



## Events in the Industry, Benefits and Awards

Sep 1, 2008  
American Salon

### Neill Corporation Hosts Serious Business in New Orleans

For the eighth year, the Neill Corporation presented its Serious Business conference in New Orleans, hosting 1,200 attendees for a two-day program that featured experts in sustainable and progressive business practices. The highlight of the carbon-neutral event was the groundbreaking Hairdressers Unlocking Hope Benefit Hair Show, which raised almost \$82,000 for Hairdressers Unlocking Hope, an organization that builds homes for victims of Hurricane Katrina with Habitat for Humanity. During the show, seven world-renowned hairdressers—Antoinette Beenders, Vivienne Mackinder, Nick Arrojo, Van Council, Robert Lobetta, Christiaan and Tim Hartley—took the stage to pay homage to the legendary Vidal Sassoon, each creating a personal interpretation of one of his classic haircuts.



Keynote and breakout speakers included Saatchi & Saatchi's Judah Schiller; author and founder of Noise Marketing, Noah Kerner; consultant, entrepreneur and author Matt Mason; customer service authority John DiJulius; Arrojo; Heath Smith, co-founder of the Jackson Ruiz companies, which owns Jackson Ruiz SalonSpas; coaching, team-building and entrepreneurial training expert Wendy Watkins; sustainable business development specialist Mark Wuttker of the Wuttker Group; New York City-based Aveda salon owner Scott Buchanan; Creative Director of the Neill Corporation Michael Baker; executives from Modern Salon & Spa Group; and Jeanine O'Neill-Blackwell, partner and chief learning officer of management company Beauty Basics.



TOP LEFT: NEILL CORP. PRESIDENT AND CEO MICHAEL BAKER; TOP RIGHT: NEILL CORP. VICE PRESIDENT AND CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER JEFFREY WATKINS; MIDDLE LEFT: NEILL CORP. VICE PRESIDENT AND CHIEF MARKETING OFFICER JEFFREY WATKINS; MIDDLE RIGHT: NEILL CORP. VICE PRESIDENT AND CHIEF OPERATIONS OFFICER JEFFREY WATKINS; BOTTOM LEFT: NEILL CORP. VICE PRESIDENT AND CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER JEFFREY WATKINS; BOTTOM RIGHT: NEILL CORP. VICE PRESIDENT AND CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER JEFFREY WATKINS

Industry visionary Vidal Sassoon closed the event by recounting his rise to fame and the lessons he learned along the way, and by sharing his experience working with Hairdressers Unlocking Hope. —L.A.

### Freestyle Systems Lends a Helping Hand

ABC's *Extreme Makeover Home Edition*, with the help of Freestyle Systems, created a home salon for hairdresser/mom Renee Giunta. Giunta had been unable to work since her husband, Paul, was seriously injured in a car accident two years ago, but host Ty Pennington surprised her with a practice salon. The dedicated team from Freestyle Systems not only made calls to other manufacturers to help get the salon fully outfitted with products and furniture, but also spent five days (and some late nights) at the house to help with the installation of Freestylist Dryer Support System pull-down dryers and the company's latest innovation, SpectraLights. This episode was the world premiere of the

