
business | planning for success in 2010

by Dori Soukup

NOW THAT THE NEW YEAR has arrived, many of us are glad that 2009 is finally behind us. The start of a new year often prompts us to make resolutions and promises to improve our lives or better ourselves. Unfortunately, most of these good intentions are short lived. Have you considered what changes you are going to make in the coming year that will positively impact your business and have lasting value?

Consider some of the following suggestions to help make your business resolutions for the new year a reality.

Conduct a S.W.O.T. analysis of 2009. A S.W.O.T. analysis is an objective assessment of your current situation. It involves taking the time to identify your spa's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. To complete the S.W.O.T. analysis, determine the answers to the following questions:

What were your business' strengths in 2009? What can your spa improve upon? What opportunities can you tap into? What are some of the threats you face?

That last question is probably very easy to answer right now, as the current economic conditions have many businesses feeling the pinch. So, how can you assure your sustainability and business success in 2010? Through innovative marketing.

Designing a good marketing plan is one of the most important things you can do for your business. A well conceived strategy will help shape the future of your business. A well-executed marketing plan can help a business to thrive rather than remain stagnant.

Formulating a marketing plan also enables you to clarify your goals for yourself. It helps you to communicate your vision for the company to your employees and clients. Without having a solid marketing strategy in place, you will be operating under the outdated adage, "build it and they will come." That is no longer a viable philosophy in today's competitive marketplace.

As a business leader, it is up to you to chart the path for your company and figure out ways to increase traffic into your spa.

Creating and implementing a marketing plan helps you to achieve the following:

- Build brand awareness and increase client traffic
- Drive up sales and revenue
- Develop customer loyalty
- Create personal connections with your guests

These benefits all work together to build your business. As you design your marketing strategy, keep the following points in mind:

- You must first establish your goals
- Identify your target market
- Get familiar with that market—understand their likes and dislikes and find out what motivates them to buy
- Make sure your products and services match up with the needs and desires of your target market
- Know who your competition is
- Establish your marketing mix
- Determine your budget
- Select a person to be in charge of marketing



- Create your marketing material
- Evaluate the success of your marketing methods, and make necessary adjustments

People do not plan to fail, they fail to plan. To see great improvements in your business in 2010, start by creating an annual marketing plan. It is one resolution you cannot afford to break. ■

Dori Soukup is an executive coach, author, professional speaker and the founder of InSparation Management. She speaks globally in conventions and hosts public and private seminars. Her Spa BizTools and strategies are designed to help spa professionals significantly increase their profits. Dori can be reached at info@insparationmanagement.com.