

# **Building a Better OTC Seasonal Allergy Promotional Strategy**

# Allergic Rhinitis

Allergic rhinitis, otherwise known as hay fever or seasonal allergies, is a condition that impacts between

# 10-30%

Americans and

# 40%

of Europeans every year.

And it's no longer just a nuisance. One of the knock-on effects of the pandemic is that people have rediscovered their connection to nature. They're spending more time outside in the spring and summer months, and this has made it more important to keep seasonal allergies under control. For pharma brands, this presents a golden opportunity you can't afford to miss.

According to a 2020 study, global demand in the allergy treatment market is expected to grow at a healthy rate



This is partially due to the growing prevalence of allergic rhinitis - particularly among younger people. Experts agree that the rising approval of immunotherapy, a trend that shows no sign of slowing down anytime soon, is also one of the major contributing factors driving growth in the market.

Because many allergy remedies and medications are over-the-counter (OTC), analysts predict that OTC drug spending will rise in the near future, as a growing number of consumers turn to self-treatment for hay fever, allergies, and congestion.

Ensuring consumers understand your products and how they help is now a vital aspect of your promotional strategy. Why? Because confidence is key when it comes to building trust and showing consumers that you're here to help them enjoy the great outdoors this spring.

## The Types of OTC Allergy Treatments: What You Need to Know

Due in large part to the growing prevalence of self-care, among younger generations in particular, OTC allergy treatments are on the rise. When building your seasonal promotional strategy, it's important to know as much as you can about the many treatment options on the market.

**Antihistamines** have been used to treat allergy symptoms for years. They're available as pills, nasal sprays, or even eye drops.

**Decongestants** are another popular option that come in several forms, including nasal sprays, eye drops, liquids, and pills. Pharmacists recommend only taking nasal sprays and eye drops for a few days at a time, as prolonged use can make symptoms worse.

**Corticosteroids**, commonly referred to as steroids, have also been used to successfully treat allergies over the years. They can reduce the type of inflammation that's commonly associated with allergies, but they can also treat common symptoms, like stuffiness, sneezing, and an itchy or runny nose. Consumers use corticosteroids as both a seasonal and year-round remedy.

## Seasonal Allergies: By the Numbers

The global allergy treatment market is expected to grow enormously over the next few years, to reach an estimated



**\$40.36 billion by 2026**  
up from  
**\$24.65 billion in 2017**



More than

**50 million Americans**  
say that they experience some form of  
allergies every year.

and over

**400 million Worldwide**  
suffer from hay fever.



The cost of allergies exceeds about  
**\$18 billion each year**,  
underlining why your OTC seasonal allergy  
promotional strategy is so important.

# The Geography of Allergies

When planning your OTC seasonal allergy promotion strategy, it's also important to understand where you should focus your efforts.

Every year, the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America ranks the top 100 most challenging US cities to live in for seasonal allergy sufferers. The foundation calls them "allergy capitals", and they very much live up to the name.

According to the 2022 report, the 10 most **CHALLENGING** US cities to live in are:

1. Scranton, Pennsylvania
2. Wichita, Kansas
3. McAllen, Texas
4. Richmond, Virginia
5. San Antonio, Texas
6. Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
7. Hartford, Connecticut
8. Buffalo, New York
9. New Haven, Connecticut
10. Albany, New York

There's no corresponding list for Europe or Asia-Pacific. The EU Allergy Index does provide a handy list of the 10 **BEST** European capital cities to visit or live in for seasonal allergy sufferers:

1. Riga, Latvia
2. Tallinn, Estonia
3. Zagreb, Croatia
4. Bratislava, Slovakia
5. Rome, Italy
6. Berlin, Germany
7. Vienna, Austria
8. Lisbon, Portugal
9. Dublin, Ireland
10. Ljubljana, Slovenia

If you're going to use geotargeting as a part of your larger campaign, you want to steer clear of locations with low pollen counts.

# Innovative Rewards Programs & Incentive Strategies for Allergy Season

Promoting your brand this allergy season will require a unique approach to rewards opportunities, to attract and engage consumers.

## Limited Edition Items

Offering limited edition items and swag, for example, allows you to stand out from your competitors and encourages repeat purchases. As an added incentive, give consumers the option to customize their prize and make it their own.



Johnson & Johnson wanted to drive summer sales of their well-known allergy product, Benadryl, by encouraging consumers to have the product in every bag. After purchasing qualifying Benadryl products, consumers received a code for a free, customized tote bag.

## Digital Rewards

Digital rewards, like gift cards or credits to popular streaming services, are a no-fuss, instant reward option for incentivizing purchase and non-purchase activities. Rewards built around digital activities are particularly popular, especially among the younger generation.



To drive sales during the spring and summer season, Banana Boat and OFF partnered up for a “Camp Playmore” program. Consumers who purchased qualifying products from both brands received rewards in the form of digital gift cards for specific retailers. Snipp facilitated the partnership, using our receipt processing technology to validate all purchases.

## Rebates & Trials

There’s a lot of seasonal allergy remedies out there and finding the right one can be tough. Using a trial marketing strategy can incentivize consumers to try out your product while reducing the risk. For example, with a rebate or money-back guarantee.



To drive awareness and trials of Flonase nasal spray, GSK (now Haleon) offered a coupon and money-back guarantee if the customer wasn’t satisfied with the product. Snipp provided a mail-in refund solution that let consumers download a refund form which they could then mail in. Snipp validated the receipts and offered a refund for the highest-priced qualifying item.



## Influencer Marketing

This highly effective social media strategy helps you promote brand awareness with a face your audience already knows and trusts. For example, a health expert. Cross-promotional strategies, like shared blog posts, social media takeovers, or cross-branded swag, are mutually beneficial, helping both brands grow their audience.



To help drive sales of Zyrtec, Johnson & Johnson partnered with U.S. Soccer to offer a limited-edition scarf as a reward for purchasing \$25 of Zyrtec allergy products. The program uses Snipp's receipt processing technology to make verifying purchases easy for customers and Johnson & Johnson.

## Sweeps & User Generated Content

Sweepstakes are the perfect promotion for brands to raise awareness, sales and to acquire and engage customers. Layer it with UGC and reward social sharing for added buzz and excitement. Leverage the right tech for a seamless CX and to run your promotions efficiently and at scale.



Flonase created a unique way for customers to not be afraid to stop and smell the flowers. Consumers can customize an Allergy Monster based on their allergies and symptoms and can share it on social media in augmented reality! Snipp validated all receipts and collected valuable customer data through this program.

## Get allergy season off to the best possible start

Allergy relief may not be the most glamorous product category, but that doesn't mean your promotions have to be similarly mundane. There are many ways to spice up your promotions to attract consumers and raise awareness – from simple digital rewards to exciting influencer partnerships to social amplification. Experiment to find which combination of promotions works best for you and your audience.

Many OTC products are also prescribed by a physician. You can now save springtime for prescription medications with SnippRx - a digital, contactless solution that enables pharmaceutical brands to rapidly and economically provide coupons and pay-no-more cards to medical practitioner clients and patients.

Learn more about SnippRx.

## References

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Snipp provides promotions and loyalty programs designed to engage customers across the entire path to purchase - in-store, at home and online. Clients can run one-off promotions to evergreen loyalty programs that meet objectives at a brand, shopper, category, and portfolio level and customizable by region, language, channel, retailer and more.

SnippCARE, our modular Customer Acquisition, Retention & Engagement platform, powered by our market-leading receipt processing platform for purchase and nonpurchase validation, enables implementation of ROI-driven, omni-channel programs, globally. We capture zero-party data in real time and build proprietary data sets, driving engagement, personalization and brand loyalty and enabling intelligent decision-making. It's tailor-made for brands to build deeper relationships with their customers.

For over a decade, we have worked with the world's leading organizations in both B2C and B2B spaces, across industry verticals including CPG, retail, pharma, utility, home and outdoor, alcohol, tobacco, lifestyle and more.

