



Bringing prescriptions to the digital age

Rolling out an e-prescription service on the Whispir platform enables Chemist Warehouse make prescription fulfillment easier and safer

Case study

Customer at the core of business

Chemist Warehouse is Australia's largest pharmacy retailer, with over 350 stores across the country and 10,000+ employees. Since their first store in Melbourne in 2000, the company has expanded with franchises across Victoria and in 2004 opened their first interstate store in Cairns, sparking fast expansion across Australia.

Chemist Warehouse believes that the customer is at the forefront of everything they do—and their priority is to efficiently provide customers with the most cost-effective healthcare products, which can be purchased in-store and online.

The Challenge

As one of Australia's leading retail pharmacy groups, Chemist Warehouse fills around 50 million prescriptions each year. As COVID-19 hit Australian shores in 2020, many aspects of life and business have changed—including for Chemist Warehouse's traditional business model. The company now needed a digital prescription service to ensure a contactless experience that keeps both staff and customers safe.

For Chemist Warehouse, a digital prescription service also needed to provide a seamless, user-friendly way to engage with all customers. Fulfilling prescriptions is not always as simple as presenting a piece of paper at the counter—customers need to be able to communicate properly with the pharmacist to ask questions or seek advice regarding their medication.

“It seemed strange that in 2020 we would still be dependent on a piece of paper to fill a prescription,” said Chemist Warehouse Managing Partner and Director Mark Finocchiaro. “We needed a way to immediately bring an e-prescription service to our customers during the pandemic with a sophisticated level of functionality.”



whispir

The Solution

The pharmacy retailer has previously engaged Telstra for a Whispir solution that enabled a click-and-collect service through the Chemist Warehouse app. As their new digital requirement emerged as a priority, they once again turned to Telstra for an electronic prescription solution.

Telstra and Whispir developed a solution that addressed Chemist Warehouse's unique requirements—involving a sophisticated encryption system. When a patient visits a general practitioner, they will be provided a prescription via a text message containing an encrypted token. This secure token can only be decrypted by pharmacists, and now through Whispir, Chemist Warehouse customers can simply send their tokens to 0448 SCRIPT. They then need to complete a form to designate their store of choice and time of pick-up, or request delivery if needed. This solution also enables the customers to ask questions directly to a pharmacist through the form and receive an immediate response.

Contactless healthcare has been a necessity during the pandemic. This is made possible by using telehealth, so patients no longer need to go physically into a clinic to receive healthcare advice. Additionally, using the Chemist Warehouse e-prescription service allows them to avoid unnecessary contact and receive their medication safely.

Understanding the urgent need for this contactless prescription service, Telstra and Whispir implemented the solution quickly and efficiently—all within two months.



The Outcome

The e-prescription service was rolled out across all Chemist Warehouse stores in Australia, providing a COVID-19-safe solution for all the pharmacy retailer's stakeholders. A contactless service enables Chemist Warehouse to maintain social distancing, reduce the customers having to come into the store, and provide a safe workspace for all employees.

Additionally, digitising the prescription service saves time for both customers and pharmacists. Customers now have the option to choose how to receive the medication they purchased, by home delivery or their choice of date, time, and location to collect it themselves.



The rollout of the e-prescription service also delivers another benefit for the pharmacy retailer—they are expecting to see a 30% increase in prescription fulfillment as more of their customers use the service.

“[The e-prescription rollout] provided an extra level of convenience and speed that has proven valuable to many Australians, such as a busy mum looking after her family, who can now travel straight from a doctor's appointment to a Chemist Warehouse store to collect a prescription, making a more efficient journey with less waiting, giving patients more time to look after their health and that of their families,” Mark said.

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