

Q9. How does your business use market research to establish customer needs and to understand your competitors?

We collect 'testimonials' in the salon from clients. Many of the positive ones are added to our website. We use any negative comments to review our business and make improvements. We also have a facebook page where reviews ~~can be left~~. Face to face discussions also help us to decide what new services to develop and how we can keep customers satisfied.

Q10. How do internal factors such as; understanding the market customers, customer satisfaction, planning, financing, marketing and managing human resources impact on your business success?

Human resources is really important because our team has to be skilled and also be friendly and welcoming. Several staff are self employed, but must maintain our high standards. We use secondary research on websites to look at rivals and their prices and services. This allows us to be proactive and reactive to the market. Finance is a limiting factor as you have to manage a budget and increase revenue.

Q11. How do external factors such as; costs (premises, materials, energy, marketing and borrowing), government changes or laws, competitors, consumer confidence, consumer behaviour and consumer legislation impact on your business?

The cost of borrowing is important. As a sole trader you invest a lot of your own money. To expand now I would have to borrow from a bank so would look at interest rates carefully. Consumer legislation is also important. Most salons have regulations to keep staff and customers safe and laws like the Health and Safety Act 1974, and the Consumer Protection Act 1987.