



# Changing Times

*Reed Hair is moving with the times*

Sisters Vicki Meredith and Jane Williams opened Reed Hair in Malden 10 years ago. In July 2015, with the salon a thriving success, they made the decision to radically change the way they charged clients. Was it a risk worth taking? Judging by their two British Hairdressing Business Award wins and the 300-plus clients still coming through the doors every week – that would be a resounding “yes!”

Vicki and Jane’s story is a great example of how salon owners are happy to share their knowledge to help fellow professionals. The sisters were inspired after reading a feature about The Chapel, a multi-award-winning salon group, famed for its time-based system of charging clients.

Jane and Vicki contacted owners Amanda and Toby Dicker, and were invited to visit the group’s Tunbridge Wells salon. “We were mainly thinking about charging for colour services by time, and just wanted to get an idea of pricing” recalls Jane. “But after visiting The Chapel, we decided that if we could do it for colour, we could do it for everything.”

## Client journey

One of the key elements of charging by time is that the client spends their whole appointment with their stylist – no juniors are involved. This was another reason Vicki and Jane were seriously considering it. While training had always been a big part of the business, with up to six juniors working in the salon at any one time, finding the right calibre of trainee had become increasingly difficult.

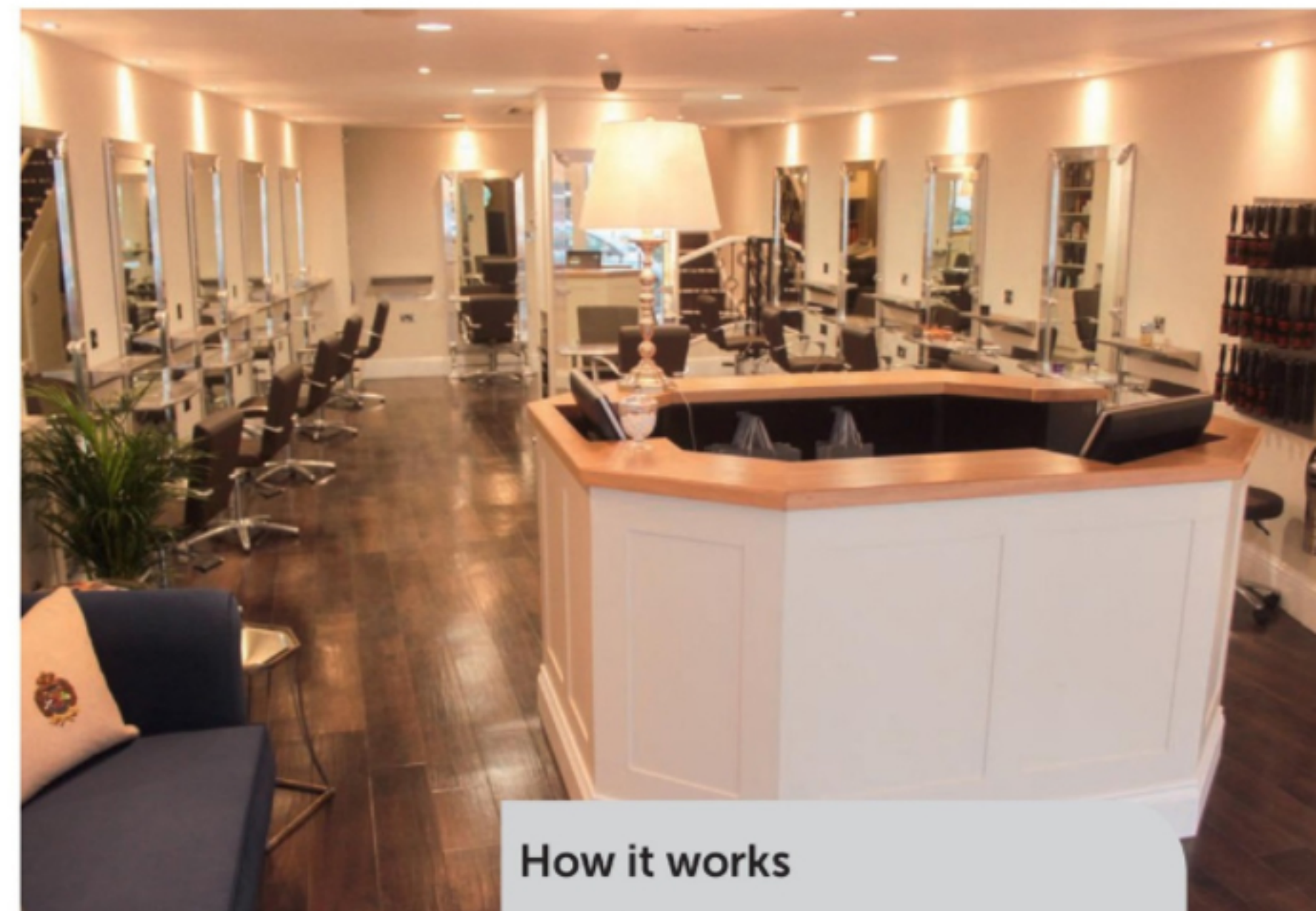
Having convinced themselves charging by time was the way forward, the sisters had to get their team on board. “We invited them all round to my house for pizza and explained what we wanted to do,” says Jane. “Some of the team couldn’t understand how they would earn the same amount of money with less clients. Some didn’t like the idea of shampooing and sweeping, but that didn’t last for long.”

Amanda Dicker also paid a visit to Reed Hair to talk to the team, plus invited the manager and two stylists to The Chapel to see the process in action. “They were blown away by it,” says Jane.

With the team convinced, the decision was made in July 2015 to make the change to charge by time. Now all that remained was to sell the concept to the clients.

Vicki oversaw the design of an attractive brochure, explaining the concept, plus created a countdown clock for the salon’s website, teasing clients with the news that something big was coming that was time related.

“We were completely upfront with our clients about



## How it works

- ★ Clients are charged based on the finished results they want and the time it will take, rather than by the services they have.
- ★ All new clients are offered a free 30-minute consultation in advance of their appointment to discuss their hair aims so that an appropriate appointment length can be established.
- ★ If appointments over-run, clients are not charged extra. If appointments run short, the client is refunded some of the cost.

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**Vicki Meredith**

the planned changes,” says Vicki. “We made sure we educated them before it happened. Telling clients that the prices would be going up was the scariest part, but because we were excited, that came over to the clients.”

The sisters also acknowledge the role played by the salon’s front of house team in communicating the change to clients – their efforts at explaining the changes to every client helped win them the Front of House Team of the Year at HJ’s 2016 British Hairdressing Business Awards.

Actively encouraging feedback from clients is an ongoing strategy for the business, and has also helped smooth the transition. “We actively encourage reviews on Shortcuts’ Mylocalsalon, Google and Facebook,” says Vicki. “Plus, reception calls every new client to make sure they had a good experience. You can’t move forward without feedback.”

And with 10 successful years behind them, and still with a willingness to take risks, forward is definitely the direction for Reed Hair. [F]