

StraightTALKING



The wonder of the web

Liz McKeon asks, 'what has your website done for you today?'

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If you don't have a well-built website driving clients to your salon or Spa, you are literally missing out on the single biggest source of new clients in the world today, costing you thousands of euros every year! Don't throw money away on a poorly designed, ineffective website - instead make your website an integral part of your business.

The six most common and costly mistakes that salon owners make with their websites are:

Not having a website!

A website can be an incredibly profitable tool in your salon business - you absolutely need to have one and it should be well developed and maintained, promoted correctly and extremely profitable. It's great to open the salon in the morning and have online bookings to start the day - in fact you can make money through your website while you sleep!

Image style websites

Image style websites don't make the phone ring. People don't want to be sold, but they do want to be helped. Successful marketers understand that they must concentrate on a prospect's needs and wants - this is called 'direct response'.

By its very name it is self-explanatory, designed to get an immediate response, action, visit, call or purchasing decision from the reader.

It directs people to action, it compels them to contact you. You must give them a reason to contact you, and with a direct response website, people can leave their contact information.

The wrong content

Get the maximum number of qualified clients to identify themselves when they visit your website. This can be done by simply providing free information and/or a great offer. Compare this with the 'salon library' type of sites: in an attempt to provide a site 'rich in content', the entire text of the brochure can be found on the website. Why would a potential client contact the salon when they can simply read the brochure, leave the site and move on?

Choosing the wrong website developer

The vast majority of salon website developers are not marketing experts. Unless your website developer really understands direct response marketing and how clients make buying decisions, don't rely on them to write your message or develop your site. Mistakes can prove very costly. But, if you can create a website that sells your salon, then the cost is well worth it.

Failing to effectively promote your website

Once your site is up and running, you'll still have to promote it to create traffic. The process of promoting and refining your website to maximise the response rate is on-going - you will continually experiment. Ask your website developer to give you a truly profitable marketing plan.

Failing to continually test and measure

Most sites are never tested. The real advantage of a direct response website is that it allows you to test whether changes have improved the effectiveness of your site or not - provided that you have built in the statistical tools needed to track any modifications. Once you have a prospect's name and contact information, you can follow-up with them to address their specific needs. If you don't get their name before they leave your site, odds are they're never going to get in touch with your salon. Any increase in this response rate will go right to your bottom line!

Remember, 'If you're not on the internet, you're already behind.'

Liz McKeon is a Business Coach and Trainer, specialising in the beauty industry. For further information on mentoring, coaching and training services, call (86) 386 1243 or visit www.lizmckeon.com

