

Day Spa Expo: First Year Show Exceeds Even Las Vegas Standards

By Marc Alexander, Freelance Writer

Las Vegas, NV – If you are like most in the spa industry, you love and hate trade shows. Love them for the chance to network and see what is new; hate them because there are so many to attend. How to decide where to spend your time? The Day Spa Expo at the Mandalay Bay Convention Center solved this dilemma in three days.

“This was the first time I felt I left a show with more answers than questions,” said Mary Cox, St Louis Spa Owner, “The classes were some of the most information-packed I’ve seen. I have management ideas I will use the minute I’m back home.”

The Business Education Forums were paced over three days, and covered a wide range of topics geared specifically toward day spa managers and owners. One of many unique and refreshing aspects of this show, echoed by many attendees was that the line-up of speakers was not made up of all the same speakers you see at all the other shows. The trade-show floor itself was open the last two days, with long breaks from the forums each day. This schedule gave attendees the chance to learn in the classroom *and* spend time on the expo floor with top quality spa industry vendors.

The big difference at the Day Spa Expo was the convention’s clear focus on the business side of the spa industry. "Since we first announced the launch of Day Spa Expo in mid-2005 I believed our first year show would be well received," stated Shane O'Sheeran, Show Manager for Day Spa Expo.

O'Sheeran went on to say, “Up until our Day Spa Expo, there had never been any national show—in the entire multi-billion dollar spa industry—dedicated to serving day spas, even though they are by far the largest segment in the industry. For that matter there had never been a national show dedicated to specifically serving spas owners, operators, presidents, and managers.”

“We really felt as owners of a chain of east coast spas that we had an extremely worthwhile three days here at the Day Spa Expo,” said Marilyn from Virginia. “We were able to spend quality time with several vendors we had been wanting to work with, and I got to buy Pure Inventions items right there and take them back with me.”

According to Douglas Preston, Day Spa Association Advisory Board Member, this is one of the most well-attended educational programs he has seen. “The 9:00 AM keynote speaker, Melissa De La Cruz, drew over 300 people; they were spilling out of the room! She spoke on ‘How to Make You and Your Spa Business Famous!’, a take-off on her recent book. You just don’t get attendance like that unless the crowd is excited about what you’re offering. Almost every single session and round table was full to capacity”

The easy access to industry experts was a great boost for attendees as well. Most speakers were available between seminars or on the expo floor to work with spa owners.

"I met Mr. Hussey [of Global Success Systems] at the Day Spa Expo in Las Vegas and the information he shared with me was invaluable. Mr. Hussey was helpful, kind, and extremely knowledgeable. I own a boutique spa in Los Angeles and I needed business advice specifically related to the spa industry. I learned a great deal about finance, marketing, and public relations", said Gabriella Phillips who owns Euphoria Face & Body.

The expo floor was filled with a variety of products and services geared toward the spa industry, from private-label skin care, self-tanners, and anti-aging equipment. Products & supplies, services, and equipment were all available to order or buy. Vendors were happily spending time networking with real buying decision-makers from as far away as Korea.

"My plan for a transition to more spa activity appears to be on track from my work at the Day Spa Expo. Just initial work associated with the show will add up to around \$12,000. This does not even count what I expect will show up later," said one spa consultant I grabbed at the close of the show as he dashed for the airport.

"I admit I was a little surprised—we did not expect to sell out our entire show floor this first year, or have such a wide range of excellent vendors supporting us by exhibiting, but that is exactly what happened," added O'Sheeran. "The responses from the spa owners and operators in attendance from all over the country to both the show floor and the Day Spa Association-produced DSE Business Forum were also extremely positive across the board. We are already receiving thank you letters and information requests for next years' show from exhibitors and attendees alike, and we are very excited about creating another excellent show for 2007!"

For those that missed this inaugural show, the next Day Spa Expo will be February 20 - 22, 2007 back at the Mandalay Bay Convention Center. For more information on exhibiting or attending the show go to dayspaexpo.com or call the show manager Shane O'Sheeran at 800-859-9247 or 702-893-9090 ext. 227 or e-mail him at shaneo@bentleyintl.net