



Q&A with Vanessa Melman Yakobson, CEO of Blo Blow Dry Bar

Blo Blow Dry Bar, North America's original blow dry bar, celebrated its 10-year anniversary in June 2017. Over the past decade, Blo has grown from a mother-daughter venture in Vancouver, Canada to an international brand with over 85 locations in three countries. We spoke with Vanessa Melman Yakobson, CEO of Blo Blow Dry Bar, about the company's growth over the past 10 years.

Franchise Chatter (FC): How are you celebrating Blo's 10th birthday?

Vanessa Melman Yakobson (VMY): This is a big birthday, so we are going all out to celebrate and have our guests join in the festivities.

We hosted a scavenger hunt for free blow outs in 10 select locations across North America. We posted clues on our Instagram page to engage our loyal customers. All 10 prizes were found! We also held an Instagram contest to give away pairs of blow outs for best friends who participated.

Celebrations were documented using the hashtag #HappyBdayBlo (@bloheartstoyou) on Instagram and Twitter.

FC: What do you have to look forward to in your 10th year?

VMY: In its 10th year, Blo is experiencing unprecedented growth, with an additional 15 locations scheduled to open in 2017 and record sales of new units. We are excited to open new locations in existing cities, and also break into new markets. We've just opened two new locations in New York and Texas.

FC: Looking back, can you tell us more about how Blo started?

VMY: In 2007, a Canadian mother-daughter duo had the revolutionary idea to provide women with red carpet-quality hair at affordable prices. Three Blo locations were opened in Vancouver, and a new category of blow-dry only hair salons was born.

Soon after, Toronto entrepreneur, Ari Yakobson (my husband and business partner), and a group of investors acquired Blo. They combined their business expertise with this successful retail concept and re-launched Blo as a franchise system.

Several successful Canadian franchise locations in Toronto and Vancouver opened shortly thereafter, and in 2010 the first US-based franchise opened in San Francisco.

FC: When did you get involved with Blo, and what do you enjoy most about leading the Blo brand?

VMY: I was involved from the beginning as a founding partner, but moved into the role of CEO in 2016. As a customer, I was already addicted to getting weekly blow outs, so I immediately saw the appeal of this business model.

One initiative that I introduced that I love working on is Blo for a Cause. This is our system-wide fundraising initiative in support of Childhood Cancer Awareness Month every September. Each franchise location works to raise money for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in the United States and Sick Kids Foundation in Canada.

FC: To what do you attribute Blo's success over the past 10 years?

VMY: Blo is North America's original blow dry bar...we are the blow out experts and set the gold standard in the industry. We are also experts at franchising, with proven systems that have been refined over many years of being in business. Our branding is strong and recognizable.

What's more, all our locations are owned by franchisees who are passionate about their business and their community. Our guests love knowing that their Blo is operated by an owner who is dedicated to their business and the customers they serve.

FC: What are your goals for Blo in the next 10 years?

VMY: We hope to continue to expand by opening new locations and by gaining more recognition in the industry. We also just launched make-up service offerings in our bars, and are excited to see how this will grow the business.

We have franchising opportunities available and are always looking to partner with passionate entrepreneurs.

By Franchise Chatter on July 14, 2017

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