

Attitudes towards Cosmetic Procedures - UK - January 2021

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This report looks at the following areas:

- The impact of COVID-19 on cosmetic procedures.
- Changes within cosmetic surgery industry.
- Rising consumer interest in non-invasive procedures.
- Demographic-related preferences.
- Marketing strategies to expand exposure.
- Normalising cosmetic procedures.
- Opportunities to boost safe regulations.

Relying on close physical contact with clients, much of the cosmetic industry has struggled during the pandemic with beauty salons and clinics forced to close in the two major lockdowns seen so far. However, there were still opportunities to grow the market. For instance, online consultations for surgical and non-surgical procedures have increased even in the midst of the pandemic. Interest in cosmetic procedures is partly driven by so-called "Zoom boom", a hyper-awareness of facial imperfections following an increase of video calls. This translated to busy cosmetic operators and a return to performing procedures, shortly after lockdown rules were relaxed.

More generally, developments in technology have contributed to an increase in the popularity of non-surgical procedures which has changed the face of the industry. Aesthetic procedures carry fewer stigmas now, following a normalisation of many of those practices: 43% of UK adults agree that non-surgical procedures are becoming a normal part of beauty grooming routines. This is mirrored with a 40% drop in cosmetic surgeries since 2015, according to the British Association of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons (BAAPS).

Increased financial uncertainty and disposable household income falling following the pandemic have raised some concerns for cosmetic operators, especially around surgical procedures since they tend to be far more expensive than non-invasive alternatives while the coronavirus has made many people more wary of unnecessary hospital visits.



"The COVID-19 outbreak had a direct impact on cosmetic procedures with beauty salons and clinics forced to close for many months during the initial spring and winter lockdowns. While economic uncertainty from the pandemic could translate to a dip in the number of some cosmetic procedures in the near future, lockdown had fuelled demand for others."

– Sarah Al Shaalan,
Consumer Lifestyles Analyst

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The younger generation have emerged as one of the leading demographics seeking non-invasive cosmetic procedures. Growing up with social media, they are more likely to consider rejuvenation and preventative ageing treatments compared to other age groups. Thus, it is necessary for cosmetic operators to improve incorporation of social media marketing strategies to garner a stronger relationship with the cohort.



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