



MARKETING SOLUTIONS

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Getting Wet!

How to Effectively Market & Promote Wet Treatments in Your Spa

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Effectively Marketing Wet Treatments

Building new treatment areas fit for wet treatments and buying the equipment needed to perform the services is a very expensive investment! It can also be difficult to make wet treatment facilities profitable. But with some extra effort and some good strategic business advice for marketing, advertising, PR and promotions, you will see your spa hydrotherapy services paying for themselves over and over again in the future.

It is extremely important that you properly invest a certain amount of money into new marketing programs, merchandising materials, PR and advertising. A progressive marketing campaign, focused on wet treatments will truly separate your spa from everyone else's. You may want to hire a marketing firm, in whose hands you can place all of these responsibilities. Otherwise, you or an appointed creative and well-spoken member of your staff should become your spa's "Marketing Coordinator".

Education-Oriented Marketing

First, you must begin to educate your entire staff on the complete benefits and wonders of the spa treatments that are available at your spa. They must learn about all of the specialized ingredients, products and therapies. When you open the new spa or install new treatments, invite your staff to experience one or two treatments on the house. This will not only warm up your esthetician to his or her new surroundings, but it will allow the staff to rave about your wet treatments, through their own personal experience. Personalized testimonials and recommendations will go much further with clientele than cold hard facts.

It is important that your staff be your best sales team! Selling salon and spa clients 'up' to additional services is an important, yet basic marketing strategy. When a client calls to make a massage appointment, your receptionist should ask the client whether he or she would also like to try a Vichy shower after their service, for example. Your front desk staff should always be ready to share advice and personally recommend treatments that may be designed for specific conditions. They should readily know all of the wet treatment service prices and their therapeutic benefits, and be able to make a sale without looking at the spa services menu. Once you get your clientele to experience a new hydrotherapy service once, you may just have them hooked.

Create Unique Spa Wet Treatment Packages

It may prove to be extremely effective to create service packages that include one of your spa's more popular services and a new treatment, like a Vichy shower or other wet service. Make it a deal. This will entice clientele to try something new, at a slightly discounted price, as long as they know that they can stick with something they already know they like.

Spa Service Menus

It is important to position your spa as unique and different from most other salons, spas and day spas. Your spa service menu will be the key marketing vehicle to tell your story and to define all of your specialty spa services for your clients, the community and the media. Not everyone is savvy about spa treatments today. Carefully create a professionally designed menu with detailed descriptions for each service, using professional photographs to illustrate. If necessary, hire a freelance writer and graphic designer to create this marketing device for you. Consider two-color to full color printing. Extra touches of elegance may be achieved with unique paper folds, tissue overlays, die cuts, thermography and other special printing effects.

Spa Photography Sessions

Spa photographs are essential for your advertising, marketing and PR programs! Hire a professional photographer to take tasteful and discreet photographs of models enjoying your wet treatments services. Whether it is a Swedish Shower, Vichy Shower or Hydrotherapy Tub Treatment, you can visually illustrate these great new services. Create a special ambiance in the photos by using candles, soft lights, rose petals and all of the normal extra effects that you create for your wet treatment clients. Some photographs may be 'ghosted' or printed in a 20% screen behind your typewritten copy areas. These photographs will help your new and current clients better understand your wet treatments. A picture is still worth a thousand words ... maybe more!

Direct Mail

Direct mail is a terrific marketing concept for reaching new people within your community and soliciting your regular clients, who currently do not take advantage of your wet treatment services. If you are computerized, start to keep track of your clients by types of service that they indulge in. This will allow you to market to specific clientele those services in which they may not yet have indulged.

Create a series of direct mail pieces with seasonal letters, holiday postcards and colorful fliers that can be sent directly to your client database and to other area homes. With postage, these marketing tactics may run from fifty cents to one dollar each. To save money, research and utilize 'bulk mail discount programs' with your local post office or credit card company.

Consider cooperative & marriage mail programs. Companies like Clipper Magazine, Val Pak and Money Mailer can offer you the opportunity to promote your spa and your specialized wet treatments through their publications. These companies will help you target 10,000 to 100,000 homes near your spa for approximately four cents per home. They create the artwork, handle the postage, offer photographs and handle all of the details for you. Check your local Yellow Pages under 'Direct Mail'.

Some spas successfully use Broadcast Fax fliers to promote their menus, corporate spa gifting programs and special seasonal service offerings, especially to local corporations with fax machines. Even though these particular fax marketing devices must be created with black and white line art, it offers you a new way of targeting business owners.

Newsletters

If you are an established salon or spa adding on new treatments or facilities, a newsletter is a great idea. Send these to your former clients, informing them about the upgrade and offer them a discount or promotional rate on one or another of your new services. This is an extremely effective way of utilizing the loyalty of your pre-existing client base. Consider printing in full color. Explore new digital printing services, versus the more traditional and more expensive offset printing. Hire a local direct mail company to mail 10,000 to 50,000 extras of these out to the local zip codes nearest to your salon.

Print Advertising

Spending money on advertising may seem like too much extra effort, but in reality, it is very effective when the correct vehicles are utilized. Local newspapers can be an extremely worthwhile investment, especially if they are distributed to homes in your area. Often, the main goal of advertising is getting your name out. The more familiar the general population grows with your name, the more trust they will invest in you.

Local and community magazines prove just as effective as newspapers, and often times more so. Many small print publications feature special sections at certain times of year, advertising for beauty salons and day spas exclusively. This is a perfect place to get your name out. Look for bridal sections, and special holiday sections, like Valentine's Day or Mother's Day. Advertising in these sections will target the perfect audiences and you will be assured public recognition.

Advertorials on a local or national basis is one of the newest and most effective forms of print advertising – and possibly one of the most valuable! To be featured in a national magazine's "Best Day Spas" section is usually not free. You may pay for the unique opportunity to be recognized nationally in a consumer magazine like Elle, W, Allure, Redbook, Victoria, Bazaar or Town & Country and the reader would never know. You can feature your distinctively different wet treatments in these advertorials, because you write and control the copy. In addition, once you receive that endorsement, you can use that magazine feature again in posters, PR reprints and in-spa signage, to boast your spa's new accomplishment. Being named in "top" selections can have an enormous impact on your business, while building pride and namebrand recognition for your staff and your clients.

Electronic Advertising

Another similar way to get your name out is using the powers and popularity of today's TV and radio shows. Cable television offers many resources for targeting specific areas. You may choose to place ads or you can produce more intimate infomercials. Either of these options will require a production shoot. This is an additional expense, yet when targeting the correct audiences with a highly visual impression of your spa's wet treatments, it will be well worth the investment. Aim for stations and television shows that cater to your specifically targeted audience. In most cases, this will be 70% well educated and career-oriented women in the 25 to 50 age range. Offer your community a visual spa tour, illustrating the benefits and availabilities of your wet treatments.

Weekly, monthly and seasonal e-Mail marketing campaigns can also be extremely effective. Begin to collect the email addresses of all your clients, if you haven't already created this database. Plan to send out notices of special services, seasonal gift certificate ideas and newsworthy information about your spa. Plan to regularly promote hydrotherapy treatments to everyone on your email list.

Merchandising & Point-Of-Purchase Programs

In-spa posters and fliers should be professionally designed and printed, showcasing professional photographs of men and women enjoying these wet treatments, while listing the benefits. In certain situations, you may also choose to exhibit prices, although it is recommended to get clients in the door first. Utilize wall space and window space in the spa to display posters with photographs exhibiting services.

Visually attractive mini-posters, fliers and counter cards should be put in all treatment rooms. Offer concise bullet point listings and explanations for all your spas services. As your clients are staring off into the distance during their other services, allow them to read about your other wonderful spa services. Packages and services should also be displayed and glamorized with point-of-purchase materials to put at the front desk. Create new counter cards for holidays and special events to maintain the interest of the clientele.

Special Events & Promotions

Promotions are always a wonderful way to get clients to try treatments that they may not have otherwise. However, many upscale spas are not thrilled with the idea of offering discounts or promotions, and some are downright against it. If this is the case, I would suggest hard-core Gift Certificate marketing. Gift Certificates can be the perfect way to sell packages and holiday time is when the race begins. Mother's Day, Valentine's Day, Christmas, and New Years are perfect times to get beautiful marketing material out, hanging large posters in windows or on walls and placing tantalizing advertisements in local papers and magazines.

Create a marketing calendar for your spa that includes some interesting special events like Lecture Demonstrations, Lady's Night At The Spa, Corporate Programs, or Charitable & Fundraising Events. Utilize seasonal special events like proms and graduation to create special packages or "days of beauty."

Mastering Media Relations:

You must consistently work to gain the interest and respect of the local and national media. There are many outlets and resources that you can utilize. For one, a series of grand opening press releases are a must for any new spa! Even if you are not opening the spa with these treatments, a re-grand opening press release will serve to educate the public that you are now redesigned and better than ever!

Plan to send media releases out every time you add an exciting new wet treatment or other spa service. Offer free consultations and complimentary services to editors to actually get them to experience the wet treatments in your spa. Send along photos of the wet treatment facilities or services photos of the treatments themselves.

Pitching to the media may be easier than some may think. All it takes is creating some newsworthy and well-written materials. Create a one-page press release, detailing the event, products, or services that you intend to pitch. Offer them enough extra information to write a similar customized story for their own publication. Send along professional photographs exhibiting the spa treatments and services that you are promoting. Write a personalized cover note or a 'pitch letter', which you will send along with the press release. This letter will introduce the spa and offer a few alternative story subjects which might be of interest to that publication. Target specific editors for local magazines and newspapers. Take the time to also target the national spa and beauty trade magazines, where readers would be interested in a story like yours. A week or so after sending each press release, call back the editors to ensure that they have received it and find out if they are interested.

It is often a great idea to contact the editors of health and beauty websites with media news about your wet treatment services. They are frequently looking for more information to exhibit on their sites, and as we all know, there is no page limit on a website. Send press releases to websites by email, along with photographs as attachments. The easier you make it for them to publish, the better your chances will be.

A customized PR Media Kit is a truly important factor to any successful PR campaign. Your PR Media Kits need to include press releases, personalized pitch letters, salon menus, business cards, biographies, the spa business story, extra wet treatment photographs and your other hydrotherapy marketing materials. The more you include, the better. Everything in your PR Media Kit should be uniformly printed on either your company letterhead or white photo paper – if the print is a design example.

Spreading The Word

The one most important element to first time and repeat visits for wet treatments is word of mouth referrals. A spa cannot simply offer the treatments; they must also offer amazing customer service and royal care all around. This will get clients talking and the buzz about your amazing spa will begin! Incentive programs are also one way of expediting word of mouth referrals. If you tell one client that they can get ten dollars off their next treatment if they refer someone to your spa, you will have two people coming in for every one who leaves. And doubling your business has never been a bad thing!

Salon Platinum DaySpa ~ Success Story

Salon Platinum DaySpa, owned by Robert Lewis in Bethesda Maryland, is one spa that knows the importance of both wet treatments and thorough marketing. From the very beginning, Lewis knew that regardless of what he had to give up to make it possible, he would have several luxurious hydrotherapy treatment rooms and would offer the most exclusive treatments available in the area.

Platinum is not a salon that turned into a day spa. In fact, the salon element of the facility is very much equal in importance to the services that clients can find behind the mahogany and frosted glass door leading to the private spa facility. Lewis already owns two very successful hairstyling salons in the area. However, with the opportunity of a new location at one of the busiest and most upscale shopping malls in the area, he quickly decided to venture into the hot business of spa services. This is not a typical location for any day spa, but certainly is advantageous when considering the ease of attracting new clientele.

In creating a day spa, Lewis knew that he had to offer new and different treatments to make his salon better than the rest. His staff of professional estheticians all came to him with thorough backgrounds in a diversity of skincare techniques. His wet rooms are indulgent, with beautiful tile and state-of-the-art technology and treatment facilities. All of their professional skin care products are top-of-the-line and esthetically beneficial.

Because of Salon Platinum DaySpa's steady growth, Lewis have sought out the expertise of a full-service professional marketing, advertising and public relations agency, that specializes in the professional beauty industry. Through this agency, Salon Platinum DaySpa has been able to bring their fresh image and inspirational ideas to the public through PR, promotions and national acclaim. They have started to facilitate several professional photography sessions per year, in order to use the photos in their advertising, marketing, printed materials and PR exposure.

Salon Platinum DaySpa has taken a fresh direction, utilizing a more upscale program of placing advertorials in newspapers and magazines, while avoiding discount-oriented marketing. Salon and spa packages are always offered at full-price, yet marketed intensely with gift certificate programs throughout the year. With the help of their marketing services agency, Salon Platinum DaySpa works hard to facilitate gift certificate programs, seasonal marketing and holiday events. In addition to this, they are able to utilize the marketing facilities made available through the mall location, to post localized signage and participate in promotional events.

Salon Platinum Day Spa will be regularly promoting Gift Certificates and Gift Certificate Cards. They will also promote new 'Spa Membership Programs' whereby clients may purchase a 'Year Of Beauty' or a 'Platinum Membership Program', which offers numerous spa packages and combination services throughout the year.

Because of Robert Lewis's ability to recognize the importance of wet treatments in building a successful spa, Salon Platinum DaySpa has grown with every new client, and has been featured in numerous national magazines, including Elle Magazine's 'Best of the Best', W Magazine's 'Best in Day Spas and Skin Care Salons In The USA' and Celebrity 101 Hairstyle Magazine's 'Top Day Spas In The USA!' In many cases, their wet treatment services were featured in these stories.

Marketing Partners

To take advantage of some extra marketing opportunities, you should build partnerships with your beauty supply distributors, manufacturers and other local businesses. Your manufacturers and distributors may be able to offer some brochures, marketing materials, posters, educational opportunities and incentive reward programs for your staff. Other local businesses like limousine services, florists, candy shops, hotels and restaurants may be able to work with you to create some very unusual new 'Day Of Beauty' Packages.

Diving Right In

Wet treatments are quite simply what make spas. If you want to own and operate an effective, successful and recognized spa, sit down with your accountant, do some shopping, and then take the plunge. When run and marketed correctly, there is no limit to how far they can take you.

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