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Customisation: make-up meets diversity

Women of mixed ethnicity constitute a target group that is set to grow exponentially. Yet their colour cosmetics needs are far from being met. As brands seek ways to cater to the many skin tones within this group, packaging will emerge as a key factor in 'serving the underserved'.

A recent report by market researcher Mintel highlights the rise of multi-culturalism. It states that this demographic trend is "leaving many consumers unable to find cosmetics that match their skin tone. While brands simply cannot launch products for every possible tone, packaging can help meet this new consumer need."

Millennials are putting on the pressure. The younger generations are not shy about making demands and what they want is tailored solutions. Customisable packaging is already starting to boom, with build-your-own palettes appearing in retail stores and online personalisation services emerging on the internet.

Shades galore

The bigger brands are starting to bring out greater numbers of shades, as many as 40 in the case of Fenty Beauty. To differentiate in store, the packaging needs to enable consumers to easily identify the colour they want. This means viewing windows or transparent packaging. Glass is ideal here. Not only is it perfectly compatible with any formula, is also super clear, giving an undiluted view of the bulk. The YouWood and Liquid Foundation ranges in Quadpack's Q-Line portfolio are especially designed with glass bottles to help brands meet the needs of this growing market.

Alternatively, some kind of colour coding mechanism can help for identification. Colour-matched discs or collars can be added at the last minute on the filling line. Quadpack's Slim Panstick with removable ring or Jumbo Stick with snap-on discs both provide effective means of colour coding. This way, brands can adapt their delivery to market according to last week's sales figures, for a quick response to demand.

Blend it yourself

With the sheer number of possible skin tones, some cosmetics companies prefer to offer solutions that involve some kind of blending on the part of the consumer. NYX, The Body Shop, Autograph

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and MUA are just some of the brands who have released shade-adjusting drops that allow you to darken, lighten or otherwise alter the colour of your foundation.

For this kind of product, practicality is king. The pack needs to offer accurate dosage in a convenient way to add the product for blending. Push button or teat droppers, squeezable bottles or tubes with precision applicators all offer suitable solutions.

Build it yourself

In fact, any kind of dual, triple or multi pack offers consumers a degree of customisation. Where a greater number of shades is required, palettes offer the answer. Right now, custom palettes are coming into their own, whether for lip, face or eye colour. The trays need to be easy to change, while the palette case needs to be robust enough to withstand long-term use – all without compromising aesthetics, of course!

This kind of build-it-yourself solution is extending itself beyond palettes, to include modular sticks and stackable jars. Trinny London's The Stack is a perfect example of a portable solution of a customisable colour range. It's practical, convenient, fun and adaptable to your own tastes and habits – a solution that was highly commended at the Pure Beauty Awards in May.

Blueprint for packaging diversity

Whatever solution a brand turns to in order to offer colour diversity, there are certain characteristics required of the packaging. The phrase 'smart packaging' applies here more than ever and not just for the consumer. Modular solutions mean basic components can be held in stock for just-in-time decoration. Intelligent stocking is a great enabler of the fast time to market required by make-up brands – and is set to become a big growth area, along with on-demand personalisation.

Modular solutions can adapt to different formulations, brand images and positioning. This adaptability is crucial in the world of fast cosmetics. It also requires collaboration by the various stakeholders in the value chain, from the formulators to the packagers and fillers. The Millennials can teach the world a thing or two about teamwork to achieve a common goal. And diversity in make-up is a goal worthy of bringing the beauty industry together.

– Sonia Cerato, Quadpack Make-Up Category Manager

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About Quadpack Industries SA

Quadpack Industries is an international manufacturer and a provider of enhanced packaging solutions for beauty brand owners and contract fillers. With offices and production facilities in Europe, North America, and the Asia Pacific region and a strategic network of manufacturing partners, Quadpack develops bespoke and customised packs for prestige, masstige and mass market customers. For more information, please visit www.quadpack.com.



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