

BLUSH FOUNDATION EYE SHADOW



makeup challenges

Makeup is often the most exciting eye candy sold at day spas, but like a shiny new toy, it can

sometimes lose its luster and start collecting dust. If you find that your clients and staff have grown indifferent to your makeup line, perhaps it's time to look for ways to reignite their passion for your color cosmetics. To help you make this capricious product category a consistent breadwinner for your business, *DAYSPA* asked manufacturers to identify some common challenges owners and managers face with makeup sales and suggest ways to overcome these obstacles. Here are seven complaints common to spa owners who have difficulty sustaining successful makeup sales and suggestions for ways to overcome them.

By J. Elaine Spear

Makeup photography by Brooks Ayola

MASCARA LIPSTICK POWDER GLOSS



Courtesy, Circe

To compete with department store brands, your spa needs a premium line that estheticians can enthusiastically support.

“YOUR MAKEUP COMPANY SHOULD HELP YOU AGGRESSIVELY PROMOTE YOUR MAKEUP LINE.”

Complaint No. 1: I’ve tried selling makeup, but I could never compete with department store brands.

Let’s be real; carrying any line of color cosmetics means making a serious financial investment. Why bother tying up precious capital unless your makeup manufacturer can help you compete with department store brands? Our beauty pros advise that choosing a makeup line should be like entering into a marriage. The key to having a successful relationship is doing business with a company that offers a fair business deal—a two-way street, if you will—where both parties support healthy makeup sales.

“In this day and age, professional makeup brands need to compete on every level with department store cosmetics, including providing seasonal releases, beautiful displays, sophisticated formulations, attractive packaging and slick marketing materials,” says Shiri Sarfati, director of corporate communications for Repêchage in Secaucus, New Jersey. “Whether you carry a private label line that requires

creating these materials from scratch or you’re working with a branded makeup line where sales literature is part of the package, competing with class retail lines means having eye-catching posters that can be changed on a seasonal basis, four-color brochures and counter cards to continually pique the interest of your clients and staff.” How-to brochures that show different ways to use the latest seasonal releases are also extremely helpful.

“Your makeup company should help you aggressively promote your makeup line by providing regular promotions that attract more customers to your makeup counter and facilitate consistently higher sales,” says Sarfati. “You only have to look as far as department stores like Bloomingdale’s and Barneys New York to see how this is done. Gift-with-purchase promotions have people lined up at their makeup counters, and they continually create new customers by introducing therapeutic and colorful solutions to challenges like thin lips, skimpy eyelashes and sallow complexions.”

“IT’S IMPORTANT TO INCLUDE MAKEUP AS PART OF YOUR COMPANY’S DRESS CODE.”

Complaint No. 2: My hairstylists and nail technicians treat our makeup like it’s the flavor of the month. They’re really enthusiastic about a line for a couple of weeks and then completely forget about it.

There’s no doubt that salon service providers can treat makeup as a faddish accessory that’s soon out of fashion. They may love the basic products in your makeup line—a smooth, satiny foundation, for instance, or a concealer that invisibly hides life’s little imperfections—but they still need to be stimulated by a constantly changing rainbow of fashionable colors. To hold their attention, consider carrying at least a few seasonal products that push the color envelope—a metallic lilac lipstick for spring, for instance, or a silvery pink blush that makes the cheeks the dominant facial feature for a change.

“Salon technicians definitely need to be excited about your makeup line before they’ll talk about it with clients, but they also have to understand that your makeup department is a serious part of your business,” says Scotty

Ferrell, director of education for Babor, based in Palm Beach, Florida. “You need to be very clear about your expectations of staff; let them know they need to share information about makeup with all clients and suggest a makeover any time there’s a hair color or styling change.” Our beauty pros advise that you have a better chance of making this happen on a regular basis if you have a mobile makeup station that can service clients while they’re still sitting in the styling chair!

“It’s also important to include makeup as part of your company’s dress code,” continues Ferrell. “Having a freshly scrubbed face may be beneficial to a health food store’s image, but not for a day spa or salon. You should consider having all women on your staff wear at least one product from your makeup line that they absolutely love and can consistently recommend to clients. You wouldn’t expect anything less from your hair products—imagine if your hairstylists promoted hair products that you didn’t carry in your salon. Why should your makeup be any different?”

Complaint No. 3: Clients don’t seem to notice that we carry a makeup line.

Makeup sales follow the golden rule of commercial property: location, location, location. If your makeup is tucked away in a corner or only displayed in a private room, most of your clients will probably never know that you have a professional makeup department.

“Department stores have known for years that color generates more retail sales per square foot than any other product in the store,” says Diane Ranger, president of Colorescience in Dana Point, California. “That’s why their cosmetics department is always at the main entrance of the store. Following this



Put makeup displays and testers in a busy, visible area of your day spa.

Courtesy The Face & The Body



“It’s that five-minute free touchup that hooks most people on your makeup line,” says Diane Ranger of Colorescience.

well-thought-out plan, you should ideally have a private makeup room between your spa and salon, and a prominent retail display—including testers, a mirror and good lighting—in the retail area where it can be easily seen by any clients who enter your business.

“Too, you should have brochures and promotional materials on your counters and in your waiting area,” continues Ranger. “Because makeup

has to be exciting to sell well, you should always work with your manufacturer to create promotions that will keep clients loyal to your makeup brand and liberally display those promotions throughout your business.”

Ranger goes on to say that while all these things are essential to promoting a good makeup business, it’s that five-minute free touchup that ultimately hooks most clients on your makeup line. “Marketing materials are only meant to get clients into your makeup

chair,” she says. “After that, selling cosmetics is up to you.”

Complaint No. 4: Any time I ask my staff to get more involved in selling makeup, they always ask, “What’s in it for me?”

That’s a good question, and one that you should carefully consider when organizing your makeup business. Whenever possible, leave special occasion makeup applications, makeup lessons and even full makeup touchups in the hands of specialists who are paid to do these services. Commission service providers can’t be expected to pass up a haircut or facial because they’re in the middle of a free or less lucrative makeup service. If you have a salaried staff, though, it’s extremely fair to get everyone involved in makeup services!

Beauty pros suggest that you can temporarily pique the interest of your staff by holding sales contests, but these activities spike, rather than create consistently high sales. If you expect your service staff to focus on makeup sales every day, they need to believe that selling makeup will positively impact their earnings. “If you carry a private label line, the profit margins can be quite high, so you shouldn’t hesitate to share the wealth,” says Karen Bock, president of Brushes by Karen/ColorStrokes in Mineola, New York. This could mean assigning a dollar amount to each piece of makeup—\$2 paid on every lipstick sold, or \$4 paid on every foundation sold—or a higher commission percentage than you offer on your branded lines. You can also consider being more creative when offering incentives on any makeup line. For example, you could allow employees who meet a quota for makeup sales to go on a personal shopping spree in your retail department or give those who sell up to

On a Whim

Retail pro Brian Dyches, president of the Atmospheric Group in Laguna Niguel, California, relates that color cosmetics make excellent impulse items, especially when they’re displayed within 8 feet of your checkout desk. “Don’t clutter your checkout area, though. Too many items will reduce the total number of products your clients can comfortably put on the desk,” advises Dyches. “Studies have shown that when space is limited at the cash wrap, people will buy fewer products.

“I suggest having one beautiful makeup display near the cash register that draws clients in before they’ve ended their shopping mindset,” continues Dyches. “You can also place display towers on each side of the checkout desk to dramatically increase your cosmetics sales. The ideal display is from 2 feet 6 inches to 5 feet 6 inches high, with the area at eye level producing the most sales.” Dyches further suggests that impulse items be changed to match the average visitation cycle of your clients. “This is important because impulse items are supposed to stimulate new interest in your products,” he says. “If you want to continue selling a product past the six-week cycle, for instance, move it to a new location on your shelves.”

a certain level a generous gift, such as a complete seasonal collection for their own personal use.

"You should also motivate your entire staff to support your makeup line by appealing to them on a personal level," says Diana L. Wiley, general manager of Youngblood Mineral Cosmetics in Simi Valley, California. "I believe it's important to offer makeup products to employees at a deep discount, because if they wear what you sell, they're going to naturally advertise your makeup line every time clients ask, 'What lipstick are you wearing?' Or say, 'Your skin looks great! What foundation are you wearing?'"

Complaint No. 5: My estheticians rarely apply makeup on their facial clients after services.

"Creating strong makeup sales in your esthetics department begins with choosing a makeup line that reflects the focus and philosophy of your business," says Sarfati. "If it doesn't offer skincare benefits, your estheticians will probably resist applying it to their clients' newly treated complexions." Sarfati suggests including makeup in all your skincare treatment protocols by making the last step a simple makeup application that includes foundation, blush, powder and lip gloss. "Instead of clients wanting to hide their face behind sunglasses and a hat after a facial, they can leave your business knowing they look absolutely beautiful," says Sarfati. "Making this a practice does wonders for makeup sales and the morale of your clients."

"Many day spas overlook the



Courtesy Elizabeth Arden

importance of including makeup as an integral part of every skincare consultation," comments Marci Marrek, education director for Aveda Services West, based in Los Angeles. "Asking skincare questions like 'What improvements would you like to see in your skin today?' allows estheticians to address problems that clients are concerned about by offering many different solutions, including makeup. Too, when estheticians see a ruddy complexion, dark circles or inflammation during the skin analysis, makeup should be suggested on the spot to improve the appearance of the skin. Following through by doing a five-minute application at the end of each service will serve to close the sale because the client can instantly see results."

Arlyne Roer of Joey New York believes estheticians have a hard time selling makeup either because they don't know how to apply it efficiently, aren't comfortable choosing the right colors, or fear it will cause

Makeup can be the solution to many skincare problems.

"MANY DAY SPAS OVERLOOK THE IMPORTANCE OF MAKEUP AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF SKINCARE."

SALES ARE WHAT
MAKE A MAKEUP
PROFESSIONAL
AN ASSET TO
YOUR BUSINESS.

breakouts after a facial or treatment. The company has addressed all of these problems in a new DVD. "It's a step-by-step guide to applying makeup and choosing the right colors," says Roer. "We teach all the tricks of the trade. Estheticians don't need any makeup application knowledge to learn how to be a professional one instantly. It's great for spas because clients feel comfortable with and trust the esthetician who works with them on skin care."

Since Joey New York products are all-natural and noncomedogenic, estheticians are comfortable with prescribing them for their clients. "Our makeup is an extension of our skincare treatments," continues Roer. "Offering a makeup application after a facial lets the client leave the spa looking fabulous, and leaves the spa's bottom line looking great too!"

Complaint No. 6: I can't afford to hire a full-time makeup artist who really understands the art of makeup.

Of course you can't! The last person you need to hire is a makeup artist who believes in the art of makeup and not the art of the sale. Sales are what make a makeup professional an asset to your business. Our beauty pros suggest that your best bet is to hire a dedicated makeup person who has excellent sales skills and does a good job on makeup applications and lessons. To measure this person's productivity, use this day spa industry rule of thumb: A dedicated makeup employee should average at least three times his or her hourly wage in gross makeup sales.

"If you have four to six treatment rooms, three or more manicure stations, or five or more hair stations, you have enough foot traffic to hire a dedicated makeup person," says Charles Mizelle, regional director for Sothys U.S.A., located in Miami. "The key is to create a multitask position. The person who's

responsible for all makeup activities in your day spa, for instance, can also be in charge of inventory, relieving your front desk personnel for breaks and lunch, and closing skincare and makeup sales. This person can also switch out displays, do product demonstrations and generally keep your retail department running smoothly." Many day spa owners with medium to large businesses report that their dedicated makeup personnel do many of the more mundane inventory and retail chores during slower times of the week and place a stronger emphasis on makeup services during peak business days.

Complaint No. 7: My staff doesn't tell clients about the many services we offer in our makeup department.

And they probably never will. When you place a strong focus on makeup, it becomes as specialized as haircolor services. You might expect your estheticians to suggest that clients consider a soft highlighting service, for instance, but you know she isn't likely to talk with clients about specialized applications like "bumper lights" or "balyage." Even though it's essential to educate your entire staff on your makeup line to optimize retail sales, anything beyond recommending a simple touchup or makeup lesson will undoubtedly be left to you. One way to get the word out effectively is to create a makeup menu that changes with the seasons and sells the sizzle as well as the services you offer in this area of your business. You can include makeup services as a part of your regular day spa menu but it might be better to create a separate insert that can be changed seasonally and distributed with your main service menu or placed in the spa lounge, locker room, retail department and waiting area.

"Your makeup menu should spell



“THE MAJORITY OF WOMEN ARE INSECURE ABOUT MAKEUP AND NEED EDUCATION.”

out everything you offer in the way of makeup, including consultations, after-service touchups, seasonal color updates, special occasion makeup, bridal makeup and your bread-and-butter service: make-up lessons,” says Mizelle. “Include a description of your latest seasonal collection.” Make sure this section is written to reflect the beauty and excitement of the new season. For example:

This spring delicate sugarplum shadows and lipsticks and bright cotton-candy cheeks look scrumptious enough to eat. Think innocence with this new collection no matter what your age may be and bring out your own “doll-like beauty.”

“Many day spa owners think that makeup sells itself,” says Jane Iredale, president of Iredale Cosmetics in Great Barrington, Massachusetts. “They fail to realize that the majority of women are insecure about makeup and need education. I suggest providing a series of three, 30-minute lessons to teach women everything they need to know about makeup, instead of overloading them with one long, involved lesson.” A series of shorter lessons also makes it easier for clients to afford everything they need for a finished makeup look; spending \$100

in three different sessions is much easier than spending \$300 at one time. Here’s a suggested makeup application series:

- Lesson 1: Talk to your client about the importance of wearing the right foundation and blush. Share different formulations, colors and application techniques. Apply these products so she can see the difference, and then have her apply them.
 - Lesson 2: Have her reapply her base and blush and then show her how to make up her eyes and lips. You apply the products first, and then have her do it.
 - Lesson 3: Recap the previous two lessons and then show her how to modify her look for different occasions.
- “Make sure she leaves with a color palette she’s comfortable wearing and always encourage her to bring a friend,” says Iredale. “When the fun factor goes up, people almost always spend more money.” ♦

J. Elaine Spear is a *DAYS SPA* contributing editor and head writer for *Writers On the Edge*, an agency specializing in custom magazines and newsletters for day spas. She’s based in Santa Fe, NM, and can be contacted at Fabfashion@aol.com.