



## Press Release

Contact: **Nanette Kirsch**  
Marketing Communication Director  
[Parata Systems](http://www.parata.com)  
[nkirsch@parata.com](mailto:nkirsch@parata.com)  
919.433.4363

### **Discount Drug Mart Gets a Robotic Hand in Prescription Filling** *Efficiency, Service Commitment and Safety Drive Automation*

**DURHAM, N.C. (July 14, 2005)** – Ohio-based Discount Drug Mart “is a place you can go to get your prescription filled promptly, quickly and accurately,” and Parata RDS (Robotic Dispensing System) is playing a role in helping the chain continue to fulfill that commitment to customers as it grows, according to Vice President of Pharmacy Operations, Pete Ratycz. Following the success of a technology pilot, Discount Drug Mart is now rolling out Parata RDS across many of its stores.

The regional chain, which operates more than 60 stores in the Ohio region, started looking at automation as a way to optimize efficiency and maintain customer satisfaction. “Customer service has improved significantly since installing Parata RDS,” Ratycz reports. “Efficiency is inextricably linked to customer service. Decreased time processing a prescription frees employees’ time to provide patient care. Some employees are responsible for assisting patients with durable medical equipment, measuring and fitting for diabetic shoes, stockings, etc. When our staff is too busy, it is more difficult to focus on these other valuable services.”

#### **Making a Technology Commitment**

“At a certain point, adding more technicians is not the answer. You simply run out of space,” Ratycz says. He reports space was also a consideration in choosing an automation solution. “I liked the compactness of Parata RDS. With other robotic technologies, we would have had to remodel or retrofit the pharmacy to blend with the workflow. Our busier stores are also our older ones, and some are less than 500 sq ft. To be able to simply add a robot without expanding the pharmacy made Parata RDS very appealing.”



## Press Release

Parata RDS is just 12 sq. ft., so it fits the space of a single shelving unit, yet it holds 252 medications. It counts 30 tablets a second to process a 30-count script in 20 seconds, strong processing power in any pharmacy setting.

### The Safety Factor

As volumes increase, so do errors in many cases. Maintaining safety as the stores' volumes grow was important to Discount Drug Mart. "The counting accuracy of Parata RDS is very high, and we never had a problem with the wrong drug being filled. With less emphasis by our techs on filling prescriptions, they spend more time inputting the prescription, which increases accuracy – fewer wrong "sig codes," fewer wrong medication entries," Ratycz says.

### Expanded Services and Value

Discount Drug Mart leveraged the time freed by automating prescription processing to launch other initiatives. "We made one store a durable medical equipment hub location," Ratycz explains. "There is a learning curve with DME. The techs are required to do product in-service training. The patients require a lot more attention. Billing is more complex. It's a time-consuming sale. We could probably have done it without Parata RDS, but we would have had to increase payroll."

The store also added a prescription drive-through. "Our experience with drive-through is it increases usage and point-of-service requirements, resulting in a bump in payroll. With Parata RDS in place, this did not occur. In fact, we actually saw a payroll reduction. We had seasonal help leave that we did not have to replace. Realizing a reduction in payroll was one of our goals."

"In addition, with Medication Therapy Management (MTM) becoming a viable reality, we plan to use Parata RDS as an adjunct toward developing successful MTM models at some locations. Prescription volume often can impede implementation of such an important program. Parata RDS clearly gives us an opportunity to bring these programs to fruition more expeditiously in our busier locations."



## Press Release

### Starting Off on the Wrong Foot

Discount Drug Mart thought it might be starting out on the wrong foot with its Parata RDS pilot when one of its pharmacists broke a leg a week into the install. However, the store had already identified technician specialists who were primarily responsible for the unit, and others able to meet the needs of the unit. The training and downtime wasn't there.

According to Ratycz, because of the relative ease of use of Parata RDS, staffing was a non-issue, especially with pharmacists. Too often, a lack of training with a new technology or process can be a large obstacle for those at the store, according to Ratycz.

### The Bottom Line

Parata "takes the 'lick, stick, count and pour' out of the pharmacy. When your staff is filling 50 percent fewer prescriptions, the time is freed for patient care. We now operate in an era where customer service is critical. Distinguishing ourselves from our competition through value-added services is a huge advantage. There are some extreme benefits there," Ratycz says.

### About Parata Systems

Parata Systems brings the power of robotic prescription dispensing to all retail pharmacies. Founded in 2001, Parata's flagship Parata RDS (Robotic Dispensing System) fills a prescription in just 20 seconds, a cycle time that includes selecting and labeling a vial, filling, capping and sorting by patient last name. At just 12 square feet the sleek, compact machine is an easy fit in any pharmacy, occupying the space of a single shelving unit. Parata Systems is based in Durham, N.C. Call, click or visit Parata Systems, [www.parata.com](http://www.parata.com), [info@parata.com](mailto:info@parata.com), 1-888-PARATA1 (727-2821).

# # #