

History and introduction to the day spa marketing essay



In the day runner world of corporate culture in modern day America, many people find it hard to relax, assuming that they even make the time to do so. For those that do want to relax, driving to a day spa is a good alternative. There are many treatments found a day spa: all natural massages, stone therapy, sauna and whirlpool treatments, hot mud baths, and makeovers. Despite difficult economic times, there are people that will make the time to relax, and are willing to prioritize their spending knowing that a healthy body and mind are a more valuable investment than finding a second job.

Once you decide to own a day spa, there are various steps that need to be executed in order to setup a successful business. Sometimes people who don't prioritize their well being feel that a spa is a waste of money, but as an owner, one must recognize possible objections and create customers that will be loyal. There are many things to ponder before running your own business: do you have a market, do you have clientele, what about location, what about competition? One very important step prior to even starting the business is to check out everyone in the area that could be considered competition. This is not to discourage, but to gain a clear picture of what it is that you will have to do differently in order to establish regular clientele. The second key to success is to apply marketing and advertising principles in order to attract the correct clientele.

Next, a location and startup money are two indispensable items that must be located. " Surrounding yourself with the right people will strengthen the business plan and add quality to the content while helping you identify available pockets of money. Moreover, having open lines of communication with these professionals (i. e., lawyers, accountants, bankers and business

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development officers) adds support and promotes good decision-making. Startups need capital. Few startups have the necessary capital on hand to launch the company, but that is not a deterrent. There are other options available.

Friends and family are most often the first source of financing for a startup because familiarity and trust have already been established. The challenge with most friends and family financing plans is the total capital available is sometime limited” (Roze, L. 2009, March 31).

Once location and capital have been located and established, then comes the actual part where one must work extremely hard to gain some measure of success. Besides the financial obligations that starting a businesses will bring, there will be a lot of personal commitment. Family life will be the first thing affected, since most of your time as an owner will be spent solving all the obstacles that will spring up as opening and getting the day spa solvent as a small business. In addition to permits and all the paperwork and licensing necessary to open the actual doors, one must also take some time to interview and hire staff. Staff hired is also in proportion to the services that will be offered.

“ When determining which spa services to offer, it’s important to weigh factors like equipment cost against potential profitability. For instance, you may want to offer hydrotherapy in your new day spa. However, hydrotherapy services require the greatest outlay of cash for equipment and facility development” (Smallbusiness. aol. com).

This is when one must decide whether to limit services to something with less equipment cost in order to increase profit. “ Spa services are a rapidly growing segment of the personal care industry. The range of services is truly dazzling, but basically, aesthetic services offered at a day spa fall into three categories: body and skin care, makeup, and hair removal. Theoretically, there is a fourth category - nail services. Nail services have crossed over into the beauty mainstream and are no longer considered just a spa service. However, when offered in a spa setting, nail services have a tendency to be higher priced than in a salon. Skin and body care spa services could include: facials and body exfoliation, natural massage, wraps and packs, body tanning, hair-removal, waxing, eyebrow arching, manicure and pedicures, cosmetics applications” (Entrepreneur. com).

Since the concept of a day spa implies disposable or luxury income, there are many aspects of marketing and advertising that must be applied in order to achieve success. The segmentation of the market is the first thing that must be taken into consideration. A market segment is a group of people that have similar needs or wants for a particular product or service (Investopedia, 2010). As an owner, one must pinpoint the most likely segment of the market for this particular service, which would be families with some disposable income that are health-conscious. Regardless of race, these particular consumers need to understand that health is important to developing their family and themselves. These consumers also need to make the connection between being healthy and spending time at a spa. This is where target marketing and positioning come into play.

When you target a specific segment or class of people through your advertising, this is known as target marketing. In the leisure industry this is extremely important, especially when the current national economy has not allowed for as much disposable income as before (Allbusiness. com, 1999). In this economy, businesses such as day spas are operating in highly competitive markets because of the nature of the service, which they are offering. In order to create revenue, they may find themselves initiating frequent marketing campaigns and devoting significant resources to generating brand awareness and sales. Marketing campaigns can be designed with different ends in mind, including building a brand image, introducing a new product, increasing sales of a product already on the market (Investopedia, 2010). A successful marketing campaign for a leisure business like a day spa involves very clever positioning to create the consumer perception of the services as a wise investment and a necessity, not a luxury.

One possibility would be slogans like “ The state of your family’s health is priceless” or “ The wisest investment you can make is in your health”. Slogans like these can be a part of radio or television advertising, which would be geared at the demographics of the market segment one is trying to cultivate. A catchy slogan can also serve as a form of branding. While a name or slogan captures the personality of a product or service, its emotional and perceived makeup is what makes the brand. Simply put, branding is about conceptualizing, creating, nurturing, nourishing, promoting and focusing on the distinct and dependable qualities of such product or service in a way that ensures clear target market understanding and

appreciation and yields positive experience and consequential emotional attachment (Eze, 2010). Once the target market has that connection with the spa, then the clientele will start patronizing the establishment regularly.

Another important observation about day and family spas are that they happen to provide a leisure service that is aimed at a specific niche market. When a business owner of a small business – such as this day spa – doesn't specify whom they are marketing to, it becomes easier to fail. Niche marketing is crucial because it involves several steps. First of all, you need to define your target audience. Earlier we discussed that the market for this business includes more affluent families with disposable incomes. However, you are not going to target every affluent family with disposable income. Let's say the spa is located in Chicago, IL. Then the niche we would be focused on is upper-middle class, wealthier families with children above a certain age, who are health-conscious and enjoy pampering themselves. While it may seem like too specific or narrow of a market at first, in reality once you have defined exactly whom you need as a customer base, you can become a leader in that particular market. Niche marketing is about setting yourself apart from the competition, making the customer come to you, and giving them a desire to buy or use your services and products (Lake, 2010).

Market leadership is the direct offspring of effective niche marketing. Market leadership refers to positioning the business in such a way that when the specific market is being discussed, your specific business figures into the discussion because of your advertising and marketing efforts to brand yourself and identify yourself with that market and demographic. Because the concept of a family day spa implies pampering similar to what you might

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enjoy on a spa vacation or a cruise ship, it is common for spas to offer a variety of services and packages. Again, this is an example of reaching your clients. Your niche may be affluent, but in this economy they must feel a necessity for a particular service before they spend their money. So in order to entice them as consumers, one must follow certain steps. First and foremost, one has to demonstrate the value of the services being provided. In this case, packages should consist of at least three complementary services. Spa industry insiders recommend offering half-day packages that run three hours and five-hour packages that offer a light lunch. In each package, value should be highlighted to where the client understands that the services a la carte would be more expensive, while not undercutting the profit too much by discounting the package.

Secondly, one must attract the client to buy. Once you have caught their attention and demonstrated the value, now something must be offered that will make it a no brainer for them to purchase the goods or services. This is where one should tailor packages based on the population and demographics of the clientele that frequents the establishment. Trends should also be acknowledged, such as the increase in single parent families. An effective way of acknowledging this trend would be to offer adult and child packages, where the whole family can take some time away from daily troubles and relax and renew themselves and their relationships. In order to make a remarkable offer, you must truly understand your clientele's wants or needs. It doesn't matter if you are the most talented person in your field or you have the best product in the world, if nobody knows you can help them (Anonymous, 2010).

Of course, another crucial key to success is the personal touch. Customer service plays a large role in the effectiveness of personal selling. Personal selling sounds exactly like what it is: communicating personally with the clientele or potential consumers of the services and making the sale. In the case of a family day spa, one very good idea would be to hold little mini spa getaways in a public location, such as a mall or shopping center. One would set up booth for sample services given away for free to the potential customers. Of course, one would want to be located near boutique shops or other locations that cater specifically to the demographics that one is also trying to reach. This is where the customer service that your staff provides will generate the return visits from the prospects. As a business one only has the chance to make that first impression. Providing excellent and welcoming customer service, in addition to the personal selling during the free demonstrations will also go a long way to create and consolidate your customer base.

Finally, as a new business owner one must be flexible and adapt to solve obstacles that can affect the daily running of the business. Even so, no two days tend to be alike for salon owners. While the needs of clients and employees vary widely, there are certain tasks that you can expect to perform on a regular basis. Booking appointments, ordering supplies, talking to vendors, and arranging for in-shop or offsite training are just a few parts of the daily and weekly routine. Making up and adjusting work schedules, tracking receivables, monitoring costs, marketing and advertising, and communicating with customers are also important duties that only the owner can perform.

Overall, owning a business can be very rewarding, and owning a day spa will not only reward you, but your clientele as well.