

“I really think that Nobu will take a giant step this year in many markets!”

Nobu is set for success – Alain Elmaleh brings numerous new products to Europe

One year has passed since Alain Elmaleh, President of Bodispa wellness products, inc. / Kaytel media inc. presented his brand Nobu to the trade and industry, and right from the beginning, it was met with great interest. But that was merely the beginning because – as Alain explains in our interview - the collection has not only become a major international success, but it has also grown quite a bit, and today, it includes 40 products in different price ranges. Now, the Canadian company wants to present Nobu in all its multi-faceted glory to the European trade at the eroFame trade convention.

exclusive

In 2013, your company presented its products at eroFame for the first time – and with great success! This year, you're back in Hanover. Do you think you will be even more successful than last year?

Alain Elmaleh: Yes, I am sure that we will definitely be more successful than last year for many reasons. What will definitely help is the fact that we are now better known by retailers and distributors than last year since we've been exhibiting at every major trade show in Europe and the USA throughout the year, as well as advertising in every major magazine on a regular basis.

This year, we also gained some great exposure by winning an important XBIZ Award earlier this year and we even got triple nominated this past July at the Storerotica Awards. But the main reason why I think we'll be more successful this year is because we've now added some beautiful new products that are priced right, and the brand now consists of a total of 40 different items (all available in two colours) versus 14 items last year. This year

we've also launched a hugely successful line of flavoured edible massage oils and massage candles, each being offered in very attractive counter displays with testers.

It has been a year since the last eroFame trade convention, and it was an eventful and successful twelve months for you. Looking back, which were the highlights?

Alain Elmaleh: Our highlights were no doubt winning the much coveted XBIZ "Best New Pleasure Products Company of the Year" Award and being nominated for Storerotica's "Best Boutique Brand of the Year" Award, "Best New Design" Award for the Swani, and also the nomination for "Best Foreign Distributor of the Year" Award. Other highlights included also the signing of some of the largest distributors in the industry, both in America and Europe.

Among other things, you presented your new Nobu line at eroFame 2013, and Nobu will be back in Hanover this year – however, the collection has grown considerably in the meantime. What can you tell us about the development of the Nobu line?

Alain Elmaleh: This year we wanted to make the line accessible to a larger clientele by broadening the price range. At the beginning the first 14 items were all priced at \$100 and more, because it was





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Alain Elmaleh is looking forward to presenting
 his new Nobu products to the European market

important for us to establish Nobu as being a higher end line, but now we have added some pretty amazing affordable items ranging in size and functionality, and I can say now that the price range is now from \$29 to \$140. Therefore we can now really say that we have something for everyone, and we hope that once people taste the Nobu experience with the lower priced items, they will be tempted to try some of the more sophisticated and elaborate items that are priced higher.

How many products does the collection comprise at the moment, and which ones are your personal highlights?

Alain Elmaleh: The line comprises of 40 carefully picked items, and we are hoping to increase the selection to 60 items by the end of 2015. My personal delights are the new Nobu Minis, scheduled to be released for the first time during eroFame (they will be

available through Tonga first.) I also like the Sumo and the Nora, because of their exquisite design, impeccable quality and also the amazing power of their vibrating bullets inside. I have a fiancée who loves toys, so it's a great advantage for me, because I get to know first hand which items work great and should be part of the Nobu range, and which items are not so great and therefore shouldn't be part of Nobu!

Nobu stands for great quality at a great price. Is the price-quality ratio what makes these products so successful?

Alain Elmaleh: Well, among other things yes, but I also like to think that what makes Nobu successful is the fact that every Nobu that we offer has something unique, either new technology, bold design, elegant simplicity, more power, etc... But of course I also agree with you that the price quality ratio has been a very important factor

in Nobu's rapid success. In fact, before putting out any new product we do a full analysis on comparable products on the market, and we make sure that we always offer a bit more than competing products, for a better retail price. For example we will offer more features, more performance, more power, better packaging, etc... anything that will give Nobu an edge over competing products in the same category.

For a while, the market was dominated by products with flashy design, then everybody seemed to turn to expensive luxury toys, and now, the latest trend seems to be to combine erotic products and modern technology. How do you feel about that development, and using those trends as corner marks, where on this axis would you position Nobu?

Alain Elmaleh: Well, if you look back at the beginning of Nobu two



The headquarters of Bodispa and Kaytel Media in Saint-Laurent, Canada

years ago, it is exactly the direction that we took, right from the start. If you recall when we first met, I had shown you some of the Nobu products that combined exclusive technology never seen before on the adult toy market, with beautiful ergonomic designs combined with elegant, simplistic yet sophisticated packaging. So this is not new to us! In fact, when we introduce a new Nobu product on the market, it must have something special, either special technology such as temperature sensor system or voice activated or led lighted shaft, or its shape or size must be special, or its features. This is what we thrive on. Not just launch items to clog retailers shelves!

Nobu includes vibrators, lubricants, massage oils, and massage candles. Do you want to turn Nobu into a product range that covers all the facets of the market?

Alain Elmaleh: That's right. We know now that we have something good in our hand with the Nobu brand. People clearly showed us that they like what they see so far! Our goal now is to turn Nobu into a sexual lifestyle brand, which will always stand between the mainstream and the adult market.

Which new products from the Nobu line will we see at eroFame?



Alain Elmaleh: We will officially launch our new Nobu Mini (5 new items) and Nobu Sorbè (10 new items), as well as our three new kits and also all our new marketing tools such the mini counter displays, the led lighted, rotating shelves counter displays, or our full line of floor displays. We will also present our new 2014 - 2015 Nobu catalog.

As far as your other brand, Bodispa, is concerned, your goal was to cater to the adult market, but also to channels of distribution outside the erotic realm. Have you succeeded?

Alain Elmaleh: Yes indeed, we are now in seven countries and just signed a deal with two chains of drugstores in Canada, totalling 450 retail outlets. Next will be Shopping channels on TV, both in USA and Canada, and hopefully one major chain of 1000 drugstores, that we've been working on for over a year now!

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Why is Bodispa the right collection for the mainstream market, and why isn't Nobu?

Alain Elmaleh: Because Bodispa is the more mainstream brand, selling items that are completely non-sexual such as the neck massager, the head massage kit, the hot and cold massager for the whole body, etc. while Nobu has a more sexual wellness approach, selling only items that can be used in a sexual way, no ambiguity there!

Are you also planning to bring Bodispa to eroFame? If so, would you mind giving us some information about the products we can expect? What makes them stand out from the competition?

Alain Elmaleh: We might concentrate only on Nobu this year because there is so much happening right now with Nobu! Maybe next year we will do the

contrary if its Bodispa that has more to show the world! But in any case, rest assured that we are heavily promoting Bodispa as well, having participated in no less than seven mainstream wellness shows this year alone!!

Please tell us more about your plans and your expectations regarding eroFame 2014?

Alain Elmaleh: We want to continue on the same path, show our product range to people from all over the world, find other distributors to cover areas where Nobu is not properly represented yet, and explain to potential customers the unique characteristics of all the new and exciting Nobu items that are being launched this year!

When will your new products be available to the European trade, and which distributors will offer them to the retailers?

Alain Elmaleh: Our new products will be ready to ship immediately after the eroFame show. Right now we have S&T Rubber distributing our products in Germany and other parts of Europe, we also just signed with Tonga to distribute the complete Nobu range, and then we have a few more distributors in the other European markets such as France, Spain, (Italy coming soon), and we hope to find distri-



The Nobu catalogue 2014 - 2015

butors to cover the Eastern European territory, as well as Russia, and other territories that we have yet to develop.

Are you happy with the presence of your company in Europe, or do you want to expand and strengthen the distribution network?

Alain Elmaleh: We are very happy of what

we've accomplished in Europe so far, but we still have a lot to do in Europe and I think this year will be the year when we make it happen. I really think that Nobu will take a giant step this year in many markets, and

we will really affirm our presence everywhere in Europe and other parts of the world!

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You are a Canadian company. Why is it that so many well-known brands and products in the sex toy market – We-Vibe, Swan, Fuze, Nobu, to name but a few – were all created in that country?

Alain Elmaleh: Well, what can I say! Here in Canada, we are not a lot of people, only 33 million for such a vast country almost as big as the USA! So we are in general very competitive because our market is so small in volume, and therefore in order to succeed we must be very creative, otherwise we cannot succeed in such a tight market. That's probably why so many great ideas come from here! If you want me to give you another unrelated example, in the music business for example. Take a look at who are among the most successful French singers in France lately, they almost all come from Quebec! Not from France! Same phenomenon! Smaller market here so the singers are more creative and try harder! But then again, maybe I'm wrong and maybe it's just pure coincidence that all these great brands emanate from Canada!

