



# THE NEW PAPERLESS

BY EDWIN NEILL

**The year's newest trend in technology—  
paper is out, profits are in.**

We all went paperless years ago when technology snuck into the salon industry, replacing the physical appointment book. The erasers, the illegible handwriting, the misspellings, the spilled coffee, the book that caught fire when someone accidentally held it over a candle (yes, this really happened) — all went out the door when the computer muscled its way into the front desk of the salon. Gone were the days of color formulas filed on index cards, and old-fashioned cash registers. The change was exciting, but it was a lot to process, and many salons struggled with it.

Stylists had a hard time getting their heads around the changes; they were leery of getting rid of their trusted card file of color formulas, and altering their long-held way of doing things. Even as we struggled to embrace technology in the salon industry back then, we never dreamed of the technical innovations that have become standard today.

*Styling: Jared Green; Makeup: Jo Sugar  
Hair: Gina Conway; Photographer: John Rawson*

A special technology supplement from SalonBiz®



# MOBILE TECHNOLOGY changed everything

Three years ago, nobody sold cars on eBay mobile. Now, 10,000 vehicles a week are bought and sold on that app! We do everything on our mobile devices — shop, communicate, share our lives, pay bills. So why not make the most of it in a salon?

## engaged and productive staff

Tablets are fun, and everyone has a smartphone — so let's incorporate them into the salon experience and use them to streamline the service process. It's now possible to view the day's schedule on your phone, learning at the touch of a button the client's visit frequency, past product purchases, color formulas, and even favorite vacation spots. With this easy-to-retrieve information, stylists can greet the client armed with conversation topics and a personal profile that they can use to map out the visit, rebook the next appointment, and recommend products and services they haven't tried yet, but are likely to be interested in. Also, stylists can measure their performance against their goals (with real-time updates) and stay connected with the company's internal message center, which

puts the ownership on them to manage their day and monitor their own results. When you change their thinking, you can change their behavior. This new approach can scare some salon owners, but the shift is toward an "our client" mentality — and the stylist now plays a much more active role in the client experience. You're all in this together, working toward a common goal of providing ultimate service as well as being successful.

## embrace a mobile culture

Culture plays a big role with technology in a salon. When you attract people with the same values and beliefs that you have, trust emerges, and with trust comes a willingness to take risks, explore new things, experiment, and fail. In a salon environment, culture is the foundation of the great haircuts, innovative styles, and amazing new color techniques. Culture creates a sense of belonging, and motivates talented people to stay with you. When you make mobile technology a part of your culture, you integrate it into what makes you successful long-term.

Long gone are the days  
of the paper policy and  
procedure manual and  
time off request forms.

Your team sees their day (and their progress) from their phone, anytime. ➤



## transforming the front desk

There's been a lot of talk recently about removing this vital nucleus of the salon. What if the front desk weren't there to hide behind, talk over, and store a bunch of junk under? Did you ever view the front desk as an actual barrier between you and the client, one that discourages communication and personal contact? At SalonBiz, we asked, "How could we make all of its necessary functions invisible to the client?" So we made the front desk mobile. Capturing product regimens, rebooking appointments, and recommending new services right at the chair is far more convenient for both the client and the stylist. It's fun for both parties and creates a stronger rapport.

Apple taught us all to think outside the box in their retail stores — let's follow them and send an email receipt instead of printing one. Think of the money you will save on paper and printing supplies. One salon manager shared with us that his salon has 8 chairs. After spending nearly \$400 per month on printer toner and paper, he decided to shift his thinking. He spent \$2800 on iPads, got the staff to use them to reference their schedules and started emailing receipts to customers. Think about the savings!

## loyal clients crave technology

Habits are changing. We need to step back from seeing technology as an interruption and start viewing it as a tool that enhances the client experience while it connects them to your brand. Clients are tech savvy and aware of the latest trends. They book their own appointments online and love sharing their experience through integrated reviews. "They show an interest in what's new with us and how we are evolving. We focus on creating a 5-star restaurant feel," says Gina Conway, Owner of Gina Conway Salons in London. "I see mobile technology supporting an effortless, professional, amazing experience when delivered with a smile."



Today's clients want the power to book themselves.



^ The paperless front desk.

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## less paper, more profits.

"It's no secret that in today's business climate, we're forced to adapt, change, innovate, and change some more in order to grow our business and stay ahead of the competition," says Chris Murphy, Owner of Maximum FX. Long gone are the days of the paper Policies and Procedures Manual, and stacks of time-off request forms. Everything is now automated, with a focus on accessibility and transparency.

As we evolve the software experience, we continue to look at possibilities to offer convenience to staff and clients, with proven revenues and improved results for the business. We believe in letting the software do the work, so that systems become seamless and the stylist's talent can speak for itself. Turns out, technology is about the human interaction, about connecting in a new way — and now the client is driving the connection.