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Start-up Solution to Transform Unorganized Pharmacy Management

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ABSTRACT: Unorganized, highly manual tasks performed by the pharmacist are labour intensive and inefficient. The objective of this paper is to analyse the process of automating pharmacies, particularly in rural areas, using different kinds of Pharmacy Management Software which can help the pharmacy manager with visibility into the expiry date and traceability date to the shelf where the medicine is placed. Additionally, this software must be light weight solution that can working without network connectivity at zero or low cost.

KEYWORDS: Automation, Medical Shop, Pharmacy, Expiration Date

I. INTRODUCTION

Unorganized Retail pharmacy refers to the traditional formats of low-cost retailing, for example the local pharmacy shops, managed by local owner with supporting sales staff and investment will be not same unlike organized retail pharmacy it will be different setup from different location. Currently, there are only 20-30 percent organized pharmacy retail chains in India and most of them exist in the urban areas.

Major part of sales at retail pharmacy is generic medicines to the public with or without prescriptions that they already carried while coming. Here the consumers have become aware of generic drugs like crocin and have started purchasing these medicines Over the Counter (OTC).

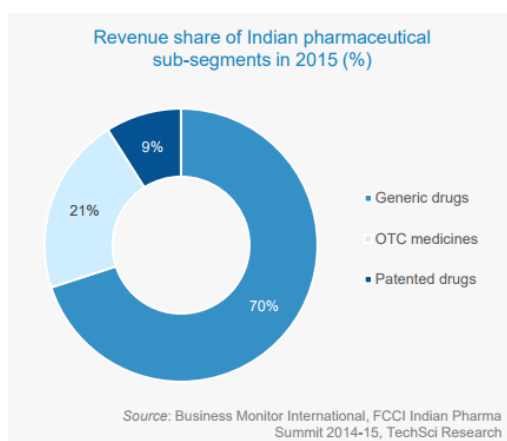


Figure 1: Pie chart showing distribution of revenue in Indian Pharmaceuticals

One of the major tasks done by the pharmacy manager every day to validate the expiry date of medicines on the shelf and expiry date during delivery. This is tedious, time consuming and more prone for human error.

II. METHODOLOGY

Approach to implement this solution in pharmacies:

1. Install the software
 - a. Custom Medical Shop Management Software is chosen as there is no investment required from shop owners. Exiting desktops can be used for installation of software
2. Collect and categorize the medicines that are sold in the respective shops
3. Upload the data to the software
4. Generate the expiry date report



- 5. Train the staff on usage of the software

III. COMPARATIVE STUDY

1. Comparative study and analysis of the various categories of software solutions available in the market

Parameters	Open Source (PartKeepr)	Asset Management (Snipe-IT)	High End (Inventoryplus Pharmacy)	Custom Medical Shop Management Software
License	GPLv3	Limited Free		Not Applicable
Ease of use	√	√	√	
Inventory Tracking	√	√	√	
OS	Linux	Windows /Linux	Windows	Windows
Export to csv/excel	√	√	√	√
Year on Year Trend Report			√	
Desktop				√
Network Connectivity	√	√	√	
Integration with external systems such as payment			√	
Multiple User Login			√	
Automatic Notification using email			√	
Financial Report			√	

Table 1: Contrasts different pharmacy inventory management software solutions

2. Analysis of the Current state of Digitization and Customer Experience

Parameters	Unorganized Medical Shops	Online Pharmacy - ECommerce
Personalization	√	
Discounts	Margin loss due to inefficiencies	√
Investment for Digitization		√
Staffs	1 to 2	Skilled
Consumers	Mix of consumers with access to technology	Technology aware
Wait Time	0-5 Minutes	Transaction Time for processing
Face 2 Face Interaction with person	√	
Presence	Rural, Sub urban, Few in Urban	Only in Urban

Table 2: Table highlights advantages and disadvantages of digitizing pharmacy management



IV. CONCLUSION

Create the digital awareness in the small medical shops with the impact and efficiencies that small technology changes can bring in. Small wins will be a key change driver in getting the medical shops move from unorganized to organized. Adding a mobile interface to this software would be the next step to drive the change of consumer preferences

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