

## Case Study

### Major Pharmaceutical Retailer

#### BACKGROUND

Filling one out of every seven retail pharmacy prescriptions in the country is no easy task. It takes a retail presence of 6,200 stores in 43 states and 14 distribution centers nationwide. It also takes a synchronized voice and data system to ensure flawless transactions and identical processes from Anaheim, Calif. to Albany, N.Y.

As one of the largest pharmaceutical retailers in the country, this organization relies on a 14-year relationship with leading voice and data integrator, Comm-Works, to keep its voice and data systems up and running.

#### CHALLENGE

The growth of this pharmacy chain is fueled by acquisitions, which present a multitude of infrastructure challenges. To ensure the success of the business combination, everything from customer record systems to point-of-sale terminals must operate identically.

The company's recent acquisition of 700 pharmacies in southern California, the Southwest and Midwest prompted a call to Comm-Works. In less than one year's time, Comm-Works was required to deploy training systems and complete total systems conversions in all acquired stores.

"This was a project with zero room for error," Comm-Works' key account manager said. "With a retailer of this size everything from its brand reputation and customer loyalty to the value of the stock is on the line. They were relying on us to make the acquisition go completely smooth and be virtually invisible to those served by its stores."

#### COLLABORATION

This was the third acquisition Comm-Works participated in on behalf of the pharmacy giant. To manage the complex operation, two Comm-Works project managers were placed onsite at the company's headquarters, working along side its IT team. Two additional project managers were assigned to co-manage the project from Comm-Works' office.

From these two operational epicenters, the team directed six field managers and more than 100 technicians for the duration of the eight-month project.

The long-standing relationship between Comm-Works and the pharmacy retailer made the complicated project practically second nature. Phase one involved setting up store managers, pharmacy and front-end retail staff on training equipment. Phase two, the most critical of the three phases, was the overnight conversion of the stores from the existing to the new system. And phase three, the construction phase, involved remodeling the acquired stores. During this last phase, Comm-Works made significant rewiring and configuration changes to ensure that the stores matched the company's signature look and feel nationwide.

Daily meetings were held at company headquarters as well as at Comm-Works' office to keep the project on track. Comm-Works Field technicians rotated from site to site resolving complications and ensuring that universal quality standards were met.

#### RESULTS AND VALUE

"We're only as good as our last job," explained Comm-Works' key account manager. "Anything less than 100 percent performance is unacceptable, and with that standard in mind we've developed a very long-standing, successful relationship with this customer."

In less than eight months' time, Comm-Works completed the integration of the 300 plus stores. Thanks to Comm-Works' exceptionally high standards, the enormous project was executed beyond the customer's expectations.

No doubt the pharmacy chain will continue to grow exponentially throughout the country. With its top-quality service and flawless execution, Comm-Works plans to continue to support this expansion – wherever it may be.

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