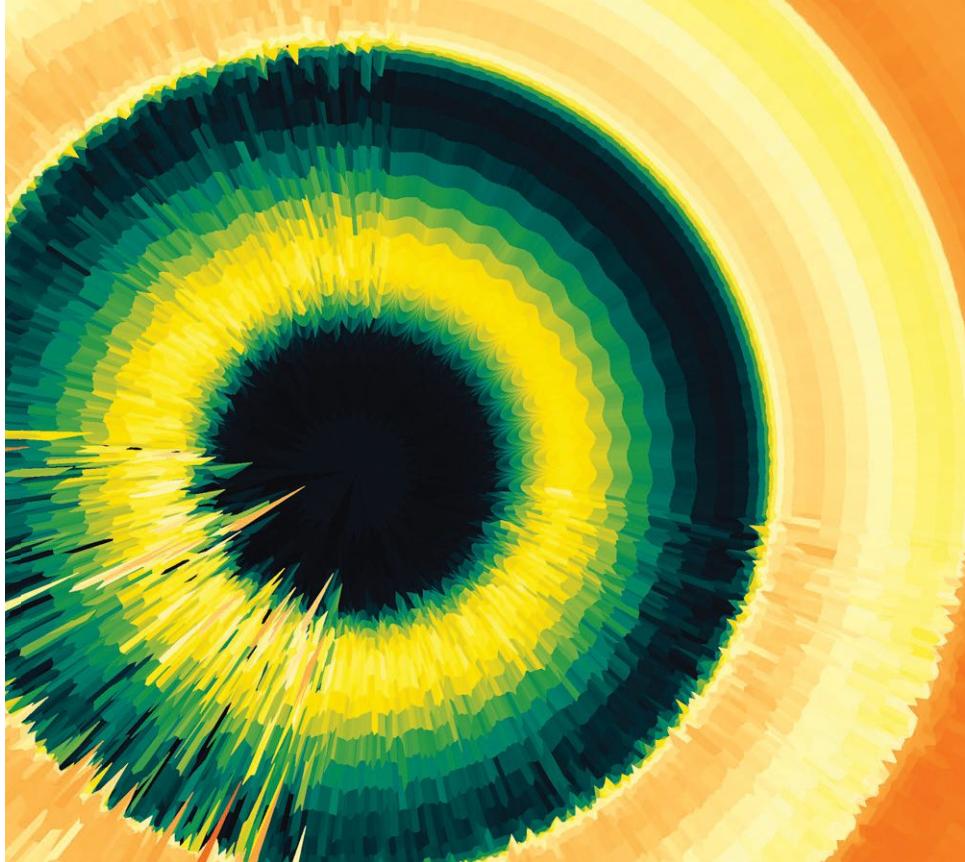


How I Convince Tanners to Wear Eyewear

Part Two

By Brenda Fishbaugh



Last month, my column featured interviews with several salon operators who shared their tips for encouraging tanners to wear eye protection. This month, I'm talking to longtime salon owner, Angelene Eubank.

"How do I convince my tanners they need to wear eye protection? For us, it's all in the verbiage when we make a sale. Every time someone signs up or buys a package, we just grab a pair of goggles and say, 'You absolutely need to protect your eyes,' and just ring up the sale. Our guests do not even question it. If a tanner says, 'Oh, I already have eyewear' we say something like, 'That's great, keep using them to protect your eyes!'" shares this Mattawan, MI operator.

This industry veteran gained her skills by working in the family's tanning salon business while going to college. "When I show a customer the correct way to fold disposable eyewear, I again emphasize the importance of wearing it," explains Eubank. "And when I give a salon tour, I instruct them, 'When you lie down on the bed, pull the canopy down, make sure that your eyewear is in place to protect your eyes, and push the start button.'"

"After two decades in the tanning industry, I've learned how repetition is important in making your message heard," she continues. "Another way we reinforce the eyewear message is by placing the goggle tower and display box of disposables on our back counter, which is a great reminder to our tanners that they need to buy eyewear. The disposable eyewear display box is a conversation starter. Tanners will say, 'She looks like an alien

with those cones on.' I use this as a lead-in to my pitch. Did you know those cones are see-through, but completely block all damaging UV light? Did you know those silly cones have been FDA compliant since 1985? Here, let's put a pair on you, so you can see how well they work with no strings or nose bridge."

The Utan salon owner also shares some of the crazy eye protection substitutes her guests try to use. Eubank has known tanners to put dimes or quarters on their eyelids (EEEWW ... coins are ridiculously unsanitary!) She also says that some have tried wearing sunglasses (Oh, the raccoon eye tan lines!) And, she has seen a lot of t-shirts, towels and cotton balls (Nooooo! Fabrics have very little UV block.) "Sometimes, I just give a free pair of disposable eye protection to a customer, just to remove the issue of money from the equation. I want to emphasize that eye protection is important and I'm not trying to nickel-dime them," says Eubank.

I asked how Utan continued to prosper during the tough COVID times. "We have two annual customer appreciation events, on Black Friday and Super Bowl Sunday. We have food, deals, and lots of mingling. Our customers really love them!" she enthuses. With safety being a priority during the pandemic, her sales of disposables soared as people did not want to wear shared goggles.

"We have a way of building trust with our guests and instill in them that they need to protect their eyes every time they tan," Eubank concludes. ■

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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.

