

HOT FLASH
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We're Hiring!
DIRECT SALES A BRIGHT SPOT IN A DIM ECONOMY

Sugar Grove, IL, April 3, 2009 – Layoffs looming. Pay cuts pending. The anxiety of it all has many Americans contemplating career Plan B – a job in direct sales.

Truth be told, at-home sales may be the bright spot in today's dim economy. Labeled "recession resistant," by the Direct Selling Association (DSA), direct sales grew 4.5 per cent on average during recessionary times from 1987 to 2007. First, there's an increase in the number of people selling through direct sales, then there's a surge in sales overall, according to Amy Robinson, vice president of communications and media relations for the DSA in Washington, D.C.

"In this economy, I'm finding many more people interested in hearing about my company's income opportunity," confirms Mary Johnson, a North Carolina-based consultant for Votre Vu, a new luxury French skin care line sold via direct sales. "People want to hear about ways to supplement income from their full-time job or provide a second income. And many who wouldn't have looked at direct sales in the past are taking a second look."

No doubt, with unemployment hovering at just over 8 percent as of February 2009, the labor field is ripe for the picking. "When Great Indoors was closing down, I was there handing out my business card left and right," states Votre Vu consultant Judy Rollins of Arlington Heights, IL. "It's a job opportunity – and no one's going to fire you. If you don't share the news, you're just being selfish."

Today's novel proclamation that "we're hiring" has a welcome ring ... and must be reaching the ears of the want-to-be employed. "Each month, we add about 10 percent to Votre Vu's national sales force; it's a rapidly growing team," states Ann Brodette, Vice President of Sales Development for Votre Vu, which boldly launched in January 2009 despite the timid economy. "We've no doubt this perpetual growth is just the beginning."

Brodette credits the stable growth in part to Votre Vu's low start-up cost of only \$99, which provides a new consultant with more than \$250 worth of products with which to start selling. "Moreover," adds Brodette, "Votre Vu offers supportive on-line training, personalized web sites, and convenient online shopping – so consultants can have their Votre Vu business up and running the day they sign up."

Couple this start-up ease with offering the right product mix for the economic times – and Votre Vu may be cooking up a recipe for business success.

According to a March 2009 report by research firm NPD Group, Inc., of Port Washington, NY, prestige skin care was the only category among the prestige beauty industry that stayed afloat in 2008 -- capturing a 29 percent dollar share, an additional share point over 2007. Moreover, anti-aging face products, premium-priced face products, and natural/spa/wellness skin care brands showed strong dollar growth in 2008.

“Votre Vu is all that and more,” states Votre Vu CEO and Founder Harold Zimmerman, “Our French-made products are spa-quality, botanically based, and feature anti-aging benefits. But even better – we offer luxury products at less-than-luxury prices – meaning women don’t need to stress out about their skin care in a stressed economy.”

Historically speaking, this value market niche should bode well for Votre Vu. “During recessionary times, consumers choose differently,” states DSA’s Robinson, “selecting products that offer a little luxury yet don’t break the bank.”

Moreover, she adds that people are more likely to cocoon during recessions – a venue trend that bodes well for the direct selling industry’s at-home sales strategy. As an exaggerated case in point, Robinson cites the first quarter after 9/11, which marked record sales because people stayed home and looked for ways to reconnect.

“In this economy, people want an event -- a personal experience,” concurs Votre Vu consultant Traci Kuhn of Naperville, IL. “Like the company, our sales soirees are fun and chic. People come because it’s a social event; we don’t rush or pressure them into making a purchase. Instead, we promote they try before they buy – and people favor that approach. We know that once they’ve sampled our amazing products, they’ll recognize the value. In my opinion, now is the perfect time to sell Votre Vu.”

Formed in March 2007, Votre Vu is a privately held luxury skin care company offering the finest French-made formulations. Company headquarters are in Sugar Grove, Illinois, with all products crafted in a family-owned laboratory in France, except the beauty beverage, *SnapDragon*, which is manufactured in the U.S.

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