

# AUTOMATED *Solutions*

*Independent  
pharmacists discuss  
how their versions  
of workflow help  
their businesses*

By Chris Linville

**H**ow is automated workflow helping pharmacists? Certainly no two systems are alike. Some have different capabilities, and pharmacists can pick vendors and products based on what their particular needs may be. Some do not use “automated workflow” in the strict technical definition, but find that they are achieving their desired results. On the following pages, independent pharmacists discuss the systems they are using, and how they and their businesses are benefiting.

### **Kirby Lester ([www.kirbylester.com](http://www.kirbylester.com))**

For Anne Barr, RPh, owner of Countryside Pharmacy in Savannah, Missouri, life before acquiring her current automation was a bit more stressful.

“The challenges we faced prior to purchasing a **Kirby Lester** counting machine were increasing volumes with space at a premium and time-consuming triple checks to be sure the right medication got in the right bottle.”

Barr opened Countryside, located outside of Kansas City, in October 2001 inside an expansion to an existing grocery store. The pharmacy has two full-time and three part-time employees. The 600-square-foot facility has a limited front end and the pharmacy does some durable medical equipment business.

There were two key factors that led Barr to choose the Kirby Lester 16. “The biggest was my fear of a mistake making it out of the pharmacy and doing harm,” she says. “The second was needing to add another employee into our crowded work area.” She also was attracted by

the price, the “footprint” of the machine (about one foot of counter space next to her label printer), ease of use, quick learning curve, and the fact that all prescriptions (including liquids) would be verified using the machine.

Barr says she paid \$10,000 for her unit. That fee also covered phone training and one year of software updates.

As far as becoming acclimated with the system, Barr says it wasn't difficult. “The learning curve with Kirby lasts maybe ten minutes,” she says. “All we had to learn was how to turn the machine on, identify ourselves using our fingerprint, scan the prescription label, scan the bottle, and pour the tablets through. It was also very easy to learn how to use Kirby's memory to check how many tablets were counted and by whom.”

Barr says that for her pharmacy's needs, Kirby has been the perfect fit.

“I like the fact that EVERY prescription can be verified using Kirby and that all solid dosage prescriptions can be counted by machine,” she says. “I do not want to choose which drugs to put in a machine. I am very uncomfortable taking drugs out of the manufacturer's bottle and putting them in a counting machine. I also like the fact that I do not have to calibrate the machine for each new medication. If I could go back and decide on a counting machine again, I would get a Kirby Lester again.

And, the payback is more than simply financial.

“The return on investment that I immediately noticed was the peace of mind I had at the end of the day,” she says. “I knew that between Kirby and myself the likelihood of a mistake leaving the pharmacy was greatly reduced. I think Kirby paid for itself within the first 12 months. I was at the point of needing to hire another technician with all the costs associated with an employee. Kirby frees up time for the entire staff to spend with patients, and it is invaluable in telling people when their prescription was filled and how many they received.”