



NICHE VS FULL SERVICE

MENU CREATION COURSE

Neiru Biz Training Lesson by Elizabeth Morris

DESCRIPTION

The pros and cons of becoming a niche vs. full service provider. Some basic information to help you choose.

OBJECTIVES

1. **What is niche? What kind of services would you expect to see at a niche business?**
2. **What is full service? What kind of services encompass a full service business?**
3. **Pros and cons comparison to help you decide which to pursue**

LESSON TRANSCRIPT

Hi! I'm Elizabeth Morris from The Nail Hub. In this lesson you will learn about the pros and cons of choosing whether you want to be a niche vs. a full service provider. This decision can apply whether you are an independent nail tech or you own a salon. The important factor when considering which you'll choose is understanding that the type of business you are will play a role in your entire business structure. Your choice to specialize or not will also affect the type of reputation you build within your local market. So as we continue to move through this Menu Creation course, continue to apply the knowledge from each lesson. At the end we'll put it all together to make sure we have our Menu and Business strategy aligned.

Let's start with the definition of niche. A niche can apply to both a single person and also to a business. When applied individually it means a person has found their ideal position. A job, position, or place that is the very suitable for them. When applied to a business a niche



is the specific purpose or position that business plays within the group or industry it is a part of. Let's use an example. A niche nail tech would most likely focus on one specific type of art or service such as specializing in say Russian one-stroke nail art or only offering LED gel extensions. As a business a niche salon might specialize in natural nail care or maybe have a set look or feel that clients learn to expect. Think of a few techs or salons you follow on social media. You can easily identify which ones are more specialized and which are not just by looking at the types of pictures they post.

Now let's look at full service. A full service nail tech would provide everything from artificial nail enhancements to polish changes to pedicures. A full service salon would offer everything from pedis, to manis, to massage and even waxing or eyelash extensions.

As far as niche services are concerned you want to think about the area of focus you want to attack. If you don't want to be that focused maybe full service is a better option for you. There is also everything in between and you can get creative with creating combinations of services that really define your business and who you are as a service provider. The sky is the limit when it comes to the variety of choices that are available. What's important to remember is that each of these choices or even a mix of them will have a resulting consequence.

So what are some of the pros and cons of each choice? Let's start with niche.

As a niche service provider you are more likely to have a more specific type of marketing which means clients will get a very clear idea of what you and your business do and how you do it. The clients who choose to visit your business are more likely to already have been researching and searching for a specific service provider like you. There's less responsibility on the part of the business to convince the consumer to choose them because the client who would pick your business was already quote unquote looking for you. They are also more likely to be more educated about the services you provide or at least more open and excited to trying something new. Most consumers who visit niche businesses have already made their purchasing decision before they ever set foot in your location. So it is an easier relationship to build. It also means that the type of reputation you build will be very specific and you can gain quick notoriety in your local market if you are the only or one of few people who provide that type of service.



Cons? As a niche business your specificity also means you will not easily appeal to the masses. Your business will be built on the quality of each visit rather than relying on large volumes of clientele. Clients expect niche businesses to be much more high quality than that of a full service as the specialization signifies expertise. And since you will most likely charge more for your specialized services there is extra pressure to perform. For a seasoned professional this is often a natural transition as you become an expert in your field. For a nail tech just starting out this may be a tougher position as you may not have enough experience in nails in general to number 1 make the decision of where you want to focus, and 2 have the experience consumers are looking for to validate your expertise. Not to say it's not possible but usually specialization happens after more general experience has already been acquired. If you're going to be niche you have to be comfortable with a couple of things: you will have to turn away numerous opportunities with new clients because they just "don't get you", and you'll have to have full faith in your quality and client experience to back up your pricing and your expertise claims.

In a full service setting the pros can be: you appeal to more potential clients because you offer a larger range of services, your pricing is often times lower and therefore more acceptable to potential clients, you aren't as pressured to perform every service with as much focus because the types of clients who visit full service nail salons are looking for more basic offerings and less specialization anyhow. You also can pick and choose what you want to do as you go along. There is more flexibility to the salon and you can always add services should you want to. As a salon owner it is also easier to find more generalized nail techs who fit into your business model when you need new hires.

Cons? Your pricing will usually be expected by clients to be lower than a niche salon which means your business relies on a lot of volume. Slow days take an extra hit on your financials and you won't have as much ability to plan ahead as most full service salons are walk-in focused or have minimal future appointment bookings. The amount of equipment needed and startup costs will usually be larger than a niche business. As a tech you may also feel more spread thin or find yourself doing everything at 80% instead of really perfecting every service.

Now, if you try to mix the two ideas of niche and full service together you may find yourself in a pickle. Mixing the two concepts can be done but it is difficult to do well. Many nail



techs find themselves frustrated with their businesses because of this choice. They start out super confident and choose to be an expert in a specific area of nail care, but they get insecure about the quality expectations and about charging the prices necessary to survive off of fewer clients. Time and time again I hear nail techs saying how they can't compete with the cheaper salons and how they constantly feel bad charging their clients what they should. These techs succumb to their own self-fulfilling prophecy. In an effort to ward off impending doom they resort to never increasing prices, never breaking up with bad clients, and never really committing to their niche goals. They are so overwhelmed by the threat of losing their precious clientele that they try to act like a full service provider and bend over backwards for each client request, including doing free work!

So all in all think about what you want to be. If you're just starting to build a clientele the choice will seem less important because all you can think about is getting your hands on any clients you can get, but visualize the type of business you want to be once you are fully booked. Do you love doing multiple types of services and never want to stop? That's great! Full service is for you. Or maybe you only want to do gel nail art and you never want to touch a single toe in your life. That's great too! Niche is definitely your road to success. The key is to strategize, implement, and reassess your business regularly. Don't just let the cards fall where they may. Business is not about fate it's about choices.

I really hope this information was valuable. As a business owner and nail tech myself I know how challenging and overwhelming it can be to put all these pieces together especially when everything is new. Sometimes our fears of failure can really get us down, but I am here to help and I know with the support you'll find right here on Neiru.me you can achieve any career goal and conquer any obstacle!

If you have any questions or comments please use the comments section at the bottom of this video page. I am always happy to clarify or discuss any of the info in these lessons. Check out the next lesson in this Menu Creation course to learn about Choosing Services for your menu.