

CASE STUDY



Retail Management Solutions
The industry leader in pharmacy point-of-sale innovation

Independent Pharmacy in Children's Hospital improves discharged patient wait times and workflow with RMS' Point-of-Sale solutions.



When Jake Olson was asked to open Skywalk Pharmacy in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in 2003, it was the first independently-owned community pharmacy located in a children's hospital in the United States.

His team's mission was, and still is to this day, to provide high-quality specialized pediatric pharmacy service to children and families who have chronic diseases and special needs that cannot be easily addressed by most pharmacies.

As Skyway Pharmacy rapidly became the go-to experts for the 240-bed pediatric hospital, Jake and his team opened two additional locations in 2014 in Delafield and New Berlin.

With the main campus devoted to the discharge process and transitions of care for patients going home, the second location offers clinical services, such as a medication synchronization program, and other higher-touch services that can't be provided in a discharge setting. The third location, a remote dispensing site, is conveniently located in the suburbs and is much closer to the patients so they can continue to pick up their prescriptions after they've been discharged from the hospital.

Small Storefronts and Logistical Mishaps

While Skywalk Pharmacy is known as the best choice for all children's medication and offers front-end items that can't be found anywhere else, the pharmacy's small storefront and multi-location network presented logistical problems which caused workflow, multi-store reporting and customer service mishaps.

"Being the discharge pharmacy at a hospital, we fill about 300 prescriptions a day at the main location. That's about 150 new patients with at least two prescriptions that are coming in the door every day. We'll go two hours with nobody in the store and then ten people wanting to be discharged at the same time.

When you only have 900 square feet with three consultation booths, and one of them is completely dominated by a traditional point-of-sale system, we frequently have lines out the door with people in a hurry and wanting to be rung up quickly.”

The Point-of-Sale Systems That Caused More Problems

As someone who constantly aims to be ahead of the technology curve, Jake has had a point-of-sale system installed in Skywalk Pharmacy since 2007. While it was extremely easy to use, his original system didn’t effectively interface with his pharmacy management system.

“Anytime somebody would come to the register, there was no way to know how many prescriptions they were picking up. They’d check out with one prescription, get home, and realize that two of their prescriptions were still sitting on the shelf back in the pharmacy.”



Jake Olson and his team at Skywalk Pharmacy, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Eventually in 2012, Jake switched to a new pharmacy management system that included an integrated point-of-sale system.

“We thought we had solved all of our problems by installing a point-of-sale system that came with our pharmacy management system. However, it came with the unintended consequences of having a program that was extremely difficult to use and did not produce any reports or give us information about our front-end retail business. We couldn’t teach anyone how to use it and had no idea how to generate sales reports; our IT manager was the only one who could add new products or update pricing.

Realizing my team was beyond frustrated, we decided we needed a point-of-sale system that could balance all of our needs: easy to use, integration with our pharmacy system, multi-store reporting, and a small physical footprint.

That’s when we reached out to *Retail Management Solutions*.”

The Evolution of the Pharmacy Point-of-Sale System

Thinking the pharmacy needed a second cash register to ensure an efficient customer experience, when Jake spoke with *Retail Management Solutions (RMS)*, he learned that he wouldn’t have to sacrifice another patient consultation booth. Instead, they could use RMS’s EvolutionPOS, a mobile point-of-sale device.

“When we have a long line, we can open a second lane to ring people up with the handheld EvolutionPOS device. Our team will go out into the pharmacy and ask people who they are picking up for and the amount of prescriptions. They can actually see if they are ready or not for pickup, have them sign everything, prepare for checkout and then step up to the consultation window.”

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JAKES'S ADVICE

Pharmacy Owners Considering a Point-of-Sale Solution

"Pharmacy Owners need to take a serious look at their pharmacy management system and decide: do you want an add-on to a pharmacy operating system that's not going to provide you what you want, or do you want an easy-to-use, yet robust, point-of-sale solution?"

I have evaluated a lot of systems over the last few years, and every time I look at my list of needs and what RMS is able to provide, they meet all the criteria. If you want all of your needs met, go with RMS. If you want just some of your needs met, go with someone else."

Multi-Store Communication

What the Skywalk Pharmacy team quickly realized was that the communication amongst the three locations, pricing and cash flow management, also exponentially improved. When they had one pharmacy it hadn't been a problem but with the addition of the new stores, the reporting wasn't synchronized and it became a hassle for one person to manage three locations from the cash register sales system.

"The other challenge that we had was that while we don't offer a lot of retail items in the other pharmacies, the ones that we did have would struggle with being priced consistently across the locations. It was all solved by the RMS point-of-sale system when the stores integrated and reporting was on behalf of all three locations."

Avoiding the Traumatic Switchover

Change is difficult for a lot of people, and switching systems and processes can very much disrupt a business in the short term. As it is for all customers, it was RMS's mission to make the Skywalk Pharmacy installation and training process as smooth as possible. And if something did come up, Jake had a support team in place to help his team find a solution.

"It was pretty nontraumatic for the staff to switch. When the RMS trainer came to the pharmacy and spent a couple days teaching and training the staff, we realized it was pretty easy, again, and a pain-free system. If we have any problems, they have not been urgent and the RMS team has been very responsive in solving our issues."

The Bottom Line Impact of an RMS Point-of-Sale System

Jake and his team chose the RMS point of sale system because they knew the integrations and easy-to-use platform would make their retail business easier to manage. Everything is more streamlined and his team is freed up to take care of their patients and work on growing their business with the RMS technology.

"We're planning on implementing a bedside delivery for a Transitions of Care project that we have with the Children's Hospital. We currently only capture about 10 percent of the discharges and we know that using the EvolutionPOS to deliver medication up to their rooms will greatly increase our business.

When you're a small pharmacy trying to discharge 200 people a day, you simply cannot fit them all in that little space and care for them in an appropriate amount of time. We want to alleviate the pressure of people coming down and standing in the pharmacy.

With the handheld point-of-sale device, my team will be able to go up to the room, provide one-on-one consultations, ring people out, and make sure they have all of the documentation and capture signatures all in one place. It not only makes life easier for the patient, but also for the pharmacy if we're audited.

We're also excited about offering curbside delivery at our suburban locations since we do not have a drive-thru. Parents can just pull up and not have to get the kids bundled and out of the car to pick up the medications."

With 3 busy stores and high demand for his specialized pediatric products and services, RMS gave Jake the tools he needed to better understand his business, while increasing staff efficiency and customer service.

Contact RMS today and see if RMS would be a good fit for your needs as well.