

# Chain Drug Review

Reporter for the Chain Drug Store Industry

## ***Asteres to Develop Additional Tools for Pharmacies***

SAN DIEGO — Asteres Inc., manufacturer of ScriptCenter, an automated finished prescription pickup machine for retail pharmacies, has announced multiple initiatives to expand its product offerings.

The technology company has also indicated that Walgreen Co., Safeway Inc. and the University of California at San Diego have received waivers from the California State Board of Pharmacy to install ScriptCenter for refill prescriptions.

Asteres' new initiatives revolve around increasing capability and capacity. ScriptLocker, its second hardware offering, is a customconfigurable locker system being introduced as part of

ScriptCenter to manage and deliver oversize items.

Asteres is also introducing ScriptCenter Container for loading 90-day fills into ScriptCenter, providing a new solution for prescriptions that require multiple packages.

A new integrated software platform to manage such additional store products as over-the-counter drugs, essential medical supplies and personal care items is also being debuted. ScriptCenter can manage various restricted items that are subject to age, quantity, time and other constraints and can manage highshrink items. "By adding capacity and capability at ScriptCenter, we can increase the variety of items

that can be securely purchased in a single transaction," asserts founder and chief business officer Linda Pinney. "Now we can deliver to the consumer O-T-Cs and other merchandise with or without their prescription while providing the retailer a secured storage and self-checkout device."

President and chief executive officer Al Waterhouse adds that Asteres has put customer suggestions "back to work for the customer."

Among the retailers working with Asteres is Ahold USA, which was recently granted tentative approval by the Virginia Board of Pharmacy to test the ScriptCenter at one of the retailer's Giant stores in Reston, Va.

"We are going to highlight selfservice and convenience with the dispensing kiosk," Brad Dayton, director of pharmacy operations for Ahold, said at the National Association of Chain Drug Stores Pharmacy & Technology Conference. "The system will free up pharmacists while they are in the pharmacy and provide customers with extended pick-up hours — without extending the pharmacists' hours.

"The most important thing concerning technology is to have acceptance from pharmacy staff. No matter how good the technology, if they don't like it, it won't be used — but if it is used it can create a unique customer experience."