

THE 7 STEP GUIDE TO UNTANGLING YOUR SALON

How to Smooth Out the Knots
in Your Guest Experience



Nobody likes tangled hair. Messy, knotted-up hair looks unattractive, gives the impression that you don't take care of yourself, and is painful to fix.

Well, the same goes for your salon.

When your salon operations are tangled, it leads to a poor guest experience—a bottlenecked front desk, appointments that take three back-and-forth phone calls to book, not stocking the products they want to buy, and so on. Clients will get the impression that you don't care about their time or satisfaction and take their business elsewhere.

Although it may hurt at first, smoothing out those knots is the key to making your salon easier to manage, setting your staff up for success, and keeping your clients (and the revenue they bring) coming back. And we want to help you do that.

In this guide, we'll go over the seven steps you need to take to untangle your salon operations and offer your guests a shiny, frizz-free beauty experience.

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STEP 01

TRACK YOUR PERFORMANCE

Your past is an important part of your future. Just look at how far you've come! So it makes sense that before you can figure out how to untangle your knots, you need to take inventory of the detanglers that have and haven't worked along the way. You also need to stay on top of what is and isn't working now.

Why is it so important to track your salon's performance? Because when you know where the knots are in your business, you can use the strategies that have been successful for you to smooth them out.

Let's take a look at the best places to start for identifying those successful strategies.

MONITOR YOUR CASH FLOW TRENDS

We know that beauty is your passion, but those pesky financial numbers are crucial to your success. Keep your eye on cash flow with a high-level point-of-view and look at historical trends to pick up any patterns.

Pay attention to when and where you have money coming in and going out daily, weekly, monthly, and quarterly. This will help you better understand where you're spending money, how much money you actually have, and how much is still tied up in unused gift cards, inventory, and stock.

With this understanding of your money in and out, you can make better decisions when it comes to managing your cash flow—ensuring your salon comes up positive at the end of the year.

As you work through the rest of the steps in this guide, keep your eye on cash flow and stay open to better ways to monitor your financials.



#PROTIP:

Make it easier to collect payments and avoid leaving cash in accounts receivable by offering flexible payment options for your clients. Being able to do things like store client cards on file and take payments in person, online, and over the phone will make sure more cash makes it into your till.

GET REGULAR PERFORMANCE METRICS REPORTS

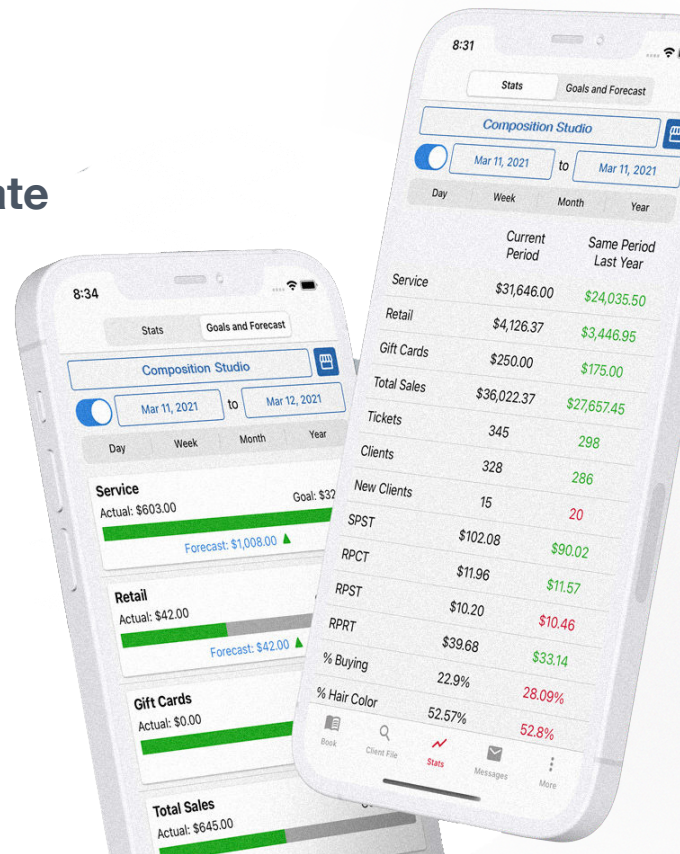
How is your performance as a salon? Are your books always full? Are retail sales falling flat? Do your clients keep coming back or ghost you after one appointment?

The answers to questions like these will shed light on how tangled or untangled your salon really is. Dig deep into key performance metrics to see what's working and what areas need combing out. Here are some of the top metrics to have eyes on:

- ✓ **Revenue**
- ✓ **New client appointments**
- ✓ **Returning client appointments**
- ✓ **Retail sales (total and per client)**
- ✓ **Revenue per service**
- ✓ **Staff member rebooking rate**

The best way to stay on top of these key metrics is to run regular reports on salon performance. Using a salon management software with reporting built in can make this easy.

As you're running and analyzing your salon's reports, take note of systems that aren't reliable or processes where you could do better, and don't shy away from these challenges. Leaning into the work of making thoughtful, continuous improvements across your systems and processes is how you tap into expansive growth.





SET SALON AND STYLIST GOALS

Having specific goals to work toward will keep you and your stylists motivated to work hard. When deciding on your goals, start by analyzing past salon performance so that you can create realistic but ambitious goals. If you can find a pattern of growth, set benchmarks that will encourage you to exceed those past marks.

Of course, looking at these benchmarks on a salon-wide scale is essential, but don't forget about individual employee goals too. When stylists have individual goals to work toward, they'll be more motivated, be able to better prioritize and time manage, and have better job satisfaction as they meet these goals.

BUILD PERFORMANCE TRACKING INTO YOUR ROUTINE

After you've gone through all this work to track your salon's performance, don't just do it once and forget about it. Add a calendar event, make a recurring task in your to-do list, or do whatever you have to do to check in with your key metrics throughout the year.

Make a plan that includes revisiting the notes you took during these steps to analyze how you're performing on them. Whether monthly or quarterly, figure out what check-in schedule works for you.

By consistently analyzing your benchmarks, you keep your goals in focus.

“THIS INDUSTRY HAS ALWAYS BEEN A LEADER, A PLACE WHERE CREATIVITY FORCES EVOLUTION AND GROWTH.”

WILLIAM EDGE | WILLIAM EDGE SALONS



STEP 02

MASTER YOUR MARKETING STRATEGY

Once you start untangling your salon so you can offer the ultimate client experience, you'll need to have mastery over the marketing tools that help you connect with your guests. Because, after all, there's no point putting in the work if no one hears about it and your books stay empty.

Marketing is crucial to your salon's success, but it doesn't need to consume all your time or budget. That's right—**there are effective and affordable tools and strategies right at your fingertips** that can help you dive in and spread the word about what you have to offer.

KNOW YOUR “WHY”

Marketing your salon is all about telling people who you are and what makes you their go-to beauty destination. Before you can tell that story to your audience, you need to know it yourself. Where should you start? With your why.

What’s the “why” that drives what you do? Are you committed to being the poster salon for natural hair care? Do you want to become a household name where families can find affordable cuts? Is your goal to provide an oasis of self-care for your busy guests?

No “why” is wrong—it’s a reflection of the core missions and values that drive you. Finding this “why” is often one of the first steps of developing any business model, but it’s always good to revisit when you’re developing your marketing strategy.

Once you’ve nailed it down, think about how you can bring that “why” into every aspect of your salon experience. For example, if your “why” is to help every guest feel beautiful and unique, you could look into local partnerships with underserved communities or set up a program to donate hair for wigs.

Putting your “why” into action can give your team more purpose and help you build an authentic and inspiring brand. And considering 88% of consumers consider authenticity important when deciding which brands to support, creating and marketing an authentic brand will prove crucial to your success.



LEVERAGE EXISTING CLIENTS

Believe it or not, the most sustainable growth comes from the guests who are already in your chairs! Happy guests lead to happy referrals, and it's much easier to keep a guest than to find a new one—and five times cheaper.

Here are a few ways to shower attention on your loyal guests:



START A REWARDS PROGRAM.

Reward loyal guests for purchasing services and retail with points that translate to savings. Then they know that every time they get a haircut or buy their favorite shampoo from you, they're getting points they can use to save on future purchases.



OFFER REFERRAL BENEFITS.

Give happy guests an incentive to pass along your name with a great review. Whether it's more points for your rewards program or a free sample product, a referral program shows gratitude for the time they took to recommend your salon.



CROSS-MARKETING YOUR SERVICES.

You already know your returning guests love your services, so why not make sure they know about everything you offer? Cross-market to your existing guests about other services your salon offers with targeted emails or texts. For example, if you have a core group of guests who already come in for monthly color service, make sure they know about your new waxing services they can add on to their next color!



SALONBIZ UNTANGLED OUR MEMBERSHIPS. WE HAVE EASY ACCESS TO CLIENT INFORMATION SO OUR TEAM CAN QUICKLY SEARCH FOR POINT BALANCES, PRODUCT RECOMMENDATIONS, AND HISTORY. WE USE ALL OF THIS GREAT INFO TO WOW OUR GUESTS AND GIVE THEM A GREAT EXPERIENCE.”

SARRA PUTNAM | BEST BODY CO.

CRUSH YOUR OMNICHANNEL SALON MARKETING

Your guests want easier ways to keep in touch with your salon, set up appointments, and get their beauty needs met. Creating multiple coordinated touchpoints for your audience, such as engaging social media content and online appointment scheduling, will help give them a consistent and satisfying experience with your brand.

An omnichannel marketing strategy promotes your products and content across multiple different platforms, channels, and devices. This type of experience also needs to be seamless for your guests. Whether they're making an appointment on an app or buying a product at your front desk, it should be quick and easy to get the information and products they need.

At a minimum, here's what you need to have in place for coordinated omnichannel salon marketing:



WEBSITE

Create a beautiful and intuitive website that is easy to navigate on desktop and mobile. Your website should make it easy for guests to make appointments, learn about your services, and get valuable beauty-related content.



EMAIL

Did you know that email marketing has an ROI of \$36 for every \$1 you spend? Email is a great way to connect with guests about new services, check in on their recent salon experience, offer promotions, and more. Since successful email communication is all about making it personal for the subscriber, be sure to target and segment your list based on client activity and interests.



SOCIAL MEDIA

Stake out your space in the salon industry and stay in the front of your audience's mind with engaging social media content. Post content that will attract attention (such as before and after photos), inform (such as new services or business updates), and educate (such as beauty tips and trends).



TEXT MESSAGING

In a recent survey, 88% of people said that texting was the number one thing they use their phones for. Meet your audience where they are with personalized text alerts about upcoming appointments and salon specials.



#PROTIP:

With SalonBiz's marketing features, you can automate and target your marketing efforts to help you save time and reach more people. We make it easy to create automated email campaigns, send them to targeted lists, create referral programs, and more!

STEP 03

GIVE GUESTS WHAT THEY WANT

Loyal clients are the backbone of any salon. If you want to retain your guests—and go a step further to make them brand advocates—you need to be aware of and meet their growing demands. This is one of **the most important knots to untangle at your salon if you want it to grow and thrive**, not just survive.

For some salon owners, that means expanding their offerings to include

services that go hand-in-hand with hair, such as nails or facials. Others are embracing how easy (and popular) it is to go mobile by offering curbside product pickup.

Let's go over a few things you can do to keep up with your guests' wants and needs, so you can meet their demands.

STAY ON TOP OF SALON INDUSTRY TRENDS

As a creative salon, you likely discover new trends before they begin, but how can you incorporate these trends into your growth strategy? To start, don't hesitate to reach out to your product vendors about new retail items to sell and use to provide up-and-coming services.

For example, if you've been reading about a rise in demand for organic hair products or noticed more guests asking about them, ask your vendor about organic product lines. You could use them to boost retail sales and improve your services by offering guests the option to use organic products exclusively.

You should also look at consumer habits. For instance, your stylists probably already meet brides on the morning of their big day at their hotels and homes. Nowadays, it's not just brides who want this mobile, beyond-the-salon convenience—it's all your guests. Consider how your team can go beyond the brick and mortar to offer similar mobile services.

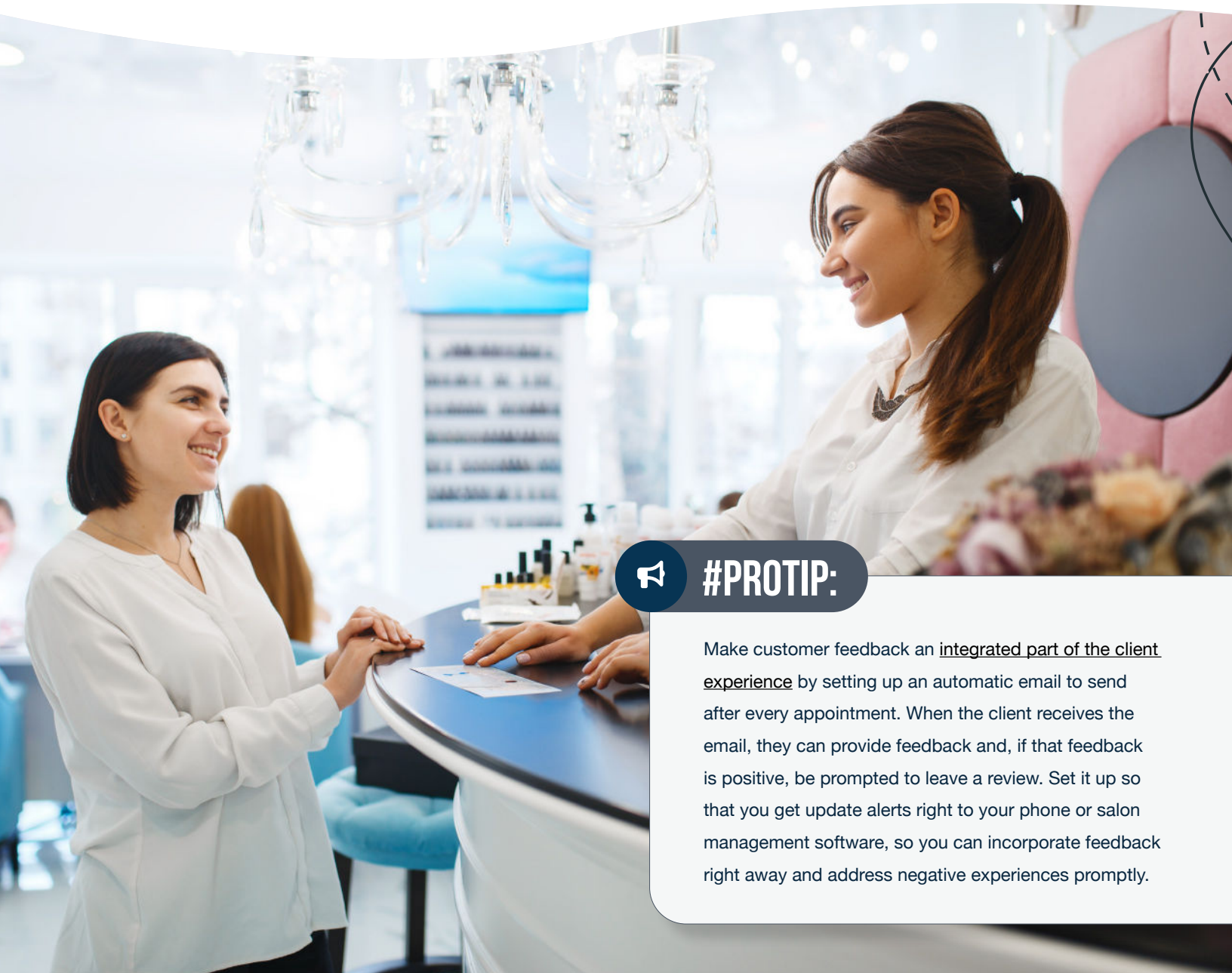
MORE TRENDY IDEAS FOR SALON GROWTH:

- ✓ **Specialized curly hair care**
- ✓ **Hair and lash extensions**
- ✓ **Dedicated skincare specialists**
- ✓ **Lash lift and tinting**
- ✓ **Brow microblading**
- ✓ **Waxing services**
- ✓ **At-home facial and skincare kits**
- ✓ **Mobile services**

COLLECT GUEST FEEDBACK

What better way to discover what your guests want than to ask them directly? Your salon should ask clients for feedback every time they come in. You can also ask for feedback from guests on your email list throughout the year.

After a client comes in for their appointment, send a follow-up email asking about their experience. If their review is anything less than a 9-10/10, prompt them to give more details. What was their experience missing? How can you improve your salon services? This is where you can collect valuable insights into what your customers want and what you're missing.



#PROTIP:

Make customer feedback an integrated part of the client experience by setting up an automatic email to send after every appointment. When the client receives the email, they can provide feedback and, if that feedback is positive, be prompted to leave a review. Set it up so that you get update alerts right to your phone or salon management software, so you can incorporate feedback right away and address negative experiences promptly.

STEP 04

BE SMART ABOUT RETAIL

The best salon experience is one that guests can bring home with them. By offering just the right products guests need to maintain their beauty routine when they leave the salon, you give them more value and cultivate a stronger relationship.

If you make elevated product choices that match your brand, strategically place those products throughout the

guest experience, and (again!) keep an eye on the numbers, **retail can be an explosive area for your salon's growth and revenue.**

Here are a few tips for untangling retail at your salon:

MAKE THE BEST USE OF YOUR SPACE TO PROMOTE RETAIL PRODUCTS

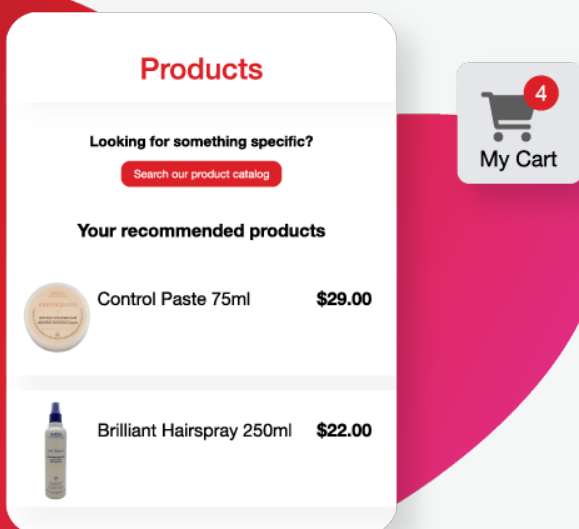
Every precious square foot of your salon is valuable space for bringing in revenue. Find unique ways to display and store your retail products without losing important real estate while also driving more sales.

Start by calculating how much space you'll need for the essential components of your salon, such as the reception desk, stylist chairs, shampoo bowls, and so on. Then, create a detailed plan of how you'll lay that out and fill in your remaining space.

MONITOR YOUR INVENTORY TO SEE WHAT'S SELLING

Your salon's inventory can give you a lot of insight into which of your retail products are continuously bringing in money and which are collecting dust on the shelves. If a product isn't selling, it's time to replace it.

Take note of your best sellers too. If you have a few products that are guest favorites, make sure they're front and center (or available in multiple areas).



You can easily stay up to date on inventory by automating the process through your salon software. That way, you can keep track of your counts, set up automatic reorders when stock hits a specific number, and keep eyes on your retail without even thinking about it.

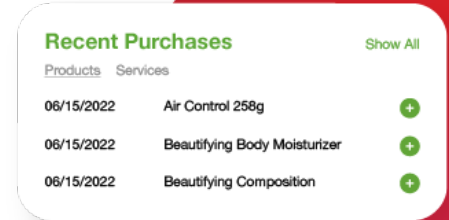
PERSONALIZE RETAIL RECOMMENDATIONS TO CLIENTS

By keeping track of what clients like and don't like, your stylists will know which products to recommend to them and be able to predict what new products they're most likely to be interested in.

Let's say, for instance, you have a regular guest who likes to dye her hair a new fashion color (e.g., pink, purple, blue) every few months. Last month, one of your vendors released a new line of hair care products specifically formulated for fashion-colored hair. The next time that client comes in, her stylist sees a note in her account that she prefers fashion colors and figures she'd probably be interested in the shampoo and conditioner from the new line.

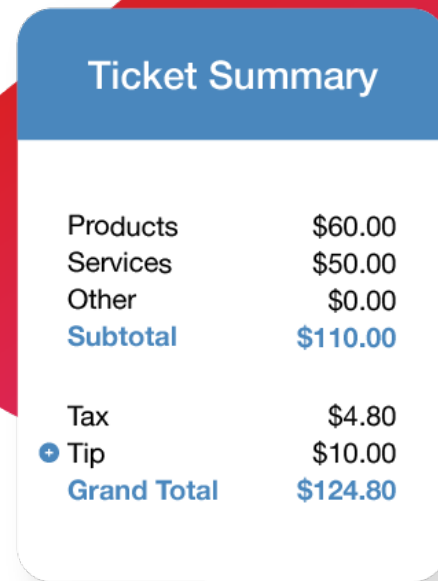
The stylist now knows to talk about the new products during the client's appointment and maybe even uses them on her, and boom—she buys them at checkout. Not only that, but the client is extra appreciative that her stylist knew she could benefit from those products and books her next root touch-up too.

Clients will notice when you personalize their retail recommendations and, as a result, be more likely to listen to them time and time again.



A UI mockup of a 'Recent Purchases' section. It features a title 'Recent Purchases' in green, a 'Show All' link, and two tabs: 'Products' (selected) and 'Services'. Below are three rows of purchase data, each with a date, a product name, and a green plus icon.

Recent Purchases		Show All
Products	Services	
06/15/2022	Air Control 258g	+
06/15/2022	Beautifying Body Moisturizer	+
06/15/2022	Beautifying Composition	+



A UI mockup of a 'Ticket Summary' section. It has a blue header with the title 'Ticket Summary'. Below is a list of items and their prices, with a plus icon next to the 'Tip' item.

Ticket Summary	
Products	\$60.00
Services	\$50.00
Other	\$0.00
Subtotal	\$110.00
Tax	\$4.80
+ Tip	\$10.00
Grand Total	\$124.80

STEP 05

INVEST IN YOUR TEAM

Untangling your salon isn't something you can do alone. In many areas, your staff will be the ones going at the knots in your operation with a fine-tooth comb—you'll just be the one handing them the right tools.

As a salon owner or manager, **a big part of your job is to set your team up for success.** This means giving them the resources and motivation

they need to provide the ultimate guest experience and going the extra mile to retain your employees for the long run.



WHY SALON STAFF RETENTION MATTERS

Some salon owners make the mistake of thinking employee retention is just a bonus, not a crucial factor in their business's success. But the truth is that higher staff retention leads to greater salon productivity and a better guest experience.

How many calls do you get from guests who want to make an appointment with a specific stylist? Probably a lot. Many clients return to the same salon again and again because they grow attached to one stylist who has gotten to know what they like and don't like, as well as who they are as a person. Often, if that stylist leaves, their loyal clients will go with them.

It's also cheaper for you to retain your salon staff than replace them every few months or years. The cost of replacing an employee is about 50% of their salary. Not to mention, constant turnover can make your other employees less motivated and more likely to look for jobs elsewhere.

TIPS FOR RETAINING SALON EMPLOYEES

So, now that you understand why it's so important, what strategies can you put in place to boost staff retention? Here are a few ideas to get you started:

IMPLEMENT A COMPREHENSIVE TRAINING PROGRAM.

Training is a significant part of the staff onboarding and continuing education experience. An effective and engaging training program will ensure your salon employees have all the information they need to succeed and feel motivated right from the start.

Thorough training on new equipment, products, and techniques will also help your staff feel prepared for success—and is an excellent opportunity for some team-building exercises.

HELP STAFF MEMBERS REACH INDIVIDUAL GOALS.

Remember how we talked about the benefits of having your employees set individual goals? Well, there are benefits to helping them reach those goals too. In fact, the top reason people consider leaving their job is to find new opportunities for career growth, achievement, and security.

Whether it's additional training, attending an industry conference, or more hours on the floor, find ways to help your team progress towards their personal career goals. This will show them that you care about them as individuals beyond what they contribute to your salon. Then, they'll feel like a valuable part of your team and be more motivated to stay.

SHARE POSITIVE GUEST REVIEWS WITH STYLISTS.

Are your clients leaving reviews raving about their stylists? Share them with your team! Knowing they're doing a good job helps keep your stylists motivated and lets them know they're working smart.

When you receive positive feedback about specific staff members, forward them the review so they can read it themselves. It's also a good idea to call them out publicly at team meetings or with a recognition wall to make them feel appreciated for their hard work.

OFFER A COMPETITIVE COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS PACKAGE.

This employee retention strategy is kind of a no-brainer, but it's easy to forget just how important it is. As the salon industry grows, you're not just competing for clients but for staff members too.

Pay your team fairly or, even better, offer them more than market value to give them an incentive to choose and stay with you for their career. That compensation should also come with a generous benefits package—e.g., health insurance and paid time off. An employee's greatest sense of value and motivation at your company usually comes from their salary.

STEP 06

USE TECHNOLOGY TO SMOOTH OUT YOUR GUEST EXPERIENCE

Your salon guests are usually in a hurry. Whether they just got off work or need to get in and get out to pick up the kids from school, they have places to be. When you take advantage of best-in-class salon technology tools, **you can streamline and improve their salon experience.**

Use our handy checklist of the best salon technology tools to help you determine which parts of your guest experience are already first-class and which still need some untangling.

TECHNOLOGY TOOLS

TECHNOLOGY TOOLS	GOT IT!	NEED IT
Convenient online scheduling on website and mobile apps	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Automated text message or email reminders for upcoming appointments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guest-facing app for quick bookings and payments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Flexible payment options (swipe, chip, ApplePay, mobile, in-person)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Card-on-file features to speed up guest checkout	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personalized product recommendations on client accounts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Automated emails for guests to easily give feedback	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Salon memberships for high-value guests	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Electronic gift cards for easy and last-minute gift giving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

“EVERYTHING IS AUTOMATED, AND STAFF CAN CONCENTRATE FULLY ON THE GUEST THAT THEY ARE SERVING..”

KATE COTTRILL | IHLOFF SALON AND DAY SPA

STEP 07

GET HELP FROM THE BEST SALON MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

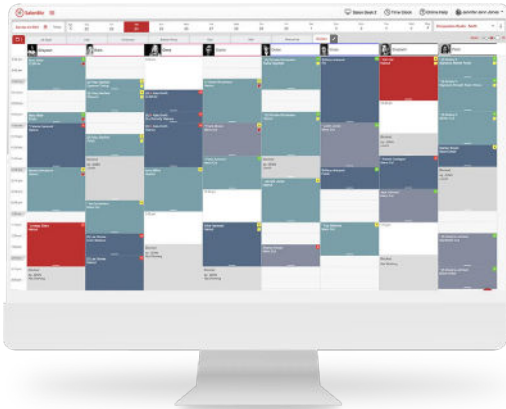
Untangling your salon business knot by knot is a lot to take on. Along with our guide on how to smooth out your salon operations, we also want to give you the tools you need to make the process easier!

SalonBiz is a comprehensive salon management software that makes it easier for you to do your job and

your staff to do theirs, so everybody can focus on providing the best guest experience in the business.

GROW WITH SALONBIZ

With streamlined scheduling, integrated payment functionality, and so much more, SalonBiz offers everything you need to untangle your salon's gnarliest knots. Here's how we can help you, your team, and your guests:

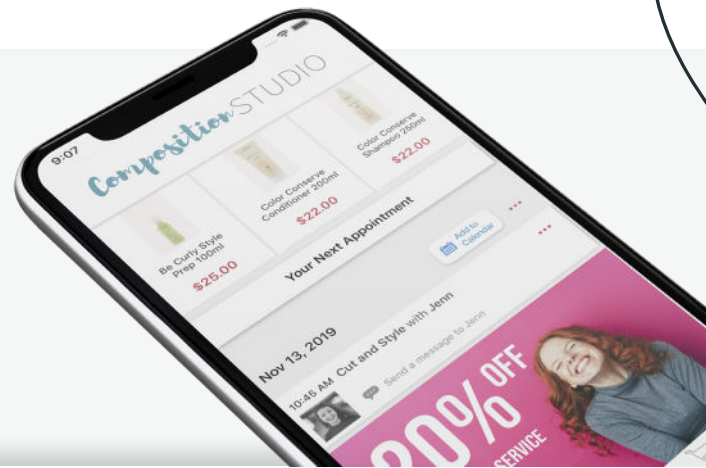


Salon Management.

From multi-location salon management to in-depth financial reporting, SalonBiz gives you a 360° view of your salon at all times. Track performance metrics with powerhouse reporting, keep your salon stocked with effortless inventory management, supercharge sales with an efficient point of sale system, and more.

Guest Experience.

With our free client app, Pocket Salon, your guests have the power to schedule appointments, buy products, add a tip, and check out from the palm of their hand. You can also help streamline their in-salon experience with easily integrated payments, self-check-in from our iPad app, and other simple features.



Staff Empowerment.

Put your stylists in control of their day with our dedicated Stylist App. In addition to 24/7 access to their book, they'll love that they can tap into past guest history, color formulations, and more. They'll also receive a notification when their guest checks in and whenever an appointment is made, changed, or canceled on the current day's book.

THE SMOOTHER YOUR SALON OPERATES, THE MORE SUCCESSFUL IT'LL BE. AND AT SALONBIZ, YOUR SUCCESS IS OUR SUCCESS, SO WE'RE EAGER TO GIVE YOU THE TOOLS YOU NEED TO UNTANGLE YOUR SALON.



SCHEDULE A DEMO

READY TO SEE SALONBIZ IN ACTION?

Let's get a demo on the books.
Contact our team to learn how SalonBiz can help you smooth things out.

