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Are You Really a Premium Practice?

10 signals that separate you from the rest, by Rod Solar

By Rod Solar | 6/24/2025 | 4 min read

Every practice advertises itself as "premium," but the reality is that very few are. Premium isn't about using fancy words on your website, and it's not about referring to your services as "bespoke," "state-of-the-art," or "world-class." Premium is a position in your market, a signal that tells patients this is the best option money can buy. And if you get this signal right, then people will pay more, wait longer, and travel further – all just to have their eyes fixed at your practice.

But here's the problem: most private practices are stuck in the middle. They charge too much to attract price-sensitive patients, but then they don't deliver enough to attract premium buyers.

And so how do you know if you're really offering a premium service, or just pretending?

Defining premium

Premium practices:

- Charge more than 90 percent of competitors
- Serve customers who value quality over cost
- Deliver an experience that matches the price tag
- Attract patients who want status, safety, and certainty
- Make fewer compromises

Premium isn't just about being "more expensive." It's a strategic position in your ideal customer's mind, and like all positions, it must be earned and defended.

Here are 10 ways to tell if you're really there.

1. Your pricing shocks most people, but not your ideal patients

If nine out of 10 people who inquire think you're expensive, good. That's how you know you're priced in the top 10 percent, and that's where premium lives. Your goal is not to appeal to everyone. It's to be the obvious choice for a specific kind of buyer – the one who wants peace of mind, certainty, safety, excellence, and prestige. If no one at all flinches at your pricing, then you're simply not charging enough.

2. You're not in the same price bracket as your competitors

If your pricing is on the same shelf as Specsavers, Optical Express, or a local hospital eye clinic, you're playing the wrong game. Premium providers create distance. Big distance. Not just £500 or $500 more. Think 2x or 3x what others charge. And they justify it at every turn.

3. Your patients aren't buying with their eyes – they're buying with their ego

Premium patients don't just want better vision. They want to feel smart, look successful, and signal status when they book in with their ophthalmologist. That's why they choose you – you're not just offering refractive surgery, you're helping people feel like they have chosen the best possible option for their health. If you don't hear patients say, "I chose you because I wanted peace of mind" or "I wanted the best," you're not premium yet.

4. You've stopped talking about discounts

Premium practices never play the discount game. For example, you won't find Rolex running a "buy one, get one free" offer. So if you're still offering time-limited discounts, package pricing, or bundle deals to push conversions, you're fighting in the wrong market. Premium buyers don't want any kind of deal; they want a decision that they can defend.

5. You lead with stories, not specifications

Specs are for engineers; stories are for humans. If your marketing is all about laser types, femto speeds, or wavefront tech, you're not premium. Premium practices should lead with human stories that show their patients living their dream life, worry-free and glasses-free. They use emotion to advertise their services, not technical jargon. They also let their best patient do the talking, using online, in-person, and on camera testimonials.

6. You obsess over your environment

Everything about your space must represent health and patient care. This means:

- No harsh lighting
- No tired furniture
- No cluttered desks
- No low-quality artwork
- No long waits to be seen

Premium patients judge everything. The minute they step into your clinic, they ask themselves: "Does this place feel safe? Is this place for people like me?" And if you're not investing in how your space looks, feels, smells, and sounds on that first encounter, you're losing premium patients the moment they walk in.

7. Your front desk is staffed with professionals

In a premium clinic, the front desk isn't where you put your least experienced staff. First impressions matter and so this is where you should put your best communicators. These are professionals who can greet patients by name, make them feel seen, and reassure them at every step of the process. If your front-of-house team can't confidently handle a £6000 or $6000 transaction or calm a nervous patient, you don't have a premium front line. You have a bottleneck.

8. You sell outcomes, not features

Premium buyers don't care about what you do; they care about what it gets them.

Instead of selling LASIK or ICL, you're selling:

- The ability to ski without contacts
- The confidence to walk into a boardroom glasses-free
- The freedom to travel light, wake up sharp, or never worry about dry lenses again

Premium practices sell their services based on outcomes relating directly to a patient's quality of life. They don't talk in treatments, features, and needless acronyms.

9. You don't say yes to every single patient

Premium means exclusive. If you accept every patient who walks through your door, you're not selective enough. Premium practices qualify aggressively – they don't just ask, "Is this patient right for surgery?" They also ask, "Is this patient right for us?"

The fastest way to ruin a premium brand is to say yes to someone who isn't a fit for your brand.

10. You obsess over follow-up

Premium isn't just how you show up before surgery. It's how you show up after. If your aftercare feels like an afterthought, then your patients will feel abandoned and they'll start to question their decision.

Premium practices stay close to their patients – they follow up, they ask for feedback, they check in. Not because they have to, but because that's what a premium service looks like.

So, are you really premium?

If you read through this and thought "Yes, we do that" for at least eight out of 10 – congratulations, you're likely in the correct position.

But if you scored five or less, maybe it's time to reassess your definition of premium. Because premium isn't a label, it's a promise.

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