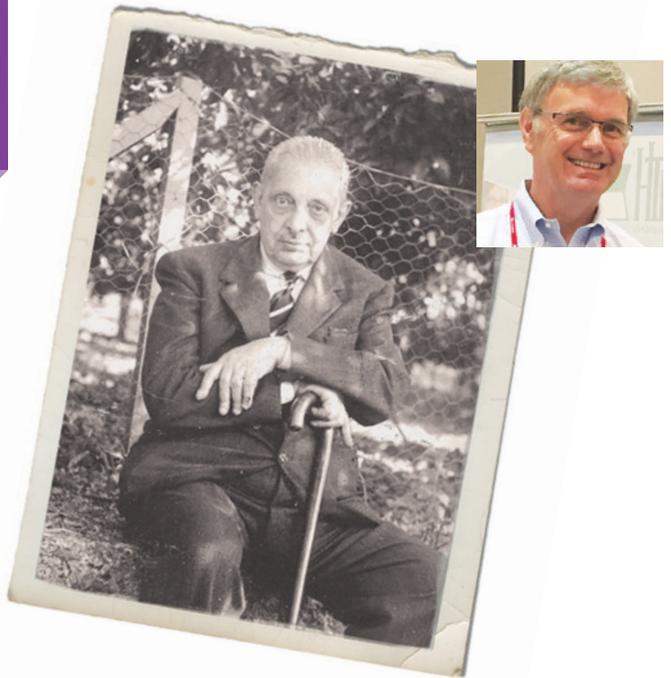


FRONT-END OVERHAUL

It's time to make some changes

by Gabe Trahan



Ah, the good old days.

Looking back at the last 42 years, I'm not sure exactly when those good old days were. I do know they all have something in common: things were changing, and no one liked it. The battle cry was, "Why can't things just stay the way they are?" Giuseppe Tomasi was the last Prince of Lampedusa, in modern day Sicily. He gave up his kingdom so that things would stay the same.

On a much lighter note, to keep front-end revenue flowing, we need to make some changes. Unlike Tomasi, you get to keep your kingdom, but it's time to rethink your front end. Obviously, we have to keep the basic OTC health and personal care lines, but do departments have to be as large as they were in the 1980s? Back then I was selling lawnmowers, food freezers, and bicycles. I had 24-foot school supply headquarter displays, a 24-foot cough and cold section, and a 16-foot hair care department. Crazy, right? I'm too embarrassed to tell you how big our cosmetic section was. Those departments made us some nice money back then, but it is not "back then" anymore.

***"If we want things to stay as they are,
things will have to change."***

— Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa

Today, we need to offer the specialty departments that make sense for most community pharmacies. It's time to consider offering organic therapeutic teas. It's time to move forward and look into kinesiology tape. I'm not sure what it does, but people are looking for it. It sounds like a nice extension and companion sale to the brace and external pain relief sections. Maybe it's time to cut back on the 12 feet of the same brand vitamin you may have and bring in another — perhaps a supplement line that offers tablets that dissolve and disperse under the tongue.

Also, how about some sexy (yes, I said sexy) light compression stockings that can double your money? That would be a nice change. There's no fitting needed, and it's a cash sale. I love cash; that will never change. Dude, how about gluten-free soy snack/meal bars with more than 7 gm of healthy hemp-based protein?

You can always offer a lollipop that cleans teeth. No, I did not make either of those up, as they do exist.

At the moment, hair and nail health is on a huge upswing. Find a line of shampoo and supplements that will fill that ever growing need. Add to your arthritis pain relief and diabetes support centers with wearables.

The key to boosting your sales is selling more to the customers that enter your store. Find it all at www.frontendmarketplace.com. ■

Gabe Trahan is NCPA's senior director of store operations and marketing. Gabe uses more than 40 years of front-end merchandising experience to help NCPA members increase store traffic and improve profits. Visit www.ncpanet.org/feo to watch videos, read tips, and view galleries of photo examples by Gabe. Follow him on Twitter @NCPAGabe for additional tips.