



# Channahon Ranch Pharmacy Brings Order to their Dispensing Process

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*Chicago-area Independent Lauds Quality Features and Small Footprint of PharmASSIST SmartCabinet*

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In the highly competitive climate of the retail pharmacy market, independent pharmacies have had to take total control of their destinies in order to survive. Pharmacy automation technology is a vital area in which independents have increasingly invested. In particular, automated prescription dispensing has been at the forefront of their technology strategy.

PharmASSIST®

## case study



*Channahon Ranch Pharmacy is an independent pharmacy that has been owned and operated by Lou Kaducak for 30 years. The store fills approximately 1,500 prescriptions weekly using a PharmASSIST SmartCabinet System comprised of 2 cabinets and 98 dispensers.*

Channahon Ranch Pharmacy, located in the Chicago suburb of Channahon, Illinois, took control of their destiny. Faced with the challenges of continually rising prescription volumes, an ongoing shortage of pharmacists, and a highly stressful work environment, Channahon Ranch proactively sought out a solution and found it in Innovation Associates' PharmASSIST SmartCabinet® System.

Independent pharmacies typically don't have an Information Technologist and the evaluation of pharmacy automation systems either falls into the lap of the owner or is outsourced to a consultant. At Channahon Ranch, owner Lou Kaducak took on the painstaking process of researching and comparing the various automated prescription dispensing systems in the market.



## Surveying the Field

“We had been stressed out in trying to keep up with our workload, and I was looking to make things easier on my staff and to make it enjoyable to come to work every day,” says Kaducak. “I looked at the various prescription dispensing systems on the market. Innovation had what I considered the best quality features and the smallest footprint out of all the systems currently available.”

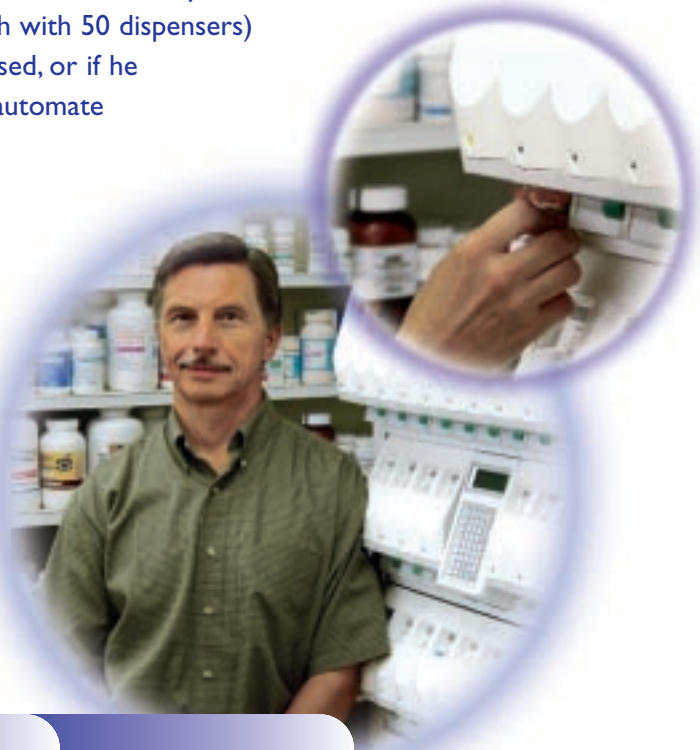
Channahon Ranch uses the McKesson Pharmacy System as their pharmacy management system (PMS) and employs a fairly simple workflow. Due to this, Kaducak felt comfortable with his operational infrastructure and decided to look for a pure counting technology solution, which Innovation offered with its PharmASSIST SmartCabinet System.

Kaducak met with Innovation to discuss various key issues ranging from prescription volume to drug/dispenser mix to physical layout to pharmacy management system integration, and more. After carefully evaluating Channahon Ranch's requirements, the Innovation team recommended a 2-cabinet, 98-dispenser SmartCabinet System. They explained that he could easily add PharmASSIST

Standard Cabinets (each with 50 dispensers)

as his volume increased, or if he simply wanted to automate the counting of more drugs.

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## Quick & Easy Installation and Training

Innovation's installation process is straightforward, always with an eye toward minimizing any disruption to a pharmacy's hectic activities. With the small footprint of the SmartCabinet System (3 square feet per cabinet), even Channahon Ranch's tight quarters of approximately 900 square feet was plenty of space to install the cabinets and the appropriate cabling.

Innovation's customer service representative installed the SmartCabinet System and performed the integration with their PMS in just two days. This included working with Channahon Ranch's staff to complete the initial replenishment of the system's 98 dispensers with the appropriate drugs.

"The installation seemed to take no time at all. Innovation's customer service rep stayed on-site for a week training my staff on the basics of the system, and was just there to answer questions when we had them," says Kaducak. "It got us off to a great start and we've never looked back."

*“Using PharmASSIST we've never had a mistake made in my pharmacy. This system has enhanced our quality, reduced our stress level and clutter, and enabled us to spend more time with our patients.”*



## Maintaining Their Hometown Image

One of Channahon Ranch's key assets, according to Kaducak, is the store's "hometown atmosphere" and his goal was to maintain that feeling even with the new technology. "Our pharmacy layout is unique in that the pharmacy area is not enclosed in any way. We don't have plexi-glass windows or high barriers separating us from our customers. This makes our customers feel welcome and gives them access to talk to us whenever they need to."

With the SmartCabinet's unassuming yet award winning design fitting in nicely to

Channahon Ranch's pharmacy setting, Kaducak feels that he has maintained that all-important "look and feel." "Our customer's reaction to the SmartCabinet has definitely been favorable," comments Kaducak. "I've explained to a number of them the quality features of the system and how it helps us from making filling errors. They certainly like to hear that."



## Unparalleled Dispensing Quality

One of Kaducak's key criteria for a dispensing system was quality control, and his SmartCabinet System has lived up to and even surpassed his expectations. "Using PharmASSIST we've never had a mistake made in my pharmacy," says Kaducak. "This system has enhanced our quality, reduced our stress level and clutter, and enabled us to spend more time with our patients."

Channahon Ranch configured their 2-cabinet, 98 dispenser system alphabetically. With the cabinets sitting side by side, drugs starting with the letter A are placed in dispensers in the top row of the SmartCabinet. They then flow across the remaining rows of the two cabinets with drugs with the letter Z placed in dispensers in the bottom row of the Standard Cabinet. "This just makes things easier for us," says Pharmacy Technician Roxanne Lanoue. "The system's light cues do a great job of alerting you to which dispensers are counting and which dispensers are ready to release orders to vials. The alphabetizing enables us to know the general location of the drug before going to retrieve it and helps to speed up the process." She adds, "We've also physically placed all the drugs in the dispensers' little windows so we can see them as we retrieve orders."

Channahon Ranch's volume is approximately 1,500 prescriptions weekly.

They employ a straightforward workflow with the main steps being Drop Off/Order Entry, Automatic/Manual Filling, Verification, and Customer Pickup. With the SmartCabinet System, the pharmacy's technicians are much more involved in the entire process as they handle the bulk of retrieving automatically filled prescriptions and the replenishing of dispensers during slower periods. "Using this system has taken the burden off our pharmacists and enabled our techs to be more productive overall. For example, they replenish dispensers during slower periods," says Kaducak. "They like doing it and it helps us maintain a perpetual inventory while helping them learn the technology and stay productive."

“I like that about Innovation; they look at your workload and provide you with just the right configuration. They don't try and oversell their automation.”

"Our 2-cabinet system is just the right amount of automation for our volumes and my staff, which is typically two operators even in peak periods," says Kaducak. "I like that about Innovation. They look at your workload and provide you with just the right configuration. They don't try and oversell their automation."

*Discover our vision of PharmASSIST  
automated dispensing solutions.*

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