

In an era where value has become a consumer's main purchasing principle, beauty brands are having to go the extra mile in order to secure a purchase. And with ever more sophisticated formulas and product claims being touted by manufacturers, packaging is playing a key role in promoting these additional benefits.

From brushes and roller balls to rotating mascaras, manufacturers have elevated the humble cosmetic applicator to a 'beauty tool', claimed to help increase the efficacy of skin care products or even enabling consumers to recreate complex make-up looks in one easy application.

"Consumers, and in particular women, are trying to recreate at home the techniques and results a professional aesthetician or make-up artist would produce but they need the right beauty tools to do that," explains Maria Viegas, creative & innovation marketing manager, Albéa. "The opportunity to create applicators for the delivery of a novel formula as well as applicators to help create a beneficial effect to the consumer is huge."

"Women are becoming more and more educated about beauty and how to apply their products – they want something beautiful but it needs to function. A make-up palette doesn't just jump onto your face – you need the right tools to create the desired look," adds Anisa president, Anisa Telwar.

As an example, the company has worked with L'Oréal to create an innovative applicator for the group's L'Oréal Paris brand. The One Sweep Eyeshadow, part of the brand's Studio Secrets Professional line, promises to create a perfect eye, defining, highlighting and adding colour in just one application thanks to a unique applicator that is designed to fit the eyelid and can pick up multiple shades of shadow in one step.

INTEGRATE TO INNOVATE

Telwar has also identified the increasing use of integrated applicators in cosmetic packaging by manufacturers.

"There is a trend of integration between the packaging and the applicator," she tells SPC. "This is really important especially for the mass market because an applicator in a product in this market is not normally seen to have a lot of perceived value. But by integrating the applicator into the packaging, it adds more value. Brands can charge more at retail and there is a story and education behind it which consumers will buy into."

"There is great opportunity here," adds Viegas. "With standard packaging, consumers don't consider it will bring them any additional benefits so the right tools



BEAUTY ON THE GO

Japonesque's Beauty Fixation line offers a novel way to apply or remove make-up. The five treatments are contained in pre-filled ready to use swabs which are activated when they are snapped. Products include Makeup Remover/Touch-up, Tinted Lip Conditioner, Lipstick Touch-up, Nail Polish Touch-up and Cuticle Conditioner.

and the right formula can boost the perceived value of a product."

L'Oréal has again blazed a trail in this area. It has already had success with the roll-on format – its Garnier Caffeine Eye Roll-On is the UK's most popular eye product – but now the company has added battery power. Wrinkle De-Crease Collagen Micro-Vibration Eye from L'Oréal Paris features a vibrating metal tip which is claimed to cool,

soothe and smooth wrinkles and reduce the appearance of dark circles.

The beauty giant has also extended the applicator concept into a number of cleansing products. L'Oréal Paris' Perfect Clean cleansing line features a scrublet, a massage and cleansing tool which is claimed to enhance the properties of the cleanser as well as leaving skin soft and smooth. The scrublet is stored on the outside of the packaging and can be popped out for use. And Garnier's Pure Exfolusher Oil Control has been redesigned to feature both bristles and flexible ridges in the integrated cleansing head, which the brand claims helps to both exfoliate and cleanse skin, reducing shine and the appearance of blackheads.

The take-up for integrated applicators has also been healthy at the premium end of the market. bareMinerals has incorporated a brush into its SPF30 Natural Sunscreen, making it easy to apply the mineral powder precisely and when on the go.

Similarly Decléor has taken the spa concept of brush application and included it in its Comforting Milky Gel Cream Mask. The brush provides a gentle way of applying the mask to sensitive skin, according to the brand, as well as staying true to its spa heritage.

Albéa and HCT meanwhile have both supplied Estée Lauder and L'Oréal's Vichy with cooling solutions to eye puffiness and dark circles. Vichy's Neovadiol Gf Lip & Eye Contour treatment cream features HCT's ergonomically shaped Zamac tip, which is said to adapt to the contours of the lip and under eye areas as well as being cool to the touch, helping to soothe and calm. The company has extended its range to include a

Adding value

Far from being a secondary part of the packaging, applicators now play an increasingly important role in the finished product, as Emma Reinhold discovers





ceramic variant, which again promises to provide a cooling sensation on application.

Similarly, Albéa has used the cooling properties of ceramic for Estée Lauder's Idealist Cooling Eye Illuminator, which promises to help reduce the appearance of fine lines, puffiness and dark circles, leaving the eye area looking more rested. The ceramic applicator has been designed to massage the formula around the eye area, offering a refreshing and soothing sensation.

"Consumers are more willing to use skin care products that offer direct application to the skin," explains Viegas. "They understand there is a beneficial effect. An applicator helps massage the skin which means taking more time over a skin care routine which can only be a good thing."

TARGET PRACTICE

While the number of applicator options is increasing, roller balls remain a popular option for many manufacturers. The ability to target specific areas such as under the eyes is a key factor in the success of this sector, as is engaging the consumer in the massage element of these products in order to achieve the desired claims.

"Roll-on applicators bring the treatment of a specific facial area into focus and to the forefront of a user's mind, calling for diligent compliance," explains cosmetic consultant, Katerina Steventon. "In my view the benefits are multiple but only incremental. There is both a physiological and behavioural benefit to using one."

The potential for roller balls is also moving beyond just facial care. Albéa's new Ellips Triball tube has been designed for body care products with specific claims such as slimming, tightening, anti-stretch mark and moisturising. The 'massage tool' features

Modern cosmetic applicators often claim benefits over and above the simply practical, promising a soothing and refreshing sensation through touch and massage at the very least. They can also help consumers recreate professional make-up artist looks

three integral roller balls, which are available in a metal or plastic finish, and are designed to provide a cooling and massaging experience on application. The tube also features an on/off system to control product distribution, preventing product wastage.

Also for the body, the company has developed Cream Dispenser, an integral dispensing roller that is said to deliver a light, uniform application to targeted skin areas. According to Albéa, the spreading and massaging action of the roller helps to speed up the skin's absorption of a formula, whilst protecting it against contamination thanks to an isolation valve system between the roller and the base reservoir.

Brushes also provide opportunities for targeted application. Anisa has introduced a number of new items which it says offer targeted and flexible application options. Its Magnetic Half-Moon brush, for instance, offers full facial coverage in its unmodified state; targeted contouring benefits for blushers when folded in half; and highlighting benefits when used alone. Similarly, its Isotonic Brushes offer multiple

application options. The system provides a complete set of stackable eye tools in one compact wand with applicator name clearly printed on the outside.

"Brushes are a luxe item – they are something to invest in so it's important that there is education there to help the consumer use the products effectively," says Telwar. "It also creates a complete marketing experience for the brand."

Telwar tells SPC that she is looking into new areas of innovation for brushes such as fragrance.

"A wood pulp resin brush handle can be scented which creates a fun and different concept for a brand," she explains. "This is great for a brand looking at moving into a new area and can help craft a story for brand education."

Geka has also focused on targeted application with the creation of its Lips to Kiss range. The fully finished line features four different lip applicators which promise to provide different lip finishes.

LipMagnifier for instance features a diamond-shaped flat applicator which allows for precise application and even distribution on the lips. The lipDefiner Max by Michael Burke, meanwhile features an applicator inspired by the Hollywood make-up artist's little finger and is said to offer a professional-style application.

Advances in design have certainly helped propel the cosmetic applicator market to the forefront of many beauty brands' marketing campaigns, but it does come at an additional cost. And while value remains key in most consumer purchases, Viegas warns that brands need to get the balance right between innovation and increased costs.

"We have to make sure the investment is justified. Investing in applicators will bring additional costs to a brand so the finished product has to be made in a way that brings advantage to the end consumer. The increase in price has to make sense to a consumer and she has to see the benefit. If this is real she will pay, otherwise she won't." **cb**

