

Checklist for Evaluating Software Effectiveness		
Have you talked with at least three colleagues in pharmacies similar to yours who have recently installed the software?	Yes	No
Have you visited one or more of these pharmacies to review the system while under use by pharmacy staff?	Yes	No
Do promotional literature and verbal claims made for the software distinguish between what the program can do immediately after installation and what it can do if supplemented (at a later date and at additional expense) by additional programming modules or hardware (VERY IMPORTANT)?	Yes	No
Are pharmacists who work in similar pharmacies involved in programming the software?	Yes	No
Can all information be seen on screen at one time? For a prescription, this information should include patient data such as address, telephone number, allergies, and medical conditions; all data on the prescription; the name, address, telephone number, and Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) number of the prescriber; and drug information such as the name of the agent (brand and generic) and the national drug code, average wholesale price, and net cost.	Yes	No
Can you override, modify, or turn off every feature of the system (ESSENTIAL)?	Yes	No
Does the system have a pharmacy-technician version and a pharmacist version, or does it constantly delay prescription processing with messages such as "This requires a sterile procedure. Is your staff qualified to do this and is your facility adequate?"	Yes	No
When you see a needed warning (such as "pharmacist's name required"), is the warning redundant or does a dropdown menu of pharmacists' names appear?	Yes	No
Is this a turnkey system that conforms with federal law and the laws of your state (i.e., it does not impose upon you the more stringent laws of other states)?	Yes	No
Are serious deficiencies corrected by the vendor within 24 hours after they are reported, or are you required to hope for improvement when or if an upgrade is provided and use programming tasks and/or time-consuming workarounds in the meantime to correct those problems?	Yes	No
Are all applications seamless (e.g., are house charges and processed automatically as are Visa or MasterCard transmissions)?	Yes	No
Are charges corrected or deleted without extra steps as the prescription is modified or deleted?	Yes	No
Does the basic accounts receivable function allow for the following? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Total choice of cutoff date in order to eliminate the problem of having to require an employee to be at the pharmacy on weekends and holidays to process statements correctly ■ Detailed aged trial balance ■ Ability to match payments with charges ■ Edits to archived transactions as in QuickBooks 	Yes	No
On lookups with just one choice, are additional keystrokes required to access that choice?	Yes	No
For prescriptions with detailed instructions (e.g., 5 to 10 lines), can an accessory label be created, and can freehand information be typed on the prescription label (or additional labels) if space is required?	Yes	No
Does the program automatically enter the name of the patient's primary physician?	Yes	No
After the first of multiple prescriptions filled at the same time from a secondary physician, does the program automatically enter the name of the secondary physician?	Yes	No
After the name and quantity of the drug have been entered, does the system enter information such as "capsule," "tablet," "suspension," or "suppository"; start the "SIG" with "Take one capsule," "Take one tablet," "Shake and take one teaspoon," "Unwrap and insert one," or similar standard instructions; and list cautions such as "Refrigerate" or "Protect from heat"?	Yes	No
After the prescription information has been entered, is that prescription saved and are a label and a charge, cash, or credit card invoice created by a single command, such as typing "L" (label), or "L2" (two labels)?	Yes	No
Is simultaneous entry to multiple numbers to refill possible?	Yes	No
Does altering or deleting a prescription or refill also correct accounts receivable?	Yes	No
Can the system search for a generic drug by its brand name or a brand name by its generic name and enter both the brand name and the generic name on the label? (<i>Note: This is a requirement in North Carolina.</i>)	Yes	No
Is the number of days supplied determined automatically from the SIG (e.g., is "Disp #30, SIG Take one 3 times a day" automatically entered as a 10-day supply)?	Yes	No
Is a warning received on attempted entry of duplicate information (such as the SIG code or the name of the patient, the prescribing physician, or the drug) into the database?	Yes	No
Does the system print "YOUR REFILLS HAVE EXPIRED" conspicuously on the label?	Yes	No
Does the prescription screen show how many third-party prescriptions the patient has received for the month to date?	Yes	No
Can third-party prescriptions be filled if the patient's eligibility has expired?	Yes	No
Can a list of archived (i.e., entered but not processed) prescriptions be printed by date range?	Yes	No
Does the vendor arbitrarily change the program without your knowledge, regardless of your needs?	Yes	No

Checklist for Evaluating Desirable Features that Were Not Available in the 1975 Digital System		
When the system requests omitted information, does the cursor immediately access that field, or do the pharmacists have to access the field via multiple keystrokes?	Yes	No
Do you receive an "Are you sure you want to do this?" flag that requires undue response time, or is there a back arrow (as in Microsoft Word) that allows you to revert to the prior screen to correct an error?	Yes	No
If dropdown menus are used, are the few regularly used fields automatically positioned at the top of the dropdown menu as in Microsoft Word?	Yes	No
Can the name of the patient be accessed without having to make multiple menu choices?	Yes	No
Are chemical inventory updates performed via bar coding?	Yes	No
Is the system compatible with Unguator software, such as the Computerized Electro Mortar & Pestle, and with Ohaus electronic balances?	Yes	No

Checklist for Evaluating Highly Desirable Features that May Not Be Available in Pharmacy Software		
Does the system use caller ID to access the patient's profile as the telephone is answered?	Yes	No
When multiple identical prescriptions are received from the same physician every day, can each order be entered into each patient's profile by a code so that the pharmacist need only review the prescription and enter "L" (for label)?	Yes	No
Can the patient's profile be searched for a specific drug by the generic or brand name, or does the patient's entire profile have to be reviewed to find the drug?	Yes	No
<i>Note: As of the publication of this article, the authors had not found these features in any pharmacy software, although the features are available in software for other businesses.</i>		