

Valentine's Day Tips – Part 2

Advertising and Merchandising Suggestions

- ♥ Bring out last year's Valentine carry over NOW! This is very important! This merchandise must go on the shelf. Make a decision as to whether this product needs to be discounted immediately and if so, how much discount can you offer? It is reported that boxing up, inventorying, un-boxing and re-merchandising the same merchandise costs 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.
- ♥ 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, Tuesday the 14th" I also have 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 Tuesday the 14th!" Then on the 15th the sign can be replaced with "Did you forget Valentine's Day? Come on in, we can help!"
- ♥ Don't forget about signage! Examples: *Valentine's Gift Headquarters* or *Don't Forget Valentine's Day, Tuesday the 14th!* Signage locations: Near the entrance, near each register, in the candy, card and gift departments to remind customers that Valentine's Day is Tuesday the 14th.
- ♥ 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.
- ♥ Fragrances: Ensure all testers are working and are not out of date.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 the men's cologne and after shaves. Merchandise premium skin care, candles and bubble bath along side of the fragrance departments.
- ♥ Coupons: Prepare a few "50 cents Off Greeting Card Purchase" coupons that can be attached to slower moving candy, fragrance and or gifts.

End-Cap Reminders

- ♥ End-Caps - plan for them now. Possible end-cap themes are: Chocolate (duh); fragrances; photo frames, albums & film; candles; massage oils & skin creams; plush animals; children's candy & toys; and wrapping accessories. Every end-cap must be signed 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 bigger sticker Valentine items. Don't spend a lot of time wrapping your shelves. Paper doesn't sell product. Great presentation, full shelves, themes, signage and pricing makes your sale.
- ♥ February is Heart Month. Create an end-cap of heart-healthy products. Place a red sticky heart on the shelf next to any heart-healthy item in your store (for example: CoQ10, aspirin, etc.). Create signage that reads, *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 and your pharmacy could become a member of the Overhaul of Fame.

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