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Interview

O Boticário president
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Market watch: US

The consumer, retailing
and the challenges ahead

Packaging

The latest make-up
trends and innovations

Luxury insight

What's changed and
what's to come?

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The new consumer

In our guest column, Leïla Rochet-Podvin, founder of Paris-based consultancy Cosmetics Inspiration&Creation gives her views on emerging consumption patterns, based on the agency's studies on consumers and brands in Japan, the US and China



Targeting today's consumer: Clairol's Talking Mirror, Intelligent Nutrients' edible beauty and L'Oréal Paris' multi-tasking Go 360° Clean

Back to basics & less is more

Consumers have moved from buying a brand to buying into a brand. Intimacy has replaced the one-size-fits-all and traditional mass media is not enough to make today's consumer want to buy. The search for quality and *savoir-faire* as opposed to superficial glamour are growing trends. More discreet branding, sober graphics, nude make-up and packaging have been strong, with luxury brands focusing on their heritage. This should be an inspiration for beauty.

In the US, the "home-farming" trend has spilled over to beauty: DIY or vegan cosmetics are hot, as is the idea of "feeding" the skin. The Intelligent Nutrients line (pictured above), for example, is made from organic food ingredients. In Japan, ancient beauty practices or ingredients have come to the fore, and consumers now aspire to Japanese beauty, rather than Western icons. Haku's advertising (Shiseido) portrays a porcelain-like beauty with an empress demeanor. In China, local brands, such as Herborist are focusing on traditional Chinese medicine and herbs.

Guilt-free hedonism & new players

We see resilience centered on hedonism and pleasure and escape from difficult times as the new model. Experience is key; fantasy and storytelling is a must. Surprising consumers in non-conventional spots, for example Calvin Klein's vending machines in the Paris metro or Clairol's talking mirror at Grand Central Station in New York (pictured above) helps trigger a positive emotional link with the brand, which is often followed by sharing the experience in social media. In product inno-



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Leïla Rochet-Podvin

vation, it opens doors to creative alliances. In the US, "cartoon inspired" make-up has popped up in the past year, such as So Smurfy from Too Faced and OPI's Alice in Wonderland-inspired colors. In Japan, on top of the "kawaii" or manga-inspired cosmetics, we've seen lip-gloss presented like lollipops (Popchu) or heart-shaped mascara (LoveLabo). In Shanghai, the six-story Barbie store has a spa and sells a beauty line for mother and girls.

Urban attitude & smart solutions

Widespread access to information, and the 'smart' attitude adopted during the economic

crisis has led to an expert urban consumer. Pragmatic pursuit, efficiency and convenience are key in appealing to this demanding consumer. Brands need to adapt products to these demands, just as the high-tech industry has done. Home spa tools, multi-tasking, all-in-one cosmetics and on-the-go packaging have gained in popularity. In the US, smart packaging is hot, whether it vibrates, talks or integrates tools. For example, L'Oréal's Go 360° Clean (pictured above) integrates an exfoliating disk, called the "scrublet" into the bottle. In Japan, Aube Couture EyeMake System eyeshadow comes in an eye-shaped case to show how it should be applied. In China, night packs (for example, La Neige's Water Sleeping Pack), or leave-on creams that act as night masks, are popular.

Positively green

We've seen the emergence of "green-hero" brands that value the positive use of nature, ethical practices and transparent information. It is no longer just about "no" or "organic" claims, but the brand's manifesto and how it takes action. One example is recycled design. In the US, Sonia Kashuk launched a make-up line made of organic bamboo, cork and wood. In Japan, retailer Isetan Apothecary has an area for green brands. In China, the green trend is on the up, with 82% of Chinese saying it is unacceptable not to make efforts for the environment (according to a 2009 study by Global Elderman Goodpurpose). Corporate social responsibility is becoming a key topic and even *Elle China* published a 230-page supplement called Love Earth, devoted to Green Lifestyle. ■