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The Beauty Innovator's Resource



THE NEXT GENERATION OF BEAUTY PACKAGING

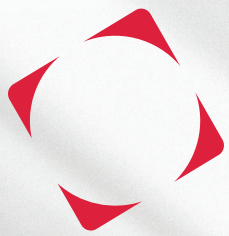
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Gen Alpha Is Coming for Beauty Earlier, Smarter and With AI in the Mix



Brands have to make products and experiences desirable to the child while simultaneously communicating safety, efficacy and appropriateness to the parent. Sunryz addresses that tension directly with dermatologist-tested formulas, at least 90% naturally derived ingredients and a focus on hydration and gentle care.

Generation Alpha isn't waiting until adolescence to become a beauty consumer. The industry's next generation is entering the category earlier, experimenting with routines sooner and bringing expectations shaped by social media, personalization and now artificial intelligence.

That is the clearest implication of new NielsenIQ research on Gen Alpha, reinforced by a wave of brands and retailers increasingly designing beauty experiences specifically for tweens and young teens. The company's analysis, "Gen Alpha Is Entering Beauty Earlier," points to the acceleration of beauty engagement among younger consumers. The finding arrives alongside a June study commissioned by Ulta Beauty and conducted by NielsenIQ that offers an important qualification to the digital-native narrative.

The Ulta/NielsenIQ study found that 78% discover beauty through at least one online source, while 77% seek some form of real-world validation. That can mean testing products in stores, asking family or friends for advice or discussing products with peers. And despite growing comfort with digital shopping, most Gen Alpha consumers still prefer to shop for beauty in stores across fragrance, makeup, skin care, hair care and nails.

Still, nearly three-quarters of Gen Alpha beauty consumers in the Ulta study use personalization tools, including product recommendations, AI-powered search and interest-based content. Interestingly, Gen Alpha consumers who use AI tools are *more* likely to visit stores to browse and try products than non-users—57% versus 36%.

The implications are already visible in the product pipeline. PDC Brands' launch of Sunryz, a body care brand explicitly created for Gen Alpha tweens, avoids attempting to translate an adult beauty proposition downward. Instead, the brand



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builds the category around what younger consumers appear to want: fragrance, sensorial textures, self-expression and “glow,” paired with parent-friendly positioning around skin support and age appropriateness. Its initial assortment includes body mist, body cream, shimmer body oil and body wash, with three fragrance profiles designed to be layered.

The shopping journey is also changing. Today, a young consumer can encounter a product through a creator, research its ingredients, ask an AI assistant for alternatives, see it discussed by friends and then walk into a store to try it. That’s a very different beauty funnel.

That said, the Ulta/NielsenIQ research found that 98% of parents and guardians play an active role in beauty and personal care purchasing, while parents are the single most helpful beauty influence for Gen Alpha, ahead of social media and friends.

Brands have to make products and experiences desirable to the child while simultaneously communicating safety, efficacy and appropriateness to the parent. Sunryz addresses that tension directly with dermatologist-tested formulas, at least 90% naturally derived ingredients and a focus on hydration and gentle care.

For formulators, that could mean a growing premium on age-appropriate efficacy rather than simply reduced-strength versions of adult products. For retailers, it means education and knowledgeable associates become increasingly important. And for marketers, it means speaking to younger consumers without exploiting the insecurities that can accompany beauty at an increasingly young age.

The winning beauty brands will be the ones that understand how a young consumer moves from curiosity to confidence and how parents, peers, creators, stores and algorithms all participate in that journey. ■



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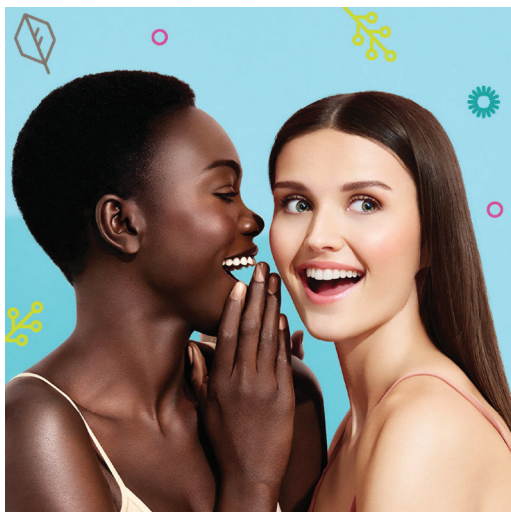


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Cosmopak USA

<https://cosmopak.com/>

Cosmopak USA's airless packaging collection combines innovative dispensing with elevated, functional design. Featured formats include a precision pump with rollerball applicator, a sleek standard airless pump, and a 360° airless sprayer designed for effortless, all-angle application.



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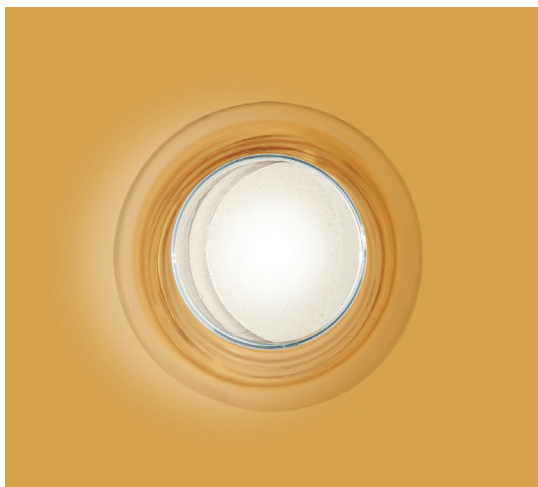
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Berlin Packaging Helps Funner Turn Playful Packaging Into Production Reality

Berlin Packaging

<https://www.berlinpackaging.com/>

Funner is a professional-grade hair care brand that encourages consumers to play with their hair. They had ambitious package design concepts that posed several manufacturing challenges. Studio One Eleven, Berlin Packaging's design & innovation team, helped turn their vision into a manufacturable reality, ensuring each component was production ready.



Aptar's Essencia Delivers Longer, Softer Fragrance Sprays

Aptar Beauty

<https://aptar.com/en-us/beauty>

Essencia is Aptar Beauty's North America-made fragrance pump, combining a modern low-profile design with gentle actuation and homogeneous spray. Engineered for high compatibility and olfactive neutrality, Essencia is available with the Bloom insert for a 3x longer spray and a refillable screw-on neck finish, ideal for hair and body mists.

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THE NEXT GENERATION OF BEAUTY PACKAGING: DESIGNING FOR GENS Z AND ALPHA

The companies that thrive will be those that treat packaging as a strategic business asset rather than simply a container.

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Gen Z already represents roughly one-quarter of the world's population and is projected to surpass Baby Boomers in annual global spending within the next five years, reaching an estimated \$12 trillion according to NielsenIQ. Meanwhile, Gen Alpha is entering the beauty market earlier than previous generations.

Gen Z and Gen Alpha are transforming the beauty industry at an unprecedented pace. As the first generations to grow up fully immersed in digital technology, they approach beauty differently than older consumers. They discover products through social media, expect brands to reflect their personal values, embrace individuality over traditional beauty ideals, and seek products that seamlessly fit into their everyday lives.

Their influence is only growing, both culturally and economically. Gen Z already represents roughly one-quarter of the world's population and is projected to surpass Baby Boomers

in annual global spending within the next five years, reaching an estimated \$12 trillion according to NielsenIQ. Meanwhile, Gen Alpha is entering the beauty market earlier than previous generations, with young consumers driving significant spending in skin care, makeup, and fragrance. Mintel predicts their spending power will reach \$5.5 trillion by 2029.

For beauty brands, the implications extend far beyond product formulation. Packaging has become one of the industry's most influential marketing assets. It shapes first impressions, fuels digital discovery, communicates brand purpose, creates memorable experiences, and inspires loyalty

long after purchase. As expectations continue to evolve, its role will only become more important, influencing how consumers discover, evaluate, and remember beauty brands.

Packaging Designed for Digital Discovery

For Gen Z and Gen Alpha, the path to purchase often begins with a scroll. That shift has transformed packaging from a retail shelf asset into digital marketing content. Social platforms such as TikTok and Instagram have become primary destinations for beauty inspiration, education, and purchasing decisions. Rather than relying

on traditional advertising, younger consumers look to creators, peer recommendations, tutorials, and viral product reviews to determine what deserves their attention and money. McKinsey reports that 64% of Gen Zers cite social media as a top source of beauty inspiration, while Boston Consulting Group (BCG) research finds that approximately 75% of U.S. teen girls consume beauty content on social media at least once a day.

In this environment, impactful packaging is essential for content creation. As consumers judge products in seconds and share them by the thousands, eye-catching, memorable package design becomes one of a brand's most effective forms of visual marketing. Today's creators aren't just reviewing formulas; they're evaluating package design and showcasing unique bottles, closures, materials, and more. Distinctive structural designs, bold branding, and unexpected product formats are more likely to stop the

scroll, spark engagement, and encourage user-generated content.

Secondary packaging has also become increasingly important. Premium influencer kits and thoughtfully crafted presentation boxes elevate the unboxing experience while encouraging creators to produce content that extends a brand's reach. According to the Digital Marketing Institute, unboxing videos generate significantly higher engagement than traditional product demonstrations, and consumers are substantially more likely to purchase a product after watching an unboxing experience.

The brands winning attention online increasingly design packaging with content creation in mind. Berlin Packaging's design and innovation teams helped develop Beauty Blender's "Ready Set Glow!" influencer kit, demonstrating how packaging can be designed with digital discovery in mind. Its vibrant colors, playful presentation, and light-up neon feature

create an experience that's highly shareable across social platforms while reinforcing the brand's energetic identity. As social commerce continues to shape the beauty industry, brands that design packaging for both physical shelves and digital feeds will be best positioned to capture the attention of digitally native beauty shoppers.

Purpose-Driven Packaging

While eye-catching packaging helps brands earn attention, purpose is increasingly what earns long-term loyalty. Socially conscious Gen Z and Gen Alpha seek companies whose values align with their own, particularly around diversity, inclusion, sustainability, and corporate responsibility. Both generations expect brands to take meaningful action on issues that matter. Just as importantly, these consumers—and their parents—are quick to recognize greenwashing and inauthenticity, rewarding companies that back sustainability claims with transparency and measurable action.

Packaging is often a consumer's first physical interaction with a brand—and one of its most powerful marketing channels. Consumers increasingly look for recyclable materials, refill & reuse systems, and environmentally responsible formats that reduce waste without sacrificing aesthetics or performance. Berlin Packaging's designers created the Amika "forever friend" reusable and refillable shampoo and conditioner bottles. The custom bottle utilizes a fun flower shape inspired by the brand's iconic floral prints and is made with impact-resistant, BPA-free, and EA-free Eastman Tritan™ plastic. According to an independent lifecycle assessment, using these refillable bottles for one year reduces the packaging's carbon footprint by 69% as



Berlin Packaging's design and innovation teams helped develop Beauty Blender's "Ready Set Glow!" influencer kit, demonstrating how packaging can be designed with digital discovery in mind.

compared to using two of the brand's PCR plastic bottles.

Inclusive design is equally important. Gender-neutral color palettes, imagery, and messaging help brands appeal to a broader range of consumers while reflecting younger consumers' changing attitudes toward traditional gender norms. Accessibility is equally important, with thoughtful features such as ergonomic closures, easy-open designs, and tactile elements making products easier for everyone to use. These details not only improve functionality but also demonstrate that brands are designing with all consumers in mind.

By combining inclusive design, accessible functionality, and authentic sustainability, packaging becomes a visible expression of a brand's values and a meaningful connection with the next generation of consumers.

Building Trust Through Packaging

Raised in an era of constant digital content, Gen Z and Alpha have become highly skilled at identifying what feels genuine and what feels manufactured. While younger consumers are highly engaged online, they are also among the most discerning audiences that brands have faced. They understand influencer marketing, recognize sponsored content, and quickly disengage from messaging that feels overly polished or inauthentic.

While younger consumers enjoy discovering new brands, their loyalty is increasingly earned through products that consistently deliver on their promises. BCG reports that teens are becoming more practical in their purchasing decisions, prioritizing products that genuinely work over those that simply generate social media buzz.



Berlin Packaging's designers created the Amika "forever friend" reusable and refillable shampoo and conditioner bottles.

Packaging that accurately reflects product performance and brand values helps strengthen that trust and encourages repeat purchases.

Packaging plays an important role in establishing credibility. Before consumers experience what's inside, they decide whether to trust what's outside. Rather than relying on exaggerated claims or overly polished branding, successful packaging communicates honesty and quality at first glance. Clean, minimalist designs, transparent product information, clearly displayed ingredient lists, and recognizable certifications all help reassure consumers that a brand has nothing to hide. Premium materials and thoughtful structural design further reinforce perceptions of quality and reliability, creating confidence before the product is even opened.

Packaging that Supports Individuality

For Gen Z and Gen Alpha, beauty is no longer about achieving a single

ideal—it is about celebrating individuality. Growing awareness of mental health, self-care, and self-acceptance has reshaped how younger consumers define beauty, driving demand for products and experiences that feel authentic, inclusive, and uniquely their own. According to Mintel, increased awareness of mental health and social issues has created a generation that values body positivity, self-expression, and challenges to traditional beauty standards. Euromonitor echoes this trend, noting that Gen Z views beauty as a reflection of their identity and values, prioritizing individualism over conventional ideals. Rather than following rigid routines or one-size-fits-all products, these consumers seek flexible solutions tailored to their lifestyles, preferences, and personal goals.

For younger consumers, packaging has become another way brands communicate, celebrate, and enable self-expression. As beauty companies respond to this shift, packaging has become a powerful platform for creating personalized experiences

that extend beyond the product itself. Modular packaging systems allow consumers to mix and match products, swap refill cartridges, and build skin care or makeup routines that evolve with their changing needs. Refillable compacts with interchangeable color pans and customizable palettes enable users to curate products based on their individual preferences rather than purchasing fixed sets. Brands are also embracing limited-edition packaging, customizable labels, engraved components, and color options that give consumers a greater sense of ownership and self-expression. Together, these solutions demonstrate that packaging is no longer simply a vehicle for a product—it has become an extension of the consumer's identity.

Technology is expanding these opportunities even further. QR codes integrated into packaging can unlock virtual makeup try-ons, AI-powered shade matching, customized product recommendations, personalized skin care routines, ingredient education, and immersive brand storytelling. These interactive experiences bridge the physical and digital worlds, making product discovery more

engaging, informative, and tailored to each consumer while fostering deeper, longer-lasting brand relationships.

Convenience by Design

Balancing school, work, travel, fitness, and social lives, Gen Z and Gen Alpha are constantly on the move and expect the products they use to keep pace. Beauty routines are becoming more flexible, shifting from lengthy rituals at home to quick touch-ups between classes, during commutes, or while traveling. As a result, packaging has become a critical tool for delivering portability, functionality, and style in equal measure.

Today's beauty consumers want products that seamlessly fit into their everyday routines. Compact, lightweight, and travel-friendly packaging makes it easier to carry daily essentials without adding bulk, whether tucked

into a backpack, gym bag, or purse. Smaller formats also appeal to consumers who value flexibility, allowing them to test new products, build customized routines, or pack efficiently for travel.

Stick formats offer quick, mess-free application with minimal tools required. Their efficient design makes them easy to toss into a pocket or bag, while eliminating concerns about spills or leaks during travel. At the same time, wearable packaging is emerging as a creative solution that blurs the line between

beauty products and fashion accessories. Lip glosses, fragrances, hand sanitizers, and lotions are increasingly designed as clip-on accessories that remain easily accessible throughout the day. Berlin Packaging's Studio One® design and innovation team

created custom packaging for The Ordinary's lip balm. The custom teardrop silhouette stands out in a sea of traditional sticks and tubes, and its playfully unique shape makes it the perfect keychain or bag charm.

Looking Ahead

As Gen Z reaches its peak spending years and Gen Alpha becomes an increasingly influential consumer group, beauty packaging will continue to evolve alongside changing expectations. Digital engagement, sustainability, inclusivity, authenticity, personalization, and convenience are no longer independent trends—they are becoming interconnected requirements for brands seeking long-term growth.

The companies that thrive will be those that treat packaging as a strategic business asset rather than simply a container. By creating packaging that inspires discovery, reflects brand values, builds trust, and delivers meaningful user experiences, brands can forge lasting relationships with younger consumers in a competitive market.

With expertise spanning custom package design, material innovation, manufacturing, and global supply chain solutions, Berlin Packaging helps beauty brands develop packaging that resonates with the next generation of consumers while balancing creativity, functionality, sustainability, and commercial success. As beauty continues to evolve, thoughtful packaging design will remain one of the industry's most powerful competitive advantages.

Ready to get started? Download your full trend report.



Berlin Packaging's Studio One® design and innovation team created custom packaging for The Ordinary's lip balm.

Body Care Gets Smarter: From Skinification to Wellness, Climate Resilience and Waterless Innovation

From serums to sustainable soak: body care is shedding basic moisturizer status with climate-conscious actives and personalized performance innovations.

The new body care playbook is where performance, sensoriality, personalization and sustainability converge.



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Body care is shedding its “basic moisturizer” reputation. Spate data shows consumers are embracing serum-like treatments, wellness-driven rituals and targeted skin solutions, while formulators are pushing the category into new territory with climate-conscious actives, adaptogens, upcycled ingredients and waterless formats. The result is a new body care playbook where performance, sensoriality, personalization and sustainability converge—turning everyday products into higher-value, more intentional experiences.

Body Serums Surge, Brands Pack Skin Care Into Every Body-Care Step

Body moisturization is getting more sophisticated.

Body serum interest is up 88.5% year-over-year, per May 2026 Spate data. In response to rising interest, Accupac’s Cobalt Labs has developed a Moisturizing Serum-Infused Body Mist, which also, according to chief commercial officer, Michelle Chavez, “demonstrates how compressed



Ollly's incorporation of adaptogenic materials in its 2025 body care launches signaled a bigger shift in the sector.

delivery systems can help reduce packaging volume while providing lightweight hydration through concentrated lipid technology.”

The company has also developed a Matrix Sync Serum Balm, which Chavez says “combines growth factor-inspired ingredients with barrier-

replenishing lipids to help support skin exposed to environmental stress.”

Moisturization interest is also turning up among in-shower moisturizers, which have jumped in interest by 383.7% year-over-year, per Spate, appealing to consumers who want skin care-level results without adding another post-shower step.

Body Care Enters Its Wellness Era

“Body care is increasingly becoming part of consumers’ broader wellness routines, creating opportunities for brands to support both skin needs and emotional well-being through thoughtfully designed formulations,” says Chavez. “Neurocosmetic-inspired ingredients such as adaptogens, magnesium and botanicals associated with stress support can help transform body care from a maintenance step into a meaningful self-care ritual.”

She adds, “Consumers are seeking products that align with how they feel throughout the day, whether they are looking to unwind, recharge, or recover from environmental and



Serum formats are being packed into every product possible in body care.

lifestyle stressors. In body care, this means combining performance-driven ingredients with sensorial elements such as texture, fragrance, and application experience.”

In response, Cobalt Labs is developing wellness-focused body care concepts, including the Comfort Wrap Adaptogenic Body Soufflé, formulated with ginger root extract, snow mushroom and nourishing oils, and the NeuroReserve Magnesium Ion Recovery Soak, featuring bioavailable magnesium and a synbiotic peptide system.

“Products like these demonstrate how body care formulations can help support emotional wellness while still delivering the hydration, barrier support and skin conditioning benefits consumers require in their daily routines,” Chavez explains.

Body Care Gets Climate-Ready

“As consumers spend more time navigating fluctuating temperatures, pollution exposure, UV stress and environmental aggressors, body care products are evolving to help support skin resilience, says Chavez. “The next generation of climate-conscious body care is moving beyond single-benefit protection and

Vylte takes a climate-specific approach to sensitive skincare, formulating lightweight, fast-absorbing products specifically for Singapore's hot, humid conditions rather than adapting formulas designed for temperate climates. Developed with Singapore's National Skin Centre, its lean, fragrance-free formulas aim to balance hydration and barrier support without the heaviness or stickiness that can be problematic in high humidity.

toward comprehensive skin support systems. Rather than focusing solely on immediate defense, brands have an opportunity to formulate products that help reinforce the skin barrier, support recovery from environmental stressors, and maintain healthy-looking skin over time.”

Cobalt Labs is exploring climate-conscious body care with antioxidants, biomimetic lipids, adaptogenic botanicals, fermentation-derived

actives and microbiome-supporting technologies. Its Derma Lift Sculpting Butter combines peptides, ceramides and biomimetic lipids to support skin elasticity and barrier function.

Chavez notes, “Looking ahead, body care products that combine environmental protection, barrier resilience and sustainability-focused design are likely to resonate strongly with consumers. The most successful innovations will help consumers adapt to challenging environmental conditions while supporting healthy-looking skin through daily use.”



Body care innovations are also taking on challenges around refill concepts. For instance, Rita Corp.'s pre-dosed, dissolvable surfactants, offered in partnership with Ecopol, are designed to deliver a more sustainable, user-friendly alternative to conventional liquid surfactant handling.

Waterless, Smarter, More Sustainable: The New Body Care Blueprint

“Sustainability is becoming an integral part of product performance rather than a separate product attribute,” says Chavez. “Consumers increasingly expect body care products to help reduce environmental impact while still delivering a premium experience and visible skin benefits.”

She adds, “Waterless and concentrated formulations are particularly well suited for body care because they can help reduce shipping

weight, packaging requirements, and resource consumption while providing highly effective product formats. Multifunctional products also continue to gain momentum as consumers seek simplified routines that reduce excess consumption without sacrificing efficacy.”

Cobalt Labs is developing waterless body care with sustainability built into the formulation: its Dry Polish Sugar Scrub uses sugar crystals and upcycled mineral exfoliants, while Second Skin Balm pairs a concentrated format with upcycled fermented apple peel extract. The company also points to biodegradable ingredients, renewable raw materials and more efficient packaging as key areas for sustainable body-care innovation.

Body care innovations are also taking on challenges around refill concepts. For instance, Rita Corp.’s pre-dosed, dissolvable surfactants, offered in partnership with Ecopol, are designed to deliver a more sustainable, user-friendly alternative to conventional liquid surfactant handling. Key benefits reportedly include:

- **Simplified formulations:**

Waterless, anhydrous capsules



Everist was an early-ish adopter of waterless body care, launching its Waterless Body Wash Concentrate in October 2021, just months after introducing its waterless hair-care concentrates. The water-activated paste-to-lather formula was designed to replace water-heavy, single-use plastic body washes with a concentrated, plant-based format packaged in infinitely recyclable aluminum tubes, targeting lower carbon and plastic-waste impact.

can reduce the need for viscosity modifiers, stabilizers and other additives primarily used to maintain liquid stability, while removing free water can help limit microbial growth, oxidation and hydrolytic degradation.

- **Portable, low-bulk cleansing:**

Water-activated capsules offer a pre-measured, travel-friendly alternative to liquid bottles and wipes, creating fresh cleanser at the point of use without transporting water or relying on pre-saturated formats.

- **Broader applications:** The compact format is suited to travel, hospitality, gyms, subscriptions, discovery kits and sampling, extending premium cleansing beyond the bathroom.



Proof of concept in the market: Niagen NanoCloud uses a sealed, waterless sachet to protect Niagen’s stability until use, addressing the challenge of NAD+ molecules degrading rapidly in water. (Example does not leverage Rita Corp.’s pre-dosed, dissolvable surfactants, which are offered in partnership with Ecopol.)

“Refill systems only succeed when they are as convenient as the products they replace,” note Elizabeth Frabotta, marketing and business development leader at Ecopol America Inc., and Denis Ontumi, VP of R&D at Rita Corporation. “While consumers increasingly support refill concepts, many existing formats introduce unnecessary friction through pouring concentrates, measuring the correct amount, dealing with spills, or achieving inconsistent dilution. Every additional step creates an opportunity

for frustration and ultimately reduces long-term adoption.”

The experts argue that pre-measured single-dose body wash capsules eliminate guesswork and waste by delivering a precise amount of concentrate that consumers simply add to water, while maintaining consistent lather, performance and sensory appeal.

“Importantly,” they note, “brands don’t have to choose between refill and single-use formats. The same platform can support both at-home refill systems and portable single-use capsules, allowing consumers to enjoy the same trusted body wash whether they’re replenishing a bottle at home, traveling, heading to the gym, or trying the product for the first time. By creating a connected ecosystem of formats, brands can remove friction from the refill experience while expanding opportunities for trial, convenience, and repeat purchase.”

But there are technical challenges. For instance, traditional body lotions are notoriously water-heavy emulsions. Transitioning a low-water, anhydrous capsule concentrate into a full-sensory body emulsion upon at-home dilution with water is no easy feat.

“Traditional body lotions are largely composed of water, requiring complex formulation systems to stabilize the emulsion throughout manufacturing, transportation and shelf life” say Frabotta and Ontumi. “By separating the concentrated formulation from the water until the point of use, brands have an opportunity to rethink how lotion is developed, distributed, and ultimately experienced by the consumer.”

They add, “The capsule platform is designed to remain anhydrous until activated with water, allowing the concentrated formulation to transform into a full-sensory lotion that delivers the texture, glide, and skin feel consumers expect from



Proof of concept in the market: The Niagen NanoCloud sachet dissolves into a serum or moisturizer at the moment of use, creating a freshly activated, precision-dosed treatment designed to support skin hydration, texture and radiance. (Example does not leverage Rita Corp.'s pre-dosed, dissolvable surfactants, which are offered in partnership with Ecolol.)

a premium body care product. Rather than asking consumers to compromise on performance, the format preserves the luxurious application experience while reducing the need to transport water throughout the supply chain.”

Frabotta and Ontumi continue, “From a formulation perspective, separating the concentrate from the water until the point of use allows developers to design around product performance rather than long-term storage of a water-heavy emulsion, while still delivering the luxurious texture consumers expect once activated. Because the formulation remains concentrated until the point of use, brands also have an opportunity to improve shipping efficiency by replacing bulky, water-heavy products with highly concentrated capsules. Depending on the formulation, this architecture may also reduce reliance on certain ingredients used primarily to maintain

long-term stability in traditional water-based systems while preserving the premium sensory experience consumers expect.”

The platform, they say, enables personalized, water-activated body care, allowing consumers to customize lotions with fragrance, oils, actives or sensory profiles—thereby creating opportunities for premiumization, limited editions and personalized products.

“The visual transformation from capsule to finished lotion also creates highly engaging moments that naturally lend themselves to product demonstrations, social sharing and user-generated content,” say Frabotta and Ontumi. “As consumers increasingly discover and evaluate beauty products through platforms like TikTok and Instagram, brands have an opportunity to create experiences that are not only effective, but inherently shareable. Instead of simply redesigning

the bottle, brands can transform personalization into part of the beauty ritual while delivering more value with fewer products.”

Furthermore, the near-anhydrous format reduces water and potentially unnecessary formulation additives, enabling more concentrated products with less material to manufacture, transport and package—a potential sustainability advantage over conventional water-heavy liquids.

“Traditional liquid personal care products are built around water, requiring additional ingredients to stabilize the formulation throughout manufacturing, transportation and shelf life,” say Frabotta and Ontumi. “By shifting to a near-anhydrous, concentrated architecture, product developers have the opportunity to rethink that approach from the ground up. Rather than formulating around the needs of a water-heavy liquid, brands can focus on the ingredients that deliver the desired consumer benefit.”

They add, “Consumers already have water at home, so why ask them to purchase and transport it? By separating the concentrated formulation from the water until the point of use, brands can shift their value proposition away from selling a bottle that is primarily water and toward delivering the ingredients and performance that truly create value. In many applications, this also allows formulations to be simplified by focusing on the ingredients responsible for cleansing, conditioning, moisturizing, or other targeted benefits, rather than maintaining lengthy ingredient lists designed primarily to support the liquid format itself.”

They continue, “More broadly, this reflects a shift occurring across the beauty industry. Consumers aren’t looking for more products or more complexity. They’re looking for smarter products that deliver exceptional performance through intentional design.”

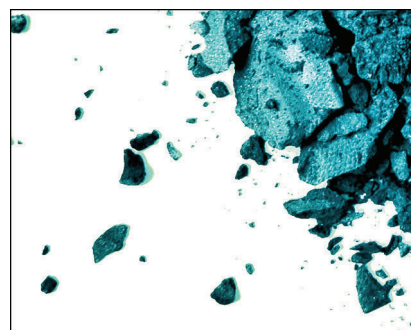
In short, they argue, concentrated capsule formats enable simpler, more purposeful formulas with fewer ingredients, giving brands a clearer efficacy story while aligning with consumer demand for transparent, streamlined “only what you need” beauty.

Because single-use, water-activated cleansing capsules simplify the consumer ritual while reducing the need to transport water, they combine a convenient, premium cleansing experience with a more resource-efficient product format.

“For years, skin care innovation has largely centered on adding more products, more steps and more complexity to consumers’ daily routines,” say Frabotta and Ontumi. “Today, that philosophy is changing. Consumers aren’t looking for more products. They’re looking for smarter products that deliver visible performance while simplifying their regimen. They want fewer products that work harder, not more products that create longer routines.”

They add, “Single-use, water-activated facial cleansing capsules support this shift by combining convenience with a premium cleansing experience. Each capsule delivers a perfectly pre-measured dose that transforms into a rich, luxurious lather, providing consistent performance without the guesswork of over- or under-dispensing product. The format also offers a fresh dose with every use, making it well suited for consumers who value precision, portability, and simplicity.”

Finally, they note, single-use cleansing capsules position facial cleansing as a high-performance, premium ritual while supporting travel, hospitality, discovery kits and sampling through a compact format. They also align with demand for simpler, more intentional skin care routines. ■



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Prestige hair care is growing on both dollars and units, while mass shoppers are tightening their budgets, making value, format and performance the new battlegrounds.



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HAIR CARE SPLITS IN TWO: VALUE WINS AT MASS, TREATMENTS TAKE OFF IN PRESTIGE

From value-packed basics to \$120 longevity serums, hair care is rewriting the rules.

Prestige hair care was a standout in the first half of 2026, with U.S. sales^a up 11% and units up 8%, per Circana. Unlike fragrance, where the dollar-unit gap was driven by premiumization, hair care is seeing meaningful expansion in both measures.

Mass hair care tells a different story. Sales increased 7% in the first half of 2026, but units dipped, suggesting that consumers are becoming more value-conscious. One notable exception is shampoo-and-conditioner combo packs, which generated double-digit growth in both dollars and units—classic value-seeking behavior.

Given this divergent set of trends across mass and prestige, how are brands to pivot to meet the demands of either pricing tier?

Mass: Hair Care Gets Leaner, Smarter and More Efficient

As cost pressures encourage consumers to prioritize high-performing essentials over elaborate routines, hair care is moving toward streamlined products that deliver more value with less complexity.

Aptar's HDP Pump supports this shift with a high-dose 3.5 cc-per-stroke format designed for shampoos, conditioners and other products used in larger quantities. Its compact 15 mm stack height maximizes shelf visibility, while the all-PP construction simplifies material composition and disposal; a metal-free spring positioned outside the dosage chamber also helps protect formula integrity.

E-commerce capability without an additional transport clip further reduces packaging complexity, making HDP a practical fit for efficient, high-volume hair care formats where performance, cost-conscious design and streamlined packaging all matter.

Hair Care's Treatment Boom Puts Scalp Health, Longevity and Serums Center Stage

Meanwhile, on the prestige end of the spectrum, treatments are the star. Hair serums surged nearly 60%, while masks, oils, leave-in treatments and scalp-focused products also delivered healthy gains.

Recent notable serum launches have included K18, which is pushing hair care into the hair longevity space with FutureIQ biomimetic hair longevity serum, a \$120 nightly treatment



Aptar's HDP Pump supports the shift in consumer hair care habits with a high-dose 3.5 cc-per-stroke format designed for shampoos, conditioners and other products used in larger quantities.



Recent notable serum launches have included K18, which is pushing hair care into the hair longevity space with FutureIQ biomimetic hair longevity serum, a \$120 nightly treatment designed to address the biological drivers of hair aging before visible thinning, shedding and graying accelerate.

^a<https://www.circana.com/industries/beauty>

designed to address the biological drivers of hair aging before visible thinning, shedding and graying accelerate. Powered by proprietary MultiVital technology, the serum combines biomimetic peptides, a root-anchoring complex and antioxidants to support follicle anchoring, pigmentation, oxidative defense and scalp resilience. Clinical testing reportedly found up to 19,000 hairs retained, fewer grays in up to 70% of participants and improved scalp barrier function in 100% after three months, positioning the launch as a shift from correcting hair damage to proactively preserving hair health and longevity.

Elsewhere, Biolage expanded the skinification of hair care with its Hydra Source Moisture Method Serum, a lightweight, water-based treatment designed to deliver 24-hour hydration to both the scalp and hair. The formula combines micro-filtered aloe vera, 11% fermented hyaluronic acid, glycerin and natural humectants to replenish moisture, support the scalp's moisture barrier and seal the hair cuticle without the heaviness or buildup associated with traditional silicone- and oil-based serums. Positioned as a skin care-inspired, precision-dosed treatment, the launch reflects the growing



Aptar's Serumony offer controlled, dose-accurate dispensing.

convergence of scalp health, hair care and skin care routines.

On the scalp care front, Nutrire and Jupiter are both taking the category into specialty retail, underscoring the category's shift from niche treatment to mainstream beauty. Nutrire is made its first retail move through an exclusive nationwide launch with Ulta Beauty; the scalp-first brand, developed with estheticians, trichologists and



Biolage expanded the skinification of hair care with its Hydra Source Moisture Method Serum, a lightweight, water-based treatment designed to deliver 24-hour hydration to both the scalp and hair.

hairstylists, has also been named an Ulta Sparked brand.

Meanwhile, Jupiter expanded from DTC, Amazon and Target to Ulta.com and approximately 500 Ulta stores, with an assortment spanning anti-dandruff treatments, conditioners, scalp moisturizer and a new Day 2 Dry Shampoo, which combines oil and odor absorption with scalp-barrier and microbiome claims. Together, the moves show how scalp care is adopting skin care's language of targeted treatment, prevention and barrier health—and gaining the retail visibility to make those concepts part of the everyday hair-care routine.

As scalp care increasingly mirrors skin care, the category is moving beyond basic cleansing and treatment toward prevention, longevity and long-term hair health. Advances in biotechnology, dermatology and personalized care are driving demand for science-backed solutions targeting thinning, hair loss, scalp aging and overall scalp wellness, with brands building holistic routines around high-performance serums, supplements, devices, treatment tools and targeted ingredients.

One such technology is Sabinsa's Proscalpin, which takes a multi-targeted approach to fuller-looking hair, combining botanical actives with



On the scalp care front, Nutrire is taking the category into specialty retail, underscoring the category's shift from niche treatment to mainstream beauty.

a selenium-based peptide derivative to support scalp and follicle health. Cococin delivers micronutrients and growth-promoting compounds to moisturize the scalp, while Saberry helps protect dermal papilla cells from UV-induced damage and inhibits 5- α reductase activity. Finally, PeptiSeLect leverages selenium's role in normal hair maintenance to support fuller, healthier-looking hair. Together, the trio targets the scalp, follicle and hair-growth environment through complementary mechanisms, positioning Proscalpin as a holistic solution for thicker-, stronger- and healthier-looking hair.

"Proscalpin extends beyond traditional anti-hair-thinning applications by supporting a proactive approach to scalp and hair health, helping maintain a healthy scalp environment while improving the appearance of stronger, more resilient-looking hair," says Shaheen Majeed, global CEO and managing director, Sabinsa. "That versatility makes it well suited for both leave-on formats, such as serums, sprays, creams, lotions, gels, and rinse-off formats like shampoos and conditioners."

The ingredient's solvent-free format also has benefits.

"Formulating without harsh solvents matters because those solvents can contribute to scalp irritation and dryness, particularly for sensitive skin, so Proscalpin gives developers a gentler foundation to build on," Majeed explains. "Performance does vary by format. Leave-on products, such as serums, perform best, since longer contact time with the scalp allows the actives to work more fully, while rinse-off formats, such as shampoos, see more limited benefit given they are quickly rinsed off, which may limit the overall benefit."

He continues, "That difference showed up clearly in our 3-month study, where a leave-on hair serum containing Proscalpin showed improvements in hair growth rate and hair density, a reduction in the appearance of hair thinning, and

support for healthier-looking hair, which is why I'd point developers toward leave-on formats first when performance is the priority."

Scalp and hair treatments also require unique packaging solutions.

Packaging Delivers Precision: The New Tools for Targeted Hair & Scalp Care

An array of packaging formats from Aptar align closely with the rise of targeted hair and scalp treatments,

where precision, hygiene and ease of application can be as important as the formula itself.

NeoDropper Autoload, Star Drop and Serumony offer controlled, dose-accurate dispensing suited to concentrated scalp serums and leave-on treatments, while sealed, airless or low-contact designs can help protect sensitive formulas and minimize contamination.

For more expansive or hard-to-reach applications, BOV Meridian with Sprizzle combines 360° dispensing



Aptar's NeoDropper Autoload offers controlled, dose-accurate dispensing.



Aptar's Star Drop offers controlled, dose-accurate dispensing.



For more expansive or hard-to-reach applications, BOV Meridian with Sprizzle combines 360° dispensing with a narrow spray pattern.



Athena is designed for foams, mousses and gels.

with a narrow spray pattern, making it well suited to scalp mists and treatments that require even, targeted coverage without overspray.

Athena, meanwhile, is designed for foams, mousses and gels, offering pinpoint dispensing and one-handed control that could translate well to styling and scalp-treatment formats.

Collectively, the technologies point toward a new generation of treatment-first packaging that makes application more precise, hygienic, portable and experiential, helping brands differentiate increasingly sophisticated hair and scalp products beyond the formula itself.

Ingredient Briefing: Hair & Scalp Care's Bio-Based Performance Push

As hair care moves toward lower-impact formats, bio-based performance and more efficient formulations, sustainability is increasingly being built into the technology itself—not simply added as a marketing claim.

From dissolvable surfactants and water-activated formats to plant-derived conditioning systems, multifunctional ingredients and bio-based film formers, these innovations aim to reduce packaging, water use and formulation trade-offs while preserving the sensory experience, efficacy and versatility consumers expect from modern hair care.

Drop, Dissolve, Lather: Rethinking the Shampoo Bottle

Rita Corp.'s pre-dosed, dissolvable surfactants, offered in partnership with Ecopol, deliver a more sustainable, user-friendly alternative to conventional liquid surfactant handling. The plant-based, biodegradable anhydrous surfactants arrive in ready-to-use doses that simply drop and dissolve, eliminating pouring and measuring while delivering consistent formulation performance. The format can help reduce mess, packaging and handling



"Consumers increasingly expect products that simplify their routines without compromising performance," say Elizabeth Frabotta, marketing and business development leader, Ecopol America Inc., and Denis Ontumi, VP of R&D at Rita Corporation.



Rita Corp.'s pre-dosed, dissolvable surfactants, offered in partnership with Ecopol, deliver a more sustainable, user-friendly alternative to conventional liquid surfactant handling.

complexity while supporting refill and low-water product concepts—making it particularly relevant to solid, concentrated and water-activated beauty formats seeking to cut waste without sacrificing convenience or formulation precision.

“Consumers increasingly expect products that simplify their routines without compromising performance,” say Elizabeth Frabotta, marketing and business development leader, Ecopol America Inc., and Denis Ontumi, VP of R&D at Rita Corporation. “For product developers, dissolvable shampoo capsules offer an opportunity to rethink the traditional shampoo bottle by delivering a pre-measured, concentrated format that transforms into a rich, luxurious lather during use. Rather than asking consumers to trade convenience for sustainability, brands can deliver both, creating a premium cleansing experience while reducing packaging, improving portability, and introducing new refill concepts. This concepts also provide opportunity to customize dosages to deliver benefits such as shorter hair care routines and quick rinsing.”

The experts add, “Beyond performance, consumers are looking for products that fit seamlessly into increasingly dynamic lifestyles. Whether at home, traveling, at the gym, or simply running low on their favorite shampoo, they want products that are readily available without the inconvenience of carrying bulky bottles or making an extra trip to the store. By offering both single-use capsules and at-home refill formats, brands can create a connected product ecosystem that keeps consumers stocked with the products they already know and trust.”

Finally, they say, “Single-dose capsules provide convenience for travel, hospitality, fitness, and trial experiences, while refill capsules allow consumers to replenish existing bottles with a perfectly pre-measured dose. Together, these complementary formats extend brand accessibility, encourage repeat purchases, and create a more

flexible, consumer-centric approach to everyday hair care.”

Ultimately, the opportunity isn’t simply creating a new shampoo; it’s creating a new product format that better aligns with how consumers want to use personal care products. The future of personal care isn’t adding more products to consumers’ routines. It’s creating products that do more while asking less of the consumer.

Bridging Naturality and High-Performance Sensory

Biocogent’s Hedi Avocado is a plant-derived, water-based microdispersion designed to bring the rich conditioning benefits of avocado butter to lighter,

more elegant formulations. Combining avocado butter with squalane, radish seed extract and vitamin E, it offers a silicone- and paraffin alternative with a soft, luxurious, sprayable milk-like feel while supporting moisturization, barrier care, frizz control, hydration and damage repair. Its ability to be cold-mixed and easily dispersed in water also gives formulators greater flexibility across skin and hair care, from serums and barrier treatments to hair milks, masks, leave-ins and detanglers.

“Hedi products represent a solution to the longstanding challenge of balancing ‘naturality’ with ‘elegance,’” says Paul Lawrence,



Biocogent’s Hedi Avocado is a plant-derived, water-based microdispersion designed to bring the rich conditioning benefits of avocado butter to lighter, more elegant formulations.

PhD., executive director of bioscience research, discovery and scientific communications. “Natural butters and oils provide excellent biological benefits, but are often greasy, slow to absorb, and difficult to uniformly disperse. Silicones and paraffins have solved the sensory problems, but do not contribute much as far as biological activity. The Hedi technology allows natural substances to be used efficaciously and surmounts the longstanding trade-off, where consumers can now obtain the natural benefits without relying upon synthetic emollients for the sensory properties.”

He adds, “The means by which Hedi products are created allows for stable, homogeneous dispersions to be prepared that seamlessly blend high levels of lipophilic materials into water-based systems. These preparations have uniform particle sizes and impressive stability. This proprietary process allows downstream clients to cold-process and ‘infinitely dilute’ the Hedi products as active ingredients in finished formulations. This saves formulators precious time while being able to extol highly desirable features like the lighter feel, that the material is easily sprayable, spreads faster, and provides uniform skin coverage.”

Multitasking Tech: Protection, Foam and Viscosity

Symrise’s Mindera Euca is a 100% plant-based multifunctional ingredient designed for rinse-off personal care. It provides broad-spectrum product protection across a broad pH range while also improving foam quality, volume, viscosity and sensory feel, including in sulfate-free systems. The ingredient extends Symrise’s patented Mindera platform into rinse-off formulations, giving brands a way to combine product protection and enhanced cleansing aesthetics while responding to demand for natural-origin, wellness-oriented formulations.

“As a multifunctional, Mindera Euca (INCI: piperitone) delivers, among other properties, broad-spectrum product protection in rinse-off



Symrise’s Mindera Euca is a patented, plant-based product protection technology for rinse-off applications.

systems through a multi-modal antimicrobial mechanism typical of monoterpenes,” says Steffen Nordzicke, director microbiology research, global innovation, Symrise. “It disrupts bacterial cytoplasmic membranes in both Gram-positive and Gram-negative organisms, leading to loss of membrane integrity, ATP depletion and reduced cellular energy. In Gram-positive bacteria, piperitone additionally supports the downregulation of genes involved in cell wall synthesis, quorum sensing and virulence, further limiting microbial survival and adaptation. Because this membrane-active mode of action is non-ionic and chemistry-driven, efficacy is maintained across a wide pH range and in sulfate-free surfactant systems common to modern rinse-off formulations.”

Sabine Lange, director functional efficacy and application, global innovation, Symrise, adds, “Building on its multifunctional profile, Mindera Euca functions as a foam-structuring viscosity modifier. As hydrophobic molecules preferentially partition into surfactant micelles instead of the aqueous phase, driving micelle swelling and increasing aggregation number. More importantly, their insertion between surfactant headgroups reduces effective headgroup repulsion and lowers micellar curvature, promoting sphere-to-rod or wormlike micelle transitions. These structural changes significantly enhance bulk viscosity and contribute to creamier, more stable foam. The effect is indirect and structure-driven, resulting from micellar reorganization rather than direct surface activity.”

Making the Case for High-Performance Bio-Based Hair Care

Solabia USA's OleoVeil is a 100% bio-based, vegan film former designed to deliver silicone-like slip and a comfortable "second-skin" feel in natural and mineral formulations. Its amphiphilic structure improves spreadability and wear while reducing pilling, streakiness, tackiness, greasiness and heaviness associated with botanical-rich formulas, and it also provides water and transfer resistance plus a soft-focus finish.

"We believe the key opportunity here is for brands to shift the conversation from just a natural alternative to a high performance technology that happens to be natural and biobased," says Tim Cuneo, Ph.D., NPD functionals group leader at Solabia USA. "Materials like OleoVeil represent the next generation of bio-based materials which leverage more advanced chemical feedstocks developed over decades of green-alternative initiatives. OleoVeil

demonstrates that sustainability and performance can coexist without compromise. Rather than asking consumers to trade efficacy for sustainability, brands can position OleoVeil as a next-generation film former that delivers the conditioning, manageability and styling performance consumers expect from traditional ingredients while supporting growing demand for bio-based solutions at accessible prices."

As for how OleoVeil's multifunctionality shapes product development and claims strategy across hair care, Cuneo notes, "Multifunctionality has become an important part of both product development and claim strategy. Consumers are looking for products that solve multiple concerns in a single step, while brands are challenged to create efficient, high-performing formulations. OleoVeil supports both objectives by enabling a broad range of consumer-facing claims, including

curl retention, frizz prevention, cuticle sealing, and reduced split-end appearance without buildup. It also enables clear formulations without compromising foam performance, helping brands deliver more benefits with a single ingredient. Its compatibility across both rinse-off and leave-on applications also gives brands the flexibility to extend the same technology throughout a complete hair care routine."

According to Cuneo, OleoVeil's strongest opportunity for curly and textured hair is its ability to maintain curl definition, shape and volume control in high-humidity conditions. Testing showed more defined curls, less frizz, reduced shrinkage and better shape retention versus controls, while also limiting unwanted volume expansion. The ingredient's lighter, less greasy and less tacky feel compared with traditional oils and bio-based derivatives adds another point of differentiation, giving brands a performance story centered on long-lasting curl integrity without sacrificing sensory quality.

Solabia's data suggests OleoVeil can be used across shampoos, conditioners and leave-in styling products.

"When designing a product line, a great deal of effort is put into matching the desired marketing and technical briefs that are crucial for creating differentiated products and reproducible success," says Cuneo. "If an ingredient is able to deliver the right sensory, benefits, and experience, it can be an integral part of multiple products in a line. For example, traditional materials like amodimethicone and dimethicone can be found across a routine, often in ratios designed to give a brand their signature sensory. If a material must be excluded from some formulations, it can be less attractive as a choice if it introduces the dilemma of having to lose part of the designed aesthetics in one or more products. The flexibility allows the adoption of materials that can become part of a brand's core technology platform which establishes their unique edge." ■



"We believe the key opportunity here is for brands to shift the conversation from just a natural alternative to a high performance technology that happens to be natural and biobased," says Tim Cuneo, Ph.D., NPD functionals group leader at Solabia USA. "Materials like OleoVeil represent the next generation of bio-based materials which leverage more advanced chemical feedstocks developed over decades of green-alternative initiatives."

HAIR CARE'S NEXT MOVE: GRAY, SENSORY AND CLIMATE-READY

Hair care packaging is moving beyond simply containing the formula. As consumers rethink gray coverage, seek more sensorial rituals and adapt to increasingly unpredictable climates, packaging is becoming a tool for personalization, performance and experience. From precision root touch-ups and discreet gray blending to tactile dispensing systems and climate-responsive formats, the latest innovations point to a category where how a product is delivered is becoming as important as what it delivers.

Gray Coverage Gets a Makeover

As gray hair becomes a more visible and diverse hair-care opportunity, packaging is evolving to support more nuanced approaches to coverage—from full root correction to subtle blending and gray acceptance.

Recent gray-hair coverage innovation is moving in three distinct directions: speed, precision and multifunctionality. Laura Geller Beauty's Root Touch Up Cream + Powder brings makeup-style convenience to gray coverage with a dual-ended format that instantly conceals roots while also creating the appearance of fuller hair, extending the brand's mature-skin positioning into hair care.

No Gray, meanwhile, is tackling the time and mess associated with permanent color through Quick Color Shampoo, which delivers 100% gray coverage in as little as five minutes using a dual-chamber system that keeps dye and developer separate until application, while adding conditioning and scalp-care benefits.

American Crew's Fly Under the Graydar takes a subtler approach, using an undetectable hair-color product designed to blend gray hairs into a man's existing natural color rather than creating an obvious



Laura Geller Beauty's Root Touch Up Cream + Powder brings makeup-style convenience to gray coverage.



No Gray is tackling the time and mess associated with permanent color through Quick Color Shampoo



Aptar's Apollo Dual-Sided Spray is particularly relevant for root-touch-up products, using two distinct spray patterns to give consumers control over coverage.



From precision root touch-ups and discreet gray blending to tactile dispensing systems and climate-responsive formats, the latest innovations point to a category where how a product is delivered is becoming as important as what it delivers.

dyed effect. Together, the launches point toward a broader shift from traditional, salon-like gray coverage toward faster, easier and more discreet solutions that combine color correction with grooming, volume and hair-health benefits.

As the category evolves, new packaging solutions are required.

Aptar's Apollo Dual-Sided Spray is particularly relevant for root-touch-up products, using two distinct spray patterns to give consumers control over coverage: a targeted, higher-dose application for medium-to-full gray coverage and a wider, diffused spray for a softer, more natural finish.

Its twist-to-lock dual-spray design eliminates the need for a separate cap, while using 40–60% less resin than a conventional actuator-and-overcap system, adding a sustainability benefit to a format designed around precision, customization and discreet gray coverage.

Sensory Packaging Meets High-Performance Hair Care

As consumers seek moments of sensory reset and emotional wellness, hair care packaging is evolving from a functional delivery system into part of the ritual.

Aptar's BOV technology is particularly suited to rich hair masks and high-viscosity leave-ins, separating formula from propellant to preserve product integrity while delivering consistent, 360° dispensing and up to 99% product evacuation.

Formats such as BOV Wren, WS25 and Ringo add tactile actuation, controlled ribbon-like or foam dispensing, ergonomic handling and premium finishes, turning the application of dense treatments into a more pleasurable, precise experience.

For brands, the technology creates an opportunity to make texture, dispensing and touch part of the product experience while supporting omnichannel distribution and, in some formats, PCR-content goals.



Aptar's BOV Wren (pictured), WS25 and Ringo add tactile actuation, controlled ribbon-like or foam dispensing, ergonomic handling and premium finishes, turning the application of dense treatments into a more pleasurable, precise experience.



Aptar's AAT Valve supports particle-rich formats such as dry shampoos and texturizing sprays while reducing clogging, making it well suited to dry, heat-friendly styling products.



Moritz Hair, paired with BOV technology, provides 360° dispensing, high product evacuation and formula protection, supporting heat-protection and frizz-control sprays that need reliable performance in changing conditions.



Aptar's EuroMist offers tailored spray technologies—including high-viscosity and oil-compatible options, upside-down dispensing and an ultra-fine, extended mist designed for a drier, faster-drying feel—making it particularly relevant to lightweight leave-ins, air-dry treatments and texturizers.

Hair Care Gets Climate-Ready

Climate volatility is pushing hair care beyond traditional climate-adaptive anti-frizz solutions toward climate-responsive performance, with products designed to work with heat, humidity and water stress rather than simply combat their effects.

Aptar anticipates that the next wave of innovation could include air-drying formulas that speed drying while enhancing texture, cooling scalp treatments that provide relief in extreme heat, and “melt-proof” styling products engineered to maintain hold, shape and sensory

appeal as temperatures rise. The broader shift is from protecting hair *from* the climate to designing routines that help consumers adapt to increasingly unpredictable environmental conditions.

Packaging can help turn climate-responsive hair care from a product claim into a functional experience. Aptar’s AAT Valve supports particle-rich formats such as dry shampoos and texturizing sprays while reducing clogging, making it well suited to dry, heat-friendly styling products.

Moritz Hair, paired with BOV technology, provides 360° dispensing, high product evacuation and formula protection, supporting heat-

protection and frizz-control sprays that need reliable performance in changing conditions.

Meanwhile, the company’s EuroMist offers tailored spray technologies—including high-viscosity and oil-compatible options, upside-down dispensing and an ultra-fine, extended mist designed for a drier, faster-drying feel—making it particularly relevant to lightweight leave-ins, air-dry treatments and texturizers. Together, these systems give brands greater control over dispensing, formulation compatibility, portability and sensory performance as hair care evolves to address heat, humidity and increasingly unpredictable climates. ■

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Ingredients Are the New SEO: How AI and TikTok Are Rewriting the Rules of Skin Care

| BY JEB GLEASON-ALLURED, Group Publisher

Success increasingly depends on building products and content that work together across retail shelves, recommendation engines and social platforms. Skin care is entering a new phase defined by proven performance, scientific credibility and digital discoverability. Recent research reveals that while consumers continue to invest heavily in skin health, the factors driving purchase decisions are rapidly evolving. Clinical efficacy remains the foundation, but AI-powered search engines and social commerce platforms like TikTok Shop are reshaping how consumers discover, evaluate and ultimately buy products.

Together, these findings paint a clear picture: tomorrow's winning brands will develop products that are easy for AI to understand, compelling for creators to explain and simple for consumers to trust. For R&D teams and marketers alike, success increasingly depends on building products and content that work together across retail shelves, recommendation engines and social platforms.

Skin Care's Next Growth Era: Science, Not Hype, Is Winning

Circana data from 2025 and Q1 2026 suggest^a that skin care has entered a more mature, resilient phase of growth, with demand broadening rather than relying on a handful of hero trends. Growth in both mass and prestige channels indicates consumers are continuing to invest in skin health across price points, while strong unit gains show shoppers are buying more products, not simply paying higher prices.

At the same time, the outperformance of face creams, serums and eye treatments, coupled with clinical brands capturing more than one-third of prestige dollar sales, reinforces that efficacy and science-backed claims remain the industry's strongest value proposition.

^a<https://www.circana.com/industries/beauty>

Rather than chasing novelty alone, consumers are increasingly prioritizing proven performance, making skin care one of beauty's most dependable long-term growth engines.

But, beyond the product, ingredient and category trends, two forces are reshaping the skin care market: TikTok Shop and AI platforms such as ChatGPT. This suggests that new strategies are needed, from product development to marketing.

AI Is Rewriting Skin Care Discovery—and Ingredients Are the New SEO

A recent study by the 5W Research Team^b has revealed a fundamental architectural shift in how beauty consumers buy and research skin care. In a sweeping Q1 2026 audit analyzing more than 80 high-intent consumer prompts across ChatGPT, Claude, Perplexity and Google AI Overviews,

^b<https://www.5wpr.com/ai-visibility-index/beauty-ai-visibility-index-2026/>



The outperformance of face creams, serums and eye treatments, coupled with clinical brands capturing more than one-third of prestige dollar sales, reinforces that efficacy and science-backed claims remain the industry's strongest value proposition.

researchers discovered that beauty has become the largest consumer category for AI search optimization.

The report suggests that AI is creating a new competitive landscape where scientific clarity is becoming as important as product efficacy. Brands

that make it easy for AI to understand exactly what a product does—and why—are gaining visibility over brands that rely on prestige, heritage or aspirational storytelling.

The report's authors offer the following key insights:

- **Lead with ingredients, not brand heritage.** AI search prioritizes products based on specific ingredients and skin concerns (e.g., vitamin C, niacinamide, barrier repair, sensitive skin) rather than luxury positioning or brand recognition. Brands should organize product messaging around what the formula delivers.
- **Make formulations machine-readable.** Structured product information—including ingredient concentrations, mechanisms of action and exclusion frameworks—helps AI systems interpret and recommend products. The report points to The Ordinary's concentration-based naming and Drunk Elephant's "Clean 8" framework as examples of content AI can easily parse.
- **Clinical credibility is a competitive advantage.** Brands such as CeraVe, La Roche-Posay



The report argues that Sephora and Ulta have become distinct AI citation ecosystems. Securing distribution across both retailers not only expands physical reach but also increases the likelihood of appearing in AI-generated recommendations.

and SkinCeuticals consistently surface because they pair formulations with dermatologist relationships, clinical positioning and evidence-based education. AI appears to reward verifiable expertise over lifestyle marketing.

- **Own a specific skin concern.**

The strongest-performing brands dominate clearly defined territories—barrier repair, sensitive skin, vitamin C, niacinamide—rather than trying to be everything to everyone. Establishing authority around a focused benefit can improve discoverability.

- **Retail strategy now influences digital discovery.** The report argues that Sephora and Ulta have become distinct AI citation ecosystems. Securing distribution across both retailers not only expands physical reach but also increases the likelihood of appearing in AI-generated recommendations.

- **Invest in authoritative educational content.** Peer-reviewed studies, dermatologist-authored resources and chemist-backed explainers create the kind of credible content AI engines are most likely to cite. Brands that continue to emphasize lifestyle imagery over technical education risk losing visibility in AI-driven search.



Companies including Neutrogena and La Roche-Posay placed within the top 10 sources favored by ChatGPT, indicating that well-developed brand content remains influential when AI systems evaluate skin care products.



Beyond direct purchases, TikTok Shop is also fueling an omnichannel halo effect, with brands seeing 46% higher brick-and-mortar sales and 28% higher Amazon sales after gaining traction on the platform.

A separate 2026 analysis from Novi builds on this shift, examining which online sources most strongly influence the beauty recommendations generated by ChatGPT. Notably, for skin care-related questions, ChatGPT's citations leaned more heavily toward editorial publications and (in an echo of 5W's findings) major beauty retailers.

The top five most-cited sources for skin care recommendations were:

1. Reddit
2. Who What Wear
3. Sephora
4. Allure
5. Ulta Beauty

Interestingly, some brand-owned websites also appeared among the top-ranked sources. Companies including Neutrogena and La Roche-Posay placed within the top 10, indicating that well-developed brand content remains influential when AI systems evaluate skin care products.

^c<https://info.charm.io/industry-reports>

TikTok Shop's Beauty Playbook: Hydration, PDRN and Ingredient Education Drive the Next Wave of Viral Sales

A new report from Charm.io, "Formulating for Virality: What TikTok Shop Sales Data Reveals About Winning Ingredients, Products & Trends"^c, suggests beauty brands hoping to win on TikTok Shop should focus less on chasing fleeting trends and more on pairing high-interest ingredients with educational, creator-led content.

The platform is rapidly cementing its role as a beauty retail powerhouse, with beauty sales projected to reach \$4.9 billion by 2026. Beyond direct purchases, TikTok Shop is also fueling an omnichannel halo effect, with brands seeing 46% higher brick-and-mortar sales and 28% higher Amazon sales after gaining traction on the platform.

Hydration continues to dominate ingredient-driven sales, with water,

sodium hyaluronate and glycerin remaining top revenue generators. Meanwhile, regenerative ingredient PDRN has become one of beauty's hottest topics, generating more than 460 million views over the past year. Four of the five top-selling PDRN products are sold as multi-pack systems, underscoring the growing appeal of simplified routines and higher-value bundles.

Other fast-rising actives include Croda's Volufile, a non-invasive plumping ingredient that has amassed 226 million views and surged 2,943% over the past 12 months, despite a market still dominated by just four brands. Kojic acid also continues to gain momentum for hyperpigmentation, with creators frequently pairing it with niacinamide and turmeric while showcasing visible before-and-after results.

According to Charm.io, the biggest winners are combining science-backed ingredients with creator education rather than traditional advertising.

Tutorials explaining ingredient benefits, application techniques and visible transformations outperform purely promotional content, while claims such as "glow," "hydrating" and "smoothing" consistently rank among the strongest purchase drivers.

The report also points to product bundling as an increasingly effective strategy for increasing average order value while helping consumers understand complete skin care routines.

1. Design formulas for both people and algorithms.

Ingredient transparency, published concentrations, mechanisms of action and clearly defined skin concerns are becoming competitive advantages. AI platforms increasingly reward structured, science-forward product information that is easy to interpret and recommend.

2. Double down on clinically credible hero benefits.

Consumers continue to gravitate toward proven efficacy over novelty. Barrier repair, hydration, pigmentation, sensitive skin and anti-aging remain durable growth platforms, supported by dermatologist validation and clinical evidence.

3. Turn education into your marketing strategy.

The highest-performing brands are replacing lifestyle messaging with ingredient education, expert explainers and creator demonstrations. Consumers—and AI search engines—reward brands that clearly explain how products work and who they are for.

4. Build products for the social commerce ecosystem.

TikTok Shop favors products with visible results, memorable hero ingredients and routines that creators can easily demonstrate. Bundles, before-and-after transformations and claims such as "glow," "hydrating"



PDRN has become one of beauty's hottest topics, generating more than 460 million views over the past year. Pictured is Induction Therapies' YouthXO + PDRN, "a clean, recovery-and-renewal serum designed for continued daily skin support between treatments."

and "smoothing" continue to drive engagement and conversion.

5. Think beyond the shelf to maximize discoverability.

Distribution, editorial coverage and retailer presence increasingly shape AI recommendations. Strong relationships with retailers such as Sephora and Ulta, alongside authoritative brand-owned content and earned media, can amplify visibility across both AI search and social commerce. ■



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The Skin Care Toolbox: Next-Gen Ingredients and Concept Products for Longevity, Barrier Health & Beyond

California-based contract manufacturer Cosmetic Group USA's BioBarrier Ceramide Cleansing Oil Stick advances the cleansing stick format with a ceramide-powered oil-gel technology designed to remove makeup, sunscreen and daily buildup while preserving skin comfort.

As skin care evolves beyond traditional anti-aging and trend-driven innovation, the next generation of winning products will be defined by a powerful combination of science, sensory appeal and digital discoverability. Today's consumers—and the AI platforms and creators influencing their decisions—are looking for clear benefits, credible claims and ingredients that deliver measurable performance. From longevity-focused botanicals and next-generation UV protection to barrier-supporting cleansers, biotech-powered actives and elevated lip care formats, these innovations showcase the technologies helping brands create products that stand out across retail shelves, recommendation engines and social platforms.

Here, we explore ingredients and concepts designed for brands seeking to harness the future of skin care.

24/7 Slugging Lip Mask Reimagines the Trend with Day-to-Night Barrier Comfort

The next evolution of lip slugging is moving beyond heavy occlusion to deliver flexible, wearable moisture



California-based contract manufacturer Cosmetic Group USA's 24/7 Slugging Lip Mask | Day + Night uses a shared cushiony lipid technology built from emollients, waxes, butters and sensorial modifiers to create two distinct experiences

protection. California-based contract manufacturer Cosmetic Group USA's 24/7 Slugging Lip Mask | Day + Night uses a shared cushiony lipid technology built from emollients, waxes, butters and sensorial modifiers to create two distinct experiences: a lightweight, non-sticky jelly balm for daytime wear and a richer overnight treatment designed to envelop lips in nourishing comfort.

The innovation addresses a key challenge with traditional slugging—

delivering long-lasting moisture without a heavy, greasy feel. The Day formula uses lightweight lipids, structured waxes, butters and soft-focus texturizers to create a breathable moisture-sealing layer that provides the protective benefits consumers expect from slugging while remaining comfortable under makeup.

By combining barrier-supporting performance with elevated sensory design, the dual-ended format reflects a broader lip care trend: consumers are seeking products that deliver visible comfort and protection while fitting seamlessly into daily routines. The result is a modern take on slugging that balances cushion, adhesion and wearability from morning through night.

Harnessing Nature's Circadian Code for Overnight Skin Renewal

Mibelle Biochemistry's LunaRose brings the power of nature's circadian intelligence to overnight skin care. Derived from the rose hips of a unique organic *Rosa rugosa* hybrid grown in Finland, this active delivers



Mibelle Biochemistry's LunaRose brings the power of nature's circadian intelligence to overnight skin care.

melatonin-like effects to help support nighttime skin regeneration, mitochondrial function and barrier renewal. Backed by in vitro and in vivo studies, LunaRose reportedly helps improve radiance, hydration and skin smoothness while reducing sleep wrinkles, redness and the visible signs of fatigue, unlocking a more rested, rejuvenated complexion by morning.

“LunaRose mimics melatonin’s effects by activating similar biological pathways that regulate the skin’s circadian rhythm and support overnight repair,” says Katharina Kappler, Ph.D., senior scientific project manager at Mibelle Biochemistry. “In human epidermal keratinocytes, treatment with LunaRose significantly increased the expression of the melatonin receptor MTNR1A, comparable to the effect of melatonin itself. The receptor activation by melatonin is known to

trigger downstream gene expression changes involved in circadian rhythm, antioxidant defense, and mitochondrial function. Just like melatonin, LunaRose induced a time-dependent expression pattern of core clock genes such as BMAL1, CLOCK, PER2, and CRY2, helping synchronize the skin’s natural rhythm. Additionally, genes linked to antioxidant response and mitochondrial activity were upregulated by LunaRose, enhancing cellular protection and energy metabolism. This melatonin-like action may be partly due to LunaRose boosting melatonin receptor levels, amplifying the skin’s ability to respond to melatonin and restore its natural overnight renewal cycle.”

Kappler adds, “LunaRose enhances mitochondrial function, which is essential for maintaining the skin’s energy and vitality. In human epidermal keratinocytes, LunaRose

upregulated key genes involved in mitochondrial processes, including those responsible for electron transport and ATP synthesis. It also stimulated genes linked to mitophagy, the selective removal of damaged mitochondria, ensuring a healthy mitochondrial network. This genetic activation translates into improved mitochondrial performance. In a Seahorse assay measuring realtime oxygen consumption—a direct indicator of mitochondrial activity—cells treated with LunaRose showed increased basal respiration, maximal respiration, and ATP production. These improvements mean that skin cells generate more energy, supporting vital metabolic processes and repair mechanisms during the night. By boosting mitochondrial efficiency and energy output, LunaRose helps the skin maintain its vitality, resilience, and ability to rejuvenate overnight,



As the global population of menopausal and postmenopausal women expands, these changes are driving increased interest in hormone-informed skin care approaches designed to address hydration, barrier function, collagen support and the broader concept of “menopausal skin” as a distinct category of beauty and wellness needs.

contributing to a fresher, more radiant appearance.”

Finally, she says, “LunaRose strengthens the skin barrier by promoting keratinocyte differentiation and enhancing structural cohesion, which helps protect against environmental stressors. In human epidermal keratinocytes, treatment with LunaRose upregulated key genes involved in barrier formation, including markers of keratinocyte differentiation essential for building a resilient stratum corneum. Additionally, LunaRose boosted the expression of genes critical for corneodesmosome formation, which ensures strong cell-to-cell adhesion, and the gene encoding kallikrein-related peptidase 7, which regulates controlled desquamation. It also increased the expression of the water transporter aquaporin-3 that supports optimal hydration. These molecular changes translate into a stronger, more cohesive barrier that retains moisture and resists external aggressors. This effect was confirmed in a placebo-controlled clinical study: after 28 days of using a cream with 2% LunaRose, transepidermal water loss (TEWL) decreased by 12.4% compared to baseline and by 7.3% versus placebo, indicating improved barrier integrity. Skin hydration also rose significantly, reinforcing the barrier’s ability to maintain suppleness and resilience.”

Beyond Anti-Aging: Menopause Skin Takes Center Stage

Menopause is a global life stage affecting hundreds of millions of women, with the World Health Organization^a noting that menopause typically occurs between ages 45 and 55 and that women aged 50 and older represented 26% of all women and girls worldwide in 2021—a population expected to continue growing as life expectancy rises.

The transition is driven by declining ovarian function and falling estrogen levels^b, which can have a profound impact on skin health: reduced estrogen signaling is associated with decreased collagen production, thinner epidermal structure, lower moisture levels, diminished elasticity, increased dryness, fine lines and wrinkles, greater sensitivity, and slower wound healing.

Research has shown a strong relationship between estrogen deficiency after menopause and loss of dermal collagen^c, a key structural protein responsible for firmness and resilience, contributing to accelerated visible skin aging during this phase. As the global population of menopausal and postmenopausal women expands, these changes are driving increased interest in hormone-informed skin care approaches designed to address hydration, barrier function, collagen support and the broader concept of “menopausal skin” as a distinct category of beauty and wellness needs.

“Menopausal skin is receiving long-overdue attention as brands recognize the profound biological shifts that occur during this life stage,” says Michelle Chavez, chief commercial officer at Accupac, a contract development and manufacturing organization. “Declining estrogen levels can reduce collagen production, weaken the skin barrier, and accelerate dehydration, leading to visible changes in elasticity, tone, and texture. As a result, brands are moving toward more targeted formulations that focus on helping restore core skin functions—such as barrier strength, cellular renewal, and moisture retention—rather than simply masking symptoms.”

She adds, “Advances in biotechnology and ingredient engineering are playing an important role in these solutions. Fermentation-derived peptides, microbiome-supporting actives, and lab-developed

structural proteins are being used to help reinforce collagen networks and rebuild resilience in mature skin. Ingredients such as bioengineered collagen fragments, barrier-supporting lipids, and red algae extracts that address cellular aging are helping improve firmness and elasticity while supporting long-term skin vitality.”

Finally, says Chavez, “At the same time, consumers navigating menopause are increasingly looking for products that demonstrate meaningful improvements in hydration, skin texture, and overall skin quality. This is influencing formulation strategies that combine immediate sensorial benefits—such as cooling gels, plumping serums, and nourishing textures—with ingredients designed to strengthen the skin over time.”

Accupac’s Cobalt Labs Growth Signal Night Cream and Cellular Vitality Reset showcase longevity-inspired approaches to menopausal skin care, combining biomimetic science with next-generation aging strategies. The Growth Signal Night Cream uses plant-derived, growth factor-inspired actives to support overnight skin regeneration, helping stimulate collagen production while strengthening the skin barrier. Cellular Vitality Reset, a senolytic gel-cream featuring an eco-designed red algae extract, targets cellular waste associated with aging signals to help promote skin resilience and firmness.

Together, the concepts reflect a broader shift toward proactive skin longevity solutions designed to address menopause-related concerns such as collagen decline, barrier weakening and loss of skin vitality.

Advancing Barrier Care With Oil-Powered Botanical Bioavailability

Symrise’s SymConcentrole Barrier Boost is a 100% natural-origin, eco-designed active that pairs upcycled pineapple hearts with organic coconut/MCT oil to reinforce the skin barrier while improving firmness and elasticity.

^a<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/menopause>

^b<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/16198774/>

^c<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/17540135/>

By boosting key epidermal proteins such as filaggrin and involucrin alongside structural components including fibrillin-1 and decorin, the ingredient delivers a dual-action approach that leaves skin stronger, smoother and more resilient.

“For SymConcentrole Barrier Boost, the SymFrequency extraction in coconut or MCT (medium-chain triglycerides) oil can improve the stability and practical bioavailability of triterpenoids because it keeps these lipophilic compounds in a protective fat phase instead of exposing them to water or harsh solvent processing,” says

Gauthier Beck, global product manager botanicals, Symrise. “Triterpenoids dissolve better in oils, so the active material is less likely to precipitate, degrade, or be lost during extraction and storage. Coconut and MCT oils also tend to be more oxidation-resistant than many unsaturated carrier oils, which helps preserve sensitive plant compounds over time. Compared with water-based methods, the oil phase avoids poor solubility and hydrolysis. Compared with conventional organic solvents, it can reduce handling losses and eliminate a separate solvent-removal step.”

Beck adds, “SymConcentrole Barrier Boost demonstrates robust barrier-strengthening efficacy through targeted in vitro and ex vivo studies on human keratinocytes and skin equivalents. In vitro assays reveal statistically significant upregulation of filaggrin (essential for keratin filament bundling and stratum corneum hydration), involucrin (cross-linked cornified envelope protein enhancing mechanical resilience), caspase-14 (protease driving filaggrin processing and barrier lipid maturation), fibrillin-1 (microfibril scaffold for elastic fiber assembly in dermis), and decorin (small leucine-rich proteoglycan regulating collagen fibrillogenesis and extracellular matrix integrity).”

He continues, “Ex vivo human skin models confirm markedly elevated filaggrin, fibrillin-1, and decorin protein expression, alongside quantifiable increases in epidermal thickness (assessed histologically) and structural cohesion (via intercellular junction integrity). These findings provide mechanistic depth for barrier maturation and dermal support, complemented by sensory tests for consumer-perceived efficacy.”

The New Science of Skin Longevity: From RNA Signals to Plant-Powered Exosomes

Biocogent’s RNAActivate W represents a new frontier in skin longevity, harnessing RNA-based technology and a proprietary delivery system to precisely target microRNA signals linked to visible aging. By helping restore the skin’s natural production of collagen, elastin and key extracellular matrix proteins, this advanced bioactive ingredient supports improved firmness, elasticity, smoothness and resilience—addressing the root signaling pathways behind wrinkles rather than simply masking their appearance.

He adds, “RNAActivate W represents a paradigm shift for the cosmetic care industry to allow for precision biotech



Biocogent’s RNAActivate W represents a new frontier in skin longevity, harnessing RNA-based technology and a proprietary delivery system to precisely target microRNA signals linked to visible aging.

skin care that supports the skin's natural biological communication involved in the maintenance of a youthful appearance. In that regard, one could envision multiple product formats that could capitalize on its exceptional efficacy: a daily facial serum, a night repair serum, an undereye treatment, a sheet mask, and certainly neck and décolleté regimens."

Global Cosmetic Industry also asked Lawrence how product developers creating clinical or dermatologist-branded skin care could best structure consumer-facing trials or visual assets to back up claims like "strengthens skin from within."

"The phrase 'strengthens skin from within' is an attractive marketing phrase that can be supported through examinations of the extracellular matrix integrity, barrier integrity, dermal resilience, and resistance to environmental stressors," Lawrence noted. "From these tests, there will be molecular biology (gene expression) evidence (already shown for RActivate W), protein and tissue evidence (already shown for RActivate W), biomechanical tests (already shown for RActivate W) and consumer perception surveys."

Meanwhile, dsm-firmenich has relaunched its Alpaflor portfolio, marking 25 years of its Alpine plant-based bioactive platform with a renewed focus on skin longevity, resilience and climate adaptation.

Inspired by the ability of Alpine plants to thrive under intense UV exposure, extreme temperatures and other environmental stressors, the refreshed range features 10 clinically tested bioactives designed to support hydration, barrier function, regeneration and well-aging. The company said its Alpine botanicals are cultivated at optimal high-altitude locations to maximize the concentration of protective phytochemicals.

According to dsm-firmenich, the standardized extracts are positioned to support emerging neurocosmetic and longevity-focused skin care claims,



Provital's Intensilk brings a longevity-inspired approach to body care with a multi-omic botanical active designed to reshape the look of skin affected by cellulite.

with applications spanning climate-adaptive skin care, anti-pollution, skin rejuvenation, barrier repair, prebiotic care for oily skin and soothing solutions for sensitive skin. The expanded portfolio includes ingredients such as Alpaflor Neurosmooth, Alpaflor Edelweiss CB, Alpaflor Gigawhite CB and Alpaflor Alp-Sebum CB, reinforcing the company's emphasis on nature-inspired, science-backed bioactives for next-generation skin care formulations.

Elsewhere, Symrise is advancing longevity skin care with Cellexora MD, an active powered by plant-derived exosomes from upcycled organic apple side streams in Italy. Designed

to support deep skin regeneration and long-term vitality, the 100% natural-origin ingredient uses extracellular vesicles as biological messengers to enhance cell communication across key skin cells, including keratinocytes, fibroblasts and macrophages.

Backed by scientific characterization and clinical data showing improvements in wrinkles, firmness and skin resilience within 30 days, Cellexora MD reportedly brings a new level of efficacy, transparency and sustainability to premium well-aging formulations.

"The exosomes of Cellexora MD are internalized by keratinocytes, fibroblasts and macrophages, where

they act as biological messengers helping modulate intercellular communication,” says Héloïse Bouchez, global product manager advanced actives, Symrise. “They support genomic stability, autophagy and dermo-epidermal adhesion by stimulating Collage XVII in keratinocytes, they help stimulate fibroblast extracellular matrix production (total collagen, collagen III and fibrillin-1), and help reduce pro-inflammatory markers signaling in macrophages, creating a regenerative skin micro-environment. The most implicated pathways relate to DNA damage response, autophagy/proteostasis, and extracellular matrix organization, explaining the observed collagen and elasticity benefits.

“Cellexora MD is positioned as [having] true exosomes through physical characterization with TEM imaging, TRPS and NTA to analyze particle size and vesicles’ quantification, and biochemical characterization with OMICs profiling (lipids, proteins, microRNAs),” says Héloïse Bouchez, global product manager advanced actives, Symrise. “Stability and batch-to-batch reproducibility are demonstrated by zeta-potential measurements, controlled size distribution and particle size number, and a spray-drying process ensuring consistent performance and formulation robustness. This multi-level characterization clearly differentiates Cellexora MD from exosome-mimetic or synthetic vesicle systems that lack clarity on cargo complexity and biological functionality.”

Finally, Provital’s Intensilk brings a longevity-inspired approach to body care with a multi-omic botanical active designed to reshape the look of skin affected by cellulite. Derived from locally sourced apple flower, the premium ingredient targets both adipocyte metabolism and tissue architecture to improve the appearance of cellulite bumps, firmness and skin texture—supporting a smoother, tighter and healthier-looking body silhouette.



California-based contract manufacturer Cosmetic Group USA’s BioBarrier Ceramide Cleansing Oil Stick uses a structured oil-gel system that melts during application, combining jojoba and sweet almond oils to dissolve impurities with botanical oils that leave skin feeling conditioned rather than stripped.

Per the company, “At its core, the ingredient targets adipocyte energy metabolism by mimicking a caloric restriction state. Through phlorizin’s interaction with glucose transport (SGLT pathways), it reduces cellular glucose uptake, triggering an internal energy deficit signal. This cascade is claimed to push fat cells toward increased lipid utilization rather than storage.”

The company notes that Intensilk targets more than 1,000 genes and 200+ proteins involved in energy metabolism, inflammation and tissue architecture, supporting lipolysis, reduced adipogenesis, and enhanced collagen and elastin production.

In a 56-day clinical study, Intensilk reportedly demonstrated visible improvements in body contours, including up to 6 cm thigh reduction, a 12% decrease in hypodermal thickness, and gains in firmness, elasticity and

hydration. Its effects can be further amplified through mechanical stimulation, reflecting the rise of bio-mechanical approaches in advanced body care.

Solid Cleanse, Soft Finish: The Science Behind a Ceramide-Powered Cleansing Stick

California-based contract manufacturer Cosmetic Group USA’s BioBarrier Ceramide Cleansing Oil Stick advances the cleansing stick format with a ceramide-powered oil-gel technology designed to remove makeup, sunscreen and daily buildup while preserving skin comfort. The solid formula uses a structured oil-gel system that melts during application, combining jojoba and sweet almond oils to dissolve impurities with

botanical oils that leave skin feeling conditioned rather than stripped.

When activated with water, the formula transforms into a lightweight, milky rinse for thorough removal without the greasy residue often associated with oil-based cleansers. The addition of ceramides supports a barrier-friendly after-feel, reflecting the broader shift toward cleansers that do more than remove products—they help maintain skin balance and support overall skin health.

The Preventative Skin Care Shift

“Preventative skin care is becoming a defining behavior among younger consumers, driven by a convergence of digital transparency, longevity culture and access to personal diagnostics,” says Accupac’s Chavez. “Gen Z and younger millennials have grown up

seeing real-time skin care results across social platforms, where before-and-after imagery and ingredient education have created a more informed and ingredient-aware consumer base.”

She adds, “Technology is also playing a role in shaping these habits. AI-powered skin diagnostics, at-home skin scanning tools, and retailer-led testing platforms allow consumers to monitor factors such as hydration levels, elasticity, and pigmentation over time. As a result, product development increasingly focuses on formulas that provide both immediate visible improvements and long-term benefits.”

Chavez adds, “For younger consumers, preventative care is less about reversing aging and more about maintaining skin vitality over time. In response, brands are developing formulations designed to protect, strengthen and support skin earlier in its lifecycle.”

On the preventative ingredient front, Biocogent’s DermalRx LuShield NAT is an anti-aging active derived from a proprietary extract of the *Osmanthus fragrans* shrub designed to combat one of the key drivers of visible skin aging: advanced glycation end-products (AGEs). The ingredient is formulated to inhibit AGE formation, reduce AGE-induced cell toxicity, reverse fibroblast senescence and support the skin’s extracellular matrix by promoting the expression of 18 genes associated with skin health.

In a four-week clinical study of 60 volunteers applying the ingredient twice daily, DermalRx LuShield NAT reportedly delivered statistically significant improvements versus placebo. All participants showed improvements in skin elasticity and firmness, with average gains of 16.62% and 16.48%, respectively. The ingredient also improved forehead lines



“Gen Z and younger millennials have grown up seeing real-time skin care results across social platforms, where before-and-after imagery and ingredient education have created a more informed and ingredient-aware consumer base,” says Accupac’s Chavez.

in 86.67% of panelists and under-eye lines in 90%, while 100% experienced improvements in skin clarity, brightness and even skin tone. Redness was reduced in 93.33% of participants.

In building product claims, Biocogent's Paul Lawrence notes, "R&D teams experimenting with DermalRx LuShield NAT should look to biomarkers that address the following questions:"

1. *Is the ECM being supported? Type I collagen and other collagens.*
2. *Is degradation of the ECM being prevented? MMP inhibition, TIMP expression.*
3. *Are fibroblasts more youthful? Reduction in SASP markers like beta-galactosidase activity and interleukin expression.*

4. *Is oxidative stress being reduced? Use antioxidant assays.*
5. *Is there clinical evidence of visible repair? Redness, clarity, skin tone, wrinkles, elasticity ... to name a few.*

As for ensuring claims are credible, Lawrence adds, "Within cosmetic care, 'pharmaceutical grade' statements should be avoided, but there is in vitro evidence that at certain concentrations DermalRx LuShield NAT functions as good as a pharmaceutical compound: pyridoxamine. There is sufficient biological evidence to support a marketing claim that this active ingredient helps to preserve the integrity of youthful skin before signs of aging arise by countering the accumulation of advanced glycation

end-products (AGEs) in skin tissue, which is one of the key drivers of biological aging."

Beyond performance, the ingredient emphasizes sustainability through a traceable supply chain. *Osmanthus fragrans* flowers are hand-harvested in their native Far East habitat by village cooperatives, providing local income while supporting low-input cultivation. Production follows an ISO 9001-certified, no-waste process that repurposes plant byproducts for fertilizer or incense.

Unlocking the Next-Generation Bemotrizinol Sunscreens

Inolex has launched LexFeel Enhance MB, a new formulation technology designed to help sunscreen developers incorporate bemotrizinol, the recently FDA-approved UV filter, into more stable and sensorially appealing products.

Developed specifically for organic UV filter systems, LexFeel Enhance MB uses a polymer network designed to improve thermodynamic stability while helping formulators create sunscreens with enhanced protection and improved skin feel. The launch follows the U.S. approval of bemotrizinol, an ingredient that has been widely used in sunscreens across Europe, Asia and Australia for more than 20 years.

According to Inolex, in-vivo testing showed that LexFeel Enhance MB helped evaluated UV filter systems achieve 25-30% higher SPF performance, with the potential to support SPF 50 formulations. The company also reported that just 5% usage of the ingredient was sufficient to solubilize 6% bemotrizinol for up to 12 weeks in sunscreen formulations.

The technology addresses a longstanding sunscreen challenge: consumer acceptance. While efficacy remains critical, texture and wearability continue to influence whether consumers apply and reaply sunscreen consistently. Inolex



Inolex has launched LexFeel Enhance MB, a new formulation technology designed to help sunscreen developers incorporate bemotrizinol, the recently FDA-approved UV filter, into more stable and sensorially appealing products.

said LexFeel Enhance MB not only improves UV filter solubilization compared with traditional approaches but also enhances the overall sensory profile of finished products.

From Clinic to Cabinet: How Medical Aesthetics Is Redefining Skin Care

“Advancements in bioengineering and medical research are significantly influencing the way modern skin care is designed,” says Accupac’s Chavez. “Many professional treatments work by stimulating biological processes—collagen production, cellular renewal, pigment regulation, or barrier repair. Today’s cosmetic formulas increasingly aim to help activate those same pathways through sophisticated ingredient technologies.”

She notes, “Fermented peptides, bio-designed structural proteins and cell-signaling ingredients derived from biotechnology are enabling topical products to help support skin recovery, resilience, and regeneration in ways that almost mirror clinical interventions. Delivery systems are also evolving—encapsulation technologies, targeted actives, and microbiome-supportive ferments help improve stability, penetration, and skin compatibility.”

To illustrate this pro inspiration, Croda Beauty Actives has introduced Matrixyl Neolide, an advanced evolution of its Matrixyl peptide technology featuring patented encapsulation for enhanced stability and controlled peptide release over 15 days.

The ingredient “shifts formulation from short-term dosing to continuous sustained biological signaling,” says Philip Ludwig, business development manager, Croda. “Its encapsulated system delivers a fast initial release followed by sustained peptide release over 15 days, supporting consistent fibroblast activation due to the enhanced and sustained bioavailability.”



Croda's Matrixyl Neolide's "clinically proven synergy with microneedling amplifies collagen I by 15% and collagen III by 31% versus dermaroller with a placebo, transforming the post-procedure window into a results-enhancing opportunity," says Anne Young, Croda's technical business development manager.

He adds, “For post-aesthetic care, this enables simpler, more effective protocols—maintaining collagen stimulation, barrier repair, and inflammation control without the need for frequent reapplication or complex layering. The powerful soothing benefits of Matrixyl Neolide are especially helpful after aggressive in-office aesthetic treatments.”

Anne Young, Croda’s technical business development manager, adds that the technology delivers “+25% global skin firmness and -8.2% wrinkle density in just 15 days.”

She adds, “Its clinically proven synergy with microneedling amplifies collagen I by 15% and collagen III by 31% versus dermaroller with a placebo, transforming the post-procedure

window into a results-enhancing opportunity. For the growing world of devices and light-based therapies, Matrixyl synthé'6 is a powerful companion, reinforcing the collagen-stimulating effect of LED light therapy by up to +20% while boosting six key skin-rebuilding constituents."

Young notes, "For formulators, the design brief is clear: layer ceramide-based barrier support with sustained collagen-boosting actives proven to work in synergy with the procedures consumers are already investing in—formulating with ingredients that don't simply follow the procedure but amplify it."

The ingredient tech opens up opportunities by combining encapsulated peptides and microneedling for in-clinic treatments and "pro-inspired" consumer skin care claims.

"The synergy with microneedling creates a new class of 'delivery-amplified' actives," says Ludwig. "Enhanced penetration combined with protected, sustained release leads to stronger collagen responses—up to +31% for collagen III ex vivo compared to dermarolling alone."

He continues, "This supports both in-clinic efficacy and credible 'pro-inspired' claims, such as post-procedure boosters or dermaroller-compatible products that extend treatment benefits beyond the clinic."

Young adds, "Remarkably few actives have been clinically tested in combination with microneedling—with non-surgical procedures growing 57.8% globally in four years (ISAPS), this represents a significant and largely untapped opportunity for brands ready to move beyond basic soothing claims into credible, evidence-based 'works with your treatment' positioning."

She concludes, "Matrixyl Neolide's 15-day release supports the entire recovery window. Crystalide,

another encapsulated peptide also complements this perfectly, addressing the skin quality and glow dimension that collagen-boosting actives alone do not cover."

The increasing availability of these types of technologies is changing the beauty market.

"These developments allow brands to create skin care that bridges the gap between daily routines and professional treatments," says Accupac's Chavez. "Products may be positioned to prep skin before procedures, accelerate visible recovery afterward, or help prolong the results of treatments like resurfacing, microneedling or injectables."

Concept products such as Accupac/Cobalt Labs' LumaLift Eye Cushion, which combines snow mushroom extract with elastic fiber-supporting technology, and the Vegan PDRN Recovery Serum, featuring mushroom-derived PDRN and barrier-strengthening actives, reflect the growing emphasis on regenerative, treatment-inspired skin care.

Chavez notes, "These types of formulas reflect how biotech-driven ingredients are enabling topical skin care to help extend the functional benefits of aesthetic procedures into the at-home regimen."

She adds, "Today's consumer wants products that deliver visible, measurable results, not just aspirational claims. Evidence may come in many forms: clinical studies, instrumental testing, dermatologist validation, or simply observable changes in the mirror—smoother texture, brighter tone, or firmer contours. Digital skin diagnostics and AI-driven tools are also making it easier for consumers to track improvements themselves, reinforcing the expectation that performance can be demonstrated."

Chavez continues, "However, while efficacy expectations have

intensified, consumers still prioritize skin compatibility and gentleness. Many people who receive professional treatments are also managing sensitivity, barrier disruption, or inflammation. This means formulations must balance powerful actives with calming ingredients, barrier support, and optimized delivery systems that minimize irritation."

To illustrate, Cobalt Labs' Skin Reset Milky Treatment Toner combines bakuchiol and an azelaic acid derivative to support collagen while targeting blemishes and discoloration, while the Precision Brightening Serum uses a clinically studied amino acid derivative to help reduce uneven pigmentation. The concepts also emphasize performance-driven textures—such as cooling gels and cushion creams—that deliver immediate sensory benefits while reinforcing perceptions of efficacy.

The global medical aesthetics market continues to expand rapidly, with more consumers incorporating professional treatments into their regular self-care routines. This growth is influencing skin care in several ways.

Chavez concludes, "For brands, these shifts present significant opportunities. Skin care can now be positioned not just as cosmetic maintenance, but as a science-driven extension of dermatological care. Formulas that deliver visible results quickly while supporting long-term skin health are likely to resonate strongly with consumers who already invest in professional treatments."

And, she says, "As the medical aesthetics market grows and consumers demand evidence-driven performance, the most successful brands will likely be those that combine credible science, thoughtful formulation, and clear proof of results—both in clinical testing and in the everyday skin care experience." ■

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PPWR Is Rewriting Beauty Packaging: The Trends, Technologies and Compliance Strategies Defining the Next Era



Among ICONS America's featured innovations was its Jelly Applicator collection, which uses soft silicone tips to create a gel-like application experience.



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Packaging for beauty is entering its biggest regulatory shift in decades. As the European Union's Packaging and Packaging Waste

Regulation (PPWR) moves from legislation to implementation, brands are being challenged to rethink every aspect of packaging—from materials and recyclability to refillability, mono-material construction and consumer experience. The result is a new generation of packaging innovations that don't simply meet sustainability goals—they are being engineered from the ground up for circularity, compliance and premium performance.

From tactile applicators and airless glass systems to mono-material refill-ready formats and packaging already aligned with future recycled-content requirements, suppliers are rapidly adapting to the demands of the PPWR era. This report explores what the new regulation means for beauty brands, outlines the key compliance timeline, and highlights the packaging technologies emerging as leaders in Europe's new circular economy.

EU Packaging Rules Enter a New Era: What Brands Need to Know

The European Union's Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) 2025/40 establishes a harmonized framework for packaging placed on the EU market, covering all packaging materials and packaging waste regardless of origin. The regulation is designed to reduce packaging waste, lower reliance on virgin raw materials, and accelerate the transition to a circular economy by setting requirements for packaging design, composition, recyclability and waste management.

Among its key objectives are ensuring that all packaging on the EU market is recyclable in an economically viable way by 2030,

increasing the use of recycled plastics, reducing unnecessary packaging, restricting certain single-use plastic formats, limiting substances of concern such as PFAS in food-contact packaging above specified thresholds, and supporting the EU's goal of climate neutrality by 2050.

For beauty, personal care and other consumer brands, the regulation represents a significant packaging compliance milestone. The PPWR entered into force on February 11, 2025, with most provisions applying beginning August 12, 2026, replacing the long-standing Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive over an 18-month transition period while some existing provisions remain in effect.

Companies placing products on the EU market should evaluate packaging materials, recyclability, recycled-content strategies, reusable and refill systems, labeling, and overall package design to ensure compliance with the new requirements. The European Commission has also published implementation guidance and FAQs to help businesses prepare for the phased rollout.

From Tactile to PPWR Compliant

As MakeUp in Paris concluded, ICONS Beauty Group highlighted packaging concepts reflecting several of the industry's strongest trends, including sensory applicators, travel-friendly formats and packaging designed to meet the EU's Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR).

PPWR is set to reshape how brands design, source and market packaging across Europe. The regulation entered into force on February 11, 2025, and generally applies from August 12, 2026, replacing the previous directive with directly applicable rules for all packaging placed on the EU market.

For brands, the biggest takeaway is that packaging must be designed for a circular economy. The PPWR introduces stricter requirements for recyclability, recycled content, packaging minimization, reuse and refill systems, labeling, and restrictions on certain hazardous substances. Companies will need to rethink packaging formats, eliminate unnecessary materials, improve recyclability, and prepare



On the sustainability front, ICONS America has emphasized PPWR-ready solutions, including its one-piece mono-material polypropylene Powder Spray Tube, a fully recyclable package available with post-consumer recycled (PCR) content for applications such as powder dry shampoo and other spray products.

for harmonized labeling and documentation requirements across EU member states. Many of the regulation's performance targets, including recyclability grades, recycled content requirements and reuse targets, will be phased in through 2030, 2035 and 2038, giving companies a roadmap for long-term compliance.

Brands selling into Europe should treat 2026 as the start of a broader packaging transformation rather than a one-time compliance deadline. Early preparation—working with packaging suppliers, reviewing material choices, validating recyclability and updating sustainability strategies—will be critical to maintaining market access while meeting increasingly stringent circular economy requirements.

Among the company's featured innovations was its Jelly Applicator collection, which uses soft silicone tips to create a gel-like application experience.

Available in stick, wand and pencil formats, the applicators are designed for lip, cheek and face products, supporting the growing demand for packaging that enhances both product performance and consumer experience.

ICONS also showcased a range of rounded "tottle" designs, including new 15 ml pebble- and heart-shaped polyethylene formats aimed at travel-size and on-the-go beauty products. Additional portable packaging included an Airless Push Button Dropper in 10 ml and 15 ml sizes, designed for one-handed dispensing across multiple formulation types.

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The display reflected broader packaging trends emerging from the show, where tactile design, portability and regulatory compliance continue to shape new beauty product development.



Among ICONS America's featured innovations is its Jelly Applicator collection, which uses soft silicone tips to create a gel-like application experience.



ICONS America's Airless Push Button Dropper in 10 ml and 15 ml sizes is designed for one-handed dispensing across multiple formulation types.



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NEW PACKAGING COLLECTION PUTS SPEED TO SHELF IN FOCUS

Cosmopak is positioning packaging speed as a competitive advantage with the launch of Beauty in Motion, a new collection of turnkey packaging solutions designed to help beauty brands accelerate product development from concept to retail.

Created around the themes of speed, innovation and forward momentum, the collection spans skin care, color cosmetics, fragrance and beauty accessories, reflecting growing demand for ready-to-launch packaging formats that can shorten development timelines while maintaining a premium aesthetic.

The portfolio includes a broad range of packaging options across glass and plastic formats, including airless pumps, droppers, jars, bottles, tubes, vials and compacts in sizes ranging from 2.6 ml to 100 ml.

Among the highlights are airless dispensing systems designed to protect sensitive formulations, dual-chamber bottles that enable multi-phase or freshly mixed products, and compact formats suited to today's hybrid makeup and skin care launches.

The company is also spotlighting premium glass packaging designed with clean, contemporary styling, underscoring the continued demand for elevated packaging that balances shelf appeal with functionality.

Beauty in Motion presents a curated toolkit of packaging components intended to give brands greater flexibility as they develop new products. By combining stock packaging, turnkey solutions and accessories within one collection, Cosmopak aims to help customers explore new product formats while reducing time to market.

The launch reflects a broader shift in the beauty packaging sector, where suppliers are increasingly emphasizing speed, agility and modular design as brands face mounting pressure to launch products more frequently and respond quickly to emerging consumer trends. As product development cycles continue to compress, readily available premium packaging has become an increasingly important tool for brands seeking to bring innovation to market without the delays associated with fully custom development.

With operations in New York and Los Angeles, Cosmopak says the Beauty in Motion collection is designed to provide beauty brands with packaging solutions that support faster commercialization while offering the versatility to meet a wide range of formulation, branding and category needs. ■



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Tube options in the collection include a Cooling Head Tube (80 ml), Tube with Lip Applicator (10 ml), Tube with Lip Applicator (5 ml) and Click 2-in-1 Tube Roller & Slanted Lip (10 ml x 2).



Cosmopak is positioning packaging speed as a competitive advantage with the launch of Beauty in Motion, a new collection of turnkey packaging solutions designed to help beauty brands accelerate product development from concept to retail.

Glass Airless Packaging That is Premium, Sustainable, Ready for the Future

Baralan's DEA 2.0 takes glass airless packaging to the next level, blending premium design with sustainability and regulatory readiness. Crafted from European-produced soda-lime glass, the 15 ml and 30 ml bottles offer full formula compatibility, recyclability and a sleek, cylindrical silhouette. Innovative features like the invisible piston and precise cream or spray pumps ensure smooth, consistent dispensing while keeping the glass clean and elegant, elevating the consumer experience.

Crafted from European-produced soda-lime glass, Baralan's 15 ml and 30 ml bottles offer full formula compatibility, recyclability and a sleek, cylindrical silhouette. Baralan

Beyond aesthetics, DEA 2.0 reflects a commitment to circular innovation. Lightweight components reduce material usage and production costs,

while customizable bases allow brands to add logos or graphics for a distinctive touch. With design and technology aligned to upcoming PPWR requirements, this system delivers a scalable, eco-conscious solution for skincare and cosmetic brands seeking performance, style, and sustainability in one package.

Recyclable Wet Wipes Pack With 35% PCR Content

Mondi is expanding its sustainable packaging portfolio with the launch of re/loop FlowWrap, a recyclable mono-material solution designed for wet wipes applications that combines high performance with 35% post-consumer recycled (PCR) content.

Developed for the home and personal care market, re/loop FlowWrap is a form-fill-and-seal (FFS) packaging solution made from mono-polypropylene (PP), replacing conventional non-recyclable laminate structures often used for baby care, cosmetic and household wipes. The material is designed for compatibility with existing packaging lines, enabling brands and converters to transition without significant equipment modifications.

The launch comes as packaging manufacturers prepare for the European Union's Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR), which will require 35% recycled content from post-consumer plastic waste in this packaging category by 2030. With 35% PCR content already incorporated into the structure, Mondi positions the solution as a future-ready option for compliance and circularity goals.

According to the company, extensive internal testing and customer trials demonstrated that re/loop FlowWrap delivers performance comparable to virgin-based alternatives, including strong sealing integrity, barrier protection and efficient machinability. Additional trials conducted on IMA Ilapak packaging equipment confirmed reliable runnability at high production speeds.

"With this launch, we show that wet wipes packaging can move towards circularity without sacrificing performance," said Alessandro D'Agostino, business development manager, home and personal care, at Mondi Consumer Flexibles. "By combining a material designed for recycling with PCR content and excellent machinability, we help customers transition faster towards sustainable packaging solutions while maintaining operational efficiency." ■



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