

BUSINESS CLASS COLUMNS

WOW WITH SERVICE NOT STOCK

 GUEST AUTHOR 09/01/2021

Do you feel claustrophobic in your own pharmacy? If you've too much clutter, you can be sure that patients will, and the cost will be felt to your professional standing, says Glenn Guilfoyle

Pre-pandemic, when I enjoyed the liberty to roam the countryside and could use the regular filling of my statin script to conduct my own mystery shopper visits, I recall becoming flummoxed by how crowded so many pharmacies felt.

This was not necessarily caused by a surfeit of customers, but due to a lack of personal space provision.

I wonder how these pharmacies and their customers have coped with the 1.5m social distancing requirement?

For many there was no room behind the script-in if one or two customers arrived there before me. Similarly for the script out and OTC counters. And no hope at all if a few shopping trolleys or mobility scooters are in the mix.

Similarly, there was no personal space around me if I should sit on a waiting chair. And on it goes. Claustrophobia quickly sets in.

Why is this so?

For a warehouse... I get it. But for a professional services based pharmacy? It seems that, for many, the notion that stock sells stock still reigns supreme.

The manifesto still seems to reign that exhorts "stack em high....watch em fly", with gondolas on top of gondolas, dump bins upon dump bins and bilateral shelf talkers that reach out into the aisle far enough to restrict a two way aisle down to one way traffic.

Less is more

If you are a professional services pharmacy, remember that less is more. Remember to:

Sacrifice

Prioritise

Make space

You can do this by:

- Removing gondolas that consume floor space at the service counters in the professional services area.
- Removing dump bins at entrances to your dispensary.
- Removing stock bins that create clutter at the dispensary service counters.

Focus on creating ambience, creating order, creating flow, and, critically, creating workflow for efficient medicines processing.

Mirror this with efficient customer traffic flow and leverage both to create culture and calmness to foster rich customer engagement at the service counters.

Give your customers more than what they expected in terms of a more complete solution for their conditions. Complementary sell to deliver that complete solution and "wow" your customers.

Make great professional service outsell stock weight.

Glenn Guilfoyle is Principal of *The Next Level Sales System*

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