

Apple Primary Care isn't coming any time soon—here's why the Watch is a better product because of it

Article

The news: Apple's ambitious attempt at disrupting healthcare by planning to offer primary care medicine has stalled [per](#) The Wall Street Journal. The report emphasizes the scope of Apple's efforts to **create a healthcare platform** involving its own primary care services, clinics, and Apple-employed doctors.

Apple spent months trying to digest the flood of wellness data collected from **Apple Watch** users in 2016. Combining device sensors, software, and services, Apple aimed to provide healthcare services at a lower cost. While this wider healthcare pivot **stalled**, Apple focused its efforts into making its health tracking apps and Apple Watch wearable better.

What this means: The report reveals how difficult disrupting healthcare is even for the biggest technology companies.

- Apple's efforts echo similar health overtures made by **Amazon** with its now-shuttered [Haven](#) joint venture, which aimed to use technology to **reduce costs** for employees.
- Microsoft's [HealthVault](#), a web-based personal **health record** for fitness information also shut down before it took off.
- And IBM's [Watson Health](#) was another ill-fated attempt to use computational superiority and AI for the service of healthcare.

The opportunity: Throwing technology at healthcare's problems without understanding their complexities can only go so far. For its part, Apple's participated in various [health studies](#) and has a dedicated [Research](#) app to better decipher common health risks. The company has also initiated [pilot programs](#) in tandem with leading hospitals to better understand the challenges.

Apple's advantage over its competitors is that it already has a large and growing base of users who trust them with health data. And its products have [seen success](#) in improving people's health.

Further, Apple is well positioned to take on [healthcare](#) in the near future as its innovations gain ground: It's new health records feature is [now supported](#) by the **Mayo Clinic**, and the upcoming iOS 15 operating system is unveiling new health tracking features as well as the ability to determine trends in a person's health.

*For more on what an Apple Primary Care service could mean for the virtual care space, read [this article](#) from our **Digital Health Briefing**.*

Tech Companies US Adults* Are Willing to Share Health Data** with, 2018-2020

% of respondents

	2018	2019	2020
Google	60%	56%	57%
Amazon	53%	45%	52%
Microsoft	51%	47%	45%
Apple	49%	42%	45%
Samsung	46%	42%	39%
Facebook	40%	36%	38%
Uber	-	22%	19%
Lyft	-	16%	14%

Note: ages 18+; Lyft and Uber were not included in the 2018 survey response options; *among those who are willing to share their health data with tech companies; **such as medical records, test results, prescription drug history, genetic information, and physical activity data

Source: Rock Health and Stanford Center for Digital Health, "Digital Health Consumer Adoption Report 2020" conducted by Toluna USA, March 2020

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