

Interview with Tony Sciara of New Image Forecast 2014



by: AHLC and Tony Sciara, President, New Image Labs

AHLC: Hello Tony. Thanks for taking the time to speak with us today during the busy conference. With the year of 2013 almost at a close, what are the expectations for the future?

Tony: Some segments of the hair loss industry are transitioning. Existing business models need to be re-thought as the key drivers are changing due to increasing costs. To enjoy continued success we need to think outside the box. We see a strong tendency towards the women's business and are we ready for it.

To start, we need to understand how women think and how they respond to hair loss. Only then will we be able to build lasting relationships and achieving any level of success.

AHLC: What other trends do you see?

Tony: We see a growing interest in hair loss from the beauty industry. We do receive calls from hairdressers who are looking for information about our services. They have clients in the chair with various stages of hair loss and have no options or solutions for them. The irony is that these salons know how to work with women and service their needs, but do not have the answers for hair loss. However, we in the hair replacement industry have the solutions, but in most cases are weak in our ability or willingness to work with women clients.

AHLC: That is quite interesting. Do you think it is a benefit to our industry that AVEDA for example and many others are coming out with new anti-hair loss and anti-hair thinning product lines?

Tony: Absolutely, yes. It creates and facilitates discussion and awareness. The more professionals are talking to their clients about hair loss the more

attention is brought to the condition. We then all benefit, especially the hair loss professionals.

AHLC: What is the most powerful tool New Image has for 2014?

AHLC: Speaking about the future, what do you think the future holds regarding Asia?

Tony: Things are continuing to change in Asia. No matter what we want to



Susan Kettering, Peggy Thornhill, Grant Gunderson and Tony Sciara at the New Image Conference

Tony: New Image University. The new site has just been launched and we are now offer two certification courses – New Image Certified Hair Loss Specialist and New Image Certified Master Hair Loss Specialist. This online educational tool will pay off for the entire industry. We plan on continuing to further expand the site in the future and make it grow even more. Education is key.

believe, some of the third world countries are no longer considered developing countries. In fact, both China and Southeast Asia have a rapidly expanding middle class. In addition there is less interest for good workers to go into the hair trade. It is going to be a challenge to have long-term access to and a continuous supply of hair. Sustainability of the product chain should be in the forefront of every studio owners mind.

My recommendation is to align yourself with one or two key hair suppliers, which provides a secure, long-term source of product.

AHLC: How about research and development?

Tony: We are constantly researching and creating new products, especially in the women's market. Actually, we just launched a number of beautiful, versatile women's hair systems with Biolon, 100% Remy human hair and 100% European Hair. We also are continuing work on various materials to improve the stability and durability for our men's designs.

AHLC: Speaking of Biolon, in view of the ongoing issues with handling human hair, do you feel Biolon can replace human hair?

Tony: Biolon was inspired by the vision to create a product that could simulate human hair. It was never intended to replace human hair. It's simply another tool or option to achieve the style and the design you are looking for. It feels and acts like human hair, mostly due to its composition, as it gives the feel and movement of real hair. It does not fade and is just as durable as human hair. In my opinion, it's a great solution for the market, moving forward.

AHLC: Thanks so much, Tony, for your time and your insight. We appreciate it. Do you have any closing comments or thoughts?

Tony: Let's be passionate about our industry and realize the great potential. Let's encourage everyone in the industry not to focus on what's broken but instead on how we can improve it. We invite everyone to commit to elevating the entire hair loss community through knowledge and education, so that we can all become a resource center for today's sophisticated and well-informed consumers. There will always be a demand for competent hair replacement professionals as long as there are people with hair loss. It is up to us to change and adapt to new market conditions and new consumer behavior patterns. It's an exciting journey. 🌈



Five Tips for Success in 2014

by: Elvira Amankwa, CMP, Marketing Manager, New Image Labs

WE HAVE CONTRIBUTED to *The Link* many times throughout 2013 and with this issue being dedicated to an industry forecast, we have been asked to put together some pointers of what we think will help you to be successful in 2014 and beyond.

With our best wishes for a successful new year, we have created the "Top-5-List" below.

We hope you will enjoy reading and more importantly, implementing some of our tips.

1. Align yourself with a strong manufacturer

More than ever, it will be important in 2014 to align yourself with a strong hair manufacturer to ensure a consistent and continuous supply of quality hair for you and your clients. With the prevailing global economic conditions and the labor situation in China, a solid relationship with a strong manufacturer will be key to your uninterrupted hair supply.

2. Know there is a difference between price and value

Not everything that has a low price is of good value. What might seem cost-effective or even a so-called bargain at first, does often not provide in the long run the value that you and your clients are looking for and deserve. Problems with the product, lack of customer service, hassle with returns, damage to your reputation, increased administrative costs at your end are just some of the issues that can come along with low price and little value.

3. Reach out

In 2014, it is going to be crucial to reach out with marketing. Advertise online or in print. Don't shy away from social media, such as Facebook and Pinterest as they are great tools to help brand your studio, spread the word about your services and showcase what you can do. Don't neglect email marketing. Be visible in your community by attending and participating in events. Host an Open House. Get the word out about your business. This will help raise awareness, generate leads and create new business for you.

4. Merchandise

Here is one tip straight from the horse's mouth, one of the most successful studios in the nation. "Tap into the power of merchandising. By having a merchandising program in place, you can generate a viable stream of revenue for your studio. Many great products, such as hair care lines, are available, which lend themselves for profitable retail sales in your studio." With the right products, display options and incentive structure for your staff to participate, merchandising can translate into \$\$\$ for you in 2014.

5. Move

Benjamin Franklin said: "All humanity is divided into three classes: those who are immovable, those who are movable and those who move!" Be a mover and a shaker. Be creative and pro-active. Be enthusiastic (again) about your business. Rekindle the fire by attending conferences and mingling with peers. Keep yourself updated and the most current trends in the industry. Become dedicated to life-long learning.