Transitioning away from TOBACCO

TIPS FOR PHILLY RETAILERS

- Make Money
- Save Lives
- Support Your Community
The retail environment has a big impact on the health of your community.

Your store has the chance to improve your community’s health... ...or it can harm community health.

Take tobacco, for example. Tobacco companies spend most of their advertising money at the Point of Sale (POS), in small retail stores like yours. In fact, they spend more than $1 million dollars per hour on advertisements at the POS.¹

$1 million per hour buys them the best placement in your store for their products and their ads. But there’s more — $1 million per hour encourages youth to start smoking and makes it hard for current smokers to quit.²

Is it worth it?

Your customers live in your neighborhood. They should be able to have healthy lives without influence from tobacco companies. That's why we're here to reveal some myths about tobacco revenue and offer alternatives to selling tobacco.

Let’s get started.
THE BOTTOM LINE:  
NO IF’S, AND’S, OR BUTTS

Just 1 out of every 12 customers bought only tobacco in a study of Philly c-stores.¹

**MYTH**  
Jobs are lost when small retail stores can’t sell tobacco.

**REALITY**  
Less people smoke and fewer places sell tobacco, but the number of people who work in retail hasn’t changed.⁴

**MYTH**  
Small retail stores are closing because they can’t sell tobacco.

**REALITY**  
The number and density of retail stores has increased in the last twenty years. Even though less people are smoking and there are stricter tobacco laws, there are more small retailers.⁶

**MYTH**  
When stores stop selling tobacco, they lose money because they can’t sell other things.

**REALITY**  
People use their money to buy other products.  
C-store customers spend the same amount of money on food and beverages, regardless of whether or not they buy tobacco. They use their money to buy other products.⁴
THE BOTTOM LINE: NO TOBACCO? NO PROBLEM!

9 out of every 10 Philadelphians say they would shop the same or more at a store that has stopped selling tobacco.

Over 3,500 Philadelphians were asked:
If a store stopped selling tobacco products, would you shop there more often, less often, or about the same?

- **About the Same**: 80%
- **More Often**: 12%
- **Less Often**: 8%
THE BOTTOM LINE: ELIMINATE FINES

Kicking your store’s tobacco habit can save you time and money. Avoid costly mistakes by selling other products instead of tobacco.7

Did you know your store can be fined $75 for every day it sells tobacco without a valid permit?

That could cost you $525 in one week...

...$6,750 after three months...

...and more than $27,300 in one year.7

Even with a valid permit, your store can be fined $250 each time it sells tobacco to a youth.7
PRODUCT & SERVICE SUBSTITUTES

Tobacco products take up prominent and valuable shelf space in your store.

Put that real estate to better use by selling other items instead of tobacco.

Market research shows that today’s customers expect to have a “shopping experience” when they enter a store and that they want a selection of healthy food options.

Selling the products and services listed on the following pages can...

- Improve Your Store’s Image
- Expand Your Customer Base
- Increase Your Profits
PRODUCT & SERVICE SUBSTITUTES

Fruits & Vegetables
Add healthy, colorful options to your store by stocking fresh produce.
- Items like potatoes, onions, beets, carrots, peppers, and corn will last longer and store easily.
- Pick things that are in season, like watermelon in the summer and butternut squash in the fall.
- Make practical and attractive displays with wooden crates, baskets, and barrels.

Other Food Products
Snack-able and value-added food items are easy to stock and sell and make your store healthier.
- Tree nuts and peanuts can be purchased and sold in bulk.
- Canned products (like honey, jams, pickles, and salsas) have a long shelf life and look nice.

Non-Food Products
Attract more customers by adding new services and unique products.
- Remittances (Western Union)
- Online food ordering (Grubhub or UberEATS)
- Novelty Items (fidget spinners)
- Clothing items (hats, sunglasses, t-shirts)
THE 5 P’S TO PRODUCT INTRODUCTION

Pick the Right Products
- Ask your customers what they would like to see in your store.
- Do a sticker survey near the register.
- Visit other stores in the area to see what they are selling.
- Work with local farmers and small business owners to sell their products.

Promote Your Products
- Use social media to let people know about your new offerings.
- Offer a special deal to customers who mention your ads.
- Use signage to advertise at your store.
- Put posters in your windows and small signs inside to help people find new items.

Place Your Products
- Put new items in a high-traffic area of your store that is well-lit.
- Create an attractive display.
- Use baskets, crates, and shelves to organize your products.

Poll Your Customers
- Ask your customers which new products they like.
- Do a sticker survey near the product display.
- Ask them what else they would like to see in your store.

Perfect Your Product Selection
- After 2 months, examine your customer feedback.
- Review your sales and marketing.
- Look at how many people clicked on your social media advertisements.
- Decide which items to prioritize and which ones to drop.
RESOURCES IN PHILADELPHIA

Ready to take the lead in making your community healthier?
Find technical assistance and funding opportunities at
the following organizations.

Technical Assistance
- Philadelphia Association for CDCs
  www.pacdc.org/member_list
  Community Development Corporations are centers that aim to
  rebuild neighborhoods and revitalize communities. Each
  neighborhood has a CDC. Find yours by visiting the member list.
- The Welcoming Center for New Pennsylvanians
  www.welcomingcenter.org/

Funding
- The Merchants Fund
  www.merchantsfund.org

Technical Assistance & Funding
- City of Philadelphia Department of Commerce
  www.phila.gov/commerce/neighborhoods/
  The Commerce Department supports programs to strengthen commercial
  areas through economic development and technical assistance
- Local Initiatives Support Corporation Philadelphia
  www.lisc.org/philly
- PIDC
  www.pidcphilad.com
  PIDC is a non-profit organization that supports business growth to
  energize Philadelphia’s economy through a variety of financing tools.
- Small Business Development Center Pennsylvania
  www.pasbdc.org

For more information about the Voluntary Retailer Transition Project, contact:
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REFERENCES


