

## Valentine's Day Tips – Part 2

Can you apply this simple design to your store window?

If you do, please send your photo to [gabe.trahan@ncapnet.org](mailto:gabe.trahan@ncapnet.org)

- ♥ Windows: Samples of a great window display include dangling paper hearts, hearts drawn with glass wax, a large sign that reads, "Valentine's Gift Headquarters" and "Don't Forget Valentine's Day Thursday the 14<sup>th</sup>." I have also seen a plush dog resting on a dog house with a sign that reads, "Don't let this happen to you!... Valentine's Day is Thursday the 14th!" Then on the 15<sup>th</sup> the sign can be replaced with, "Did you forget Valentine's Day? Come on in, we can help!"



### Advertising and Merchandising Suggestions

- ♥ Bring out last year's Valentine carry over NOW! This is very important. Make note why the product is carry over. Is it because you over estimated, bad weather caused a slowdown in shopping, less than desirable day of the week for Valentine's to land on, or simply a bad item? This merchandise must go on the shelf. Make a decision about whether this product needs to be discounted immediately and if so, how much discount can you offer, or can the item be sold at last year's retail with the help of a creative sign, sampling or repositioning? If the item is two years old then use a sign and a discount. It is reported that when you box up, inventory, un-box and remerchandise the same merchandise it will cost at least 15% of the product's value. Do your best not to box up this old merchandise again. Remember, last year's unsold merchandise is like money being held hostage. **Don't think of last year's inventory as slow-moving product, but instead think of it as cash that needs to be rescued.**
- ♥ Don't forget about signage. Examples include: *Valentine's Gift Headquarters* or *Don't Forget Valentine's Day, Thursday the 14th!* Sign locations: Near the entrance, near each register, in the candy, card and gift departments to remind customers that Valentine's Day is Thursday the 14<sup>th</sup>.
- ♥ Card Department: Constantly straighten your greeting card department. Make sure to have an envelope for every card. Pull aside some red envelopes from Christmas to use for cards that you just can't find the matching envelope. Resist condensing your Valentine card section - the smaller the section the less room people will have to shop. *Russell Stover 1lb chocolates fit nicely in an empty card pocket.*
- ♥ Fragrances: Ensure all testers are working and are not out of date. (Nothing kills a sale faster than a tester gone bad.) Have some fragrances pre-wrapped. Don't forget men's cologne and after shaves. Merchandise premium skin care, candles and bubble bath alongside the fragrance departments. Note: Valentine's is the peak for fragrance sales - it's all downhill from here, don't be tricked into thinking you should carry fragrances all year long. You should be sold out on February 15.

- ♥ Coupons: Prepare a few “50 Cents off Greeting Card Purchase” coupons that can be attached to slow-moving candy, fragrance, and or gifts.

### End-Cap Reminders

- ♥ End-Caps: Plan for them now. Possible end-cap themes are: chocolate; fragrances; photo frames; candles; massage oils and skin creams; plush animals; children’s candy and toys; and wrapping accessories. Every end-cap must have a sign and try adding a pink or red backdrop to the fixture.
- ♥ If you dedicate a section or a complete aisle to Valentine’s Day, make sure you have an end-cap leading into this area. Identify and rank your end-caps by value and utilize them accordingly. Which ones get the most customer traffic? Use those for higher sticker price items. Don’t spend a lot of time wrapping your shelves. Paper doesn’t sell product. Great presentation, full shelves, themes, signage and pricing make your sale.
- ♥ February is American Heart Month. Create an end-cap of heart-healthy products. Place a red heart on the shelf next to any heart-healthy item in your store (for example: CoQ10, aspirin, etc.). Create signs that read, *“Look for the red heart and give the gift of health!”*

### General Tips

- ♥ Shopping baskets: People stop shopping when their hands are full! Place shopping baskets and or carts both in the front and rear of the store.
- ♥ Remember, everyday products re-merchandised as Valentine gift suggestions do not have to be discounted the day after Valentine’s. Challenge yourself to purchase a little less Valentine’s Day product and sell more of your regular gifts and everyday product for this holiday.

**MOST IMPORTANT: Don’t Panic!** Valentine’s Day is the most last-minute holiday there is. Don’t kill your potential profit by letting your inventory scare you. Unless someone really messed up, **do not discount before the holiday**, just be a better buyer next year.

Have you visited Gabe’s Gallery or the Overhaul of Fame yet? Send a photo of your Valentine merchandising to [gabe.trahan@ncpanet.org](mailto:gabe.trahan@ncpanet.org) and your pharmacy could become a member of the Overhaul of Fame.

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