



FAUX EXPERTS ON THE RISE

**TAKE BACK YOUR RETAIL SALES FROM
THE FAKE BEAUTY EXPERTS.**

FAUX EXPERTS

celebrity touted bird poop facial, snail slime serums and bee-sting beauty treatments become a “thing” and derail your clients from professional, scientifically sound and safe skin care options.⁵

MLMS ON THE RISE

With the rise of the multi-level marketing (MLM) beauty companies, everyone can try to be a beauty expert. Companies like Avon, Rodan and Fields and Beauty Counter are extremely popular and successful. To the consumer’s dismay and confusion, everyone is selling them beauty products. It’s

not just the TV ads, billboards and spritzer girls at the mall anymore; it’s their friends, family members and colleagues.

MLM companies are home-based businesses and do not require their sales personnel to have formal training in skin care. As Christine Burke at *Moneyish.com* reports, the goal of MLMs is for the participant to “earn a little extra money and score some discounted products,” while the company itself makes most of the profits.⁶ However, many licensed skin care professionals will say that they have a problem with sales people who try to diagnose

skin conditions and treat serious things like acne and rosacea with no training in skin care whatsoever and you should too. Many of our clients are being persuaded by salespeople who work for MLMs to invest in and use thousands of dollars worth of products per year under the guise of whatever rehearsed sales speeches they are memorizing from the companies. It’s time to be aware of the thousands of dollars in skin care sales that your skin care business may be losing to MLM companies and empower yourself and your professional staff to educate your clients for the better.



Show off your rewards, diplomas and certificates for clients to see your education.

YOU: THE EXPERT

How can estheticians distinguish themselves in a sea of faux-fessionals?

Your education. The best tip for letting your clients know that you have the upper hand in terms of advising them on their skin is to inform them of your education and training. Hundreds of hours and thousands of dollars spent on an esthetics education is the major difference between a professionally trained skin care expert, like an esthetician, and everyone else. It behooves all estheticians to remind their clients that they studied very hard in school and had to master certain topics like anatomy, sanitation, hands-on technique, cosmetic chemistry and skin

diseases and disorders, just to name a few, to obtain a license. Let's not forget to mention the endless tests, quizzes and state board exam. Mentioning these training milestones will let your clients know that they can trust you because you have dedicated your career trajectory to professional skin care. It's not just a side hobby that you pursue for a few extra bucks.

Advanced training. Don't forget to mention to clients about any advanced training programs that you attend or continuing education that you receive. It's not that you're bragging, but you are letting clients know that you take your career in skin care seriously and invest time and money in your education to further your knowledge and ultimately give more to your clients. Visuals are great as well, so be sure to display your license information, certificates and awards in your lobby or treatment room as they should be there for the public to see.

Skin science vocabulary. Another way that estheticians can stand out from the fakers is by utilizing their professional vocabulary. As we know, it's not just skin—it's the epidermis, the dermis, follicles, adipose tissue and blood vessels, etc. It's not a "sun spot," it's photo damage or hyperpigmentation. Estheticians are equipped with a technical vernacular that should be used every day, with every client, because how you speak will set you apart. Just as a composer uses the language of music to create songs and symphonies, an esthetician has a language to express the science of skin care. Sometimes estheticians are a bit shy about using technical language with their clients, but the truth is that clients are impressed with this knowledge and will appreciate your expertise.



Capitalize on your product knowledge to stand out from "faux-fessionals."

Product knowledge. Estheticians need to capitalize not only on their professional vocabulary but their understanding of products and ingredients. Trained estheticians know how to identify skin conditions and identify product ingredients that will work to create changes in the skin. Matching skin conditions to ingredients is a skill that takes years of study, practice and care. This is one of the key elements that a fake beauty expert will miss. The fine art of skin analysis and recommending impactful skin care ingredients to treat skin conditions is a valuable and much needed skill in the industry. Anyone can sell a box of products labeled "acne" to a client that has breakouts, but a true skin care professional can curate a customized, thoughtful skin care program to a client based on a thorough skin analysis and a product ingredient know-how.

Ingredient understanding. Estheticians should also be able to dissect product labels to breakdown those ingredients into categories so that clients can get a

basic understanding of product composition. It's not to say that you must be a walking, talking cosmetic dictionary, but it's certainly necessary to have an above-average knowledge of what comprises skin care products so that you can be the guru that your client needs. A true skin care professional can speak to water versus oil based products, for example. Being able to identify and explain active ingredients such as antioxidants, retinoids, hydroxy acids and humectants, for starters, is testament to your knowledge base. This aptitude to expertly consult and communicate about the science of skin care products will certainly set you apart from the faux-fessionals out there and you should feel empowered to do so.

RECLAIMING RETAIL SALES

It's time to beat the beauty bloggers and YouTube stars at their own games! As we've mentioned, it's imperative to understand what is happening in our industry in terms of how and

Every esthetician and spa/salon owner knows that retail sales are an important and lucrative revenue stream. So, how would you feel if you found out that people who are not trained in skin health are selling millions of dollars of skin care products to your clients behind your back? How, you ask? The beauty industry is rife with fake beauty “experts” who are thriving because of the popularity of the industry and the pervasiveness of online sales and social media. If you feel like you are losing skin care sales at your spa or just don’t seem to have the attention of your clients, then read my expert advice and take control of your retail revenue.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEAUTY

Striving for beautiful skin, hair, nails, teeth and physique is not a new endeavor. We all want, to some degree or another, to look beautiful and appeal to others. We want to feel good about how we look because we know it can affect how people perceive us before we can make an impression with our personalities.

In fact, Dale Archer, M.D., notes that “beauty is an asset, just like physical prowess, charisma, brains or emotional intelligence.”¹

It’s no wonder that we spend so much time and money investing in skin care, hair care and gym memberships. Maybe we know, subconsciously, that the better we look, the better we will be treated by

others. Archer makes the case that a beautiful woman can “get away with things that ordinary people can’t.” For example, he claims that a beautiful woman is more likely to be able to talk her way out of a parking ticket or get a last-minute table at the hottest restaurant in town without a reservation. If this is so, then it behooves us to make ourselves as beautiful as possible because maybe our lives will be easier or more exciting.

INFLUENCERS

Popularity, these days, equates to web presence and followers. Haven’t you noticed that practically every day there are dozens of news items and posts

about which celebrity swears by this moisturizer or that facial? Can you keep track of the hundreds of celebrity-endorsed skin care lines and beauty brands? Do you see videos in your social media feeds with the “newest” crazy eyebrow grooming trend or specialty facial mask?

Beauty advice is in your face every day, everywhere you look. The problem for the consumers (a.k.a. your clients) is that they are being fooled into thinking that just because it’s popular, trending or relevant that it’s sound advice. In fact, Kristie Clements of *thenewdaily.com* exclaims that “self appointed experts and influencers are duping a generation.”² She feels that these influencers are benefitting financially off an ignorant consumer. “Influencers don’t necessarily have skills or a portfolio of their work,” but since they have followers, consumers believe that they should be a trusted source of information.

The beauty industry is worth billions, and it’s very lucrative and inviting to just about anyone willing to sell products. In 2017 alone, 40 prominent beauty-brand startups were founded that made over \$445 billion in sales. There’s no denying that there is money to be made in the beauty business and even small, grassroots brands have the potential to be hugely successful.³

Making matters worse, because there is so much financial opportunity and incentive in the industry, beauty brands are exploiting our inherent need to be beautiful. Alex P., a writer for *Thriveglobal.com*, writes that the beauty industry “capitalizes on making women feel imperfect and then sells them products to fix a problem that they don’t have.”⁴ In other words, we are being fooled, by not only major companies, but also “influencers, bloggers and fake gurus” who have something to sell us. She goes on further to say that these internet influencers regularly receive free products from companies in return for “exposure” on their blog or social media accounts.

Fake beauty experts’ claims don’t have to be backed by science. Furthermore, sometimes the claims that fake beauty experts make can be harmful! In his article “The Pseudoscience of Beauty Products,” Timothy Caulfield says that there are “dubious” claims being made by beauty companies that go “unquestioned and untested.” Because there is “little literature produced by independent researchers...and government research entities like the U.S. National Institute of Health or the Canadian Institute of Health have little interest in funding big double-blind placebo-controlled studies of efficacy.” Therefore, the

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why non-professionally trained individuals endorse and sell beauty products and how we can step-up our game to reclaim our roles as skin care pros.

Estheticians need to capitalize on their educational experience, professional training, vocabulary and product expertise to capture the attention of their current and prospective clients. Doing this will boost your professional image and help you to reclaim your retail sales both in person and in your digital presence.

Along with highlighting yourself and your expertise, ask yourself the following questions:

- Is your spa creating compelling video content for your clients?
- Do you have a mobile-friendly website with an intriguing blog and photos?
- Do you empower your estheticians, nurses and MDs to talk about skin care with clients in a free and compelling consultative setting?
- Does your spa have a social media presence that is congruent with its brand vision?
- Do you offer online retail sales for your existing clients and patients?
- Are your estheticians adequately trained on the protocols and product ingredients that your spa offers?
- Are you empowering your staff to

sell retail confidently by practicing dialogues and setting goals and incentives?

- Are you confident that as a spa industry professional you should be leading the way in product sales and not lagging behind?

You and your staff have the privilege of seeing, touching and performing services on your clients and are the most informed in making skin care product suggestions. Ask yourself these important questions and take back your retail sales from the fake beauty experts now. It's your time to prosper as the true beauty experts. ✂



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