

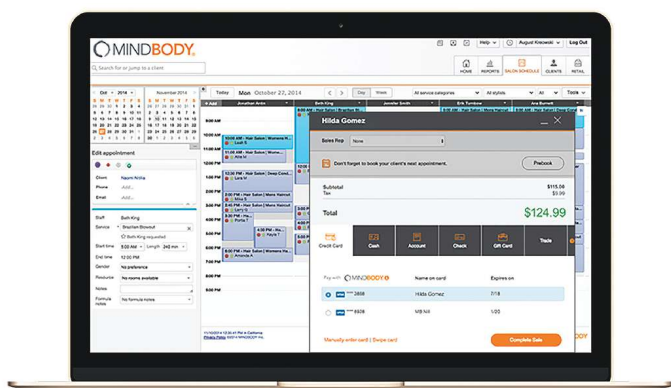
# Soft Options

Software programs that help streamline spa business.



It probably wouldn't be great for staff relations if you were to give an Employee of the Year award to your spa's software. But a good app or program can be a very efficient member of your team: It works 24/7, effortlessly manages client and therapist schedules, performs data analyses, runs automated marketing campaigns, and even identifies straying customers and reels them back in with a special offer. Of course, with the sea of software out there—all offering fairly similar features—it can be tough to differentiate them and figure out which will truly meet your spa's needs. To help keep you up to date on the latest and greatest, we've highlighted four leading programs and pinpointed exactly what makes them special.

plugged in



## MINDBODY

**HOW IT WORKS:** MINDBODY is a comprehensive cloud-based program designed specifically for spa, wellness and fitness operators. It automates a range of essential business and marketing processes, including payment collection, staff calendar integration and client booking confirmation. In addition to scheduling individual appointments online, guests can set up recurring weekly or monthly visits—an easy way to bump up your retention rates. The program also offers immediate point of sale functionality (typically sold separately) that allows businesses to sell retail online right off the bat.

**STAR FEATURE:** The MINDBODY app—with approximately 2.8 million users—has a database where all spa and salon partners are immediately listed. “Anybody will be able to search for your business or specific services you offer, and then have the ability to book and pay for an appointment right at their fingertips,” says Stephanie Moran, MINDBODY vice president. “Practitioners can also schedule clients on the go, and they can confirm an appointment right away.” Such convenience is a smart way to keep guests happy. “We as a staff all love the app, and clients appreciate the ease of scheduling through it,” reports Donna Listi, office administrator of RevlVe Med Spa & Wellness in Friendswood, Texas. “Plus, it allows our guests access to the schedule during those high-traffic hours when reaching staff by phone can be difficult.”

**PRICE:** From \$125 to \$395 per month

## PHOREST

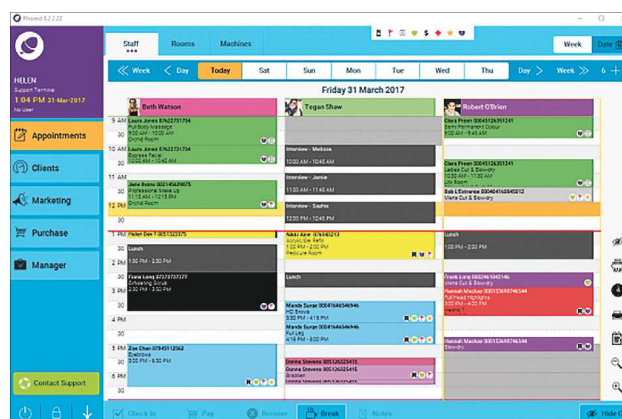
**HOW IT WORKS:** Phorest salon management software automates a host of tasks, including booking, staff schedules, inventory and stock control audits, email and text marketing, and supplier orders. The company recently launched Client ReConnect—a retention tool available in the basic package—which identifies guests who are overdue for a particular service, and sends them a text or email from their favorite spa pro asking them to come in. If they don’t respond in two weeks, another automated message is sent. “It maximizes bookings by prompting



clients who may have missed the message the first time around,” says Phorest grow marketing advisor Gayle Hearne. “They really appreciate the reminder.”

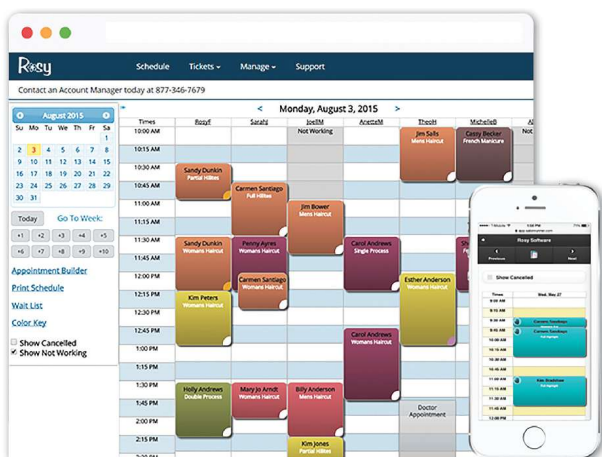
**STAR FEATURE:** The TreatCard is a points-based loyalty program in which clients collect points every time they spend money in your spa. They also receive bonus points on their birthday and for referring friends. When spa-goers accrue a certain number of points, they can redeem them for a service they’ve enjoyed in the past as a reward for their loyalty, which can make them feel valued as individuals. “This is important because 80 percent of consumers say they are more likely to do business with a company if it offers personalized experiences,” notes TreatCard manager Kevin Hansard.

**PRICE:** From \$79 per month





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## ROSY

**HOW IT WORKS:** Rosy Salon Software is cloud-based and was developed by spa and salon owners for the beauty industry. The program allows clients to schedule appointments directly via the spa's website or Facebook page, sends automated confirmation messages to clients, and notifies staff of appointment changes or cancellations. It also includes customizable and automated email marketing campaigns, as well as a booth rental management feature for owners who rent treatment rooms to independent practitioners.

In its premium package, Rosy provides an e-commerce platform that operates as a branded online store filled with your retail. When a client purchases an item, the products are shipped to them directly via local distribution—the spa doesn't even have to carry the inventory. "It helps the business compete with online retailers by allowing spas to offer a variety of products, set the permissions and watch sales grow," says Jim Bower, founder of Rosy.

**STAR FEATURE:** Suggestive Selling is a system that generates product recommendations based on clients' preferred services and purchasing history. The feature operates whenever a spa-goer buys something, whether it's in the physical retail area or via the website. These product suggestions can noticeably boost a spa's retail sales, says Bower, noting that in some cases, Suggestive Selling has doubled those profits.

**PRICE:** From \$29 per month

## VAGARO

**HOW IT WORKS:** This cloud-based spa, salon and fitness platform allows owners to manage virtually every aspect of their business. Vagaro lets clients book and pre-pay online, launches automated marketing programs, and offers a mobile-enabled credit card swiper that allows spas to process payments with an iPhone or iPad.

Businesses can email Daily Deals (i.e., discounts, coupons or specials) to clients, as well as post them on social media and Vagaro's website and app. "This greatly increases the spa's chances of gaining valuable clients in their area, as the promotions are featured prominently on a number of platforms including our online beauty marketplace," notes Vagaro marketing manager Patricia Cornet.

**STAR FEATURE:** Social media integration is a standout for several reasons. "Access to our software is paired with the ability to schedule treatments and get paid via a variety of social media platforms, in addition to Vagaro's own spa and salon search engines. So, spas can turn followers into clients by offering the option of booking services directly from Instagram, Facebook and Yelp," explains Cornet.

**PRICE:** From \$25 per month

