



# Standards for Retail Success

Now is the time to develop a strong retail sales strategy.

The past few months have turned many practices and medspas upside down. With many nonessential businesses forced to temporarily close due to the worldwide pandemic, online retailing has become even more important for the survival of your business. Following are seven standards you should have in place to grow your homecare retail sales. These apply to brick and mortar as well as e-commerce retailing.

## BRANDING

Your brand represents who you are and what you do. The brand you have chosen for your medspa or practice reflects your culture, credentials and services. Practices should also have a sub-brand for their retail areas and e-commerce sites. It may be as simple as the Allure Medspa Skin Care Store or Dr. Johnson's Skincare Center.

Once you have created your brand name, stick with it across all retailing platforms—brick and mortar, e-commerce, in printed marketing collateral and across social media.

## APPOINT A SKINCARE CONCIERGE

Exceptional customer service means being available to answer your patients' questions and educate them rather than sell them on your products and services. This is why having a dedicated skincare specialist, or skincare concierge, pays dividends in retail sales. This may be an esthetician or another team member who is in charge of learning about the products, may assist in inventory ordering and recommending new lines or products and acts a direct point person for patients seeking homecare products.

# “Understanding your patients’ preferences helps you identify upselling opportunities, design personalized promotions and increase patient loyalty.”

Train your front desk staff to forward callers asking about skin care to this point person. If you have an automated phone system, add “speak to our skin store” or “speak to our skincare specialist” as an option. Keep in mind, every staff member should know the basics of what you offer and be trained to direct more in-depth inquiries to the team member with deeper knowledge.

To keep every staff member abreast of new offerings, sales goals and promotions in your retail business, offer short monthly trainings during staff meetings so everyone has up-to-date information.

## MAKE IT EASY TO ORDER

Offering patients the option of ordering and reordering their products online has always been important. Now with partial reopenings, which limit the number of employees and patients in a practice at one time, and consumer’s desire to limit shopping trips and exposure to others, e-commerce sites have become a must-have for any business with retail sales.

Make sure your website is user friendly and accessible on mobile devices. Visitors to the site should be able to search by brand, concern and product type (cleansers, moisturizers, serums, etc.). Offer online chat to answer customer questions, assist in orders and reorders and improve overall customer service. You also can add a subscription ordering option that automatically reorders and delivers products every 30 days. But make sure this is an option, not a default. Some consumers do not want to be automatically billed and prefer to reorder products, as needed.

Offer a variety of online payment options, such as net banking, credit or debit card, PayPal, Apple Pay, Google Pay, etc. This holds true at your physical practice location as well. Cash and checks are going the way of the dinosaur and cashless options are taking over. Offering a variety of payment options makes it easier for consumers and patients to buy from you.

## TRACK PATIENT PREFERENCES

The key to great patient care and service is knowing what your patients want and consistently delivering those outcomes at the right price and at a consistently high standard of excellence. The same holds true for retail. Make a note of the products your patients purchase and follow-up to make sure they are satisfied. You can then use this information to remind them when it’s time to reorder



a product they love and to recommend new additions to your line. Understanding your patients’ preferences helps you identify upselling opportunities, design personalized promotions and increase patient loyalty.

## BUNDLE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

Homecare products can speed healing, improve outcomes and increase the longevity of your in-office treatments. You can encourage patients to adopt a homecare regimen by bundling appropriate products with their services or session packages. Consumers are looking for the greatest benefit they can get at a given cost. Increasing the benefit or perceived value of



a treatment by bundling in skincare products they can take home and enjoy not only makes patients happy, it increases the chances that they will continue with the prescribed homecare regimen.

### CARRY A PRIVATE LABEL LINE

Consider adding private label products to your retail offerings. Selling your own brand of skincare products can boost your bottom line by as much as 30 percent due to the higher profit margins. In addition, private label products keep your brand name in front of your patients on a daily basis. Best of all, private label products keep your patients coming back to your practice or e-commerce site to reorder, since they are not available anywhere else.

Until your private label brand becomes well established, you may wish to carry a mix of private label and national brands. Your staff needs to be well trained and knowledgeable about all the products you carry. They should know how the private label items compare to similar national branded items and be ready to educate the patient on the benefits your products provide.

### HELP SKINCARE CONSUMERS FIND YOU

The first step in online and brick and mortar retailing is to

market your offerings to existing patients through in-office signage and merchandising, e-newsletters and email blasts. But, you can also attract new clients by marketing your skincare store across a variety of online channels. Promote featured products on social media, such as Facebook and Instagram, and make educational YouTube videos that highlight the benefits of specific lines that you carry. Combine these marketing efforts with special promotions or discount codes.

In order to be successful in retail sales, practices and medspas need to establish the same high standards that they demand for their services and procedures. This means training staff members, assigning responsibility for retail success and educating patients on the value of the products you offer. Dedicating the time and resources needed to execute the standards above will help increase your bottom line whether at your physical practice or through your online store. **ME**



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