



Peak  
Pharmacy

Printing Solutions

## Dakota Ensures 'Peak Performance' within new Peak Pharmacy Automated Warehouse & Dispensing Hub Thanks to Fit-For-Purpose Labelling Solution

### The Company

Founded in 1981, PCT Healthcare Ltd, trading as Peak Pharmacy, is a family-owned and family-run company based in Bolsover near Chesterfield. Since its inception in 1981, the business has grown through mergers and acquisitions to become one of the UK's largest independent pharmacy chains, with 130 branches across the Midlands and Northwest, serviced by its own fleet of vehicles as well as an online pharmacy operation.

In 2024, Peak Pharmacy opened its new automated warehouse and dispensing hub, amalgamating three sites into a new 116,000-sq-ft purpose-built, temperature-controlled facility in order to provide patient prescription orders to all branches on a next-day service, as well as bringing head office and distribution operations together under one roof.

With fast operation and optimum branch service provision being key components in the creation of this new facility, Peak Pharmacy needed to source a reliable labelling solution partner to ensure operational momentum and continuity.

- 0.00083% error rate
- 5,000 single item labels used per hour
- 50,000 prescription bag labels every week
- Guaranteed continuity of supply
- Consistent label quality



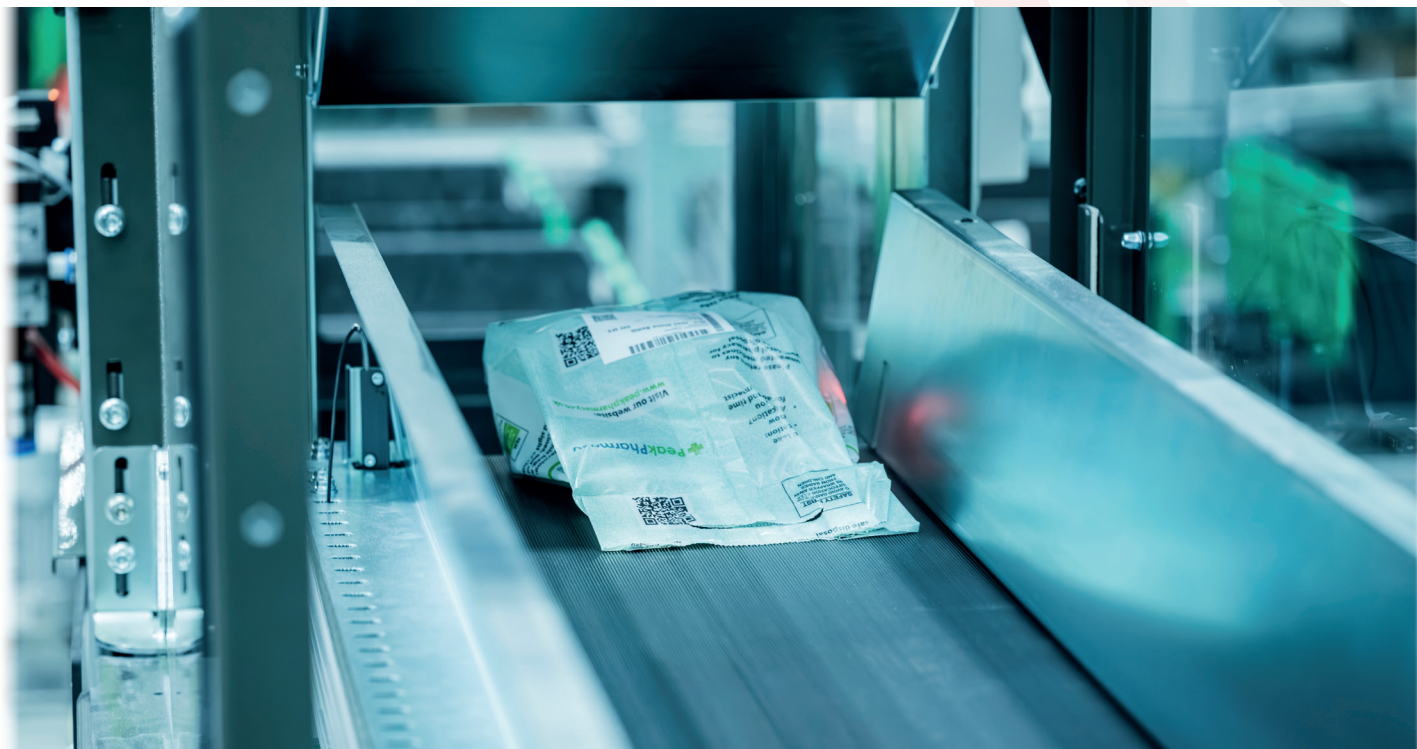
## The Problem

The key technology at the new site – the Pack2Patient solution from KNAPP - enables the processing of single items required for prescription orders with minimal human intervention.

Darryl Dethick, Head of Business Transformation at Peak Pharmacy explains, “When we were setting up the new facility, we needed the automated handling system to enable us to realise our objective of delivering to all of our branches on a next-day service, while meeting all the latest MHRA warehousing guidance. In order to bring everything together however, we needed a reliable label provider to work with ourselves alongside the KNAPP Pack2Patient solution to ensure that order turnaround was going to be achieved to the highest standard, whilst maintaining optimum order accuracy. We needed the right labels for the job, so we turned to Dakota to help us to achieve our labelling objectives. Since we use approximately 5,000 single item labels per hour and 50,000 prescription bag labels every week, we needed to be able to guarantee a continuity of supply because without consistent, quality labels and the ability to correctly position the labels on the products, the whole operation would grind to a halt.”

## The Solution

Dakota’s labelling experts live and breathe the importance of correct labelling. Offering a highly customer-focused and customised consultative approach, alongside deep-rooted success in supplying labels to its customers during its twenty-four year tenure, Dakota works closely alongside each and every one of its customers to comprehensively understand their requirements to ensure that they are using precisely the correct product for their labelling needs. Despite raw material prices being in a constant state of volatility, Dakota’s experts work with its labelling suppliers to ensure the provision of the highest quality labels at most competitive prices.



Karen Peacock, Sales Manager at Dakota comments, “We were contacted by Peak Pharmacy just prior to the opening of their new automated warehouse and dispensing hub. They were looking for a variety of labels to suit their requirements; predominantly labels for products which pass through the Pack2Patient system for the automatic assembly of patient prescriptions, however they were also looking for a range of other labels including tote labels and dispensary, mobile printer and courier labels.”

The KNAPP Pack2Patient system enables single items to be processed rapidly and accurately. Goods required for prescription orders are conveyed to one of two infeed stations, whereby an operator removes items from the tote and places them on a conveyor belt that feeds them automatically into the machine.

Inside the Pack2Patient system, smart KiSoft Vision cameras identify each item by capturing information from 1D and 2D data matrix codes, shapes, dimensions and several other attributes. The system then automatically prints and applies the labels, supplied by Dakota, to the articles on the fly as they pass through the high speed system. After labelling, a second vision system checks that the label, information and article are all correct.

Karen Peacock continues, “As the articles on the conveyor belt move through at such a high speed and therefore need to be labelled extremely quickly, we needed to supply Peak Pharmacy with labels that would be easily applied, would stay in their original shape so that the barcode is not distorted and which would adhere in the correct orientation to the package. Incorrect labelling could lead to significant delays and cause the cut-off deadline for next day deliveries to not be met, thus slowing down the whole operation, so we needed to make sure that we sourced high quality, fit-for-purpose labels. And with 5,000 items labels being used in the facility every hour and 50,000 prescription bag labels required every week, continuity of supply is key, which is why we ensure that Peak Pharmacy always has these labels in stock. We even hold boxes of spare labels in our warehouse for rapid dispatch if needed, so all bases are covered and our customer can relax in the knowledge that their all-important labels will never be out of reach, especially during peak periods.”



## The Result

The results of the label supply have been far-reaching and the system as a whole has been a resounding success for Peak Pharmacy; so much so, that the success of the system has led to a decision to invest in a third Pack2Patient line at the facility.

Darryl Dethick concludes, “The new solution has facilitated the supply of around 1.2 million individual packs to Peak Pharmacy’s 130 branches every month, freeing up significant time for staff to provide a high level of professional service to its customers. We have been so impressed with the service we have received from Dakota. Without correct, quality labels which are fit-for-purpose, our whole mission-critical operation would be hugely disrupted. Dakota really took the time to understand our requirements from the offset and continue to work alongside us as our operations grow. We only have a 0.00083% error rate within our new facility, and have no doubt the provision of the right labels for our Pack2Patient system has a part to play in that success. We are delighted to have found such a reliable label solution provider in Dakota and we very much hope that our strong working relationship continues for years to come.”

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