

# Technology and the Evolving Landscape of RETAIL PHARMACY

By Antoinette Alexander



Faced with rising prescription volumes, greater patient expectations, and labor shortages, the retail pharmacy landscape continues to evolve with technological advancements aimed at improving accuracy, efficiency, and patient engagement.

Illustrating the growth, a research report released by Grand View Research stated that the U.S. pharmacy automation devices market was estimated at \$2.73 billion in 2023 and is expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 9.2% by 2030.

As pharmacies navigate the evolving landscape, along with the growing burden of chronic diseases and the increasing geriatric population, companies like Tension Packaging and Automation, iA (Innovation Associates), McKesson, ScriptPro, and Enliven Health are among those at the forefront of innovation.

## The Rise of Pharmacy Automation

Automation has become a cornerstone of pharmacy operations, helping to mitigate errors, improve workflow efficiencies, and enhance patient safety.

Take, for instance, Tension Packaging and Automation. The company provides pharmacy automation solutions built for flexibility and scalability. Its portfolio includes, but is not limited to: The Single Vial Packer (SVP): an all-in-one vial packaging solution to streamline pharmacy operations for specialty pharmacies, mail-order, or central fill; The Tension Bottle Packaging Machine (BPM): an automated prescription packaging system for bottles and vials; and their Custom pharmacy design and shelving systems that are tailored to optimize a pharmacy's prescription fulfillment process.

Meanwhile, iA specializes in pharmacy automation and fulfillment solutions for retail, health system, and government pharmacies. The company's intelligent NEXiA Enterprise Software Suite and retail pharmacy solutions advance fulfillment functions to improve operational efficiency and enhance patient engagement. This enables pharmacists to spend more time on patient care rather than manual tasks. iA's development includes expanding its Pharmacy Fulfillment Platform. The Platform is a solution for pharmacies of various sizes, from community pharmacies to large-scale retail chains. It features modular hardware and software, advanced robotics, sophisticated counting and collation devices, and resources to optimize medication dispensing while ensuring compliance with safety protocols.

Similarly, ScriptPro has pioneered robotic dispensing systems designed for retail, hospital, and mail-order pharmacies. The company offers a line of more than 200 pharmacy automation and management system products for pharmacy operations in the U.S. and worldwide. ScriptPro's solutions, including Pharmacy Management and Workflow Management Systems, can deliver highly accurate robotic prescription dispensing and pouch packaging systems to help pharmacies manage high prescription volumes efficiently. ScriptPro can also help manage workflow from the point of entry to the point of sale or mail delivery and improve margins with advanced reports and analytics.

McKesson continues to embrace automation and AI capabilities to improve efficiencies and enhance product and service offerings. For instance, McKesson's BlistAssist and CountAssist, which are modular, scalable technologies that leverage automation capabilities, are among the solutions helping pharmacies better meet increased demands.

## Enhancing Patient Engagement, Adherence

Advancements in technology are revolutionizing pharmacy management, helping pharmacies to modernize patient care and improve patient engagement and adherence.

One example is EnlivenHealth, a technology-driven subsidiary of Omnicell. Enliven Health is leveraging innovation to help pharmacies transform the patient experience. Recent developments include the official launch of Enliven Health's Digital Medication Information Delivery (DMID) solution. The patient engagement solution electronically sends FDA-required medication information — including drug monographs, FDA Medication Guides, CDC Vaccine Information Statements and other health and medication literacy information — to pharmacy patients. It is designed to improve patient access and education while promoting environmental and sustainability efforts by reducing paper and toner cartridge waste.

As technology advances, the future of retail pharmacy will increasingly be shaped by greater automation, AI-driven innovation, and enhanced digital health solutions. Seamless integration between technology and patient care will be the key to success. **DSM.**

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