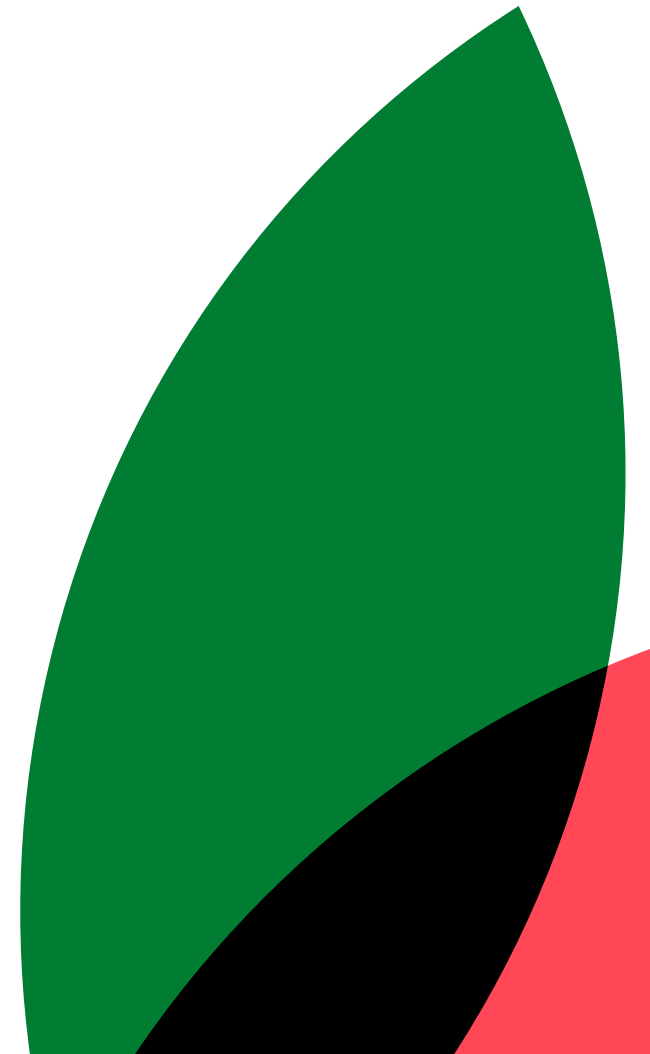




Consumer Insights Report 2025

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Introduction

At the end of 2024, we ran a large-scale survey with hair salon guests to get a clearer picture of their behaviours, motivations, and what's really driving their choices.

To keep things impartial, we worked with an independent panel, gathering 716 responses from consumers based in the UK and Ireland. And while this report zooms in on those two regions, it's worth noting that we saw striking similarities in trends across Canada and Australia too.

We also carried out a similar survey back in 2022. That means we've been able to track what's changed, what's stayed the same, and what's coming next. You'll see some of those shifts highlighted throughout this report.

But this isn't just a collection of stats and graphs. We're lucky to work closely with salons all over the world, and one question we hear all the time is: "What are other salons doing?"

So alongside the data, we've woven in stories and ideas from some of the most creative, innovative, and forward-thinking salons in the UK and Ireland.

In this report, we dive into four key areas:

1. The Premium Salon Experience
2. Retail
3. Online Booking
4. New Clients

We'll also take a look at how consumers feel about AI in their salon, before wrapping up with some reflections from Luke Doolin, our UK & Ireland Country Manager.

Chapter 1: The Premium Experience

How would clients like to see their salon personalise their experience for them?



50% of clients want their hair salon to personalise their experience through rewards and offers

Preserve your value

Discounting isn't the only way, or even the most effective way to show appreciation to your loyal clients. While it might seem like the easiest option, frequent discounts can slowly chip away at the perceived value of your services.

Instead, consider implementing more personalised rewards, exclusive offers, and thoughtful complimentary perks that make your clients feel truly valued. When you thank your clients for their support in ways that are meaningful rather than just monetary, it creates a deeper connection and preserves the worth of the services you are offering.

Loyalty programs are a great foundation for rewarding your loyal clients, but they're not the only way to make clients feel valued. In fact, some of the most memorable moments aren't planned or tied to a transaction at all – they're personal, spontaneous, and heartfelt. Loyalty isn't always loud. Sometimes it's the quiet support that deserves to be celebrated with a little unexpected kindness. Just a genuine gesture that makes someone feel special – because they are to you.



Lilac Miller
Sleeping Beauty Salon
Inverness, Scotland.

“I do believe that providing aftercare and home care advice is a crucial part of the actual treatment. Whether you sell the products or not, it's a disservice to not send the client home with information on what they can use to improve their hair/skin etc..”

Here are a few examples to help inspire you:

- Celebrate personal milestones – Send a small token when a client shares something exciting, like a new job or a wedding. This could be a complimentary add-on to treat themselves before the big day.
- Holiday appreciation – At Christmas, consider sending your top spenders a personalised card and a small gift. For example, a Christmas decoration with salon branding, or a holiday themed scrunchie or hair tie set.

These moments create emotional connection, deepen loyalty, and remind your clients that they're more than just bookings on a calendar – they're valued individuals.

When it comes to rewarding clients, Toby & Amanda who run The Chapel Hairdressers believe that discounting is not, and should not be the only way to reward clients. They believe in celebrating community and bringing people together which is why all of their locations are set in spaces where people naturally gather, such as churches or schoolhouses.

To acknowledge their clients in a way that celebrates these values of coming together, The Chapel recently brought together 40 of their most loyal clients, some of whom have been with the salon for over 25 years for a VIP afternoon tea. They said it was a lovely opportunity for people to meet, chat, and share their stories. "They obviously love what we do, and you forget that sometimes," Toby said. His mum even helped bake cakes for the occasion, making it a truly personal event.



Toby Dicker & Amanda Faith
The Chapel Hairdressers (UK)

Written by Will Guidara, *Unreasonable Hospitality* explores how going above and beyond to serve others can create unforgettable experiences. Drawing from his time leading Eleven Madison Park to become the world's best restaurant, Guidara shows how putting the customer at the centre of everything can transform relationships.

“While clearing plates for a group of vacationing foodies, they mentioned the only thing they hadn't tried was a New York street hot dog. I saw an opportunity. I ran out, bought one, dressed it up, and served it before their final course. When I presented it as their missing culinary experience, they lit up. I'd served thousands of dishes, but nothing got a reaction like that hot dog.”



What motivates clients to pay higher prices for a premium hair salon experience?

38% Cleanliness and hygiene standards

38% Complimentary perks

36% Highly skilled or renowned stylist

36% A relaxing or upscaled ambience



What motivates clients to pay higher prices for a premium hair salon experience?

Cleanliness and hygiene standards

It was surprising to see cleanliness and hygiene emerge as the top reason clients are willing to pay higher prices. This isn't about whether your standards are being met—we're confident they are. The real question is: do your clients know that?

Lilac from Sleeping Beauty introduced brand guidelines in her salon to establish clear standards for cleanliness and grooming among the team. They strive to maintain consistency across all their locations, and these guidelines help ensure those standards are upheld.

Complimentary perks

This is a powerful way to elevate your client's experience while staying budget-conscious. Simple touches like warm towels infused with essential oils, premium snacks and beverages, or a quick hand or head massages create a sense of luxury. Work with your distributor to offer product samples to boost retail and give clients something new to love. How about offering free fringe trims between appointments to keep them coming back. Small gestures go a long way in building lasting loyalty.

Key Takeaways:

- **Read Unreasonable Hospitality**
Let it inspire you to elevate your own salon experience by looking beyond our industry and drawing ideas from businesses that deliver unforgettable service.
- **Show appreciation without discounting**
Discounting isn't the only or the best way to show appreciation to your loyal clients. Personalised rewards, thoughtful offers, and complimentary perks can add value without undermining your pricing. Find meaningful ways to thank your loyal clients while maintaining the worth of your services.

Chapter 2: Retail

Where consumers buy their haircare today

32% Supermarket

24% Pharmacy

22% Online retail site

15% Salon (in person)

5% Salon (online)

Of the 80% of clients who don't purchase hair products directly from the salon, how many do actually want to?

2022

60%

2025

70%

70% of clients who don't buy retail from their salon want to!

"We're not just here to do your hair today, we're here to do your hair tomorrow, next week, next month. Even though you're not actually physically in the salon. It's about looking after you outside of the salon as well."

At Ed's Hair, they maintain a 26% care factor by emphasising that retail is a journey, from the pre-visit consultation form to in-salon treatment, checkout, and follow-up.

The consultation form plays a key role, setting the expectation that retail will be part of their entire hair journey with Ed's Hair. Mike uses it to learn about each client's current routine, products, and goals—creating a natural, trusting entry point for the in-salon conversation. It shows clients that their hair care is a priority, not just a one-time sale.



Mike Messenger
Ed's Hair, Bramhall, UK

Extra tip:

Some salons use consultation forms to ask if guests want to discuss at-home care—making it easier for stylists to start the conversation.

Liam from Black Amber firmly believes in educating clients about retail throughout their entire journey, both inside and outside the salon. While he doesn't expect his team to be salespeople, he believes their education empowers them to confidently share knowledge about aftercare and home-care with clients.

It is vital that they explain how clients can maintain their hairstyle and which products are best suited for use at home. These conversations naturally lead to product purchases, not through sales tactics, but through genuine advice.

To motivate his team to have conversations with clients about aftercare and product usage, he offers exciting prizes to be won. Liam works directly with his distributor to place a higher than usual retail order ahead of a competition so he is able to supply top of the range products that he can use as prizes.

Whether you're a commission or salary based salon, these types of competitions motivate staff to have the conversation with their guest.

Phorest's data across 11,000+ salons shows that , salons who set retail goals sell 2.5x more retail than those who don't.



Liam Kennedy
Black Amber - Dublin (IRE)

Key Takeaways:

- **Consultation Forms**

Add questions into your consultation forms about hair care and retail to introduce the idea that this is the start of their retail journey with you and starts the conversation for the stylist.

Bonus! We've included a sample list at the end of this report!

- **Distributor Sponsored Prizes**

Consider reaching out to your brands or distributors to explore staff incentives in exchange for larger orders. These incentives could be as simple as complimentary products for stylists to use or prizes to reward performance.

- **Consider setting achievable retail goals**

Even small rewards can be a powerful motivator for your team! They don't have to be grand gestures – maybe cinema tickets, or a coffee voucher.



Cost is the main factor for clients not purchasing retail from their salon

Mike believes in educating his clients on proper usage of products. He demonstrates how to use the right amount of product for better results, often inviting clients to show how much they typically use and showing them the correct amount. He proves that premium products can be cost effective and last longer with correct use.

"You're going to use less of it and I'm going to show you how."

Mike doesn't discount his products. He speaks with his clients to understand their budget and tailors his recommendations based on this. This can either impact the range of product he recommends or the quantity. He will often sell one at a time so he enters his client into different purchase cycles e.g. conditioner now, shampoo at a later date with replenishment coming at different times. He will also throw in samples of the products not being bought on the day.

" 62% Cost is the main reason not to purchase from salon"



Mike Messenger
Ed's Hair, Bramhall, UK

Key Takeaways:

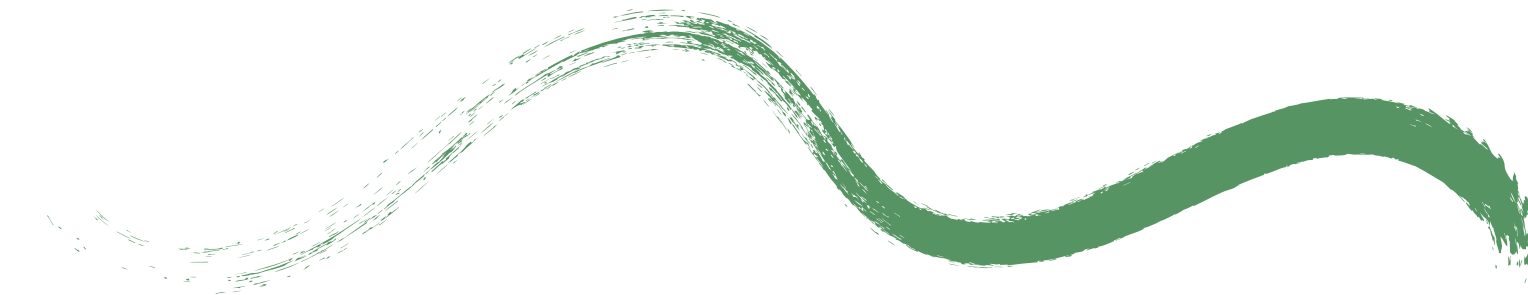
Educate your clients on product usage

Successful salons are going one step further in educating their guests on how to use product at home. Pouring product directly onto their hand, allowing them to feel and smell the product, and teaching how much they should be using not only encourages the best results, but shows how to get the most value out of it.

- **Understand your guest's budget**

Suggesting products that cater to different budgets or providing flexible payment options show your recommendations reflect your clients budget and offer flexibility.

Chapter 3: Online Booking



2022: How do you prefer to book in for an appointment with a hair salon

35% Online booking

29% Over the phone

17% In person

8% Walk in

7% Messaging on social media



2025: How do clients feel about using online booking to schedule an appointment?



What motivates clients to book an appointment online instead of using other booking methods?

69% Ability to view available slots

50% Convenience of booking anytime

41% Faster process

40% Easier to make changes or cancellations

26% Ability to book exclusive add-on treatments



45% of clients prefer online booking to schedule appointments and use it when possible.

Take Time London operates as a receptionist-free salon, with 60% of appointments being booked online.

Emma actively encourages online booking by:

- Sitting with her clients, personally guiding them through her online booking menu
- Keeping service categories and names clear and easy to understand
- Promoting access to her online booking link or app, by displaying a QR code in the salon and on her business cards

"The only way I guarantee that you can make a booking at any time of the day or night is if you use the app"



Allyson King
Hair & Co – Brooklyn, (NY)

Extra tip:

Maintain a balance: While encouraging digital bookings, be sure to offer a personalised experience for clients who need guidance.

Encouraging the use of online booking

- We know that clients are increasingly motivated to book online, so why not reward them for doing so? Sleeping Beauty Salon, for example, offers double loyalty points to clients who book their appointments online. If your software provider allows you to automate this process, it can be a fantastic way to encourage online bookings, helping clients build up their points faster while enjoying the flexibility and convenience of booking in their own time.

Key Takeaways:

- **Add your online booking link to all digital communications with your guests:**

Add a link to email & SMS messages

Add a link to your bio on social media

- **Promote your online booking platform in the salon**

Add a QR code to your online booking or app on your salon mirror

Add a QR code or URL to access your online booking/app to your business cards

- **Use in salon moments to guide clients confidently through the booking process**

Walk your guests through how to book their services using your menu



Lilac Miller
Sleeping Beauty Salon
Inverness, Scotland.

Chapter 4:

New Clients

Factors choosing a new hair salon

2022

65% Word of mouth

46% Google search

31% Social Media

29% Reviews

10% Google maps

2025

61% Word of mouth

38% Instagram

37% Facebook

35% Google search

28% Reviews

61% of clients rely on family & friends to discover new hair salons.

People inherently trust recommendations from their close friends and family. Despite this slight decrease over the last few years, it is still the number one way clients learn about a new salon.

You spend so much money getting new guests through your door, let's keep them coming. On average in the UK and Ireland, new client retention for a hair salon stands at 29% for the last three years.

Liam follows up with all new guests 72 hours after their appointment, if they have not rebooked a future appointment. This gives him an opportunity to offer some at home care instructions, discuss any feedback the client might have on how the salon could improve and book in a future appointment. They have found huge success in this and whilst it does take up time, the returns are worth it.



Liam Kennedy
Black Amber - Dublin (IRE)

Focus on incentivising a new client's second visit rather than their first.

This strategy helps introduce your pricing structure in a way that feels natural and transparent. First-time clients who receive an incentive such as a referral discount may not fully understand the value of your services at full price, which can lead to awkward conversations during future visits or them just not returning. By encouraging a return visit instead, you create an opportunity to build trust, showcase the quality of your work, and set clear expectations from the beginning.

Welcome pack

Sleeping Beauty offers a welcome pack for new clients to welcome them into the salon. Typically, this pack includes a brochure, a "recommend a friend" card, information about the salon's membership scheme, a herbal tea bag, branded chocolate, and occasionally product samples from suppliers. However, they have found that distributing the pack to every new client isn't always effective, particularly in cases where clients are less likely to return due to location or other factors. Instead, they strategically reserve the welcome packs for high-value clients who receive premium services and demonstrate strong potential for long-term engagement. The team believes that the cost of the pack is a worthwhile investment when weighed against the higher cost of acquiring a new client.

Key Takeaways:

- **Do a 72 hour check in if a new guest doesn't have a future appointment booked in**

This is a simple, low-cost way to stay connected and show you care before they slip through the cracks. A quick check-in also gives you an opportunity to capture feedback on a client's first experience with your salon. This could make all the difference in turning a one-time visitor into a loyal client.

- **Incentivise the second visit**

Instead of incentivising a new guest's first visit with your salon, consider doing so for their second visit. This will help attract guests who are not shopping for a discount and also ensure they are aware of the full service cost from the beginning. Be sure to include clear T&Cs. For example, the discount must be redeemed within a timeframe that suits your service cycle.



Factors choosing a new hair salon

76% Price

75% Location

48% Opening hours / days

46% Services offered

42% Referral by family & friends

Location & Price are the two most important factors for consumers when choosing a new salon

Chez Elaine embraced the opportunity to not only grow their business but also better meet the needs of their clients. Recognising the increasing demand for flexibility, they expanded their availability to include Sundays. With clients juggling busy schedules, the addition of Sunday hours has made it easier for people to prioritise their self-care without the stress of weekday traffic. This simple change has had a significant impact, helping Chez Elaine continue to grow while offering convenience to the clients they care for, and providing more flexible work schedules for the stylists.

Key Takeaways:

- **Be flexible to meet the needs of your clients**

Offering flexible availability helps ensure your clients can prioritise their self-care without added stress. Consider adjusting your hours or providing special appointment times to better accommodate their lifestyles.

- **Do your own local market research**

You probably can't up and move your salon with great ease, but you can learn a lot about the location of your salon by observing your surroundings. Understanding your surrounding area is key to making informed decisions and growing your business.

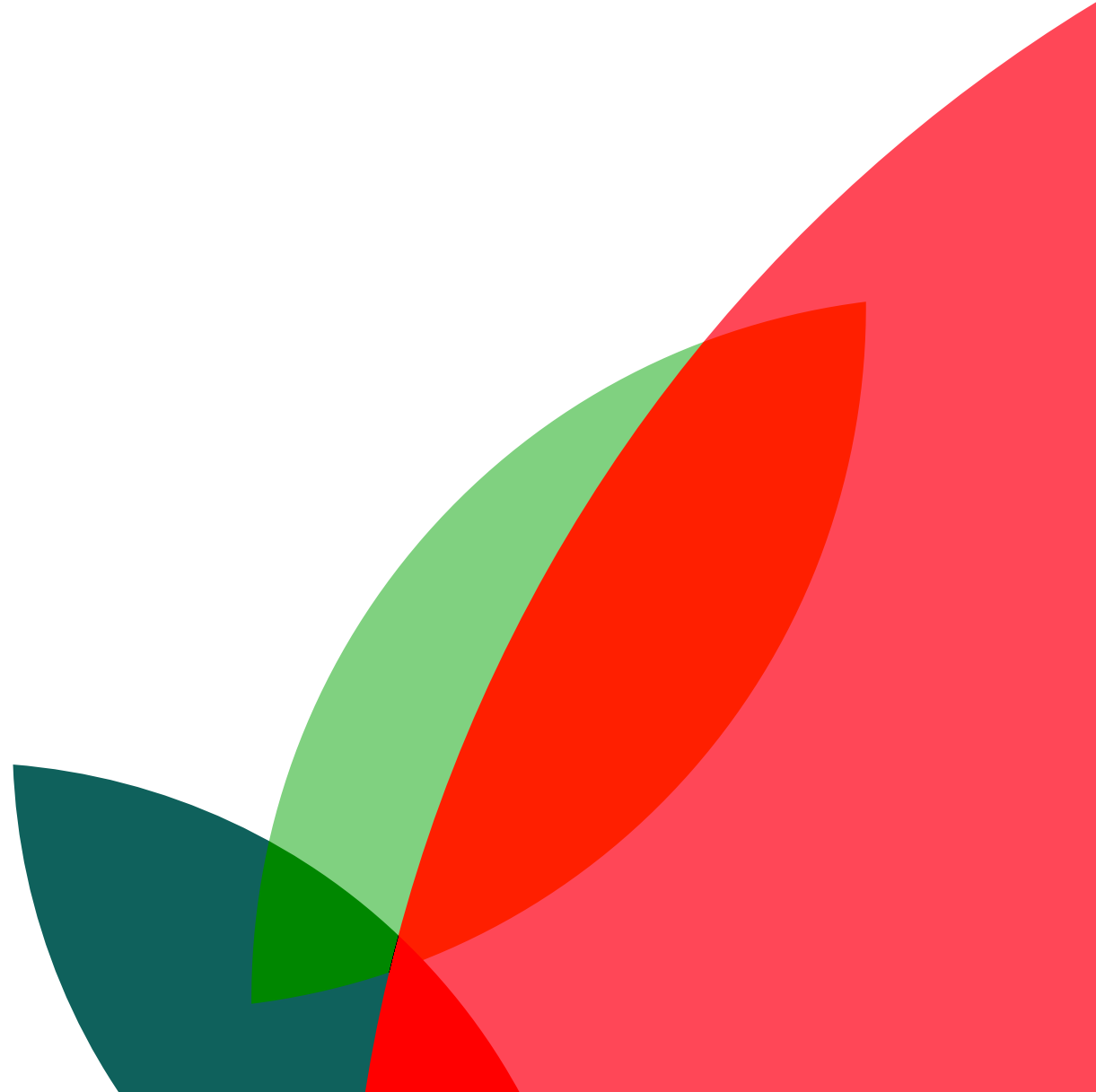


Elaine Barrett
Chez Elaine, Galway (IRE)

Extra tip:

Do your own local market research and really get to know the area you're in. Spend a few hours people watching outside your salon to observe who's passing by each day. If the natural footfall aligns with your target audience, consider using a board at the front of your salon to promote new staff, products, deals, and more to invite them inside and turn them into loyal customers

Future Outlook: AI

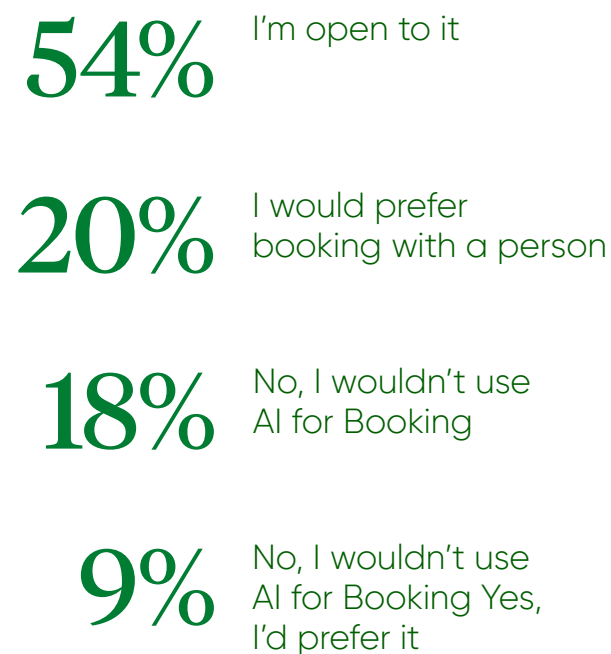


Before we wrap up, let's take a moment to look ahead at emerging trends – especially the growing influence of AI. We asked clients how they feel about AI becoming part of their hair salon experience.

Would you be comfortable communicating with your hair salon via an AI assistant?



Would you be comfortable booking an appointment with your hair salon using an AI assistant?



Extra tip:

Using AI can help streamline your daily admin so you have more time for your guests. Some salons are already ahead of the curve, using AI to automatically transcribe one-on-one meetings with their stylists, making it easier to track progress, set goals, and keep communication clear.

By striking the right balance, salons can enhance the customer experience while leveraging the benefits of AI. It can help you to improve efficiency by automating tasks like appointment booking, reminders, and FAQs, but it's essential to maintain human interaction for a personalised service that your customers value.

It's worth highlighting that this is a rapidly evolving space. We're keeping a close eye on how AI can help streamline routine, impersonal tasks like checking availability so you can spend more time focusing on what truly matters: delivering a personalised experience for your guests.



Methodology

The survey was conducted using SurveyMonkey between October 30 and November 13, 2024. Data was collected through SurveyMonkey's paid audience panel, with participants screened to qualify only if they had visited a hair salon in the past six months.

Among those who completed the screener, 48.06% (n=2,083) qualified and proceeded to complete the survey.

Business types including beauty salon, barber, and medi clinics were available but did not qualify participants to proceed. Only completed responses—where participants answered all survey sections—were included in the final analysis and this report.

Participants represented a diverse global audience, with 15% from Australia, 12% from Canada, 15% from Ireland, 20% from the United Kingdom, and 38% from the United States.

The age distribution of participants was as follows: 18–29 years (17%), 30–44 years (39%), 45–60 years (30%), and 60+ years (14%).

Made possible by

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- Toby Dicker & Amanda Faith,
The Chapel Hairdressers
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And the Research, Data, and Design teams at Phorest



Kate Elliott
Senior Product Researcher

About Phorest

Phorest is a fast-growing technology company and dedicated partner for salons, spas, and aesthetic clinics. Seamlessly integrating appointment management with marketing, reporting, and payments, Phorest is an all-in-one solution designed to create exceptional client experiences at scale, foster a thriving team culture, and achieve industry-leading growth.

Founded in Ireland in 2003, Phorest is trusted by over 11,000 businesses across North America, Europe, the UK, and Australia. What sets Phorest apart is its deep industry roots. The team, shaped by former salon and clinic professionals, places collaboration with business owners at the heart of the development process. This partnership shapes innovative tools tailored to the real-world opportunities and challenges of running a salon or clinic.

Beyond the product, Phorest invests in the success of every business it serves, offering unmatched, personalised support. The global Phorest community also has access to expert-led education, exclusive events, and data-driven insights that give owners a competitive edge.

#TogetherWeGrow



A message from Phorest

Over the last few years, we've proudly supported industry federations and councils in their efforts to lobby government, ensuring the salon and clinic industry receives the recognition it deserves. By amplifying the voice of our industry and championing its needs at the highest levels, we're committed to securing the recognition and support the salon and clinic industry rightfully deserves.

Whether it's developing innovative tools designed to accelerate your business growth and streamline operational efficiencies, or conducting essential industry research—like this—to uncover insights into booking behaviours, retail trends, AI advancements, and premium salon experiences, we're continually looking forward, anticipating your needs, and uncovering new opportunities. Our goal is always to empower you to deliver exceptional service to your clients and help your business thrive.

Phorest is more than just software; we are your partner, and we've always got your back.



Luke Doolin,
UK & Ireland Country Manager

Appendix

Consultation Forms Question Examples

Including hair care and retail related questions in your consultation forms not only personalizes the guest experience but also sets the stage for future product recommendations. Here are a few examples of questions you can add to your consultation forms.

Hair Care Routine Questions

These help you understand what the client is currently using and opens the door for tailored recommendations:

- What shampoo and conditioner are you currently using?
- Do you use any styling or heat-protection products? If so, which ones?
- How often do you wash your hair?
- Do you feel your current hair products are meeting your needs?
- Have you ever been professionally recommended a hair care routine? These gently introduce your role in supporting their hair care at home:

Hair Concerns & Goals

These help identify problems that your retail products can solve:

- What are your top concerns with your hair (e.g., dryness, frizz, breakage, oiliness)?
- What are your hair goals? (e.g., more volume, smoother texture, stronger hair)
- Are you open to trying products that support your hair goals?

Retail Engagement

These gently introduce your role in supporting their hair care at home:

- Would you like us to recommend professional products suited to your hair type and lifestyle?
- Are you interested in learning how to maintain your salon results at home?
- Have you purchased professional products from a salon before?
- Are you looking for a low-maintenance or high-maintenance hair routine?
- Do you prefer natural/organic hair care products?



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