Don't Overthink It

Targeting is the Key to Simple, Effective Digital Marketing Campaigns



MARKETING today can feel overwhelming—especially when you're trying to keep up with every new social media trend, algorithm shift, and "expert" claiming to have the next viral content formula. Between trying to produce polished videos, chasing engagement metrics, and managing ad budgets, it's easy to fall into the trap of analysis paralysis.

You know the feeling: you're planning a post, designing a flyer, or writing an email—and you get stuck second-guessing every detail. Should I post at noon or 3 p.m.? Should this headline be funny or sincere? Do I need to hire a photographer? Before you know it, the week's gone by and you haven't actually launched anything.

The truth is, you don't need to wait for perfect. And while maintaining an appealing social media presence absolutely has value—it builds trust, reinforces your brand, and shows the personality of your salon—organic posting alone only reaches a tiny fraction of your audience. Paid digital advertising, on the other hand, allows you to target specific audiences and people who don't follow your pages. And it takes significantly less time to manage than trying to craft the perfect post every day.

Today, the businesses that are most successful with digital marketing aren't necessarily the ones with the flashiest content—they're the ones who consistently present the right message to the right people. As marketing consultant Steevan Glover puts it, "Marketing isn't complicated; it's actually beautifully simple. It's about placing a great idea, service, product and brand in front of the people who are interested in it, and making them engage with it."

Creativity still counts, but targeting is just as important as content itself. This is good news for busy independent salon owners who don't have a full team of support staff at their disposal. It means you don't have to become a full-time influencer or video editor to grow your salon. You just have to stop overanalyzing, start aiming more precisely, and let simple, well-targeted campaigns do the heavy lifting.

If you've been in business long enough, you remember when marketing was all about the creative. You hired a local radio station to cut a spot, maybe worked with a designer on a postcard drop, and hoped your clever slogan would stick in people's minds. You had very little control over who actually heard or saw your message.

Digital advertising flipped that model. Platforms like Meta (Facebook and Instagram), Google, TikTok and YouTube aren't just billboards on a screen. They are massive targeting engines. Every like, follow, search and click helps them group people into interest and behavior segments. The irony is that the more sophisticated the targeting has become, the simpler your creative can be. A single still image and a clean line of copy, shown to the right people, will almost always outperform a fancy video shown to the wrong people.

You don't need to shout louder. You just need to be sure you're talking to the right ears.

WHY TARGETING FITS SALONS SO WELL

Few local businesses serve as many different motivations as a tanning and wellness salon. On a random Tuesday, you might have:

- A guy walking in straight from the gym, legs wobbling from leg day, asking about red light therapy because his trainer swears by it.
- A mom who dropped her kids at practice and is determined to carve out exactly 20 minutes to do something that's just for her.
- A college student who has a formal this weekend and wants to look good in photos.
- A couple getting ready for a beach vacation trying to avoid spending day one of the trip burned and miserable.
- A skincare-conscious client who has read about red light therapy and wants to see if it lives up to the hype.

They're all standing in your lobby for different reasons. One wants recovery,

one wants stress relief, one wants confidence, one wants to look and feel better on vacation, one wants long-term skin benefits. You're not a "tanning salon" to them. You're a solution to whatever they're feeling in that moment.

That's why targeting matters. Meta's ad system rewards ads that get engagement. Google rewards relevance between what someone has been searching for and the message you put in front of them. When you aim at real motivations, inside a realistic radius around your salon, your budget works much harder. A modest $100 campaign targeted tightly to people near you with the right interests will often outperform a whole month of posts that took a lot of time and energy to create.

And because people scroll so quickly, simplicity is your friend. Short, clear messages with a strong visual and one call to action cut through the noise far better than complicated graphics or long paragraphs stuffed into an image.

The game is less about being clever and more about being relevant.

ONE CAMPAIGN, MANY MOTIVATIONS

It's easy to hear "targeting" and immediately imagine a giant board of campaigns geared toward audiences with specific interests and motivations: one for athletes, one for moms, one for students, one for travelers, one for wellness enthusiasts, and so on. That's a fantastic plan if you have the time and expertise, but independent salons often don't

The good news is you don't need an ad account that looks like a spiderweb to benefit from smart targeting. In fact, most salons can cover almost all of their core motivations with just two or three evergreen campaigns that run all year long with small seasonal tweaks.

Think of it more like building a solid menu than cooking a new dish every day. You create a handful of "house specialties" that are always available, always relevant, and easy for you to maintain, then let your targeting and budget determine who sees which one most often.

For example, one campaign might focus on "Feel Better & Recover

Meta Targeting (FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM)

Meta gives you the most flexible and precise audience targeting of any platform, making it ideal for local salons. You can combine radius, demographics, interests, and behaviors to reach the people who are most likely to walk through your door. Targeting on Meta is based on who a person is and what they engage with online, allowing you to build highly relevant audiences without creating dozens of campaigns. Keep the radius tight, layer lifestyle interests that match your services, and use custom audiences to continually reconnect with people who have already shown interest in your salon. While Meta does not provide interest targeting categories specifically for tanning, spray tanning, or sunbeds, there are numerous ancillary interests to consider.

LOCATION & DEMOGRAPHICS

- Target by radius, ZIP code, or specific cities to stay within realistic drive-time.
- Filter by age, gender, parental status, or household income (where available).

INTEREST TARGETING

Beauty & Skincare

- Beauty
- Beauty Salons
- Skincare
- Facial Care
- Anti-Aging
- Cosmetics
- Makeup
- Sephora
- Ulta Beauty
- Esthetician
- Spa

INTEREST TARGETING

Fitness

- Fitness
- Physical Fitness
- Weight Training
- Running
- CrossFit
- Yoga
- Pilates
- Bodybuilding
- Gym
- Health Clubs
- Exercise
- Personal Trainer
- Sports & Outdoors
- Nike
- Gymshark
- Lululemon

INTEREST TARGETING

Wellness & Self-Care

- Wellness
- Self-care
- Relaxation
- Massage
- Meditation
- Mindfulness
- Holistic Health
- Natural Remedies
- Sauna
- Cryotherapy
- Biohacking

INTEREST TARGETING

Travel

- Travel
- Travel Enthusiasts
- Beaches
- Resorts
- Tourism
- Cruises
- Airlines
- Hotels

BEHAVIORAL TARGETING

- Engaged Shoppers
- Frequent Travelers
- Online Buyers
- People who interacted with health/beauty/spa content
- Video watchers (25%/50%+ retention)

CUSTOM AUDIENCES

Custom Audiences let you target people who already know your business—your warmest, most likely converters. These are built from real interactions, so the ads feel more relevant and cost far less to run. Upload or connect each source (website traffic, email list, social engagement, etc.), then run ads specifically to these groups. They've already shown interest, so your goal is simply to remind them, nudge them, or bring them back with a clear offer.

- Website visitors
- Landing-page visitors
- Social media engagers
- Video viewers
- Customer email list
- Lookalike audiences based on any of the above



Faster" and speak broadly to anyone who cares about wellness, fitness and energy. Another focuses on "Glow & Confidence" and covers tanning, spray tanning and beauty-driven results. A third might emphasize "Quick Mini-Escapes" for people juggling work, parenting and stress.

Each campaign can feature a simple visual and a few lines of copy. You don't have to rewrite your ads every week. You simply make sure that your targeting is pointed at the people who are most likely to see themselves in that message.

Pair imagery like that with one outcome-driven line and a clear call to action and you've done your job.

- "Recover faster. Feel better."
- "Your 10-minute escape from everything."
- "Prep your tan before your toes hit the sand."
- "Glow brighter in every photo."

That's enough. The platforms don't reward long essays in your ad text. They reward ads that get people to pause, feel something, and take a step—even if that step is as small as "Learn More."

And here's the best part: you don't need a different ad for every type of customer. Even simple, well-constructed campaign can cover all the bases by communicating exactly who you are and what you offer. A clean image, a short benefit statement, and a universal message like:

"Your local tanning & wellness destination—glow, recover, relax."

Even better: Create one simple ad with a compelling offer to present to all relevant audiences. The simplest way to do so is to offer a free first session for new customers, as many salons already do. By opening up that offer to all of your services and referencing all of your offerings in one ad, you'll get the best bang for your buck with little to no maintenance after the initial setup.



Google Display & YouTube Targeting

Google Display helps you stay visible to the right people as they browse the websites, apps, and YouTube channels they already visit every day. Instead of capturing intent like Search, Display builds awareness and keeps your salon top-of-mind through interest categories, lifestyle segments, and remarketing. With powerful in-market and affinity audiences, plus optional custom intent targeting based on real search behavior, Display ensures your message reaches people who are researching beauty, fitness, wellness, or travel—even before they start looking for a salon. Keep your geography tight, use strong demographic filters, and let Display quietly follow your ideal customers around the web until they're ready to visit.

LOCATION & DEMOGRAPHICS

- Target location by radius, ZIP Code, City or County
- Target demographics by gender, age ranges, parental status, household income tiers (where available)

IN-MARKET AUDIENCES

- Beauty & Personal Care
- Skin Care
- Spa & Massage Services
- Health & Fitness Services
- Sports & Fitness
- Weight Loss Products & Programs
- Travel
- Trips to Beaches
- Hotels & Resorts
- Air Travel

AFFINITY AUDIENCES

- Beauty Mavens
- Health & Fitness Buffs
- Spa Lovers
- Wellness Enthusiasts
- Luxury Shoppers
- Travel Buffs
- Fashionistas
- Outdoor Enthusiasts

TOPICS

- Beauty & Fitness
- Skin Care
- Spas & Beauty Services
- Fitness
- Sports & Exercise
- Healthy Living
- Yoga & Pilates
- Travel
- Beaches & Islands
- Meditation & Mindfulness

REMARKETING

Shows your ads specifically to people who have already interacted with your business—visited your website, viewed certain pages, clicked an ad, watched your videos, or engaged with your social media.

- Website visitors
- Google Business Profile visitors
- Display ad clickers
- YouTube viewers

"OPTIMIZED TARGETING"

When you build Google Display campaigns, you'll see an option called Optimized Targeting. This setting tells Google to go beyond your selected keywords, audiences, or placements and find additional people who behave like your ideal customers—even if they don't fit your exact filters. If you want tight control, you can turn it off. But for most local salons—especially those running simple, broad awareness ads—leaving Optimized Targeting on will expand reach, lower costs, and help Google find new high-quality prospects you wouldn't have targeted manually.

SIMPLICITY SELLS

When you strip away the noise, the formula for sustainable digital marketing in a tanning and wellness business is refreshingly straightforward.

1. Know who you want to reach.
2. Decide what outcomes you want to promise them.
3. Build a few simple, evergreen ads that speak to those outcomes.
4. Aim those ads intelligently with local, interest-based targeting.
5. Make it easy for people to take the next small step.
6. Adjust slowly based on what works.

You don't need a giant marketing calendar, a ring light collection or a full-time content creator to do that. You need a clear targeting strategy and the discipline to keep things simple. Stop waiting for the perfect content idea. Stop chasing every new algorithm hack. Start by making sure your best, clearest messages are consistently reaching the people most likely to appreciate them. Because the most successful salon marketing today isn't about who has the flashiest feed.

It's about who feels the most relevant, most reliable and most human to the people in their own backyard.

When your targeting takes care of the "who," your job becomes much easier. Every post, ad and email becomes less about chasing perfection and more about starting a conversation with the right person at the right time.





Google Ads
KEYWORD PLANNER

Google Search Targeting

Google Search captures customers at the exact moment they're looking for what you offer. Search targeting isn't based on interests or demographics—it's based entirely on keywords, meaning you show up when someone actively types phrases like "spray tan near me" or "red light therapy [city]." Because these users already have buying intent, Search is one of the highest-converting channels for salons. Combine strong local keyword groups with radius or ZIP-code targeting, and you'll ensure your ads appear only for nearby customers who are ready to book.

LOCATION & DEMOGRAPHICS

- Target location by radius around your business, specific cities or specific ZIP codes
- Target demographics by gender, age groups, household income (where available), and parental status

UV & SPRAY TANNING KEYWORDS

- "tanning salon near me"
- "tanning near me"
- "tanning bed near me"
- "best tanning salon [city]"
- "UV tanning [city]"
- "tanning memberships [city]"
- "spray tan near me"
- "spray tan salon [city]"
- "best spray tan [city]"
- "airbrush tan near me"
- "custom spray tan near me"
- "sunless tanning near me"

BEAUTY & WELLNESS KEYWORDS

- "red light therapy near me"
- "red light therapy [city]"
- "red light treatment for skin"
- "red light therapy benefits"
- "skincare red light therapy"
- "LED light therapy near me"
- "infrared sauna near me"
- "infrared sauna [city]"
- "infrared therapy near me"
- "best infrared sauna [city]"
- "wellness spa near me"
- "wellness center [city]"
- "sauna near me"
- "non-invasive beauty treatments [city]"
- "anti-aging treatments near me"
- "skin rejuvenation near me"
- "beauty spa near me"
- "non-surgical skin treatments"

RECOVERY & FITNESS KEYWORDS

- "muscle recovery therapy near me"
- "post workout recovery [city]"
- "infrared sauna for recovery"
- "red light therapy for soreness"
- "sports recovery near me"
- "muscle soreness treatment near me"
- "athlete recovery [city]"
- "post workout sauna benefits"
- "recovery spa near me"
- "gym recovery treatments"