



# Market Report

A Snapshot of your Marketing Sector

## Nail Technician

This pack has been designed to provide information on setting up a business in the **Nail Technician** industry in Scotland, as well as helping to inform the market research section of your business plan. You can find more information on how to write a business plan from the Business Gateway website ([www.bgateway.com/businessplan](http://www.bgateway.com/businessplan)), including an interactive template and tips to get you started.

This market report was updated by Business Gateway in **February 2025**.

## What do I need to know about the Nail Technician market?

The following summary statistics have been taken from market research reports and reliable resources that the Information Service uses to compile industry information. They should give you an indication of how your industry is faring at present and whether there is demand for your type of business:

- ◆ Industry revenue for hair and beauty treatments is expected to **increase at a compound annual rate of 0.6% to £5.8 billion over the five years through 2024-25**, with an increase of 6.2% in the current year. Over the five years through 2029-30, revenue is anticipated to rebound at a compound annual rate of 3.3% to reach £6.8 billion. **Nail care services generate £954.6m** (15.5%) of industry revenue and is second only to hair cutting services in segment size. (IBISWorld, *Hairdressing & Beauty Treatment in the UK*, November 2024).
- ◆ In 2023, **17% of UK adults had a professional nail treatment**, a slight uptick from 15% in 2022. This may have influenced the at-home nail colour segment, as more individuals opted for professional manicures and pedicures. However, in April 2024, nail salon prices rose due to a campaign by The Nail Tech Org, with thousands of technicians across the UK demanding higher wages. The campaign reported that artists earn an average of £7 per hour, below the UK minimum wage of £11.44 for services priced at £30-40. This shift in pricing may drive cost-conscious consumers towards at-home nail options. (Mintel, *Colour Cosmetics UK*, June 2024).
- ◆ The professional beauty/grooming/hair treatment market is expected to recover to its pre-pandemic value in 2024, **reaching £16bn with a growth of 6.6%, increasing to 6.7% growth through 2025 to 2028**. Despite recent inflationary impacts on prices, 27% of users of beauty/grooming treatments expect to spend under £30 on a beauty/grooming treatment, whilst 51% of professional hair treatment users feel the same for hair. (Mintel, *Professional Beauty & Grooming Treatments UK*, March 2024).
- ◆ In 2025, sustainability in beauty is no longer optional; it's a baseline expectation. Consumers are demanding products that not only deliver on performance but also prioritise environmental responsibility. By focusing on reformulations and range extensions that highlight natural ingredients and clear benefits, brands can resonate with consumers who are increasingly mindful about their purchases. (Mintel, *2025 Beauty & Personal Care Trends*, September 2024).
- ◆ The national organisation for this industry is [The Hair and Beauty Industry Association](#). Other industry bodies include [The British Association of Beauty Therapy and Cosmetology](#) ; [The Guild of Professional Beauty Therapists](#) ; [The National Hairdressing & Beauty Federation](#).

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## Where can I find more information on my market?

The Information Service has access to a number of databases which can offer more detail on this industry. Some of these reports are listed below - if you would like to be sent extracts from any of these reports, please contact us on **0300 013 4753** or email [info@bgateway.com](mailto:info@bgateway.com).

- ◆ **Mintel – *Colour Cosmetics UK*** (June 2024). In the UK, 72% of adults who purchased nail art accessories/tools also purchased non-gel/UV nail polish products, indicating a significant audience who actively engage with innovative nail art, while preferring to maintain the flexibility of non semi-permanent polishes. Remaining a niche segment, only 8% of UK adults purchased press-on nails in the last year. Encouraging use of press-ons can amplify creativity for nail wearers, especially those who don't want to spend too much time on their nails.
- ◆ **IBISWorld - *Hairdressing & Beauty Treatment in the UK*** (November 2024). Nail care services like manicures, pedicures, and nail enhancements have seen a surge in demand attributed to the increase in people's focus on wellness and individuality. Gel nails are particularly popular due to their long-lasting and customisable nature. Social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok have played a crucial role in promoting independent nail stylists.
- ◆ **Mintel – *Professional Beauty and Grooming Treatments UK*** (March 2024). BIAB is a soft-gel which can be soaked off, and is specifically formulated to be used as an overlay on the natural nail. This appeals to those looking for a gentle alternative to harsher-on-nail solutions, such as acrylics. BIAB nails saw a surge in social media post activity in 2023, with this reflective of consumers seeking out options that are better for their nails. BIAB is also designed to be longer-lasting than gel or shellac, appealing to those who are looking to cut back on discretionary spend.

There are also a number of online resources you may find helpful:

- ◆ **The Nail Tech.org** ([www.thenailtech.org](http://www.thenailtech.org)) – offers courses, tutorials, and industry news in a worldwide online community platform.
- ◆ **'Scratch'** ([www.scratchmagazine.co.uk/](http://www.scratchmagazine.co.uk/)) is an online and print-based journal for the UK nail sector that features market news, reviews of new nail products and nail treatment techniques, nail art ideas, and a selection of blogs from nail technicians and other nail professionals.
- ◆ **'NAILS Magazine'** ([www.nailsmag.com/](http://www.nailsmag.com/)) and **'NAILPRO'** ([www.nailpro.com/](http://www.nailpro.com/)) are online and print-based journals for the nail sector in the US. Each journal provides market research information and articles about new nail products and treatments that could be relevant to UK nail technicians.
- ◆ **National Careers Service** provides information on Nail Technician careers.

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## How can I find out about my competitors?

Business Gateway's online guide to [Competitor Analysis](#) explains how to find your competitors, how to research what they're doing and how to act on what you learn about them.

Immediate competition will be from other businesses in your local area. There are several online directories which can be used to find company information and generate lists easily and at no expense. Many Local Authorities also publish local business directories on the web. Below are some key web resources:

- ◆ General business directories such as [Yell](#), [Thomson Local](#) or [Google Maps](#)
- ◆ Trade specialists like [EuroPages](#) (European directory), [The Wholesaler](#) or [Free Index](#)
- ◆ Business to business (B2B) specialists such as [Kompass](#)

Likewise, your local Chamber of Commerce may publish a members' directory; find your local Chamber on the [Scottish Chambers](#) website.

Once you've identified who your competitors are, the next step is to gather information on the way they do business. Which services do they provide? How do they market themselves? How much do they charge?

To learn about your competitors:

- ◆ Look for articles or adverts in local newspapers, trade press and directories.
- ◆ Try to read their marketing material; if the company has an online presence, visit the company's website as a first port of call. Not only does it give you a better understanding of the company's activities, it can also offer a wealth of information such as a company history or staff biographies, as well as the company's partners or suppliers
- ◆ Search for information on limited UK companies via the [Companies House](#) website
- ◆ Gain an insight into your competitor's performance using credit checks and the accounts that limited companies are required to submit to Companies House each year.

We can provide credit checks free of charge; if you are interested in using this resource, or looking for us to help you find relevant publications, please contact us by emailing [info@bgateway.com](mailto:info@bgateway.com) or by calling **0300 013 4753**



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## What about suppliers?

[Choosing and Managing Suppliers](#) can help you decide what you need from a supplier, how to identify one and how to choose one to deal with.

Trade associations or industry specific organisations may also be able to recommend suppliers or contacts. You can also use the aforementioned resources for finding competitors to find suppliers.

Once you have decided on a supplier, we can run a credit check on the company to help assess their financial stability. We provide credit checks free of charge; if you are interested in using the resource please [info@bgateway.com](mailto:info@bgateway.com) or by calling **0300 013 4753**.

## Who are my customers?

Your business plan should include information about the customers you would expect. Business Gateway's guides on [Market and customer research](#) will help you to identify new trends, opportunities, customers and competitors.

It can be useful to group your customers by geographical location, age or lifestyle. The websites listed below are freely available and can provide most of this information. If you can't find what you're looking for from these websites, please contact us and one of the team will be happy to help:

- ◆ Access the latest population estimates from the [National Records of Scotland \(NRS\)](#). NRS also offers demographic factsheets for each council area in Scotland, which can provide summary statistics for the area you will be based in.
- ◆ Information from the most recent census in 2011 is released via the official website. See in particular the [Census Area Profiles](#). Clicking on your area of interest will give the latest population figures, including estimates by age.
- ◆ [Understanding Scottish Places](#) has interactive profiles of towns and cities across Scotland. It can be useful for understanding the interrelationships and flows between towns, and also gives comparisons between two or more places.
- ◆ [Scottish Government Statistics](#) provide accurate and up-to-date statistics on Scotland, covering population, health, education and housing.
- ◆ [The Scottish Household Survey](#) provides information on the structure, characteristics, attitudes and behaviour of Scottish households, both at a national and local level.
- ◆ [Office for National Statistics \(ONS\)](#) is the recognised national statistical body for the UK. ONS covers a wide range of demographic, economic and social issues at a UK level.



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## How can you help me with other aspects of starting my business?

The Business Gateway website has guides, videos, online tutorials and tips on all aspects of starting up a business in Scotland. Follow the links below to explore each resource:

### Accountancy

Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland's (ICAS) "[Find a Chartered Accountant](#)" tool

### Funding

[Practical information](#) on finance and funding for starting and growing your business

### Insurance

[Business insurance guide](#)

### Legal Help

Gov.uk "[Licence Finder](#)" tool

Law Society of Scotland's "[Find a Solicitor](#)" tool

### Pricing

Business Companion [Pricing & payment guide](#).

**Please note:** the most effective way to research pricing is to conduct your own research – visit wholesalers or suppliers to obtain price lists, find quotes from similar companies and work out what other businesses in your area are charging

### Promotion

[BG guides to Marketing](#)

### Training

[Skills Development Scotland's My World of Work](#)

[Funding for training](#)

[Small Business Bonus Scheme \(Scotland\)](#)

Your local Business Gateway can offer events, workshops and 1:2:1 support on all aspects of starting and developing your business. Call the helpline on **0300 013 4753** to find out what is available in your area.

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You must not rely on the information in the report as an alternative to advice from an appropriately qualified professional. If you have any specific questions speak to your Business Gateway Advisor or consult an appropriately qualified professional.

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**Updated by: Eleanor**

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