



Physical and Psychological Keys to Cosmetic Usage

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The physical key to cosmetic usage is product performance. The psychological key is enhanced sense of well being.

Life's priceless riches are our five senses with which all are endowed by right of birth. Three of the five—smell, sight and touch—find expression in cosmetic usage. Our instinctive desire to gratify our senses explains why cosmetic usage dates back to earliest historical records. It also explains cosmetics' present popularity and forecasts continued growth until everyone everywhere can satisfy all sensory desires. However, cosmetics are perceived needs as distinguished from the real needs of food, shelter and clothing. Therefore, the rate of future growth will depend upon affordability.

Primitive formulae of natural substances stirred over an open hearth led to household recipes cooked over a kitchen stove. By the 18th and 19th centuries household recipes formed the basis of a cottage industry.

The explosive transition from small business to big business took place in the early decades of the 20th century. The emergence cannot be attributed to just one factor but resulted from the convergence of many happenings. Seven factors come to mind.

French Imports

The first contributing factor is that of the French imports. Maurice Levy of Park and Tilford Import Co. told me that he was responsible for introducing paste rouge into the U.S. about 1900. He also told me that he commissioned Sco-

ville, a manufacturer of small metal parts, to manufacture the first lipstick case in 1914. Prior to that time rouge was applied to the lips by rubbing a finger over the surface of the pot of paste rouge.

The gifts of French perfumes brought back after World War I by returning soldiers for their mothers, wives and sweethearts led to the establishment of U.S. licensees by French perfume companies a year or two later.

New Synthetic Compounds

In the 1920s and 1930s the burgeoning chemical industry began to develop new compounds which could be used in large volume in other industries and fortunately also found use in the then small cosmetic industry. Those ingredients included fluorocarbons, PVP, synthetic emulsifiers, and plastics.

Fluorocarbons were developed by Du Pont as an improved refrigerant and were destined to make air conditioning possible. However their initial use was as a propellant for dispensing DDT to delouse the soldiers of World War II. After the war, an early civilian use was as a propellant in aerosol fragrance flacons.

Polyvinyl Pyrrolidone (PVP) was developed by the Germans as a blood substitute for treating wounded soldiers in World War II. After the war the General Aniline and Film Company in the U.S. found another use for the then stockpiled chemical. PVP became the active ingredient in aerosol hair spray with fluorocarbons as the propellant.

Synthetic emulsifiers were another category of compounds developed by the chemical industry. The target market was the giant detergent companies. However, cosmetic manufacturers were quick to use the synthetic emulsifiers to improve the texture and stability in cream and lotion compounding.

The primary use of plastics was targeted at the container industry. It offered a lighter-than-glass container which would reduce shipping costs, have greater versatility in shape and design as well as freedom from breakage.

Emergence of the Cosmetic Chemist

The transition from artisan to cosmetic chemist was virtually mandated by the greater scientific knowledge required to formulate products using the newly available synthetic compounds. The emergence of the cosmetic chemist is surprisingly recent. The first society of cosmetic chemists worldwide was founded in New York City in 1945 with twelve members. It rose to 3,300 by 1985.

The transition from artisan to cosmetic chemist is still far from complete as indicated by the feature article which appeared in the April 1985 issue of *Chemical and Engineering News* entitled "Cosmetics: Science Is Replacing Art In Formulation."

I have a personal anecdote relating to cosmetic marketers' attitude toward research and development in the early 1940s. When I was interviewed by the president of a nationally known cosmetic company of that period, the gentleman asked me why I sought the interview. I replied that I wished to be employed by his company as a research chemist. He looked down on me and commented that after the war all the women would go back to their kitchens and the then prospering cosmetic industry would collapse. Several years later when I was president of my own company, this same gentleman applied to me for a job. As we met he said that I looked vaguely familiar. I never told him of our initial meeting.

Packaging

The simple product container used in the cottage industry days led, largely through use of plastics, to more sophisticated packaging offering tangible consumer benefits such as eye appeal, superior function, greater convenience as well as more aesthetic means of applying the product.

Advertising

Up until the late 1940s the principal advertising media were newspapers and magazines.

Local merchants were limited to local newspapers. With the advent of TV in the late 1940s a new option became available to cosmetic companies. The demonstrator on the TV commercial virtually overnight became the exciting nationwide equivalent of the demonstrator in the downtown department store. I experienced how powerful a selling tool the new medium was. Shortly after introducing the Hazel Bishop lipstick, we became the first cosmetic company to advertise on TV. With only that one product, sales grew from \$1 million the first year to \$2 million the second, to \$5 million, to \$10 million. It was estimated that we captured one-fourth of the total lipstick market.

The successful use of the medium was particularly meaningful to me because before I was born, my father used circus animals to supplement advertising his stores in the local newspaper. I credit him with conceiving the prototype of the Macy Thanksgiving Day parade decades before Macy. He had an elephant covered with a placard advertising his toy store led by its trainer dressed as Santa Claus parade down Washington Street in Hoboken on Thanksgiving morning. The elephant was followed by the horse and wagon from his awning factory pitching out candy from his candy store.

My father taught me to be a confirmed believer in advertising. His favorite saying was that there was only one business which he knew could get along without advertising and that was the U.S. mint.

Distribution Channels

The advent of the TV commercial opened the flood gates to additional channels of distribution which have become categorized as the mass market. Cosmetic products are now available in ever increasing types of retail outlets. A recent addition is in highway diners across the country where truckers may buy aftershave lotions and colognes such as Stetson, Truck Stop and Long Haul.

Consumer Mobility

Traditionally the married woman remained virtually housebound until her children reached adulthood. Beginning with World War II women were employed to replace men who entered the army. These women were initially envisioned as a temporary replacement, but the post war return to the kitchen never happened. The working woman became reluctant to relinquish earning money on her own. Shortly thereafter the "Equal Opportunity For Women Trend" solidified into an irreversible fact. When World War II soldiers

returned, the married women remained in the job market. The dual income resulted in more disposable income for cosmetic products.

Clues to Future Growth

The big question on everyone's mind is what growth does the future hold? I believe that the past can provide clues to future growth. Growth should come from many sources. Growth should come from increased fragrance consumption in bath products, environmental fragrances, aroma therapy and importantly, from more frequent application of alcohol-based fragrances. The difficulty in surveying current users is that they undoubtedly claim more frequent than actual usage. However, higher fragrance concentrations, scent strips and TV fragrance commercials are creating a more fragrance conscious society which should lead to an increased frequency of average usage.

Growth should come from the growing group of women who color coordinate their makeup with changes in color fashions in apparel from season to season. Color strips also could stimulate seasonal color promotions.

In skin care and toiletries growth should come from still undeveloped chemical compounds which can be used in cosmetic formulation to achieve improvement in existing products and to develop currently non-existing products. The joint efforts of the chemical industry, the pharmaceutical industry and the dermatological community should lead to truly efficacious skin care products.

A great opportunity is present in the barely tapped market among the aging population for skin care products that truly perform and are affordable. A corresponding market exists for products that can be applied routinely to protect the young skin and initiate a lifetime skin protective habit.

The relatively resistant male market needs to be approached in acceptable male terminology dissociated from effeminacy. Two such product categories could emphasize product performance and enhanced sense of well being. We might consider weather-protective products for healthy care of the male skin—be it for the bald head, the face, lips or hands. For example, the medical literature indicates that men develop more lip cancers than women whose lips are protected from the burning rays of the sun by the oils in their lipsticks. A second category might be easy to apply, more natural-looking hair coloring. The current metal-based men's products lack the lustre of their female counterparts. The men now in public office have made covering of male grey hair acceptable. At the present moment

minoxydil is raising the hopes of many bald men.

Growth also can be expected from the great untapped market, both domestic and abroad, of those persons who have not yet been able to gratify their senses of smell, sight and touch. A major caveat in future rate of growth in cosmetic products is not only the amount of disposable money but also the individual consumer's personal order of spending priorities. Will it be a face cream or a new toaster?

Conclusion

To paraphrase a quotation from Emerson "that which is before your very eyes you will not see until you are prepared to see." The future is in the hands of those sophisticated marketers with vision and courage to risk in the areas of new opportunities.

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