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Designing Your Dream Salon



Paul Manke
Tanning Supplies Unlimited

WHEN salon owners imagine upgrading their space, the focus almost always starts with new equipment—and understandably so. But the real transformation happens when you rethink the entire experience.

That's the focus for Tanning Supplies Unlimited's Paul Manke, who now leads the company's Salon Design Service alongside colleagues Eric Matras and Eric Haynes. This complimentary client support program helps salon owners optimize layouts, plan remodels, and turn loose ideas into practical, profitable floor plans.

The program combines deep industry insight with advanced design tools, giving owners the ability to see their future salon before construction ever begins. Using computer-aided design (CAD), TSU can produce precise layouts, ideal equipment placement, and even full 3D visualizations—whether a salon is opening its first location, refreshing an existing store, or expanding into a new one.

Beyond technical expertise, the TSU team's guidance also extends to the finishing touches that elevate a space—interior elements that complement the modern aesthetic of high-end KBL equipment and create the kind of room experience that keeps clients coming back.

In this interview, Manke shares how he helps salon owners rethink their layouts, maximize every square foot, and create rooms that feel every bit as impressive as the equipment they showcase.

Q: How do you take a salon owner from early vision to a fully realized floor plan?

A: Myself, Eric, and Eric have been in so many stores and in the industry for so long that we have the natural ability to envision these layouts, and we can help people greatly from vision to concept drawings. I'll ask the customer for the measurements, the bathroom locations or any other obstacles to work around, and do they have a vision for what they want to see? What I do a lot is ask them to take a video of the salon. Open up your front door, go outside, walk in, let me see your store front, pan to the right and to the left, then walk down through your store and let me see the rooms and how the doors are positioned.

They may have a wall looking toward the front windows with lotion or clothing that's a prime area for a room with a double door, and I can put together that floor plan just based on their measurements. I have customers I've sold equipment to, and I'll redraw their whole store for them as a floor plan for the future, and keep it in my system so I can look it up when they're ready for the next step.

This is one more aspect of what we can offer at TSU as your one-stop distributor, from helping you find a location, understanding electrical and HVAC needs, to layouts. We're fortunate we sell the best-looking equipment, and you want to place them right in the store. We can help customers go from a vision of what they want to do to the reality of the concept.

Q: For owners updating an older salon with smaller rooms, what options do they have?

A: The challenge you have with the stores that have been out there is the rooms were built for smaller equipment. Thankfully, with the K Series, the compact series I call it, the measurements are 50 inches deep to 90 inches wide, which fits in a pretty common room size in the older tanning salon models. We can take that room and put in a modern unit with nice features, with multiple price points to fit your budget.

I know we have customers who don't buy a particular unit because they see the room specs and they don't think they can fit it in, but we can work with people and how new equipment can fit in their current layout or what they can do to make it work.

Q: Why is a room refresh so important when adjusting your layout or adding new equipment?

A: More and more salon owners are going to one, two, or three levels, and a number are going to one level. Your premium equipment is what really sets that apart. You don't want it to only be about the bed but the experience within the room. I talk about the experience within the experience. That's what you want to happen when you shut that door. When they go in there, they're wowed with the full-length mirror and lighting and maybe motion sensors and dimmers and highly reflective floors that show off the illumination coming off the beds. It's really about helping them see things they may not see.

Let the bed draw the member into the room to experience the bed and that environment. You want it to be different. When they shut that door, you want a unique experience with the bed but also the environment in that room.

For more information, contact Tanning Supplies Unlimited at 800-569-3911 or **tanningsuppliesunlimited.com**