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eNEWSLETTER

**Weiss Fischmann's
Success Secret:**
"Like – no, *love* – what
you do. Never give up
on a project or a
presentation"



The Culture of Color: Suzi Weiss Fischmann, OPI Products, Inc.

By Leigh Henderson

Madonna wore *it* at her wedding. Sharon Stone had *it* on during the movie *Diabolique*. What is *it*? Nail polish. More specifically, the nail lacquer colors that Suzi Weiss Fischmann has been creating for 25 years as Executive Vice President and Artistic Director of OPI Products, Inc. OPI, a family owned and operated worldwide brand, generates \$100 million annually through direct sales of nail care products and lipsticks at salons in about 80 countries.

Known for names like *Rock-apulco Red*, OPI's nail lacquers also help good causes. Weiss Fischmann spoke with PINK about inspiring others with color.

PINK: What was your career path?

SWF: "Bottom up." I grew up working in the family clothing manufacturing business in New York City. In 1982, I move to Los Angeles to work in another family business, Odontorium Products Inc., that provided lotion, remover and implements for nails. We were successful and decided we wanted something for the customer to take home. In 1989, OPI rolled out 30 colorful shades of nail lacquer.

PINK: You are also Artistic Director. Why that additional title?

SWF: I design every color like an artist. The name comes first – six of us get together to brainstorm – and then we work on the ingredients to get the color to live up to the name.

PINK: What's OPI's growth secret?

SWF: Great marketing. The first time a customer buys our product is on impulse. The second time is because of quality. Madonna wore OPI's *Italian Love Affair* when she married Guy Ritchie and sales soared for that color afterwards in London. Sharon Stone wore *Innsbruck Bronze* in the movie *Diabolique* and again we saw a spike in sales.

PINK: What's next for your business?

SWF: OPI has seen 30 percent of growth from international markets. We are hoping to be importing to Brazil in about four to six months. We're realizing great success in India as an emerging market and growing middle class where women are ready for education on nail enhancement.

PINK: What the biggest challenge are you facing today?

SWF: Pressure to be environmentally friendly. Regulatory agencies don't do quantitative risk assessment and do not differentiate the potential risk of minute amounts of ingredients from two pounds. The European Union's rules and regulations are a nightmare. Hopefully, in the next five years we'll find a balance so that we'll be approved to use very small amounts of ingredients in a safe way for our customers.

PINK: What's your management style?

SWF: We have 350 employees in the Los Angeles office and my management approach is, "the door is open." I'm very low key, I delegate, and work closely with the vice presidents of marketing and advertising. I want to provide inspiration and allow my employees creative freedom.

PINK: If you wanted to ask for a raise what color would you wear?

SWF: Red. It represents chic, Rita Hayworth, Hollywood. It's also my favorite color to wear.

PINK: What's the secret of your success?

SWF: I create every color collection as if I'd never done one before. The day I don't, I won't do it anymore. I get my inspiration every day from my husband and my daughter, 13, and a son who is 10.

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