

NEW



The Medical Spa MD Physician Report

Issue 1 - September 2011

Introduction

Welcome to the very first Medical Spa MD Physician Report.

Those in the Cosmetic & Aesthetic industries are craving information. I can't count how many times I have heard from our physician members that they feel like they are working in a vacuum; without a "community" to support them. Medical Spa MD was created for that very reason. We are a place where you can praise, complain, ask, answer, vent and share with your peers.

The next natural extension of this community is our new Physicians' Report. With the power and knowledge of our membership base, our goal is to bring together all the valuable information, successes and failures; giving you an insider's point-of-view to improve your business and your bottom line. Which products sell best? Which treatments are most profitable? Which equipment manufacturers are recommended and which are not? Future surveys will deep-dive further into the various areas, such as "Growing your business", "Advertising and marketing", and "Staffing and training" to name a few.

The report will generally include a survey of cosmetic clinics around the world, an interview or case study, and an area for sponsors or select partners who wish to get in front of our Members and readers with their products and services.

To begin, we reached out to not only our member base, but also other prominent doctors in our field. The response was overwhelming. About 80% of our respondents practice in the US, but the other 22% come from all over the world, including South America, Europe, the Middle East and Russia. About 92% are physicians, with the other 8% working as RNs or PAs in cosmetic clinics and medical spas.

Another way to contribute to our Physicians' Report is to participate in our monthly interview. We choose an office or medical spa each month to get their unique perspective on running their business. The interviews add insight into working medical spas and cosmetic practices, what works, what doesn't work, successes, failures and anything else you want to share with your peers.

A special thanks to our growing group of physicians and clinics for participating in this month's report. If you would like to join our panel, please [sign up to contribute to the next report here](#). The more participation we get, the greater the value for the group.

Do you have a suggestion to improve our services or an idea for a research project you think we should be doing? Would you like to be interviewed or sponsor a report? Please [contact us](#).

Warmly,



Founder, Medical Spa MD

P.S. **Please feel free to distribute, email, link to, tweet, post or send this report** to anyone who may be interested as long as you do not modify or change the report in any way.

About This Report

This report is published by MedicalSpaMD.com, an active community of plastic surgeons, cosmetic dermatologists, medical spas and laser clinics with more than 5,000 members. It's designed to give physicians the stats, inspiration, and information to improve their results, make better business decisions, and grow their business.

For more information about this or other Medical Spa MD Reports and free downloads:

- You can [download archived reports in the Members Only Area.](#)
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Survey Results

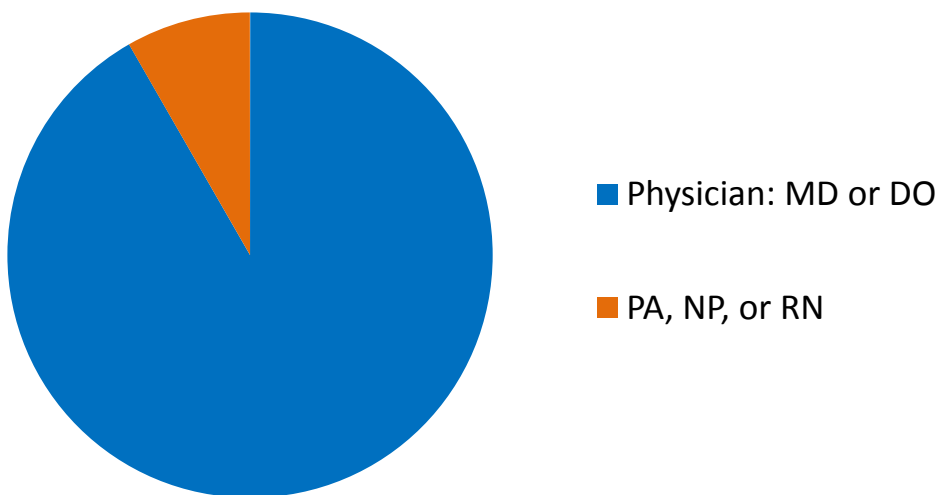
1) Locations of respondents



Roughly 80% of our respondents practice in the US, but the other 20% come from all over the world, including Canada, South America, Europe, Australia, the Middle East and Russia. This reflects two facts; Medical Spa MD is in English, and there are more medical spas and cosmetic clinics in the US than anywhere else.

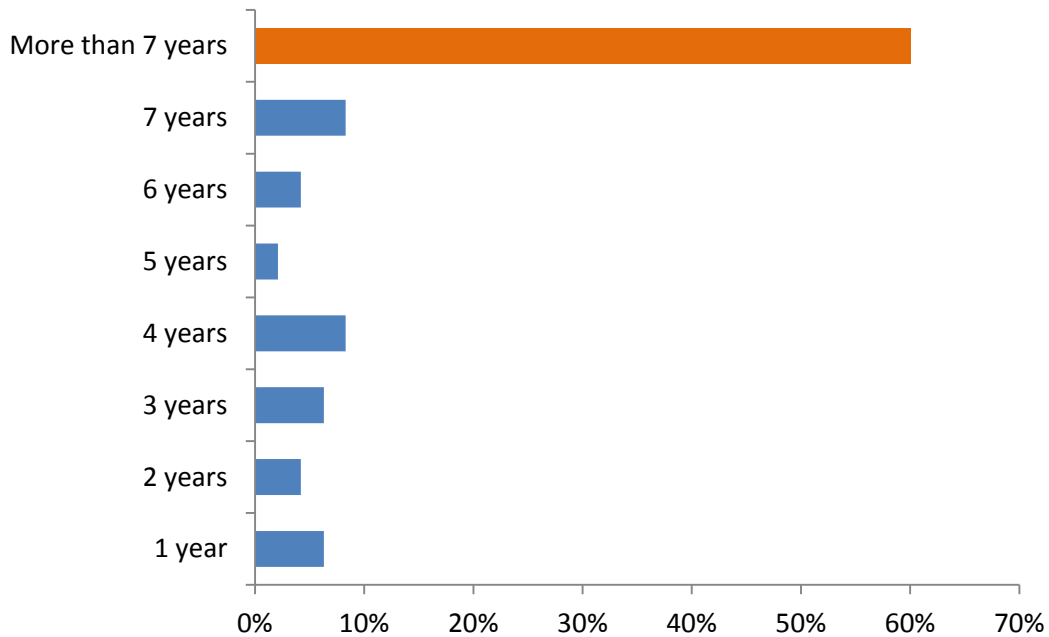
*This data was compiled directly from the IP address of the computer where the survey was completed and not from responses to the survey.

2) I am a:



About 92% of respondents are physicians, with the other 8% identified as RNs or PAs working in cosmetic clinics.

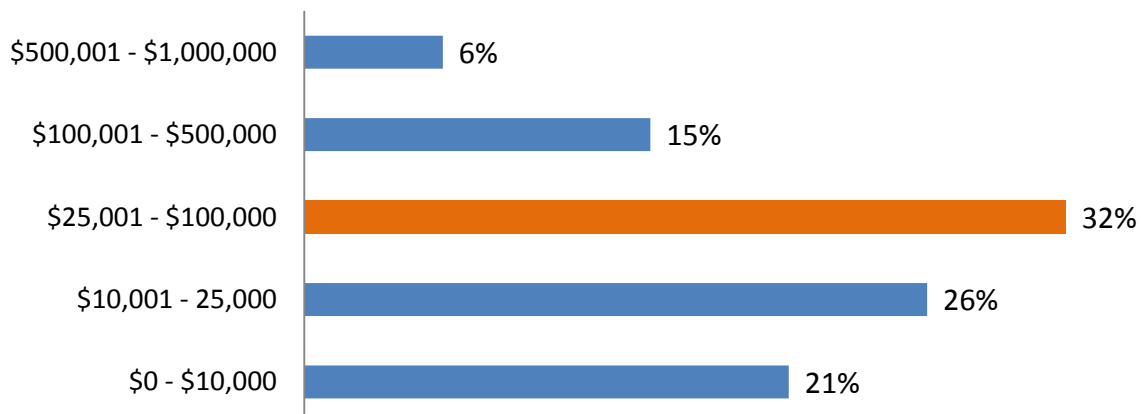
3) How many years have you been practicing cosmetic medicine full time?



For purposes of our survey, it is positive to see that just over 60% of our respondents have been practicing cosmetic medicine for more than 7 years.

This skew towards more experienced physicians may be due to concerns by younger, newer, or more inexperienced physicians that they may be helping a competitor in some way. We expect that this result will flatten as more physicians take part in the survey.

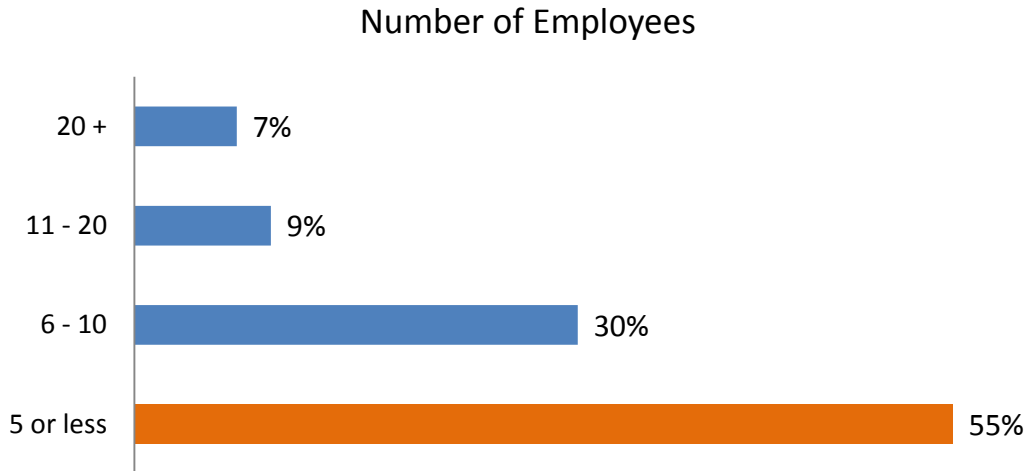
4) What is the total income of your clinic or medical spa per month?



Another positive note regarding our sample population; there is a nice variety of business sizes, again offering a wide range of perspectives with the highest percentage of the group falling between \$10,000 and \$100,000 in revenues per month. This, along with the clinic size (next question) appears to indicate that most of the clinics surveyed are operating with a single physician.

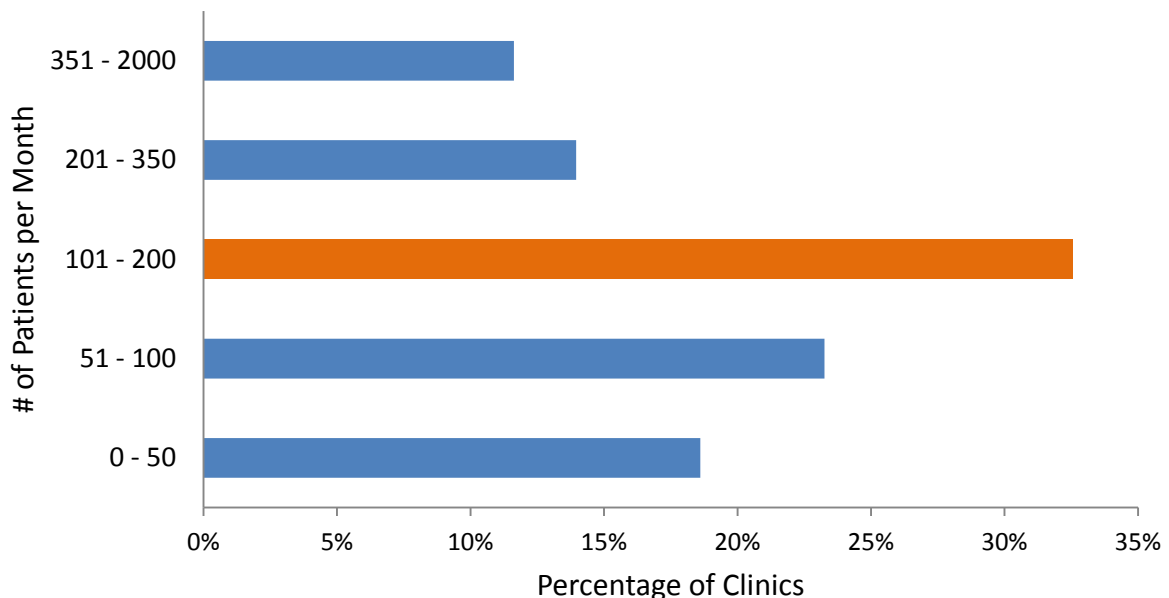
What's also interesting is that we have some very large clinics responding with 6% indicating that they're grossing more than half a million dollars a month. These clinics are probably the same ones that have a staff size of 20+.

5) What is the total number of people that work inside of your clinic in any capacity?



We were careful to add 'in any capacity' to this question to try to capture a good feel for the actual size including any staff that might not be actual employees like contract and wholly commissioned staff. The results here indicate that we're capturing a good cross section of clinics with the majority falling into the single physician/owner category.

6) What is the estimated (best guess) average number of patients that your clinic treats each month?



The greatest percentage of clinics reported that they are treating 100-200 patients per month (25-50 per week or 5-10 per day).

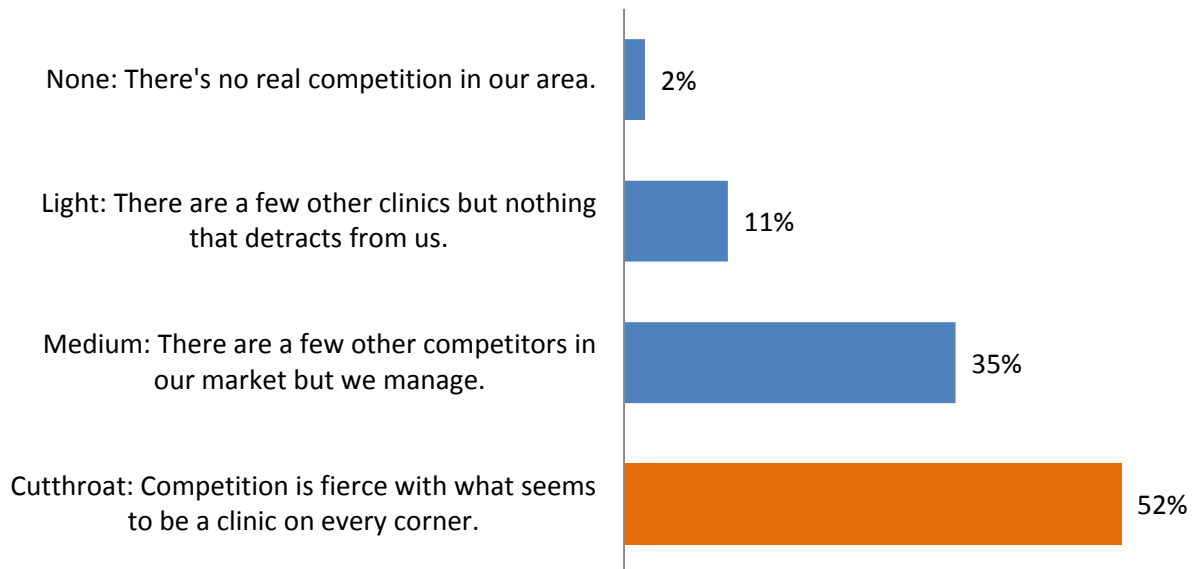
While we can't draw any exact conclusions about this it would seem that we're on the right track to find out some critical metrics around patient flow and revenue. If we take the number of patients, number of staff and revenue from the respondents we find that we end up with some interesting metrics.

Taking the largest groupings from the above 3 responses we get this:

1. Total income = \$25,000 to \$100,00
2. Employees = 5 or less
3. Average number of patients = 100 -200

We're not ready to define any conclusions about this since we think that we need more accurate numbers on total income and number of patients (which we'll add in future surveys) but there is a picture that's starting to emerge about what constitutes an 'average' clinic.

7) How would you describe the level of competition in your market?



Based on the feedback here it appears that cosmetic clinics are seeing increased competition with 87% of surveyed physicians indicating that they're facing either medium or cutthroat competition.

Our expectation is that the level of competition will continue to grow and that those clinics who are unsuccessful adapting to increased competition won't necessarily go out of business since many of them are part of an existing medical practice of some type, but that they will see their revenues shrink as more successful clinics take away their business.

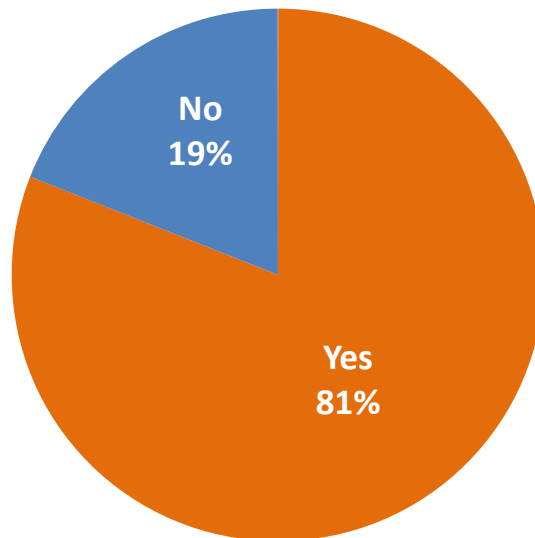
8) Rank these in the order that you personally consider to be most important to generate revenue/sales for your practice.

Response	Overall Rank
“Marketing to <u>EXISTING</u> patients.”	1
“Marketing to <u>NEW</u> patients.”	2

*Score is a weighted calculation. Items ranked first are valued higher than the following ranks; the score is the sum of all weighted rank counts.

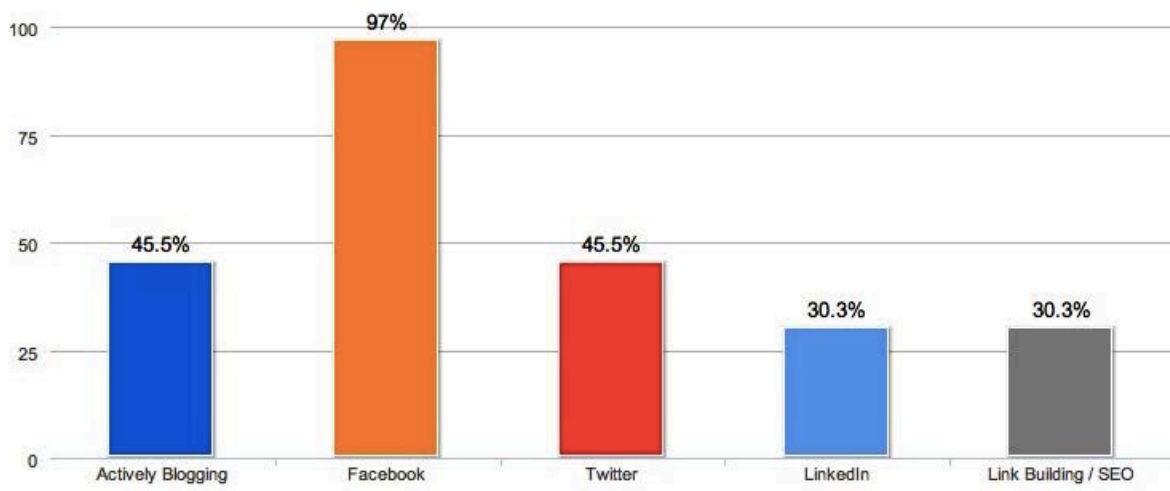
Most of the responding physicians feel that marketing to their existing patients generates the most revenue, which shows just how important customer service, in-house marketing and patient satisfaction are to the success of a cosmetic clinic.

9) We're currently using social media to market our clinic...



Social media marketing is playing an increasing role in a clinic's success, not only in attracting new clients but also in communicating, servicing and marketing into a clinic's existing patient population.

10) If you are currently using social media: Select ALL of the following social media activities that you're ACTIVELY using to market your clinic.



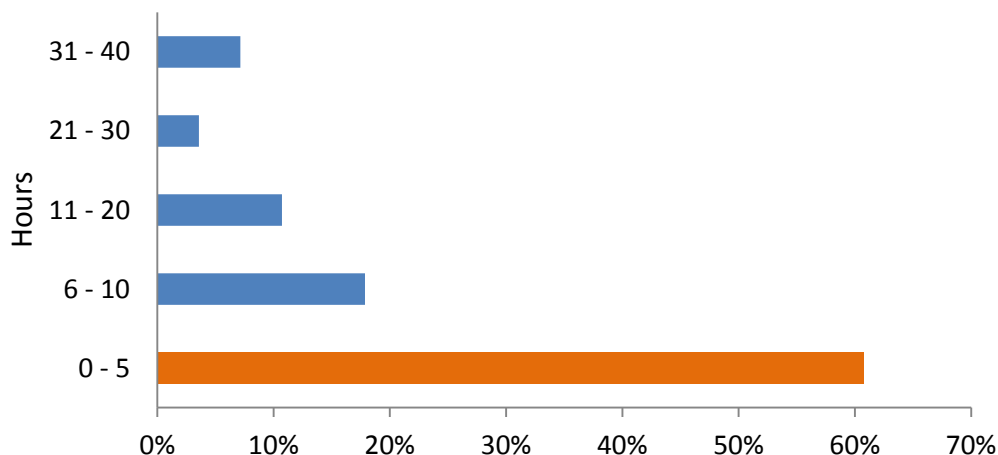
Not a big surprise that Facebook is leading the pack here since they now have 750 million members and it can be expected that the majority of any clinics potential patient population and staff already have Facebook accounts. What is surprising is that almost every clinic that less than half of clinics using social media are using anything else to grow their business.

Of interest is that every clinic that responded that they are actively blogging are also using both Twitter and Facebook with the majority of these clinics also using link building services and SEO.

We were somewhat surprised to see that LinkedIn was also being used since this is most often associated with B-to-B and personal business networking.

[Join the Medical Spa MD LinkedIn Group here >](#)

11) If you are currently using social media: How many cumulative hours a week are devoted to marketing your clinic online each week?



With more than 60% of clinics devoting an anemic "less than 5" hours a week to using social media it would seem that there's room for improvement.

What's equally as interesting is that about 30% of clinics are devoting 10 or more hours a week with 9% spending 30+ hours a week on social media. This starts to make sense when you realize that 70%+ of consumers are not using the internet as their first step to find local businesses and that they actually trust online reviews almost as much as personal recommendations from people they know.

12) If using online social media to market your clinic: Please order the following by what you personally think are the most effective.

Social Media	Effectiveness Rank
Facebook	1
Blogging	2
Link Building / SEO	3
Twitter	4
LinkedIn	5

*The score is the sum of all weighted rank counts.

Again, Facebook comes in at #1 in perceived effectiveness probably due to its ease of use and perceived networking effects.

While Facebook is being used by almost all clinics who are already using any social media, we've reviewed a number of clinics and found that almost every clinic is using Facebook ineffectively or, worst of all, actually turning off people by posting streams of 'special offers' and links.

13) Order by what you think is most effective in driving sales / revenue.

Revenue Rank	Revenue Generator
1	Search Engine Marketing / SEO
2	Waiting Room Marketing / Internal Marketing
3	Social Marketing (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
4	E-mail
5	Local Newspaper
6	Television
7	Radio
8	Something not on this list

We asked survey participants to rank a list of what they think is most effective in driving revenue and ordered the list with a weighted score. There are a couple of surprises in here that merit attention.

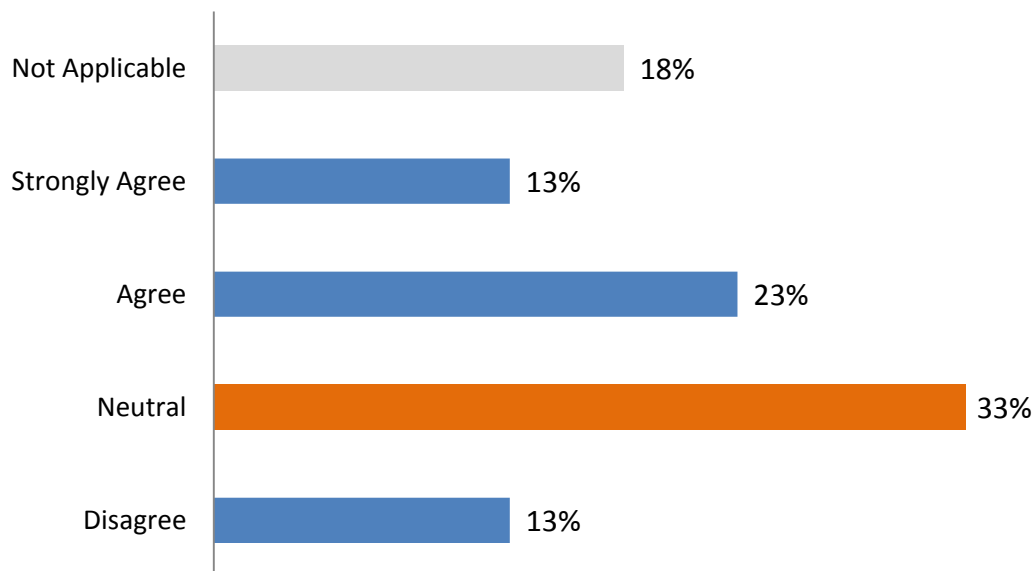
First, search engine marketing ranked #1 in perceived value for driving revenue which differs from the result that we got when surveying only those that are using social media.

Second, Search Marketing and '[Waiting Room Marketing](#)' were virtually tied for first place with SEO only narrowly beating out internal and waiting room marketing. While they are ranked #1 and #2 they were statistically almost identical.

Lastly, radio comes in last place with participants giving it the lowest perceived effectiveness.

One thing that we did not include that we should have is the Yellow Pages.

14) "I make money with laser hair removal."

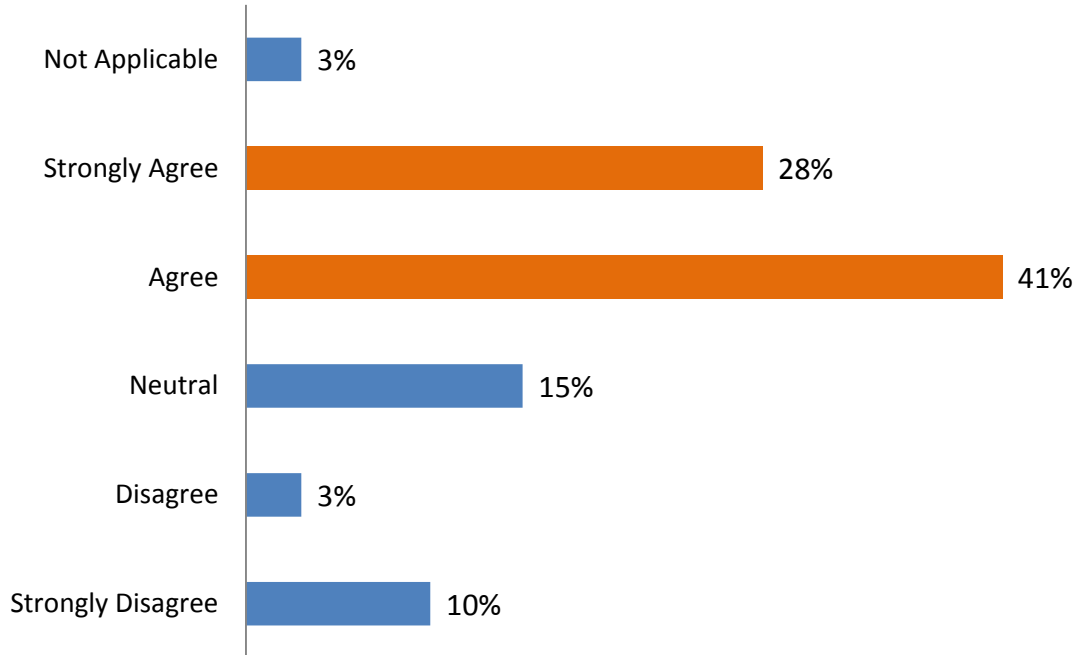


Since laser hair removal has increasingly become commoditized and widely available, it's no surprise that the margins for laser hair removal have continued to shrink and that the largest group of participants ranked it as 'neutral' in creating revenue but it's often a 'must have' for medical spas that focus on nonsurgical treatments.

The fact that 18% of participants rated laser hair removal as 'not applicable' probably indicates the number of plastic and cosmetic surgeons that are offering surgical solutions and may not be focused on lasers and IPLs.

It's also noted that 36% either 'agree' or 'strongly agree' that laser hair removal is still a moneymaker for them.

15) "I make money from Botox."

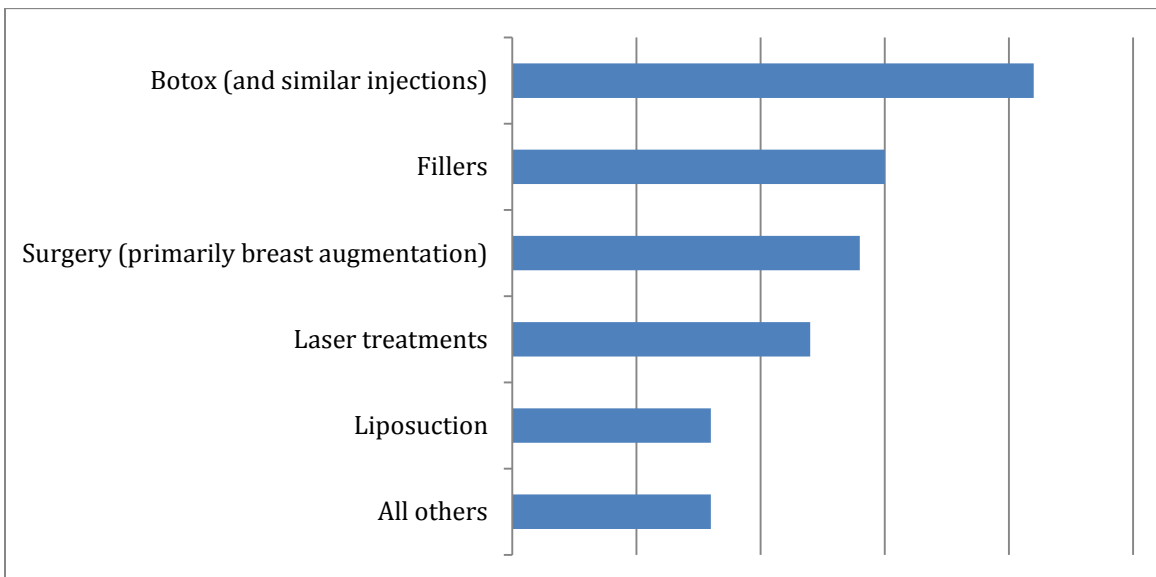


It seems that Botox is as popular as ever and often provides the core injectable treatment. 69% of responding physicians agree or strongly agree that they're still making money on Botox.

However, 10% of physicians strongly disagree that Botox is making them money which indicates that they may be trying to reduce their Botox pricing in an attempt to attract patients and are operating at a loss, or that they're overpaying for their Botox.

[Click here for the Botox Group Buy Program at Medical Spa RX >](#)

16) What are the 3 treatments that generate the most revenue for your clinic?



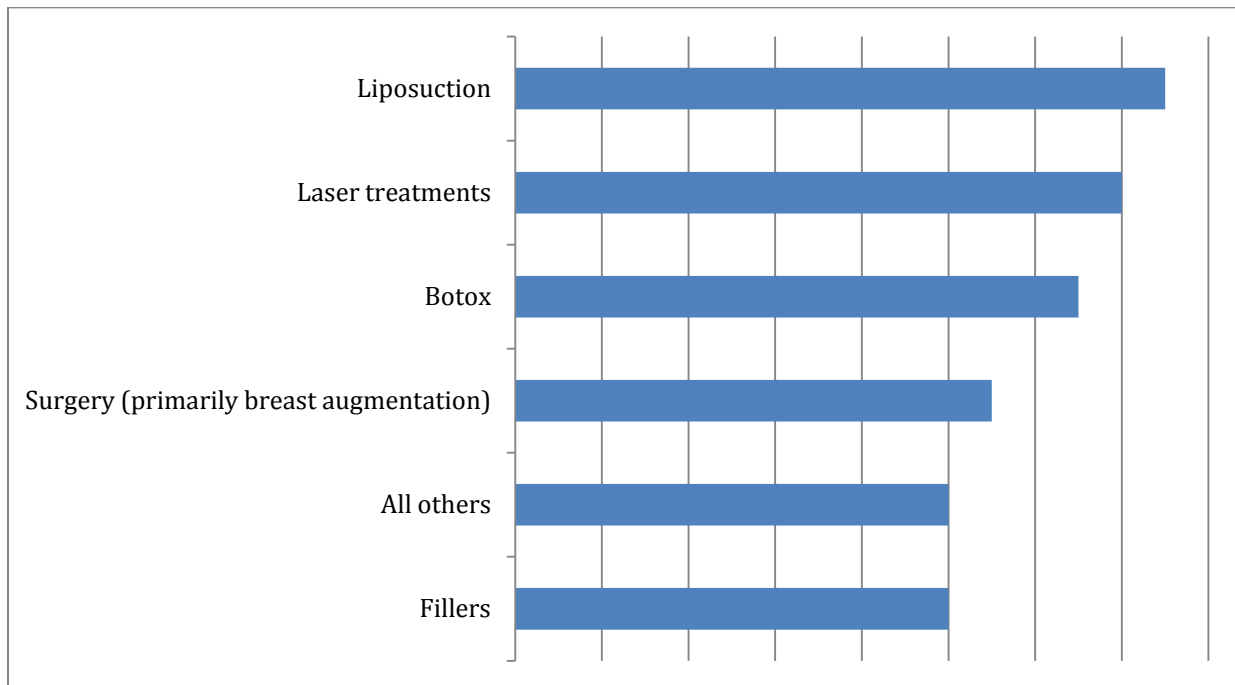
We purposefully divided this question (revenue) from the following one (profitable) in order to see where the money is coming in, and where the money is being made.

For treatments that are bringing in the most money, it would seem that Botox (and probably Dysport) are the top earners along with filler injections (Restylane, Juvederm, etc.) This is a surprising conclusion and it may be skewed due to the fact that not all of the participating clinics are offering surgical solutions. Since each clinic had one 'vote', it's probable that if we asked this question only of those clinics that are performing liposuction or cosmetic surgery, that we would get a different result.

If you only look at nonsurgical treatments, Botox is still leading followed by filler injections and laser treatments.

In future reports we'll try to divide responses a little more carefully regarding surgical/non-surgical practices and see if we can't isolate this further.

17) Enter the 3 treatments that are most profitable for your clinic.



Respondents indicated a very tight ranking when asked about profitability. While Liposuction appears to be the most profitable, the top three spots are not statistically different.

This result appears to support the thought that less commoditized treatments like liposuction can generate health profits. However, there are many additional costs, headaches and liabilities that attach themselves to more invasive treatments.

In a future report we'll dissect the results around liposuction and try to determine where physicians are coming down on the types of liposuction that they're performing and what they think of the different liposuction technologies.

18) Please list the medical technologies you utilize in your clinic by manufacturer and model.

Rank	Manufacturer	Models
1	Sciton	BBL Joule Skin Tyte Profractional Profile
2	Lumenis	Light Sheer Quantum FX Encore
3	Cynosure	Smartlipo Apogee Fraxel Smooth Shapes
4	Candela	GentleMax
5	Alma	Accent Pixel

The results here are something of a shocker.

While we did receive results with every major manufacturer and technology, there was a noticeable difference in the way that some participants responded to this question.

While many participants named the technology they were using, some demonstrated what we perceived to be remarkable brand loyalty and named the same manufacturer with different models. This 'doubling up' is what accounts for the apparent discrepancy from what might be expected and may explain why Sciton tops the list beating out larger manufacturers and Palomar doesn't even appear in the top 5 results.

A secondary factor was the large percentage of participants who did not answer this question.

Why? We don't know but it did result in a smaller subset of total participants and may have skewed the results.

Does Sciton actually enjoy a more loyal following? Are Palomar users unwilling to recommend Palomar? Were physicians hesitant to be identified with the technology they're using? As we delve deeper into technologies in future reports we're hoping to be able to discern what's happening here and gain increasingly relevant data.

[Click to read the IPL & Laser Reviews & Comparisons Forums >](#)

19) What technology manufacturers would you recommend?



20) What technology manufacturers would you NEVER recommend?

We asked questions 19 and 20 knowing that they could be controversial and that manufacturers may be tempted to try and influence the results by either adding 'likes' to their own products or trying to get negative recommendations for competing technologies.

Since we're thinking of making this a regular feature of the report to track how physicians are feeling about the technology they're using, we decided that we needed to implement some controls to prevent these results from being manipulated.

So, instead of posting the results as we've done with the other answers, we're using a minimum threshold (a percentage of total responses) before any manufacturer, device, or technology makes the list as either recommended or not recommended. For this report we're only specifying the companies that garnered the most votes for these specific questions.

Results: A total of 16 technology manufactures were named as either recommended or not recommended but only two technology companies were named by enough participants that they made the list.

 Manufacturer	 Manufacturer
Sciton	Zerona
Unpublished	Unpublished
Unpublished	Unpublished

Note: This is the first report and we expect that the results for these questions will gain more statistical relevance as the number of participants grows. The results of this first survey are inconclusive and, while interesting, you should not draw any conclusions about the companies above.

21) Enter the URL (website) of any resource that you would recommend to other physicians.

With any of our 'recommendations' we're attempting to be somewhat cautious and prevent manipulation of the results. Our goal is to filter out all of the dross and only list those resources that physicians are really finding useful. Because this is our first report, we're going to list all of the resources that received multiple recommendations.

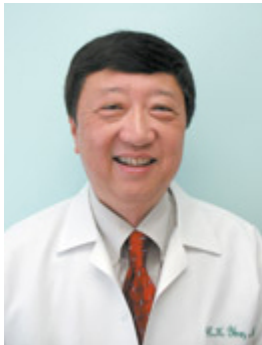
Recommended resources:

- [Facebook.com](#) - Social Network
- [Freelance MD](#)
- [Frontdesk Waiting Room Videos](#)
- [Medical Spa MD](#) (Right on!)
- [Realself.com - Patient Review Site](#)

Physician Interview

Honolulu MedSpa

<http://HonMedSpa.com>



Choon Kia Yeo, MD, Medical Director

Choon Kia Yeo, MD, is a board certified physician with over 30 years of experience practicing medicine in Hawaii. Dr. Yeo is board certified in general surgery by the American Board of Surgery and the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada. He is also a member of the American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine and fellow of the American Society for Laser Medicine and Surgery.

Medical Spa MD: Can you tell us about your clinic, how it's organized and how it operates?

A: Honolulu MedSpa is a full-service medical spa specializing in non-invasive cosmetic treatments. We have an on-site medical director, Dr. C.K. Yeo, and a team of nurses (2) and estheticians (5). The business originally opened in 2001 and focused on laser hair removal. As non-invasive cosmetic medicine has advanced so too has the business. We have expanded into injectables such as Botox & Juvederm, laser skin rejuvenation with fractional laser resurfacing and photofacials, skin tightening and cellulite reduction with radio frequency, targeted fat reduction with CoolSculpting, photodynamic therapy, and more. We focus on treatments that have little to no downtime.

We have a President who handles the Operations and Marketing of the facility, our Medical Director in charge of all treatments and patients, as well as an assistant to the President who handles promotions, social media and marketing the business

Medical Spa MD: Staff - Explain how you manage your staff?

A: Hiring is really tough in this industry and finding the right person is extremely critical. Unfortunately we've had to do a lot of trial and error to find the right people. We do salary plus performance bonuses for proven staff, and hourly plus commission for new staff. It's really important to focus compensation on profits rather than gross revenues. In particular, estheticians often look for compensation tied to gross receipts without considering your costs. Do not fall into that trap. I think in the US in particular estheticians are in general thought as pretty low professionalism scale, but I want my estheticians to feel that they are truly professionals and at the top of their industry so that they behave as such. I try to involve all employees in the operations and success of the business. If they understand that overhead is

expensive and expenses must be controlled to ensure a profit, and are compensated on the profits, they are all focused on the right things.

Nurses are often difficult because most have little concept or experience around cosmetic medicine. They are also unfamiliar or uncomfortable with sales. Other times we find that nurses have a chip on their shoulder and develop a diva attitude. I think step 1 is your Medical Director and Manager need to be role models for the staff, constantly educating themselves and acting professionally. That sets the tone for what's expected of everyone else.

Medical Spa MD: Marketing - Describe what kinds of programs, media, advertising, social media and the like you use to attract new patients?

A: Television: We experimented on television in 2004 and again in 2007, with little quantifiable results, but admittedly our ads had more of a branding focus. I think television has had more of an effect of expanding awareness of the medspa industry than really establishing our brand. Currently we get 1-2 calls a month that say they saw our ad, but we think they may have “thought” they saw our TV ad. Due to the expense and poor results, we have no plans to move forward again with television advertising. It takes a lot of money and a lot of time for TV advertising to work. Most people these days fast forward through commercials too!

Radio: We tried radio in the first couple years of the business before the advent of iPods and the like. We found it to be pretty ineffective in our market and we haven't done any since 2003. I think the lack of results is similar to the reasons for TV. With iPods in most cars, and satellite radio, radio advertising might also be a thing of the past soon.

Print: Newspaper and magazine ads are not very effective for us, but editorial content/articles about us are very effective. Editorials, being ads dressed up as a news story, seem to get read. We have had new patients walk in the door holding the editorial in hand. If done correctly,

Internet: We do use PPC advertising on Google Adwords, currently managed by Yodle. It's hard to say that it's been more or less effective than if I had done this work internally since our online inquiries have not increased significantly, but it does alleviate some of time demands of managing it internally. Overall though, we believe PPC is effective and best of all quantifiable.

Internet: I believe we have one of the best websites in our market for clean look, information, design, etc. It definitely does pay dividends for us. It makes us appear much more professional and established than our competitors. We use a great 3rd party SEO company (<http://FrontdeskSEO.com>) that creates backlinks, manages our key word performance, social media, Facebook advertising, etc. We are seeing positive upward movement in our Google Analytics and web site traffic so believe that we must continue our SEO investments to stay ahead of the competition.

Patient Marketing: Newsletter & email blasts have proved to be a great way to stay in front of our customers. When they are ready for another treatment, we hope to be top of mind. Nurturing these relationships is crucial to our repeat business.

Flash Sales (Groupon, Living Social, etc.): We've tried a local provider and Living Social. The local provider deal was \$75 for \$150 worth of treatments or products. It proved to be pretty ineffective and only sold about 20 deals. Living Social had a much bigger subscriber base and we ran a laser hair removal deal with a follow-up skin service. We sold nearly 900 from a subscriber base of approximately 50,000. Response to the deal has us booked for laser hair removal solid for months and as we get into the 2nd and 3rd treatments are starting to have more success with up-selling and cross-selling to more areas and other services. We would absolutely consider doing this again in the future.

Medical Spa MD: Sales - What treatment modalities create the most sales for you? Which are most profitable? Have you dropped any treatments? Are you looking to add anything new? What, and why?

A: Last year, laser hair removal was about 30-40% of our business and the rest a mixture of skin services from photofacials, fractional laser resurfacing, injectables, facials & peels. We have not dropped any treatments, but we have narrowed our focus on certain treatments where we are trying to be seen as “the experts”. Our most profitable treatments are probably peels and CoolSculpting. We are not looking at adding anything new, unless it gets us significantly and consistently better results than what we're currently offering. Cellulite and stretch marks are something we wish had better solutions.

Medical Spa MD: What advice would you give to other physicians based upon your experiences?

A: I think the biggest mistake is to be the lowest-price provider or the one that discounts the most. Yes, in the short term it may bring you business, but in the long term, it hurts your ability to be profitable. It also hurts the industry overall. Remember, you are physicians and you should be paid well (fairly). As we all know, there are a lot of discount medical spas out there. Stay away from that model. To build a strong business, with a loyal clientele, provide quality service at a fair price.

Would you like to be interviewed? Please email us through our [contact page](#).

Contributing Physicians

A special thanks for all of the physicians and clinics that contributed to this first report.

The following is a partial list of the physicians and clinics that contributed to this report and gave us permission to identify and link to them.

Note: We do not identify individual physicians or clinics with specific answers to make sure that all respondents can be completely candid in their answers. (Our surveys are done through our online software and provide confidentiality and anonymity and they take about 10 minutes to complete.)

Honolulu Medical Spa	atlanta-liposuction.com	plasticsurgerysandiego.com
kaplancosmeticsurgery.com	foreveryoungmedspa.us	rhamawy.com
plasticsurgerytoday.com	landonplasticsurgery.com	LaserCosMedix.com
advancedskinwisdom.com	sciencemedspa.com	wimedspa.com
beautybybuford.com	doctoretxeberria.com	landecker.com.br
silkyimage.com	drmatlock.com	jdvmmedspa.com
doctorguillermocienfuegos.es.tl	773lipo.com	chirurgiefaciala.ro
northwesternplastics.com	faceandlegs.com	RomoPlasticSurgery.com
lovethatface.com	paceslaserMd.com	NewportWellessBoutique.com
WinchesterLaserCosmetic.com	cos-medica.com	drminniti.com
iversmd.com	JaneAesthetics.com	dryveshebert.ca
paceslasermd.com	naturophoria.com	doctorhoefflin.com
LaserCosMedix.com	delajeness.ru	monarchbaylaser.com
cos-medica.com	koe-aesthetics.de	thenyac.com
renovomd.com	centrosbys.com	mandalaclinic.pl
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Believe me, our regular videos are jaw-dropping, but if you want or need to have truly customized marketing messages that go beyond the basics, our custom videos allow you to add your own images, copy, specials and more.

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