

Simple Spa Marketing Tactics That Win Customers

To retain customers, creating an exceptional customer experience is paramount. This takes an expert staff that uses premier products, and a salon or spa space that comes across as professional yet relaxing. However, retention efforts must be balanced with a steady effort to entice new customers, too. The good news? There are a variety of simple marketing strategies that you can employ to achieve both of these critical goals.

Do-It-Yourself Digital Marketing

For the uninitiated, the term “digital marketing” can seem daunting. But it doesn’t mean you have to fork over the cash and spend the time to develop your own app (though if you have the marketing dollars and the customer base to support one, it could be pretty cool!). Honestly, it just takes a little effort on your part to leverage ready-made platforms.

From a marketing standpoint, the Information Age has leveled the playing field, especially for small to mid-size spas and salons. The simple marketing tactics available to you now weren’t 20 years ago. The rise of social media, along with the ability to compile email lists, means you have opportunities to win—and create loyal—customers.

The following tactics assume that you’re using social media, and providing information via email in the form of monthly newsletters or timely e-blasts:

1. Provide Discounts

People love a bargain. Providing discounts is a great way to get new customers in the door—and create loyal ones as well. Discounts can range from services to products; either way, it’s an incentive that creates action for a customer that’s currently sitting on the fence, or looking for a new esthetician. When we say discount, we don’t mean *deep* discounts. Simply offer something that comes across as a fair value—and experiment to see which offers generate the most interest. Social media is a great way to entice new customers, while your email list will hit up your existing ones.

2. Present New Services

Coming across as cutting edge by providing the latest products and services is a great way to differentiate yourself from your competitors. A perfect example of this is the rise of blowout services. Once a specialty, blowout bars are now popping up on every street corner. Whether it’s a service or a product, it’s important for you to keep an eye on the horizon for opportunities like this—and then not be afraid to position yourself with marketing that shows your innovative spirit.

3. Offer Contests

Another option that works for clients new and loyal—as well as across a variety of marketing channels—is contests. Whether it’s in the form of a survey, an in-shop drawing, or social media-based, it’s a great way to engage with your audience. Prizes can include service packages or gift baskets featuring your most popular products. Really, contests can take on any form. The key is to have fun with them. That way, your audience will, too.

4. Find Partnerships

Partnering with local businesses to provide treatment for their employees is another great way to get in front of potential clients that you might not have had an opportunity with otherwise. Be strategic, choosing companies that have the type of clientele you’re after. For example, considering income levels and genders doesn’t mean you’re being snobby, or discriminatory. Partnerships must make sense. Salon clientele are comprised mostly of women, and spa treatments aren’t cheap. Find

businesses that fit your audience, or you're not only wasting your own time and energy, but theirs as well.

5. Referral Programs

Offering incentives for existing clients to refer friends and family is a great way to grow your business. Referrals could lead to discounted services or products for the referrer. Once again, this tactic is easy to employ within the walls of your spa or salon, as well as through social media and email. Whether in person or via the worldwide web, the key is taking the first step: ask for the business. Once you do, you might be surprised at the response you get. If you're providing the service that creates loyal customers, they'll be willing to spread the word.

6. Give Back

Getting involved in your community is not just a great way to give back. It also raises your local profile. Whether you decide to support a nonprofit or a charity, creating a customer-centric campaign make a huge difference for your chosen cause, all while creating awareness for your business. When giving back, keeping the cause front and center to ensure that a true contribution is being made is crucial. Raising your profile through community initiatives is a common practice, but if it's not genuine your audience will see through it, and it will backfire.

For those of you not doing these things, we hope you'll try them, and let us know your levels of success. Trial and error is just part of the game here, so if one of your strategies doesn't work, don't be gun-shy to try a new one. For those of you already employing these tactics, we'd welcome comments so we can all see what's working for you and what's not. Sure, marketing your business takes a little bit of elbow grease. But a little effort can ultimately make a big difference for your bottom line.