

# THE CHEMIST

THE COMMUNITY PHARMACY GROWTH KIT

## LEADERSHIP

How To Build A Strong Pharmacy Culture

## MARKETING

Online Reputation Management - How To Win The Review Game

## CASHFLOW

The Left-Digit Effect: How Pricing Psychology Can Increase Your Pharmacy's Revenue

**DUOPHARMA**  
Play. Learn. Care.





## Products expiring on you?

You work hard to control your inventory, but sometimes products expire on your shelves. You wonder, if there's a way, you could prevent the headache of expiries.

Expired Stock = Additional Expenses

Expired medicine is additional discarding costs. The more products expire on your shelves, the more losses you incur. That's bad for business.

- ✓ We understand your struggle. Many pharmacies face the same problem.
- ✓ We have the solution. We've helped pharmacies get rid of slow moving stock—all while impacting their communities too!

## Empty the Shelf, Impact Lives

- Post It – Post the products you want off your shelf.
- Search It – Check out the products needed for donations.
- Impact Lives – Impact lives, get rid of stress, and grow your pharmacy brand.

## Act Now: Compound Your Impact Today!



[Click for impact](#) —before the items become a liability!

## The Cost Of Waiting?

- ✗ You have expired items.
- ✗ You lose money.
- ✗ Your pharmacy suffers additional disposal costs.

## What You Gain!

- ✓ You impact lives.
- ✓ Your minimize losses.
- ✓ You grow your pharmacy brand & business.

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May is about the invisible forces shaping your pharmacy's growth — your team's culture, your reputation online, and the psychology behind every price tag. In this issue, we explore how to build a workplace your staff are proud of, what customers find when they search your name, and how a single digit in your pricing can shift buying decisions — so you can lead better, and grow your pharmacy revenue in the months ahead.

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# How To Build A Strong Pharmacy Culture

## BY THE CHEMIST

You hired a good team. You trained them. You pay them on time. And yet, something feels off.

Customers mention that the staff seem disinterested. Your best staff member has been quiet lately — doing the work, but no longer bringing the energy she once had.

A locum you brought in last month told you, without prompting, that the pharmacy "feels tense." You brushed it off. But the comment stayed with you.

Here is the thing: those signals are not personality problems. They are culture problems.

Culture is the invisible force that shapes how your team shows up every day — how they treat customers, how they handle pressure, how they talk to each other when you are not watching. You cannot hang it on a wall or write it in a job description. But your customers feel it the moment they walk through your door. And your staff feel it the moment they clock in.



The good news is that culture is not an accident. It is built — deliberately, consistently, over time. And as the pharmacy manager, you are the one who builds it.

## The Hidden Culture Problem Many Pharmacies Have

Many pharmacy managers think of culture as something large chains worry about — not something a smaller community pharmacy needs to think about. So they focus on stock, margins, and compliance. Culture is left to take care of itself.

The result usually looks like this:

- Staff do exactly what they are told — nothing more, nothing less.

- There is no sense of shared purpose. Everyone is just getting through the day.
- High performers start feeling unrecognised and quietly start job hunting.
- Customer service is inconsistent — warm on some days, cold on others, depending on who is at the counter.
- Conflict simmers under the surface and occasionally boils over.
- You, the manager, feel like the only person who truly cares about the pharmacy.

This is not a staffing problem. You could hire new people tomorrow and the same patterns would return within weeks. Because the problem is not the people — it is the environment the people are working in. This is where intentional culture-building comes in.

## LEADERSHIP: HOW TO BUILD A STRONG PHARMACY CULTURE



### A Pharmacy Where Everyone Pulls in the Same Direction

Imagine walking into your pharmacy on a Monday morning and feeling something different. Your team greets customers by name. They solve problems without waiting to be told. When one person is overwhelmed, another steps in without being asked. New staff pick up the standards quickly – not because you enforced them, but because the team modelled them.

That is not luck. That is culture at work.

### How to Build a Strong Pharmacy Culture: A Practical Guide

#### Step 1: Define What Your Pharmacy Stands For

You cannot build a culture around nothing. Every strong culture starts with a clear answer to this question: What do we stand for?

This is your pharmacy's vision – the reason you exist beyond selling medicine. It does not have to be complicated. Some examples:

- "We exist to make healthcare accessible and dignified for every person who walks through our door."
- "We are the pharmacy that our community trusts with their family's health."

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- *"We believe every customer deserves advice, not just a transaction."*

Write yours down. Share it with your team. Revisit it in your team meetings. When decisions get difficult – whether to stock a product, how to handle a difficult customer, whether to bend a process – your vision is the compass.

But a vision only becomes real when it is broken down into objectives your team can work towards – and further into the daily actions that move the needle. This is exactly what Growth™ by The Chemist is built for.

Growth™ is a strategic planning tool that helps you define your pharmacy's vision, break it down into clear objectives, and translate those objectives into the daily tasks that – when done consistently – build the pharmacy you are working towards. If your pharmacy does not yet have a written vision, Growth™ is the place to start. Visit <https://thechemist.co.ke/growth> to get started.

Culture without a vision is just a mood. Give it a foundation.

### **Step 2: Model the Culture You Want to See**

Your team is watching you far more closely than you realise. The way you speak to a difficult customer teaches them how to handle difficult customers.

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The way you respond when a mistake is made teaches them whether it is safe to admit errors. The way you show up on a hard day – tired, stressed, but still composed – teaches them what resilience looks like in your pharmacy.

You cannot ask your team for professionalism, warmth, and accountability if you are not demonstrating those things yourself. Culture flows downward. If you are cutting corners, your team will too. If you are present and engaged, your team will match that energy.

Before you try to change your team's behaviour, ask yourself honestly: Am I modelling what I am asking for?

### Step 3: Recognise Your Team – Specifically and Consistently

One of the fastest ways to kill a culture is to only notice when things go wrong.

Recognition is not just about being a nice employer. It is a performance tool. When people feel seen and valued, they work harder, stay longer, and bring more of themselves to work. When they feel invisible, they disengage – quietly, gradually, but visibly in their performance.

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Here is how to do recognition well in your pharmacy:

- Be specific, not generic. *"Good job today"* means very little. *"The way you handled that customer who came in without a prescription – explaining the process calmly and offering an alternative – that is exactly how we do things here"* means everything. Specificity shows you were paying attention.
- Do it quickly. The closer the recognition is to the action, the more powerful it is. Do not save it for a year-end review. If someone did something well this morning, tell them this afternoon.
- Make it personal. Some team members love being praised in front of the group. Others find it embarrassing and would prefer a quiet word. Learn which is which.
- Tie it to your vision and values. When you connect recognition to what the pharmacy stands for – *"That is exactly what we mean when we say every customer deserves dignity"* – you reinforce the culture with every compliment.
- Mix small and big gestures. A handwritten note, an extra break, a small airtime top-up – these matter. So does a bonus, a pay review, or paying for a short training course. Do not only do one or the other.
- Celebrate progress, not just big wins. The staff member who reduced dispensing errors by half deserves recognition – even if the pharmacy has not yet hit its revenue target. Progress is worth celebrating.

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- Do it consistently, not occasionally. A culture of recognition is not a once-a-quarter thing. It is a daily habit. Build it into how you lead.

But over time, it builds a team that communicates, problem-solves together, and feels like they are part of something, not just employees in something.

### Step 4: Create Space for Honest Conversation

A pharmacy where staff are afraid to raise problems is a pharmacy full of hidden problems.

Create regular moments for your team to speak openly. A short 10-minute team huddle at the start of the week — *"What went well last week? What is one thing we can do better this week?"* — costs you almost nothing.

If you are looking for a simple structure to run these weekly conversations, Growth™ includes a built-in weekly meeting section that helps you and your team review progress, surface challenges, and stay aligned on priorities. It turns what could be a scattered catch-up into a focused, productive ritual. Visit <https://thechemist.co.ke/growth> to explore it.

When a mistake happens — a wrong dispensing, an unhappy customer, a stock error — respond with curiosity, not punishment. *"What happened? How do we prevent this?"* is a culture-building question.



*“Who is responsible for this?”* asked in anger is a culture-destroying one.

Psychological safety – the sense that it is safe to speak up, make mistakes, and ask for help – is one of the many powerful predictors of team performance. Build it deliberately.

### Step 5: Invest in Your Team's Growth

People do not just want a salary. They want to feel like they are going somewhere. When your team sees that working at your pharmacy makes them better – more skilled, more confident, more employable – they stay. And they give more.

Investing in your team does not require a large budget. It can look like:

- Paying for a short CPD course or webinar relevant to their role
- Giving a senior staff member the chance to mentor a new team member
- Rotating responsibilities so people develop new skills
- Sharing industry reading – including this magazine – at team meetings
- Discussing real pharmacy business challenges with your team so they understand the bigger picture.

When your team feels invested in, they invest back. That is the foundation of a strong culture.

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### The Two Culture Mistakes Pharmacy Managers Make

#### **Mistake 1: Assuming culture will build itself.**

Many managers believe that if they hire good people and pay fairly, culture will follow naturally. It rarely does. Culture needs to be intentional — named, modelled, and reinforced regularly. Without that deliberate effort, what fills the gap is usually a culture by default: one shaped by whoever in the team has the strongest personality, not by the pharmacy's values.

**Mistake 2: Only addressing culture when something goes wrong.** Culture work is not crisis management.

If the only time you talk about values, standards, and team behaviour is when there is a complaint or a conflict, your team learns to associate those conversations with punishment. Culture conversations should happen on good days too — when things are going well, when a team member does something excellent, when the pharmacy has a strong week. Build it in the good moments so it holds in the hard ones.

### A Mindset Shift

Many pharmacy managers think of culture as something soft — the HR language of big corporations that does not apply to a smaller community pharmacy.

Here is a different way to think about it: culture is a business system.

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Just like your inventory system determines whether your shelves are stocked, your culture system determines whether your team shows up fully. A broken inventory system costs you in stockouts and dead stock. A broken culture costs you in turnover, poor customer service, and a manager who cannot step away from the counter.

Culture is not separate from your pharmacy's growth. It is your pharmacy's growth — from the inside out.

### One Practical Action You Can Take This Week

This week, recognise one member of your team — specifically and personally.

Think of something they did in the last two weeks that reflects the kind of pharmacy you are trying to build. Pull them aside, or send a short WhatsApp message if they are on shift elsewhere, and say: *"I noticed [specific thing you did]. That is exactly the kind of [professionalism / care / initiative] that makes this pharmacy what it is. Thank you."*

Do not wait for a big achievement. Find a real, specific moment from this week. Do it before Friday.

Then make it a habit.

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### Why This Matters Now

Kenya's community pharmacy landscape is becoming more competitive every year. New pharmacies are opening in neighbourhoods that once had only one or two. Customers have more choices – and less loyalty – than before.

In that environment, the pharmacies that win are not always the ones with the lowest prices or the biggest stock. They are the ones where customers feel genuinely cared for. Where the team is warm, competent, and consistent. Where walking in feels different from walking into any other pharmacy on the street.

That feeling is culture. And it is yours to build.

**Pharmacies that invest in their culture quietly build something no competitor can copy – a team that cares. Start building yours today.**

Share your team culture success story with us at [info@thechemist.co.ke](mailto:info@thechemist.co.ke). What has worked for you? We'd love to feature your insights in an upcoming issue of The Chemist's "From Our Readers" section.

# DuoPharma

DUOPHARMA:  
PLAY. LEARN. CARE



4

DAY STREAK



4360

POINTS



11%

31/282  
COMPLETED

## Play. Learn. Care

A

22 units



Abacavir





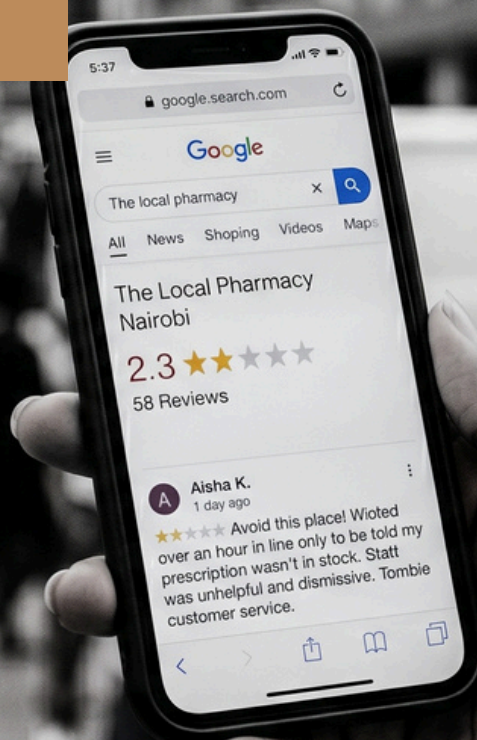
# Online Reputation Management - How To Win The Review Game

BY THE CHEMIST

A customer walks past your pharmacy. They have never been in before, but they need a blood pressure refill and your signage catches their eye. Before they push the door open, they do what nearly every new customer does now — they pull out their phone and search your name.

What they find in the next thirty seconds will determine whether they walk in or keep walking.

If they see four stars, a few warm reviews, and a pharmacy that responds to feedback — they come in. If they see two stars, a scathing comment about slow service from eight months ago, and no response from your side — they do not. They find the next pharmacy on the list.



This is the quiet way many pharmacies lose customers before those customers ever arrive. Not to better prices. Not to a bigger range. To a handful of unmanaged reviews on a platform they barely knew was tracking them.

Your online reputation is not a vanity metric. It is a front door. And right now, you may not know what people see when they approach it.

### The Hidden Reputation Problem Many Pharmacies Face

Here is what unmanaged online reputation looks like for a community pharmacy: A negative review from a genuinely unhappy customer sits unanswered for months, signalling to every future reader that no one is minding the store.

- A satisfied customer who would happily leave a five-star review was never asked to do so – so they did not.
- The pharmacy has no idea what is being said about it on Google, Facebook, or in local community WhatsApp groups.
- A staff member was mentioned by name in a negative post. No one in management saw it.
- The pharmacy tried to dispute a bad review once and was told it did not qualify for removal. They gave up.

The deeper problem is this: many pharmacy managers assume that if they are doing good work, reputation will take care of itself. It will not. In a digital environment, reputation is not built by doing good work alone. It is built by actively managing how that good work is seen, shared, and responded to online.



And if you are not managing it, the algorithm is managing it for you — and it will surface whatever it finds, good or bad, in whatever order suits the platform.

### What a Well-Managed Reputation Can Do for Your Pharmacy

Imagine a different scenario. A new customer searches your pharmacy name. They see 4.6 stars across 80 reviews. The two or three critical comments have thoughtful, professional responses beneath them — not defensive, not dismissive, but genuinely helpful. The recent reviews mention a staff member by name and praise the quality of advice they received.

That customer walks in already trusting you. The sale is half-made before they reach the counter.

This is what online reputation management — ORM — does for your pharmacy. It turns your digital presence into a conversion tool. It builds trust before a single word is spoken. And it gives you a recoverable position when things go wrong, because in any pharmacy, things occasionally do go wrong.

Here is how to build it.



### Step 1: Know What is Being Said About You — Monitoring Needs Layers

You cannot manage what you cannot see. The first step in ORM is building a monitoring system that covers all the places your pharmacy's name might appear.

This does not need to be complicated. Set up the following:

- Google Business Profile alerts: Ensure your Google Business Profile is claimed and that you receive email notifications for new reviews. If you have not claimed your profile yet, do this today — it is free and takes under ten minutes at [business.google.com](https://business.google.com).
- Facebook notifications: Turn on notifications for mentions, reviews, and comments on your pharmacy's Facebook page.
- Google Alerts: Go to [google.com/alerts](https://www.google.com/alerts) and set up a free alert for your pharmacy name. Google will email you whenever your name appears in new online content.
- WhatsApp and community groups: These are harder to monitor systematically, but if you have staff who are members of local community groups, ask them to flag any mentions of the pharmacy.

Check your reviews at least once a week. Build it into your Monday routine. Reputation problems that are caught early are far easier to manage than those that have been sitting unaddressed for months.



## Step 2: Treat Reviews Like Support Tickets

Every review — positive or negative — is a message from a customer. The positive ones are telling you what to do more of. The negative ones are telling you what to fix. Either way, they deserve a response.

Think of your review inbox the way a good customer service team thinks of a support queue: every ticket gets acknowledged, every issue gets addressed, and nothing sits unanswered.

For positive reviews, respond warmly and specifically:

- "Thank you so much for this, [Name]. We are glad our team could help. We look forward to seeing you again."
- Keep it brief. The point is to show that a real person read the review and appreciates it.

For negative reviews, respond with three things: acknowledgement, empathy, and a path forward:

- "Thank you for sharing your experience with us. We are sorry to hear your visit did not meet expectations. We would love the opportunity to make it right — please reach out to us directly at [phone number or email] so we can assist you further."



Never argue in a public response. Never be defensive. Your response is not just for the person who left the review — it is for every future customer who reads it. A calm, professional response to a critical review builds more trust than ten positive reviews alone.

### Step 3: You Cannot Delete it — But You Can Outrank it

This is the piece many pharmacy managers do not know: negative reviews on Google can only be removed if they violate Google's content policies — spam, fake reviews, irrelevant content, or personal attacks. A genuine negative experience from a real customer, however unfair it may feel, will stay.

Trying to fight this is a losing battle. The smarter strategy is to outrank it with volume. A single two-star review feels devastating when you only have eight reviews in total. It disappears into context when you have eighty. Your goal is to build a consistent stream of fresh, genuine positive reviews that push older negative content down in both visibility and influence.

Here is how to do that:

- Ask at the right moment. The best time to ask for a review is immediately after a positive interaction — when a customer thanks you, when you have resolved a problem well, when a repeat customer comments on good service. Say: "We are so glad we could help."



If you have a moment, we would really appreciate a Google review – it helps other customers find us."

- Make it easy. Create a short link to your Google review page using Google's own PlaceID tool and print it on a small card at the counter or include it in your WhatsApp follow-up messages.
- Do not incentivise reviews. Offering discounts or gifts in exchange for reviews violates Google's policies and can result in your profile being penalised. Ask genuinely, not transactionally.
- Train your staff to ask. You do not need to be the only one asking. When a staff member has a warm interaction with a customer, they can make the ask naturally.

Brief your team on how to do it.

Volume and recency are the two variables that matter in online reputation. Fresh, consistent reviews signal an active, trusted business. Build a habit of asking, and the volume will follow.

#### **Step 4: Go Beyond Google – Build Presence Where Customers Are Talking**

Google is the starting point, but it is not the only place your reputation lives.



- Local online communities: Neighbourhood Facebook groups, estate WhatsApp groups, and local forums are where word-of-mouth now lives in digital form. A recommendation from a trusted neighbour in a community group carries enormous weight. The way to earn those recommendations is to deliver excellent service consistently and occasionally remind satisfied customers that a word of mouth – digital or otherwise – goes a long way.
- Your own website: A testimonials page on your website that you update regularly gives you a reputation asset you fully control – one that is not subject to platform policies or algorithm changes.

Build presence in layers. Each layer reinforces the others.

### The Two ORM Mistakes Many Pharmacy Managers Make

**Mistake 1: Responding only to negative reviews.** Many managers ignore positive reviews entirely and only engage when something goes wrong. This sends a signal – intentional or not – that the pharmacy only shows up in difficult moments. Respond to positive reviews too. It takes thirty seconds and shows customers that a real, engaged team is behind the pharmacy.



**Mistake 2: Asking for reviews in bulk, all at once.** Some pharmacy managers realise they have a review problem and send a WhatsApp blast asking all their contacts to leave a Google review on the same day. Google's algorithm flags this as unusual activity and may suppress or remove those reviews entirely. Build reviews gradually, consistently, over time – not in a single push.

### A Mindset Shift

Many pharmacy managers think of a bad review as an attack – something to be removed, disputed, or ignored.

Here is a more useful way to think about it: a bad review is a broken customer relationship that became visible.

The customer who left it walked away from your pharmacy feeling unheard. They went to the only place they felt they could be heard – a public platform. When you respond to that review with empathy and a genuine offer to resolve the issue, you do two things at once: you open the door to winning that customer back, and you show every future customer watching that your pharmacy takes its service seriously.

Reviews are not a threat to be managed. They are a conversation to be led.



### One Practical Action You Can Take This Week

Search your pharmacy name on Google right now.

Read every review – positive and negative. For every review that does not yet have a response, write one this week. Start with the most recent. Keep each response under three sentences. Be warm, be professional, and where there is a complaint, offer a path forward.

Then, before the end of the week, ask three customers who expressed satisfaction – in person or on WhatsApp – to leave you a Google review.

That is your ORM programme started. Everything else builds from there.

### Why This Matters Now

Kenya's internet penetration is growing steadily, and with it, the habit of searching before buying. Customers who once relied entirely on word-of-mouth to find a trusted pharmacy are now doing that search on their phone first. Younger customers – the children and grandchildren of your long-standing patients, who will become your customers in the coming years – do this instinctively.

MARKETING: ONLINE REPUTATION  
MANAGEMENT - HOW TO WIN THE  
REVIEW GAME



The community pharmacy that manages its online reputation well today is not just protecting itself from bad reviews. It is building a digital asset that compounds over time – a profile that attracts new customers, reassures existing ones, and signals to the wider community that this is a pharmacy worth trusting.

**Your reputation is being built online whether you are involved or not. The only question is whether you are the one building it.**

Share your ORM experience with us at [info@thechemist.co.ke](mailto:info@thechemist.co.ke). Have you turned a negative review into a loyal customer? We would love to feature your story in an upcoming issue of The Chemist's "From Our Readers" section.

CASHFLOW: THE LEFT-DIGIT EFFECT:  
HOW PRICING PSYCHOLOGY CAN  
INCREASE YOUR PHARMACY'S REVENUE



# The Left-Digit Effect: How Pricing Psychology Can Increase Your Pharmacy's Revenue

You are standing in a supermarket aisle. You pick up a product priced at KES 199. You put it in your basket without much thought. On the next shelf, a similar product is priced at KES 200. You pause. You put it back.

The difference is one shilling. But it did not feel like one shilling. It felt like the difference between something affordable and something that needed justification.

BY THE CHEMIST



That feeling has a name. It is called the left-digit effect – and it is one of the most studied, most consistently proven phenomena in consumer psychology. It works because the human brain does not process numbers the way a calculator does. We read left to right, and we anchor to the first digit we see. KES 199 registers in the brain as "one hundred and something." KES 200 registers as "two hundred." The gap between those two mental categories feels far larger than one shilling. Supermarkets, airlines, and e-commerce platforms have known this for decades. They have built entire pricing strategies around it. And yet, walk into the average community pharmacy in Kenya, and prices are still set in round numbers – KES 50, KES 100, KES 500 – with no thought given to the psychology of how those numbers land in a customer's mind.

That is a missed opportunity. And it is one you can fix this week.

### The Hidden Cashflow Problem in Your Price List

Pricing in many community pharmacies is driven by one of two things: supplier cost plus a markup, or a rough match to what nearby pharmacies are charging. Both approaches have their place. But neither accounts for how customers actually perceive and respond to price.



The result is a price list that leaves money on the table in two directions at once:

- Products priced too high relative to how they feel to the customer — leading to hesitation, abandonment, or the customer asking "is that your best price?"
- Products priced lower than a customer would have willingly paid — meaning the sale happens, but the margin suffers unnecessarily.

Many pharmacy managers think of pricing as a fixed calculation: cost plus margin equals price. Full stop. But pricing is also communication. Every price tag tells the customer something about the product, about the pharmacy, and about whether this purchase feels like a good decision.

When you ignore the psychology of pricing, you let the customer's subconscious make that call without any input from you. When you understand it, you can guide that decision — ethically, honestly, and profitably.

## CASHFLOW: THE LEFT-DIGIT EFFECT: HOW PRICING PSYCHOLOGY CAN INCREASE YOUR PHARMACY'S REVENUE



### What Becomes Possible When You Price Strategically

Imagine reviewing your top 30 OTC products and making a handful of small pricing adjustments — no new stock, no new promotions, no extra marketing spend. Just smarter numbers.

Some products move from KES 100 to KES 99. Others move from KES 500 to KES 499. A wellness bundle that was priced at KES 1,500 is repositioned at KES 1,450 — and suddenly feels accessible rather than premium. Within a month, you notice that certain products are moving faster, add-on purchases are increasing, and customers are commenting less on price.

No product changed. No cost increased. The numbers just got smarter.

This is what pricing psychology can do for your pharmacy's cashflow — not by manipulating customers, but by removing the small psychological friction that was quietly slowing down sales.



KSH 199.00

## How to Apply the Left-Digit Effect in Your Pharmacy: A Practical Guide

### Step 1: Understand the Science Behind the Price Tag

The left-digit effect was documented extensively in a landmark study by researchers Manoj Thomas and Vicki Morwitz, who found that the left digit of a price has a disproportionately large influence on perceived value. Our brains encode the magnitude of a number as soon as we read the first digit – before we have finished processing the full price.

This means that the difference between KES 299 and KES 300 feels psychologically larger than the difference between KES 301 and KES 302 – even though both are one-shilling gaps. The first crosses a mental threshold. The second does not.

In practical terms, prices ending in 9, 99, or 95 consistently outperform their rounded counterparts in purchase rate. This effect holds across income levels, product categories, and geographies. It is not a trick for low-income shoppers. It is a function of how human cognition works, across the board.

**CASHFLOW: THE LEFT-DIGIT EFFECT:  
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**Step 2: Identify Where to Apply it in Your Pharmacy**

The left-digit effect is not a universal rule to apply to every product on your shelves. Some contexts call for it more than others.

Where it works well:

- OTC products with discretionary demand – vitamins, supplements, skincare, baby care, health accessories. These are products customers choose, compare, and can easily decide not to buy. A price that feels lower can tip the decision in your favour.
- Wellness and lifestyle products – protein supplements, herbal teas, pain relief patches, compression products. Customers in this category are making a value judgement, not a clinical one.
- Private label or pharmacy-branded products – if your pharmacy stocks or bundles its own products, psychological pricing gives you full control over the price anchor.
- Bundled products and care kits – a Hypertension Care Kit priced at KES 4,999 feels more considered than one priced at KES 5,000, even though the difference is negligible.

**CASHFLOW: THE LEFT-DIGIT EFFECT:  
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**Where to apply it with care:**

- Prescription medicines – customers collecting a prescription are filling a clinical need, not making a discretionary purchase. Psychological pricing here can feel incongruent with the trust the customer is placing in the pharmacy. Round, transparent pricing is often more appropriate.
- High-value medical equipment – for a blood glucose monitor priced at KES 8,500, the left-digit effect still applies, but the primary purchase decision is driven by clinical need and brand trust. Price psychology is a supporting factor, not the lead one.

**Step 3: Audit Your Top 30 Products**

Take your top 30 selling OTC and wellness products and review each price through the lens of the left digit. Ask two questions for each:

- Does this price cross a left-digit threshold unnecessarily? (e.g., KES 200 instead of KES 199, KES 500 instead of KES 495)
- Could a small adjustment – one that does not meaningfully reduce your margin – make this price feel more accessible to the customer?

**CASHFLOW: THE LEFT-DIGIT EFFECT:  
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A one-shilling reduction from KES 200 to KES 199 costs you KES 1 per unit. If it increases the sales volume of that product by 15%, the margin gain far outweighs the price reduction. Run the numbers for each product before deciding.

Create a simple spreadsheet with three columns: current price, adjusted price, estimated volume impact. You do not need to change everything at once – start with your five fastest-moving OTC products and observe the effect over 30 days.

**Step 4: Use Price Anchoring to Guide Customer Decisions**

The left-digit effect is one tool in a broader set of pricing psychology principles. Another powerful one is anchoring – the tendency for customers to rely heavily on the first price they see when evaluating subsequent prices. In a pharmacy context, anchoring works like this: if a customer sees your premium product first – say, a digital blood pressure monitor at KES 6,999 – and then sees a standard version at KES 3,499, the standard version feels like exceptional value. If they had seen the standard version first with no reference point, KES 3,499 might have felt expensive.

**CASHFLOW: THE LEFT-DIGIT EFFECT:  
HOW PRICING PSYCHOLOGY CAN  
INCREASE YOUR PHARMACY'S REVENUE**



You can use anchoring deliberately in your pharmacy:

- Position your premium product at eye level and your mid-range option beside it. The mid-range becomes the "sensible choice."
- Create bundles that anchor to the full price. "Valued at KES 2,500 – available as a bundle for KES 1,999" gives the customer a reference point that makes the bundle feel like a win.
- Use shelf signage thoughtfully. When promoting a product, show the individual price alongside the bundle price. The individual price becomes the anchor; the bundle price becomes the reward.

**Step 5: Train Your Staff to Talk About Price Confidently**

Pricing psychology does not only live on the price tag. It lives in how your team communicates value at the counter. When a customer hesitates at a price, the instinct of many staff members is to apologise for it – "I know it is a bit expensive" – or to immediately offer a discount. Both responses undermine the perceived value of the product.

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Train your staff to respond to price hesitation by reinforcing value, not reducing price:

- "That includes [specific feature/benefit] — a lot of customers find it worth it for the quality."
- "We also have this option at [lower price point] if you would prefer." — Offering a genuine alternative is different from discounting.
- "It is one of our best sellers — customers come back for it regularly." — Social proof shifts the conversation from price to trust.

Price confidence at the counter is part of your pricing strategy. Invest a few minutes in your next team huddle on how your staff handles price conversations.

## The Two Pricing Psychology Mistakes Many Pharmacies Make

**Mistake 1: Applying charm pricing to every single product.** When every item on your shelves ends in 99, the effect loses its power. Customers become habituated to the pattern and begin mentally rounding up automatically. Use psychological pricing selectively — on the products where discretionary decision-making is highest. Reserve round numbers for categories where they feel more appropriate, like prescription medicine.

**Mistake 2: Reducing prices without reviewing margin.** The left-digit effect is about perception, not discounting.

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Dropping a price from KES 200 to KES 199 is a psychological adjustment. Dropping it from KES 200 to KES 150 is a margin decision — and a very different one. Never apply pricing psychology as a shortcut to a pricing review. Know your cost, know your margin floor, and only adjust within that range.

### **Beyond the Numbers**

Many pharmacy managers believe that pricing is a purely logical exercise — cost plus markup equals price, and the customer either accepts it or does not.

Here is a more complete picture: pricing is a communication exercise first, and a mathematical one second.

The price you set does not just tell the customer what something costs. It tells them how to feel about buying it. A price that is set thoughtfully — one that accounts for how the customer's brain will process it — removes friction from the decision. It makes the purchase feel easier, more natural, more like a good call.

You are not manipulating your customers by understanding how they think. You are meeting them where they already are. The left-digit effect exists whether you use it or not. The question is simply whether you are the one guiding it.

## CASHFLOW: THE LEFT-DIGIT EFFECT: HOW PRICING PSYCHOLOGY CAN INCREASE YOUR PHARMACY'S REVENUE



### One Practical Action You Can Take This The Landscape Has Shifted Week

Pick five of your top-selling OTC products. Check each price. For any product currently priced at a round number – KES 50, KES 100, KES 200, KES 500 – calculate what a one-shilling or five-shilling reduction would cost you in margin per unit.

If the margin impact is negligible, update the price this week. Then track the sales volume of those five products over the next 30 days and compare to the previous month.

You may be surprised by what a single shilling can do.

Kenya's retail pharmacy sector is under real margin pressure. Supplier costs have risen. Customers are more price-conscious than before. And competition – from nearby pharmacies, from supermarket health sections, from online platforms – is growing steadily. In that environment, every pricing decision matters. The pharmacies that grow their cashflow without growing their costs are the ones that understand the levers available to them – and pricing psychology is one of the many levers many pharmacies never touch.

**CASHFLOW: THE LEFT-DIGIT EFFECT:  
HOW PRICING PSYCHOLOGY CAN  
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You do not need a consultant or a new system to start. You need a spreadsheet, a willingness to test, and an understanding of how your customers think.

**Smart pricing is not about charging more. It is about removing the friction that stops customers from saying yes. Start with five products. Start this week.**

Share your pricing wins with us at [info@thechemist.co.ke](mailto:info@thechemist.co.ke). Did a small pricing adjustment move the needle for your pharmacy? We would love to feature your story in an upcoming issue of The Chemist's "From Our Readers" section.



# Using AI to Predict Your Pharmacy's Order Volume

BY THE CHEMIST

It is a Tuesday morning and your supplier delivery has just arrived. You open the boxes and find three months' worth of a slow-moving antifungal cream — because you over-ordered last month when it briefly sold well — and not a single unit of the paediatric syrup that has been flying off the shelf since the school term started.

You make a note to reorder the syrup urgently. You find a corner to stack the antifungal cream. And you move on, because there are customers waiting and this is just how ordering works.

Except it does not have to be.

## OPERATIONS: USING AI TO PREDICT YOUR PHARMACY'S ORDER VOLUME



Overstocking and stockouts are not inevitable features of running a community pharmacy. They are forecasting problems. And forecasting problems, in 2026, have a solution – one that is more accessible, more affordable, and easier to use than many pharmacy managers realise.

That solution is AI. Not the complicated, expensive kind that requires a data scientist and a large IT budget. The kind you can access from your phone, feed a few months of sales data, and start getting useful predictions from within the hour.

### The Hidden Cost of Getting Orders Wrong

Every pharmacy manager knows the two sides of the ordering problem. But the full cost of each is rarely added up.

When you overstock, here is what it actually costs you:

- Cash tied up in slow-moving inventory that cannot be used elsewhere – to pay staff, cover rent, or take advantage of a supplier promotion.
- Shelf space occupied by products that are not earning their place.
- Products approaching expiry that must be discounted or written off entirely.



- The quiet stress of a stockroom that feels like a problem waiting to happen.

When you understock, the costs are different but equally real:

- Lost sales on the day — a customer who needed something, could not get it, and left.
- Lost customers long term — a customer who found it at a competitor and discovered they liked that pharmacy too.
- Emergency orders placed at short notice, often at higher cost or with less favourable terms.
- The erosion of your pharmacy's reputation as a reliable, well-stocked health resource.

Many pharmacy managers manage these two problems reactively — restocking when something runs out, cutting back when something piles up. This works, but only just. It keeps the pharmacy functional without ever making it efficient.

The gap between functional and efficient is where profit lives.

### What Accurate Demand Forecasting Can Do for Your Pharmacy

Imagine placing your next supplier order with confidence.

# OPERATIONS: USING AI TO PREDICT YOUR PHARMACY'S ORDER VOLUME



Not guessing, not copying last month's order with minor adjustments, but working from a clear picture of what your pharmacy is likely to sell over the next 30 days – informed by your own sales history, adjusted for the season, the school calendar, and the patterns specific to your community.

You order closer to what you will actually sell. Your stockroom is leaner. Your cash is freer. Your shelves stay stocked on the products that matter. And your team spends less time fielding "do you have this?" questions they cannot answer.

This is what AI-assisted demand forecasting makes possible – and it is available to your pharmacy right now.

## How to Use AI to Predict Your Pharmacy's Order Volume: A Step-By-Step Guide

### Step 1: Start With the Data You Already Have

AI forecasting does not require a sophisticated pharmacy management system. It requires data – and if your pharmacy has been operating for more than a few months, you already have it.

Your data sources might include:

- Sales records from your POS system, exported as a spreadsheet
- Manual stock movement records kept in a notebook or Excel file



## OPERATIONS: USING AI TO PREDICT YOUR PHARMACY'S ORDER VOLUME



- Supplier invoices that show what you ordered and when
- Expiry write-off records that reveal what consistently overstays its welcome

The minimum you need to start is three months of sales data for your top 50 products – ideally broken down by week or by month. If you have six or twelve months, even better. More history means more accurate patterns.

If your records are not digitised, this is the moment to start. Even a simple Google Sheet with product name, units sold, and month is enough to begin. Assign this to a staff member as a weekly task – it takes under 30 minutes once the habit is established.

### Step 2: Identify Your Demand Patterns

Before you involve any AI tool, spend a few minutes with your data looking for patterns you already recognise intuitively. These patterns are what AI will formalise and quantify.

For a Kenyan community pharmacy, common demand patterns include:

- **Seasonal peaks** – antimalarials and antipyretics spike during the long rains (March to May) and short rains (October to November). Cough and cold products rise in the cooler months of June to August.
- **School term cycles** – paediatric products, vitamins, and dewormers typically increase at the start of each school term in January, May, and September.

## OPERATIONS: USING AI TO PREDICT YOUR PHARMACY'S ORDER VOLUME



- **Month-end and salary cycles** — chronic disease medication refills often cluster in the last week of the month when customers have been paid. Discretionary wellness products follow a similar pattern.
- **Festive periods** — December and Easter see increased footfall, more gifting of health products, and changes in the mix of what customers buy.
- **Local events and community factors** — a disease outbreak in your catchment area, a nearby hospital changing its formulary, a new residential estate opening nearby — these are local signals that national forecasting tools will never capture but you will.

Write down the three or four patterns that you recognise most clearly in your pharmacy. These will become the context you feed to your AI tool alongside your data.

### Step 3: Use AI to Analyse and Project

With your data and your pattern notes ready, you can now use an AI tool to build a demand forecast. Here is how to do it practically using a tool like ChatGPT, which is free to access at [chat.openai.com](https://chat.openai.com):

- Open a new conversation and paste in your sales data — either directly from a spreadsheet or as a summarised table.

## OPERATIONS: USING AI TO PREDICT YOUR PHARMACY'S ORDER VOLUME



- Give the AI context: *"This is monthly sales data for a community pharmacy in Nairobi. We are heading into the long rains season. School term begins in May. Please analyse this data and give me a projected order quantity for the next 30 days for each product, flagging any seasonal adjustments I should consider."*
- Review the output. AI will identify trends, calculate averages, flag anomalies, and suggest projected volumes. It will not be perfect — no forecast is — but it will be significantly more informed than a manual estimate.
- Ask follow-up questions: *"Which products show the highest demand variability month to month?"* or *"Based on this data, which products am I most at risk of stocking out in May?"*

You are not replacing your judgement. You are supplementing it with pattern recognition that no human brain can do as quickly or consistently across 50 or 100 products simultaneously.

### Step 4: Build a Simple Reorder System Around Your Forecast

A forecast is only useful if it changes how you order. The next step is to build a simple reorder system that uses your AI projections as its foundation.

For each of your top products, define three numbers:

- Projected monthly demand — from your AI forecast

## OPERATIONS: USING AI TO PREDICT YOUR PHARMACY'S ORDER VOLUME



- Reorder point — the stock level at which you place a new order (typically: projected daily demand × supplier lead time in days, plus a small safety buffer)
- Order quantity — how much you order each time (typically: projected monthly demand minus current stock on hand)

Build this into a simple Google Sheet that you update weekly. Your staff member who manages stock does a weekly count of your top 50 products, enters the numbers, and the sheet flags any product that has dropped below its reorder point.

This is not a complicated system. It is a disciplined one. And discipline in ordering is what separates pharmacies with healthy cashflow from those perpetually firefighting stock problems.

### Step 5: Refine Your Forecast Over Time

The value of AI forecasting compounds as you feed it more data. After your first month of using a forecast, compare what was predicted against what actually sold. Note where the forecast was accurate and where it missed.

Feed this comparison back into your next AI session: *"Last month I forecasted 40 units of Product X but sold 62. Here is my updated sales data. Please revise the forecast for next month."*

## OPERATIONS: USING AI TO PREDICT YOUR PHARMACY'S ORDER VOLUME



Over three to six months, your forecasts will become increasingly accurate – shaped by the specific patterns of your pharmacy, your community, and your product mix. You will start to anticipate demand rather than react to it. And that shift, from reactive to anticipatory, is one of the most valuable operational transformations a pharmacy manager can make.

### The Two Forecasting Mistakes Many Pharmacies Make

**Mistake 1: Using last month's order as next month's order.** This is the most common default – and it compounds errors over time. A month where demand was unusually high leads to an over-order the following month.

A quiet month leads to an under-order when demand recovers. Basing orders on a rolling average rather than the previous single month alone immediately improves accuracy – and AI can calculate that average across multiple timeframes instantly.

**Mistake 2: Forecasting in isolation from cash flow.** A forecast might tell you that you need 200 units of a product next month. But if your cash position cannot support that order without stretching your supplier credit dangerously thin, the forecast is incomplete. Always run your demand forecast alongside your cash flow position. The goal is not to order everything the forecast recommends – it is to prioritise the orders that protect revenue without compromising financial stability.

## OPERATIONS: USING AI TO PREDICT YOUR PHARMACY'S ORDER VOLUME



### The Bigger Picture

Many pharmacy managers think of stock management as a logistics problem — something to be handled at the back of the pharmacy, away from the real work of serving customers.

Here is a different way to see it: your ordering decisions are cashflow decisions. Every shilling tied up in slow-moving stock is a shilling unavailable for growth — for a new product line, a staff training course, a marketing push, or a supplier promotion that could improve your margins.

AI forecasting is not a technology upgrade. It is a cashflow tool dressed in operational clothing. When you predict demand accurately, you free up capital. When you free up capital, you create options. And options are what growth is made of.

### One Practical Action You Can Take This Week

Pull your sales data for the last three months — even if it is just a rough summary from memory or a basic spreadsheet.

## OPERATIONS: USING AI TO PREDICT YOUR PHARMACY'S ORDER VOLUME



Open ChatGPT, paste in your data, and ask: *"Based on this sales history for a community pharmacy in Kenya, what are the top five products I should prioritise in my next order, and what quantity would you recommend for each?"*

Read the output. Compare it to what you were planning to order. Note where they diverge and ask yourself why.

You do not have to act on it immediately. But seeing the gap between instinct and data is often the moment a pharmacy manager decides to do this properly.

### The Moment You Are In

Kenya's pharmaceutical supply chain has faced real pressure in recent years — from import cost increases, to foreign exchange fluctuations affecting drug pricing, to supplier lead times that are less predictable than they once were.

In that environment, the pharmacies that manage their inventory well have a structural advantage over those that do not. They hold less dead stock. They experience fewer stockouts. They negotiate from a position of clarity rather than urgency. And they make ordering decisions based on evidence, not anxiety.

## OPERATIONS: USING AI TO PREDICT YOUR PHARMACY'S ORDER VOLUME



AI forecasting is not a future capability. It is available today, at no cost, using tools your phone can already access. The pharmacy managers who start using it now are building an operational edge that will only widen as their data — and their forecasting accuracy — grows.

**The pharmacy that orders smarter does not just save money. It frees itself to grow. Start with three months of data. Start this week.**

Share your stock management wins with us at [info@thechemist.co.ke](mailto:info@thechemist.co.ke). Have you found a smarter way to forecast demand in your pharmacy? We would love to feature your approach in an upcoming issue of The Chemist's "From Our Readers" section.

SALES: LTV – WHAT YOUR CUSTOMERS ARE REALLY WORTH TO YOUR PHARMACY



# LTV – What Your Customers Are Really Worth to Your Pharmacy

BY THE CHEMIST

Think about one of your regular customers. Perhaps they come in every month for their blood pressure medication. They pick up a painkiller occasionally. Every few months they buy a vitamin supplement. At Christmas they purchase a gift set for a family member. They have been doing this for three years.

Now think about what you charged them on their last visit. Perhaps KES 450 for a month's supply of amlodipine. That is the number that went into your till. That is the number that felt like the sale.

But it was not the whole picture.



**SALES: LTV — WHAT YOUR CUSTOMERS ARE REALLY WORTH TO YOUR PHARMACY**

That customer — if they continue visiting your pharmacy for the next five years — is not a KES 450 transaction. They are a KES 54,000 relationship. Possibly more, once you account for the family members they refer, the additional products they buy, and the trust they place in your pharmacy's advice over clinical decisions that affect their health.

That number — the total value a customer generates over their entire relationship with your pharmacy — is called their Lifetime Value, or LTV. And understanding it changes everything about how you think about sales, service, and growth.

**The Hidden Sales Problem Many Pharmacies Have**

Many pharmacy managers measure sales by the day. How much came through the till today? How does it compare to last Tuesday? Did we hit our target this week?

These are useful numbers. But they create a dangerous blind spot: they make every customer look the same size.

The customer who buys a KES 50 sachet of oral rehydration salts once and never returns looks identical to a new chronic disease patient on the day they both first walk through the door. Yet one of them — if managed well — could be worth KES 80,000 to your pharmacy over the next five years. The other is worth KES 50.

## SALES: LTV – WHAT YOUR CUSTOMERS ARE REALLY WORTH TO YOUR PHARMACY



When you cannot see that difference, you make decisions that hurt your long-term revenue:

- You focus all your energy on attracting new customers while your existing ones quietly drift to a competitor.
- You let a chronic disease patient leave without scheduling their next refill.
- You respond to a complaint from a loyal customer with the same urgency – or lack of it – as a first-time visitor.
- You run promotions designed to pull in new footfall without any strategy for what happens after that first visit.
- You underinvest in customer experience because the cost of a warm interaction does not show up in today's till report.

Transactional thinking keeps a pharmacy surviving. LTV thinking is what makes it grow.

### What Becomes Possible When You Think in Lifetime Value

Imagine looking at your customer base differently. Instead of seeing 200 transactions a week, you see a portfolio of relationships – each one at a different stage, each one with a different potential value.

You identify your top 50 chronic disease customers – the ones on long-term medication who visit monthly – and you build a simple retention system around them. You make sure they never run out. You follow up when they miss a refill. You remember small details about their lives.

# SALES: LTV – WHAT YOUR CUSTOMERS ARE REALLY WORTH TO YOUR PHARMACY



You calculate that keeping each of those 50 customers for one additional year is worth, conservatively, KES 5,400 each – KES 270,000 in revenue that requires no new marketing, no new stock, and no new customers. Just better stewardship of the relationships you already have.

This is the power of LTV. It does not just change how you measure sales. It changes where you invest your time, your energy, and your care.

## LTV – What Your Customers Are Really Worth: A Practical Guide

### Step 1: Understand the LTV Formula

LTV is calculated using three numbers:

$$\text{LTV} = \text{Average Transaction Value} \times \text{Purchase Frequency} \times \text{Customer Lifespan}$$

Here is what each means in a pharmacy context:

- **Average Transaction Value (ATV)** – the average amount a customer spends each time they visit. If a customer spends KES 600 on one visit and KES 900 on the next, their ATV is KES 750.

## SALES: LTV – WHAT YOUR CUSTOMERS ARE REALLY WORTH TO YOUR PHARMACY



- **Purchase Frequency** – how many times a customer visits your pharmacy in a given period. A chronic disease patient on monthly medication has a purchase frequency of 12 visits per year. An occasional customer might visit 3 or 4 times a year.
- **Customer Lifespan** – how long, on average, a customer continues to use your pharmacy. This is the hardest number to know precisely, but a reasonable starting estimate for a community pharmacy with good retention is 3 to 5 years.

A worked example for a Kenyan community pharmacy:

*A hypertensive patient visits monthly for medication refills, spending an average of KES 800 per visit.*

- ATV: KES 800
- Purchase frequency: 12 visits per year
- Customer lifespan: 4 years
- **LTV:  $KES\ 800 \times 12 \times 4 = KES\ 38,400$**

That is the value of one well-retained chronic disease customer. Now multiply that across 40 such customers in your pharmacy. That is KES 1,536,000 in projected revenue – from customers you already have.

# SALES: LTV – WHAT YOUR CUSTOMERS ARE REALLY WORTH TO YOUR PHARMACY



## Step 2: Segment Your Customers by LTV Potential

Not all customers have the same LTV – and your energy should not be distributed equally across all of them. A practical segmentation for a community pharmacy looks like this:

### High LTV customers – your pharmacy's most valuable relationships:

- Chronic disease patients on long-term medication (hypertension, diabetes, thyroid, epilepsy, mental health)
- Caregivers purchasing regularly for elderly or ill family members
- Mothers purchasing for young children across multiple product categories

### Medium LTV customers – valuable and worth nurturing:

- Customers who visit several times a year for acute illness management
- Customers who purchase supplements, wellness, and OTC products regularly
- Customers who have referred others to your pharmacy

### Low LTV customers – occasional visitors:

- One-time customers who came in for a specific product and have not returned
- Customers who visit only during illness episodes and do not return in between

## SALES: LTV – WHAT YOUR CUSTOMERS ARE REALLY WORTH TO YOUR PHARMACY



Your strategy for each segment is different. High LTV customers need retention systems – consistent follow-up, refill reminders, personalised service. Medium LTV customers need nurturing – reasons to visit more often, awareness of your broader product range. Low LTV customers need a reason to return – a good first experience, a follow-up WhatsApp message, an invitation to come back.

### Step 3: Build Retention Systems for Your High LTV Customers

Retention is where LTV is won or lost. A chronic disease patient who switches pharmacies does not just cost you one month's revenue. They cost you KES 38,400 – or whatever their LTV calculation reveals.

Here is how to build retention into your pharmacy operations:

- **Refill reminders via WhatsApp.** A simple message three days before a chronic patient's medication is due – "*Hi [Name], your monthly supply of amlodipine is due this week. Would you like us to set it aside for you?*" – costs nothing and dramatically reduces the chance they drift to a competitor out of convenience.
- **Medication records.** Keep a simple record of your chronic disease customers' regular medications. When they come in, your staff can confirm their full regimen – not just what they asked for – and flag anything that might be running low.

# SALES: LTV – WHAT YOUR CUSTOMERS ARE REALLY WORTH TO YOUR PHARMACY



- **Follow-up after a first chronic diagnosis.** When a customer presents a new prescription for a long-term condition, that moment is the beginning of a potentially high-value relationship. Treat it that way. Explain the medication, ask about their lifestyle, offer to keep their records on file, and invite them to make your pharmacy their regular stop.
- **Acknowledge loyalty.** A customer who has been coming to your pharmacy for two years deserves to know they are valued. A small gesture – a handwritten thank-you note, a small complimentary item on their birthday, a priority service during busy periods – builds the kind of emotional loyalty that no competitor's promotion can easily undo.

## Step 4: Increase LTV by Growing Average Transaction Value

Retention keeps the customer. Growing ATV increases what each visit is worth. Two practical approaches:

**Therapeutic add-ons.** When a customer collects medication for hypertension, is there a related product – a blood pressure diary, a low-sodium salt alternative, a pill organiser – that genuinely complements their treatment? Offering it is not upselling. It is clinical value-add. Train your staff to make one relevant suggestion per chronic disease transaction.

# SALES: LTV – WHAT YOUR CUSTOMERS ARE REALLY WORTH TO YOUR PHARMACY



**Bundling.** A customer buying a paediatric antibiotic is likely to need an antipyretic, an oral rehydration sachet, and possibly a probiotic to protect gut flora during the course. Offering these as a bundle – at a slight saving versus buying individually – increases ATV, improves clinical outcomes, and saves the customer a return trip. Everyone wins.

## Step 5: Reduce Customer Acquisition Cost by Maximising Referrals

One of the clearest benefits of LTV thinking is this: a retained, satisfied high-LTV customer is also your cheapest marketing channel.

A chronic patient who trusts your pharmacy will refer their spouse, their parents, their neighbours. A mother whose child recovered well on your advice will tell other mothers. A customer who felt genuinely cared for will mention your pharmacy by name in the local community WhatsApp group when someone asks for a recommendation.

You do not need a formal referral programme – though one can help. You need to deliver an experience so consistently good that your high-LTV customers feel compelled to share it. Ask satisfied customers directly: *"If you know anyone who needs a reliable pharmacy, we would be grateful for the recommendation."* Simple, honest, and effective.

# SALES: LTV – WHAT YOUR CUSTOMERS ARE REALLY WORTH TO YOUR PHARMACY



Instructions:  
1. Antibiotic 5ml twice daily.  
2. Fever syrup 3ml every 6 hours (if hot).  
3. ORS 1L water/sachet.  
4. Probiotic 5 drops daily.

## The Two LTV Mistakes Many Pharmacy Managers Make

**Mistake 1: Investing more in acquiring new customers than retaining existing ones.** New customer acquisition – through flyers, social media, promotions – is visible and feels productive. Retention is quieter. But research consistently shows that acquiring a new customer costs five to seven times more than retaining an existing one. If your marketing budget is entirely pointed outward, you are likely losing through the back door what you are winning through the front.

**Mistake 2: Treating all customer complaints as minor inconveniences.** A complaint from a high-LTV customer is not a minor inconvenience. It is a KES 38,000 risk event. A customer who leaves unhappy – and does not come back – takes their entire future LTV with them. Resolve complaints from loyal customers with urgency and genuine care. The cost of resolution is almost always far lower than the cost of losing them.

## One Practical Action You Can Take This Week

Identify your top ten chronic disease customers – the ones who visit most regularly for long-term medication.

PHARMACY

PHARMACY

**SALES: LTV – WHAT YOUR CUSTOMERS ARE REALLY WORTH TO YOUR PHARMACY**



For each one, calculate a rough LTV using the formula: monthly spend × 12 months × 3 years.

**Where Kenyan Pharmacies Stand Today**

Write the number next to each name. Then ask yourself: *Am I serving each of these customers in a way that reflects how valuable they are to this pharmacy?*

Kenya's community pharmacy sector is at an inflection point. Customer expectations are rising — people want to be remembered, advised, and valued, not just served. At the same time, competition is intensifying, and the cost of acquiring new customers through advertising and promotions is climbing.

If the answer is not a confident yes, decide on one thing you will do differently for each of them starting this week. A refill reminder. A personal greeting by name. A follow-up message after their next visit.

Start with ten customers. Build from there.

## SALES: LTV – WHAT YOUR CUSTOMERS ARE REALLY WORTH TO YOUR PHARMACY



In that environment, the pharmacies that win are not necessarily the ones with the most footfall. They are the ones with the deepest customer relationships – the ones whose regulars would not dream of going elsewhere, whose referrals bring in a steady stream of new patients, and whose revenue is built on a foundation of loyalty rather than volume alone. LTV is how you measure that foundation. And it starts with seeing your customers not for what they spend today, but for what they are worth over time.

**Your best customers are already in your pharmacy. The question is whether you are investing in them the way their value deserves. Start calculating. Start this week.**

Share your customer retention wins with us at [info@thechemist.co.ke](mailto:info@thechemist.co.ke). Have you built a loyalty system that works for your pharmacy? We would love to feature your approach in an upcoming issue of The Chemist's "From Our Readers" section.



# The Hypertension Care Kit

## BY THE CHEMIST

One in four Kenyan adults is living with hypertension. A significant number of them do not know it. Of those who do know, many are not managing it well – missing doses, skipping check-ups, unaware of the lifestyle changes that could reduce their dependence on medication.

Every one of those people is a potential customer walking past your pharmacy.

The Hypertension Care Kit is a bundled product that your pharmacy can assemble, brand, and sell – bringing together the tools a hypertensive patient needs to manage their condition at home, in a single, purposeful package. It positions your pharmacy not just as a place to collect medication, but as a healthcare partner invested in your customer's long-term wellbeing.

It is also a strong revenue opportunity. Here is how to build it.

**PRODUCT: INNOVATIVE PRODUCT  
SPOTLIGHT: THE HYPERTENSION CARE  
KIT**



### What the Kit Contains — and Why

The Hypertension Care Kit has five components. Each one earns its place clinically and commercially.

#### 1. Digital Blood Pressure Monitor

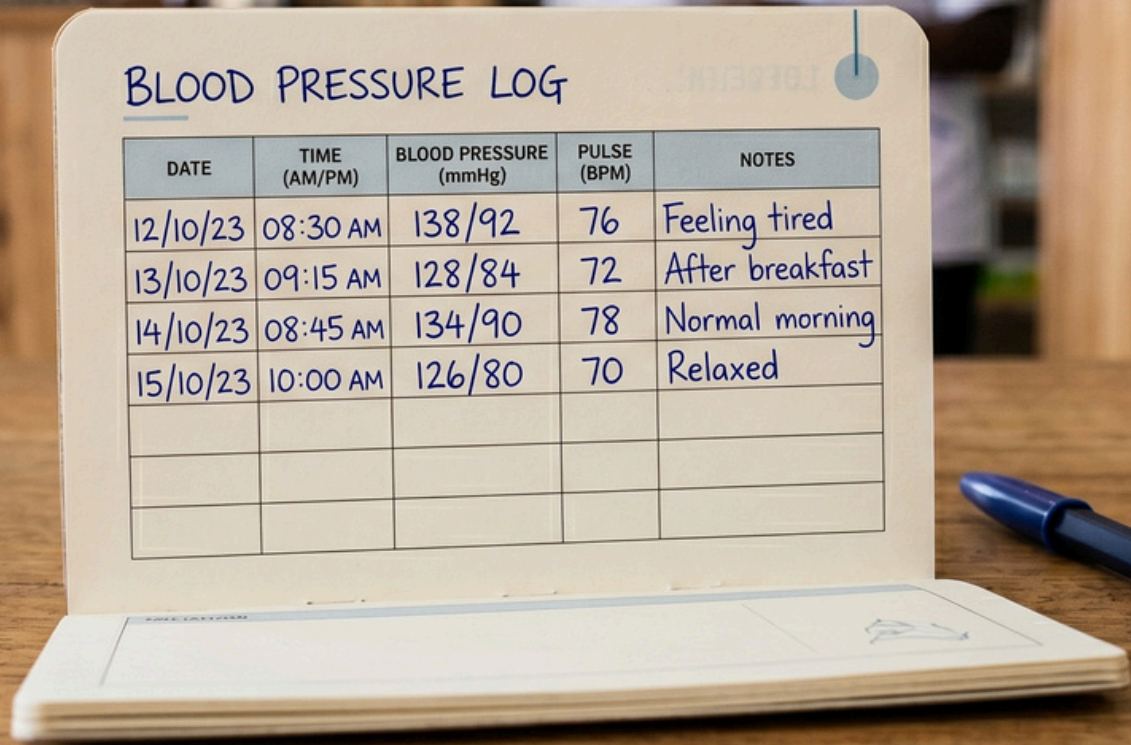
This is the anchor of the kit — the product that gives it weight, perceived value, and clinical legitimacy. A reliable upper-arm digital BP monitor allows a hypertensive patient to track their readings at home, spot dangerous spikes before they become emergencies, and bring accurate data to their next clinical appointment.

Source from a reputable supplier that offers upper-arm digital monitors with clear displays and reliable accuracy. Stock two tiers if possible: an entry-level model and a mid-range model with memory and irregular heartbeat detection. This gives you a basic kit and a premium kit at two different price points.

#### 2. Pill Organiser

Medication adherence is one of the central challenges in hypertension management. A weekly pill organiser — seven compartments, clearly labelled — is a simple tool that dramatically reduces missed doses. It is low cost, high utility, and communicates care. Source from your medical supplies distributor.

**PRODUCT: INNOVATIVE PRODUCT  
SPOTLIGHT: THE HYPERTENSION  
CARE KIT**



Choose a sturdy, compact design that feels like a quality addition to the kit, not an afterthought.

### 3. Blood Pressure Tracking Diary

This is the component that brands the kit as yours. A simple 12-page printed booklet – designed in your pharmacy's colours – with space to record daily BP readings, notes, and medication times. Include a brief guide on what BP numbers mean and when to seek medical advice.

Print it at any local digital printer. A run of 100 copies costs approximately KES 3,000 to KES 5,000 depending on size and finish.

Every customer who uses it takes your pharmacy brand home and keeps it on their bedside table. It is the lowest-cost brand touchpoint your pharmacy can produce.

### 4. Low-Sodium Salt Alternative

Sodium reduction is one of the most evidence-backed lifestyle interventions for hypertension management. A low-sodium salt alternative – available from health food suppliers and select wholesale distributors in Kenya – is a practical, affordable addition that reinforces the clinical credibility of the kit. It signals to the customer that this is not just a product bundle. It is a health management tool.

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### 5. Patient Education Card

A laminated A5 card covering five key points: understanding blood pressure readings, the importance of medication adherence, foods to reduce, lifestyle changes that help, and when to visit the pharmacy or a doctor. Keep it simple, visual, and in plain language. Design it in your pharmacy's branding. Print it alongside the diary.

### Pricing the Kit

Offer two versions:

### Basic Hypertension Care Kit

- Entry-level digital BP monitor + pill organiser + branded BP diary + low-sodium salt + patient education card
- Estimated cost to assemble: KES 2,800 – KES 3,200
- Recommended retail price: KES 3,999
- Estimated margin: 20 – 30%

### Premium Hypertension Care Kit

- Mid-range digital BP monitor (with memory function) + pill organiser + branded BP diary + low-sodium salt + patient education card
- Estimated cost to assemble: KES 4,200 – KES 4,800
- Recommended retail price: **KES 5,999**

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- Estimated margin: 20 – 30%

Note the pricing – KES 3,999 and KES 5,999, not KES 4,000 and KES 6,000. As covered in this issue's Cashflow article, the left-digit effect applies here too.

### Who to Sell it To

The Hypertension Care Kit is relevant to a wider customer base than you might expect:

- Newly diagnosed hypertensive patients – the moment a customer presents a first-time antihypertensive prescription is the perfect moment to introduce the kit. They are motivated, slightly anxious, and receptive to anything that helps them feel in control.
- Family members of hypertensive patients – a concerned spouse or adult child purchasing medication for a parent is a natural kit buyer. Frame it as a gift of care.
- Patients with poorly controlled hypertension – a customer who keeps coming in with complaints of headaches or dizziness despite being on medication may benefit from home monitoring. The kit opens that conversation.

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- Corporate wellness – businesses purchasing health products for staff wellness programmes are an emerging market. A Hypertension Care Kit presented in a branded box makes a compelling workplace wellness gift.

### How to Market it In-Pharmacy

- **Counter display.** Place the assembled kit – or a display model – at the dispensing counter where antihypertensive medications are collected. Proximity to the point of need is the most powerful merchandising tool available.

- **WhatsApp broadcast.** Send a short message to your existing customer list: *"We have just launched our Hypertension Care Kit – everything your loved one needs to manage blood pressure at home, in one package. Ask us in-pharmacy or reply to this message to find out more."*
- **Train your staff.** Every staff member should be able to explain the kit in two sentences and make the offer naturally during a relevant dispensing interaction. Brief your team before you launch.
- **Google Business Profile post.** A simple photo of the kit with a short description posted on your Google Business Profile extends your reach to customers searching for hypertension-related products nearby.

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### A Note on Clinical Responsibility

The Hypertension Care Kit is a supportive health product – not a substitute for medical care. Ensure your staff are clear on this when selling it. The kit empowers patients to monitor and manage their condition at home. It does not replace their doctor, their medication, or their regular clinical reviews. Position it as a complement to their existing care, and your pharmacy's credibility – and the customer's trust – will only grow.


The Chemist community of over 1,200 pharmacies is your sounding board. Have you stocked a care kit that has sold well? Share your experience with us at [info@thechemist.co.ke](mailto:info@thechemist.co.ke) – we would love to feature your product insights in an upcoming issue.

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