

# Spa Solutions

1. Spa therapists can imagine the "sales" experience as prescribing homecare to allow the client to keep up the professional work performed at the spa. In fact, I see it as their responsibility to the client to make professional recommendations for quality care as well as to educate them on a routine. This should, of course, be paired with a regular treatment program within the spa as well.
2. While many vendors do have training programs in place they are very product specific. The only way to expect good sell-through is to educate not only on the key ingredients in each product but also on consultative selling as an art. This is different for each individual's personal style as well as for their department. We find that hairstylists and estheticians sell far more per service dollar spent than massage therapists, for example.
3. Improvements are also easily approached. If it is locked in a case, it won't be stolen but it also won't sell at the typical spa. I chant, "get it on them." More sampling is needed and testers are a must. Further, the spa is a very experiential place where consumers expect top quality service but also to be transformed. Visual imagery is a must. Some spas are confusing because they try to stuff too many items into one space. We have found that three sku's of an item is plenty and grouping the retail area into themes is best. So, spa clothing in one area. Skin lines grouped with their family, candles in another area, a makeup bar, etc. I have worked with spas where the merchandising is so poor that the products are almost hidden in little cubbies and odd wooden fixtures. Furthermore the product should be featured in the treatment rooms. If clients are to be changing in the same room I would recommend an attractive glass display that is locked.
4. I recommend a variety. A well known bigger line, a medical line, and a boutique line. Depending on the size of the spa I also like to see candles, music, gift cards, etc. Shop around for support in the form of training, merchandising aids, sampling and sales support. Some product lines will even take products out that aren't selling and replace them with different product.
5. There is a need for standardization in sales systems, selling points and a consistent marketing. The therapeutic vision needs to be consistent as well. Many spas try to be all things to all people and the market is too crowded for this. Niche equals rich.
6. McSpa or Spabucks are my favorite terms. We will see spas continue to explode. The franchise component will grow and quality will improve due to simple saturation. I have also seen and done a lot of spas that are trying to be less expensive but I think this will be a poor strategy due to labor costs.
7. Medical spas have already exploded but wellness is on the verge. More water, more meditation, more yoga and Pilates. We are also seeing more resort/urban spas with larger spas that are very full service and more expensive in the center of the city. Spas are even now becoming a place to meet the opposite sex. Further, men's spas have exploded and some of my clients are reporting that 50% of their client base are men. Ten years ago we reported 3% and just a couple of years ago for a 2002 study we saw only 24%. All of these figures are from data collected from The Spa Association which I am the Executive Director.

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