

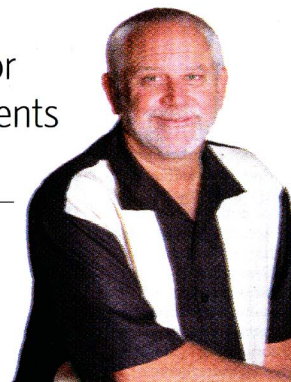
PHOENIX Business Journal

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SUNSET TAN: Salon franchisor Marc Kiekenapp aims to give clients a celebrity experience. **31**

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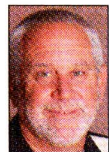
Tanning chain plans 25 new sites in Phoenix, Tucson

BY LYNN DUCEY

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LA Sunset Tan is heating up plans for an Arizona expansion that could include 25 new franchises in metro Phoenix and Tucson within five years.

The Los Angeles-based tanning salon offers both tanning beds and spray-on tan options, and prides itself on providing a "celebrity experience."



Kiekenapp

"The buildout of our salon is much more upper-end," said Marc Kiekenapp, vice president of franchise development.

Kiekenapp and business partner Tadd Olson own the LA Sunset Tan franchise development rights for Arizona. The company operates four properties in its hometown and just opened a location at The Palms Hotel in Las Vegas. The company's executives include co-founders Jeff Bozz and Devin Haman as well as Britney Spears' former manager, Larry Rudolph, who serves as co-president of the firm with Bozz. Haman is CEO.

Beyond the Britney connection, the brand may be best known by viewers of E Entertainment Television, who watched the trials and tribulations of those working at its four Los Angeles salons on the reality-based "Sunset Tan" show this past season. The second season is being filmed at the Las Vegas location.

While Kiekenapp declined to release exact locations, he said the first metro Phoenix properties are expected to open this fall in high-end, athletic-oriented areas. Sunset Tan's presence in Arizona is expected to create more than 120 full- and part-time jobs at full buildout, executives said.

"If you think of how gyms locate, we will follow those gyms. People who are into fitness, who are healthy and want to feel good about themselves are people who tan," Kiekenapp said.

The tanning industry is not without its detrac-

tors. Many in the medical profession say tanning is anything but healthy.

The Chicago-based American Academy of Dermatologists is strongly against indoor tanning. Spokeswoman Alison Sit said the organization supports placing warning labels on tanning beds. The group also would like to see legislation prohibiting their use by minors and banning their manufacture and use for nonmedical purposes.

The AAD said studies have shown that UV radiation

from indoor tanning increases the risk of developing skin cancer and contributes to skin aging and eye damage. But the Indoor Tanning Association, a Washington-based industry group, contends that moderate tanning maximizes the benefits of the sun, helps the body produce vitamin D, lowers blood pressure and wards off depression.

"Everybody for years was told how bad this was for them, and they still did it," said ITA Executive Director John Overstreet. "But now, new research is showing all the wonderful things that UV light does for the body."

Overstreet pointed out that ultraviolet light, regardless of whether it comes from the sun or a tanning bed, is the same. "And because with tanning you are in a controlled environment, the risk of overexposure is less," he said.

Tanning salons industrywide also offer spray-on tans, which last up to about a week.

"If you picture somebody painting a car with a spray gun, that's basically what it is. And we can paint six-pack abs on you," Kiekenapp said. Trained salon workers use differing layers and colors of dark and light on the stomach to create the look of a toned and tight stomach, he said.

"Our spray-on area is a very active component for us. We also do a cocktail where you will lay in a bed for a few minutes, and then you get a spray-on tan," he said.

And while there are a number of small salons in the Valley, the metro retail tanning market is largely underserved, Kiekenapp said.

"There is always competition somewhere. It's important for us to provide that celebrity experience to our clients so that they will come back to us," Kiekenapp said.



LA Sunset Tan was co-founded by Devin Haman, left, and Jeff Bozz.

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LA Sunset Tan: www.sunsettan.com

American Academy of Dermatologists: www.aad.org

Indoor Tanning Association: www.theita.com