

When you use the words 'massage' or 'spa', most people immediately think of a tranquil environment, relaxing and, beautifying and/or healing services or just envision a place to unwind and getaway. However it is extremely important for business owners and managers to think also of the retail area as a powerful and perhaps equal contributor to your business' health, not to mention that of your clients. That being said, it is important to realize that simply carrying a few retail products will not be enough. You must plan for the success of this area. Here are a few ways to improve your retail mindset and results.

1 - Understand Why Clients Buy Retail

It is important to remember that **most people come to a spa or wellness business seeking solutions** for pain relief, stress management or various skin and issues. Someone who comes in for a facial may want to look and feel younger, improve the appearance of a scar or get their acne under control. In the case of a massage, they may be suffering from a few aches and pains, general tension or be recovering from an injury. And with body treatments such as back facials, cellulite wraps, self- tanning or body polishes, people often seem to be preparing for something special such as a big event or trip.

When they have these services done at a spa or reputable business, clients expect to be treated by knowledgeable professionals who not only can provide the treatments but also make educated suggestions about *how to continue to improve their condition or appearance after they leave*. For this reason it is vital that massage, wellness and spa professionals are prepared to meet those needs with a proper array of at home products for skin, body and mind. Knowing your clients and their specific motivations can help you determine how to stock your retail area from top to bottom.

2 – Have the Right Set-Up

Begin by thinking of your retail area as an additional treatment room, setting it up to have many of the same features as a treatment room. This includes things like appropriate lighting, furniture or fixtures that are appropriate to showcase, display or test the products, and a clean workspace. You may also want to accent the treatment area with elements from your treatment rooms such as fountains or flowers or give it a completely different look to set it apart from the rest of the business.

Just as you want a treatment room table to look fresh and inviting when a new client enters the room, you will also want to ensure that your product area is clean and well maintained. All products and display areas should be monitored throughout the day or between client visits. Product pricing, brochures, usage instructions, PR features/mentions and all other collateral should be attractive, informative and up to date. And of course all products available for purchase should be stored and rotated properly so that clients never encounter expired or rancid items in your stock.

3 – Have Samples and Testers

Depending on the products you carry and the way your retail area is set up, you may want to have testers of products available. This can be done in a variety of ways such as selecting a featured line or product each week or month and showcasing them in a designated high traffic area of the spa. Another avenue is to provide a sample of products to clients as they are leaving or to have a staff member on hand to provide mini-treatments using the product or products you are highlighting.

You can also opt to offer testers alongside each product or group of products if your volume is such that these items will actually get used. If your space is smaller or you wish to more closely monitor which products each client is testing, you can also provide product samples for the client to use at home.

4 -Utilize Staff Recommendations

Of course the ultimate testing site is in the treatment room while a client is having a service. It is vitally important to your spa's overall retail sales that staff members are sharing the names and benefits of the products used during a session or treatment. From the aromatherapy oil that is being diffused in the room to the special facial brush that is used with a particular cleanser, retail items should be written down and given to the client or at a bare minimum at least discussed.

5 – Include Retail Products with Gift Certificate Purchases

Whether a client purchases [online gift certificates](#) through your website or at your office or business, including retail products in some of the packages or specials you offer can increase your gift certificate and retail sales. For example if your average gift certificate sale is \$50 and you want to increase that amount to \$75, include a “free gift with purchase” certificate or incentive toward a retail purchase coupon that can be redeemed along with the certificate. Choose something that has a high perceived value but that is not too expensive to give away or a product that you are trying to feature or highlight. You might also offer a package that includes a corresponding product – a take home body polish or moisturizer with a Salt Scrub or After Sun package, for example - that is actually part of the purchase price of the package.

The bottom line with each of these suggestions is to provide the client with what they really want – solutions to their problems. Make it easy for people to buy items that will help them take the relaxation or healing experience home with them. It will benefit your bottom line and increase your clients' overall satisfaction and results.



Felicia Brown, LMBT is the owner of Spalutions! (www.spalutions.com) and provides business and marketing coaching for massage, spa and wellness professionals. Felicia is passionate about inspiring others to succeed. Her personal philosophy of engaging in “cooperative competition” and sharing her knowledge with others has been a cornerstone of her career since becoming a massage therapist in 1994. Felicia continues to apply this way of thinking in her coaching, consulting and teaching. To schedule a FREE initial consultation with Felicia and take steps to improve your sales and profits, please contact Felicia Brown of Spalutions (www.Spalutions.com) at Felicia@spalutions.com or 336-508-0790