Working Together at your companies?

Mindy Thompson-Sherwood: The way that we’ve approached it is to start with strategic alignment at the top in terms of what the areas are that just make the most sense for Procter & Gamble and Kroger to be working on together, both looking at traditional and nontraditional areas of work that a consumer packaged goods company and a retailer might have. A traditional area might be something like merchandising. A nontraditional area might be something like the Network of Executive Women, for example, [which works] on inclusion and retention of women in the retail and consumer products industry through education, leadership and business development.

From there we aligned on common business goals. We always say we’re looking for a triple win—it needs to be a win for Kroger, a win for Procter & Gamble and a win for the shopper.

Jeff Bornino: I would echo Mindy’s comments. The focus on the customer drives everything that we do, and because both organizations believe in that fundamental principle, it made the collaboration sessions much more meaningful. Any New Ways of Working Together relationship should really begin with a focus on the customer and incorporate cross-functional collaboration.

Thompson-Sherwood: Once we were aligned in the areas in which we wanted to work together, we then set joint targets and goals. That piece is important. ... One of the very best examples of us working together that fits under the New Ways of Working Together umbrella was ... to take costs out of the supply chain and to then reinvest [those savings] back into the shopper. So, we put together multifunctional teams and started an initiative to get the right product to the right store at the right time. That project has delivered savings, which we have invested back into the shopper.

DrSN: What exactly does “right-store/right-time” mean?

Bornino: It’s ensuring that when our shoppers come into the store, the product that they expect to be there is there. We obviously don’t want to carry too much inventory, but we absolutely do not want to disappoint a shopper with an out-of-stock situation. So much of our effort was designed to get that mix of products right.

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Proposed cigarette-sale ban burns Beantown drug store operators

BY ALARIC DEARMENT

BOSTON — Last month, San Francisco mayor Gavin Newsom signed into law an ordinance to ban the city’s retail pharmacies from selling tobacco products.

Soon after, health officials in neighboring Marin County announced they planned a similar move, though attorneys for Walgreens sued on Sept. 9 in the San Francisco Superior Court for an emergency injunction to block the San Francisco ban. Now, it appears, another city could soon join the club.

Health officials in Boston announced Sept. 4 that they would seek a similar ban, though their proposal also would affect college campuses and ban smoking on patios, in outside seating areas of restaurants and bars, in such outdoor areas near workplaces as loading docks and in hotels, inns and bed-and-breakfasts. In addition, it would ban the opening of new smoking bars, such as hookah bars, and ban the sale of “blunt wraps,” tobacco leaves often used to roll marijuana cigarettes. Boston originally banned smoking in bars and restaurants in 2003.

The National Association of Chain Drug Stores expressed opposition to the proposed ban. “This is not a tobacco issue, but rather a fairness issue,” a representative of the organization said. “For example, we would feel the same if the proposal were to ban certain food products because they are not considered to be on the correct side of the ‘healthy’ line.”

The city’s health department, however, considers it a health issue.

“Tobacco exposure continues to be a significant factor that contributes to preventable sickness and death,” commission executive director Dr. Barbara Ferrer said in a statement. “The board’s actions will help reduce young people’s exposure to tobacco products and ensure that workers are not exposed to secondhand smoke when trying to earn a living.”

NACDS, however, said the ban could drive smokers away from retail pharmacies, which often carry smoking-cessation products and advice, to retailers that don’t.

The commission’s board also agreed to ask the city council to strengthen city laws against selling tobacco to minors and require stores to post additional signage to emphasize the hazards of smoking.

It will have a public hearing on the issue in October. NACDS said it was not aware of any other areas proposing similar bans.