



I was recently interviewed for an article in the New York Times. That article titled "[Rethinking the Nail Salon by Glancing at the Starbucks Model](#)" focuses on a new business venture named MiniLuxe. In a nutshell, the creators of [MiniLuxe](#) were looking for a commoditized industry that was ripe for the creation of a strong "brand" player. There are a number of lessons for all of us from how these leaders positioned their offering in the nail salon industry.

MiniLuxe has eight locations in Boston, one in Dallas and \$23 million behind them as they seek to be the Starbucks of nail salons. So what are they doing and what do their efforts have to do with your business?

1. Leaders at MiniLuxe looked for a fragmented industry and created a "blue ocean" position. As you will recall from the disruptive book "[The Blue Ocean Strategy](#)," we should all seek opportunities in the marketplace that avert direct competition (red oceans of fish biting at each other) and instead should place ourselves in unique wide-open space. In the case of MiniLuxe, they are looking for a high mid-market above the cheaper nail salons in a strip mall and below a high-end spa.
2. MiniLuxe is also attempting to knit together a network of operationally consistent customer experiences. To that end they are developing their own products, nailing down (excuse the pun) safety and operational standards, and building multi-sensory components into their experience.
3. MiniLuxe is solving the core problems that the lower price competitive marketplace has created. While there may virtually be a nail salon on every corner (assuring convenience and ease of access) those salons are so variable on aspects of hygiene, scheduling, operational efficiency and delivery of the overall experience that customers would likely want to seek out a consistently predictable affordable luxury branded experience.

What is your take away from MiniLuxe? Whether you have one operating unit or a chain of them, brands are nothing more than what people say about us when we are not around. MiniLuxe hopes you will say they are consistent and worthy of passing buy lesser known smaller brands to assure safety, a quality service product, and a nurturing experience. Now there is a blue ocean in which all of us should swim....

### Timeless Wisdom

Our chief want is someone who will inspire us to be what we know we could be. -- Ralph Waldo Emerson

### The Best of the Blog:

#### Human and Automated: Customer Experience Management at Its Best

According to customer support technology reviews firm Software Advice and research they conducted, manually trying to manage customer relationships and consumer complaints through email and spreadsheets is going the route of rotary-dial phones! What was once an expectation in large business is becoming stand fare for small business owners as well. Integrated software solutions are becoming essential for customer relationship management from mom and pops to global enterprises and the best of breed not only integrate customer record keeping but nimbly respond to customer needs in a seamless and authentic manner. [Read more.](#)



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