

## Niches are hiding in your store

I have feet like a hobbit, complete with gross nails. Is that TMI? The good news is I won't have hobbit feet for much longer, thanks to a product line called Probelle. Soon I will have gross-free nails. Finding all natural remedies for nail fungus is tough, hence the niche. Display the product where it can be easily seen, cross-merchandise it by placing the fungi killer in the foot care section, the first-aid section, and on a seasonal sun care and bug bite prevention end-cap. Be ready, as the sale of this type of product will peak in the summer, also known as flip flop/sandal season.



Now let's talk ticks and Lyme disease. Ticks are now a threat nationwide. Do you have tick repellents and tick removers in your store? Create a niche by cross-merchandising the repellents and removers with a shelf sign next to the traditional insect repellents and near the sun care products. Use your web page, Facebook, and other social media to educate customers on how to recognize and remove a tick. Be the tick-fighting headquarters in your town! Tick protection is a nice niche cash sale.

Let's also talk about poison ivy, poison oak, and poison sumac. Having both the brand and private label of the OTC topical solution that removes urushiol, the toxin responsible for the itching and pain, is a gift for any customers looking for relief. Here is the deal: If you've never had poison ivy or any of the others, then you've never heard of the topical solution. Cross-merchandise your inventory on an end-cap. At eye level, add a sign that reads, "It's better to have it and not need it than to need it and not have it."

I am out of gross things to talk about, so let's jump to canes. Nearly every pharmacy in the U.S. has at least one cane hanging around, and most likely it's gray or black. Make canes your niche by being an expert in properly adjusting canes for your customers. Is it a big deal? Well, one YouTube video has more than half a million views on fitting and walking with a cane. If fitting were offered at the store level, the views might be more like 50. One more thing about canes. I've learned over the years that stocking more styles of canes, especially those with bright colors and patterns, leads to an increase in durable medical equipment sales. Many times, canes are the first step to address mobility changes. Unfortunately, and all too often, someone who uses a cane will eventually need a rollator, transport chair, and maybe even a wheelchair. Build a relationship with your customers by making sure they don't leave the store without having their cane adjusted. Be Cane Central in your town.

Niches don't always have to revolve around unique products or special services. They can be the way that you merchandise, sign, promote, and support an everyday product. Good luck. You can do it.