Weave

by VP of Product and Group Product Manager

`Patient Engagement` `Patient Billing and Collection` `Secure Patient Communications`

`Patient Scheduling` `AI Contact Center Intelligence`

Details

Review Date	11/02/2023
Purchase Date	Q4'22
Implementation Time	2-3 weeks
Product Still in Use	Yes
Purchase Amount	$300/month
Intent to Renew	80%
Review Source	Elion

Product Rating

Product Overall		3.5
Use Case Fit		3.5
Ease of Use		3.5
API		N/A
Integrations		N/A
Support		2.5
Value		4.0

About the Reviewer

`Purchasing Team` `Implementation Team`

`Product Oversight`

Reviewer Organization

`Virtual-First Provider` `Cardiology`

`Neurology`

Reviewer Tech Stack

`Calendly` `Zoom`

Other Products Considered

`Spruce Health` `Tellescope` `Welkin Health`

`Zoho CRM`

Summary

- **Product Usage:** The reviewers, working in a health services startup, use Weave for patient communications, particularly making phone calls and sending SMS to patients.

- **Strengths:** Weave's strengths include affordability, HIPAA compliance, and basic communication functionalities like voice call and SMS.

- **Weaknesses:** Weaknesses comprise dispersed and inconsistent customer support, lack of software-based option, and difficulties in phone setup.

- **Overall Judgment:** The reviewers find Weave satisfactory for the current basic communication needs, though they express concerns about its ability to meet future requirements.

Review

This interview involved two respondents from the same company. Respondent 1 (R1) is the VP of Product and Respondent 2 (R2) is the Product Manager.

So today we're chatting about Weave and how it's used at your company. Before we jump into that, could you give a brief overview of the company and your role there?

R1: We're a startup that uses a combination of technology and clinical services to assist survivors of serious health conditions as they leave the hospital. Our goal is to help them adjust to life outside the hospital, take charge of their recovery, and reintegrate into the community. We have a mobile app for patients, and our team of navigators support the patients through the recovery process. I'm the VP of product, engineering, and design.

R2: I'm the manager, product management. I manage our web portal, which is used by our navigators – a team of occupational therapists and social workers. We also have a mobile app that supports our patients and their care partners.

What was the business problem that you were looking to solve with Weave?

R2: Initially, we used Zendesk to document technical problems and facilitate communication between our clinical team, patients, and care partners. However, we found that Zendesk had too many features that we didn't need, and it complicated our processes. We explored different telephony products that could provide SMS capabilities and allow us to call patients and care partners. In the end, we chose Weave because it offered a single, affordable cost for the entire year, regardless of the number of users.

R1: Zendesk is a great ticketing tool, but we quickly realized that we didn't need a ticketing system. What we needed was a way for navigators to connect with patients easily. Weave's mobile app allowed us to do that by sending SMS and making phone calls easily. With Zendesk, every communication was turned into a ticket, and sometimes the tickets would close unexpectedly, causing confusion. We simply wanted to click on a patient and call them without dealing with unnecessary ticketing features. Weave provided us with a straightforward platform for maintaining a navigator/patient relationship. We used Weave as a pilot program for five months before completely leaving Zendesk.

What key requirements did you use to evaluate Weave and their competitors?

R2: As far as must-haves, SMS was crucial. Being able to make and receive calls was also important. A nice-to-have feature was the ability to send group messages.

R1: Another "should-have" feature was that it would be software-based, which wasn't available with Weave initially. Zendesk is pure software, as are other tools like CRM tools. Weave has a physical phone component, but we ended up accepting that, since pricing was a big factor. It was also great to be able to use the application on a mobile device and ensure HIPAA compliance. We needed bidirectional SMS and phone communication.

Who were the other vendors that you considered in this evaluation, and how did they stack up?

R2: Spruce was one. We also considered a few different CRMs: Tellescope, Welkin Health, Cured, and Zoho Desk. However, these options seemed more CRM-focused, which wasn't what we needed. We wanted something simpler

that could handle calling, SMS, and receiving calls. Price was also a major consideration for us. While other tools may have had better functionality, their pricing models didn't align with what we wanted.

R1: Due to our negative experience with Zendesk, we quickly eliminated any ticketing systems like Zoho Desk. It didn't fit our needs and was expensive, so we ruled it out as an option. Instead, we started exploring CRM systems. Pricing was a major factor, and not all of them were willing to sign BAAs with us, even if they claimed to be HIPAA compliant. Weave, on the other hand, was specifically designed for healthcare. I'm unsure if Spruce or Tellescope had the same focus. Another important consideration was phone call capabilities. Not all platforms had the ability to make phone calls.

R2: Tellescope offered voice over IP or calls through their website.

How did pricing compare between the vendors?

R2: Zendesk cost $99 per agent per month, while Zoho Desk was $40 per agent per month. However, Weave offers a flat cost instead of a per-agent per-month payment structure.

How would you characterize the sales process?

R2: The sales guy oversold us. He said the system would pop up on our computer and we could answer the phone that way, which we wanted. But in reality, they only had a web app at the time that you could add to your desktop. It would ring, but you couldn't answer on the desktop app. You had to pick up the physical phone. It made no sense.

R1: The physical phone thing was a major discrepancy. During the sales process, we thought one thing, but it turned out differently. So that physical phone issue became a point of contention.

R2: They suggested we get desktop phones, but they also had cordless phones that weren't connected. We didn't even know we had that option. As we added more team members, we realized that some of them didn't have a convenient place for a physical phone. For example, if your internet connection is in a closet, and your phone has to connect directly to the router, your phone won't be next to your desk. It caused a lot of problems. So I contacted Weave, and they told me about the cordless phones. We ended up switching to those so that everyone could have their phones nearby.

Another thing to note is that we were the only remote company they worked with at the time. None of their other clients were remote. That created additional challenges. When I called them, I had to remind them that we were different. We don't have an office or a support team. Everyone is remote. They needed to adapt their approach and consider our unique situation.

R1: We were very clear during the sales process that we're a remote company. We don't operate like a traditional clinic with a physical location. We don't have an IT team to set up phones for us. We have to send them out to people's homes, so it needs to be easy. They said it wouldn't be a problem, but in reality, the physical phone setup wasn't simple at all.

How was the setup and onboarding process?

R2: The original setup wasn't terrible. However, when we switched from stationary phones to cordless phones, we encountered some issues. I remember spending an hour and a half on the phone with them. The person I spoke to didn't realize that my internet router was outdated, which made it incompatible with the mobile device. It was frustrating that the person I spoke to didn't realize this until an hour and a half into the call and asked me to check my router box.

Whenever I call the Help Desk, I feel like each person I speak to gives me different information. It seems like they are moving too quickly and not properly training their employees. So, from early on, I knew that if I didn't like the answer I received, I could call back and ask again and see if someone else had a different answer.

What specific use cases does Weave support for your organization?

R2: Our onboarding team contacts patients and care partners through phone calls or text messages to gauge their interest in participating in our program. We utilize Weave for these communications. Once they join, the navigators continue to communicate with patients and care partners using Weave through phone calls or text messages.

Weave is primarily designed for dental offices and pharmaceuticals. Some features are specific to these types of organizations. For instance, there is a feature for medication refills, which allows for sending bulk messages. However, we had to make modifications to use this feature for sending bulk text messages to remind multiple individuals to join a call at a specific time. We had to work around certain limitations because Weave is tailored to specific industries.

Weave also has reminder features, although they are more aligned with medical and dental practices. These reminders are not perfect, but our navigators use them to set a reminder to reach out to a specific patient on a certain day, and it appears as a notification on the desktop. The reminder remains visible until closed, as it is not integrated with email.

R1: And again, Weave is designed with standard clinics in mind, where appointments play a central role. They integrate with EMRs and send appointment reminders. However, our system is different. We have our own proprietary system and don't rely on EMR integration. Moreover, our operations are not appointment-based. We prefer to be available to patients at any time. While patients can schedule specific times through Calendly, we don't have a concept of a traditional visit in our platform. Therefore, some of Weave's features are not well-suited for our needs, as they are based on appointment concepts.

R2: In terms of functionality, Weave occasionally releases updates, but sometimes these updates require an additional payment. For example, they introduced an automated bulk messaging feature that was only available in a higher-priced tier. If not included in your package, it required an extra monthly fee.

Regarding data analysis, a few months ago, we wanted to analyze the number of calls and SMS messages we were receiving. However, Weave's presentation of SMS data was not in a format that was useful to us. Additionally, Weave recently introduced a feature called Softphones, which allows calling from the desktop app. Initially, this feature was not available, but now it is. Unfortunately, the way their data structure retrieves information does not accurately identify the individuals who make or receive calls using Softphones.

The Softphones have been working better recently, and we haven't received many complaints. However, during the initial implementation phase, navigators reported experiencing slowness, disconnections, and difficulties hearing the callers. When we reached out to Weave for support, their usual solution was to update the app, reinstall it, or check the internet connection. They never provided a more effective resolution. This was often due to app updates, as they frequently release new versions. So, if the app is not regularly updated, it is more likely to experience issues.

We manage all the notes for our contacts in our system, but we manually add contact information like names and numbers to the Weave directory. It's not automated.

R1: But since our volume is low, it hasn't been a problem.

R2: Text messages and voicemails are stored within Weave. Everything is kept within the portal. With text messages, we can't extract any data other than the actual texts. We can generate a PDF version of the chat conversation, but we haven't found a use for that.

Are there any features that you aren't leveraging at this time?

R2: One issue with Weave is that you have to be integrated with their email system to utilize it, so we don't use that feature. They do have forms, but they're mainly designed for medical and dental practices with physical locations.

R1: I believe they also have a payments feature where you can collect payments, but that doesn't fit our business model.

R2: Another thing that doesn't work well for us is tasking or automation for our navigators. Because our model is remote, when we receive a call, it rings for everyone, so it's up to the navigator to have the desktop app open at all times to see who's calling. The only exception is if the patient calls a specific number assigned to the navigator, at which point it rings directly on their phone. I had to ask Weave to give each navigator a separate line so that patients could call them directly if they wanted to, and now each navigator has their own number. This way, if a patient wants to call back, they can do so without going through the phone tree.

In the web version of Weave, there is a CSV option, but we haven't had the need to use it. Also, you can only track a few pieces of information, like first name, last name, and maybe date of birth, which we don't really need, and possibly sex. It's very minimal, and you can't capture alternative numbers except for maybe one alternate number.

How do you feel about the platform interface overall?

R2: For our purposes, it's usable and easy enough. We don't use the fax or team chat features. We mainly use it for communicating with our patients. We focus on adding patients, making phone calls, and sending messages.

R1: Currently, it satisfies our core needs. The user interface and product overall are sufficient. The price is great as well. However, we are unsure if it will still meet our requirements a year from now, when we might have different use cases. So far, it has been working fine. But we can't say for sure if it will continue to meet our needs in the future.

How would you characterize the quality of support?

R2: When I manage to reach someone knowledgeable, their support is actually pretty good. I usually receive an answer to my questions. However, I believe their support prompts could use more detail. After selecting a prompt, I often end up being transferred to another person. Their email support, on the other hand, is not very reliable. I never receive a response, so I've stopped using it altogether. I prefer to call when I have questions.

Do you think you made the right decision in going with Weave?

R2: Yeah, it's doing the job for now. It might not be the perfect solution, but we don't have a lot of other options.

What do you see as an area of potential growth for Weave?

Elion

R2: If it's not integrated with an EMR or scheduling system, the product should still function as a standalone so you can still perform all the necessary tasks without any issues.

Any general advice you have for folks who might be making a similar decision in your position around solutions like this?

R2: I think it depends on what you need. If you just want to make calls, receive calls, send SMS, and receive SMS, then it can handle those basic functions. But if you require more specific features like tracking, it won't be able to assist with that.