



# Looking Back at HealthTech Predictions in 2012 : How Accurate Were They?

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In 1903 Henry Ford's lawyer was told by the President of the Michigan savings bank not to invest in the Ford Motor company, saying that "the horse is here to stay, but the automobile is a novelty, a fad". History is littered with now comically wrong predictions. This is particularly true in the World of technology. From Western Unions prediction that the telephone had too many shortcomings to be seriously considered as a means of communication" to

Darryl Zanuck's 1964 prediction that TV would last six months because people would get tired of staring at a box every night.

Numerous articles are published every year predicting the trends that will change healthcare in a particular period of time. One of the things I enjoy doing is reading back on such articles a number of years after they were published to see how accurate they were. On January 1st 2012 Tech Crunch published an article entitled '6 Big Health Tech Ideas that will change medicine in 2012'. Coming up to six years since that article was written, I cannot help but ask myself the question; how accurate were the predictions and how far have these trends changed healthcare in these interceding six years?

### **Trend No 1 : Artificial Intelligence**

The first trend listed was that of Artificial Intelligence. The article predicts that AI will 'assist with diagnostics and decision support for both patients and clinicians'. This prediction largely proved to be correct, as diagnostics is the area in which AI has made huge advancements in the field of healthcare. Examples of this include DataArt's professional assistant for developed for Kehmesoft and IBM's Watson computer in use in New York. Both systems utilise an increasingly common methodology of comparing symptoms to a huge database of previous cases to provide a potential diagnosis. The system may not go as far as the author predicted, as they only really provide a second opinion to aid doctors as opposed to making a concrete full proof diagnosis autonomously.

The one area predicted was that it would disintermediate areas like dermatology. We are still not quite there. The increasing number of high street mole clinics opening up still rely on photograph technology, although this is now well advanced, that is reviewed by an expert that puts forward a professional opinion. The predicated disintermediation of such areas is still surely a long way off.

### **Trend No 2 : TeleHealth**

One area the article was completely correct on was the way in which we will communicate with doctors, postulating telehealth as the future. This has received the ultimate endorsement by the recent introduction of GP at hand by the NHS. This service offers patients the chance to see a free NHS GP within

two hours via a phone video chat. In the private healthcare space similar concepts are flourishing, particularly push doctor and Now Health Care group and i-GP. What perhaps was not predicted by the article was that telehealth would increase in a number of healthcare fields from counselling to speech therapy. Examples include DotCom therapy, which is completely revolutionising speech therapy, providing access to people in remote areas would otherwise have to travel for hours to access such services.

### **Trend No 3 : Mobile Apps**

The article insisted that Mobile phones would be increasingly used to track medical metrics. The examples for this are almost endless. Organisations are dedicating much energy into the development of such tools. DataArt has focused very heavily on such technology, particularly in the development and technology arm of its business, Orange. This includes a system known as heartbeat rate, which uses video processing algorithms to measure heart rate without physical contact. It does so by using the camera on a mobile phone to detect the red pixels on a user's face to disseminate blood pressure rate.

The predicted use of big data has flourished not just in healthcare but in almost every sector, particularly in the field of diagnostics as already discussed. The predicted increase in social network based around health have also materialised, with a social network available for almost every medical condition one could think of.

### **Trend No 3 : 3D Medical Orienting**

Considering this article was written six years ago, which is a remarkably long time in the technology space, the predictions made have largely come to pass. The only area that was perhaps far off was the area of 3D medical orienting, which the article postulated would be a fair bit further ahead than it is now. While some of the predictions may not be as far forward as predicted, such as the disintermediation of certain medical fields, this is a generally impressive attempt at future prediction, and it will be interesting to see if the predictions that have not yet come to pass will have done so by the time the tenth anniversary of the publication appears. Such articles are far more than time fillers but in many ways a time capsule, not featuring physical markers of time such as coins and postage stamp, but something far more interesting, human thought.

## **DataArt**

Julie Pelta is Director of Business Development for DataArt Healthcare and Life Sciences division. DataArt is a global technology consultancy that designs, develops and supports unique software solutions, helping clients take their businesses forward. Recognised for their deep domain expertise and superior technical talent, DataArt teams create new products and modernize complex legacy systems that affect technology transformation in select industries. DataArt has earned the trust of some of the world's leading brands and most discerning clients, including Nasdaq, S&P, Oneworld Alliance, Ocado, Artnet, Betfair, and Skyscanner. Organized as a global network of technology services firms, DataArt brings together expertise of over 2,200 professionals in 20 locations in the US, Europe, and Latin America. <http://www.dataart.com/>

Original article can be found here: <https://www.healthcare.digital/single-post/2017/09/26/Looking-Back-at-HealthTech-Predictions-in-2012-How-Accurate-Were-They>