



From innovation to impact: A customer success perspective

Connecting AI capabilities to measurable business value in a complex payer environment

Across the payer landscape, artificial intelligence has moved from concept to reality. Health plans are actively deploying tools that promise smarter prior authorization, faster claims adjudication, predictive care management models and more personalized member engagement. The innovation itself is no longer the question. What we hear consistently from executives, however, is a more practical concern: Are these investments actually moving the needle?

From a customer success vantage point, the gap between adoption and impact is rarely about model performance or technical sophistication. It is almost always about focus, alignment and follow-through. Technology creates potential. Organizations create value.

When innovation outpaces intention

Health plans are operating under real pressure with compressed margins, heightened regulatory oversight and rising expectations from members and providers alike. In that environment, it's understandable that new technology can feel urgent, even unavoidable. But we have seen firsthand that introducing new capabilities without a clearly articulated purpose introduces its own risk. Without shared clarity on why a capability is being introduced and how success will be measured, teams struggle to integrate it into day-to-day work. Platforms end up underused. Metrics are debated after the fact. Frontline staff experience fatigue rather than enablement.

Over time, this erodes confidence not just in a single solution, but in innovation more broadly. That skepticism becomes especially costly at a moment when thoughtful application of AI can be a true differentiator.

Shifting the conversation

Organizations that consistently realize value from strategic initiatives including AI start the conversation differently. Instead of leading with features or demonstrations, they anchor discussions in operational reality. The questions we see strong teams ask early include:

- What specific business or operational problem are we trying to solve?
- How will we know objectively that this effort is working?
- Which priorities, already on leadership scorecards, does this initiative support?

This shift may sound subtle, but its implications are significant. When value is defined first, technology selection becomes more disciplined, deployment decisions become clearer and accountability becomes easier to sustain.

Aligning technology, operations and outcomes

Based on our work alongside payer teams, meaningful impact tends to emerge when these three elements are deliberately connected:

1. Start with a clear value hypothesis

Before evaluating any solution, teams benefit from stating the outcome they expect to achieve. Whether the goal is reducing

administrative costs, improving turnaround times, lifting Stars performance or improving member satisfaction, precision matters. Vague aspirations tend to produce vague results.

2. Design for the real workflow

AI only delivers value when it lives inside the work, not alongside it. That means understanding which teams will use the capability, how existing processes will change and where ownership for outcomes truly sits. Successful organizations treat operational integration as a core design requirement, not a downstream task, solving the “last mile” problem of adoption.

3. Define success before go-live

One of the most common challenges we observe is retroactively defining success. Strong programs establish metrics upfront, baseline them honestly and agree on measurement timelines before deployment begins. Cost per member, authorization turnaround time, care gap closure, accuracy and experience metrics all have a role when they are chosen intentionally and tied back to the original value hypothesis.

4. Build feedback into the journey

No implementation goes exactly as planned. Teams that succeed create regular, structured checkpoints to evaluate performance, surface friction points and adjust course. This cadence turns pilots and early deployments into learning systems rather than one-time events.

What distinguishes programs that succeed

While every organization is different, a few patterns show up consistently across successful initiatives:

- **Executive ownership matters.** Tangible results are far more likely when a senior leader owns the business case end to end, not just the technology decision.
- **Pilots are treated as strategy, not experiments.** Well-designed pilots with clear success criteria generate actionable insight quickly and reduce downstream risk.
- **Operational readiness is often the limiting factor.** Even the best models struggle if processes, incentives and change management are underinvested.

The opportunity ahead

The pressure to innovate is real and justified. But the health plans that set themselves apart will not be those that adopt the most tools the fastest. They will be the ones that apply discipline, clarity and accountability to how innovation is used. From our standpoint, the path forward is straightforward, if not easy: align stakeholders early, define value rigorously, measure outcomes honestly and stay close to execution. When those fundamentals are in place, AI stops being an abstract promise and becomes a durable driver of performance.



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