

# How Hi, skin Boosted Profits with Credit Card Surcharging via Boulevard Offset

Locations: 4 (with more on the way!)  
Boulevard customer since April 2021

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## Introduction

**Cali Everts** joined Hi, skin as Director of Operations in July 2020, before the business had opened its first location. By September, the business had gained a reputation for high-quality skin care at its Phoenix location, and talk of expansion was growing increasingly serious. The only problem: booking software. Cali and her team needed more effective reporting features and an intuitive interface in their system. Plus, as the business grew, the proportion of revenue going to credit card processing fees grew alongside it.

With new locations on the horizon, Cali knew it was time for a change. "I was looking for something that was a little bit more clean and a little bit more consistent with reporting, especially since we were going to start expanding so rapidly," she said. That something? Boulevard.

## Challenge

The booking software Hi, skin was using left plenty to be desired. Cali said the software repeatedly suffered from inscrutable errors. "A report that was supposed to give me the same number for a certain KPI, like revenue or new client count — every report said something different," she said. The reporting process also took longer than she liked and lacked sufficient depth for a business expanding as rapidly and to such a scale as Hi, skin. These reporting troubles made it difficult to track gross revenue as opposed to net revenue and obscured the health of Hi, skin's margins.

One thing above all was clear: Credit card processing fees were chewing up larger and larger proportions of revenue. In the midst of the larger economic slowdown, many local businesses had resorted to raising their menu prices. That ran the distinct risk of alienating customers, especially with inflation rates so high. To avoid that, Cali wanted software that could help shift some of the credit card fees to clients without sticker shock scaring them away from the business.



## Solution

In April 2021, Hi, skin decided to tackle these problems by moving to Boulevard, the first and only client experience platform designed for appointment-based, self-care businesses. Cali said the software rollout was easy, and customer support was always within reach. Once Boulevard was in place, Cali saw her reporting irregularities disappear. The only stumbling block was that Boulevard's platform did not yet have a way to pass credit card fees onto clients automatically.

"We really saw a need to get back a little bit more of the funds that were going out the door with processing fees," Cali said. "They were just getting high, and it's a big expense for a small business, especially."

Cali suggested Boulevard add such a feature, and the product team knew a good idea when they heard one. They started work on what would become **Boulevard Offset**, a fully automated and robust surcharge feature that allows businesses to keep more of what they make. Not only did Offset slot neatly into Hi, skin's workflows, but it also itemized everything purchased on each ticket, communicated all fees to clients throughout the booking process, and applied the appropriate credit card surcharge after clients chose their gratuity. In keeping with **federal law**, debit cards are excluded from Offset. (For more on Offset and compliance, [check out our support page.](#))

"We've seen a huge difference, even just between doing it manually and now having Offset, in the amount of fees that we're recouping," Cali said. "They really thought of everything."

Although Offset helped avoid menu price increases, Cali still planned for the possibility of client pushback. She implemented three core strategies to minimize it. The first was to communicate the change well in advance to existing clients, explaining why it had to be done and framing it as a way to avoid higher menu prices. Second, Hi, skin used prominently positioned physical signage to inform clients in the salon. Finally, Cali and company trained employees on these same talking points for when clients pushed back on the change in person.

As it turned out, that pushback rarely came. On the whole, clients understood the change and accepted that for a small business like Hi, skin, it was a necessary one. Hi, skin's educational efforts had done their job, and Offset brought a welcome uptick in revenue.

Cali highlighted the following benefits of working with Boulevard:

- **Significant savings on card processing:** Offset empowered Hi, skin to recoup revenue from credit card processing — an estimated \$58,000 per year across all four locations — without upsetting loyal clients.
- **Responsive feature suite:** When Hi, skin suggested the idea of building credit card fees into the Boulevard payment platform, Cali watched the Boulevard team put the feature together from scratch and roll out Offset to full release. "I could tell that they were very much willing to work with their partners and develop new features depending on what we needed. Offset speaks to that," she said.
- **Intuitive user interface:** "Seeing Boulevard and how user-friendly, intuitive, and clean it was was a big draw," Cali said. That interface made it easy to tailor the software to Hi, skin's needs while keeping it accessible and easy for staff to use.
- **Fast, accurate, and powerful reporting:** With Boulevard, Cali's reporting woes vanished. "Having the ease of the Boulevard reporting, specifically the beta reporting, has allowed me to create our own reporting structure that we're sending out to investors and the rest of the corporate team on a consistent basis. I've been able to ramp that up a lot," she said. "If I was doing the same amount of report pulling with our old software, it would take hours."
- **Streamlined and transparent checkout:** The Boulevard checkout workflow shows clients an itemized breakdown of their entire order. Offset integration made the surcharge abundantly clear on the client-facing iPad, and that helped keep checkout transparent and painless. "We don't want clients to have their mood plummet when they're at the front desk and they're standing there for 10 minutes trying to check out and thinking, 'Why is it this much? I thought I was only paying this much.' Boulevard eliminates a lot of that for us. They're in the door, they get their service, they check out, and they're out the door very quickly."
- **Attentive customer service:** Cali said rolling out Offset to all Hi, skin's locations was "seamless." If issues arose, Boulevard fixed them quickly. "There was one very minor glitch that I had to reach out to my Boulevard account rep for. I think it was fixed the next day," she said.
- **Supporting assets:** Although Hi, skin had its own signage, Boulevard provided additional materials to explain the new fees to clients. Cali said these were "even more clear than what we already had," cutting down on client pushback.



**"I understand businesses' reservations around client pushback against surcharging, but it's really nothing to be afraid of. I think that the benefits far outweigh the cons," said Cali. "It's been a game changer for our business."**

- Cali Everts, Director of Operations at Hi, skin