Open up for your future.

The pharmacy industry and the consumer behavior change. The future of our pharmacies does not rely on singular investments but on holistic new business approaches.

That's why we introduce the open pharmacy.

swisslog-healthcare.com

swisslog healthcare

The open pharmacy
– Table of contents

More than robots in more than 800 pharmacies across Europe.

About us

Facts and figures

— Multi-national company for pharmacy and transport automation in both hospitals and pharmacies

— Member of the KUKA group, a leading supplier of automation solutions with more than 14.000 employees and the inventor of smart factories within the industie 4.0

— Over 3000 installations globally and thereof more than 800 in European pharmacies

Our solutions

— Pharmacy automation robots for slow, medium and fast moving items

— Fully integrated transport solutions that allow a delocalization of the inventory

— Cloud based software solution that streamlines both, the point-of-sales workflows as well as the purchasing processes

— Living shelves and 24/7 dispensing for fast consumer servings

Since decades, our solutions change the way hospitals, health systems and pharmacies work - increasing their efficiency and enhancing their patients treatments. Our solutions drive customer value by improving workflows and reducing the time spent on doing routine and repetitive tasks.
As a globally leading company with extensive experience in the sensitive hospital environment, we use our knowledge to incorporate it into our developments for pharmacies and use forward-thinking technologies to enhance patient well-being. And we are proud to partner with more than 800 pharmacies across Europe, in particular in France and Italy.

In 2016 we even intensified and specialized our pharmacy expertise by incorporating the company formerly known as Tecnilab to the group. In our offices in Cuneo with more than 80 employees we not only serve our Italian customers, but also our technology center and showroom is located there as well as our own R&D department that is directly linked to the manufacturing.

Changing consumer behaviour and the development of unique needs specific to pharmacies led to the establishment of a division for community pharmacies in 2019. We recognize that modern pharmacies are going through a intensive transformation of their business models, and therefore we believe that automation shall be one component of the "pharmacy of the future", paired with software, continuity models and 24/7 dispensing availability. That's why we developed the **open pharmacy** concept.

This concept starts with the smooth integration of key elements that have been adopted by leading pharmacies today, and unifies and organizes the flow of data, medication and patients inside and outside the pharmacy. Open pharmacy is based on our leading automation solutions, but also integrates modules developed by partners. Our aim is to develop an "open platform" in which even other industry companies can participate and develop.

Trends that influence the modernization of pharmacies

Digitization accelerates workflows

Digitization is not only changing patient's behaviors and expectations. Pharmacists and their staff use different devices and interfaces with a simple user experience in their private environment.
In contrast, there is an often complex and non-networked software infrastructure that drives IT and workflow silos within the pharmacy, sometimes leading to redundant work steps and thus errors.

Software providers increasingly address these needs and develop new approaches that are both self-explanatory in operation and link data from different pharmacy areas in real time. New approaches not only accelerate the processes at the point of sales and enable the use of mobile devices instead of static computers, but also directly connect the inventory in the pharmacy with wholesalers.
For pharmacy owners, this means that sales, profitability and stock of medicines can always be monitored, even from outside the pharmacy, and measures such as promotions or reorders can be analyzed and controlled directly from the single-touchpoint software. The advantage of cloud-based providers is that software purchase is usually not associated with high initial investment and simple integration is possible. First pilot pharmacies use the opportunity to test the software offers and, as first users, to actively influence the functions through agile feedback and development processes.

The automation of drug dispensing has arrived in pharmacies

Whereas a few years ago, only a few pharmacies were thinking about automating the storage and dispensing of medicines, today various solutions for fast- and slow-movers, OTCs and even patient-specific dosage are firmly established in the pharmacy market. The amortization of automation can be achieved within a short period of time, but many pharmacies still hesitate to make the high initial investments needed considering the rapidly changing pharmacy market. Pharmacists are looking for solutions that share the risk of the initial investment between the automation providers and themselves. Instead of owning a system, there is a growing demand for business models that allow the pharmacist to purchase services that follow all-in subscription or pay-per-use models.

Open up.
For individuals.

«My health is crucial for me to fully enjoy my life. And I only put it in the hands of experts I can trust.»
– Chloé, 78

The individual needs of consumers come to the fore

Pharmacies are confronted with heterogeneous target groups. Numerous consumers expect a reflection of their online shopping experience in retail pharmacies: this is characterized above all by ease of use, quick product identification and self-sufficient purchase processing. In contrast, however, the proportion of consumers who specifically demand profound advice on health issues and consult pharmacists in their expertise as an adequate alternative to local doctors is also increasing.

Moreover, customers cannot be assigned to a general group. Rather, they act as hybrids who tend to be more in one direction or the other depending on their current situation. Conversely, this means that pharmacies have to keep both aspects in mind: behavioral and situational characteristics.

In urban areas the trend towards clear positioning of pharmacies can be observed. Thus, pharmacies with a product focus, analogous to online trading, or a strong service orientation in which pharmacies specialize in individual consulting and services are increasingly emerging. In regions that do not allow equally clear diversification, pharmacies are looking for new models that can master the balancing act between the two customer poles.

«The concept increases the flexibility of the pharmacy setups, workflows, and above all how customers are served and advised.»

Patrick Koch is the head of the pharmacy division at Swisslog Healthcare.
In the past, he has been extensively researched developments within the industry and has shared insights with pharmacists and experts to analyze the challenges of the market.

He is convinced that it is not singular solutions and processes that make pharmacies future-proof, but rather holistic approaches that enable the key asset of pharmacists — their expertise — to be brought to the fore.

— PATRICK KOCH

«We must bring expertise in front of the counter.»

In the changing, highly competitive pharmacy market, waiting is not the answer. It requires the courage to disrupt the well-known.

By Julia Kahraman

You have developed the open pharmacy concept. How did you come to pursue a holistic approach, even though your company specializes in pharmacy robots?
— That's a good question. I think the first approach was developed from the feedback of our customers, who were able to improve the performance in their pharmacies but who told us that the customer proximity in their work processes is sill missing. I found that exciting. Also because, in our opinion, one factor that increases proximity to the customer is the time the pharmacist has for consultation. This assumption actually follows the classic approach of pharmacy automation, according to which less time spent on simple activities that are invisible to the end-customer results in more time for consultation and therapy.

You say that reorganizing the inventory alone is not enough to bring the pharmacist closer to the patient, but how do you come up with an approach that does this?
— Well, to be precise, in such a consideration we look at the problem from the other end. We have started to put ourselves in the perspective of the pharmacy customer and ask ourselves: Why do people visit pharmacies at all? Some come to get a medication quickly. They may not want advice at all. Here, pharmacies are in direct competition with online retailers, but with the advantage that delivery times ideally do not have to be taken into account. Above all, these people need to be guaranteed fast service and availability of medicines. Other customers may already be well informed. They have read up on treatment alternatives and are looking for an expert advice.
The third customer group, are people who, due to the decreasing availability of doctors, are increasingly looking for other experts on health and wellness topics and consult them directly. This group can seek advice for themselves as well as for their close ones, such as children or parents. Usually these consultations take longer and require a high level of professional and personal trust, possibly even in a protected space, as sensitive issues are discussed or even medical treatments are provided..

> **«Software and decentralization of non patient-related acivities are key to use space in a better way.»**

What lessons do you draw from this for pharmacies?
— If we serve all these needs in a uniform setup, which customer group would feel served properly? I am convinced that it requires a significant rethink and that we need to work on concepts that allow customers to be served in the way they prefer in their personal situation. This means that the set-up of the pharmacies must change. So called "fast lanes" should be included in the considerations, as well as the set-up of separés within the pharmacy. As an example, I wouldn't talk about sensitive diseases in front of other customers, do you?

What you are saying is that pharmacies should have different areas: pick-up stations, as well as consultation areas and even protected rooms for private conversations or medical acts? How should this work in reality, even with the limited space?
— Yes, that is correct. I even go one step further and ask why we hide the most important asset — expertise — behind counters? I see two approaches to its realisation. On the one hand, pharmacies should make use of software solutions that allow them to move around the room flexibly and to place orders in the warehouse at the same time. The counter situation in pharmacies creates an unnecessary distance to the patient. In addition, I believe in decentralizing all non patient-related activities, such as storage, and optimizing transport within the pharmacy. This creates space in the shop floor. And therefore space for customers and new areas.

«I often know thousand opinions before I know what's wrong with her. I am happy that someone gives me orientation.»

– Jérémy, 39

**Open up.
For personal guidance.**

The concept that listens to your clients.

**Open up.
For connection.**

«We take care of ourselves, our friends, our grandchildren. It's good that someone in our neighborhood keeps track and consults us»

– Camille, 73 & Louis, 75

«Sometimes I just want a quick fix. Generally, I know what is wrong with me and the medication that works best.»

– Arnaud, 27

**Open up.
For flexibility.**

The open pharmacy

There is already a lot of evidence and research that pharmacies need to be transformed into dynamic "health centres" for their future viability, rather than maintaining a traditional "drug dispensing" role. One of the aims of this transformation is to reorganise consumer flows within the commercial area to provide a unique consumer experience while maintaining a patient-centred approach.

These new customer flows also require an adjustment of the flow of products and data. Here, advanced technologies for storage automation and software for pharmacy management apply. Instead of using valuable retail space for storage, the open pharmacy approach envisions relocating it to a remote room (4) when available. The additional space becomes available for special medications and new healthcare services that generate new, high-margin sales. In addition, the traditional counter as a separation of patient and storage areas become obsolete. Instead, this spacious counter can be converted into several smaller and more efficient "point-of-sales" areas (1) where to the remote robot automatically delivers the packs.
Specialised areas can be set up with dedicated counters (2), allowing pharmacists to offer personalised advice. Even private "point-of-care" can be realized (3), allowing simple medical treatments to be provided in privacy and intimacy. Lastly, a 24x7 dispenser (1), linked to the remotely operated robot, enables customers to pick up pre-ordered medication outside the pharmacy's opening hours.

The open pharmacy concept also aims to simplify and secure the transformation of the pharmacy. Different modules are available from a single source, with the promise of seamless integration of tested systems, through open collaboration with several industry partners. Inspired by the "open source" world, open pharmacy is evolving into a growing community of solution providers, enabling leading pharmacists to build the pharmacy of their future.

Transport connection
Consumer journey
Data connection
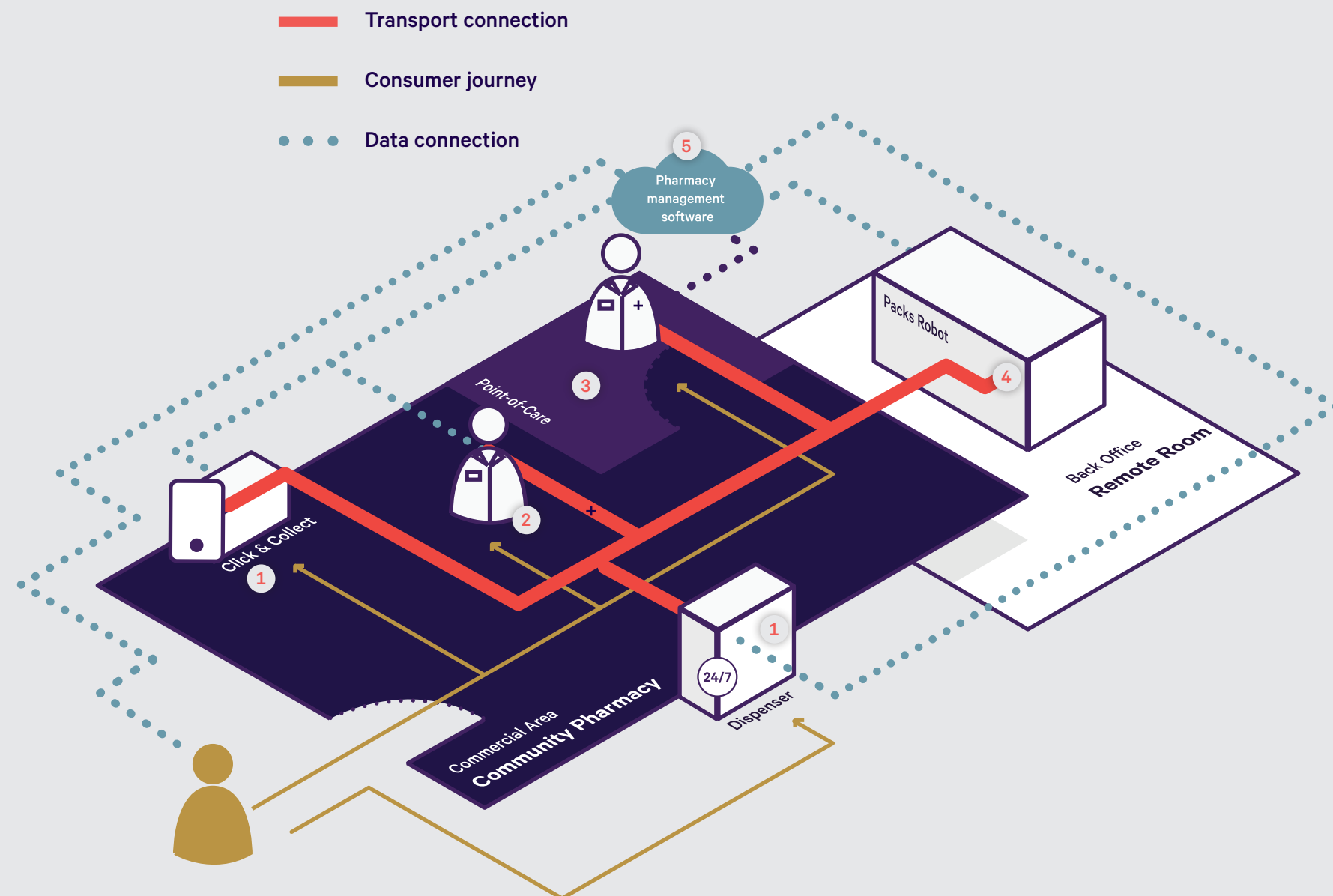
1 Open up. For **fast servings**.
Touchscreen for direct orders combined with an OTC counter and 24/7 dispensers enable quick and time-flexible pick-ups.

2 Open up. For **mobility**.
Different speciality areas can be explored flexible together with the consumer due to counter-independant transport and software connections.

3 Open up. For **intimicy**.
Sensitive healthcare services and consultations provided in an private environment.

4 Open up. For **more space**.
Delocalized storage empowered by integrated transport and software solutions generate more space for commercial and consulting areas.

5 Open up. For **streamless workflows**.
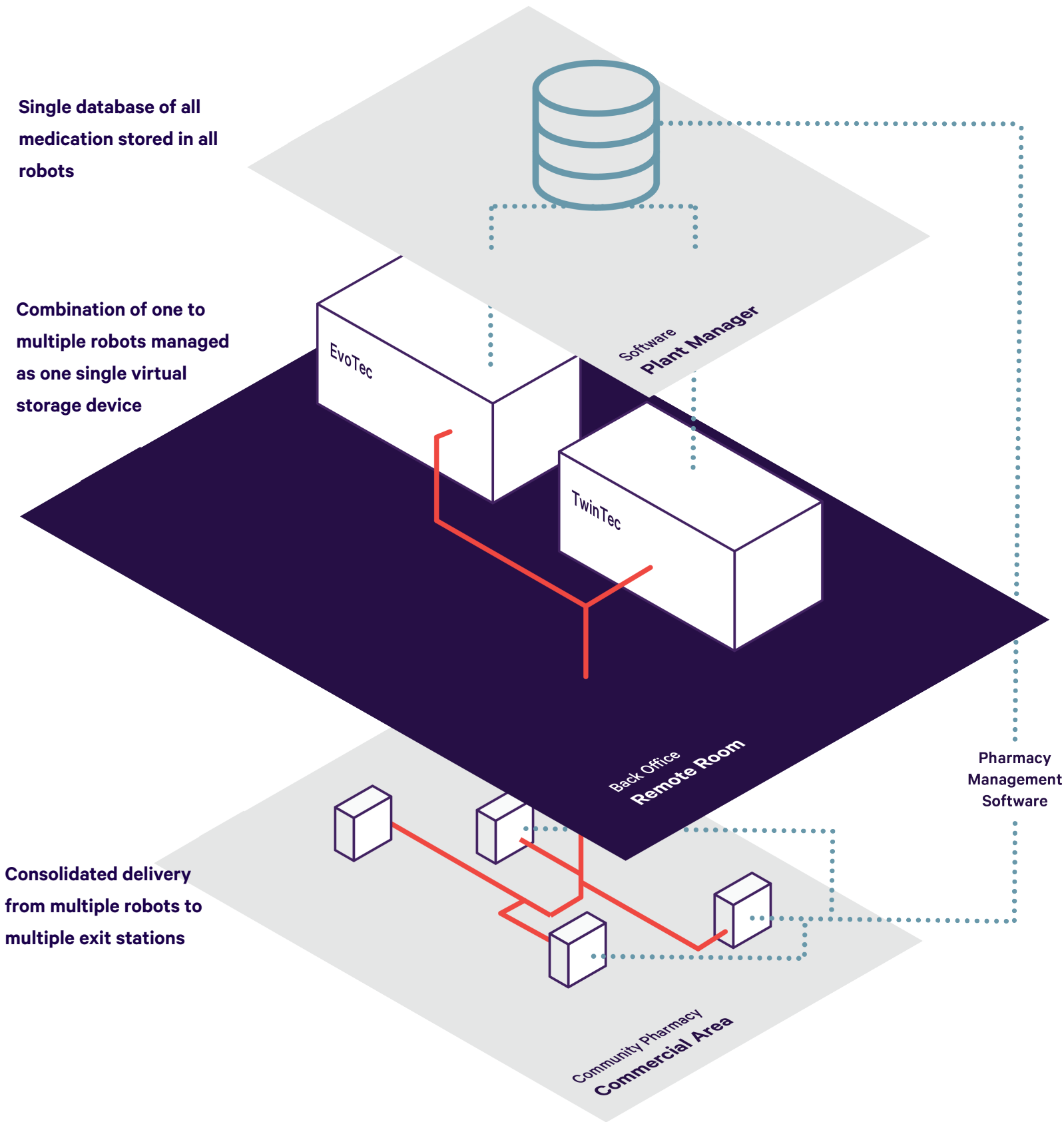Remote access within and from outside of the pharmacy lead to higher transparency.

The solution hub

Each pharmacy is unique and has its own interior. For this reason, our portfolio of solutions is designed as "building blocks" to offer each pharmacy a tailor-made solution - always with the aim of creating more time and space for the end customer.

Our portfolio consists of three main building blocks:

1. A range of automated storage and dispensing solutions that can cover a wide variety of needs, from a small volume of fast-moving items to fully automated robots with double arms and high capacity automatic loading.

2. A flexible and fast transport solution capable of consolidating all orders from multiple sources and delivering them securely to multiple counters and points of sale within the pharmacy.

3. An intelligent software platform responsible for the efficient management of the database of medicines in stock, the workload and order priorities of all connected robots and the organization of deliveries to the points of sale.

An international team of experts assists in designing the solution that best meets the individual pharmacy's needs.

Single database of all medication stored in all robots

Combination of one to multiple robots managed as one single virtual storage device

Consolidated delivery from multiple robots to multiple exit stations

EvoTec

TwinTec

Software
Plant Manager

Back Office
Remote Room

Pharmacy Management Software

Community Pharmacy
Commercial Area

Plant Manager – a single logical unit

— Information of the pharmacy management software is read out, evaluated and an ideal inventory management is generated, which integrates one or more robots.

— Streamlined handling of items with automation and transport can save up to 40% time usually spent looking for items.

EvoTec

— Offers full stock control and flexible storage adaptable in height and lenght for any type of drug. Monitors expiry date and FMD handling.

— Automatic loading ensures accurancy and shelves and storage placements are adapted independently based on the medication mix reducing the time allocated for warehousing activities by 28 %.

TwinTec

— Automated, high-density storage for fast moving items.

— Assisted loading with multi-pack function for faster placement.

— Modulary system that grows with the pharmacy due to expandable capacity.

AirTec – native transport solution

— Fully integrated transport and pharmacy solutions from a single source.

— Can be integrated with different touch points in the pharmacy and therefore flexible design of the sales rooms is possible.

— Fast delivery with a speed of 5 m/s.

Automation portfolio at a glance

EvoTec fully-automated medication management solution

The fully-automated medication management solution easily integrates into different pharmacy setups to maximize space and storage. EvoTec loads medications accurately, stores them safely and makes vital information available in real-time, reducing waste.

Main functions and features

— Continuous optimization: Shelves and storage placements are adapted independently based on the medication mix.

— Smart express loading: Handling of single boxes, mono-references, multiple boxes and even mixed products.

— E-load for accurate loading processes: The loading unit automatically identifies products from invoices and updates inventories in the system.

High density and high speed pharmacy robot TwinTec

Specializing in high-density storage with swift retrieval, this space-saving system can upload up to 1500 boxes per hour. TwinTec's smart technology boosts safety by storing medication securely and swiftly.

Features:

— **Mobile loading and LED location indicator:** Easy identification of drawers that need to be refilled and intuitive guidance through the loading procedure.

— **Radio scanner:** Codes can be scanned from a distance so stock can be refilled with highest efficiency.

— **Vertical loading system:** Moving conveyor belt system enables even most fragile boxes to be moved safely.

Fully integrated transportation with AirTec

With AirTec we provide the only transport system from a single source offered by the same manufacturer as pharmacy automation. This allows not only a coordinated integration, but also comprehensive modularity from one stop. AirTec connects both pharmacy robots, EvoTec and TwinTec, from a delocalised warehouse to every point in the commercial area. By using an integrated transport solution, manual routes are not only obsolete, but deliveries are also accelerated with a speed of 5m/s.

Every system has two or more lines of transparent tubes. Each line goes to reach a predetermined delivery point. The adaptability of the system and the ability to install the lines "in plain sight" make AirTec a winning solution from both functionality and efficiency point of view but also with regards to the layout perspectives.

Advantages

— High-speed delivery

— Covering large distances

— Low noise and small footprint

Software solutions and pick-up counters

In addition to our Plant Manager, the software that links the inventory across multiple robots and optimizes storage, dispensing and transport from a single database, we also offer a cloud-based point-of-sales software for the French market that enables communication within the pharmacy, but also between pharmacies, up to the patient. Our software solutions are designed to simplify processes and streamline work steps.

The one-stop portfolio also includes other partner solutions for the fast pick-up of medicines, during and outside business hours, such as a touch screen for pre-order including payment function in the pharmacy and a 24/7 dispensing service. All partner solutions are completely connected to the AirTec transport solution as well as to the software hub.

Open up.
For your individual advice.

We are very happy to share the open pharmacy concept with various customers and partners and to make it grow together. Become part of the open community: We look forward to your input and will be happy to consult and support you in setting up your pharmacy in the right way for the future.

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