



## DRUG STORE NEWS

# Ford developing health care in the dashboard

*Auto dealer creating hands-free interaction platform around allergies, diabetes*

**MAY 18, 2011** | BY MICHAEL JOHNSEN

DEARBORN, Mich. — Ford Motor on Wednesday announced its research partnership with WellDoc — a healthcare company that develops technology solutions to improve chronic disease management outcomes and reduce healthcare costs — around integrating WellDoc services into Ford vehicles through the automaker's SYNC voice-activated in-car connectivity system.

That SYNC system also will enable access to SDI's Pollen.com Allergy Alert application, Ford announced Wednesday.

"The car has rapidly evolved into a mobile office and entertainment center for many Americans," stated Venkatesh Prasad, group and technical leader of the Infotronics research and innovation team at Ford Motor. "Our goal is to further innovate the automotive space by incorporating health-and-wellness services into the car, thereby making them convenient and easily accessible to our customers

— all while keeping their safety in mind. Delivering real-time, in-vehicle health management services is a revolutionary concept that we are proud to spearhead with WellDoc, a pioneer in the mobile health space."

The research project between WellDoc and Ford demonstrates how adults with Type 2 diabetes can manage their disease using the WellDoc DiabetesManager System through SYNC. People with diabetes can enter their data, such as medications, exercise and diet information, through speech-to-text interaction while in their Ford vehicle. Patients who utilize the DiabetesManager System benefit from consistent interaction across their cell phone, computer and now their vehicle. The WellDoc software-based system also will allow healthcare providers to access their WellDoc clinical decision support records while they're in the office, on their mobile device or in their Ford vehicle.

WellDoc's DiabetesManager, which has been cleared by the Food and Drug Administration, provides automated, real-time clinical and behavioral coaching based on patient data. The software-based system supports adult Type 2 diabetes patients and enables their healthcare providers to configure specific parameters and extend their care beyond traditional office visits by utilizing mobile phones, the Internet and soon automobiles.

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, Americans spend more than 500 million "commuter hours" per week in their automobiles, making it difficult to follow a daily health routine. By transforming the car into an access point that delivers health management content to patients in a safe, targeted and supportive manner, WellDoc and Ford are now enabling patients to maintain their daily routines even on the road.

Regarding the partnership with Pollen.com, developers enabled the Allergy Alert app for the iPhone to communicate via Ford's SYNC using AppLink technology, giving users voice-controlled access to location-based forecasts for four different conditions: allergy (pollen), asthma, cold and cough, and ultraviolet sensitivity.

Pollen.com's Allergy Alert app for the iPhone, which was launched in second quarter 2009, had more than 1 million users in 2010 with more than 80,000 downloads, putting it in the top 100 healthcare apps on iTunes. SDI expects the Allergy Alert SYNC app to be production-ready in third quarter 2011.