

Improving Patient Experience While Growing the Business: Southern Pharmacy



Overview

Southern Pharmacy is an independent pharmacy chain comprised of six stores in Arkansas. The family-run business, based in Jonesboro, has been in operation for over 45 years. "My father started the pharmacy in 1974 and my wife and I have worked here for almost 20 years," says pharmacist and owner, Kyle Lomax. "It's a family business and we like to treat all our patients like family."

Lomax says Southern Pharmacy is known for providing a great customer experience, and for its commitment to supporting the local community.

Challenge

Southern Pharmacy was using a manual card-based system that was labor intensive, expensive and had reached capacity. The pharmacy wanted to offer patients an easy-to-use product to replace blister cards and vials, and make their life easier on a day-to-day basis. In order to fulfill demand for adherence packaging and allow the business to expand, Southern Pharmacy decided to look at other automation to help package medications for patients.

Southern Pharmacy needed to operate its strip packaging system in a very small space—only 400 sq. ft.—so Lomax began looking for a machine that would accommodate space limitations and improve efficiency.

Southern Pharmacy also wanted an adherence system that would offer options for non-NDC-specific cartridges and built-in visual inspection. With the improvement in efficiency, Lomax intended to produce adherence packaging in one location and deliver packaging to his other five pharmacies.

Solution

Southern Pharmacy identified the RapidPakRx™ as its automation of choice, due to the system's compact size, price point, built-in vision inspection and use of non-NDC-specific cartridges.

Southern Pharmacy uses the Parata Max in combination with the RapidPakRx. The RapidPakRx's visual inspection software gives pharmacists the ability to verify pouches quickly. The non-specific cartridges enable technicians to change NDCs easily, and the system's small footprint has been a great fit for the pharmacy.

Lomax says, "With the RapidPakRx, we were able to get a small system to fit in our retail space that had everything we needed built in one unit."

The top three impacts to Southern Pharmacy were improving patient adherence, increasing Star ratings and giving patients an easier option to help Lomax manage medications.

Pharmacy Owner Kyle Lomax shares how RapidPakRx compares favorably on several factors:



Results

- **Accuracy.** "The RapidPakRx visual inspection software is sensitive enough to identify small defects in capsules and tablets that you could not pick up with the human eye on visual inspection."
- **Labor Savings.** "The RapidPakRx has given us the ability to fill adherence-based packaging more efficiently with less manpower. Using the RapidPakRx versus card-filling has cut down on our production time by at least 50%."
- **Patient Care.** "We have seen that patient compliance has definitely increased since adding strip packaging. Our patients like that it has a date and a time, so they know if they miss a dose and exactly which dose it was."
- **Differentiation.** "It's given us a growth market that other competitors in our area just don't have. The impact to our business has been tremendous - it's been really well-received by our patients."
- **Space Savings.** "We were able to fit the RapidPakRx in a little over 40 inches of space and didn't have to make any other modifications to the pharmacy. We now have a Parata Max, retail shelving, and the RapidPakRx strip packager in one 400 sq. ft. space."
- **Scalability.** "With the introduction of the RapidPakRx, we feel like we can expand adherence packaging to all of our patients in all of our pharmacies, where before, with the card-based system, we were limited because of the inefficiencies of that system."

Pharmacy Owner Testimonials

"The RapidPakRx is a great tool for our pharmacy. It's helping us to increase our Star ratings and also gives patients a packaging system that will help drive their adherence and make them healthier. That's our long-term goal."

"Patients have told me that adherence packaging has been life-changing. In the past, they were never able to take their medication as prescribed. They're now taking their meds on time and are 100% compliant on the new system. It's affecting their health in a big way."

“ The RapidPakRx is a great fit for our location due to its small size and also the non-specific NDC cartridges. That gives us flexibility to have multiple NDCs and not really be tied down to a specific cartridge to dispense the medication.

Southern Pharmacy, Kyle Lomax, Owner



Kyle Lomax
Owner/Pharmacist

About Southern Pharmacy

In 1974 Kenny Lomax graduated Pharmacy School at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. Shortly thereafter he purchased his first pharmacy in Monette, known as "Ken's City Drug". It was your typical home-town corner drugstore with a soda foundation and unique gifts.

Kenny's son, Kyle Lomax, also attended University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences.

Kyle married Kass Qualls in 2001 and graduated Pharmacy School in 2002. Shortly thereafter he and Kass began working with Kenny as they purchased the Jonesboro store, Plaza Drug, in 2000. Southern Pharmacy now owns and operates 6 stores in Jonesboro, Lepanto, Lake City, Monette, Leachville and Marked Tree.

Visit RxSafe

RxSafe is the leader in robotic automation that improves patient safety and boosts profitability for independent retail and hospital outpatient pharmacies. Our RapidPakRx adherence strip packager produces single or multi-med pouches with unprecedented accuracy and efficiency, enabling pharmacies to custom-package patient medications at the lowest possible cost.