The Willner Chemists Story

History

Founded in 1911, Willner Chemists has evolved from a an old-fashioned neighborhood Drug Store into one of the countrys leading nutritionally-oriented Pharmacies.

For 85 years, Willner Chemists could be found at the intersection of 39th and Lexington in mid-town Manhattan. At first, Willners was much like any other Drug Store, a place to go to have your prescriptions filled, your questions answered, and perhaps a refreshing pause at the soda fountain. But Willners did not remain typical for long.

In the 1970s, Irving Willner, working with the leading orthomolecular and holistic physicians of the day, developed a line of nutritional supplements that met their stringent and unique requirements for purity and potency. The Willner line of supplements quickly became the mainstay of most alternative physicians' vitamin armamentarium, and was prescribed and sold widely throughout the country.

Now, the soda fountain is gone. Irv has retired, and many of those early pioneers of alternative medicine have been replaced by new faces. But Willner Chemists has continued to grow. Instead of OTC drugs and cosmetics, the shelves are now filled with nutritional supplements, herbal products, and homeopathic remedies. The Willner product line has grown as well, but the emphasis is no longer limited to serving complementary physicians and nutritionists. Now, Willner Chemist is focused more on the consumer.

In 1992, Irv retired, selling the business to Don Goldberg and Arnie Gitomer. Don and Arnie lost no time in accelerating this change, broadening the product mix, expanding the mail-order business and reaching out to the consumer through various educational avenues.

These efforts have culminated in the following:

- a widely acclaimed 2-hour radio program, The Willner Window, on WOR radio, ran every Sunday evening from 2 to 4pm. WOR is New York's number one AM radio station.

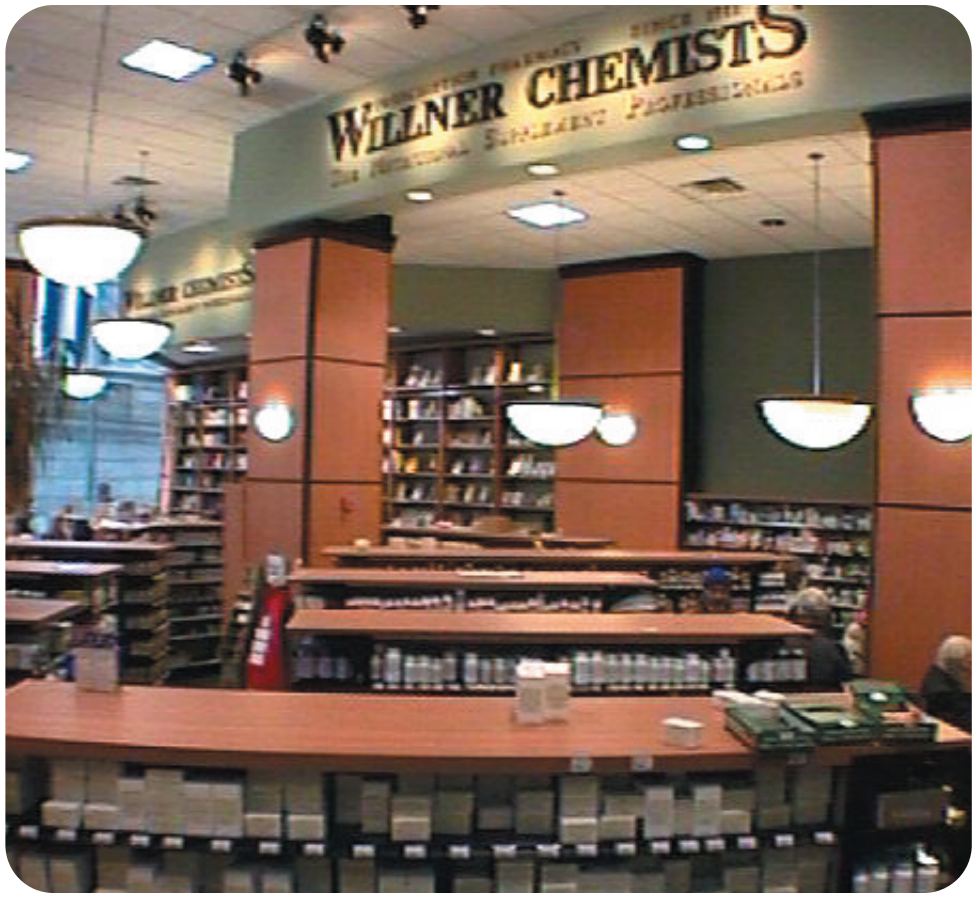
According to Arbitron ratings, The Willner Window is one of the most listened-to health talk shows in the greater New York area.

- an semi-annual, 224 page product reference catalog, considered by many to be the most informative and most attractive of any available.
- a quarterly sale flier featuring thousands of products at the most competitive sale prices in the industry.
- an informative web site, featuring a searchable product database and order-placing capabilities.
- relocation to a beautiful Park Avenue location in the heart of midtown Manhattan. Willner Chemists moved to the new, larger store in February, 1996. The new store is universally acclaimed as one of the most attractive, functional stores of its type in the country.
- in 1998, Willners opened a second store, downtown, on Broadway right across from City Hall. This store is modeled after the Park Avenue store, but is about two and one-half times larger. This store remained open until 2016.

The downtown Willner Chemists Store is conveniently located right across from City Hall, at 253 Broadway. Managed by Sam Forbes, you will find a full selection of supplements, books and skin care products, with a friendly and competent staff to help you find what you need. This store remained open until 2016.

Willner Chemists

Why is Willner Chemists so special? Why is Willner Chemists considered the standard by which all others in the industry are measured? The answer is not simple. It is a combination of many factors, including an emphasis on professionalism, extensive inventory and comprehensive product mix, discount pricing and personalized service.



A view of the midtown Willner Chemists Store.

Located just one block south of Grand Central Terminal, at the corner of 41st and Park Ave, this store has been called by many, "the most attractive, most impressive nutritional supplement store anywhere!"

Willner Chemists is not an over-night internet sensation, nor is Willner Chemists a discount mail-order catalog. Instead, Willner Chemists is the epitome of what a retail supplement store should be–a large selection of merchandise, in an attractive and functional setting, competitive pricing, and a staff of knowledgeable professionals to answer your questions.

Willner Chemists has become known as the place to go when you want authoritative, accurate answers to supplement and health questions, rather than sales pressure and hype. Willners has an unusually high number of professionals available to consult with customers—twelve licensed nutritionally oriented Pharmacists are now on staff full time, along with six nutritionists! The shelves are fully stocked, with a broad selection of hard to find professional lines as well as normal "health food" lines. Deciding which supplements to buy can be a daunting experience for many, but the friendly and professional staff at Willner Chemists makes it easy.

While product inventory, discount pricing and a pleasant shopping environment are all important, the key to Willners success has to be its staff:

Donald Goldberg, R.Ph.

Don received his pharmacy training on the east coast but moved to California right after graduation to accept a position as Director of Quality Control for Ingram Pharmaceutical Company. He received his Pharmacist license in California, but remained in the industrial setting, moving from Quality Control to manufacturing, product development and marketing with companies such as Boericke & Runyon, Shaklee and Vitamix, where he specialized in formulation and marketing of glandular supplements and dispersable powdered protein products.

Don Goldberg, R.Ph.

He returned to the East coast, accepting the position of Vice President of Faraday Labs (Nutri-Dyn, Sivad). After several years, he joined Lewis-Gitomer Labs, where he was more directly involved with marketing directly to physicians. It was at this time that he published his first newsletter and began what has turned out to be a lasting relationship with Arnold Gitomer. Before rejoining Arnie at Willners, however, Don spent two years as Technical Director for Arkopharma, helping them introduce their line of French phytopharmaceutical products to the American market. He published a newsletter for physicians, called Phytofacts, and lectured on herbal medicine throughout the United States and Canada. After this, he started his own company, Nutriceutics, distributing professional nutritional, herbal and homeopathic products directly to health practitioners.

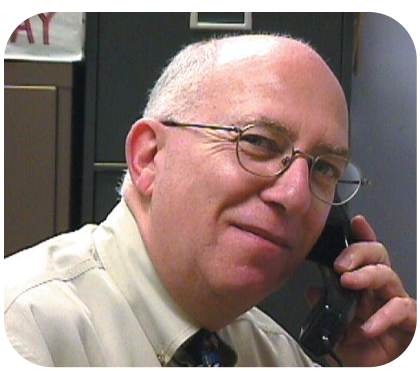
In addition to Phytofacts, Don also published the Nutriceutics News and was the contributing editor, nutrition, for The Chiropractic Journal. His articles have been published in several professional journals, and he was the assistant Sysop on Compuserve's Natural Medicine Forum.

In September 1992, Don joined forces again with Arnie Gitomer, buying Willner Chemists.

Arnold Gitomer, R.Ph.

Arnie is a graduate of the Brooklyn College of Pharmacy (1965). After three years in retail pharmacy, he moved to industry, accepting the position of Chief Pharmacist with West Ward, and later, Columbia Pharmaceutical Company. Through his involvement in compounding, formulating and manufacturing, he developed an expertise in the technical aspects of nutritional supplement products.

He then founded Lewis-Gitomer Labs, where he began to work closely with alternative health professionals. As a distributor of Nutri-Dyn Products, he became intimately familiar with the requirements of holistic practitioners, and the use of nutritional, glandular and homeopathic products. For two years, he taught toxicology at the New York Chiropractic College, and participated in



Arnold Gitomer, R.Ph.

numerous postgraduate training programs in applied kinesiology, nutritional blood chemistry analysis, and nutritional pharmacology.

In, 1992, of course, he joined Don as co-owner of Willner Chemists.

Lawrence Siegel, R.Ph.

Larry has the type of background that fits right in at Willners. In addition to his pharmacy credentials, he is also a Chiropractor. He graduated from the State University of New York at Buffalo School of Pharmacy in 1975, and from New York Chiropractic College in 1984. He practiced chiropractic for 6 years, and is certified in Chiropractic Sports Medicine. But with his strong interest in nutritional medicine and pharmaceutical sciences, it was perhaps inevitable that he became involved in nutritionally oriented retail pharmacy.

Larry Siegel, R.Ph.

Larry is now the Chief Pharmacist at Willner Chemists, and we are fortunate to have him as part of the Willner team of "nutritional supplement professionals."

Akin Adeyemi, R.Ph.

Akin is another of our "home-grown" Pharmacists. Originally from Nigeria, and a family of diplomats, Akin speaks several languages fluently—a valuable skill given the fact that Willner Chemists attracts so many foreign visitors and tourists. As a pharmacy intern, Akin was immediately attracted to Willners "because they are so customer oriented." Its hard to keep Akin behind the counter, and that is how we like it at Willners. Akin has proved to be one of our most valuable, and popular Pharmacists, and has served as Chief Pharmacist at our downtown store.

Sam Forbes, CCN

Sam Forbes is a welcome additon to the the Willner Chemists team. He brings an in-depth knowledge of nutritional supplements and homeopathy along with managerial skills to the the new downtown store, where he is the store manager. He has clinical experience in two holistic health centers in

Akin Adeyemi, R.Ph.

New York City, and spent the previous nine years working as store manager and nutritional consultant for Hickey Chemists.

Sam is a regular co-host on The Willner Window radio program.

Fely DeGuzman

Willner's Park Ave Store

Fely has been with Willners for more than 20 years. She functions as the office manager. But, as is the norm at Willners,

Sam Forbes, C.C.N.

she also has a pharmaceutical background. Every successful business has someone who, behind the scenes, make sure everything runs smoothly and efficiently. Fely fills that function at Willners.

Leonard Goldstein

Len is the General Manager. He has a B.A. in Physics and an M.B.A. in Operations Management. Len is a Certified Purchasing Manager and has been certified by the American Production and Inventory Control Society. His previous experience includes Management Consulting with

Fely DeGuzman

major accounting firms and Operations Management in the mail order industry. Like everyone at Willners, Len spends a great deal of his spare time studying nutrition and alternative medicine. And dont be surprised if you find out he is the one helping you find what you need in the store.

Sam Elmadjian

Sam's primary function is Purchasing. But it is hard to keep him from pitching

Len Goldstein

in wherever help is needed. The key to the success of any business is always having product on hand when it is needed. Sam handles this admirably. He has been with Arnie and Don from the start, and has been instrumental in helping Willner's purchasing and warehousing operations keep pace with the rapid growth, both in size and complexity, during this period. Now, with the added burden of coordinating the purchasing functions between three Willner Chemists stores, Sam is more busy than ever.

Sam Elmadjian

This view of the front of the Willner Chemists store on Park Avenue shows part of the book display on the far wall.

Jose Gonzalez

Jose is in charge of warehouse operations. It is Jose's job to make sure that whatever is needed by a customer in either of the two Manhattan stores, or mail orders, is available in the warehouse or on the shelf. He coordinates the complicated process of delivering product both to the the retail store shelves and the mail order operations. Someone has to know where everything is, and Jose is the man.

Albert Chan

Every company has to have somebody like Albert. He is a jack of all trades, ready to step in and fill any void. From computers to telephone orders, Albert is the one who we call on to fill in or solve a problem. Officially, Albert's title is Administrative Assistant, and he works mostly with Don and Len.

Albert is in charge of maintaining the product inventory system and computer information network.

Dane Miller

Dane is a popular addition to the downtown store staff. He brings many years of experience in the vitamin industry, and can be found on the store floor helping customers find the best products for their nutritional need..

Dane is also a talented singer, so if any talent scouts are reading this. . .

Inde J. Guzman, M.S.

Inde is a nutritionist, with a Master's Degree in Nutrition from The University of Bridgeport, as well as additional post-graduate study. He has spent over eight years working with some of New York's leading nutritionists and nutritional pharmacists.

Inde is currently working at the Park Avenue store, helping customers with in-store consultations and product advice.

Todd Gitomer

Todd now spends most of his time on the computer working on the product inventory listings, and checking invoices. Todd is also our "go-to" guy, able to fill in for others, when needed, in almost any capacity

The Supporting Staff

There are actually over 50 employees

You always have plenty of choices at Willner Chemists. In the picture to the right, you see a partial selection of the liquid herbal extracts on display. Our pharmacists and nutritionists will help you select the one that is right for your needs.

Todd Gitomer

Todd now spends most of his time on the computer working on the product inventory listings, and checking invoices. Todd is also our "go-to" guy, able to fill in for others, when needed, in almost any capacity

The Supporting Staff

There are actually over 50 employees at Willner Chemists. Space does not allow us to provide the recognition they all deserve, but they are all part of the Willner team, working together to provide the service you have come to expect from Willner Chemists.

Todd Gitomer

Inde J. Guzman, M.S.

Inde is a nutritionist, with a Master's Degree in Nutrition from The University of Bridgeport, as well as additional post-graduate study. He has spent over eight years working with some of New York's leading nutritionists and nutritional pharmacists.

Inde is currently working at the Park Avenue store, helping customers with in-store consultations and product advice.

Inde J. Guzman, M.S.