



AUGUST | 2017 **"They thought they were in the pill business instead of the people business."**

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What Your Car Dealer Can Teach You About Creating Better Vaccination Programs

By Dale Dauten, Syndicated Columnist

"Service is not what you do, but who you are. It is a way of living you bring to everything you do."
-Betsy Sanders

What do you suppose would happen if a high-end new car dealership took over managing your pharmacy? Your vaccination program?



What got us thinking about what we could learn from auto dealers was talking to Al Babbington, the CEO of PrescribeWellness. The company works with 10,000 community pharmacies, helping them make the transition "from pill-centric to people-centric." In other words, anticipating patients care needs and themselves into service organization worthy of customer loyalty. Nice.

What does that have to do with auto dealers?

Turns out Al Babbington spent the first half of his career in the auto industry. And it turns out that auto dealers faced a comparable problem to the one pharmacies face: with pharmacies, it's getting squeezed on margins for dispensing prescriptions, and with auto dealers, it's margins on selling cars. In both cases, the old business model was dying. And in both cases, the new business model is built on service.

And that's where Al's career shift comes into play. When he turned 50, he says, "I found myself thinking about the second half of life and how I wanted to take on a big issue. Could I apply my business skills to healthcare?" Al eventually decided to apply his skills to chronic diseases, and within that big topic, to the role of pharmacies.

With PrescribeWellness he decided to focus his new career on helping pharmacies become "America's local professionals who are focused on health outcomes." And to do that, he had to "do what they're doing in the auto industry and focus on a deeper relationship with customers."



One of the ways those pharmacists are developing deeper relationships is via vaccinations. Using the STC service ImmsLink, that pharmacist can query the state registry and determine what vaccinations are due, thus making the pharmacist the instant expert on immunization needs.



However, that expertise is not merely passive, by which I mean waiting for a customer/patient to turn up at the counter and make inquiries. Rather, when flu shot season arrives, the folks at PrescribeWellness provide the pharmacist with sample scripts to record a voicemail message to customers. The system then checks with state registry data via ImmsLink to make sure a flu shot is due, and the pre-recorded message goes out via phone calls. The patient/customers tend to actually listen to the calls – after all, the Caller ID is from their pharmacy, and the voice is that of their local pharmacist.

In addition, the folks at PrescribeWellness offered us this summary of their work...

PrescribeWellness offers integrated tools for the community pharmacy to expand their vaccination practice, including:

- Proactive multi-channel voice, text, email, mobile push and social communication to patients raising awareness of vaccination availability and events and education around the importance of vaccines and their role in family health.
- Proactive medication synchronization which allows pharmacy staff to know which customers will be in the pharmacy on which day and allows them to be ready with their medications and additional care opportunities for those patients.
- Checking and updating vaccine state registries with a single sign-on through the Patient Engagement Center which performing vaccinations which allows the pharmacist to identify gaps in care and allows the pharmacist update the patient's health record on behalf of the patient so all healthcare providers involved in that patient's care have complete information.

PrescribeWellness recently passed a big benchmark, now working with over 10,000 of the 22,000 community pharmacies, helping all those pharmacists go from "pill-centric to people-centric."

WHAT WE MIGHT LEARN FROM AUTO DEALERS ABOUT CUSTOMER SERVICE

-By Dale Dauten

As you think about what other industries know about customer satisfaction and loyalty, we could

contrast recent experiences of getting “routine maintenance” for myself and for my wife’s Acura.

THE CAR: As I pulled into a breezeway, a pleasant young man opened the door and led me to my service advisor. She soon showed me to the waiting area, with an enclosed play area for kids, desks for people like me to do some work, and with a soda fountain and snack bar, help yourself. My advisor soon returned with a list of suggested maintenance items, with costs (of course), and together we made decisions. I went back to my desk to do some work and before long I signed the credit card receipt and was shown to my newly washed car.

ME: I signed in a front counter, largely ignored by a woman talking on a phone, sat on a hard plastic chair till I was led to a little room with a that classic color poster of a poor man who’d been stripped of his skin. I was eventually given my list of “maintenance items” and I knew better than to ask about costs because my “service advisor” would have to laugh, assuming I was joking. I was shunted off to another waiting area, subjected to routine tests, then led to a check-out area where after several minutes they told me I didn’t need to check-out. I used the hand sanitizer and tried not to inhale.

Special Bonus Section

Al and his team at PrescribeWellness shared with us their summary of research done earlier this year on consumer attitudes toward vaccines, including the fact that the majority of respondents would rather get a vaccine at their pharmacy than their doctor’s office.

IRVINE, Calif.—March 23, 2017—PrescribeWellness, the cloud-based services company whose mission is to inspire collaboration for better health, today announced the results of its 2017 Vaccination and Preventive Care Survey. The survey, which was conducted by Propeller Insights on behalf of PrescribeWellness and fielded to 1,000 American adults aged 35+, gauged Americans’ feelings about vaccination, medical records and neighborhood pharmacies.

Vaccination Nation

According to the CDC, one in three people will develop shingles in their lifetime and Americans are taking this risk seriously: 89 percent think it is important to take shingles immunization seriously—because shingles is painful (73 percent) and takes a long time to heal (56 percent), because the virus can lie dormant for decades (60 percent) and because it often affects the elderly, who are often less capable of caring for themselves (48 percent).

Forty percent of Americans have been directly affected by the shingles epidemic in some way:

- 22 percent say a member of their immediate or extended family has had shingles
- 14 percent say they or their spouse has suffered from shingles
- 12 percent have friends who have been affected

“It’s wonderful that Americans are taking the shingles immunization seriously, as the vaccine significantly reduces a person’s risk of developing herpes zoster,” said Farah Madhat, PharmD, a licensed pharmacist and Director of Clinical Services at PrescribeWellness. “But there are other vaccines they should also make a priority. The pneumococcal and flu vaccines are also effective, inexpensive and readily available at local pharmacies without a prescription in most states. Pneumococcal disease can cause severe infections of the lungs—pneumonia—bloodstream and lining of the brain and spinal cord, more commonly known as meningitis. Each year in the United States, pneumococcal disease kills thousands of adults and hospitalizes thousands more.”

Eighty-six percent of Americans also feel it is important for the state to be updated on their vaccine records. Top reasons include:

- So doctors can more easily know which vaccines they've received—44 percent
- Helps doctors and pharmacists to provide quality care—32 percent
- Creates more transparency into their medical history—25 percent
- Makes switching doctors/pharmacists easier—23 percent

Americans prefer neighborhood pharmacies for many things

The survey also revealed that many Americans prefer visiting their local pharmacy to visiting their doctor's office—62 percent, in fact.

Most of the reasons hinged upon convenience:

- Their pharmacy is a “one-stop shop” for many health and wellness needs—26 percent
- The local pharmacy is easier to get to than the doctor's office—24 percent
- They get faster (23 percent) and friendlier (22 percent) service
- Their pharmacist helps keep their medications in order—19 percent

Twenty-one percent of American parents say they prefer visiting their local pharmacy because it is more convenient than visiting a doctor's office when they have the kids with them.

More than half of Americans (55 percent) said they prefer to be immunized at their local pharmacies instead of at the doctor's office, citing many of the same reasons. This included 28 percent of parents, who enjoy the convenience of getting the whole family immunized at once.

A mess of medical records

When it comes to managing their medical records, most Americans say they try to stay with the same doctor who knows their medical history (56 percent), but the remaining 44 percent report less fail-safe methods of managing their medical histories:

- 15 percent hope previous providers share information with new ones
- 8 percent say they verbally update new care providers
- 5 percent carry paper records
- 5 percent say they don't update new health providers at all

This is perhaps why the vast majority of Americans (85 percent) agree that it would be useful if their pharmacist could share medication purchase records electronically with their physicians.

“These survey findings confirm the willingness of consumers to get proactive about their healthcare options and preventive care,” said Al Babbington, CEO of PrescribeWellness. “It also speaks to the many opportunities for neighborhood pharmacies to better help Americans on the path to better health management—from immunization and medication adherence to managing medical records—and we look forward to aiding them in that mission.”