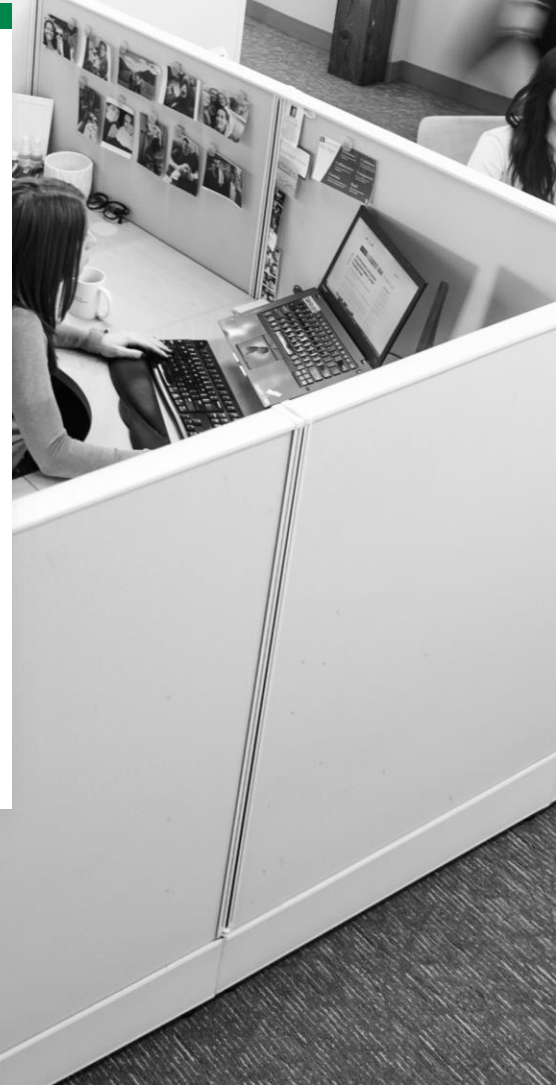




Health Tech Media in a Post-COVID-19 World

June 2021



COMMUNICATIONS

Introduction

There's no question that COVID-19 accelerated the digitalization of the healthcare industry. While digital tools had been gaining ground before the pandemic, the coronavirus crisis amplified calls for solutions that would drive operational efficiencies for strapped health systems, facilitate patient care in the safest settings possible and set the foundation for more engaging, equitable care delivery models in the future.

Not only has COVID-19 driven drastic shifts in the healthcare market, but it's also transformed healthcare media. From the inundation of breaking news to the rapid shift in beats, the pandemic has turned newsrooms on their heads.

As we look toward a post-pandemic world, we wondered, what are the issues, trends and companies health tech journalists are most interested in covering? What can health tech organizations do to break through the noise and serve up the news, content and sources that will steer industry conversations and shine a light on the state and future of healthcare?

To find out, we spoke with more than 20 of the top health tech reporters from both business and trade publications, including **STAT**, **FierceHealthcare**, **Insider**, **Boston Business Journal (BBJ)** and **Health Leaders**. Read on to learn about newsrooms' coverage priorities and how your press engagement strategies can stand out in a saturated healthcare media landscape.

The Issues that Matter

COVID-19 continues to consume reporters' attention, but the conversation is evolving beyond how healthcare stakeholders are keeping up with pandemic demands. Now, journalists are keen to address where the industry is headed—and how health tech is influencing that course.

What's Trending: Healthcare Topics Catching Reporters' Attention

When hospitals around the globe became overwhelmed at the start of the pandemic, home-based care emerged as an increasingly valuable model for delivering treatment and managing patients. Now, as we ease out of the pandemic period, reporters are watching closely to see if home-based care is here to stay in a world where visiting the doctor's office is no longer a major risk. In fact, **home-based care is the #1 area of interest among reporters we surveyed, with 67% stating they plan to cover it in the months ahead.**



In line with these trends, the **top technologies reporters are interested in covering are:**

- Remote patient monitoring (90%)
- Telehealth (86%)
- AI (71%)

The Trends Reporters are Most Interested in Covering

1. Home-based care
2. Value-based care
3. Patient engagement

At the business press level, the journalists we surveyed all said telehealth technology was of greatest interest, whereas trade press reporters unanimously cited remote patient monitoring specifically.



“I’m looking to see what happens with telehealth; if it becomes a care coordination tool versus just a patient tool.”

— Megan Hernbroth, Insider



“The pandemic has certainly accelerated change in a lot of areas that we cover, such as remote patient monitoring (RPM), telehealth and health issues related to aging-in-place challenges.”
— **Alfred Poor, Health Tech Insider**

It's not just the tech that's catching reporters' attention, but rather its evolving role transforming the healthcare industry as we know it.

As healthcare becomes increasingly digitized, maintaining data security, governance and compliance becomes a far more complex responsibility for providers to navigate. As a result, many reporters we surveyed highlighted cybersecurity as another topic of focus. Because technology often evolves faster than the regulations to govern it, healthcare providers face critical gaps between innovations available for use and established practices for ensuring security. More than the logistics of how emerging health technologies solve for pressing care needs, reporters want to know: how can providers implement it securely?

"I'm less focused on tech itself and more focused on how it relates to macro issues, such as addressing affordability, optimizing new care modalities, escalating health equity, confronting the mental health crisis, strengthening system resilience, engaging health consumers, securing data advantage and realizing medical breakthroughs."
— **Tom Sullivan, Health Evolution**



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With innovation comes policy updates for governing its implementation and use. To be sure, policy is of interest to reporters; 86% are either “somewhat” or “very” interested in covering the impact that regulation and policy will have on the health tech landscape. However, the consensus is that **journalists are more intrigued by policy when it sparks—or hinders—innovation or when it causes change in the industry.**

"I'm interested in policy that drives innovation while improving provider and patient experiences—then I get excited."
— Dennis Daily, mHealth Times



As we embark upon a post-pandemic world, reporters are watching closely to see how health tech trends—either those inspired by COVID-19's impact or those accelerated by it—will play out in the long term.

Considering reporters' limited bandwidth as newsrooms downsize and reshuffle, pitches need to be highly targeted to the topics journalists care about today. Keep reading for more on how to catch their attention.

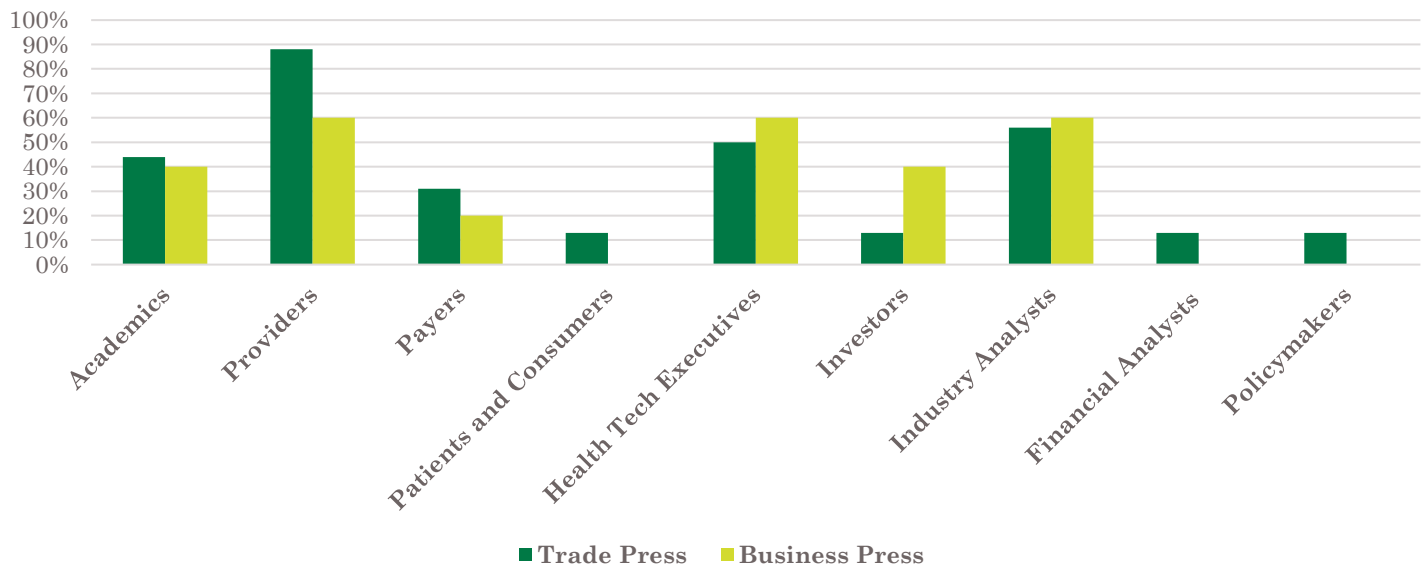
The Sources They Trust

Pinpointing journalists' areas of interest is only one piece of the puzzle to getting a company in the news; you also need to offer a credible source that reporters trust to offer perspective on key topics.

In the age of information overload and disinformation, reporters distinguish themselves through their credibility—meaning they want objective, established sources to bring their stories to life. To this end, the **journalists we surveyed are overwhelmingly interested in connecting with healthcare providers who can speak about the issues they're facing, the solutions they're using and where they see greater opportunity to improve workflows and outcomes.**

Journalists' Most Valuable Sources – Ranked

When asked to share their top sources, business and trade press cited the following:



“Normally, I prefer academic sources without financial conflicts.”
— Karen Weintraub, USA Today



To increase your chances of getting your company covered by the media, consider what you can offer by way of third-party validation, whether that be a customer who can discuss the applications of your product or service, an analyst who can share how it compares to other market offerings or an investor who can speak to the current and projected value of your unique solution.

There's no question that COVID-19 accelerated the digitization of the healthcare While third party validation is key, 88% of trade press journalists admitted they quote executives either "most of the time" or "sometimes." As for business press, interest is divided—so **familiarize yourself with the outlet beforehand to see if having your company's executives speak is a possibility.**

"If an executive can discuss how their company is growing or changing in response to industry trends, or can honestly discuss the pain points to the industry at large, that's a more compelling angle than just describing why their company is great."

— Jessica Bartlett, BBJ



The executives that journalists are interested in speaking with are those invested in the betterment of the industry at large, versus just their personal brand. **Credible executives are those who possess knowledge of the topic at hand or data or research to support their perspective.**

The Companies They Care About

While inclusion in a trends piece is more common, profiles on health tech companies aren't out of the realm of possibility. However, with seemingly infinite companies vying for journalists' attention, you need to package your company as attractively as possible to pique reporters' interest.

Just over half of the journalists we surveyed (52%) profile health tech companies, the majority of which are concentrated in the trade press (82%). Having a great product isn't all a company needs to make headlines though...

Top Components Journalists Want to Move a Profile Forward

1. Standout growth/momentum
2. Corporate news
3. Interesting founder or founding story
4. Unique offering

V2-Secured Client Profiles

Check out some of the company features below to see what drove V2 client coverage:

Inc.

Five Years Ago, She Sold Her Health Tech Startup. Last Year, She Sold It Again for \$1.3 Billion Lissy Hu just led CarePort Health through its second acquisition--while retaining her CEO title.



WIRED

Microsoft Makes a \$16 Billion Entry Into Health Care AI

VentureBeat

Current Health partners with the Mayo Clinic for remote coronavirus patient monitoring

Before pitching your company to a journalist, as yourself:

✓ Why does our story matter today?

Between the coronavirus and politics, health tech companies need to compete for the remaining ink on the news page. More than ever, pitching a health tech company needs to have a timeliness factor to it. What is the brand doing that'll make it stand out in today's media maelstrom?

✓ How can I communicate what we do in a way that's easy to understand?

Especially at the business press level, most readers aren't going to be a software developer or engineer, so your pitch needs to be digestible for the average person. Even in trade press outlets, you're probably looking to attract customers and investors—who are more concerned about how the company's product can help them than its technical attributes.

“[It’s] often difficult writing about tech companies— especially early-stage companies. They like to stick to jargon and buzzwords; we only have a minute to ID if we want to cover; [we] need to quickly interpret what a company does and explain it in terms a 4th grader could understand.”

— Robert Holly, Home Health Care News



✓ How are we different from all the other companies out there?

No one wants to read the same story over and over again. Consider what makes your brand unique and use that to your advantage. Maybe you have a unique founder story. Maybe you've experienced exceptional financial growth. Or maybe you've launched an entirely new industry category. Whatever it is that makes you different, lead with that and be as transparent and forthcoming as possible with compelling details.

Conclusion

If you're feeling stuck on how to break into the health tech media landscape, V2 can help.

As the healthcare industry goes digital, our tech roots enable us to swiftly discern and message clients' unique value proposition against the context of the evolving market. Our agile approach ensures we always have a finger on the pulse of trends and trend makers, so we deliver your story in the moments that matter most for both your brand and the industry at large.

We know how to articulate the benefits our clients and their solutions bring to industry stakeholders so they stand out even in a crowded and complex marketplace. To this end, we create customized communications strategies to build brands and thought leadership platforms that reach targeted audiences, whether they are patients, scientists, healthcare professionals or hospital and health systems administrators.

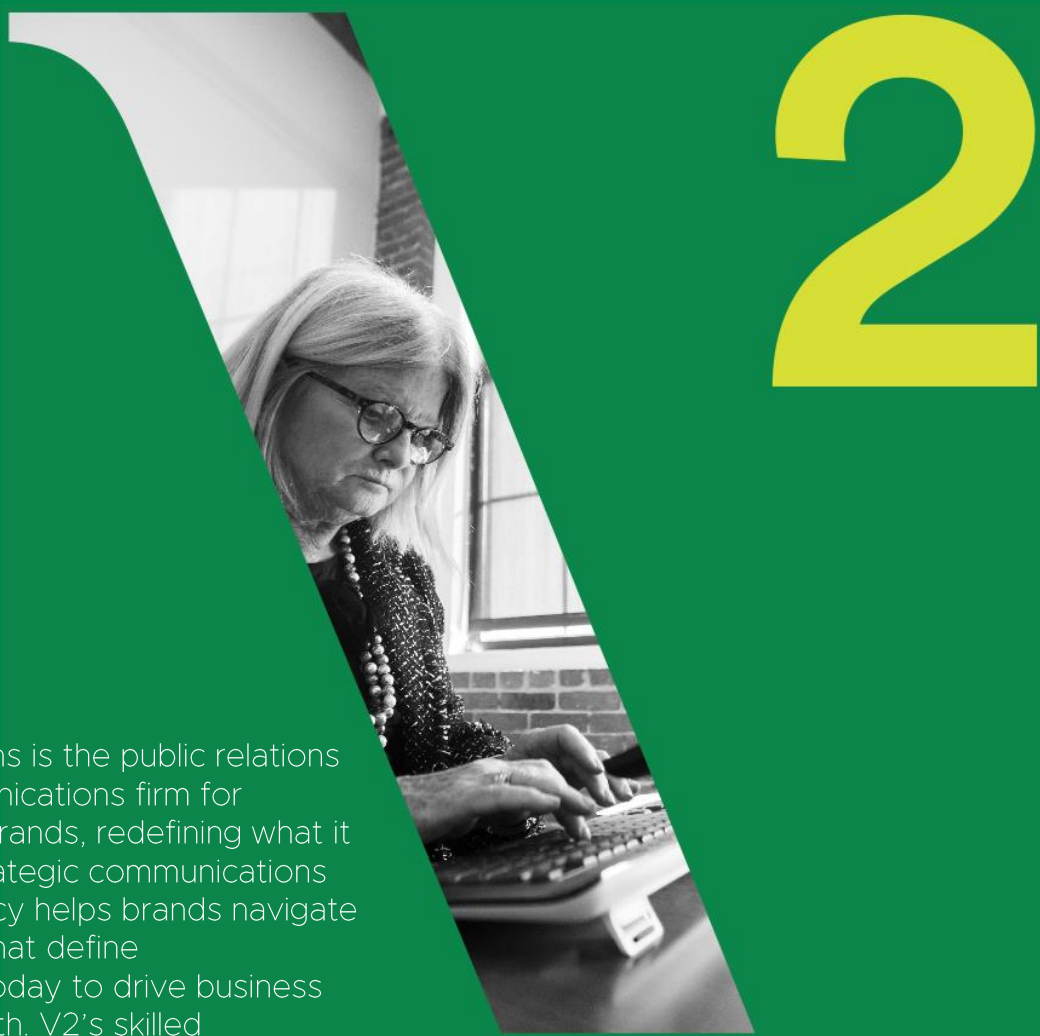
While, at the end of the day, the story a health tech company brings to the table is what dictates whether a reporter chooses to cover it, you can't overlook the power of relationships in influencing the media. Our vast network of contacts enables us to get clients in front of the journalists tuned in to their specific niche and drive impactful coverage that moves their businesses forward.

***“Health tech is a hot, fast-growing field with so much going on—it’s a challenge to stay on top of all the news and still meet our reporting goals. Don’t underestimate the power of relationships.”
— Dennis Daily, mHealth Times***

Research Methodology

V2 conducted research between April and May 2021. We directly contacted journalists we work most closely with to get their perspectives on the top issues in health tech today. Publications represented include:





V2 Communications is the public relations and digital communications firm for disruptive global brands, redefining what it means to be a strategic communications partner. The agency helps brands navigate the complexities that define communications today to drive business success and growth. V2's skilled professionals combine a business mindset and creative thinking to provide the strategic counsel, campaign ideas and results that move businesses forward.

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