

A close-up photograph of a woman's face, focusing on her eyes and hand. She has long, dark hair and is looking slightly to the right. Her hand is raised to her chin, with her fingers resting against her skin. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

HOW TO START A BEAUTY OR AESTHETICS BUSINESS FROM HOME

LASERAID

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Introduction

Establishing a clinic from home can be an incredibly rewarding experience, both financially and personally. An at home clinic has the potential to offer a level of personalised service that traditional clinics and salons cannot hope to match.

However, there are a number of well documented potential pitfalls that new operators should be aware of. This ebook will give you tips on how to avoid them, while capitalising on the unique advantages of a home-based business.

This book is separated into a number of different sections. Each section is designed to be read on its own if needs be, so feel free to jump to the chapter that is most relevant to you.



Your Space

Perhaps the most important prerequisite for considering the at-home model is determining whether you have suitable space. While numerous clinics have managed to “break the rules” when establishing successful clinics, they have usually done so because of a very established client base, or by force of their reputation.

Here are the elements we consider to be vital in your new clinic:

1. An Entrance

A standalone entrance is important for a number of reasons including health and safety, privacy and client comfort. Most importantly perhaps, an entrance demonstrates that you are a serious business, dedicated to your craft – not someone who bought a machine and put it in the spare room.

When evaluating your entrance and layout, enter the area as if you were the client and consider the impact of everything in their field of view. Can they see a living area in their peripheral vision? Is there a chance that members of your family may pass by? Also, remember to consider household odours such as the smells from cooking, which no one expects to experience in a clinic environment.

2. Amenities

Obviously, the comfort of your client is paramount. Do they have access to a bathroom

(again, taking into account standard household movements?) Do you have a sink in your clinic, with access to running water?

You will also need to take into account the electrical requirements for commercial devices. Standard household plugs will usually not be enough, so speak to your supplier and an electrician before proceeding.

3. A Waiting Area

Although a waiting area is not mandatory, if you do not have one then your appointment setting system will need to be set up to avoid client overlap. If you can, a small seated space with ambient music can set a client at ease.

4. Security

This is especially important in older homes. If you are going to establish yourself as a laser hair removal technician, then expensive equipment will need to reside in your clinic. Consider the locks on your windows and doors, and think about installing a security system. After all, you will be promoting your business in the local community and through that telling everyone that you have a very expensive device in your home.

5. The Environment

Just because you have the space to start a clinic in your home doesn't mean that you should. Pass a critical eye over your potential clinic and consider whether your efforts, reputation and skill set are going to be complemented by the space, or if you will need to work harder because it's not quite right. If the latter is true, then it may be wiseto think about a more traditional premises.

Equipment

You have your space, the walls are painted, the amenities installed and the new logo sits proudly on your fancy new stationary. Now all you need is equipment. Here is a list of the main things you will need to have in your clinic:

A Treatment Bed

When choosing a bed, consider the following –
Size. Will the bed fit in your clinic without forcing the client to sneak around it?
Style. You will want something that fits with your decor.
Comfort. Obviously.
Practicality. Consider your treatment and the available settings on the bed, make sure that it gives you suitable access.

Air-Conditioning

Commercial aesthetic devices run hot and often require temperature to be controlled in the room. Many devices will stop working if the temperature increases above a certain level. A quality air-conditioner is also crucial for the comfort of your clients.

Consumables

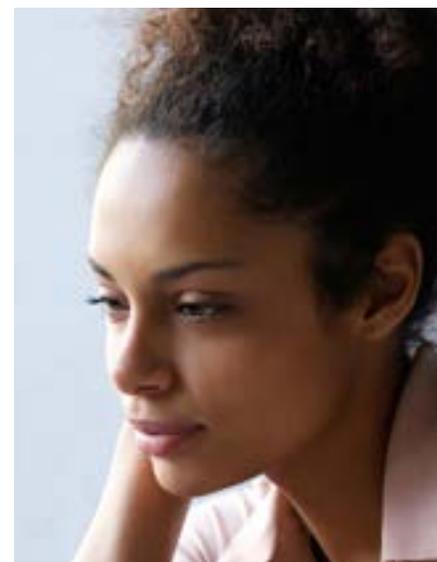
You will need to have a stock of all your required consumables. Think about sheets, gloves, cleaning equipment, device fittings, protective glasses... Plan your consumable levels based on your busiest possible day and your worst-case scenario. Running out of the basics is never a good look.

The Device

The clinical equipment you use is of crucial importance, now more so than ever. Clients are more educated than they used to be and as a result will often ask about the brand or even model of your equipment. Many clinics now advertise their devices as a unique selling proposition, attracting customers that are loyal to that type of equipment. Fortunately, your purchase options are far from limited. Laseraid offers rental options tailor-made for at-home clinics, designed to fit into your business plan – visit our website for more information.



Your Business Plan



Most business plans are created in a surge of creativity and thrown into a top drawer never to be seen again. The best way to avoid this is to make your plan simple and easy to remember. There should be steps and benchmarks and most importantly, you should know exactly the stage at which your business is at. There are a few critical elements should consider:

Finances

If you are not financially minded, a good accountant can not only assist you with your finances, but also help you with setting up your business as a legal entity. But you don't need to have a complicated system to track your day-to-day transactions, just a bit of discipline and an Excel spreadsheet. Use a simple bookkeeping spreadsheet (easily available online) to keep track of your incomings and outgoings and to set financial targets.

Marketing

A good marketing plan is easy to implement and simple to measure. To start off with, focus on your local area and make sure people are aware of you. Facebook advertising is a powerful tool for cost-effective (in fact very cheap) localised marketing. We have a number of resources on our website to assist you with promoting your clinic – just go to our blog and then click on 'marketing.'

Growth Benchmarks

This section should lay out your vision for the business and what you will do when certain things happen. For example, you may wish to grow from being an at-home clinic to a commercial premises; when will this happen? What financial benchmarks need to be hit before this is viable? What will your commercial clinic look like? How many rooms? What types of treatments?

Or perhaps you wish to maintain the business as it is, but are keen to hire someone to take care of the administrative side. When will this happen?

Most importantly, how do you define success, and how will you reward yourself when you reach it?

Day-to-Day

It's important to have a strategy in place for running your clinic on a day-to-day basis.

This series of systems will dictate your client's experience and determine what they can expect when they enter your business.

Appointment Setting

While there are numerous competitors in the "clinic software" sector, there is no need to incur the cost, at least not at the beginning. A simple spreadsheet will easily suffice and when combined with your financial spreadsheet, a complete record of clients and treatments, along with finances is the result.

When creating your appointment setting spreadsheet, remember to allow for lunch breaks and enough time between treatments to clean surfaces effectively and avoid unnecessary waiting for clients, should there be a delay.

Appointment Confirmations

Confirming appointments for the following day is a simple cost saver that makes a big difference to the finances of smaller clinics. A

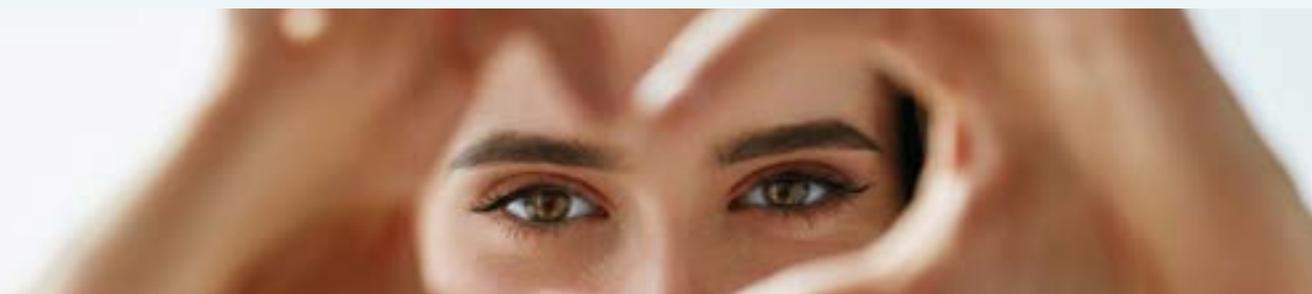
quick phone call or text message, using your appointment spreadsheet as a reference, will make you aware of any potential gaps in the following day. There is nothing more frustrating than turning down a client because you didn't have availability, only to have a client cancel afterwards.

Cleaning Protocols

This is especially important in the current climate. Define clearly what you will do after every treatment to ensure the cleanliness and hygiene of your clinic. It may also be a good idea to share this information with clients in the form of a small poster in your waiting area.

Payment

Receiving payment quickly and easily is crucial for any clinic. Make sure you have adequate change for cash (a daily float is best practice) and that your EFTPOS device is charged and available. Anyone who leaves without paying due to a card machine not working, regardless of their intentions, is a significant potential loss to you financially.



Growing Your Client List

Advertising, marketing and promotion deserve their own separate e-book, however in the interests of keeping things simple, here are a few basic tactics you can use immediately:

1. Referrals

Setting up a referral program is the simplest way for a clinic (especially one that is focused on the local community) to grow its client base. This is especially powerful if you are active in the local community – children at the local school, attending a local club etc. People will often ask what you do for a living, and a business card with a referral discount is a simple way to turn a polite question into a new client.

Successful referrals may include offering discounted or free treatments to the referrer, free products or something entirely separate to your business, such as movie tickets or a bottle of wine.

2. Digital marketing

Facebook advertising is the most user-friendly, cost-effective and easily targeted digital platform available. If you have an interest in this area, Google advertising is a powerful platform, but requires the investment of time, both in training and management.

Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Pinterest are free and offer the potential of significant organic growth.

If you are a writer, blogging about various treatments and seasonal products is a great way to grow your profile and get more people visiting your website.

3. Local Sponsorship

As you are targeting the local community, why not get involved with a local charity, school or sports club? This may be as simple as offering a treatment as a prize in a raffle or putting a sign up in exchange for a donation at the school fête.

Regardless of where you choose to focus your marketing efforts, be realistic about the time you have available to invest and your own expertise. Consider whether you should hire an expert (sometimes just chatting with a few will give you some ideas) and build the cost of marketing into your budget.



Good Luck!

Building a successful at-home clinic requires energy and enthusiasm, but also effective planning. Getting the major things right from the beginning is important because people's initial impression of you will dictate how they communicate your clinic to their friends and family. Your reputation in the local area has the potential to make or break your new business venture. Taking the time to make sure you have the right systems in place can mean your pathway to success is much smoother, and your client's experience surpasses their expectations.

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