

FEATURE

The Importance of Using Samples

By Amber McBain



Who doesn't love a free gift? Regardless of the industry, I always get excited about receiving a free sample from a brand.

In the spa industry, where clients are exposed to a multitude of products, samples are a surefire way to showcase your business, increase exposure, create customer loyalty. A sampling campaign could be significant.

Skin care professionals know that there is no one-size-fits all approach when addressing each person's unique skin type. Clients may be apprehensive about purchasing full-sized products after a treatment, especially if they are unsure how their skin will react. Offering product samples in your spa will allow guests to try products of interest without having to commit to the retail size. This might seem like giving away free product, but when supported by key strategies, sampling can actually result in increased sales and customer loyalty.

Build a Sampling Strategy

As with any promotion that you introduce, be sure to create a plan for the samples being offered in your spa. Instead of impulsively purchasing a large variety of sample products, plan ahead and forecast the number of samples needed based on your spa's revenue and the promotion you are planning.

Keep in mind the various seasons where sales may be higher, like during the holidays, and plan your sampling promotion during these times.

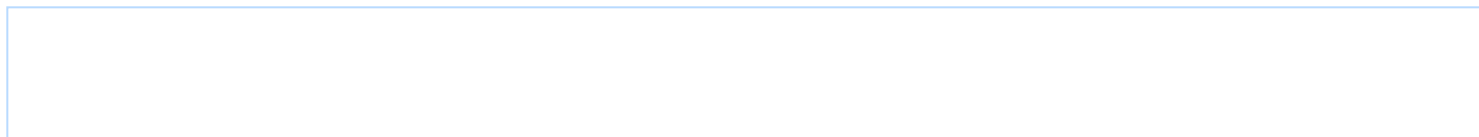
To save on costs, aim to work with companies that offer samples as part of their partnership or loyalty program. Be sure to offer a range of items that can be sampled to keep returning guests engaged and excited.



It is also important to consider the kind of samples you will offer. In addition to physical sample cards for your customers to take home, it is beneficial to provide testers of the products available for in-store purchase. This not only allows you to demonstrate the benefits of the product that the person is sampling, but the testers introduce a sensorial experience of touch and smell, which we know is a significant selling point.

Other useful tools to drive sales are promotions and reward programs created around the samples. The option to receive a gift with purchase is often difficult for any consumer to turn down. Offering samples with each treatment or purchase will not only leave clients excited to try the products, but it will also keep your business top of mind when the next treatment is booked or a purchase needs to be made.

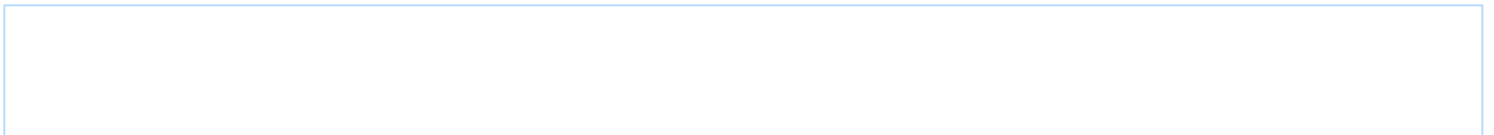
This can work well alongside a new launch or product promotion, where providing samples helps advertise the launch or promotion. That feeling of exclusivity is often enough to attract and retain clients, and offering samples is an easy and effective way to build that lasting consumer relationship and boost sales.





Sampling to Grow Your Business

As with any form of sampling, there is always the risk that customers will not make the purchase, which can result in a loss of profit over time. To optimize sales, create a plan of action and train staff to follow up with clients to see how they enjoyed their gift. This helps build and maintain relationships, and it can be a good tool to remind clients of their positive experiences using their samples.





It is also useful to offer guests samples that pair well with the products that they already use or are looking to purchase; this is a smart move that helps them create a more well-rounded home care routine.

When distributing samples to clients, encourage staff to take the extra step to provide application instructions and product education, which will ensure that customers are using the product correctly to experience its benefits.

