

## **Tanning Trends**

**By Michael Stepp**

Since the late '70s, indoor tanning has been the fad that keeps on going. In the early days, indoor tanning was viewed as a passing trend. Nearly 25 years later, the industry is alive and well and gaining the attention of more mainstream businesses looking to play the tanning game. More and more people want to look good and maintain the golden bronze color all year-round, not just during the spring and summer season. What was once a seasonal business is moving more year-round in order to help people look their best.

Today, about 28 million people visit tanning facilities in this \$5 billion industry every year. About 30,000 businesses offer tanning services; fitness clubs, video retailers and beauty salons are joining the ranks in record numbers.

Independent video stores find that selling indoor tanning services is becoming a profitable add-on to their existing business. This trend is likely to continue as more and more independent video stores are being squeezed by major chains.

Besides the new and improved sunless tanning lotions on the market, companies such as Hollywood Tan and Mystic Tan have introduced sunless tanning booths that airbrush a color on to

tanners. Although celebrities for years have used indoor UVA-inducing tanning beds and airbrush artists to “paint” their bodies with a golden glow, some stars such as Jennifer Anniston have started to use the new ancillary services of tanning salons such as sunless tanning booths, where after as much as three passes in one application, you get a “painted” tan that looks good for three to five days. The only limitation is it won’t last in chlorinated pools. Clients are also combining the two. People often find that the brown they get from UV tanning is beautifully complemented by the golden brown they can get from the mist. UV tanning does a great job of prepping the body by dehydrating a tanner's skin and making it more susceptible to a fluid being absorbed.

### **Ancillary Services and Accessories**

The goal of any tanning salon should be to stand out in a crowded marketplace by offering a unique experience. Many salons offer facial services, aromatherapy, nail services and even body wraps. Others feature accessories such as Lucas Products Corporation’s Trend Gems, temporary crystal tattoos available in an array of eye-catching designs. The crystal tattoos easily are applied directly to the skin with convenient peel-and-stick technology and are made to last through an indoor tanning

session, a day at the beach or a night on the town. Items such as swimwear and sunglasses are also good sellers, in addition to tanning lotions. Lotion maximizers with bronzers or self-tanners will continue to be popular. Hot-action shimmering bronzers are the industry buzz products right now. Lotions that allow the skin to attract and use more oxygen are also on the horizon as are lotions that contain shimmers to add an iridescent kind of a glow. BlackGold is marketing carrot seed oil and hemp oil as all-natural, and despite the negative connotation associated with it, tanners are buying it for the great organic anti-wrinkle properties. One manufacturer is marketing an onion-seed oil that may help heal scars.

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Health supplements may not seem to have close ties to tanning but the connection is unmistakable—seeing a pale professional body builder is about as likely as seeing a tan leprechaun. Bodybuilders know that a golden tan makes their chiseled physique look even better. The average tanning customer is a health-conscious adult between the ages of 18 and 49 who spends an average

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of \$600 annually on products and services designed to enhance their well being and appearance. With that in mind, selling health supplements is a "no lose" opportunity. Sexual enhancement products are also very popular. There are a lot of natural sexual-enhancer products for men and women. Weight-loss products are very popular these days too. **PMPR**

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