



Salon & Day Spa ShowBiz

Progressive Salon Owners Take Advantage Of 'Show Season' All Year Long!

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Each year, you have the opportunity to advance your career while helping guide your staff to do the same. Motivate your staff to attend as many local, national and international beauty shows as possible. Here are a few tips to help you get ready for a more successful show season.

PLANNING BEFORE THE BIG SHOWS:

RESEARCH SHOWS: Call each of your local beauty supply distributors to see what they will be offering this coming year. Look in the annual American Salon Green Book for a listing of regional, national and international beauty trade shows. You can also review every show listing via www.BIRONline.com. Once you select a show to attend, purchase your tickets in advance to save money and to avoid standing in lines.

POST SHOWS & CLASSES: Make a salon bulletin board just for the year's upcoming educational opportunities, conventions and competitions.

CREATE MONTHLY INCENTIVES: Motivate your staff through monthly sales contests to create 'Salon Convention Funds'. Monthly service or retail sales contests may allow you to award prize dollars or the equivalent in 'Education Points' for those who want to take advantage of beauty conventions and shows through a salon subsidized salon education fund.

As an alternative idea, put 10% of all retail sales commissions into a special education fund to share with those salon professionals that earn it, instead of paying the normal commissions. Divide the education fund monies equally for each designated convention, in order to subsidize their convention participation.

Or, consider Holiday and Seasonal 'Education Voucher Awards' for your staff. Much like gift certificate awards, your staff can turn these in for cash reimbursements, with receipts after convention and shows.

RESEARCH EACH CONVENTION: Before you get there, have a detailed battle plan in place. Don't go there hoping to just walk the floor. Create a daily convention calendar for your staff, even if you have to divide up in smaller teams. This will help you to share new ideas and concepts back at the salon after each show.

Create a daily show calendar with hourly and half hourly notations. Make this in two or three columns, so you'll always know where everyone is as well as where and when you plan to meet up occasionally during each day. Everyone on your salon team should get a copy before you get there. Research and pencil in all of the extra FREE classes, paid classes, competitions and each of the special floor booths you want to see. Leave some extra open space for 'walking the floor'. Don't be afraid to assign select classes to various members of your salon staff. Plan to balance education with entertainment. Some shows are more entertainment than what you can adapt for use on your own salon clients. Look for "Edutaining" classes, so you will enjoy what you learn.

RESEARCH & PLAN FOR THE EXTRAS: Many big beauty industry conventions are held in far-away places. Save time for your staff to attend special off-site educational shows as well as to do a little fun sightseeing or shopping together. Some salons even rent a small bus or limo, while dressing as a team.

THE BIG SHOW:

GET THERE 'EARLY' TO BE ON TIME: The show floor is always wide open in the very early morning hours and in the late afternoon. Plan to visit those special education classes and booths that you expect to be overcrowded, early in the day while you can still see, hear and meet the presenters.

TAKE A LARGE NOTEPAD & PEN: Encourage and assign everyone on staff to be ready to take notes! Otherwise you'll forget more than half of it - before you get back to the salon. These notes will become your in-salon Lesson Plan, for follow-up classes, where you can all share ideas with each other. Take 35mm cameras with a flash and zoom lens, if not also a video camera to share visual recordings.

TAKE NECESSITIES: Create a packing list for everyone on staff. Each person should take plenty of salon business cards and most importantly - a good solid shoulder bag. There will be plenty of available free plastic and paper bags, but it is really best to bring your own sturdy bag.

LOOK FOR NEW STUFF: Be prepared to have everyone selectively research new products, services, guest artists and trends! You may assign someone to be in charge of new spa services, another aimed at new nailcare concepts while another may be focused on the hottest haircolor trends while you work on meeting the national beauty magazine editors. You must go to the show with a designated plan to look beyond the obvious. Buy worthwhile videos, workbooks and audio tapes! These are always offered at a terrific show price, and will ensure you will all take advantage of what you have learned - all year long.

SAY HELLO TO STRANGERS!: Look to meet other salon owners, salon professionals and to `NETWORK' with them. Exchange your salon business cards and offer to stay in touch, sharing ideas and educational opportunities in the future. Some salons even hold their own joint post-convention classes with other salons.

AFTER THE BIG SHOW:

COME BACK WITH A PLAN: The best way to visit a show is to know what you plan to do with your newly found information and educational updates, before you get back.

FOLLOW-UP SEMINARS: Plan to have a few teams put together classes in your salon or day spa for those who did not go. Work together to adapt what you have learned into usable new salon haircuts, styles, retail products and services. Be ready to share the latest haircolor, perm and style trends! If you don't use what you have learned on a few models, you are likely to forget most of what you saw.

CREATE A SALON EDUCATION FILE: Buy a large office file cabinet. Instead of eventually trashing or losing all of the many handout materials given to you at the convention, begin a salon library to store all of these materials in an organized manner. Include a series of books, videos, tapes and workbooks. This should become a `Salon Education Library', where staff members can borrow things for review.

INVITE IN SHOW ARTISTS: Use some of your salon educational fund to invite select show artists to perform exclusively within your salon or day spa. Most range from \$750. to \$2000. per day, plus expenses.

CREATE A SHOW NEWSLETTER - FOR CLIENTS: Plan to share your newly learned cuts, styles and products with your clients through a professionally printed newsletter. Let them know how well educated you are as well as how they can take advantage of all that you now offer, since attending the big shows.

Sure, it is the salon owner's privilege and necessity to attend all of the major shows. It is also your responsibility to teach your entire staff the importance of these educational opportunities as well as how to best attend each of the conventions. Whether you attend a series of ongoing local classes, annual distributor conventions, national shows or the international beauty convention offerings, plan ahead to make every minute of every show worthwhile. Then plan exactly how to successfully implement what you have learned.

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