

COMPANY PROFILE

Affordable spa treatments

By Erica Sagon

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Lisa Vukonich and Erin Owens were fed up with working in corporate America when they quit their jobs to try to earn a living helping another group of frustrated women — those who were tired of paying too much for spa treatments.

The duo, who were once co-workers at University of Phoenix, are getting ready to open Fuchsia Spa, a monthly membership-based concept that sells massages, facials and other beauty treatments.

Fuchsia opens this week in Village Square at Dana Park, an upscale shopping center in Mesa. The owners hope to hook customers with beauty treatments that are cheaper and an atmosphere that is more playful than traditional day spas.

Vukonich said Fuchsia is quirky and affordable, a combination that she and Owens couldn't find when they were researching spa franchises more than a year ago.

Both had tired of their jobs; Vukonich was an enrollment manager, leading the recruiting for the master of art and education program at the University of Phoenix.

Owens was director of the continuing education department.

At their spa, customers can watch episodes of *Sex in the City* on a flat-screen TV in the lobby while they wait, choose the music that plays during their treatments and get complimentary touchups to makeup after massages and facials. A boutique in the lobby will sell well-known beauty products.

Customers pay a monthly membership fee of \$59, which includes a facial or massage, plus discounts on additional



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Erin Owens (left) and Lisa Vukonich are getting ready to open Fuchsia Spa, a monthly membership-based concept that sells massages, facials and other beauty treatments.

facials and massages that month, or other services, including hair removal, chemical peels and microdermabrasion. Non-members pay \$75 per treatment. First-timers can try a facial or massage for \$39. The spa targets women who are 30 to 55 years old, Vukonich said.

Vukonich spoke recently with *The Arizona Republic* about starting a spa for the everyday gal.

Question: Are there really a lot of women out there who want massages and facials every month?

Answer: Basically, we're in an area, with lots of busy women who would love a little bit of pampering or indulgence every single month, but yet they don't want to spend the \$75 to \$150 a month to get it.

Q: What type of image are you trying to convey with Fuchsia's decor, which is

Fuchsia Spa

Business: Monthly membership spa selling facials, massages and other beauty treatments.

Location: Mesa, with another store slated for Chandler.

Owners: Lisa Vukonich and Erin Owens.

Employees: About 10.

bright pink and chocolate brown?

A: We really want to set ourselves apart from the traditional tranquil spa environment. Typically, you have to get dressed up to go to the spa to get a facial. At Fuchsia, it's about coming as you are. We really just want people to feel comfortable. The staff is going to be non-pretentious.

Q: You're putting iPods in

each of the treatment rooms so that customers can pick tunes to listen to while they get massages and facials. What made you decide to do this?

A: We sampled all kinds of spa services as part of our research. What we found is that every time we'd go into one of these spas, they all had that healing sort of music.

When you meet with your therapist for the first time, we'll going to find out what kind of music you like, and then we'll get the iPod set up for you.

Q: What's in Fuchsia's future?

A: Our goal is, within a year, to be able to start selling Fuchsia franchises. We also have our second location in the works. We're still negotiating (a lease) at this point, so it's not final, but we plan on bringing Fuchsia to Chandler.