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Willys launches loyalty programme

Willys is now the first discount food retail chain in Sweden to introduce a loyalty programme for its customers. Willys is also first to have a programme that is entirely digital and cardless. The launch will take place in February.

The aim of the loyalty programme is to strengthen the chain's relationship with its customers, encourage customer loyalty and begin a shift away from traditional mass direct mail marketing to targeted communication via digital channels.

Willys is the first discount food retail chain in Sweden to adopt a customer loyalty programme. A traditional loyalty programme is highly cost-driven, which is a key reason why discount retailers seldom offer club cards and membership programmes. The Willys loyalty programme, however, is entirely digitally based and highly cost effective, thus allowing Willys to honour its business concept to offer Sweden's cheapest bag of groceries. Application to the programme and all customer communication will be handled via digital channels, such as the Web, mobile apps and e-mail. The programme is also cardless – customers' ordinary credit/debit cards can be coupled to the system, and the rewards will be deducted automatically when customers pay at checkout. This means that Willys will refrain entirely from mass direct mail send-outs, membership cards and paper coupons.

The goal is to recruit a million customers to the programme within three years and that 70% of the chain's sales will be conducted through the loyalty programme.

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Axfood AB conducts food retail and wholesale business in Sweden. Retail business is conducted through the wholly owned store chains Willys, Hemköp and PrisXtra, comprising 244 stores in all. In addition, Axfood collaborates with a large number of proprietor-run stores that are tied to Axfood through agreements. These include stores within the Hemköp and Willys chains as well as stores run under the Handlar'n and Tempo profiles. In all, Axfood collaborates with approximately 820 proprietor-run stores. Wholesaling is conducted through Dagab and Axfood Närlivs. Axfood is listed on Nasdaq OMX Stockholm AB's Large Cap list. Axel Johnson AB is the principal owner, with 50.1% of the shares.