



MOOD:MEDIA

# 6 STEPS TO A BETTER PATIENT EXPERIENCE

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# Providing a truly exceptional patient experience goes beyond ensuring a high level of care. It's about creating a relaxing and friendly environment throughout your facility - **not one that's bland or overly clinical.**

The goal should be to relieve stress and anxiety from the moment your patients and their family members walk through the door. One way to do so is by considering what they see, hear and feel when they're at your practice.

When used effectively, healthcare media solutions such as Music, On-Hold Messaging, Digital Signage and Scent can help you address these considerations and significantly enhance your patient experience. The result? Greater patient satisfaction, more word-of-mouth referrals, and a remarkable impression that distinguishes your practice from the rest. In this article, we'll explain how you can most effectively leverage these media solutions to achieve such great results.

## **#1: PLAY THE RIGHT MUSIC.**

Playing the right healthcare music doesn't mean only playing what the receptionists want to hear. While it's important to consider their preferences as well, the preferences of your patients and their family members should always come first. Consider the age and demographics of your average visitor, and find uplifting and relaxing music programs that speak to their generation.

Since the music you play in your practice is being used for business purposes, the programs should come from a professional healthcare music provider. These companies typically pay the required music licensing fees on your behalf (remember - playing the radio or music from a consumer streaming app in your practice violates federal licensing laws).

Additionally, working with an experienced healthcare music provider will provide you with access to a variety of professionally-designed programs so that you can play the right music for your visitors and your staff. The service provider can even help you select the right programs for your practice.

The solution you use should also allow you to schedule different programs to play at different times of day - a strategy known as dayparting. For healthcare providers, we recommend scheduling programs that deliver a softer energy in the morning, followed by slightly more upbeat programs in the afternoon and early evening.

Lastly, your healthcare music needs to be reliable. The last thing you want are streaming interruptions, odd segues between songs or complete silence because the internet is down at your location.

## **#2: ENGAGE PATIENTS WITH DIGITAL SIGNAGE.**

Healthcare digital signage is no longer a trend - it's a highly effective tool that more providers are using to educate and engage their patients and their family members - all while creating a better experience and enhancing your professional image. Additionally, healthcare digital signage applications are more cost-effective and significantly more efficient than their printed counterparts. With most digital signage solutions, you can update and schedule content instantly using a web-based portal. No more waiting for signs to come back from the printing company, and no more printing fees. Just a simple monthly rate that typically amounts to some pocket change a day.

Keep in mind that healthcare signage comes in various forms and applications, and it serves a variety of purposes. Typical uses include:

- + Patient queues
- + Waiting room entertainment
- + Wayfinding
- + Health tips, dietary recommendations
- + Appointment reminders
- + Cafeteria menu boards
- + Ambient visuals/aesthetics

Ultimately, using digital signage for these types of applications can check off all of the boxes when it comes to improving the patient experience. Not only does it add value and convenience for your visitors, but it gives them a great impression of your practice - one that has them thinking, "This doctor has a really nice facility." This is the type of impression that will go a long way towards distinguishing your practice from the competition while helping you earn more word-of-mouth referrals.

### #3: WATCH YOUR PROGRAMMING.

The programming you show on your TVs matters a great deal. The goal should be to create a welcoming waiting room experience that entertains and reduces stress, and your programming content needs to work towards achieving that goal. The last thing you want to do is contribute to stress by showing uncomfortable content such as negative news programming or TV shows and movies with violent or inappropriate subject matter.

Additionally, you can't control what ads are displayed on network television, but do you really want a competitor's commercial showing on your screens? Finally, having to get up and change the channel every 15 minutes to satisfy a patient is a waste of your staff's time and contributes to their stress levels. After all, taking care of patients is difficult enough.

One simple way to circumvent these issues is by switching out live TV for a **short-form programming solution**. Short-form programming offers 1-3 minute clips of popular TV shows, and it's wrapped in a branded template that offers on-screen space you can use to further add value to the patient experience. You can also intersperse short-form programming with full-screen content customized for your brand.

No matter what, always be mindful of what TV-based entertainment you're providing. Showing inappropriate programming is counterintuitive to creating the calming experience your patients need when they're in your waiting room.

### #4: GET THE MESSAGE

On-hold messaging still is (and always will be) a critical element of the patient experience. On-hold may seem like a mundane necessity for your practice, but the fact is that it truly can be a useful and effective tool that fulfills multiple purposes:

- + **Maximize staff efficiency.** At a base level, On-hold messages empower staff to properly prioritize incoming patients on-site and calls in the order they are received. Additionally, you can use on-hold messaging to free up the on-hold queue by directing callers to your website in order to find the information they're seeking.
- + **Promote your practice.** On-hold messaging is a great medium for providing information about specific health services that you offer at your facility. For example, you can set up

seasonal messages for scheduling flu shots in the fall and back-to-school immunizations in the summer. If you have an on-site imaging center or pharmacy, you can also promote these facilities in your messaging. The possibilities are truly endless.

- + **Promote well-being.** You can also use messaging to provide important health and wellness tips. Your patients will not only appreciate the information, but they'll appreciate the extra level of care you demonstrate. Such sentiments can go a long way towards creating a deep level of patient loyalty, which can lead to more word-of-mouth referrals.
- + **Enhance the patient experience.** Simply put, your music and messaging on-hold should be an extension of the welcoming and stress-free on-site experience you aim to create. Providing value to your callers while they wait will give them a positive on-hold experience, which contributes to their overall satisfaction with your practice.

While your average caller may not spend much time on hold, that time is a unique opportunity to pursue multiple business goals. Use it to your advantage.

### #5: LEVERAGE SCENT

We may be preaching to the choir, but the link between scent and our emotions and memories is too powerful to dismiss. Leverage Scent Marketing to enhance the welcoming feel of your practice for visitors and staff. You can also use specific fragrances to further reduce patient stress in specific areas of your practice, such as imaging or examination rooms.

Finally, Scent is a great way to minimize the perception of any odors and ensure that your practice makes a clean and sanitary impression. Find a local Scent Marketing company that can recommend specific scents for the healthcare industry. They'll also suggest the right diffusion systems for your facility and your needs.

### #6: USE COMMERCIAL-GRADE AV SYSTEMS - AND HEALTHCARE AV SPECIALISTS

Audiovisual systems are responsible for several elements of the patient experience, from Overhead Music and Digital Signage to TV, Sound Masking and Paging Systems. AV also comes into play for Conference Room and Projector solutions, enabling you to better engage and educate your team.





Using reliable commercial-grade AV components is critical in ensuring that these elements consistently perform at a high level. Commercial-grade screens and speakers may cost a bit more, but considering their reliability and the comprehensive warranties they offer, they're actually a much smarter investment than consumer-grade equipment, for several reasons.

Unlike their professional counterparts, consumer-grade speakers and screens aren't designed to operate continuously for several hours, and reliability can become an issue within weeks of regular use in a healthcare setting. Additionally, using a consumer screen in a business setting will void any warranty that it comes with. On the other hand, commercial-grade screens and speakers come with comprehensive warranties that can save you hundreds in the event that repairs or replacements are needed.

Lastly, it's important to hire an audiovisual expert that specializes in AV design and installation for healthcare facilities. Your installer needs to have a strong familiarity with the unique

facets and electrical coding requirements of a healthcare facility. They'll also be able to help you determine the right amount of audiovisual coverage you need in specific areas of your practice and suggest solutions that only provide the performance you need - no more and no less.

Ultimately, the quality of care you provide is paramount to the patient experience, but incorporating the elements we discussed in this whitepaper will also go a long way towards enhancing it even further. The result is a deeper level of patient loyalty that improves your bottom line and improves your patient's perception of the level of care they received.

**Contact us** today for more information about elevating the patient experience with Healthcare media solutions, or to schedule a free consultation. You can also learn more by visiting [us.moodmedia.com/healthcare](https://us.moodmedia.com/healthcare).