



## Study finds two-thirds of retail pharmacy customers are interested in Rx kiosks

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Wilson Health Information, a leading consumer insight firm and source of the Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals 2007 Pharmacy Satisfaction Digest, reported that more than 33,000 pharmacy customers cite convenience as one of the top three drivers of pharmacy customer satisfaction, along with price and overall professional services. The Digest also reported that short lines, convenient store hours and 24-hour pharmacy access are key drivers to customer satisfaction.

The report found one reason for declining pharmacy satisfaction was waits of five or more minutes to pick up prescriptions, according to 3-out-of-5 people polled. Furthermore, 7-out-of-10 customers of leading retail chains said they were interested in having a kiosk to pick up and pay for their prescriptions in about a minute including when the pharmacy is closed.

The report also found that over one-third of pharmacy customers have also been faced with shorter pharmacy hours as retailers cut back on the time that their pharmacies are open.

At a time when pharmacies are busier than ever, customer expectations are also higher than ever. Retailers are struggling with prescription volumes, staffing shortages, hours of operation, reimbursement changes and wait times yet customers expect their prescriptions to be ready faster, they don't want to wait and they want increased hours of service, said Jim Wilson, president of Wilson Health Information. As a result, customers are reporting frustration with long wait times and limited pharmacy hours.

In response, retailers have added prescription pickup solutions outside of pharmacy such as home delivery, mail order, and drive-thru pharmacy windows. Prescription pickup kiosks, such as ScriptCenter and Duane Reade's DR Express, provide an in-store solution. In 2005, Walgreens and Safeway joined Longs Drug Stores in receiving waivers from the California State Board of Pharmacy to install Asteres' ScriptCenter machines. Longs installed ScriptCenter in a Del Mar, Calif., unit in December and Giant Food tested its first ScriptCenter in 2006.

To use ScriptCenter, as an example, customers complete a one-time registration and then order their refill prescriptions as usual. The pharmacist then refills the prescription as usual. However, instead of being placed behind the counter, each finished prescription is placed into a sealed, barcoded bag and loaded into ScriptCenter. Customers then enter a username and password, select their prescriptions, swipe a payment card and sign the electronic signature pad. ScriptCenter locates, verifies and delivers the prescription into an electronic bin that opens for customer retrieval.

Now retailers can reduce wait times and provide after hours prescription pickup without adding labor all while keeping the customer shopping in the store, said Linda Pinney, Asteres' founder and chief business officer. She added that these prescription kiosks "add a speedy self-checkout lane for pharmacy customers who don't need extra assistance or who want the flexibility to pick up prescriptions when the pharmacy is closed.