

‘Premiere-Worthy’ Red Light Equipment

Premiere Tan Rolls Out the Red Carpet for New KBL R11s

A 26-YEAR tanning industry veteran, **Quentin Masterson** understands as well as anyone where the industry has been, where it is, and where it’s headed. He and his company have long recognized that success today is driven by offering elevated equipment and experiences that customers are willing to pay more for. But, while Premiere Tan has invested heavily in top-of-the-line UV and hybrid equipment, along with complementary wellness and spa services, they held off on making a major move into red light therapy—waiting for something that matched the visual impact and performance of today’s most advanced tanning units.

The KBL R11 was exactly what they were waiting for.

“The industry has learned that what makes your business successful now is premiere, top-end equipment that allows you to price effectively. The R11 was the first red light bed that positioned itself as a premier piece of equipment in the tanning industry and really had a wow factor for the customers looking at it. That’s what we’ve been waiting for, and we jumped on it,” says Masterson, Premiere Tan’s General Manager of Operations.

Premiere Tan, a southern Indiana chain with five locations owned by Keith and Kathy Mercer and managed by Masterson, committed fully, installing an R11 in each location. To introduce it to their market, they even took to billboards, putting the unit’s “wow factor” front and center for the community to see.

“We like to introduce the same equipment across all locations so we can brag about it more. It lets us do advertising a little more easily. We’ve been supporting them with billboards and influencers and social media and different things to try to promote what they are. One of the reasons we went with billboards for this is just seeing the bed you understand it’s not like what you’ve seen somewhere else,” Masterson says.

Taking premium positioning to a whole new level, Premiere Tan created a new membership tier in coordination with the introduction of the R11 and a new top-of-the-line hybrid tanning unit at each location in December. At $129.99 per month, the new Premiere Club Membership wasn’t designed to be for everyone, but the appeal thus far has exceeded Masterson’s projections.

“What we’re going for is the customer who is willing to pay for top-end services. We’re not trying to sell it to everybody but trying to sell it to people who are willing to pay at that level. When you’re buying equipment on that level, you have to charge on that level. It’s been a great success so far, hitting all sales projections, revenue is up substantially, and traffic us up substantially so far this year,” he says.

A major focus leading up to the launch wasn’t just marketing—it was preparation. That process started before installation, with internal preparation, and continued with hands-on support from the team at Tanning Supplies Unlimited, the exclusive U.S. distributor of KBL equipment. Onsite training sessions were conducted at multiple locations, along with group sessions designed to ensure consistency across staff.

“As we went to roll out the new equipment and club level, we needed everybody to be on message and know how to responds to questions about this equipment that’s unlike anything we’ve ever had. You have to invest in training just as much as you have to invest in marketing and buying the equipment,” Masterson says.

“The experience with the installation was very professional, and I’m very pleased that the equipment is highly reliable. [The TSU team] were very professional with my staff, not just me, I really appreciate that. They made a point to engage with my staff members at every location and make those people feel valued, and that’s what stood out to me and I appreciated the most. They were present at the launch and took their time with people and made sure questions were answered.”

While Masterson has been impressed with the overall experience and performance, the most notable impact may not just be the growth of the new membership, but where it’s coming from. The R11 is bringing in entirely new clients and taking them straight to their most expensive offering.

“In our experience, while the new club sales have been strong, the Elements has been the reason for more existing customers to upgrade, but the R11 has done more to bring in customers who had quit being customers or who were completely new,” he says. “Being a new service, it has helped expand our customer base.”