

## Important Steps in Opening a Tanning Salon

Salon ownership doesn't begin with planning an opening. There are steps to opening a tanning salon, both behind the scenes and front-and-center. And where does it begin? With choosing a location, of course.

1. Choose the best location. You can't overcome a bad location, that's just the way it is. So, here at ETS Tan , we help new tanning salons do demographic studies and competition analysis on a particular area to help them find the best location.

We look at the population, the competition and the commercial landscape and we ask "are there enough people to sustain a tanning salon and if there is competition, how many beds are there now, and how can we control that market?"

2. As the owner, get involved. In the old days, you could throw a few tanning beds in a storefront, throw up a sign and enter the world of salon ownership. Today, owners need to be more involved.

We can actually help walk you through the ins and outs of salon ownership and if you can't be as involved as you'd like, then we can offer advice on hiring a skilled, experienced and passionate salon manager.

3. Hire the right staff. Your staff are the front lines of your people. They talk to people, represent you, deal with problems, make your sales, maintain your beds and keep your salon clean. And the sad truth is that even though most people care about their jobs, some people don't. It's your job to hire people that care.

4. Nail the perfect mix of equipment. I know, I know, I sell tanning salon equipment, so why isn't it at the top of my salon ownership list? Well, to be honest, location is critical, you're critical and so are your staff. All of these elements together can actually overcome equipment that's less than ideal. But, you're more likely to see success with a nice mix and selection of quality tanning beds.

5. Learn how to market. How you put together your advertising, your decorating, your pricing structure, your membership fees, the lotions you're going to carry, other products you might stock and all your other offerings are all going to come together to create your salon image.

Are you going to be a high end spa/tanning salon or more of a budget-friendly facility? How will your marketing reflect that?

6. Find a salon ownership mentor. Here at ETS Tan, we can help to connect you with a fellow tanning salon owner who has seen some success and is willing to help walk you through part of the business. Having a mentor (outside of your competition area, of course) can help you avoid common mistakes, bring new ideas to the table and learn from the expertise of others.

7. Learn how the equipment works. You have the best equipment available. That's great. Do you know how to work it? Can you fix it if something goes wrong? Do you know how to maintain it on a day-by-day or tan-by-tan basis? We'll walk you through every nook and cranny of every tanning bed and tanning bed system you buy.

8. Learn how to sell lotion. Pinpoint the lotions that you want to carry and connect with their sales reps. How will each company work to help you make sales? Will they provide training? Displays? Free samples?

9. Get a good web presence. A solid web presence is mandatory. This is how the majority of your new clients will find you. And remember, you can't just create a page and forget about it, it should be dynamic and updated regularly. Not only does this keep your customers coming back, it also keeps your search engine rankings high.

10. Plan your opening. Finally, now that you've stated to get a handle on tanning salon ownership, now it's time to plan your opening. Will you do a soft opening? How will you advertise? Will you use direct mail to target the neighborhood? Will you advertise in the local paper? Remember, your opening and its marketing needs to reflect that same branding and style that you want from your salon.