



Increase your salon's revenues

One Client at a Time

Salon owners are embracing a one-to-one marketing mentality—aiming to increase their share of each customer rather than increasing market share.

By Danielle Murphy

Just this week, a colleague came to my desk, waving an upscale catalog for handbags and asking, "What were they thinking when they sent me this catalog? Don't they know that I can't afford to buy anything in here?"

I nodded my head and smiled empathetically, remembering what similarly mistargeted marketing pieces from yesterday's mail I had immediately relegated to my pile of trash—including a hunting and fishing catalog and a promotion for a chimney cleaning service. (I don't even have a fireplace.)

The companies who sent these mailings obviously didn't know anything about the recipients' buying habits, and more importantly, didn't seem to care—leaving the consumer irritated by another piece of junk mail.

This, as many salon owners know, is the downside of mass marketing.

For years, marketers have been trying—through mass mailings and mass-audience advertising like radio, television and newspapers—to build business by reaching as many consumers as possible and increasing their share of the market. But as salon industry veterans like Roy Fredericks, owner of Avant Salons and Spas in Austin, Texas, know, the future of marketing success may depend not on how much of the total market you capture, but rather, how much of each of your customer's business you cap-

ture. As Fredericks explains, selling more goods and services to fewer people is not only more efficient, but more profitable.

"To get the biggest bang for my my buck, I go after a targeted group," says Fredericks. "The future of marketing is really this one-to-one approach. The old idea of marketing, where hair salons run an ad in the paper and offer a 25 percent discount to everybody, is outdated. With one-to-one, you find your niche—people who already like you—and market to them."

Kathleen Bergeron, director of Neill Creative, a service of Hammond, Louisiana-based Neill Corp. which consults with salons on developing marketing programs, says that her company has done studies with hard data supporting Fredericks' approach.

"We had been working on many ad plans for reaching the masses. We were always worried about how to get more customers," says Bergeron. "But when we started analyzing our data, we found that it costs five times more to acquire a new customer than it costs to retain an existing one. That's why we've switched our focus to one-to-one programs to help salons sell more to their current customers more often."

One-to-One History

As Martha Rogers, co-author of *The One to One Future*, one of the premier books on the topic of one-to-one marketing, ex-

plains, this approach was mandated by the availability of new technology.

"Technology has brought us back to an old-fashioned way of doing things," says Rogers. "This makes it possible to remember relationships with individual customers—sometimes millions of them—one at a time."

Rogers, who consults with a number of large corporations on incorporating one-to-one marketing, says that salons and stylists have always practiced one-to-one communication, developing personal relationships and soliciting information from clients on a day-to-day basis. She stresses that this part of the relationship is still as important as ever.

Where technology comes in, however, is in continuing to build and grow those one-to-one encounters through marketing such as customized e-mails or mail promotions targeted to specific consumers by using personalized information collected in a database.

"New technology opens the one-to-one communication channel between the salon and clients on a regular basis," says Terry Culver, vice president of marketing for Salon123, a new Internet-based salon management system which will soon offer a one-to-one, e-mail-based marketing feature. "In the past, it wasn't possible to have the one-to-one except when the client **Continued**