

interpack 2017: Technical Article No. 6

Beauty out of the tube, glass and jar

“Beauty is everywhere a very welcome guest,” wrote Johann Wolfgang von Goethe at the start of the 19th century. And already 3,000 years before this, a great deal of time and extensive care was devoted to external appearance. The Ancient Egyptians were famous for their highly developed beauty culture; serving as a reference and the epitome of purity and beauty was legendary Queen Nefertiti. Whether make-up, ointments or tinctures – often made by priests the products found their place in select and finely decorated vessels made of clay, slate, metal or wood. And even today, packaging for cosmetics evokes the idea of luxury combining high-quality materials with sophisticated graphic applications and finishes.

That certain something

The cult around bodycare does not seem to be tailing off. On the contrary: spending on cosmetics is rising year on year. According to a business report by cosmetics giant L’Oréal, 2016 saw the global sale of cosmetic goods worth an estimated Euro 205 b – a rise over the previous year of 4% and more growth than achieved in the previous three years.¹ However, this growth goes hand in hand with increased competition. Therefore, anyone wishing to be successful on the highly competitive cosmetics market also has to ensure they have precise positioning and communication of brand content. When selecting packaging, brand and packaging firms therefore look for unmistakable brand design. Going hand in hand here are

¹ 2016 Business Report, L’Oréal

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multi-sensory effects and special finishes that turn simple packaging into a real brand experience.

A specialist in the high-quality packaging solution sector is the family firm Edelmann. To achieve surprising results here the packaging experts combine different finishing technologies, amongst other things. Oliver Eschbaumer, in charge of Marketing at Edelmann, explains the special effect this achieves: “By combining individual elements the original contrasts develop into a new symbiosis and in a smart combination they achieve unexpected impact.” An example of this is the interplay achieved by using both matt and gloss coatings. Surfaces can be emphasised like this or lettering can be highlighted. Tactile aspects are also very on trend in packaging and beauty products. By embossing graphic elements individual accents can be created. “At Edelmann time and again we are inspired by tactile communication,” explains Eschbaumer. “But we know that featuring tactile-looking elements on packaging often only makes sense if a dialogue is initiated with the product promise.”

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Whiter than white

A product promise of this kind is not only conveyed by the washing detergent brand Persil but also the Finnish-Swedish group Stora Enso. Here we are referring to the white tone of their new improved virgin-fibre carton board Ensocoat. “Luxury packaging typically includes processes like embossing and hot-foil embossing as well as other special effects that make high demands of the material in terms of smoothness, whiteness and folding characteristics,” stresses Product Manager Eva Lundqvist. Whiteness and lightness of the card are, she says, the most important technical properties. Established on the market now since the 60s this card made of bleached cellulose (solid bleached board or SBS) is being presented at this year’s interpack alongside many other innovative

packaging solutions for the cosmetics industry. Here, from 4 to 10 May 2017, visitors will find answers to all questions concerning the manufacture, packaging and logistics of highly sensitive products.

Also providing interesting insights into the latest components for manufacturing technologies is the accompanying event “components – special trade fair by interpack” that is primarily aimed at upstream suppliers to the packaging industry and firms that offer drive, control and sensor technology products for industrial image processing, handling technology, industrial software and communication as well as complete automation systems for packaging machinery.

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Nature in focus

In the beauty sector now it is not only ingredients and production that need to be as sustainable as possible because consumers also make the same demands on packaging. Here they want recyclable packaging in the same way as they want resource-saving production. Alongside the use of renewable raw materials, companies also offer special compact packaging that can help to avoid unnecessary waste. Special packaging solutions also help to reduce cosmetic residue by ensuring tubes, bottles and jars can be emptied more easily.



Especially with natural cosmetics, brand owners and manufacturers look to sustainable packaging concepts. Originally known for its comfortable sandals, footwear firm Birkenstock developed a natural cosmetics line focusing on the main active ingredient cork at the beginning of February 2017. To tie in with this, packaging systems with a refill system were selected. The stable bottles with airless dispensers and cork bases contain replaceable cartridges. When a

product is finished you just buy the refill and swop it in the original container. This saves resources and shows how clever and uncomplicated sustainability can be. What's more, the product is protected as the airless dispenser allows no air to reach the contents. This very naturally protects against oxidation, contamination and dehydration.

Safety as a basic principle

With sensitive products like cosmetics protection is very much top priority. Like in the pharmaceuticals and food sectors here stringent hygiene rules apply. Use of cleaning products and disinfection methods means the materials in the sterile environment of the packaging machinery are often subjected to high stresses; at the same time they must offer as little room for contamination as possible.

To prevent contamination ingress from cleaning or packaging materials unsealed closures must be avoided as much as possible in the filling process. For filling ointments, creams and other paste-like products the specialist packaging technology firm IWK offers "FP Sterile", a platform for the tube filling in metal, plastic or laminate tubes that rules out so-called dead spaces where residue or bacteria can collect and multiply. This particularly applies for critical transitions to components. To prevent any particles entering the open tube the grippers only touch the outer sides of the tubes – unlike with conventional machines where the mandrel penetrates the open tube.

Gender differences

With men's altered care routines men's cosmetics have become one of the biggest growth markets in the bodycare sector. The

segment saw its first boom at the beginning of the noughties when the cosmetics industry shifted the metrosexual man into the limelight and the promise of men who not only shave but also use creams, scents or even make-up on their skin led to numerous dedicated men's cosmetics lines. Seventeen years later expectations many have lowered but at the same time niche products have become generators of income. Market researchers value the turnover at more than US\$ 47b².

The packaging world has also changed in pace with the development of this male target group for beauty care products. This is because what women might like does not necessarily appeal to men. And this is something corporate consultant Diane Jaffé, CEO at bluestone AG, knows only too well. She advises companies on the topic of gender marketing and is familiar with men and women's different expectations of packaging. Shape, size and material play an equally decisive role as surface textures, colours or ornamentation. "Women are often attracted to the opposite of what appeals to men," explains Jaffé. Straight, square and angular means masculine; rounded forms look more feminine. Brand-name companies have long since recognised the potential of targeted packaging design and do not just attune their marketing and packaging according to gender but also their prices.

The right colour

However, packaging colours must not just be seen in the context of gender. Colours also increase recognition levels and underline brand identification. More than fonts, colours are more easily recognised by consumers and remain in their memories for longer. Strong brands like Coca-Cola or Nivea have managed to be

² Market research by Euromonitor and Bloomberg Intelligence.
<https://kurier.at/wirtschaft/businessoesterreich/der-gepflegte-mann/250.457.202>

unmistakable purely based on their choice of colour. Special colour systems help to choose the unique corporate or brand colour. There are thousands of colours to choose from. But for long-term recognisability it is vital that the same colour tone is uniformly used. This also entails technical challenges – especially in printing and finishing processes that can impact the chosen colour tone. To choose, compare and check printing inks there are so-called colour fans that are produced using offset printing and which therefore ensure particularly high concordance. Proprietary colours can be defined in any gloss level as a colour standard: as a printed version, in plastic or digital. The nearer the material of the master is to the original material the easier it is to compare. And the easier it is for the packaging to meet shoppers' expectations thereby making it the perfect brand ambassador.

Author: Melanie Streich, freelance journalist

Accompanying visuals:

Figure 1:

Beautiful prospects: the cosmetics sector is growing and with it the choice of innovative packaging. Photo: Beauty, Messe Düsseldorf

Figure 2:

For outstanding printing results and high performance in all finishing processes Ensocoat's virgin-fibre carton board has now become even whiter. Photo: Stora Enso

Figure 3:

Natural cosmetics sustainably packaged. Photo: Birkenstock

Figure 4:

IWK's "FP Sterile" platform ensures the highest hygiene standards when filling tubes. Photo IWK

Figure 5:

Really masculine: beauty series by Carlsberg. Photo: Carlsberg

Figure 6:

Unmistakable: the blue tone of the Nivea brand. Photo: Beiersdorf

Figure 7:

Combined finishes produce surprising effects. Photo: Edelmann

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The visuals accompanying the technical articles can be found as downloads online underneath the text:

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