

# Smart Retailing

INSIGHTS TO HELP YOU SUCCEED

## A Legislative Outreach Guide for Retail Pharmacies

SUMMER 2012

Every day, elected officials across the country make decisions that impact the ability to do business. Therefore, it is important to build relationships with elected officials to strengthen and maximize advocacy efforts in support of your pharmacy. Below, please find some suggestions for hosting a visit at your organization with legislators.

### Hosting a Visit

Hosting visits at your pharmacy with public officials is an effective way to educate them about your business and to leave them with a lasting impression of how you impact healthcare.

Use the checklist below to make sure that your visit goes smoothly!

### Scheduling a Meeting:

- 1 Send a written invitation to the legislator, including:
  - a) Who your company is and what you do;
  - b) Expected activities (tour, meeting with executives, etc.);
  - c) Possible dates;
  - d) Facility location; and
  - e) Contact information.
- 2 Unless you receive a response quickly, follow up with a phone call to the legislator's nearest office.
- 3 Once the date is solidified:
  - a) Verbally confirm or send a written confirmation providing complete directions to the facility and other pertinent information as needed.
  - b) You may want to include background information on your organization and/or the individuals with whom the legislator will be meeting.
- 4 If employees will participate in a meet-and-greet, inform them of the visit in advance and provide a short biography of the visitor.

### During the Meeting:

- 1 Be prepared! The legislator is meeting with you to obtain information on your company or a specific issue and its impact on you. Written background material should be provided as necessary.
- 2 Briefly explain your business interests.
- 3 Remember that you are the expert on your business. Keep overviews high level, and avoid getting into too much detail.
- 4 Don't worry if you don't know the answer to a question. Take note of the question and commit to find out and follow up.

- 5 If discussing a specific issue or piece of legislation, it is a good idea to bring a copy of the bill with you. Having this on hand will help to facilitate the conversation and allow you to point to specific language of concern.
- 6 However, if discussing a particular issue of importance, be sure to offer ideas or solutions to solve the problem and don't just complain about a piece of legislation.
- 7 You will also want to be familiar with the opposing viewpoint, including concerns that the legislator will likely address.
- 8 Don't hesitate to ask or solicit questions. Legislators will be impressed by your willingness to learn, as well as your ability to provide them with information.
- 9 Position yourself as a trusted resource!

### **Meeting Follow-Up:**

- 1 After the meeting, jot down some notes about the meeting for future follow-up.
- 2 Send a thank-you note recapping the important points of your meeting and detailing any further action necessary.

### **Identifying Your Elected Officials:**

- Call, email or mail U.S. state and federal elected officials and government agencies:  
<http://www.usa.gov/Contact/Elected.shtml>
- Find information on local officials and governments, including cities, counties and townships:  
<http://congress.org/congressorg/dbq/officials/?command=local>
- Find elected officials, including the president, members of Congress, governors, state legislators, local officials and more: <http://congress.org/congressorg/dbq/officials/>

**Sample Invitation**

[Insert Date]

The Honorable [Insert Name]  
[Insert Address]  
[Insert Address]

Dear [Insert Formal Name],

On behalf of [Insert Your Company Name] and our employees, we would like to invite you to visit and tour our facility at [Insert Address].

[Insert Background Information about Your Company/Organization.]

We are proud to have [Insert Number of Employees Living in District or State] employees who live in your district/state and work at our [Insert City] pharmacy.

We welcome the opportunity to show you firsthand the critical role we play in healthcare, and we hope to schedule a meeting very soon.

Sincerely,

[Insert Name]  
[Insert Title]  
[Insert Pharmacy Name]  
[Insert Address]  
[Insert Phone Number]  
[Insert Email Address]

## Sample Thank-You Letter

[Insert Date]

The Honorable [Insert Name]  
[Insert Address]  
[Insert Address]

Dear [Insert Formal Name]:

Thank you for meeting with us this week/last week and for taking the time to visit our [Insert City] facility. We appreciated the opportunity to discuss [Insert Topic from Discussion] and hear your insights on [Insert Topic from Discussion].

As you are aware, [Insert One-Two Sentences Reiterating a Key Point or Piece of Information about Your Company/Organization/Impact to Industry].

I look forward to ongoing discussions with you and your team on ways we can support your efforts and goals with our healthcare expertise.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at [Insert Phone] or [Insert Email].

Thank you again for your time.

Sincerely,

[Insert Name]  
[Insert Title]  
[Insert Pharmacy Name]  
[Insert Address]  
[Insert Phone Number]  
[Insert Email Address]