

## Our Town America Pledges to Help Hair Salons Stay a Cut Above in 2013

### *Nation's Leading New Mover Marketing Company Puts a Premium on Sparking Long Term Customer Relationships Through Loyalty Programs*

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UNITED STATES, Feb. 4, 2013 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- via PRWEB - Even in the recession resistant hair care industry, a rapidly changing economic environment has many salon & barbershop owners searching for answers. They've tried every marketing tactic in the book & still can't find a way to separate their salon from the competition.

That's not the case for Milwaukee-based Sport Clips owner, Wally Sauthoff, & Tampa-based boutique salon owner, Geo Sweeney, & hundreds of other salon owners around the country who benefited from Our Town America's unique new mover marketing program in 2012. As Wally & Geo suggest below, Our Town America works particularly well for hair salons because their warm gift certificate packages reach men & women within days of their move, right when they are seeking their new go-to hair care partner.

In order to build off that success, Michael Plummer & the Our Town America team have announced that they are offering a stronger loyalty program to their sponsors in 2013 that will send additional offers to new movers who redeem their first gift certificate. As Plummer suggests, this loyalty program will work particularly well for hair salon owners who must make a consistent impression on clients who demand the perfect haircut each & every time.

"While the hair care industry is recession resistant, it is also fiercely competitive & salon owners face local markets that seemingly get more crowded each day," says Michael Plummer, CEO of Our Town America. "Executing a category exclusive new mover program that is supplemented by a powerful loyalty program is one of the few ways these owners can secure a significant competitive advantage over other hair care companies in their area."

"All new movers, regardless of sex, are seeking their new hair care partner & they need an answer fast," says Plummer. "Reaching them first with an aggressive offer in a warm welcoming package is the best way to make a strong first impression that gets customers in the door. Following that up with offers rewarding them for their first visit, & delivering quality haircuts & customer service, is what inspires long term loyalty."

Recent research found in Epsilon's recent New Mover Report 2012 helps draw a similar conclusion -- direct marketing is highly valued by new movers. The report, which reached just under 1,000 movers & non-movers nationwide revealed the following information that supports that conclusion:

More than 53 million people move each year. Most movers are younger people moving great distances who have little knowledge of the local businesses that can provide the products/services they need.

Contrary to popular belief, direct marketing, specifically new mover marketing, is highly valued by Gen Y millennials.

The number of people moving has increased steadily since 2009, but new home sales from 2011 suggest an 80% in the past seven years. This means the pool of renters has increased substantially & people move more often.

"While these numbers can, & do, apply to any industry, it is especially important for hair care companies who must reach & impact new movers to remain profitable," says Marilyn Imparato, Our Town America's Director of Sales & Marketing. "To generate the biggest bang for their buck, it is imperative for hair care companies to understand how to reach out to today's new mover in order to make a strong impression. Simply sending a casual coupon won't make them feel special -- they must be willing to make a good will gesture that makes a big statement illustrating that they sincerely want to welcome them to the community & would like to have them as a long-term, loyal customer."

Milwaukee-based Wally Sauthoff, profiled above, agrees that nothing says "welcome to the neighborhood" like a free haircut.

"We have a unique business model at Sport Clips in that we focus exclusively on the male consumer," says Sauthoff. "However, too few potential customers understand that we deliver a unique, old-school barber shop experience & an MVP experience well worth a few extra bucks. The Our Town America package has allowed us to deliver that message to men along with a free haircut as soon as they come to town when they are actively seeking a new hair care partner & it's made all the difference."

The numbers back him up. In the last three & a half years, Wally has realized an overall response rate of more than 8%. Similarly, Tampa-based Geo Sweeney, also profiled above, has thrived using Our Town America's program as his only marketing tool for the last fourteen years.

"My salon is located in a high end residential area where people are constantly moving in & out of nearby condos," says Sweeney. "Because of that consistent customer turnover, an effective new mover marketing program is critically important to my success. I have been with Our Town America for more than fourteen years & don't even have to pay attention to the specific monthly fee or ROI because the ROI has been consistently there. I know it's working because I see new faces bringing in the certificates each month who really appreciate the genuine offer & will come back for more appointments if we deliver a quality experience. What more could I ask for?"

Sauthoff & Sweeney aren't isolated examples either. According to Our Town America, hair care sponsors using their new mover program have seen response rates as high as 20% for a monthly investment that can be as low as \$50.

For More Information on Our Town America visit their website at <http://www.ourtownamerica.com>.

About Our Town America: For 40 years, Our Town America has been providing new movers with traditional hospitality by mailing warm gifts from neighborhood businesses in a premium gift certificate package. Since the company started franchising in 2005, Our Town America has consistently been placed in the Franchise Top 50, ranking #8 in 2010 for franchisee satisfaction.

One of the catalysts for this success has been Our Town America's dedication to the "sponsor exclusivity" concept, meaning they will only recommend one of each business type in any specific zip code. Additionally, Our Town America allows businesses to focus only on the zip codes they'd like to reach, whether that is as small as one or as large as the entire country.

Due in large part to Our Town America's devotion to those concepts, thousands of satisfied business owners throughout the United States attest to the success & effectiveness of the program. Additionally, dozens of locally owned franchises validate Our Town America's concept as a viable business opportunity.

It is Our Town America's mission to assist new movers adjusting to their community, help businesses gain new & loyal customers & provide franchisees with an excellent opportunity. The eight million households who received Our Town America's welcoming envelopes over the last year prove that Our Town America is committed to following through on that mission statement.

For more information, visit the Our Town America website at <http://www.ourtownamerica.com>.

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