



Strategies to Increase Your Spa's Visibility

marketing techniques that keep them coming in

THE SAYING, "Build it and they will come," does not always represent the reality when you start a business. Having the most beautiful location, state-of-the-art treatments and high-tech services does not guarantee that your business will have the client traffic that it needs. One of the most critical aspects for any business owner to consider is the marketing plan and how it is going to help bring in a steady flow of clients. Budgets are tight in the spa industry. So, it is important to be innovative in implementing the least expensive and most profitable methods to get the word out about your spa.

The most cost-effective way to boost revenue is to sell add-on products and services to your existing client base. When used in combination, there are several methods to sell add-on services that produce lucrative results. ➔

by Bryan Durocher



Front desk promotions and closing the sale

Up front is where some of the sales take place. Role play with your team until they memorize the following closing statements:

- Which of these products would you like to take home with you today?
- With what treatment package would you like to start out?
- Would you like to add this other service to the treatments you have chosen for today?
- Do you prefer to come in on Tuesdays or Thursdays so we can book your next three visits in advance?
- Please pass on these referral cards to friends and family to receive a discount on your next visit with a confirmed referral appointment.

Hosting a recruitment seminar is the latest trend in the skin care and spa industry. The main objective of a recruitment seminar is to consult with as many potential clients as possible, at the same time.

In the treatment room, begin by asking yourself, What service/product could I offer this client that I haven't offered before? Next, introduce new product lines or reintroduce your top 10 products. Mention the products' unique features and how they benefit the client. Demonstrate how best to use each product so your client can achieve results in between treatments, at home.

Spa and retail area marketing

You have a captive audience. Your environment is perfect for showcasing before-and-after photos, framed product posters, a video demonstrating your procedures, tester products, brochures and a makeover portfolio.

The appearance of your retail area must evolve with the seasons and holidays. Have your team create spontaneous themes that inspire customers to explore the retail area during each visit. Use fresh colors, props and rearrange the products frequently. Use "shelf talkers" to promote the features and benefits. Group your top picks or holiday specials together. Give away a slow moving product with a popular product to make a product with purchase gift bag. Put samples and testers on shelves at eye level. Prominently display a profitable retail item at the front desk. Change that item each month.

Attracting new clients

Before bringing in a new clientele you must first ask yourself some important questions. Who is my target customer? What specific services or products do I want to promote this quarter? What percentage of profitability am I expecting to gain with my marketing campaign? What's uniquely different about my spa? On what are my clients missing out? Which market do I want to attract and which one should I avoid? Which unprofitable or unpopular services should we discontinue marketing?

Assess where your spa is right now, and where you want it to be in three to six months. Outline a plan to reach your goals, consider what obstacles you may encounter and how you will overcome such challenges. Choose three short-term and three long-term goals. Assign three action steps and a deadline to each goal. Then, prioritize your goals. Decide what you will delegate and what you will do yourself. Assess how you will measure your success and who you will hold accountable for reaching your objectives.

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Ad content and design: how to effectively market yourself

Keep the following components in mind when creating your ad:

- Product/service type—communicate what you are selling.
- Identify what is unique about your product/service.
- Outline the benefits for the client—what is in it for them?
- Who is it for? What is your target market?
- Use a catchy phrase to grab the customer's attention.
- Be sure to include your logo for branding.
- Consider placing before-and-after shots.
- Use a call to action such as offering a free service to the first 10 people who respond.
- Brand unity: repeat your brand collateral's color scheme and style.
- Do not forget to list your website address, physical address and contact info.

In order to establish yourself as an expert in the field, you must obtain industry leadership skills. Be the first to introduce new technologies, products and services in the area.

Now you can proceed to implement a targeted, lead generating marketing campaign you can track via such methods as online marketing, print advertising in newspapers, magazines and/or the *Yellow Pages*, and client recruitment seminars.

Website: your virtual business

With the aid of professional website designers and search engine optimizers, you can attract a large number of leads that can receive automatic e-mail responses from your company. Produce monthly electronic newsletters, provide online offers, generate product and service pages, highlight service providers and show spa photos and before-and-after images. More and more savvy consumers are expecting to learn about your services via the Internet.

Host a successful client recruitment seminar

Hosting a recruitment seminar is the latest trend in the skin care and spa industry. By now you've probably been invited to attend a seminar hosted by a plastic surgeon or dermatologist—I strongly recommend that the rest of us in the beauty industry follow suit. The main objective of a recruitment seminar is to consult with as many potential clients as possible, at the same time. Standing behind a podium gives you the opportunity to present your products and services to a targeted audience.

Begin by putting together your invitation list, including your database of leads, prospects and clients, the local wellness media and press, members of the Chamber of Commerce, nurse associations, weight loss centers, yoga studios, etc. Be sure to include several of your very satisfied clients who are willing to stand up and give personal testimonials of your work.

Advertise your seminar two weeks to one month in advance via the newspapers, direct mail, radio, etc. In your ads, highlight the breakthrough technologies and unique benefits your facility offers. Feature giveaways, offers, coupons, free samples, gift bags and trial offers of new procedures. Plan on a two to three hour event, and be sure to include refreshments and possibly light snacks.

When the media arrives, be sure to hand them your press kit and a gift certificate for complimentary services—they can provide you with excellent PR via service reviews. As your guests arrive, give them travel size products in a pretty gift bag.

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Purchasing the "rights" to a territory for a specific piece of equipment, product or service can give your spa a big advantage over others.



Structure your presentation to offer solutions, highlight benefits and results, describe treatment processes and discuss facts. Conduct a demonstration, pass around product samples, show before-and-after photos and provide a menu of your services, brochures and incentives. Conclude your presentation with a call to action by offering attendees the opportunity to take advantage of your seminar special—whatever you choose it to be. Allow time for a question and answer session and for face to face networking opportunities.

Establishing yourself as an expert

In order to establish yourself as an expert in the field, you must obtain industry leadership skills. Network and build relationships with colleagues. Contribute to the community and charities. Be the first to introduce new technologies, products and services in the area.

A public relations agent can help to keep your name out there and maintain ongoing relationships with television and radio contacts and print and online editors. Submit regular articles as a contributing writer for local newspapers, trade publications or national consumer magazines, as doing so will get your name and philosophy in the public's eye. Become a mentor that offers training opportunities to junior service providers and spa entrepreneurs.

Exclusive territory marketing

When you purchase the "rights" to a territory, you have the privilege of being the only spa in your city/county that can provide a specific manufacturer's latest equipment, product or service. By eliminating the competition, you gain the

opportunity to obtain leads from your manufacturer's affiliate lists published on its website, and in consumer and trade magazines.

Another advantage to using exclusive territory marketing is the exclusive right to use patented procedures and products, copyrighted intellectual property and trade marked logos and slogans. Exclusive territory marketing packages usually offer ad slicks, website templates, photographs and ready to go radio and television commercials so you don't have to reinvent the wheel.

Manufacturers that offer territories usually hold regional and annual conferences where you can network, stay updated and connect with other territory marketers, staying in with the "in" crowd.

Marketing your brand

One of the most valuable assets in business is the combination of words, images and feelings evoked from a brand. Your brand is unique to your spa. It's the collection of products, the team's uniforms, stationary, e-mail signature block and the on-hold message. It's the music you play, the sights, sounds, flavors, aromas and feel of your unique environment. Everything you do has to reinforce that brand.

From the first impression, to experiencing the ultimate client experience, to the follow-up home maintenance regimen you prescribe, you want your mission, core values, color schemes, unity of logos and labeling to speak volumes about you. After all, it is your brand. What do you want your brand to embody? Think of ways you might verbalize the brand image in a visual way. Your brand logo needs to be prominently displayed everywhere your clients are served and one or two consistent color themes must thread all of your treatment rooms together.

Brand marketing makes us appear much bigger, and more successful, than we may actually be. Continue your branding on your website, and protect what you have by trademarking your product or service. If you are trying to build brand equity, you don't want someone else to use your brand instead of you.

There are many facets to marketing your spa, and it can be easy to get overwhelmed. Take some of these ideas and place them in a timeline that will lead to their fulfillment. All of your small marketing tactics will allow for your big marketing goals to materialize. ■

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