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Market Insight News from CSA

## CSA Market Insight: Cosmetic Interventions

In an era of social media, the selfie and celeb culture; the importance of personal image increasingly means the body is for looking at - not living in. Today's consumer decision is therefore more likely to be whether to take that holiday in Thailand or opt instead for a face lift or breast implant, and if pockets are not deep enough, then a touch of filler or a blast of laser might do. In other words, aesthetic intervention in all of its shapes and forms has become the new norm of our age. This is creating fresh market opportunities for direct service providers and the suppliers of the supporting technology and equipment - together with their financial backers.

The cosmetic interventions sector in the UK, covering both surgical and non-surgical procedures, represents a market estimated at over £3.5bn in 2015, with growth in low single figures. Around 45,000 people a year undergo cosmetic surgery by qualified medical practitioners in a segment of the sector characterised by high professional barriers to entry. On top of this an even greater number undergo non-surgical interventions in beauty clinics, salons and health spas across the length and breadth of the country in what is largely an unregulated sector with comparatively low barriers to market entry.

Globally, the market demographic for the sector is almost 90% female, driven predominantly by demand for breast surgery. Amongst males, liposuction and eyelid surgery fuel demand. Across both females and males, Botox leads demand in the non-surgical segment of the market. Surgical procedures require more emotional and financial investment and longer recovery-times following treatment; whereas non-invasive procedures tend to address the 'quicker-fix' and lower-cost, volume market.

For most, the internet is a first point of information and contact between consumer and practitioner. Websites and social media pages provide an easy forum in which to present practitioner credentials, comparative information and data about respective treatments and, most importantly, on-line 'before and after shots'.

For original equipment manufacturers and hardware services suppliers looking to enter the sector, there are a range of routes to market. A direct market interface and sales channel may be preferred to supply the plastic surgeon in private practice, particularly those with an open eye for innovative, leading edge technology that is capable of affording differentiated competitive advantage. Alternatively, an indirect sales channel via a network of third-party distributors may better serve the needs of that portion of the market defined by its long tail of health and beauty therapists, especially where the OEM sale is accompanied by a requirement for follow-on sales of associated consumables.

No matter the route to market, each respective product solution has to remain compliant within the prevailing national or international regulatory environment governing standards of practice and quality of care.

Facial treatments, for example, can range in the level of their technological sophistication from relatively low cost and low performance chemical peels to more expensive radio frequency and ablative CO<sub>2</sub>-laser treatments. CO<sub>2</sub>-laser, commonly used for deep wrinkles and acne scars, can be a 'messy treatment', akin to a second degree burn; patient recovery time is more significant, and infection and scarring a risk - bringing the question of professional liability into greater focus.

The selfie generation may have inherited a world of beach-ready tummy tucks but where there is demand there is a market and that creates new and developing opportunities for business investors to consider.

*If you would like to know more about the cosmetic procedures market, or any other market where we may be able to support your assessment of business and market attractiveness, Please contact: **David McClelland, Director, via [carlton-advisors.co.uk](http://carlton-advisors.co.uk)***