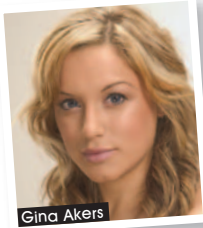


THE FINGER Files

GINA AKERS, TV beauty expert & owner of aqua-G 5-star salon, Wiltshire, gives her lowdown on new service options and a positive approach to the beauty business



Gina Akers

Every month this year I will explore issues and areas concerning today's nail and beauty professionals. Whether you're a freelance tech or a salon owner, I will give you the industry insight necessary to keep you ahead of the nail game; rest assured you have an experienced salon owner on the case.

Colour cascade

A New Year means new trends in fashion and colour, so go through your polish shades and review what is popular and what is not. For the latest looks in nail style I've found Essie's Over The Top and Steel-ing The Scene shades bang-on trend.



Marketing magic

January can be a tricky month to make money with many people having overspent at Christmas or still in holiday mode and gradually returning to their normal appointments and activities. If January is quiet for you, then make the most of this time to look at your marketing and promotions activities for the coming year. Successful marketing is achieved through good planning. If you did well financially over the Christmas period then it's a good idea to invest some of these funds into marketing and advertising, giving you a kickstart to the year and helping you gain new clients. A key trend for every New Year is clients making a new start and wanting a new look. Clients are demanding more than ever these days, so it's worth thinking about whether you have everything required on offer. The New Year is a great time to introduce new treatments and services and if you don't offer clients what they want they will go elsewhere and find a salon that does. There are quite a few new services and products making a huge buzz in the industry at the moment. Think carefully about what your clients have been asking for and what new services and products you think they would like, after all you know them best and this gives you a huge advantage when choosing what new developments to invest in.

Try this new service idea...

It's the middle of winter right now and the summer, sand and sea seem a way away, but we can bring those brighter days back to mind with Shared Beauty Secrets warming Lava Shells. The Lava Shells are used to massage the body, bringing the heat of the tropics to aching muscles and providing a wonderfully relaxing experience. This is an amazing treatment allowing deeper, more effective massage and it's great for therapists because the shells help them to massage with more ease.



Luscious lashes

Lashes will still be huge business throughout 2011 and make a great service to offer alongside nails, make-up or beauty treatments. Ardell Accents lashes are seriously soft and made of 100% human hair. They are added to the outer corner edges of natural lashes to give an ultra open-eyed look with a convincingly natural result. Reliable and strong eyelash adhesive is essential for pro eyelash services. Ardell's Duo eyelash adhesive is brilliant, it's waterproof and great for professional use.

Tech's day off

Techs and beauty professionals are always so busy making everyone else look and feel wonderful, they often forget about themselves. Budgets can be tight in January, so if you need and want some pampering, try the affordable option of taking out some quiet time for yourself. It sounds like a cliché, but start by making sure you have the place to yourself, run a hot bath, light aromatherapy candles, turn on gentle music and make a nice mug of hot chocolate. Then spend time using all your beauty and nails products on yourself. As a nail and beauty professional you will already have a vast array of great products, so no extra expense is incurred. It's important to remember how good the products you use in-salon are and if you look and feel good, it will help you sell your services and retails products more effectively. Plus, if anyone asks what you did all day you can say you were working - doing product and treatment research.

Must-have of the month

This issue's monthly must-have has to be MoroccanOil. I'm not usually a fan of heavy or oily hair products, but I am totally hooked on these. To achieve amazingly glossy hair I recommend smoothing MoroccanOil through hair before bed and leaving on overnight. The next day shampoo and condition as normal, then apply a small amount of oil to the ends of the hair before blow drying. My hair was quite dry and I was trying to avoid having too much cut off, so I decided to give MoroccanOil a try and I'm so glad I did. Leaving oil on the hair overnight gives it an intensive treatment and applying oil before you blow dry means the heat helps it penetrate deeper into the hair. Apparently celebs are also raving about it and I must say I was amazed at how soft my hair was after only one application; now I can't live without it.



Lava Shells - www.sharedbeautysecrets.com
Ardell UK/Essie UK - www.louellabelle.co.uk
MoroccanOil - www.moroccanoil.com