Selling the Experience

How to Talk to Clients About LED Tanning

THE TANNING INDUSTRY has always understood that the client experience begins long before anyone steps into a unit. It begins at the front desk. And with adoption of LED tanning technology expected to continue at an increasing rate across the country, what happens at that front desk continues to evolve and change.

Bill Pipp has watched the industry navigate technology transitions before. With 27 years in the business—including nearly two decades as an owner and executive at New Sunshine/Australian Gold and as co-founder of the Indoor Tanning Association—he now serves as **Vice President of Sales and Marketing at Tanning Supplies Unlimited**, the exclusive U.S. distributor for KBL equipment. This transition, he says, requires something the industry doesn't always prioritize: deliberate, consistent staff education.



"Make sure staff members are skilled and knowledgeable enough about the differences between fluorescent and LED," Pipp says. "You really have to understand that the technology changes the environment you're going to get your tan in. Clients shouldn't expect the same feel."

That last point is where most salons may stumble.

LED tanning is quieter, cooler, and more efficient than conventional fluorescent systems. Those are features. To the average client, they can feel like problems. A session that produces less heat and less sweat can feel like a session that isn't working—and a client who walks out confused is a client who may not walk back in.

"It's not just a change of technology," Pipp explains. "It's the ability to deliver UVA and UVB at higher irradiance and dosage levels. The new technology increases the output, so going a full session isn't always necessary to get the full results."

That is a fundamentally different message than what salon staff have been delivering for decades. Clients who have been tanning for years have built their expectations around heat, session length, and a particular kind of physical experience. Staff need to be equipped to reframe all of it—confidently, consistently, and before the client steps into the unit.

"Your staff should have the ability to redirect clients as to why the things they looked for to get a good tan in the past aren't necessary any longer," says Pipp. "If you're going in an LED bed, the traditional effects—the feelings you get inside—aren't going to be the same because they don't need to be. You never need to get hot to be tan."

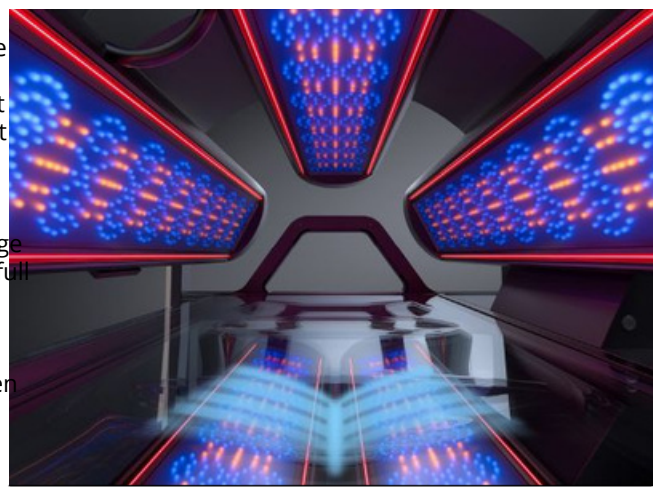
The good news is that the results tend to do the convincing once clients give the technology a fair chance. Long-time tanners accustomed to conventional beds often come around quickly once they see their color. The challenge is getting them to that point without losing them to skepticism first. That is a staff training problem as much as it is a technology problem—and it is one that Pipp believes the industry is capable of solving.

Tanning Supplies Unlimited approaches that challenge the same way it approaches everything else: as a partner rather than a vendor. With a staff representing more than 484 combined years of industry experience, TSU backs KBL equipment with training resources, technical support, and the kind of ongoing relationship that makes a real difference when a salon owner needs answers. For Pipp, that support infrastructure is inseparable from the equipment itself.

"Once clients experience the LEDs, it won't take them long to figure it out," he says.

"And once they do, they're not going back."

The front desk is where that process starts. Giving your staff the knowledge and the language to have that conversation— clearly, confidently, and every single time —is the most important thing a salon owner can do right now.



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