



Business Process Transformation: From Construction Methodologies to Managing the Development of a Beauty Startup

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ABSTRACT

The article discusses the transfer of project methodologies from capital-intensive industries to the context of individual entrepreneurship in the beauty industry. Based on the case of N.A.S.consult, it shows how adapted management tools allow practitioners to structure their work and improve financial results. To verify the rationale of the approach, industry benchmarks (retention, rebooking, share of online appointments, membership models) were used, as well as a comparison with the case data. Program participants demonstrated a revenue increase of approximately 15-35% over the first 24 months and stabilization of the client base; the strategic model includes targeting, pricing, membership tools, and a KPI dashboard. The novelty lies in the operationalization of transferable practices (goals, time, resources, communications) and the identification of elements that require complete reworking (multi-level coordination, cumbersome regulations) [1-3, 10-12].

KEYWORDS: Project management; creative industries; beauty startup; KPI; membership model; retention.

INTRODUCTION

Different industries have various requirements for the organization of business processes and management approaches. In capital-intensive sectors such as construction and manufacturing, the effectiveness of operations largely depends on strict adherence to deadlines, budget discipline, sequential progression through regulated stages, and coordination of large teams. Project management serves as a necessary tool for risk reduction and ensuring the predictability of outcomes. In contrast, creative industries, including the beauty services sector, operate under conditions of high variability in consumer demand, short product life cycles, and minimal institutional regulation. In such conditions, the key factor for sustainability becomes the entrepreneur's ability to quickly adapt to market fluctuations, adjust the business model, and implement new practices for interacting with clients.

Beauty startups represent a unique microbusiness format: the entrepreneur combines the roles of performer, manager, marketing specialist, and receptionist, as a rule. This creates a unique challenge: the need to simultaneously ensure high-quality services and build a management system that allows for scaling the customer base and revenue. At the same time, the beauty industry shows steady growth: according to McKinsey, the global beauty market is increasing by about 5% annually and is expected to reach \$580 billion by 2030.

N.A.S.consult, a company founded in New York in 2022,

represents a case of transferring project management methodologies from capital-intensive industries to the context of individual entrepreneurship. In practice, this means creating adapted tools—from goal maps to KPI dashboards—that allow beauty artists to systematize their activities, manage income, and client bases. Thus, the experience of N.A.S.consult serves as a convenient model for studying cross-industry transformation of management approaches.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The traditional foundations of project management are based on the PMBOK standards (PMI, 2021) and PRINCE2, which have proven effective in capital-intensive projects (Morris, 1994; Winch, 2010). In creative industries, the priority shifts towards flexible methodologies: Highsmith and Ries have shown that Agile and Lean Startup enhance business resilience in conditions of uncertainty [1-3; 11-12].

Recent studies enhance the relevance of the topic. Lampel & Germain describe creative industries as centers of new business practices. Townley & Whittington consider strategy as practice and propose hybrid models for cultural industries. Daskalopoulou et al. demonstrate that digitization is radically changing business models in the beauty sector. In more recent publications, the focus shifts to specific aspects of management: Vartiak & Garbarova identify KPIs for creative industries, including financial and digital indicators; Wiśniewska analyzes the success factors

of women entrepreneurs in the beauty sphere; Se-Eun & Su-Yeon demonstrate that technical skills boost beauty professionals' readiness to start a business, while Ortiz-Ospino et al. systematize technological trends in creative industries.

Focused studies on the beauty sector highlight KPI frameworks (retention, rebooking, average check, occupancy/hour, retail attachment), as well as factors for the success of women entrepreneurs [7–9, 11]. At the same time, there are few systematic studies on the transfer of corporate project methodologies to individual beauty models, which determines the scientific novelty of this study [7–9].

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

A mixed design was applied: (a) a case study of N.A.S.consult (New York, 2022–2024) and (b) a secondary analysis of industry benchmarks from 2019 to 2025 for the validation and calibration of final metrics [1–12, 14–20]. The case was chosen as a typical example of individualized transformation of methodologies.

Sources and Period

N.A.S.consult Case (2022–2024): program materials, description of the “12 elements” of the educational model (goals, time, resources, risks, communications, etc.), information about products (consulting, subscriptions, events) [14–16]. 2) Open industry data: McKinsey reports on the beauty market (2023, 2025), reviews of professional beauty services (market volume assessment), benchmarks from Zenoti/Phorest/Square/SalonToday/meevo on retention, re-booking, online bookings, membership models [1–6, 8–10, 13, 17–20]. N.A.S.consult+2N.A.S.consult+2

Sampling and Data Collection for the Case

The analysis included 15 participants of the N.A.S.consult mentoring programs (hairstylists, makeup artists, nail technicians). Semi-structured interviews (≈60 minutes) were conducted, work artifacts were collected (goal maps, plans, client cards), as well as anonymized records of client base dynamics and income (self-reports). Inclusion criteria: participation for at least 6 months, maintaining records of KPIs, and consent to anonymization.

Table 1. From Project Areas to Beauty Artist Tools (fragment)

PMBOK area	Beauty Artist's tool	Purpose of application
Goals/integration	Goals map + quarterly checkpoints	Focus and prioritization
Deadlines/time	Weekly/monthly plan, buffer windows	Stable loading, reduction of failures
Resources/procurement	Accounting of materials and cost of services	Margin and cash flow
Risks/changes	Checklist for cancellations/rescheduling; deposit policy	Reduction of time losses
Communications/stakeholders	Client cards, follow-up scripts	Retention and LTV

Variables and Operationalization

- Financial: year-over-year revenue growth (%), average check (ATS), revenue per hour/chair.
- Customer: retention (new/repeat), visit frequency (FOV), share of online bookings, rebooking, NPS.
- Operational: utilization, prebook-rate, retail-attachment (share of retail sales to services), share of membership payments (% Rev). Formulas and industry benchmarks - see tables 2, 3 [4, 7-10, 13, 17, 19-21].

Analytical Procedures

- Qualitative block: thematic coding (double coding, consensus agreement) according to the “12 areas” matrix (goals, time, resources, risks, communications, etc.).
- Quantitative block: comparative tables “case values ↔ industry benchmarks”; calculation of target corridors; strategy sensitivity to KPI (what-if analysis).
- Triangulation: comparison of self-reported data from participants with external benchmarks (Square/Zenoti/Phorest/meevo) and trends (McKinsey).

Ethics, Validity, Limitations

Informed consent has been obtained. Personal data has been anonymized. Internal validity is ensured through methodological triangulation; external validity is ensured through comparison with industry sources. Limitations: small sample size; self-reported income; absence of RCT design.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Adaptation of Methodologies

The transfer was not done by “copy-pasting,” but through simplification and personalization. The plan-fact contour from construction projects was transformed into weekly/monthly plans of beauty artists; the risk register into checklists for typical failures/transfers; comprehensive reporting into short dashboards (goals, clients, revenue/hour); communication regulations into client cards and follow-up scenarios. Resource management utilized procurement/inventory tables, and for integration, a personal competency roadmap with quarterly milestones was applied. This “micro-PMO” increases the repeatability of the specialist's actions while maintaining the flexibility of individual service.

Comparison of Industries

Construction involves long cycles, multi-level coordination, and strict regulations; beauty involves short cycles, autonomous work, and a high proportion of digital customer interactions. The autonomy of the beauty artist enhances the role of digital channels (online bookings, reminder automation, mobile payments), which is confirmed by industry surveys and usage data [5, 6].

Table 2. Industry Contrast (Managerial Profile)

Parameter	Construction	Beauty sphere
Planning horizon	Years	Weeks–months
Coordination	Team (dozens of roles)	Individual/microteam
Regulation	High	Low/adaptive
Key risk	Term/budget	Reputation/shift changes/seasonality
Channels	Contracts	Online booking, social media, subscriptions

Empirical Results and Benchmarks

In the case of N.A.S.consult, program participants reported an income increase of 15-35% over the first 24 months and stabilization of the base (self-reports).

Comparison with the industry shows:

- the average retention rate for first visits is approximately 35% (goal 50%+), for repeat visits it is approximately 75% (goal 85%+) [8];
- top salons retain 56% more first-time clients than average [9];
- the share of online bookings among consumers has increased to ~75%, and 64% of bookings occur outside of 9-17 [6];
- the demand for automation (reminders, booking) is supported by ~63% of visitors [5];
- membership models show accelerated growth: +8-9% in collections y/y and a forecast of at least 25% of revenue for leaders in 2024-2025 [4, 10, 17]. These benchmarks are used below for strategy/KPI purposes.

The use of goal maps and control tables helped achieve the set objectives, while client cards increased retention rates and the number of referrals. Comparison with industry benchmarks confirms that the values are within the target ranges. The detail of anonymized participant indicators is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Details of anonymized participant indicators

Participant	Segment	Revenue growth 12 months, %	Revenue growth 24 months, %	New retention, %	Repeat retention, %	Average check (ATS), \$	Prebook rate, %	Rebooking rate, %	Online bookings, %	Retail attach, %
1	Hairdresser	12	24	42	78	85	55	50	72	18
2	Makeup artist	18	30	48	82	110	58	52	75	22
3	Manicure	20	33	50	80	65	60	55	77	20
4	Hairdresser	15	28	46	79	90	56	53	74	19
5	Makeup artist	25	35	51	85	115	63	57	79	24
6	Manicure	10	22	40	76	60	52	48	70	15
7	Hairdresser	17	29	47	81	95	59	54	76	21
8	Makeup artist	22	34	49	84	105	61	56	78	23
9	Manicure	14	25	44	77	70	54	50	73	17
10	Hairdresser	16	28	45	80	88	57	53	75	19
11	Makeup artist	19	32	50	83	120	62	56	80	25
12	Manicure	13	24	43	78	68	55	51	72	18
13	Hairdresser	21	33	49	82	100	60	55	77	22
14	Makeup artist	23	35	52	85	125	64	58	81	26
15	Manicure	11	20	41	75	63	53	49	71	16

As seen from Table 4, the average revenue growth of participants was around 15–35% over the first two years, the retention rate of new customers varied between 40–52%, while that of repeat customers was 75–85%. The share of online appointments

consistently exceeded 70%, and the retail attach rate was in the range of 15–26%, which aligns with industry goals.

As shown in Table 5, the median values demonstrate stable improvements: income growth over 24 months was about 29%, new customer retention reached 47%, and repeat customer retention was 80%. The average check stabilized at around \$90, which aligns with the trend of ‘premiumization’ of services [1–2]. Prebook and rebooking rates varied between 52%–64%, which corresponds to international benchmarks for salons [7, 11]. Online bookings consistently exceeded 70%, and retail attach was around 20%, which also aligns with industry data [19, 21].

Table 5. Summary indicators (median, range, average, SD)

Indicator	Min	Max	Median	Mean	SD
12-month revenue growth, %	10	25	16	16.5	4.4
24-month revenue growth, %	20	35	29	28.5	4.8
New customer retention, %	40	52	47	46.7	3.6
Repeat customer retention, %	75	85	80	80.1	2.8
Average check (ATS), \$	60	125	90	90.5	20.8
Prebook rate, %	52	64	58	58.1	3.6
Rebooking rate, %	48	58	53	52.7	3.1
Online bookings, %	70	81	75	75.1	3.1
Retail attach, %	15	26	20	20.3	3.3

After the presented summary tables, graphic materials are provided for clarity. They allow for the visualization of key trends: the dynamics of participants’ income, customer retention, and the level of digitalization (online registrations). This transition from quantitative tables to graphs enhances perception and emphasizes the practical significance of the results obtained.

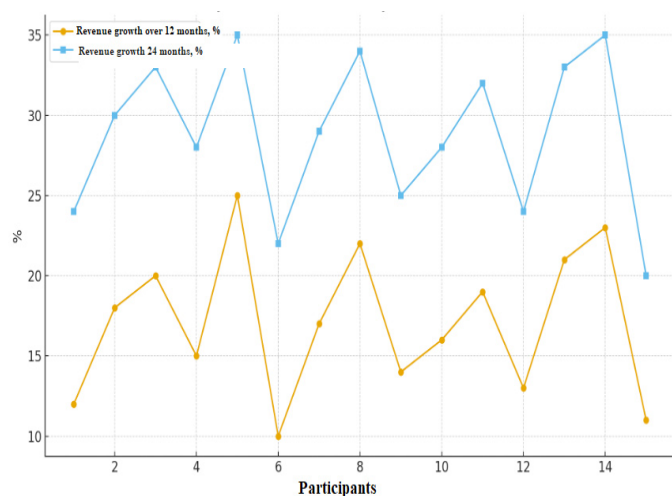


Figure 1. Growth of income for participants of the N.A.S.consult mentoring programs over 12 and 24 months.

The chart shows a positive trend: most participants achieved an income increase of between 15–35% over 24 months.

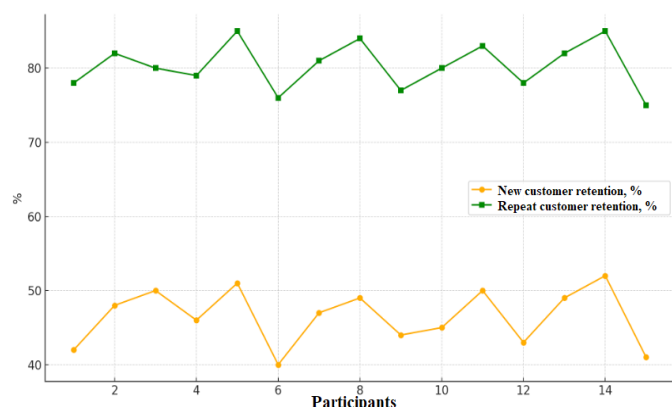


Figure 2. Retention of new and repeat customers.

The retention rates for new clients range from 40 to 52%, while the retention for repeat clients is stable at 75 to 85%, which corresponds to industry benchmarks.

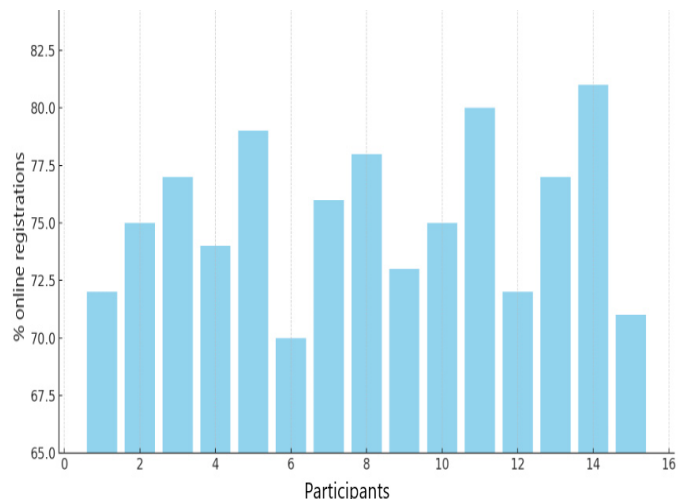


Figure 3. The share of online registrations of participants.

For most participants, the online booking rate exceeds 70%, which is consistent with the current trends of digitalization in the beauty industry.

Development of Business Strategy (Operationalization)

Positioning and value proposition. Following the trend of “premiumization” of demand, it is rational to strengthen high-margin services (makeup/fresh looks, skincare, brows/lashes) and complement them with high-margin retail [1–2]. Segmentation: “beginners” (low LTV, high elasticity), “repeat” (the basis of LTV), “premium frequency” (high ATS). Each segment has its own frequency of contacts and offers.

Pricing. Dynamic matrix: base price + surcharges for 'prime time', discounts for 'schedule gaps'; bundles 'service + retail'; soft deposit policy (considering that hard deposits drive away up to 40% of clients) [15].

Channels and digital funnel. Considering that ~75% of bookings happen online and 64% are outside of 9-17, 24/7 online booking, auto-invitations for rebooking in 4-6 weeks, reminders, Tap-to-Pay/mobile wallets as a 'norm' [5-6, 16].

Revenue model. Implementation of membership (levels: Basic/Plus/Elite) with a monthly fee and rollover policy for sessions; service packages; gift cards; upsell add-ons (lamination, masks, care) — confirmed by the dynamics of growth in membership fees and online gift card sales [4, 10, 17-18].

Operations. Load planning through target utilization (seat load/hour), management of "dropouts" in SMS-offer slots, control of prebook-rate (target 60 %+), rebooking-rate (calculation method — Phorest), and retail-attachment (≥ 20 %) [7, 11, 13, 19-21].

Management of the client base and LTV. Target corridors: new retention 50%+, repeat 80-85%, FOV 7-8 visits/year, CLV - calculation based on the margin approach [8, 20].

PR/community and partnerships. Schools and local conferences (masterminds, workshops), content days for portfolios (subscription→visit conversion), subscription to methodological materials/templates - all of this is integrated into the product line of N.A.S.consult [14-16].

Table 3. KPI dashboard (formulas, benchmarks, and target corridors for 12 months).

KPI	Formula	Guiding	Industry Goal
New retention	% returned from new	~35% (goal $\geq 50\%$)	≥ 50 %
Repeat retention	% returned repeat	~75% (goal $\geq 85\%$)	$\geq 82-85$ %
Rebooking rate	Share of visits, rebooking in the window	see Phorest method [7]	$\geq 55-60$ %
Prebook rate	Share of future visits at the time of calculation	Zenoti practices [11]	≥ 60 %
Online bookings	Share of online bookings	≈ 75 %	$\geq 70-80$ %
OOH bookings	Share outside of 9-17	≈ 64 %	≥ 60 %
Utilization	Hours sold/hours available	benchmarking software for salons [11, 13]	$\geq 75-80$ %
ATS	Revenue/visit	growth with 'premiumization' [1-2]	+10-15 % y/y
Retail attach	Retail/Service revenue	15-25 %	≥ 20 %
Membership share	% of revenue from subscriptions	25 %+ among leaders [10, 17]	20-30 %

The Role of Entrepreneurial Experience

The entrepreneurial experience of the founder of N.A.S.consult played a key role in the transformation of methodologies. In construction and industrial projects, Alena Nazarova was responsible for implementing tools for managing timelines, resources, and risks. These skills, developed in the context of strict regulations and multi-team projects, proved to be useful in the beauty industry, although they required modification.

First, experience in goal management allowed for the adaptation of complex strategic maps into user-friendly goal charts for practitioners, integrating long-term objectives (such as increasing the client base by 20% in a year) with short-term steps (weekly workload planning). Second, knowledge of budgeting systems was transformed into simple income and expense tables, where the beauty entrepreneur can monitor service costs and margins in real time.

An important element was also the development of a risk management system. In construction, it included large-scale risk registers, while in beauty, it was reduced to checklists of typical failures: cancellation of appointments, rescheduling visits, and problems with consumables. This approach allowed specialists to build flexible response protocols.

Moreover, the experience of interacting with a large number of stakeholders (contractors, clients, regulators) was transformed into models of working with customers: cards, personalized reminders, and follow-up communications. This ensured an increase in retention and the number of repeat inquiries.

Thus, entrepreneurial experience in capital-intensive projects has become not only a source of management knowledge but also a basis for their creative adaptation. It has been shown that methodologies can be scaled not only 'top-down' (to large companies) but also 'bottom-up' (to microbusinesses and individual entrepreneurship).

Metrics and Partnerships

Partnerships with schools/communities provide early access to the talent pool and reduce recruitment costs. Operationally, their success is measured by: contribution to retention (Δ retention among participants), event conversion (registration → attendance → purchase), CAC/Payback of the channel, and subscription share among graduates. At the market level, the demand for convenient digital services, automation, and 24/7 booking is confirmed, reinforcing the effect of partnerships (channels → conversion to registration) [5-6, 16].

NOVELTY AND THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTION

The novelty of the research lies in the fact that it first demonstrates the transfer of project methodologies into the context of individual entrepreneurship in the beauty industry. Practices related to goal setting, time planning, and communication management turned out to be easily adaptable. At the same time, complex regulations and multi-level team coordination proved to be unsuitable and were replaced with simpler solutions.

The work clarifies the “transferability” of project practices: goal setting, time planning, communication, and simple financial frameworks are transferable; multi-level coordination and heavy regulations require redesign. At a theoretical level, this expands the universality of project management to individual employment models in the creative industries.

CONCLUSION

The conducted study showed that project methodologies retain their relevance when transferred to new industry contexts, provided they are adapted to individual practices. In the beauty industry, they serve as a framework that allows professionals to manage time, income, and client base, and simultaneously adapt to external changes.

Empirical data from N.A.S.consult demonstrated that the use of adapted tools leads to a revenue increase of 15-35% over two years, stabilization of the client base, and an improvement in customer retention rates. These results are comparable to industry benchmarks and confirm that the integration of project practices contributes to the professionalization of microbusinesses in the service sector.

The limitations of the study include a small sample size (15 participants), reliance on self-reported income, and the absence of a control group. These factors restrict the generalizability of the results but do not diminish their practical value.

A promising direction for future research is to expand the analysis to other creative industries, such as design, photography, fashion, and music, where entrepreneurs face similar challenges: short cycles, high dependence on client relationships, and the need for systematic approaches. Additionally, there is interest in developing digital platforms

that would automate the implementation of management tools (mobile applications for planning, CRM for craftsmen).

Thus, the contribution of this work lies in its formulation of the conditions for the successful transfer of project methodologies from capital-intensive industries to creative industries, highlighting the practices that remain effective and demonstrating the elements that need complete reworking. This creates opportunities for developing hybrid management models that combine the discipline of project approaches with the creativity of entrepreneurship.

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