



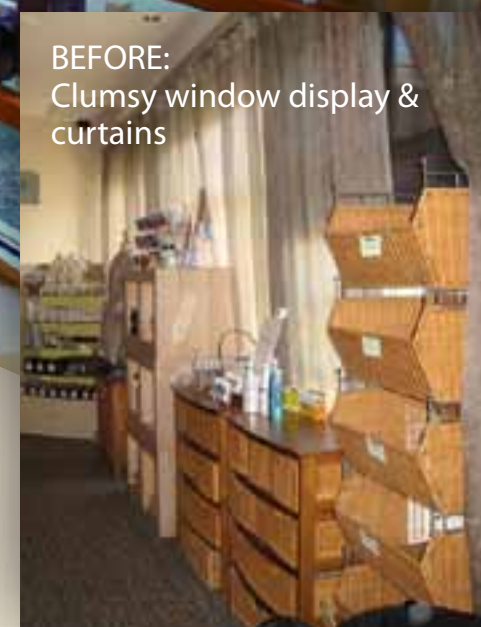
## Step-back snapshots

Get a view of your business through a guest's eyes. Grab candid shots of your storefront, waiting and service areas. Check out the photos a few days later when you're away from the business. Look out for:

- Windows cluttered with displays facing inward or awkward curtains
- Unnecessary furniture or displays blocking the flow of a room
- Long, dark hallways
- Dusty, jumbled visual merchandising areas
- Lights that give areas a flat glare



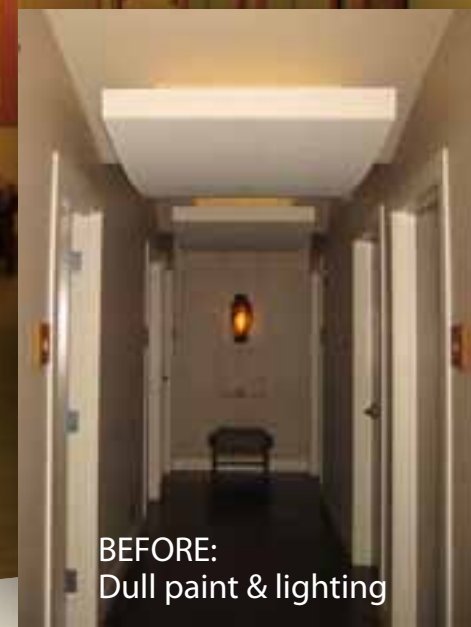
AFTER:  
Graceful shelving allows light, airy product display



BEFORE:  
Clumsy window display & curtains



AFTER:  
Fresh color, updated lighting  
Invite guests into the hall



BEFORE:  
Dull paint & lighting

# Renovate & Rejuvenate!

## 5 Steps to Rebuild Your "Wow"

By Michael Effler



**There's an energy that every spa wants.** Relaxed yet vigorous, warm, inviting and fresh, infused with a buzz of anticipation for what lies in store. No one can put their finger on it, but everyone from investors to guests knows it when they feel it. It's a unique mix that owners spend hours, months, even years working to get just right.

**What happens if that larger-than-life sensation disappears?** The buzz falls flat, the energy drops, sales level off, or even start to decline, ever so slightly each month; providers get bored; the light, pleasant energy of the spa environment dissolves into a feeling of stagnation.

**At some point, every spa inevitably faces this kind of 'energy glaze.'** At best it's frustratingly nebulous as owners struggle to address it. Worst case, it can drain investor confidence, strain relationships at every level, and even threaten the spa's survival.

**Here are five key steps** that every spa owner can take to rebuild that unique appeal, gleaned from International Design Concepts' 25+ years of spa design and business consulting.

### 1 Step Back

When business starts to level off, or when something just doesn't feel right, the first thing any owner should do is step back and take a new perspective. At the root of a spa's unique appeal are forces that can be unpredictable. Colors go out of style, furniture, fabrics, and even hardware wear down, and once-unique services become routine. It happens slowly, and can easily slip by a busy manager with their head down in the game.

The typical response is just to replace what has worn down with the same old. Since the factors that make us say "wow!" are constantly shifting, the formula that worked yesterday probably won't work as well tomorrow. If you want to prosper beyond plateaus, you can't just keep going. You have to evolve.

### 2 Look Through Your Windows

Several years ago, IDC worked with a spa inside a major hotel that initially opened with high standards. Over time the front windows became cluttered and cramped, with shelves placed against them. Arriving guests first saw shelving and the backs of product containers through the window. Eventually they added curtains to hide the shelves!

Literally, go outside your business. Look in through the windows. Look at it from the curb. Slow changes over time can create a business that looks very different two to five years after its opening. For the vast majority of your customers, the sight of your business from the curb and through the windows is their very first impression. What do you want them to see?

### 3 Look For Simple Fixes

It's easy to overlook the details, but they are a key part of a dynamic ambiance. Just as furniture or carpeting can lose their freshness, paint fades over time. Visual merchandising areas become disorganized as new product is added.

Often the IDC team finds inappropriate light sources in service areas - even fluorescents. Aside from causing headaches and other health problems, the wrong light can affect not only the guest experience, but the quality of color-oriented services. Even the best lighting and services feel sub-par against a ten-year-old color palette.

Take another 'step back' in every room, and think about small fixes that can make a world of difference: paint, lighting, even hardware.





**YOUR TURN:**  
Which of these 'added' items  
would you re-think?



# 4

## De-Clutter

While good design stays fresh for a long time, even the best design can't preserve the larger visual flow when well-meaning staff make quick fixes. Product comes with free displays. Staff bring in everything from roll-around cases to pictures for their work areas. Successive generations of managers add their own touch: one more coffee table or coat rack.

It's all done with the best intentions, but the cumulative effect can be disastrous. Each individual thing in a room can subtract from the 'flow' of a space. Make sure what you add doesn't subtract from the vibrant, welcoming, luxurious feeling of the business as a whole.

# 5

## Renew Your Services

A solid menu of rotating services is at the core of every spa's business plan, but just like every other component of that plan, the human factor combined with changing styles and trends, can create a feeling that's not so new. When IDC works with a spa, we create an extensive list of unique 'Signature Services' tailored specially to the market, location, and facility. To start, spa owners and managers can ensure that marketing new services - seasonally, around local events, or simply to freshen up the menu - is a regular task.

To learn more and to maximize single-site revenue and create experiences - and brands - that guests remember forever, we invite you to join our seminars at the Vancouver and Las Vegas ESI spa conferences.



**BEFORE:**  
'Industrial' tub  
& curtain

**AFTER:**  
Transformed into a  
magical twilight space

**Michael Effler** is the founder of International Design Concepts, an industry-leading spa design firm. Michael shares his expertise with clients and audiences in Canada, the US, and Europe. With more than 25 years' experience, IDC is known for cutting-edge design and development of day, medical, hotel and resort spas.

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