

Uniforms Can Improve Company Recognition

PROVIDING YOUR EMPLOYEES WITH UNIFORMS MAY BE ONE OF THE BEST DECISIONS YOU CAN MAKE.

BY ALISON STANTON

To read more uniform tips from Donna Flagg, visit EXPERTBUSINESSSOURCE.COM.

WHEN THINKING ABOUT what makes spa businesses successful, owners often consider things like providing high-quality products at fair prices, giving excellent customer service and hiring people who are both knowledgeable and friendly.

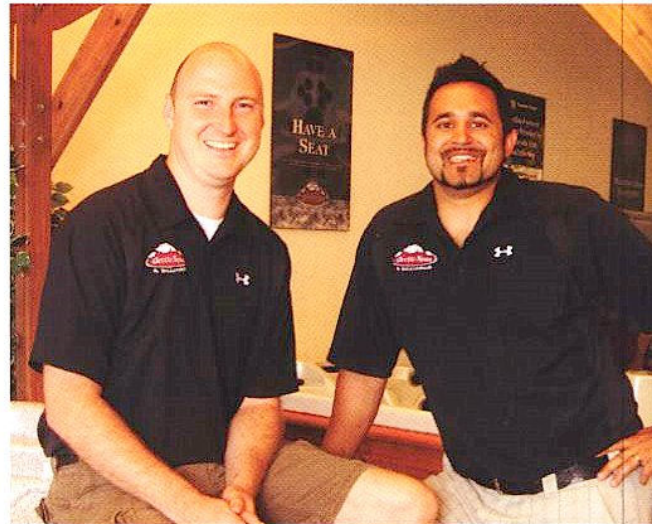
But what about the clothing that employees wear when they come to work? Is it possible that their attire can also have a positive impact on the success and overall image of a company? For some spa retailers, the answer is a resounding “yes.” As a result, many owners are issuing their employees uniforms, usually complete with the company logo.

Before any doubting Thomases out there scoff at the idea that a uniform can help contribute to a business’ success, consider this: When someone wearing a brown shirt and shorts shows up at your door, do you even need to see the big brown truck in your driveway to know the person is from UPS? In many cases, uniforms become so recognizable that they essentially become synonymous with the company itself.

Gord Coy, president and co-owner of Arctic Spas Durham and Arctic Spas Peterborough in Ontario, Canada, currently provides his delivery team with t-shirts bearing the Arctic Spas logo. In addition, his retail staff wears golf shirts with the logo.

Coy says he plans to introduce a more standardized uniform in the near future for both stores, including new shirts and sweaters for the retail staff and jackets, hats and hoodies for the delivery and service workers.

“The pros for uniforms are easy,” Coy says. “They make our service and delivery staff easy to recognize. This is extremely important because they are often working on someone’s spa when customers are not home. Neighbors



Gord Coy and Ro Mehta, co-owners Arctic Spas Durham.
Photo: Ian Crysler

need to be able to visually determine who is walking in and out of the neighbors’ yards.”

In addition, Coy says uniforms allow customers to identify his employees quickly.

“At home shows and events away from the store, a uniform is also very important. Again, staff needs to be recognizable. The last thing we want is to have a potential buyer unable to figure out who is working in the booth. I am sure we have all asked or been asked ‘do you work here?’ Having a uniform eliminates this.”

Recalling his own past employment at a fast-food franchise where he was required to wear polyester pants and a striped shirt, Coy says it’s important to make sure the uniforms you choose for your employees are up-to-date and stylish.

As long as your employees keep their uniforms clean and unwrinkled, Coy sees no negatives having his workers wear them.

Donna Flagg, president of the Krysalis Group, a human resource and management consulting firm in New York City, recently wrote a blog about the topic of uniforms. She described a time when the employees where she was consulting did not want to wear uniforms because they felt they were unattractive and uncomfortable, adversely affecting their work performance.

As Flagg explained, “They had a point. But we also had a point. We needed consistency in image and felt strongly that our customers be able to identify employees by sight.”

What ultimately worked for the company, Flagg wrote, was that the employees helped design the uniforms. She said although it took a little longer, the results were well worth it. ■