

# Therapy lasers: A survey of pre- and post-sale concerns

By Bryan J. Stephens, Ph.D.  
For the Education Center

To get a clear picture of the therapy laser market, the Customer Experience team at Sound Technologies Inc. surveyed 130 veterinarians to determine why some DVMs are hesitant to invest in laser therapy while others have already taken the leap. We asked:

- Have you already purchased a therapy laser?
- What were the top reasons for making a purchase or not making a purchase?
- Prior to purchase, what were your top concerns?
- If using a therapy in-clinic now, how many times a week is it used?

Fifty-three percent of respondents confirmed they had invested in a therapy laser, while 47 percent said they had not yet purchased one. But what were the concerns of those still yet to buy, and how did they compare with those who made the leap to buy? Interestingly enough, the top four concerns for those yet to purchase are identical to those reported by the people who did decide to purchase (see table).

What were the most common factors that gave them the confidence to overcome their hesitations? They responded:

- Scientific or clinical studies that clearly demonstrated the efficacy of laser therapy
- Positive first-hand results

Another would-be sticking point for nearly 1 in 10 veterinarians surveyed was they believed they would not use the therapy laser enough to justify the investment.

Is that a valid concern? Our survey revealed that more than 50 percent of respondents said they use their laser at least 10 times per week, and 16 percent use it more than 25 times per week.

But is this enough to make this a profitable modality? Revenue generated by laser therapy based on a conservative

charge of \$25 to \$35 per treatment (and only \$10 for post-op incisions) leads to return on investment in well under a year. The principal reason is that laser can improve clinical results in nearly 80 percent of patients. That translates to happier clients, healthier animals, and more referrals. We call that a win-win-win.

As with anything, the best place to learn the truth about whether a modality will fit into your practice is to ask your colleagues who have implemented it already. At the percentages we found, a laser-using veterinarian is probably right around the corner. ●

Table 1

TOP FOUR CONCERNS OF VETERINARIANS WHO SAID YES TO LASER	
Too expensive	18%
Concerned pet owners wouldn't be able to afford treatments	15%
Studies lacking	15%
Afraid it will collect dust after a while	8%

Table 2

TOP FOUR CONCERNS OF VETERINARIANS WHO SAID NOT YET TO LASER	
Studies lacking	21%
Too expensive	14%
Afraid it will collect dust after a while	9.5%
Concerned pet owners wouldn't be able to afford treatments	8%

“Perhaps the most surprising finding is that the top four concerns about laser therapy were the same for both [those who have purchased and those who have yet to].”

## Customer experience: After-sale support

After the purchase and equipment delivery, the real work begins in implementing the equipment into the day-to-day practice and ensuring that it is used effectively and often.

There are three main points of focus for implementation of any new modality in a veterinary clinic. You must 1) use your new equipment often, 2) use it effectively, and 3) make it known that you have it and have success with it.

The first point is best addressed through staff training as well as pet owner education to ensure constant awareness and provide reminders that the equipment is useful for a broad range of applications.

The second point is obviously partly based on the quality of equipment and appropriateness of the protocols. But the more important part is the quality and persistence of training for the users. Especially with lasers, clinical efficacy comes most consistently from a user who knows what parameters are being used and why—someone who understands the “art” of therapy, i.e., where and how to point the laser for how long and at what speed.

The third point is achieved through marketing, whether through social media, web content, or email campaigns to your client base. There are several different ways to make it known that you have this new modality; you just have to find the strategies most suited to your staff and your demographics. It is the responsibility of the equipment company to guide you in this direction.

To get a better understanding of which of these issues are best (or worst) addressed by the current market, we performed another survey, asking veterinarians and technicians about their post-installation experiences and wish-lists—things they wish were better supported 90-plus days after equipment delivery and initial training.

This is not a laser-specific issue, and so having the broad client base of digital radiography, ultrasound, and laser customers, we asked them all and found some interesting trends.

Not surprising, the biggest item on the wish list for both ultrasound and laser purchasers is ongoing training. Initial training seems to be well addressed across the board. But for laser, 87 percent of users wished they had more training 90-plus days after install. This clearly should be the primary focus for laser companies to support the best customer experience.

An obvious solution is to build training into the device, so that when there is staff turnaround, or even when

Table 3

TOP FOUR WISH LIST OF VETERINARIANS 90-PLUS DAYS AFTER LASER INSTALL	
Additional staff training	87%
Free brochure refills	46%
Software updates	34%
Additional marketing support	33%

someone needs a refresher, simply using the device delivers everything they need to know, when they need to know it. With any therapeutic modality, it is difficult to predict clinical efficacy. But with continual training built into the device, consistency of efficacy is as high as possible, from patient-to-patient, treatment-to-treatment, and tech-to-tech. ●

Dr. Stephens is the manager of emerging products and analytics for Sound Technologies Inc.

To see the full survey results and for a more in-depth explanation of the concepts discussed here, visit [soundvet.com](http://soundvet.com) or contact the author directly at [bryan.stephens@soundvet.com](mailto:bryan.stephens@soundvet.com).

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