



Successful Seasonal & Annual Marketing Strategies!

For Salons, Hair Replacement Centers & Wig Ateliers

By: Larry H. Oskin, President, Marketing Solutions

Now is the best time to create your Annual Marketing Calendar: You really should start now to lock in your plans for successfully marketing your salon in the New Year. It's time to create your annual resolutions that will really help your business grow through a strategic investment into seasonal and annual advertising, promotions and PR programs.

Set Strategic Marketing Objectives & Goals: List your top 10 'Business Objectives' and then an equal number of financially based 'Goals' for the upcoming year. Set a series of specific qualitative and quantitative goals. Here are a few examples:

- To create an annual marketing calendar with both bi-monthly, holiday and seasonal promotions
- To increase hair extension sales by 100%
- To increase wig and hair replacement service sales by 50%
- To increase new texture, perm and straightener services by 25% over the previous year
- To increase haircolor sales by 50%
- To increase gift certificate sales by at least 50%
- To recruit and retain at least 50 new salon clients per month
- To increase our staff by 3 new salon and spa professionals
- To become known as 'Hair Extension or Hair Replacement Experts', 'The Haircolor Experts' or as 'The Best Salon In Town!'

Bi-Monthly Marketing Campaigns: Purchase an annual calendar or a large sheet of graph paper. Create 6 columns across the top for January/February, March/April, May/June, July/August, September/October and November/December. Then across the left hand margin write down your primary service categories like -- Hair, Wigs, Hair Replacement, Skin/Spa, Nails and Retail. Define at least one to two promotions for every service category per bi-monthly period. Take into account both your strongest and weakest service categories.

Plan to facilitate 'bi-monthly' promotions as most of your clients only come into the salon about every 6 to 10 weeks. Most professional beautycare manufacturers and distributors also plan their seasonal specials, promotions and educational offerings on a bi-monthly basis. Start to chart a course of marketing, advertising, PR and promotional actions for the next year. If hair extensions, hair replacement services, haircolor or any special service is what you want to be known as experts at, plan to promote these areas of specialty at least two or three times per year.

Your annual calendar chart should allow you to create a secondary set of notes to include your marketing budgets for each promotion. Note any planned special advertisements, special events, printed materials and point-of-purchase merchandising devices.

Holiday & Seasonal Salon Services: Begin to plan each promotion at least 3 to 6 months in advance. There is a time to promote everything and timing is very important! If you want to sell more gift certificates, then plan to start promoting them at least 6 weeks prior to Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, Father's Day and the year-end holidays. Makeovers, hair extensions, wigs and haircolor are great to promote any time of year, although January, spring and fall are always the best! If you want to promote 'Prom Service Packages' with upstyles, manicures, pedicures, eyebrow arches and makeup applications – you must start to run advertisements and put up your in-salon merchandising materials 4 to 8 weeks in advance.

Full Price vs. Discounted Strategies: Promote most salon services, products and special beautycare trends at full price, when possible. Promoting any salon service does not mean that you need to offer dramatic discounts. You can certainly offer special series package incentives, discounts, retail gifts with services and purchase with purchase options to your clients.

Seasonal Salon Retail Product Promotions: Work with your beauty care manufacturers and distributors to promote bi-monthly, holiday and seasonal retail product offerings. They will offer special promotionally themed posters, counter cards, merchandising materials, samples and incentive contests that you and your staff should be ready to work with.

Annual & Seasonal Marketing Budgets: Set an annual marketing, advertising and PR 'Budget' for your salon. This should be at least 5 to 8% of your projected total annual service and retail sales volume. If you are a new salon or plan to take an aggressive strategy, plan to set aside 8% to 10% or more. In other words, for every \$100,000 in total sales you plan to create, set aside at least \$5,000 to \$8,000 in your advertising, marketing and PR fund or if you want to be more aggressive, set aside at least \$8,000 to \$10,000 for every \$100,000 you plan to attain. Responsibly set challenging, yet realistic budgets and goals.

Seasonal Advertising & Marketing Media Strategies: Create a projected advertising budget, so you will creatively 'invest' in building your brand and while promoting each targeted service category through paid magazine, direct mail, email blasts and Internet advertising. We do not recommend Yellow Pages, regular newspaper advertisements, radio or TV unless you are in a small city or already have multiple large volume salon locations. Your most important seasonal marketing campaigns can be promoted with direct mail postcards, regional magazines, telephone calls, email blasts, media relations campaigns or special event marketing.

Seasonal Media & PR Campaigns: Review the annual editorial calendars posted by your local media on the Internet. Time some of your holiday promotions and seasonal promotions to match what they will feature in the local magazines and print publications. Create professional press releases, photographs and cover pitch letters that will inspire the local media to work with you each season as you promote new haircolor trends, gifts of beauty, hair extensions, wigs or anything you want to feature. Present your PR campaigns in a non-commercial manner while attempting to educate the local community on salon services and products. Work at least 3 to 4 months in advance, since most major media will work that far in advance.

Seasonal Marketing Calendars: Explore options for your new 'Annual Marketing Calendar' where you can effectively promote what you want to each season, rather than just opening your salon doors for business each day. You really only need 6 marketing campaigns per year. Here are some examples of what to seasonally market:

- ❑ **January / February:**
 - New Year ~ New You Wig Makeovers
 - Hair Extension Makeovers – For Length, Volume & Texture
 - Creative New Haircolor & Highlights
 - Gifts Of Beauty: Valentine's Day Gift Certificates
 - Staff Recruitment Promotions: Lecture Demonstrations at Cosmetology Schools
- ❑ **March / April:**
 - Spring Haircolor & Highlights
 - Pretty For Prom! -- Special Packages
 - Mother's Day Gift Certificates
 - Spring Hair Removal Services
 - New Spa, Massage & Body Therapy Treatments
- ❑ **May / June:**
 - Celebrate National Blondes Day – June 4th
 - Special Men's Wig, Hair Replacement & Salon Service Packages
 - Father's Day Gift Certificates
 - Bare It All -- With Professional Hair Removal
 - Bridal Party Packages -- Upstyles, Nails & Makeup
 - Spa Manicures & Pedicures
- ❑ **July / August:**
 - Back To Cool Haircare Product Sale! Buy Any 3 Products – Get 1 FREE!
 - Spa Series Service Package Sale! Buy Any 5 Salon or Spa Services – Get 1 FREE!
 - Summer Brights! -- Haircolor & Highlights
 - Teen Makeover Specials & Teen Spa Nights
 - Smooth As Silk – Summer Hair Removal Rituals
- ❑ **September / October:**
 - Fall Into Fashionable Haircolor
 - Fall Into Total Makeovers: Hair, Skin & Nails
 - Celebrate Fall! -- With New Textures, Curls, Waves & Straighteners
 - Experience New Spa, Massage & Body Therapy Treatments
 - Staff Recruitment Promotions: Lecture Demonstrations at Cosmetology Schools
 - Lady's Nights Out – Open House Makeover / Lecture-Demonstration Events
- ❑ **November / December:**
 - Party Haircolor & Highlights
 - Celebrate! -- Holiday Gift Certificates
 - Year Of Beauty Gift Programs
 - Corporate Salon & Spa Gifting Programs
 - Makeup Applications & Lessons
 - Annual 5 to 8% Price Adjustments

Create A Comprehensive Marketing Plan: Plan your work and work your plan. Do not wait for the magical client bus to park at the front door of your salon each day, week and season. With the declining economy and a salon on virtually every street corner, you must set yourself ahead of the competition with a comprehensive marketing strategy.

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Editorial Notes: Larry H. Oskin is president of Marketing Solutions, Inc., a full-service marketing, advertising, graphic design, photography and PR agency specializing in the professional beauty industry. Clients include salons, spas, medical spas, medical clinics, associations, distributors and manufacturers. Marketing Solutions is located at 10875 Main Street, Suite 205 in Fairfax, VA 22030. For more information call 703-359-6000 EXT: 22, Email LOskin@MktgSols.com or visit www.MktgSols.com.