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WOMEN@FORBES DEC 13, 2017 @ 03:18 PM 5,215

# Woman-Led 'Drybar For Botox' Chain Alchemy 43 Grows -- With Drybar Founders' Backing



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[FULL BIO](#)



*Nicci Levy at her Beverly Hills flagship.*

Nicci Levy had spent years working in sales for top makeup brands like MAC Cosmetics and CK Calvin Klein Beauty when she took a role as a representative for pharmaceuticals giant Allergan.

Her job? Selling facial fillers Botox and Juvederm and eyelash growth treatment Latisse to plastic surgeons and dermatologists. Her sales patch was Los Angeles' Beverly Hills, 90210 zip code: the highest-volume territory in the country for Botox.

Still, while fillers were keeping the lights on for many plastic surgeons and dermatologists at the time (it was 2009, during the recession), Levy didn't understand why Botox -- a quarterly treatment, so guaranteed repeat business for those doing the injecting -- was still something so often performed furtively in a dentist's office.

"There was nothing about it that felt like a beauty ritual," she said. "These treatments were treated like a total afterthought."

In 2010, Levy watched as fellow Los Angeles resident [Alli Webb launched and began growing Drybar](#), a chain of blowout-only salons. She took notice.

"They took something that was traditionally part of getting your hair cut and colored, and they made it its own thing," she said. "I felt like there was this obvious opportunity."

Fast forward to 2017, and Levy's company Alchemy 43 is slowly but surely growing into a Drybar-like business for Botox and fillers, with a Beverly Hills flagship open, two more L.A. leases signed and negotiations on the go for a fourth. In 2018, Levy aims to open her first east coast Alchemy 43 space in New York, with other cities -- Miami's on their radar, as is Dallas -- coming later.

Levy recently closed a seed extension round taking total investment to \$3.2 million, with backers including [Kirsten Green's venture capital firm Forerunner Ventures](#) and -- perhaps appropriately -- Drybar's Alli Webb and her brother and cofounder Michael Landau. (The Drybar duo are also acting as advisors as Alchemy 43 seeks to grow to 50 outposts in six years.)

The company differentiates itself from many traditional purveyors of facial fillers by offering customers a high-end experience driven, in part, by technology.

It feels very much like the "beauty lab" Levy bills it as: a physician's assistant, your

"alchemist," offers complimentary 3D imaging, showing on a large screen in a private room what your face could look like after a boost from Botox, Dysport, or any of the other fillers on offer.

Alchemy 43, like Drybar, offers a membership program to encourage loyalty and frequency. Its \$99 monthly subscription has proved a big hit with a younger clientele.

In fact, among Levy's learnings from her first year or so in business: half of her clients are under the age of 35. (In August, the [CEO of Botox parent company Allergan noted](#) that use of the filler among millennials, or the "selfie generation," is "growing quickly.")

Levy said that some of her millennial and Generation Z clientele seem to have been inspired to try out her services by reality stars and Instagram models who appear to use fillers.

"Kylie Jenner has had a big influence on lip augmentation, but people are interested in natural-looking lips as well," Levy said.

"The great part about the younger demo: they don't spend as much per visit, but they're great about maintenance," she said. "We're their first place. They're listening to our guidance on this. Their lifetime value is incredible."

The average spend per visit at Alchemy 43 is \$482 -- far more than the average cost of 20 units of Botox in major metropolitan areas. At present, Levy has no plans to introduce any treatments more invasive than injectibles.

"Everything in our core offering is repetitive and medically effective, as well as minimally-invasive," she said. "You don't need a weekend to recover from anything."

Alchemy 43 recently started selling on-trend treatments like [micro-penning](#) and [dermaplaning](#). Next up: an in-house line of beauty products.

Said Levy: "It'll be like [GlamGlow](#) meets [Glossier](#) with a dose of something you've never seen before."

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