

ANOTHER BENEFIT IS THAT NFU CAN WORK WITH OTHER NAIL SYSTEMS. WHAT DOES THAT MEAN FOR THE TECHNICIAN OR THE NAIL SALON OWNER?

If you are an EzFlow user, you can simply buy Nfu's powders to work with EzFlow's monomers. The same goes for Creative or any other brands, as long as it is an EMA-based liquid, so salon operators do not need to change the entire nail system to accommodate Nfu. It is a cost-saving measure.

The costs of Nfu's products are on par with most established brands, with an additional value – the techniques. Products have a shelf life; the skills stay with you for the rest of your life.

Technicians can try Nfu system with their own skills. I was one of these technicians myself. My background was in EzFlow so I skipped the training. I bought her powders and experimented on my own. Though I managed to achieve certain effects through imitation, there was a limit so I decided to undergo her tutelage.

Many of my students are masters in their own right. When Enfu came to Singapore, we had other brand distributors who came for the courses. They found that the training opened up a new world of possibilities. It was an eye-opener for them.

Through the course, you will pick up certain techniques that will be a tremendous boost to your skills. That is why people attend her courses to learn how to maximize the potential of her powders.

ANY OTHER ADVANTAGES FOR THE SALON OWNER?

Most nail technicians lack training in design.

When an influx of salon supplies leads the market to reach a saturation point eventually, what makes a salon stand out from the crowd? The difference maker lies in the ability to offer something more. And I think nail art is the answer.

Many nail professionals that I spoke to – during the course of my work and traveling overseas – feel that Singapore (and Malaysia) is like Korea, Japan and

the US 10 years ago. There is a huge potential.

People do not see it now – they probably think that nobody is going to accept nail art – but I think it is important we have to catch up with the trends.

People now are seasoned travellers and you have the Internet age. How much can a salon make if it relies simply on manicure, pedicure and the ubiquitous handpainted nail art?

From my experience, Nfu is very popular with brides. They would splurge to dress up their nails and many prefer something more than a French manicure for the photoshoot. They also understand that there is no other time they could wear such ornate nails.

YOU HAVE SOMETHING EXCITING IN OCTOBER. WHAT'S UP?

I will be taking students who have completed basic and advanced diplomas here to Korea for a special two-day training under Enfu herself and two other masters for airbrushing and handpainting, after which Enfu will award them a licence by the Korean Nail Technician Association.

The nail industry in both Singapore and Malaysia is so new, the governments do not impose licensing. You have grants for beauty and hair but not for nails. Nails are put under the beauty category, but that is only for manicure and pedicure; it does not extend to nail art and design, unlike America, Japan and Korea, where the licence covers the entire scope. They hold two to three competitions a year and every year sees 800 to a thousand participants. That is testimony of their standards.

In the initial stages of our market, people learn through apprenticeship. You can be a nail tech as long as you can cut nails and do filing. There is no set of rules or policies to govern

EVERY FASHION DESIGNER HAS TO GO THROUGH THE BASICS OF DRAWING AND FABRIC CUTTING BUT AT THE END OF THE DAY, WHAT DIFFERENTIATES BETWEEN A DESIGNER AND A COUTURIER? NFU IS THE COUTURIER OF NAILS. YOU BECOME A NAIL DESIGNER AFTER YOU MASTER NFU'S TECHNIQUES. YOU CAN EXPLORE AND CREATE YOU OWN IDENTITY. YOUR STYLE PUTS A PREMIUM TO YOUR SERVICES.

the quality of nail art here, and this is going to be a problem in the long run.

I get questions like: What is the big deal with a Korean licence? Is it recognized in Singapore?

Well, it is not. However, you have to understand that Europe, America, Japan and Korea are established markets for nails, and they require licence.

It does not matter that the Singapore government does not issue licences nor recognize them. If you are recognized by Korea, it is an accreditation of your standard, your commitment to the industry and your assurance to customers.

There is a difference between a certified technician and a licensed technician. A certified technician can be anyone who has the money to go through a course and the exams for the certification. But not anyone has the means to get the licence to practise. 

