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BEAUTY CLUB

MARKETING & SALES TOOLKIT · NO. 10

ATTRACTING & CONVERTING CLIENTS

Referral Program in a Box

The clients you already have know everyone you are trying to reach. This is the whole programme — the offer, the ask, the cards, the rules — ready to run on Monday.

Inside: why a referred client is your best client · what you can afford to pay · the five design decisions · the programme, written out · the premium version · when and how to ask, word for word · the card · link, code and the giveaway trap · the ledger · rules and US fine print · six ways it fails · **printable cards**

BEFORE YOU START

The channel you already own and never use

Ask a room of beauty professionals where their best clients came from and almost all of them say the same thing: someone sent them. Then ask what their referral programme is, and almost none of them have one.

Not because it is difficult. Because it feels like asking for a favour, and because nobody ever wrote down what the offer is, so the ask never happens the same way twice. This guide fixes both: a programme specific enough to print, and words specific enough to say out loud without flinching.

> HOW THIS DIFFERS FROM NO. 07 AND NO. 09
>
> *No. 07, the Reviews Engine,* is public proof aimed at strangers. This is a private recommendation aimed at one named person — a different ask, a different reward and different rules. *No. 09, the Welcome System,* gets a client to come back herself; this one gets her to bring someone. Run 09 first: **a referral programme on top of a weak first visit only spreads the problem faster.**

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The printable cards. This guide comes with a second file — a page of eight referral cards, ready to print on card stock and cut. Two versions: one for the credit programme on page 6, one for the gift programme on page 7. Fill in your studio name once and print as many sheets as you need.

THE CASE

Why a referred client is your best client

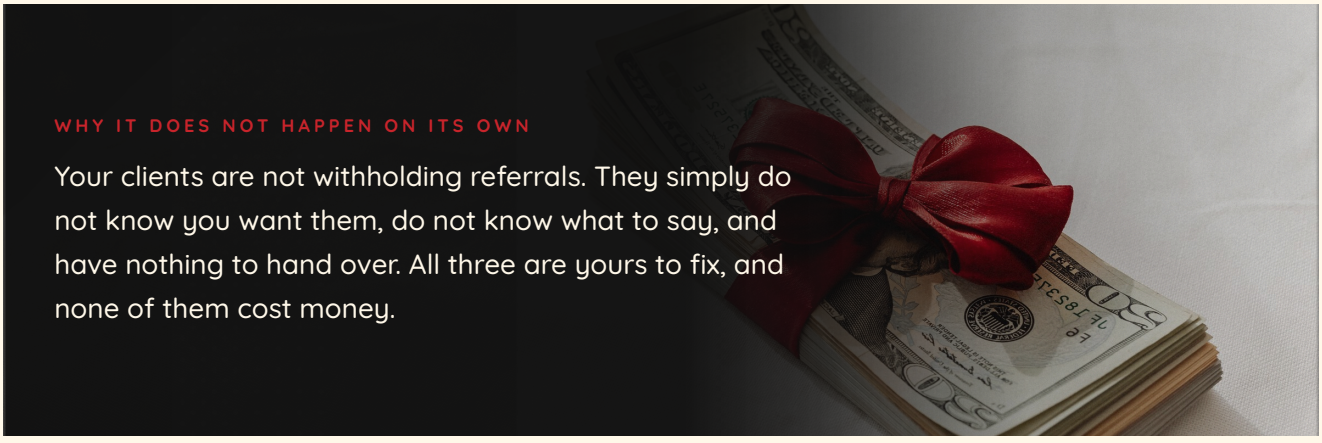
A referral arrives already convinced. Everything you spend on strangers — the profile, the reels, the proof — has been done for you by someone the stranger already trusts.

WHAT IS DIFFERENT ABOUT HER	WHY IT HAPPENS
She books faster	She is not comparing three studios. The decision was made in a conversation you were not in
She argues less about price	Her friend already told her the number and said it was worth it
She rebooks more often	She arrived expecting to stay, and she has someone to talk to about it
She refers in turn	People who were sent send. This is the only channel that compounds by itself
She costs you nothing to find	No ads, no algorithm, no rented audience that can be taken away next quarter

THE ONE CONDITION

All of this is true only if the work and the visit are genuinely good. A referral programme is an amplifier, not a fix. If clients are not already saying nice things unprompted, spend this month on *No. 09* instead and come back to this one.

One caution about the word "programme". None of this works if it turns into a transaction. The client who sends you three friends a year is not doing it for $20 — she is doing it because she is proud of her nails and likes you. The reward is a permission slip and a thank-you, not a fee. Keep that order and the whole thing stays warm.



WHY IT DOES NOT HAPPEN ON ITS OWN

Your clients are not withholding referrals. They simply do not know you want them, do not know what to say, and have nothing to hand over. All three are yours to fix, and none of them cost money.

THE NUMBER THAT SETS THE REWARD

What you can afford to pay

Most referral programmes are either too small to notice or too generous to survive. Both come from guessing. The size of the reward should come from what a client is worth, and that number you already have.

$105 − $6.80 product − 1.25 h × $24.42 overhead = $67.67

WHAT ONE SIGNATURE APPOINTMENT ACTUALLY LEAVES YOU — FROM NO. 01

A client who settles into a four-week rhythm is worth about **$1,500 in her first year**. Against that, a one-off reward of $20 to the friend and $20 to the client who sent her is not an expense worth agonising over — it is under 3% of the first year, paid once.

Why a credit beats a discount

APPROACH	YEAR ONE	WHAT IT ACTUALLY DOES
$20 + $20, one time	**$40**	Costs you once. Both people feel rewarded. Your prices never move
“20% off for friends”	**$273**	$21 off every visit, thirteen visits a year, for as long as she stays. And it teaches her your price is soft
Free service for the referrer	**$105+**	Costs you a whole appointment slot as well as the money. Save it for a large milestone, not every referral

What it costs you on the day

The friend's first appointment at $105 with $20 off leaves you $47.67 after product and overhead — still comfortably above the $30.53 that hour costs you to run. The referrer's $20 comes off a later visit, on a day you were going to see her anyway. Neither one is ever paid out of pocket.

> THE RULE OF THUMB
>
> A referral reward is worth setting at roughly **a fifth to a quarter of one appointment**, on each side. On a $105 service that is $20–$25 — big enough to be worth mentioning to a friend, small enough that you can pay it every time without resentment. Under $10 and nobody moves; over half a service and you will quietly stop honouring it.

DECIDE ONCE, THEN NEVER AGAIN

The five decisions

Every referral programme in the world is these five choices. Make them now, write them down, and the ask becomes easy because there is nothing left to improvise.

01 **Who gets rewarded?**

Both sides. A one-sided programme makes the client feel like a salesperson; a two-sided one lets her give her friend something. “I got you $20 off” is a nicer sentence than “I get $20 if you go”.

02 **What is the reward?**

Credit against her next appointment — not cash, not a percentage. Credit keeps the money inside your business and brings her back to spend it. A product or an add-on service works too; see page 7.

03 **When does it pay out?**

After the friend's first appointment is completed and paid. Not on booking — a booking can cancel. Say this on the card so it never feels like a technicality invented afterwards.

04 **How many can she earn?**

No cap, but one reward per new person. Your best client may send four friends in a year; capping her is the wrong instinct. What you do cap is stacking — one reward per referred client, not per visit that client makes.

05 **How long does the credit last?**

Give it a life — six months is fair — and check your state's rules before you print an expiry, because credits and gift cards are treated differently from place to place. Page 13.

YOUR FIVE ANSWERS

Rewarded: _____ Reward: _____ Pays out: _____

Cap: _____ Credit lasts: _____

Write the answers on one card and keep it at the desk. A programme that lives only in your head gets explained differently to every client, and the differences are what turn into arguments six weeks later.

THE DEFAULT · COPY THIS ONE

Give $20, Get $20

If you do not want to design anything, run this. It is symmetrical, it fits on a card, and a client can explain it to a friend in one sentence without getting it wrong.

THE PROGRAMME, IN FULL

Give your friend $20 off her first appointment. When she has been in, you get $20 credit on your next.
One reward per new client. Credit is valid for six months and applies to services, not products. Cannot be combined with another offer.

How it runs, step by step

01	She takes a card	You hand it over at checkout, or she sends the code by text. She writes her own name on it
02	The friend books	She mentions the name, or brings the card, or types the code into the booking notes
03	The friend is seen	$20 comes off at the desk. You write both names in the ledger on page 12
04	You tell the referrer	Same evening, by text. This message matters more than the money — page 9
05	She spends it	The credit comes off her next appointment. Mention it when you confirm that booking

Say it in one sentence

The test of any referral programme is whether a client can repeat it correctly to a friend without looking at the card. Read yours out loud. If you need a comma and a condition, cut it down until you do not.

ADJUST THE NUMBER, NOT THE SHAPE

If your signature service is $150, make it $30 and $30. If it is $60, make it $12 and $12 — or better, make it a product she already loves. Keep the two sides equal and the sentence short; that is what makes it repeatable.

THE ALTERNATIVE

When money is the wrong reward

If you are positioned at the top of your market, a dollar figure on a card can undercut the very thing clients are paying for. There is a version that rewards just as well and never mentions a discount.

A product

A full-size cuticle oil, a hand cream, a European brand she cannot buy locally. Costs you wholesale, reads as a gift

An add-on

A paraffin treatment, a brow tidy, an extended massage at her next visit. Costs you time in a slot you already have

A place in line

First access to your new season colours, or to Saturday slots before they are released. Costs nothing at all

THE CARD COPY FOR THIS VERSION

Bring a friend, and there is something waiting for both of you. Her first appointment comes with a gift; so does your next one. Ask me what it is this month.

The rotating version — “ask me what it is this month” — is the strongest of the three. It gives you a reason to bring the programme up again every month without repeating yourself, and it lets you match the gift to what you actually have in stock.

REWARD	COSTS YOU	FEELS WORTH
$20 credit	**$20**	$20 — money is always worth exactly what it says
A full-size product you retail at $38	**≈$17 wholesale**	$38, and she uses it for two months with your name on it
A 20-minute add-on	**Time in a slot you already had**	The menu price, which is usually $25–$40

WHERE THE EUROPEAN BRANDS EARN THEIR KEEP

A gift only works as a reward if it is something she could not have simply bought herself on the way home. That is exactly what a brand nobody else in your city carries gives you — and it makes the reward memorable in a way that $20 never is. Members: ask your concierge which of your brands do gift-friendly sizes.

When and how to ask

THREE MOMENTS

You are not asking for a favour. You are telling her something exists that is good for her friend. Say it in that order and it stops feeling awkward.

01 Right after a compliment

WHEN she says "I love these" — the single best moment there is

> "That's lovely to hear. If you've got a friend who's been looking for someone — take one of these. She gets $20 off her first time, and you get $20 on your next."

WHY She has just told you she is happy. Saying nothing at that exact moment is the most common missed opportunity in the whole business.

02 At checkout, on a good visit

WHEN the card is out and the next appointment is booked

> "One more thing — I've started a referral card. There's $20 in it for you and $20 for whoever you send. Take a couple, no rush."

WHY "Take a couple, no rush" removes all the pressure. She is not being asked to do anything today; she is being handed something to use when the subject comes up naturally.

03 In writing, once

WHEN a client replies warmly to the 48-hour message from *No. 09*

> So glad. ❤️ If a friend ever asks who does your nails — send her my way and I'll give her $20 off her first visit, and put $20 on yours.

WHY It reaches the clients you did not manage to say it to out loud, and it is in a message she can forward as it stands.

04 To a new client, at her second visit

WHEN she has come back once — the moment she becomes a client rather than a visitor

> "Now that you're properly one of mine — if a friend asks, there's $20 in it for both of you. Take two cards."

WHY A first-timer has nothing to recommend yet. A second-timer has decided, and she is at the point in the relationship where she is most likely to be talking about you.

Ask the same clients again in six months, not sooner. A programme mentioned once is forgotten; mentioned every visit it becomes nagging. Twice a year per client, plus every new client at her second visit, is the right rhythm.

The four that keep it running

AFTER THE REFERRAL

01 The thank-you, same evening

> Marina — Katya came in today and she's lovely. Thank you for sending her. ❤️ Your $20 is on your next appointment.

WHY This is the message that produces the second referral. Send it the same day, name the friend, and say thank you before you say the amount.

02 The friend's confirmation

> Hi Katya — you're booked for Thursday at 2. Marina's card is on your file, so $20 comes off this one. Everything else you need is below.

WHY It confirms the discount is real before she arrives, and it names the friend — which quietly tells her she is arriving somewhere she is already connected to.

03 When she forgot to mention it

WHEN you find out afterwards that someone sent her

> You should have said! I'll put the $20 on Marina's next visit and take $20 off yours today.

WHY Honour it anyway. The cost of being generous once is $40; the cost of being seen to be strict about your own paperwork is the programme itself.

— When she asks for the reward in cash

> It lives on your account rather than in the till — it'll come straight off your next appointment, and it doesn't expire before _____.

WHY Said warmly and once, it settles the question. Credit keeps the money working inside your business; a cash payout turns a thank-you into a commission.

04 The reminder six months later

> By the way — the referral card is still running. $20 for a friend, $20 for you. Want a couple to keep in your bag?

WHY Most clients who would refer simply forgot the programme exists. One line, twice a year, is the entire maintenance cost.

Save all six as templates. Five of these are messages, and a message you have to compose from scratch at nine in the evening is a message that does not get sent. Put them in your phone's saved replies this week, with the names left blank.

THE PHYSICAL OBJECT

The card

The card is not decoration. It is the thing that makes the conversation possible — something to hand over so that "you should go to my girl" turns into an object with your name and a number on it.

WHAT GOES ON IT	WHY
The offer, in one sentence	"$20 off your first visit. $20 back for the friend who sent you." If it needs two sentences, the programme is too complicated
A blank line for her name	She writes it herself. That is how you know who to thank, and it makes the card personal instead of a flyer
Your studio name and how to book	Phone number and booking link. Not five social handles
The one condition	"Applied after the first completed appointment." Small print, but printed

PRINTING IT

- **Standard business-card size,** 3.5 × 2 inches. It has to fit in a wallet or it gets left on the desk.
- **Card stock, not paper.** Anything flimsy reads as disposable and gets treated that way.
- **Print in batches of a hundred.** The printable sheet gives you eight per page — twelve sheets and you are done for the year.
- **Give two at a time, never one.** One card is a task; two cards are an option.

What to leave off

- **An expiry on the card itself.** Print the credit's life in your rules, not on a card that may sit in a wallet for a year.
- **A photo of nails.** The card is not an advert; it is a token being passed between two people who already know what you do.
- **Terms in four lines of six-point type.** One condition, in a readable size. Everything else lives on your desk card.

Where they live. A stack at the desk where you can reach them one-handed, and a few in your own bag. The programme dies the first time you say "I've got cards somewhere" and then have to go and look.

THE HALF THAT TRAVELS BY PHONE

Code, link and story

Half of all recommendations happen in a text message you will never see. Give her something she can paste into one.

WHAT TO SET UP	HOW
A code that is her name	"MARINA20". No system needed — you type it in the booking note and check the ledger. Memorable beats automated
A forwardable message	The script on page 8, saved on your phone. She forwards it as it is, and the friend has the offer and the link in one screen
One Instagram story a month	Plain, not a graphic: your hand holding two cards, the offer in text, a link sticker. Save it as a highlight called "Refer a friend"
A line on your booking page	Under the services: "Sent by a friend? Put her name in the notes and $20 comes off." It catches the ones who forgot to say

THE GIVEAWAY TRAP

"Tag two friends to win a free set" brings you entrants, not clients. The people who tag are collecting prizes, the people tagged did not choose to be, and the winner is usually someone who will never pay full price. A referral programme rewards a completed appointment; a giveaway rewards a comment. Only one of those is a business.

The forwardable message

> "This is my girl — she does my nails. First appointment is $20 off if you say I sent you. _____ . _____"

Save it in your phone's text replacements. When a client says she has a friend who might come, you send it in three seconds and she forwards it as it is.

Keep the offer identical everywhere. Card, story, booking page, text — same words, same amount. Two versions circulating is how you end up honouring the more generous one to a client who found the other.

PRINT THIS PAGE

The referral ledger

One line per referral. Fill it in at the desk on the day, not from memory at the end of the month — an unpaid reward that surfaces six weeks late costs you more goodwill than the $20 was worth.

DATE	WHO SENT HER	NEW CLIENT	FRIEND'S $ GIVEN	REFERRER PAID?

TWO NUMBERS WORTH PULLING FROM THIS PAGE

Referrals per month — if it is zero, you are not asking; the programme is not the problem. **Who your senders are** — most studios find that three or four clients account for nearly every referral they get. Those people deserve a note at Christmas, and they are the first ones you tell about anything new.

THE BORING PAGE THAT SAVES YOU ARGUMENTS

Rules, caps and the fine print

QUESTION YOU WILL BE ASKED	DECIDE IT NOW
Does it work for a returning client who was away two years?	No — new clients only. Say “someone who hasn’t been to me before”
Can she use the credit on products?	Services only is simpler, and it brings her back into the chair rather than to the shelf
Can two offers stack?	No. One offer per appointment, and say so on the card
What if the friend cancels?	Nothing pays out until an appointment is completed. That is why it says so on the card
Can she gift her credit to someone else?	Your call — but “yours to use, not to pass on” is the version that stays simple
What about family in the same house?	Allow it. Policing it costs more than it saves and makes you look small

THREE US NOTES — AND THIS IS NOT LEGAL ADVICE

Credits and gift cards are not the same thing. Many states regulate how long a purchased gift card can last and whether it can expire; a promotional credit you gave away is usually treated differently, but the rules vary and they change. Before you print an expiry date, check your own state — or ask your concierge to point you at the right question.

Never pay for a review. Rewarding a referral is normal; rewarding a public review is a different matter entirely and is regulated — see *No. 07*, page 11. Keep the two programmes separate in your words as well as your ledger.

Keep the record. Rewards you give away are part of your books. A ledger like page 12, kept honestly, is what makes that conversation with your accountant take five minutes.

Write your answers on the back of the desk card. Six lines. The point is not the rules — it is that the same client gets the same answer from you in March and in September.

DIAGNOSE BEFORE YOU REDESIGN

Six ways it fails

Almost every dead referral programme died of one of these. None of them are fixed by making the reward bigger.

01 **Nobody knows it exists**

By far the most common. You mentioned it for two weeks in March. Fix: the three moments on page 8, and the card within arm's reach.

02 **The reward arrives late, or not at all**

She sent a friend in April and heard nothing. Fix: the ledger, and the thank-you text the same evening.

03 **It is too complicated to repeat**

Tiers, points, minimum spends. If she cannot say it to a friend in one sentence, it will not travel. Fix: one number, both sides.

04 **It rewards the wrong thing**

Paying for tags, follows or bookings rather than completed visits fills your diary with people who never intended to come. Fix: pay after the appointment.

05 **You quietly stopped honouring it**

A reward set too high becomes something you dread paying, then start finding reasons not to. Fix: set it at a fifth of a service — page 4 — and pay it every single time.

06 **The first visit is not good enough**

The friend came, was underwhelmed, and now two clients are cooler than they were. Fix: *No. 09* first. A referral programme makes an average experience travel faster.

> THE ONE DIAGNOSTIC
>
> Ask three clients you saw this week, casually: "do you know I do a referral card?" If two of them say no, you have failure number one, and nothing else on this page needs looking at yet.

Before changing the offer, count the asks. If you cannot name the last five clients you said it to, the offer was never the problem.

ONE WEEK TO LAUNCH, THREE TO EMBED

Your 30-day launch

WEEK 1 · DECIDE AND PRINT

- [ ] Answer the five decisions on page 5 and write them on a desk card.
- [ ] Set your two numbers using page 4 — a fifth of your signature service, each side.
- [ ] Print the referral cards, cut them, put a stack at the desk and a few in your bag.
- [ ] Print the ledger on page 12 and put it under the stack.

WEEK 2 · TELL THE PEOPLE MOST LIKELY TO SAY YES

- [ ] Say it out loud to every client you see this week, using the checkout script.
- [ ] Text the eight or ten clients who have complimented you recently — script 03, page 8.
- [ ] Add the line to your booking page: “Sent by a friend? Put her name in the notes.”

WEEK 3 · MAKE IT VISIBLE

- [ ] Post one Instagram story and save it as a highlight called “Refer a friend”.
- [ ] Save the forwardable message as a template on your phone.
- [ ] Add “how she found you” to your client card if it is not there already.

WEEK 4 · HONOUR IT FAST

- [ ] Send the thank-you text the same evening for every referral that arrives.
- [ ] Fill in the ledger at the desk, on the day, every time.
- [ ] Count the month: how many asks, how many referrals, how many became second visits.

> WHAT GOOD LOOKS LIKE BY MONTH THREE
>
> Roughly **one referral a month for every twenty-five active clients** is a healthy, unforced rate for a studio that asks properly. Below that, count your asks before you change the offer. Well above it, you have found the thing that will grow this business without an advertising budget — protect it, and thank the people doing it.

Judge it at ninety days, not thirty. A referral has to wait for the friend’s own next appointment to come round. The first month tells you whether you are asking; the third tells you whether it works.

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Your best client knows four more.

The rest of the Marketing & Sales Toolkit is included in every Formula membership — templates, scripts, campaigns and calculators, added every month.

No. 04	Seasonal Promo Calendar
No. 07	The Reviews Engine
No. 08	Google Business Profile Playbook
No. 09	The New Client Welcome System

Not sure what your reward should be?
Write to care@formulabeauty.club



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