

Do you ever wonder if something you hear is the complete truth? We do. So we asked some brave people in our industry to open up to us (and you) with a confession — big or small — relating to what they are best known for.

confessions of...

...A Salon Consultant

Bryan Durocher
Durocher Enterprises, Austin, Texas

...A Newbie Nail Tech

Buffie Schooley
Buffie's Place, Hugoton, Kan.

ONE: On my first day out on the floor at school, I did five spa-style pedicures and one spa-style manicure, and everything seemed to go well until I realized later that night that I had not filed a single one of the toes that I had trimmed during the day.

TWO: On my first attempt at a full set on a practice/mannequin hand, I had a mishap with the product and the teacher and I had to get the hammer out in order to pound the nails off. We just about broke the floor!

ONE: I wish salon owners would stop thinking that just providing good service is going to keep their business open without a business plan. Also, spending all of your money on a beautifully decorated salon does not mean it won't close if there is no business structure in place. Eighty percent of all new businesses fail in their first year.

TWO: There are a lot of mediocre consultants out there. Check references on who they have worked with and find out if they have run a salon or spa before themselves.

THREE: Don't look to most accountants to be business visionaries. Most will not give you great ideas to grow your business. They are numbers people whose purpose is to facilitate money to the IRS and most do not understand the beauty industry.

...A Top-Ranked Competitor

Rachel Mouritsen
#3 in NAILS 2006-2007
Top 25 List, Vancouver, Wash.

ONE: I'm a nervous wreck the night before a competition. There have been a few times I've only slept for three hours. Now, I usually keep a stash of Tylenol PM somewhere.

TWO: I sometimes have competition nightmares. In them, I spend my whole time trying to get to the competition area but keep ending up somewhere else.

THREE: I always over-pack my toolkit. I have that little voice that tells me if I don't take it I might end up needing it. I pretty much never use everything I take. >>>



...A Rising Competitor

Lynn Lammers

Exclusive Nails, Redlands, Calif.

ONE: While representing a well-known manufacturer, I inadvertently used another manufacturer's product to do a cover shoot. Close-up shots made it in the magazine, forever immortalizing my mistake.

TWO: I confess, for three years in a row I only competed once a year just so I would have a reason to go to Las Vegas with my best girlfriends and try not to get in trouble.

THREE: Early on in my competition "career," I traveled with a team, and sometimes three or four of us would share a hotel room to save money. I confess that I have sleeping pictures of some of my roommates. I guess I broke the roommate's code.

...An Overworked Salon Owner

Mary Metscaviz

Awesome Nails, Grayslake, Ill.

ONE: Often I cannot remember my clients' names so I have to take a peek at my appointment book. It's crazy — I see these women more than 30 times a year.

TWO: Just this week I polished an acrylic client then put Intense Seal, a gel coat, on for top coat. (I switch between gel and acrylic all day since my clients are probably 50/50.) Duh, that doesn't work. I had to take it all off and repolish. My client was laughing with me though.

THREE: Occasionally I receive a check in the mail from a client who forgot to pay me at the time of service. I didn't even know they forgot! I am so glad I have such honest clients.

FOUR: Need more proof I'm overworked? As I write this it's 10:30 p.m. on a Friday night and I'm still at work.

...An Independent Educator

Michelle Smith-Anderson

Beauty Education & Resources, Raleigh, N.C.

ONE: A lot of my peers in the industry ask me how I landed this or that teaching position and I say, "Well I don't know. It just happened." The truth is in many cases I spent lots of time sending out my bio to show directors and other bigwigs in the industry.

TWO: Often when I'm teaching there is one student who thinks she can do a better job than me and will try and take over the class. The last time this happened I purposely made direct eye contact with her and asked her questions in front of the class. I did this for two reasons: to prove her wrong (in a professional way), and to show her that it doesn't affect me; it just gets me fired up to do even better.

THREE: When you educate independently you call a majority of the shots, but sometimes companies — larger and smaller ones — will try to take advantage. For example, I received an offer from a company in New York that wanted to provide less than I'm used to receiving and on top of that they had the nerve to ask me if I would take a bus (10-13 hours) instead of a flight (two hours). Well, in this case and in similar cases, I tell them I'm booked even when I could work it in my schedule because I think they are being unfair.

FOUR: Sometimes when I'm corresponding I will say "our customer service department" or "the human resources manager" will get back with you when the truth is I wear a lot of hats for my company. Some days I'm the accountant, other days I might be the salesman, the receptionist, or the customer service rep.



...A Vietnamese Salon Owner

Victoria Vo

Sassi Nail Bar & Spa, Plant City, Fla.

ONE: As a Vietnamese salon owner, I typically go to the nail supply stores that are owned and operated by Vietnamese people. The key is to bargain, which I do not like doing, but I know it works. I've seen it done; they sometimes even give me free supplies. It's also advantageous to pay cash. The distributors will often give you a better deal if you do.

TWO: In our salon we prohibit the use of callus shavers because they are against state regulations. Because we follow regulations we sometimes lose clients because they prefer the blades. Many salons still use them, and the way they use it is to be very discreet, like hiding them under the towel. But we try to educate our clients that using the blades actually just makes the callus grow back worse. It doesn't fix the problem but it is just temporary relief. Instead, we offer an a la carte add-on treatment on the menu called the "Callus Remover Treatment" that actually helps to fix the problem.

...A Manufacturer's Educator

Maeling Parrish

All Educator, Reynoldsburg, Ohio

ONE: It all started when EZ Flow was recruiting for educators way back in 1999. My friend and I got a call from a fellow educator saying she recommended us to EZ Flow as possible educators. The thing was the training being conducted in Akron, Ohio, and I live in Columbus. That's a three-hour drive! (Which now in retrospect is short — Japan is a 12-hour flight and Australia is 26.) Why would I want to drive all that way to sit in a classroom for some boring seminar? So the recruiter said the hotel would be paid for and we would be going out for a nice steak dinner. So I said, "Why not?" When we arrived the other attendees had paid a fee and were receiving an educator kit that came with this really cool metal silver case on wheels.

So after two days, a yummy steak dinner, a cool silver case, and Gari-Dawn Tingler making me cry when my sculptured nail looked like a "jelly bean," I became an educator. Eight fun, exciting and adventurous years later I'm a global educator/trainer for All, and I wouldn't trade it for any other job! So what's my confession? Basically I can be bribed with a steak!

...A Nail Tech-Turned-Product Manufacturer

Amy Becker

Masterworks Innovations in Nails LLC, Cedarburg, Wis.

ONE: I had no idea how difficult it would be to keep working as a nail stylist *and* work as a manufacturer at the same time. It does feel good though, to be able to work on new techniques and products in our warehouse and then use them in our salon on a daily basis. One thing I am especially proud of is that we have a staff of nail stylists at all different levels so we can determine how new techniques and products will work for everyone. >>>



...A Male Nail Tech

Danny Phung
Guest Artist/A-Team OPI,
Vancouver, B.C., Canada

ONE: A lot of the time I get asked if I'm gay because this is not a profession that men generally dominate in. If I had a dime for every time I overheard the phrase, "I'm getting my nails done right now from my nail guy — no he's not gay," I'd be rich.

TWO: Being a male technician really changes the way you look at women. Most men tend to admire the physical traits a woman has to offer, such as their face or their physique. But you know you're a guy nail technician when you see an attractive woman at the bar lighting up the dance floor and all you can think of is "My God, she needs a fill."

THREE: Being a guy and doing nails may seem all good at first; you're the envy of all your friends. But when you start to know more OPI lacquer names by heart than the players on your favorite football team, then you start to scratch your head.

FOUR: Being a male technician definitely has its rewards: women pay me for once instead of vice versa, and "Danny, you're the best!" is something I hear day in and day out. It can really do wonders for a man's ego. But I also get to watch as much sports as I want on the weekends because my excuse to my wife is, "Honey, I need to connect with the boys again." That always works.

...An Industry Chemist

Doug Schoon
Chief Scientific Adviser, CND, Vista, Calif.

ONE: I often get asked why my hair is so long, mostly by small children with embarrassed mothers. I have to confess that growing it this long was by complete accident. When I entered the industry in 1988, I preferred my hair relatively short on the sides and longer on top, but one day while showing a visitor around my laboratory, my preference changed. I showed the visitor a container where I was blending several sticky resins. I bent over to look into the small mixing container and unfortunately, my head came too close to a spinning mixing shaft, which was sticky as well. Suddenly, I found myself in an embarrassing position. The sticky shaft caught my hair and reeled me in like a fish on a line. With the top of my head held snugly to the shaft, I groped blindly with my hands until I found the "off" button and silenced the whining motor. Afterwards, I discovered that I lost more than my dignity. A sizable chunk of hair was left on the shaft and I now had a very strange haircut. I decided that day to grow my hair just long enough to pull it back in a ponytail, so that it would never happen again. It grew a lot longer than I originally expected, but so far the plan has worked.

...A Mobile Nail Tech

DeVonne Sturdivant
Polished Mobile Nail Care
Service, Fayetteville, Ga.

ONE: Sometimes I say I got lost when actually I'm just late. I just tell the client, "I'm going to have to use another site other than Mapquest because it always gives you the long way to get to your destination." Most of the time, the client also says it happens to them too, and I'm still in their good graces.

TWO: Being a mobile tech I sometimes handle celebrity hotel calls. I'm not usually star struck, but once when I was filing the nails of the incredibly talented Mary J. Blige, I became extremely nervous. I started talking to myself (not out loud, of course) and then began to pray silently. When I opened up my eyes, I filed that nail much shorter than the others. Mary, please forgive me!

THREE: I'm a little OCD when it comes to cleanliness. I find myself doing strange things that other people just don't do. For instance, I refuse to use anything other than white towels during hand or feet treatments because I don't think towels get clean without using Clorox Bleach. Plus, I never wash treatment towels that I use on clients in my personal washing machine. I always wash them at the local laundry facility, because I'm scared of "mixing germs."

...A Trade Show Attendee

Jessica Harroun

Craig Berns Salon Spa, Delafield, Wis.

ONE: I will bring at least two empty suitcases to Premiere Orlando, just in case I find a few things I like.

TWO: Every year I make sure I have naked nails at the show. I'll then go around to 10 companies and have a single demo nail done on each of my fingers. At the end of the day my roommates and I critique the product and application. You can tell a lot about a company when you have a representative put a nail on you; and I will admit, I have seen more bad nails than I ever would have guessed.

THREE: I will gladly go to a networking event, stay up until 4 a.m. drinking wine and doing nails, go to sleep, and then get up two hours later to spend a whole day at a show. The bonding between nail professionals after a few days like that is priceless.

FOUR: I check out everyone's nails at shows. I glance at other attendees, people working at the booths, the competition nails, any of the hair models I see. I have found tons of products simply by asking what is on other people's hands.

...A Celebrity Nail Tech

Kimmie Kyees

Luxe Management, Los Angeles

ONE: I'm guilty of regularly checking celebrity news and gossip sites like TMZ.com and PerezHilton.com to see if I can see images of celebs out and about with my work on their hands. I still get a kick out of seeing photos of my nails on the red carpet.

TWO: I love working for myself and with my agency, but it might be surprising to know that working on editorial is not always that lucrative. Many publications pay next to nothing, even when they're shooting major celebrities. The good side, of course, is the amazing talent and beautiful photos of my work.

THREE: Working on set is not all that glamorous. I've actually sat underneath a vanity table in a trailer to polish R&B singer Kelis' toes while her hairstylist finished her hair. I've been called to studios at the last minute for a video shoot to do 15 sets of nails in two hours, including nail extensions. It seems impossible

when they tell you how much time you have to finish, but in the end, it always seems to work out.

FOUR: As a member of "the glam squad," as we (nails, hair, makeup, and stylists) are often referred to, I tend to form a tight-knit bond with other members of the beauty team. We read magazines, listen to music, and talk about current events, boyfriends, and business relationships — it's actually very much the same kind of things that happen in the spa. The difference is we're sitting in a celebrity's living room and their dogs are running around, their kids are playing in the other room, the repairman is coming over, and things are being delivered to the house!

FIVE: My favorite time of year is during the awards shows. Working the gifting suites is so much fun. I get to work with a wide variety of celebs, plus meet editors from various media — the connections I make at these events are invaluable to my business. Plus I love getting free swag at the end of the event. **N**

Have a confession of your own you'd like to make?

Log on to www.nailsmag.com/forums and click on Discuss the Current Issue to reveal your secret.

