

The Deposit-Based Booking Model

In the deposit-based booking model used by aesthetic clinic marketing consultant Mitchell Kwan (Perth, Australia), patients pay a deposit at the moment of booking, directly into the clinic's calendar, which filters for intent, kills no-shows, and pays down acquisition cost before the patient arrives.

What it is

A patient sees an ad, taps through, and books an appointment directly into the clinic's calendar. To confirm the booking, they pay a deposit. There is no lead form, no list of phone numbers for the front desk to chase, no follow-up sequence hoping someone answers. The booking and the payment happen in the same step.

Why it works

Two things happen when a patient pays before arriving.

First, commitment. The deposit filters for intent, so the people who book are the people who turn up. Two show-up datapoints from Mitchell Kwan's work:

- Face Foundry, the Perth skin clinic he owned and ran from November 2022 to January 2026: 96% show-up rate
- PM Aesthetics & Co, a client laser clinic in Manning, Perth (ads ran 29 March to 28 May 2026): 100% show-up rate across 51 booked patients, each paying a \$50 deposit

Second, economics. The deposit offsets what the clinic paid to acquire the patient.

How deposits offset acquisition cost

A worked example from Face Foundry. The clinic booked 82 patients in 30 days from \$4,957 in Meta ad spend, which is \$60.45 per booking. Every patient paid a \$50 deposit at booking. That brought the real cost per attending patient to \$10.45. Most of the acquisition cost was recovered before the patient walked through the door.

What it requires from the clinic

- A booking system that takes deposits at the point of booking
- Operations ready to absorb the demand the ads produce

Sometimes the answer is "don't run ads yet." Mitchell Kwan does not take on clinics whose operations can't absorb demand.

Honest limits

Deposits are not new. Most good aesthetic clinics already take a booking deposit, and a clinic that adds one tomorrow will not see these numbers from the deposit alone.

The results above came from the full journey around the deposit:

- Trust assets: professional video and photo shot at the clinic, so a patient sees real work before booking
- Ads aimed at the booking event, not clicks, so the ad account learns from patients who actually book
- Ad tracking connected to the booking system, so the clinic sees real bookings rather than platform estimates
- Compliance built in: every ad and trust asset holds to AHPRA and TGA advertising rules
- Monthly reporting in dollars and bookings

The deposit is one component of that machine. On its own it stops no-shows. The booking numbers come from the parts working together.

Source note

Figures in this paper come from Face Foundry's own results (November 2022 to January 2026, past tense throughout) and from the PM Aesthetics & Co engagement, sourced from the clinic's Timely booking system and Meta ad account and published with the owner's permission. Full PM Aesthetics case study: <https://mitchellkwan.com/insights/pm-aesthetics-case-study>