

# CSNEWS RETAILING TECHNOLOGY

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## CVS, Walgreens Reach Out to Consumers via Social Media

WOONSOCKET, R.I. and DEERFIELD, Ill. — More and more retailers are recognizing the usefulness of social media when it comes to connecting with customers, and drugstore chains are among them. Both CVS and Walgreens have recently focused on the technology to promote value to consumers.

CVS Caremark Corp. relied on multiple forms of social media to promote its ExtraCare Rewards Program, which was not seeing the redemption rates the company felt it should, according to a *1to1 media* report. For the program's 10th anniversary in 2011, CVS redesigned its receipts to highlight the ExtraBucks Rewards that program members received, then planned a campaign around the redesign.

Promotional videos poked fun at "MoneyTrashers," customers who trashed their own money by not checking their receipts for rewards or redeeming online coupons. CVS posted them and allowed them to be shared via Facebook, YouTube and Twitter.

The campaign was a success, according to Melissa Studzinski, vice president of customer relationship management for CVS. She said the redemption rates for ExtraBucks Rewards increased after the campaign kicked off. As a result, the chain plans to focus on social media in the future.

"Every time we have a new promotion or initiative, we're exploring ways to leverage social media in smart but innovative ways, so we can continue to deepen our relationships with our loyal customers, and keep them as excited about all the great things happening at CVS/pharmacy as we are," Studzinski told the news outlet.

Meanwhile, Walgreens launched a new Sunday advertising circular with a digital emphasis. The print version, which now includes coupons grouped together by category and prominently displayed sales items, offers QR codes that allow smartphone users to quickly view more deals, visit category-specific Walgreens websites highlighted in the ad, and find extra bonus buys inside stores.

The online and mobile version of the circular now features hundreds of extra in-store offers, online exclusive pages and other "bonus buys," the company said. Online ads can be shared via Twitter or Facebook and include the ability to create advanced shopping lists.

"We know that for approximately half of the visitors to Walgreens.com, their next action is to go to one of our stores to shop," said Joe Magnacca, Walgreens president of daily living products and solutions. "For our loyal customers who don't use computers or the Internet, all of the items we feature online each week will also be specially marked in our stores."

Customers who sign up to receive the circular through e-mail will receive a sneak-peek version on Fridays, as well as a \$5 coupon for registering.

"This is the most dramatic refresh we've made to the weekly ad in more than two decades, delivering added value for our growing numbers of online and mobile customers, as well as a better experience for those who look forward to seeing it in print," said Magnacca. "We're giving people more convenient ways to shop and save, and this complements our multi-channel strategy by finding new and different ways to cater to today's consumers."

The new circular is available at [www.walgreens.com/weeklyad](http://www.walgreens.com/weeklyad).

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