

Heartland Tanning, Inc.

2014 Winter Fair

By John P. Ribner

HEARTLAND

The folks at Heartland Tanning thought that a Winter Fair would be a great way to prepare salon professionals before the peak season kick-off, and 350 tanning professionals agreed.

Amid region-wide snow storms and frigid temperatures, Heartland Tan's 22nd Annual Winter Fair was a success. Salon owners newbie and veteran – from places as far away as Ohio, Pennsylvania and Texas – braved the threat of blizzard conditions to attend. Highlights included a large exhibitor area where attendee's visited with industry reps, and they also had the opportunity to experience different spray-tanning systems, including Heartland's own PURA Sunless. "General sessions focused on important topics such as customer loyalty and retention," said Brad Henson, Heartland Co-Owner, "and our open forum hosted by John Farr and local salon owners Howard and Teresa Terry was also a hit!"

With nearly everyone looking forward to the upcoming season, John Farr's keynote presentation, "The Future of Indoor Tanning," was a very timely topic. "For salon owners to be successful," said Farr, "they have to provide their guests with a unique experience for their time and money, or they'll go somewhere else. Sadly, too many conversations between a

salon staff and a guest typically goes something like this, 'Hi. What's your name? Room No. 3 is ready to go.' If the customer is lucky, they might get 'Have a nice day' as they leave the salon." Farr used the results of the secret shopper surveys he conducts with his many salon owner clients to illustrate the importance of customer service in a salon's overall success.

The Sun Is Life presentation hosted by Tony Brown was a hit at the Winter Fair. Brown, the training program's director, shared the core message of Sun Is Life with attendees – that the tanning industry needs to cease making health claims about its services and instead embrace a message of moderation. Brown shared historical examples of how making health claims about indoor tanning services has harmed this industry while also presenting the Sun Is Life training and educational program. "The presentation was well received," Tony Brown said, "and numerous attendees came to discuss this new direction following the presentation because the light bulbs come on in their heads that this is the right road for our future."

The Winter Fair was so important to Howard and Teresa Terry, owners of Electric Sun Tanning in Kansas City, KS they brought 11 of their staff to the event. "We loved the show!" exclaimed Howard. "We were very impressed with the presentations given by the various tanning lotion manufacturer reps

When: January 3-4, 2014
Where: Westin Crown Center – Kansas City, MO
Who: Australian Gold, Biddiscombe, BleachBright, California Tan, Designer Skin, Devoted Creations, Eye Pro, Fiesta Sun, Fit Body Wrap, Ed Hardy Tanning, Insurtec, Light Sources, Lucas Products, Nichesoft, Norvell Skin Solutions, Playboy Tan, Podz, Pro Tan, Pura Sunless/ Pura Spa, Skin2Slim, Sun Is Life, Supre Tan, Swedish Beauty, Synergy Tan, Tan Inc.

– while they gave some great information about their latest lotions, they also spent a good portion of their time sharing useful sales and marketing tips that any tanning salon owner can use. We also enjoyed talking shop with other salon owners and trading ideas on what works." Howard says he and Teresa will attend next year's Winter Fair, and they plan to bring along as many Electric Sun staff as possible.

"Seeing and meeting all the new people entering our industry was great," said Brad Henson. "The attendees are coming with an open mind to better their businesses by improving the customer experience they provide. We appreciate their desire to learn and network amongst themselves, and Heartland is glad to offer an avenue with our seminars to that end."

The Winter Fair concluded with Team Heartland heading to its satellite location in McDonough, GA for the distribution company's January 10 event. ■