

# The Poetry of PROSE

## HOW DAVE CRISALLI'S FRANCHISE SYSTEM IS REDEFINING THE MODERN NAIL SALON



To founder Dave Crisalli, PROSE is more than an upstart nail boutique franchise. It's a total reinvention of the nail industry for the 21st century.

The former CEO of Massage Envy grew up in a hardworking Italian family in upstate New York. "I have tremendous respect for immigrants that come over to our great country and contribute to humanity in amazing ways," Dave explains. "I have a special feeling for what the Vietnamese community has brought to the nail industry. With PROSE, I want to honor that contribution and them—and build a trusted and thoughtful brand."

Massage Envy was all about redefining the massage industry, by elevating the customer experience and—just as important—by raising the value of massage therapists and bodywork. Now, with the launch of PROSE, Dave Crisalli has embraced another noble mission for the nail industry. "I have been a health and fitness believer from my earliest days," he recalls. "I appreciate how the consumer is constantly seeking to make better, healthier choices."

Nails were a natural progression, once Dave decided to retire from Massage Envy after 12 years and make space for new thinking and leadership. "I've always enjoyed pedicures and how they made me feel," he says. "I quickly saw an opportunity for great change. So I spent the best part of a year simply listening and learning,

visiting salons and talking to owners, nail techs and customers." This painstaking process revealed a disjointed industry where tens of thousands of nail techs labor in difficult conditions to deliver the best service they can to clients.

### A Deeper Purpose

"At the most fundamental level, the consumer just deserves a healthier and more consistent experience," Dave reports. "A much cleaner and safer experience—but also a much more enjoyable sensorial experience." There was something equally important that struck him. "I looked closely at the nail technician experience—these wonderful, talented people working eight or nine hours a day intently focused on the most detailed craftsmanship. I didn't feel they were sufficiently honored for the important work they do. And I saw them wearing masks, because of the toxic air. These are women, moms... some may be pregnant. That's not appropriate. I decided to do something about that and take action and build a smart brand."

Creating lasting change is a slow and difficult process, and Dave has no illusions about how long it may take. "The consumer has been getting nail services a certain way for decades. And we're creating a sea change: innovation, not iteration. Ours is a brick-by-brick approach. We begin with what kind of incredible benefits can we give the customer, where can we take the customer, and work backward from that to create the experience we know they will highly value."

Even the terminology has to change. "We think our people are more 'artists' than 'technicians.' It's a small step towards building a culture of respect. The nail



artist's relationship with the consumer is critical." To cultivate that relationship, PROSE has installed a monthly membership model. Customers purchase a membership at their chosen frequency level, allowing them to return again and again for nail services. "At PROSE we're building a personal connection between our team and franchise owner and the customer, because hands and feet need continual care!"

### Designing the Difference

The boutique environment is also critical. "One of the hardest things in creating important change is saying 'No'. To be true to our purpose, we had to reject acrylics—to protect our nail artists, and to create an inviting environment for our customers." There was another reason for Dave to banish the smell of acrylics from PROSE boutiques. As a long-standing consumer of pedicure services, he saw a huge untapped market in men. "PROSE is a family brand," he observes. "Today, we have fathers and daughters enjoying our services together and that's the embodiment of the experience we have designed."

In that spirit, the look of the PROSE boutique interior is exceptionally clean, modern and spacious. Beautiful wooden furnishings are balanced by fresh white surfaces and ergonomic chairs. "Great design inspires," Dave explains. "And we've designed every detail of the experience, right down to handy phone chargers, botanical beverages and soothing music. All of this is as much for the nail artists and team members as for the consumer. We especially want our artists to stay with us long-term, and to invite their friends into the industry."

### A Healthy Partnership

Needless to say, the choice of nail products is central to the PROSE ethos. "There are hundreds of product companies out there," Dave observes. "So we have a lot of choices. But for us, we're looking for partners who will help us innovate and create exceptional product experiences. And of course, we're seeking an alignment of values—especially our focus on health and innovation."

Those criteria made SNS a natural fit. "Here's a nail product company with a three-decade record of innovation," Dave shares. "And it's a brand our customers are asking for by name. 'SNS' today is synonymous with dipping powders, and rightly so—it's the category leader. Most of all, SNS founder Joe Nguyen has been on the frontlines of bringing health to an industry that for too long has only looked at beauty. PROSE + SNS—that's one exciting partnership!"

The bigger purpose at PROSE goes beyond nails, Dave reveals. "We see ourselves as the champions of hands and feet—those marvelous, hardworking parts of the body that do so much for us, yet get so little care and attention. PROSE exists to help people enjoy a healthier, more beautiful life, and our goal is to bring healthy and beautiful relief to every hand and foot in the world. That's a bold vision, but we're building it one woman at a time, one man at a time, one child at a time. And that's how we plan to elevate this industry, for the good of consumers and nail artists alike."