

Zerran celebrates 25 years of innovation

To the casual observer of the professional beauty industry, **Zerran International** seemingly burst onto the scene over the past few years with the release of **Zerran Reform**, its 100% vegan permanent hair straightening treatment, and this year, with the launch of **Zerran Reallisse**, its next-generation 100% vegan smoothing treatment. For salon owners intent on providing healthy services and who are focused on their stylists' and clients' personal well-being, it's a watershed moment that has propelled this manufacturer and marketer of healthy hair products to a leadership role in the professional beauty marketplace.

But what you might not know is that Zerran is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. Under the leadership of CEO/president **Steve Sauté**, the company is shifting its position from a supplier of backbar salon staples to that of an aggressive marketer. Once considered the professional beauty industry's "best kept secret," Zerran is blossoming rapidly with new vegan products in the pipeline, new distributors on board, an education program cranked into high gear and a marketing program firing on all cylinders, driving Zerran's message to salons and consumers around the world. **Beauty Industry Report (BIR)** recently caught up with **Steve** to learn what's next.

BIR: Hi, Steve. Please tell BIR's readers about your background and introduce your team.

Steve Sauté (SS): Thanks, Mike. I have worked in the cosmetic industry for more than 30 years, specializing in cosmetic product development, manufacturing and management. When I was asked to run Zerran, I recognized an opportunity to transform a successful hair care product into a great, innovative professional line that changes the way professional services are performed. By using cutting-edge technology and centuries old traditions, we create products that are

efficacious and safe that save the professional time and money. When we look at hair care, we look at it as part of the whole human system and environment, so we strive to develop the best products that address all of those elements.

As we rapidly expand our distribution both domestically and internationally, a talented management team with diverse experience in many fields outside of the cosmetics industry assists me. **Grant Samples** has joined us,



The Zerran Reallisse Kit

bringing his extensive experience in almost every aspect of sales, marketing and management, as director of distribution operations.

Cindy Van Steelandt, Zerran's marketing director, with more than 25 years of experience in education and health care, has fueled her passion as our spokesperson, leading initiatives for education and

communicating the benefits of Zerran's products. **Ann Massei**, communications director, brings 25 years of broad experience in marketing, advertising and public relations to drive Zerran's message to the world. **Neil Wachs**, our director of sales, brings a lifetime of experience in retail, sales and management in the cosmetic industry to increase our sales in California. Finally, **Debbie Lynn**, our director of education, brings her experience as a dynamic stylist, color specialist and educator to help develop new products and expand our educational program throughout our distribution network.

BIR: Where has that all led Zerran today?

SS: Zerran has been selling professional, botanically based, paraben-free, sulfate-free, vegan hair care products for salon professionals since 1986. We are delighted to be celebrating our 25th anniversary as a hair care company. In the past few years, with the introduction of our innovative vegan smoothing and

straightening systems, Zerran has developed products that propel the company into being a premier international marketer of healthy, efficacious professional salon products.

Our focus and commitment come from an idea that it is possible to marry cutting-edge science with centuries-old botanical traditions to produce products that are 100% vegan and healthy, while still delivering the performance that professional stylists demand. Applying a holistic approach to hair care benefits both our customers and the environment.

We are constantly working to develop new products that address the current and future needs of stylists and their clients. That development work requires a complete commitment from our entire team, and we spend extensive hours of lab time testing and guiding the development of new products. Our work has rewarded us with dozens of new products that may one day change the way we do hair or address scalp problems.

A healthy scalp and condition of the hair is the cornerstone to Zerran hair care. If you address the health of the scalp, you can help increase the beauty and condition of the hair. You can also benefit the condition of the hair and scalp through thoughtful products that



Zerran's Reform Kit includes a special flat iron that reaches and stays at 450°F.

assist a stylist in performing chemical processes with less irritating ingredients. A stylist should have tools that are safe to use and don't adversely affect the health of the client or the stylist.

BIR: Certainly, two primary outcomes of that strategy are the Zerran Reform straightening service and the Zerran Reallisse smoothing service. Please share how those are changing the game for salon professionals.

SS: Salon professionals know that offering cutting-edge services positions them in the community as leaders and trendsetters, and frankly, it's a valuable income generator. We want to help them provide those services—but we don't want them to do that at the expense

of their own health or that of their clients. When we saw new straightening and smoothing services gaining in popularity, we were horrified to learn that they produced toxic fumes and contained many other harmful ingredients—a fact that some of those companies were going out of their way to hide.

As the truth behind many of those treatments has been revealed by the media, stylists who are searching for a healthy alternative have discovered Zerran! We launched Reallisse, our 100% vegan smoothing treatment, at the **International Salon & Spa Expo** in Long Beach, CA, and stylists came seeking our education. We're seeing two groups of stylists—those who have been offering the traditional services but are concerned about the impact on their health and those who have opted not to offer any smoothing services until now, when they discovered our safe alternative. We're making a significant difference to the health—and income—of both groups of stylists.

As the world's first 100% vegan semi-permanent hair smoothing system, Reallisse is a patent-protected product formulated minus keratin or other animal products. It contains absolutely no formaldehyde, aldehydes, thioglycolates, sodium hydroxide, guanidine hydroxide, methylene glycol, formol, formalin, ethers or any other substance that produces formaldehyde gas upon heating with a flat iron. This professional, in-salon service takes about 90 minutes to complete on average.

Reallisse is not a replacement for Brazilian keratin treatments. Rather, it's an alternative for stylists and clients who want a service that's completely free of chemicals. And, it provides a very different outcome. Traditional keratin treatments leave the hair smooth but coated with the chemicals—chemicals that are released every time heat is applied in the shower or with the blow dryer or styling iron. Reallisse reduces the volume, but because it does not coat the hair, it leaves every hair type—from fine and frizzy to coarse and curly—with softly reduced curls, no frizz and entirely natural body and movement.

What's really big news is that Reallisse is also the world's first hair smoothing system to pass dermatological testing with zero adverse results. Using the HRIP (human repeat insult

“Zerran marries cutting-edge science with centuries old botanical traditions to produce products that are 100% vegan and healthy, while delivering performance that stylists demand.”

patch) test, an independent FDA-registered and California-certified lab tested the Reallisse Catalyst on 50 subjects and found no negative skin reaction on any subject.

BIR: That sounds like a second home run, following your launch of Reform.

SS: That's right, Mike. Our Zerran Reform Natural Hair Straightening System challenged the way hair can be permanently straightened. What makes our patented non-toxic vegan system a game changer is simple—it's not a

relaxer. It does not contain keratin, formaldehyde or any other harsh chemicals; produces no objectionable odors and the results are permanent. What's more, the system is effective on all textures—even resistant hair—and is safe for use over color, highlights and perms. In fact, it's so gentle that just like with Reallisse, stylists do not need to wear gloves or a mask. Our approach is so different that we marketed it with a little humor, using our “Cranky Grandmother” campaign featuring the line, “*Not Your Brazilian Grandmother's Keratin Treatment.*”

BIR: Tell me about Zerran's education.

SS: Zerran is very much an education-driven company. That is critical to our success—and our customers'—particularly when we're launching such revolutionary products. We continue to increase our education at all levels—at shows, in salons and online—to support the launch of Reallisse. It's a different world these days, and we are intent on keeping up with the times to communicate via traditional and social media, from print and electronic media, to direct mail to social media, including Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

BIR: Tell me more about that important link you make between health and beauty.

SS: At Zerran, beauty and health are linked at the core. We love to innovate, and we love to make products as healthy as possible. We are an FDA-certified manufacturer, so we can manufacture products like dandruff shampoos, sunscreen and OTC drugs. As a result, we are always prepared for FDA inspections and comply with all good manufacturing practices.

BIR: What's next?

SS: We have a fantastic innovation pipeline. Our creative team is in overdrive to address many challenges in terms of personal care, with an eye toward solving them in as healthy a way—both for the hair, as well as the stylist and client—as possible.

BIR: Anything else you'd like to add?

SS: We love challenges and are ready to take on the world! This is an exciting time, and we are driven to expand our reach, to introduce our innovations to the world and to influence healthy, whole body living.

For distribution opportunities, contact **Grant Samples** at grants@zerranhaircare.com, and visit www.zerran.com.