

What's the True Cost of Prescribing an Orthotic?

By John Hauer

Prescribing an orthotic used to be inefficient and slow. Additional appointments were needed, physical impressions were made and shipped, and a whole lot of information got shared via phone, fax and email. Quality wasn't ideal and the resulting orthotics often required more time for adjustment and fitting. Patients got sticker shock and many of them declined treatment.

Now digital technology is impacting healthcare, just like it has nearly every other industry.

With the new Arize solution from HP, podiatrists can consistently and quickly deliver a superior orthotic, improve patient uptake and satisfaction, and reduce expenses while simultaneously driving new revenue and profit.

The Arize solution allows DPMs to book more appointments, enabling their practices to generate more revenue and profit.

Time is Money

"In the past I would only do a few orthotics a month," says Dr. Phillip Wrotslavsky. "Plaster casted molds are time consuming, messy and would typically require setting up another appointment. Patients don't always have time to get casted right away. Rescheduling them significantly increases the risk of a no-show. There are other times when we would cast the patient and then once their insurance benefits and out-of-pocket costs were understood, they would decline treatment. In these cases my practice had to absorb the time and materials needed to cast them."

There is considerable time and expense involved with making plaster casts or using foam boxes to capture impressions of patients' feet. Clinicians typically spend up to 30 minutes on the task, and if adjustments or remakes are required, the cost escalates. There's also risk involved as patients often decline treatment after the work is done. The lost time and money is inevitably incurred by patients who do accept care, making their treatment even more expensive.

Many other factors can also impact the cost of making an orthotic. Occasionally plaster casts will get lost on their way to the lab. In other instances they get damaged or broken during shipment or manufacturing. More often though, it's a growth or product lifespan issue. Saving each cast is prohibitively expensive, so if a patient wants to order a new or replacement orthotic, the process must be repeated.

There's also time spent working with the lab to communicate the details of each prescription. A clinician or technician has to submit the order and handle follow up inquiries. It's a labor-intensive process, and isn't very scalable.

Patient Perception

"The US healthcare system broadly has an immense opportunity to provide a better customer experience by using technology to be more efficient."

—Brad Michel, Managing Director and Life Sciences Lead, Accenture, via *Outsourcing Pharma*

Beyond the cost implications, podiatrists must also consider client expectations and the infrastructure they have in place to support rapidly changing needs. For one, patients want faster care. Technology has permeated their lives, and with social media and eCommerce, consumers receive instant gratification. They've also grown accustomed to more choice and a high degree of personalization. Patients want the same from their healthcare experiences.

To meet their demands, providers must be more innovative and efficient.

Arize: The Digital Solution

The Arize Solution is a turnkey digital solution that streamlines the process of prescribing and dispensing foot orthotics. It features scanning technology, which allows you or your staff to accurately digitize the patient's foot in under 5 minutes. This alone saves valuable time and greatly reduces the inaccuracies and imprecision of other impression methods.

The comprehensive solution includes intuitive software that allows you to quickly prescribe modifications and visualize the final product. Through the powerful design engine, you can see real time design changes to the final device, ensuring the patient receives exactly what you prescribe, before submitting your order. This digital process eliminates much of the back and forth communication, allowing you and your staff to focus on patient care and clinic productivity. Each orthotic is then custom manufactured using HP's 3D printing technology, which ensures a highly accurate, finished product while the robust, high strength, engineering grade PA12 polymer material delivers the performance you and your patients expect.

Arize improves the patient experience by enabling digital technology and podiatrists are deploying this cutting-edge solution to reduce cost and deliver a better product, more affordably. It also frees them up, allowing them to book more appointments, enabling their practices to generate more revenue and profit.

Save time and money. Grow your orthotics business with Arize. Learn more at <https://www.arizeclinical.com> or click here.