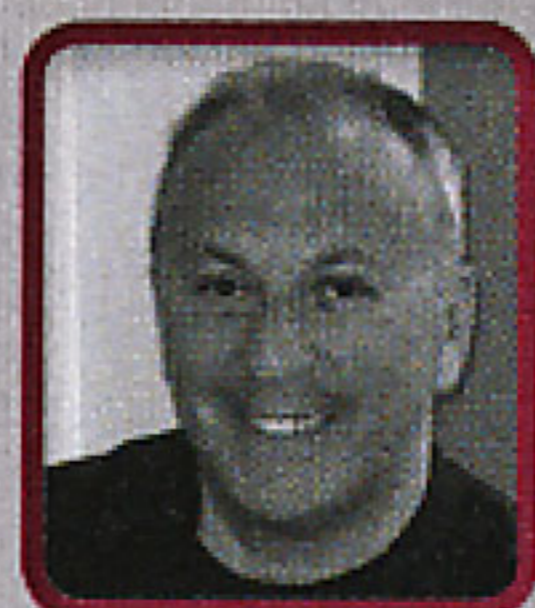




TRENDWATCH



Dr. Leon Alexander



Carolyn Collins



Howard Gurock



Blair Hopper



Joe Serna



Lauren Summers

ST: In the next three years, what do you predict will be the hottest trends in salon décor in color combinations, flooring choices, wood and other finishes and chair design:

ALEXANDER: “The design should be formulated around creating a series of experiences for the consumer. Retail area furniture should be illuminated with neutral wall colors and a strong accent color at the back of the retail—like red or purple. Trends of materials must comply with durability. Stainless steel, granite, lacquered and high-end laminates lend themselves to be both durable and contemporary.”

COLLINS: “For color, orange and turquoise have been very large but you are going to start to see more bright pops of color like lime green, hot pink and yellow. Neutrals will also continue to be strong. I think we’ll start to see more salons going towards a painted concrete floor or acid washed concrete due to its durability. Dark wood will continue to be popular but you will start to see more zebrawood, which is already a popular trend in Europe. And for chairs, the lounge style or throwback retro styles will continue to gain popularity.”

SERNA: “As we come out of a long recession, people will be searching for brighter lifestyles. Lighter colors are fresh, happy and optimistic. In flooring, porcelain commercial tile floor has and still is the best value in flooring. Low maintenance with longevity cannot be beat. Darker brown woods have been around for a number of years and the trend is beginning to grow into lighter, yet deep colored woods such as walnuts and teaks. The styling chair is one of the main tools of the stylist. What we see now and in the coming years is a re-focus on quality and more attention to functionality and durability, rather than looks and low price. The professional stylist is looking for a chair that functions in height, width and lumbar support.”

SUMMERS: “I think we will see an increase in the ‘vintage glam’ style—where contemporary meets boutique! This consists of white or neutral walls with a strong accent color such as black, turquoise or Kelly green. Rather than using paint on every wall, pick one and create a focal point by using a wall covering with a damask pattern or large floral print in your accent color of choice. Wood floors continue to stay in style. I think a dark stain really creates a beautiful contrast with lighter walls and does a better job at hiding any spills that might occur. The trend with wood for cabinets and stations go from one extreme to the other. It is either a really dark, almost black, stain or a solid white finish.”

“As we come out of a long recession, people will be searching for brighter lifestyles. Lighter colors are fresh, happy and optimistic.”

—Joe Serna

ST: What emerging service trends are changing the way you design salons and spas?

GUROCK: “We’ve seen a dramatic increase in the number of salons building treatment rooms and this is a trend that is going to continue as it’s an added source of revenue. The trend forced us to engineer LED lighting that is task specific such as special LED lights for waxing rooms and soothing dimmable LEDs for massage rooms.”

SUMMERS: “For a brief moment in time, treatment rooms were not as popular, but this has recently changed—they are making a comeback! I’ve been asked quite a bit lately to provide private or “VIP” rooms that can be used for wig services or for men’s color application in a female-dominated salon. Instead of doing an oversized room for couple’s services, we are

doing standard rooms that can open up with pocket doors to create a couple’s room. This is an efficient way to utilize valuable square footage and still be able to offer a package for couples on the spa menu. Probably the biggest increase in demand is for portable stations and mirrors. Salon owners definitely want the ability to adapt their spaces for different needs.”

ALEXANDER: “The industry has gone through a period that has affected the spa business more than any other service. The \$100+ service in a private room has been most affected. I see a trend that is both affordable for the consumer and will contribute to a higher average ticket for the salon. The express facial bar is performed in the open as it’s a non-private collection of services priced from \$25 to \$95 and takes from 15 minutes to an hour.”

COLLINS: “I think over the next few years you will start to see businesses that have a spa focus, focus more on couples’ treatments and salons that do well with hair services will continue to expand in that direction. I do think with breast cancer awareness becoming so large and hair extensions taking off you will start to see more private areas for wig service and hair replacement.”

SERNA: “Flexible space is always a good idea, and as more salons realize the importance of continued education for their stylist, we will be seeing more interior design with spaces that can be converted to classrooms, staff meetings, and yes, parties of all kinds which can help promote the salon with charity events, open houses, client appreciation nights, etc.”

ST: How are owners continuing to improve productivity in their salon?

SERNA: “The biggest and most significant change I have seen in the last few years is moving from the appointment book to computerized systems. The use of apps is revolutionizing this area and more stylists are booking appointments with their iPads, iPhones, and Droids.” >>