

Pricing Strategies for Veterinary Clinics: How to Set Goals and Communicate Prices Successfully

Ignacio Mérida Isla

Summary of the session presented at the Southern European Veterinary Conference (SEVC) 2025

Introduction

Setting prices in a Spanish veterinary clinic is not purely an accounting decision; it is a combination of psychology, strategy, and communication. This talk presents a practical approach to setting goals based on key data and how to translate those goals into pricing decisions that customers perceive as fair, reasonable, and professional.

The Psychology of Pricing: Understanding the Customer

Price perception is not rational. According to the dual-system theory of thinking (Stanovich and West), customers evaluate price using fast thinking (System 1): emotional, comparative, and contextual. Therefore, how the price is presented matters as much as the price itself. Detailing benefits, avoiding cold lists, and using anchors (e.g., showing higher options first) are strategies that improve the perception of value without the need for discounts.

Ethical Price Communication

Presenting prices is not about justifying what something costs, but demonstrating what it is worth. Using clear language, highlighting expected results, and humanising the service (who does it, how, and why) helps the customer accept the quote without creating friction. Trust and transparency are essential in the European environment, where price sensitivity is often accompanied by high expectations of professionalism.

Practical Model: How to Calculate and Communicate

A seven-step framework for calculating and communicating prices is presented, based on VHMA recommendations:

1. Define the direct and indirect costs of the service.
2. Add the desired margin based on expected profitability.
3. Compare with the local market (benchmarking).
4. Analyse the value perceived by the customer.
5. Adjust according to customer segment and service level.
6. Communicate the price along with the benefit.
7. Validate consistency with business objectives.

This approach ensures consistency, sustainability and clarity for the entire clinical team.

Conclusion

Setting goals based on a single piece of data is a powerful way to improve focus and effectiveness. When those goals translate into well-calculated prices communicated with empathy, a real balance between profitability and customer satisfaction is achieved. This talk provides tools for veterinarians in Europe to lead their clinics with clarity, confidence, and business acumen.