



Stephen Marinaro  
TheSalonGuy  
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Stephen "TheSalonGuy" interviews Brig Van Osten  
Shear Genius 2010 Winner!

- **SG:** Brig, I am so excited and thankful for this opportunity to interview you! How long have you been in the Salon Industry?

**Brig:** 15 fun & colorful years! Owning play hair lounge for 4 years. [Playhairlounge.com](http://Playhairlounge.com)



- **SG:** What is it that you love about this Industry?

**Brig:** I love that I have the creative freedom to completely express myself while helping others turn up their confidence. Whether it be with clients who are struggling to find a signature look, or with other professionals who are looking for some inspiration.

- **SG:** Is there anything that you don't like about this Industry?

**Brig:** **Hmmm. The things I don't enjoy, I stay away from. I chose to open my own salon so that I could have a professional environment to see my clients in and surround us with other passionate stylists with the same plan.**
- **SG:** I feel that our Industry is making a major transition and has been hit pretty hard. Why do you think so many Salons are closing down these days?

**Brig:** **I think that sure the economy has hit many businesses very hard, however I feel like it is forcing everyone to evaluate the improvements that they can make within themselves and their businesses. May the strong and open minded survive. Those who are not willing to grow with the times inevitably are facing closure.**
- **SG:** What does it take to keep a Salon open these days and is hiring the right staff just as important as a nice looking Salon?

**Brig:** **I think there are several factors:**

  - Yes, staff is very important. The saying "you are only as strong as your weakest link" is 100% true.**
  - Having a clean & striking salon that has clear branding is another factor.**
  - Being part of a team where the owner recognizes your goals and wants to help you succeed.**
  - Recognizing that social media can make or break your career and/or salon business. I find that too many people underestimate the power of the Internet. It is a wonderful tool to connect with your clients and also other stylists and business owners around the world.**
- **SG:** Let's talk about Shear Genius. Many of the other competitors did not seem to like you too much and didn't want you to win. Many times as Stylists we feel alone and the same way. Especially if we work in a Salon that doesn't appreciate us or we are the only ones going the extra mile. What advice can you share about this and how you overcame that feeling?

**Brig:** **I had two choices Stephen:**

**1- Quit & give in to the negativity. Ultimately we can guess where that would have taken me= home empty handed!**

**2- Ignore the negative and focus on the positive opportunity and HUGE chance to prove myself TO ME! I try to be better than myself yesterday. Not better than those around me, better than myself. This way I have a true measurement of my growth. This is what I feel scored me the win. I pushed myself to do something I had never done, let alone even seen. Fortunately the judges recognized the power of my accomplishment.**

- **SG:** What has winning Shear Genius done for your career?

**Brig: So much! I didn't even know the half of it. I have at least five different things going on in five different directions. Several people whom I have admired have come forward in support of my uniqueness & we are planning future joint projects. Modern Salon Magazine surprised me with my first national magazine cover in July. I recently presented a NAHA award in Vegas at the Cosmoprof show & my salon, play hair lounge is reaching new heights of success with a solid incredible team of talented individuals. Oh and if that isn't enough, "stay tuned" as I plan on being back on TV soon enough. I loved it!**

- **SG:** How do you feel about all of these other Salon reality shows that seem to give our Industry a bad impression to some people?

**Brig: I haven't heard. I don't have cable. Sorry. Someone will always have an opinion about everything. I stay true to my own.**

- **SG:** What is the best advice you can share to Salon Professionals to help them achieve their goals, stay motivated and be passionate?

**Brig: Set goals and stick to them. Do not let any “excuses” take you off course. Stay out of your own way and always be vocal about what you are GOING to accomplish. I AM GOING TO WIN THE LOTTO. Seriously.**

- **SG:** Last Question. What is the most important part of the Clients experience in your Salon?

**Brig: That they feel welcome and important. Not just their first visit, but for the many to follow. Our clients feel a sense of community while at play and this keeps them coming back. Oh, and great hair too! We pride ourselves in strong listening skills and problem solving. Find me one person who doesn't think THEY have problem hair?**

- **SG:** Brig it was a pleasure interviewing you! You are a beautiful amazing woman and professional! Best of luck to you and let's do this again.

**Brig: Thank you Stephen. Good luck with your website, videos and information. Your willingness to help others is refreshing and always needed.**

**Brigknowsbest.com YouTube- Brig Van Osten ☺**

