

# Pucker Up for New Patients Event Case Study and Instructions

By Tracy L. Drumm

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A "Red Lipstick Night" might be the perfect way to kiss your slow-business months goodbye. The first Red Lipstick Night was successfully launched and tested in September of 2010. Producing a waitlist, this sold-out event held at a medical office in Chicago brought 120 women together for a night of aesthetic education and fun.

Booked for a Thursday evening, this open-house style party promoted lips, in particular focusing on red lipstick and the theme was playfully promoted on the invitations and décor, and used for event activities.

## METHODOLOGY

The New York Times has reported that 80% of women wear lipstick. As such, this topic provided a safe and comfortable icebreaker for guests. Additionally, new patients were less threatened by a pleasant makeup tutorial than a seminar on lasers and injectables.

A tickets to the event cost \$25 to help ensure people who RSVP'd would attend. Revenue from ticket sales was donated to a local family to assist with medical bills (a charity is another worthy option). While the concept of charging for an open-house may seem outlandish, it is a highly effective way to place value on your event, as well as assure your staff doesn't spend weeks planning to only have a handful of guests attend. After implementing the charitable cover charge into events nearly five years ago, our patient parties now enjoy a 95% RSVP to attendance ratio.

A local cosmetic store, Sephora, was chosen as an event partner and provided sample red lipstick for the women to try -- as well as gift bags for the attendees. Wine was provided by a local wine distributor at no charge and was allowed to sell bottles to the attendees.

Stations and rooms were set up to provide activities for attendees and encourage guest interaction. Designated areas included a Lip Stain Station, Plumping Room, Gloss Bar, and Whitening Room. Medical treatments did not taking place during the event; rather, the event focused on educating attendees about treatment options.

A key component to any event is ensuring there are enough activities to keep guests entertained. A "Kiss the Canvas" station was set up to search for the perfect pout among the attendees. For an additional charitable donation, guests could pay to enter the contest where a staff member would chose the "perfect pout" based on a lip impression guests made on the canvas. The winner received a "Day of Beauty" package including a facial, waxing, and skin care products. After the event, the canvas was incorporated into the décor of the office.



## METHODS OF PROMOTION

**1. SOCIAL MEDIA** - Starting four weeks before the event, promotional posts were made on the practice's Facebook page and each staff member's page.

**2. E-MAIL BLASTS** - Over the same four week period, e-blasts were sent to current patients through Contactology on Tuesdays (a day that has proven a high open rate). Messages announced updates on the event including raffles and items for gift bags.

**3. PRINTED INVITATIONS** - Printed using printingforless.com, 6 inch-by-11 inch postcard-style invitations were hand distributed to hair salons, cosmetic department make-up counters, current patients, and to neighboring businesses and malls. ways to price your deal so you won't have to enter these dangerous discounting waters.

## OUTCOME

All materials for the event promoted limited space and a capacity of 100 guests to further create demand. As such, we took a maximum of 120 paid RSVP's and had 26 women placed on a waitlist for possible cancellations. At 6 months post-event, 15 of the attendees have converted into first-time nonsurgical patients. Total revenue generated from their initial treatments was \$16,500. Additionally, traffic to the practice's Web site doubled the month of the event due to the outreach and buzz.

## HOW TO DUPLICATE THE EVENT

**1. PICK AN EVENT DATE**, a charity to benefit from ticket sales, a target number of guests, and create an invitation.

**2. PARTNER WITH THE MINERAL MAKEUP LINE** you carry or have a staff member contact the manager of your local Sephora, Ulta, or other makeup stores. They are to provide the red lipstick samples and coaching at the party (encourage them to invite their customers, as well). In exchange, they receive promotion of their products to your qualified market. They can further their reach at the event by donating gift bags.

**3. CREATE AN RSVP LIST AND A FLOW CHART** detailing where different activities will take place. Next, assign stations for each of your staff members and designate specific people to be in charge of "mingling" with guests that may have come alone. Remember to have office get a credit card payment when taking the RSVP's and to call attendees the day before to remind them the time and location of the event.

**4. HAVE POST-EVENT METHODS OF FOLLOW-UP** in place before the big night. Getting attendees in the door is only the first step in welcoming them into your care.

The Red Lipstick Night was a huge success. It brought new patients to the practice as well as strengthened relationships with current ones. "Lips" were playfully used as a theme to tie the event together and serve as an icebreaker for staff to discuss other facial treatment options.

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