

The Ultimate Guide To
**Buying A
Laser For
Your Salon...**

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Dear fellow Salon owner,

So you're thinking of purchasing your first laser?

Well, be careful, because it's a big decision.

I remember my first laser purchase really well even though it was over 17 years ago.

Since then I've bought just about every type of machine on the market for my three salons (*which are in the North West of England*).

And I've learned a L-O-T.

The good, the bad and the sometimes very ugly truth about buying expensive equipment.

So I'm now sharing all my knowledge and experience to help you make the very best decision for your salon.

Lets get stuck in...



Rachael

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Salon Owner & Laser Expert

Introduction

The start point for any laser purchase is for you to decide and be clear which treatment you want to offer - as that will determine the type of laser you purchase.

Lasers can do all kinds of things, including hair removal, tattoo removal, red vein removal and more.

Get crystal clear on what you want to offer before you go any further.

Of course, in doing that it's also important that you understand your clientele and especially their skin type.

That's because some lasers are suitable for light skins and some are specifically built for dark skins. Others are safe to use on all skin types.

Once you know what treatment you're going to offer and your typical clients, you can get to work.

When you talk to the manufacturers and their reps the basic information you'll find out first includes:

- **The purchase price**
- **The warranty period and what happens if it breaks down.**
- **What the laser can and can't do.**

After that, there are the EIGHT questions that you MUST ask yourself and your supplier before you part with your hard earned money:

1. How much will the laser cost you every month?

Most salons take out finance to pay for their laser. The purchase price is obviously important - but the overall cost and monthly fee is the most important figure. You need to work out how manageable the payments are for you every month.

For example, if a machine is £18,000, that's the equivalent of £4,500 per year over 4 years.

So that means that the machine is actually costing you the equivalent of £375 per month. (Actually it will be bit higher as there will be interest on the finance).

2. How long will the flash lamp or source of laser light last?

For a Diode laser this might be 10 million or 20 million shots. For an IPL it might be only 50,000 or 100,000 shots. Then it will need replacing, which will cost you more money.

For some machines it will be 3-5 years before your need to pay out again, for others it will be less than 12 months. This obviously depends on usage. See the next question!

3. How much does it cost to replace the flash lamp or source of laser light?

When you need to replace the flash lamp (a bit like replacing a light bulb), you need to know how much this will cost.

It could be anywhere between £700 - £10,000 depending on the machine you have.

4. So exactly how much does it cost for you to carry out a treatment?

This is why you need to know the answers to the first three questions.

You should be able to work out (with the help of your supplier) exactly how much it costs per shot.

Then you'll be able to work out roughly how much it costs for you to carry out each treatment.

You'll find some example workings out at the bottom of this guide.

* * THE MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION * *

5. How much will you earn from your new laser treatment per month?

WARNING! This is obviously a massively grey area.

The 'profit' charts which suppliers show you demonstrate your potential earnings.

This does NOT mean that you'll generate that amount of money!!

You must start by calculating what I call your

Sensible Worst Case Scenario.

I have always calculated the worst case scenario so that I don't feel under too much pressure to start with when my new machine arrives, PLUS it helps you avoid making really expensive mistakes!

Are you really going to carry out 5 treatments per DAY / 25 treatments per week from day one, like the manufacturers suggest?

Probably not.

But you're more than capable of carrying out 2 treatments per WEEK.

So if you start off with this in mind you'll not come unstuck.

For example, let's say for an average treatment you charge £80 per session.

£80 x 2 treatments per week = £160 per week.

£160 x 52 weeks = £8,320 per year

£8,320 / 12 months = £693 per month.

*So, in this case, £693 per month is our **Sensible Worst Case Scenario.***

Does £693 per month of revenue make the machine work for you?

Does it cover the cost of your monthly payments?

From here you can see how much profit you're realistically going to make as you get busier.

Working out your **Sensible Worst Case Scenario** is super important.

Please do it!

6. Is it worth it?

Financially is a new laser worth it for you?

This is really what it all boils down to.

You're running a business so if you're not going to make any money – don't do it.

If a laser will just add stress to your life and not generate meaningful profit, - don't do it!

- **Don't be 'romanced' into buying a laser because it seems like a good idea.**
- **Don't buy one because you'd like it yourself.**
- **Don't buy one because it looks pretty and matches your salon decor.**

The only basis on which you can make a sensible decision is by modelling the numbers. A new laser **MUST** work commercially for you and your salon based on **SENSIBLE**, achievable volumes of treatments.

- **Get one because it makes financial sense...you'll earn more profit and pay yourself more money!**
- **Get one because you'll improve the customer experience for your clients (as well as making money!).**

7. What business help will your supplier give you to help you make money with your laser?

Tailor made price charts?

Help with your launch?

New and ongoing ideas to promote your treatment, such as seasonal offers.

The best suppliers will do all this and more.

If they're not willing and able to help you with this kind of thing go somewhere else – because it's a good indication that they're only interested in making money out of your purchase of the machine which is definitely NOT what you want!!

8. Ask about the training...

- **Who carries out the training and do they use the laser on a regular basis themselves?**
- **How much experience do they have?**
- **Can you speak to the trainers if you have a question weeks or months down the line?**
- **If your member of staff leaves and you need to train a new staff member how much will that cost you?**

We all know, as a salon owner, the challenges of trained staff members leaving. It will happen to you at some point. And when it does it can be an expensive problem.

So find out upfront how much does it will cost you to train another therapist?

9. Who can you speak to?

Finally, it's a good idea to speak to another salon owner who has the same machine, and ask if they'd recommend the company and the laser.

Don't skip this bit – it could save you a fortune.

(And ALL reputable sellers have machines in existing salons so there's no excuse!)

I hope this guide has been helpful.

If you'd like any more advice then please get in touch.

There aren't many (if any!) salon owners who have bought more lasers than me over the past fifteen years and they've really made a massive difference to my chain of salons – especially to our profitability. So I'm really well placed to help you and I'll happily answer any question you might have...

Rachael

FINANCIAL EXAMPLES

EXAMPLE 1

How much extra money will you generate per month from your laser.

Based on the Laser costing £18,000

You pay out roughly £375 per month in payments

You carry out **2 treatments per week** average £80 = £693 per month

Minus staff and consumable costs, approx £6 per treatment = £52 per month

£693 (money generated) - £375 (laser cost) - £52 (extra costs) = £266 surplus cash per month

You carry out **4 treatments per week** average £80 = £1,386

Minus staff and consumable costs, approx £6 per treatment = £104 per month

£1,386 (money generated) - £375 (laser cost) - £104 (extra costs) = £907 surplus cash per month

EXAMPLE 2

Based on the laser costing £36,000

You pay out roughly £750 per month in payments.

All of the figures are the same as example 1 but your costs are greater.

You carry out **2 treatments per week** average £80 = £693 per month

Minus staff and consumable costs, approx £6 per treatment = £52

£693 (money generated) - £750 (laser cost) - £52 (extra costs) = **-£109**

(You are losing £109 every month)

You carry out **4 treatments per week average** £80 = £1,386

Minus staff and consumable costs, approx £6 per treatment = £104

£1386 (money generated) - £750 (laser cost) - £104 (extra costs) = £532 surplus cash per month

EXAMPLE 3

How much will a single treatment cost you to perform factoring in the overall purchase cost of the laser.

Eg. Laser with 20 million shots - £18,000 purchase price

18,000 divided by 20 million = cost per shot = £0.0009

Eg. Underarms - uses 1,000 shots. (This will differ depending on each machine)

Cost to carry out = 1,000 x 0.0009 = £0.9 which is 90p

On top of this you need to factor in wages, business costs and consumables.

Based on the Underarms example:

Wages: for 15 mins treatment - £3-4

Consumables: gloves / laser gel / cleanser or pre-wax spray / cotton wool / spatula / aloe vera gel - approx £1-£2



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