

Amazon's next move to improve its telehealth venture could be appointment reminders

Article

The news: Amazon Web Services (AWS) unveiled three new capabilities for the Amazon Connect platform (its cloud-based contact center)—and one in particular seems relevant for

the tech giant's healthcare partners.

- **A new predictive dialer** enables managers to easily schedule and launch high-volume outbound communications by specifying the communications channel (voice or text, for instance), patient list, and content that will be sent out to customers, like email updates.

AWS says its new tech could allow a large hospital healthcare network to send texts and emails asking patients to confirm upcoming appointments, and then automatically call all patients who fail to respond, for example.

Why this could succeed: Amazon Connect's healthcare capabilities could help it grab a larger slice of the healthcare communications space—a largely untapped opportunity.

Doctors are inundated with patient calls and messages thanks to the pandemic, and automated calls could be incredibly helpful in managing the influx of requests:

- The number of **digital messages from patients to doctors** have **skyrocketed 150%** since the onset of the pandemic, according to data from EHR giant Epic, cited by The Verge.
- Plus, staffing shortages means there won't be as many admins or providers available to answer patients' questions about appointments, etc.

Amazon Connect's services could also help health systems keep patients coming back for follow-up appointments by setting regular reminders.

- **Most patients want their healthcare provider to contact them about their appointments via phone call (35.4%) or text message (32.1%), per** a March 2021 PatientPop survey.
- For context, Amazon Connect is already partnered with provider organization **SuperCareHealth**, which claims the tech increased its call efficiency and delivered cost savings of over 20%.

What's next? We think Amazon could integrate the Connect feature into its Amazon Care telehealth business to showcase the tech's ROI to potential health system partners.

Amazon Care has been aggressively expanding its employer-focused virtual and in-person care services over the last year:

- It is **launching** in-home care visits in 20 more major cities.

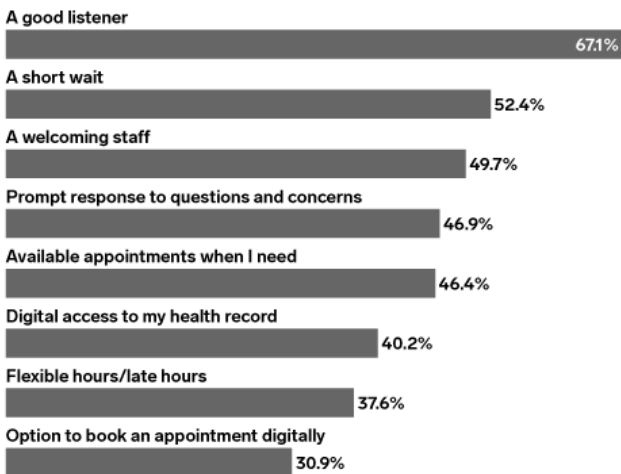
- And it's reportedly working on hiring 40,000 new US medical employees, which could **dip its profitability by \$2 billion in Q3 2021**, [according to](#) a recent Seeking Alpha report.

Since Amazon is heavily investing in its virtual care business, it would make sense for it to deploy the Amazon Connect tech to engage its own consumers with appointment calls and reminders.

- In fact, Amazon Connect is already being used by the likes of **Labcorp** to help its facilities better manage patients' billing questions, clinical questions, and appointment scheduling, [per](#) AWS' latest press release.

What Do US Adults Want Most* From a Healthcare Provider?

% of respondents, May 2021



Note: ages 18+; *besides quality care
 Source: PatientPop, "2021 Patient Perspective" conducted by SurveyMonkey, June 28, 2021
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