

Skin Inc.

5 QUESTIONS TO BUILD YOUR SKINCARE BUSINESS



FEATURE

5 Questions to Build Your Skin Business

By Dawn Gantt, Bioelements



Ready to boost your bookings and retail sales? It doesn't matter if you're an independent booth renter or a mega day spa, every skin professional should know how to tap into the buying power of today's highly connected clients, identify their individual expectations, and understanding what influences their purchasing decisions. Here are five questions you should consider when approaching the business of skin that will take you on a journey from client discovery to closing the sale with a professional recommendation.

1. Do You Have a Strong Online Presence?

Your business' visibility, credibility and reputation is directly tied to your online presence. If you have a strong online presence, it makes it easy for future customers to discover you, since 97% of customers search online for local products and services.

Most customers rely on multiple sources or channels for research, so the more places you appear online, the more credibility you have. Having current and informative digital channels like a business website and social media platforms allow you the opportunity to educate potential clients about your spa brand and share your point of view, which builds your reputation. Let's focus on three online channels: Google, your spa website and social media.

Google. Your Google My Business Profile is like a new homepage for your business; it's what potential customers will see when they search for a spa in their area. Once you have access to your Google Business Profile, there are a few things you can do to help your listing rank higher in search results. Select a primary business category, such as day spa, and add additional categories to further describe your offerings. Maintain accurate business hours and write a business description that mentions your location, services and words you want your business to be found for. Don't forget about reviews! The more five-star Google reviews you have, the higher you'll rank against competitors. Check reviews often and respond promptly.

Spa Website. Your spa website should be user-friendly, visually appealing, informative and it should exemplify your spa brand's voice. Make sure it has a descriptive spa menu with detailed pricing, current promotional offers and address details. If you have online booking, ensure it is functioning with available openings. If you don't have online booking, make your phone number prominent.



Social Media. The content you share on your social media should highlight your esthetics expertise to build trust with clients. Share (with client consent) before and after photos, along with the treatment and products used. Spotlight your services and promotions, personalize your bio in your profile, and include a link/linktree, so clients can conveniently book. Be sure to follow and interact with other businesses near you to expand your reach.

2. Do You Deliver an Exceptional Spa Experience?

What do you offer clients that goes above and beyond their expectations? The relationship you build with your client makes all the difference, one visit at a time. These checkpoints can help manage whether you are delivering a unique and exceptional experience to your clients.

Pre-visit Communication. The pre-visit communication is the first touchpoint of an exceptional experience. It's a form of genuine customer service that extends your expertise beyond the treatment room. Clients are less inclined to cancel or no-show when you confirm appointments. If it's a return customer, review their previous retail

purchases and determine if they are ready to repurchase. Let the client know that you will have these products ready for them at the time of their appointment.

Before Treatment. Before the treatment begins, ask yourself if there is focus on your client the minute they walk through the door. Is there a system in place for the front desk to alert you that the next client has arrived? Do you provide a robe, slippers, gown and changing room amenities? Is your facial room prepped?

After greeting your client, begin with a personalized skin reading consultation before removing makeup, and hand them a mirror so they can see their skin as they describe their concerns. Let the client know you will be making a professional recommendation for their at-home agenda based on these concerns and how their skin responds to treatment, and that you are happy to answer questions any time during the service.

During Treatment. During the treatment, do you go through generic steps of a facial, or do you offer sensorial experiences that make the service stand out? Signature techniques that incorporate aromatherapy, acupressure and massage sensorial movements make a facial not only effective, but memorable. Look for a skin care line with protocols that have these personalized, sensorial techniques built right in. Signature techniques should serve a purpose like: assisting in product application, penetration, removal, stimulation and relaxation. They'll set your services apart from the competition.

Most importantly, do you offer personalized facials? Clients want personalization, and one of the best ways to deliver it is via custom blending, which gives you the ability to constantly evaluate the skin and adjust the treatment. Custom blending also demonstrates your expertise, as you can discuss exactly what you are adding to their formulas, and how it will target their skin concerns and improve results.

After Treatment. Your post-facial communication is just as important as your pre-consult. Ask how their skin is feeling, allow them to ask questions, and take the opportunity to educate them on how to maintain and extend results at home. It allows you to point out the improvements you want them to see, mimicking the language they used to describe their concerns. For example, say something like "I want you to see that the crow's feet you told me about look less visible. Do you see the lines around your mouth are softer now, too?" Don't forget to follow up. Provide

your contact info so they can reach you with questions. This helps cement your relationship and maintain an emotional connection. It also gives the client security. They'll leave your spa feeling taken care of, and they will want to experience it again.



3. Do You Provide Expert Professional Recommendations?

Your professional recommendation should be a part of every service. A retail tool like an "At-Home Agenda Form" makes it easy (See **Retail Language Guide Sidebar**). Mark it with the retail products you professionally recommend the client use to maintain results, and ask "Which formulas would you like to purchase today?" Products presented as a system protocol make it likely a client will purchase more than one. Let them know what they should purchase now, by circling essential formulas.

4. Do You Build Successful Promotions?

One of the easiest, most effective ways to build a promotion is to rely on your professional skin care manufacturer. The best ones will offer ongoing promotions on retail formulas. When you take advantage of these offers, you can pass the savings onto your customers. This is how you compete with other spas and online sellers. You do not lose margin when you take advantage of these promotions. And, when your

manufacturer launches new formulas, there should be exclusive introductory offers that include free support tools, so you can successfully promote it in your business.

In addition, you should partner with a skin care manufacturer who rewards your loyalty with a bonus of free seasonal support tools, GWPs, new launch support and other business-building materials for your treatment room and retail areas. Use these free tools to create new, exciting promotions clients will love.

5. Do You Carve Out Time For Personal Growth?

The most successful skin care pros continually evolve their skill-set to stay competitive in the industry. Take the time to attend educational webinars or virtual classes to improve your skills. Learning is a continuous circle, and esthetics evolves as new machines, products and techniques are developed. Start with your product manufacturer, who should offer classes covering the latest advancements. Look for private social media groups (the best product manufacturers will have these), so you can engage with a community of professionals like you. Don't forget to read industry content (like Skin Inc.) to stay engaged with what your competitors are doing for their clients.

Retail Language Guide

Worried about objections or resistive clients? Here is some helpful language to close the sale:

They say: "I am already using a different product line. I'm just here for a facial."

You say: "I know that you like Brand A, but based on your skin reading, this product is right for you. I'm so confident you'll see a difference that I am going to give you a custom blended mini size that will target your skin concerns. Use this for a week, and I'll follow up with you on the results."

They say: "I'm on a budget and don't want to make the investment."

You say: "This value set has budget-friendly savings built right in. It includes the essential AM + PM products for your skin type, and if you purchase today, I'd be happy to custom blend the moisturizer at no charge."

They say: "I already get my products somewhere else."

You say: "If you purchase from me, I can custom blend your at-home product for your skin concerns. I have customer appreciation discounts, deals and ongoing promotions that I can offer exclusively to my clients."
