



The Case For “Owned” Eyewear

Providing Re-Useable Goggles is Not Always the Best Option

by Brenda Fishbaugh

Whenever I present a seminar about eye protection to a group of salon operators, nearly half of my audience tells me they provide their guests with “community” goggles, free of charge. They say that they feel it is the key to eliminating excuses for not wearing eyewear.

Then I ask them, “Okay, you’re loaning your guests goggles at no charge, but how many do you sincerely believe are wearing them during their sessions?”

The answer: “Half. Half of them wear eye protection.”

Why would only half of your guests use eyewear that you provide at no cost? The answer is simple.

Salon tanners often express leering about wearing community goggles. They see the “mascara ring” in the eye cups and they freak out! They see the goggle soak-tank on your counter with a layer of mascara floating on top, and they are less than comfortable with getting those goggles anywhere near their eyes. They see the “clean” goggles lying on your counter on a towel, but it’s unappealing. Questions cross their minds: “Were they rinsed?” “Why are they sitting out in the open and picking up crud from the air?” “How often do they change that cleaning solution?” “Is the cleaner so strong it could hurt my eyes?”

Back to my seminar: Now I address

the salons that do not loan eye protection to their tanners and require them to have their own. Some of these salons provide disposable eyewear, some give a pair of new goggles to each guest when they join the salon. Others merely sell eye protection, but they do not provide free re-useable goggles.

“Why do you insist that tanners have their own eyewear?” I ask this group.

The answers: “We are worried about spreading disease by not cleaning goggles correctly;” “We want to portray a clean salon;” “Tanners will wear their own eyewear more than they will wear a standard-issue pair;” “Our guests like the choice of goggles with no nose

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bridge, a smaller eye shield, different colors or disposables;” or “Ownership of eye protection makes them more inclined to wear it.”

In speaking to thousands of tanners, I’d conclude that the opinions mentioned above are accurate. Once tanners have their own personal pair of eyewear, they take better care of it and are more comfortable wearing it; they take responsibility for protecting their own vision.

A common misconception under which salon owners suffer is the idea that they must provide their guests with eyewear for free. By law, you must make eyewear available, but it does not have to be free. Only the states of Texas, New York, and Ohio require eyewear to be provided at no charge. You may also sell eyewear in these states, but you must have free eyewear available. Many salons in these states provide free disposables, and also sell goggles and disposables. Some salons offer free eye protection when tanners sign up for a session series, buy an expensive bottle of lotion, or as part of a special promotion.

If you’d like to leave community gog-

gles behind, I will email you the steps to easily make the switch to promoting goggle ownership to your guests. ■



About the Author:

Tanning industry veteran Brenda Fishbaugh is president of Eye Pro, Inc., makers of disposable eyewear. She travels extensively training salons on the effects of UV light on vision.

