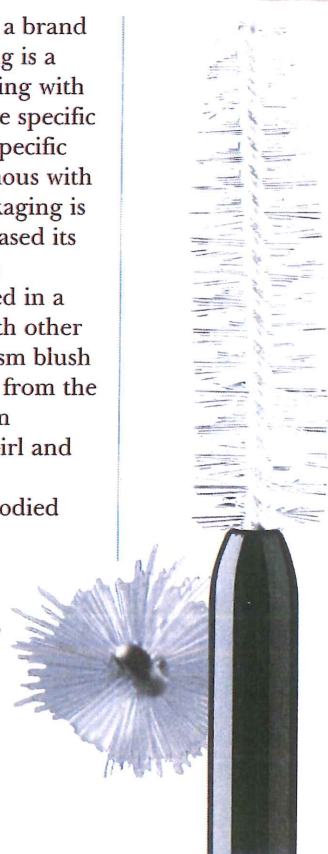


The defining factor

The eyes and lips are focal points when it comes to applying make-up, and new formulas, packs and standout design for mascaras, lip glosses and lipsticks are providing innovation. **Sonia Sharma** finds out more

Emphasising the identity of a brand through product packaging is a powerful tool when engaging with customers, as they associate specific values and attitudes with specific companies. One brand that is synonymous with risqué product titles and standout packaging is NARS. Earlier this year, the brand released its NARS Climax Mascara with the tagline 'hardcore volume, softcore feel'. Housed in a ribbed, red tube, the mascara fits in with other items from the brand such as the Orgasm blush and the limited edition colour lip duos from the provocatively named Exposed collection containing the Sex Machine, Dragon Girl and Intriguing products.

The Climax Mascara features a full-bodied brush with ribbed bristles to capture and coat each lash for an instant, intense effect. The formula "smoothly wraps blackened pigments from root to tip for rich colour and bold dimension". Available in two sizes – 6g or a mini 2.5g – the bold product has its own #NEVERFAKEIT social



media hashtag, allowing for enhanced communication with consumers to share their photographs.

Asides from NARS, another brand that uses provocative titles to enhance its brand identity and stir up conversation with consumers is Too Faced. Its iconic Better Than Sex is the number one selling prestige mascara in the US. The product features an hourglass-shaped brush to help volumise, lift and coat top and bottom lashes, according to the brand's website.

The film-forming polymers and collagen formula provide smudge-proof, all-day wear, and the formula contains *Acacia senegal* tree extract to nourish, thicken and lock each curled lash in place. The hourglass-shaped brush also differentiates itself from other products on the market by being 'curvacious', adding sex appeal to the item, further identifying itself with the mascara's name.

A MATERIAL WORLD

For a mascara one of the defining features is the formula and the applicator. GEKA is one of the world's leading manufacturers of brushes,

applicators and complete packaging systems for the cosmetics industry. Offering a wide range of technologies for mascara brushes, the manufacturer uses four specific technologies for its moulded applicators. The first is 1K technology, which is described as a one-step brush design, as the one-component injection moulding technology allows GEKA to produce mascara brushes or lip gloss spatulas from one single material. The customer or brand will specify the brush colour, form and flexibility depending on the purpose of application, while 2K technology uses two components in a single machine. The rigid core is made first and then the soft elastomer for shaping the bristles is injected around it.

GEKA also uses Moltrusion and Sandwich technology. Moltrusion technology is where a "hollow core is produced first and then the bristles are forced through the core under high pressure". This process results in filigree bristles that sit securely on a thin yet stable core, as well as allowing the bristles to be extremely dexterous, making the applicator ideal to use on long, full and curved eyelashes. The Sandwich

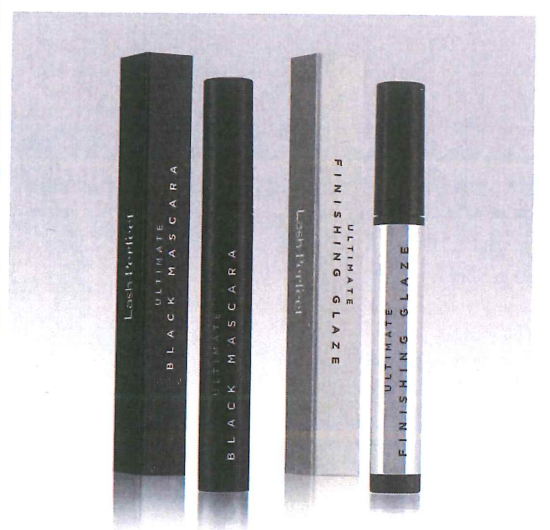
Delivering eco-friendly solutions is an increasing priority and formulas with sustainable and low impact ingredients are often matched by green packaging

process uses two plastic materials again, where the soft material for the bristles is injected first and then the harder material is introduced afterwards.

Twisted brushes are another offering from the manufacturer whereby cross-sections and special bristle finishes are combined. For these applicators there are two critical components – the manufacturing of the fibre and the brush cuts and grinding. In the fibre manufacture category, GEKA offers EOS fiber, which has an irregular surface. "This is what makes it possible to pick up plenty of the formula and apply it just as quickly. We have perfected this concept – and created our EOS fiber. Featuring a unique unevenness that makes the application objective of our twisted brushes strikingly good," the company states. Meanwhile, Fibredreams is a patented polyamide fibre with wing-shaped eyelets that can effortlessly pick up and apply any formula.

In the brush cuts and grinding category, the manufacturer has its SIAM brush cut, which "features special volume zones to take up more mascara and transfer it selectively to the eyelashes. A feature that makes SIAM brushes interesting for the Asian market."

SEPA technology is an additional production process where the ends of the bristle fibres – which are normally rough and cut off flat – are ground to a wedge shape. Thus, the bristles ensure optimum compatibility and better separation of the eyelashes. For more volume, the manufacturer offers its HYPNO brush cut, which has a distinctive cross-section with a choice of different numbers of edges for substantially increased eyelash volume. The brush can be designed with three, four, six or eight-edge milled grooves. The principle is that the brush grooves formed by milling can hold a larger amount of mascara and while long bristles reliably separate the eyelashes, the shorter bristles give the eyelash extra volume with every application.



GEKA's HYPNO brush cut (opposite) has a distinctive cross-section for added volume; meanwhile, the UK's Vetroplas (right) created the mascara and finishing glaze packs for Lash Perfect

packaging lips & mascaras

Simon Dix, Sales Director at Vetroplas, states that trends within the traditional mascara category are changing. Speaking to SPC, he says: "Vetroplas and its Italian factory partner Eurovetrocap offer a range of cosmetic packaging suitable for the full spectrum of make-up products including mascara, lip gloss, eyeshadow and foundation. The Euromakeup range is designed to give an enhanced user experience achieved with sensory finishes that give the products a tactile quality. Although high gloss black finishes are still popular for products such as mascara, the ability to provide intense colour through double layer painting increases the scope for brands seeking a different look altogether."

Being able to 'pack a punch' with their mascara applicator is vital for brands. The multi-benefit brush from GEKA combines its twisted brush technology, allowing for better separation and faster application of the formula with its hybrITION technology, which uses a hybrid material combination of the EOS fibre and an ultra-thin layer of foil around the inner wire, which increases the size of the formula reservoir. The mirror-smooth surface of the foil is said to carry plenty of mascara from the brush to the lashes without losing any along the way.

GOING GREEN

As applicators begin to change, the shape of the mascara pack format has largely remained the same. However, Dix is seeing other trends within the market. Commenting on the Eurovetrocap range, he says it "offers a variety of shapes, sizes and accessories, and although cylindrical packs continue to be popular, there is a trend towards square shapes to create a point of difference and improve stand-out".

In line with other sectors, delivering eco-friendly solutions is an increasing priority and formulas with sustainable and low impact ingredients are often matched by green packaging. "Euromakeup provides three types of printing techniques: hot stamping, silk screening and pad printing (mostly used for caps). Eurovetrocap is developing an eco-friendly mascara which is made of 50% renewed PP – specifically 30% post-industrial and 20% post-consumer recycled PP. The cap and stem are made of 100% renewed PP and the brush will be made from a fibre of natural derivation, namely castor oil."

PRECISE APPLICATION

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NYX's Powder Puff Lippie and Benefit's They're Real! Red On! opt for non-traditional lip product packs



format with the latter usually featuring a traditional soft-tip applicator on the end of a stick.

However, earlier this year, NYX released its Powder Puff Lippie, which differentiated itself from other lip items on the market, as the product needs to be 'squeezed'. The powder lip cream is a lip colour cream with an ultra-smooth mousse texture that sets to a powdery-soft finish. Housed in a flexible plastics tube, the three-piece injection moulded plastics fitment is pushed into the neck of the tube with a soft-touch cushioned applicator at the end.

The flexible tube allows the consumer to have good control over the dispensing of the product as it is released directly onto the applicator by squeezing the tube until the cream emerges through the tip. The process of applying the colour onto the lips helps to disperse the product through the applicator, and the cream can be swiped onto the lips allowing for even spreading and blending.

The Powder Puff Lippie is available in eight different shades and the outer packaging alludes to the finish of the product itself. Both the outer carton and the tube have a matte surface finish that emulates the powdery, matte effect of the product.

When it comes to the lipstick category, the conventional format is a twistable tube which contains the 'stick' formula inside. But the brand Benefit has taken a different pack format to house one of its lip products. The They're Real! Red On! product offering houses a lipstick in a compact format while two opposing recesses allow convenient storage of the applicator brush, suspending it above the product pan to keep it clean. This enhances the on-the-go appeal of the compact as it negates the need for the consumer to carry a separate applicator. The brush has a tapered shape for precise application and there is a square area of tiny raised dots on either side of the brush handle to act as a grip feature for improved handling of the tiny applicator.

The compact itself can be opened with just one hand by popping open the lid catch with the thumb and the product inside is designed with tiny lips across the surface of the formula. The outer carton features embossed red lip graphics and the brand logo in a matte finish that contrasts with the slightly glossy black background and emphasises the matte nature of the product itself, while the inner surface of the carton is coloured red to fit the product and the brand image.

Using pack formats that are not traditional for the product category helps set a product apart from its peers. The Benefit They're Real! Red On! lipstick also provides the consumer with an added experience of 'painting' on the colour, in addition to giving the user more control of their colour application ●

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GEKA
A Sulzer Brand



We are living on this planet as if we have another one to go to; but there is no 'planet B'. As a global production company, GEKA is aware of its special responsibility for maintaining a clean environment, and the company's environmental management system is tailored to address different aspects of sustainability.

The company's most important contribution to sustainability is its low-waste approach to materials and production management. GEKA uses recyclable plastics wherever possible, and plastic waste is carefully processed in line with its high quality standards and then returned to the production chain as regrind.

GEKA's green packaging solution, vertTENTATION, is a huge step into sustainable packaging for the cosmetics industry and a shining example of GEKA's commitment to sustainable packaging. The packaging is produced almost entirely from post-consumer recycled (PCR) materials.

The bottles are made of 100% food confirmed PCR-polyethylene terephthalate (PET), produced out of post-consumer amorphous (A)-PET bottle scraps by extrusion with high vacuum degassing, melt filtration and solid state polymerisation (SSP). Caps are made of 100% PCR-polypropylene (PP), produced from post-consumer PP scraps, for example from yoghurt cups or detergent bottles. The brush filaments used in this collection are also made from 100% renewable materials.

THE MASCARAS

vertTENTATION consists of three mascaras: the first lengthens, the second creates lash definition and the third mascara conjures up a volume effect. These mascaras are all paired with vegan mascara formulas free of parabens, allergens and black carbon for a clean product in terms of material and texture.

Extreme lengthening and well-defined lashes are delivered via the cuteGIANT brush, which is made of bio-based greenLINE fiber. The high-performance bristles visibly grab the lashes from the root to the tip to make them appear longer. The classic conical-shaped brush with pointed brush tip is perfect for accentuating tiny bottom lashes, as well as lashes in the inner corner of the eyes without smudging the skin. This mascara boasts a blue PCR-PP cap.

Precisely separated lashes for an open and clean look are easily achieved with the gorgeousSTYLIST brush, which is made of GEKA's greenLINE fiber, consisting of 100% renewable raw material from the castor oil plant. With the conical-shaped pointed brush tip, tiny lashes in the inner eye corner and super fine bottom lashes are easily defined and separated.

A special feature is GEKA's patented SEPA bristle treatment for optimum combability and better separation of the eyelashes. This refinement of the brush results in faster and more even application, creates wedge-shaped fibres and intensifies the definition effect as any clumps are avoided. A pastel mint cap made of PCR-PP crowns the 100% PCR-PET bottle, whose wiper is made using 84% bio-based material.

The new lashFLASH conjures up greatly volumised lashes. It is a combination of bio-based greenLINE fiber and GEKA's patented HYPNO fibre treatment. This cut creates three special bulk reservoir zones for intense volume. The principle is that the brush grooves formed by milling can hold a larger amount of mascara. The longer bristles reliably separate and lengthen the eyelashes while the shorter bristles collect the formula and work as bulk reservoirs to give lashes extra volume. As sustainability is not only brown or green, the 100% PCR-PP cap dazzles in pastel lavender.

The mascaras come in an eco-friendly make-up bag from GEKA Accessories that



combines the eco-materials cork and canvas, resulting in a chic design.

BETTER WATER WORKS

GEKA also takes great care in its use of water with a closed-loop cooling system, in which water is circulated to provide sustainable industrial cooling.

The cooler water runs through the moulds in a cycle that balances the moulds' temperature. The sustainability and efficiency aspect comes from the water being continuously used in a cycle. In other systems, the water comes from a local source and, after use, the often-polluted water is dumped back into the original water source.

Furthermore, cleaning cells are used for all water usage in which the water could become polluted. In situations where pollution could occur, all water is recycled through these cleaning cells. Clean water is recycled locally through sewage systems and all polluted water is disposed of professionally.

GREEN POWER

The company also uses its own block heat and power plant for electricity and heat generation. GEKA's electricity is generated on location. Therefore, a large part of the resulting warmth can be used for heating, warm water, etc at the location.

Primary energy is saved, thus decreasing emissions and protecting the environment. Additionally, an economic advantage is achieved by such power generation. This results in:

- Reduced CO₂ emissions
- Decreased need for primary energy through purchase; improved energy efficiency through the use of thermal and mechanical energy; and the generation of electricity using gas
- Enormous savings potential: normal power stations waste 60% of their fuel energy as heat; in block heat power plants this heat is directly used in the building. With conventional power stations the efficiency is only 35%; with block heat power plants it is 90%
- A change from liquid gasoline to natural gasoline, resulting in reduced use of crude oil and reduced risk due to the removal of the gas tank.

GEKA uses cutting-edge oil purification systems to maximise the life of oils used in its production process. And at GEKA's head office, the company relies on the efficiency of its own environmentally friendly co-generation unit to supply both energy and heat.

LOGISTICS WITH AN ECO-TWIST

And its commitment to sustainability does not end at the gates of the plant. When it comes to logistics, GEKA relies on efficient, recyclable transport materials that its customers and partners can easily dispose of by returning them to the materials cycle.

The company cumulates orders and ships only once a week. Transportation routes are also shortened by using local raw materials. GEKA uses efficient, recyclable packaging (ie foils, card boxes, trays, plastic boxes for international transportation – instead of one-time use card boxes – use of re-usable euro palettes, etc) and continuously reviews its transportation process along with its partner transport companies to establish an efficient and sustainable process. By using recycled material and grinding, stock is reused by placing it into the recycling process. This reduces material waste to a minimum with no need for transportation.

In short, sustainability is a part of GEKA's corporate culture. But rather than resting on its laurels, the company is constantly looking for new opportunities to expand and enhance green production methods, and protect people and the environment.

GEKA is working hard to provide further possibilities for 100% bio-based renewable materials for complete cosmetic packaging: eg caps, thread parts, wipers, bottles and applicators. A dedicated team is focusing on new solutions to achieve completely green packaging

Author
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A brush in the right direction

With the vertTENTATION packaging concept, GEKA has created its most sustainable ever mascara pack. The packaging and applicators specialist tells SPC about this green solution

