



TRANSPARENCY & SIMPLICITY

Even a cursory glance at the many 2018 trend forecasts for skincare would have shown that the word “transparency” was mentioned more than any other word.

It's not surprising. We have more sources available than ever before to gain knowledge. Social media democratizes what we seek to know and the desire for wellness is demanding that what we put on our skins is as good for us as what we eat. For more and more skincare consumers, finding a way through misleading claims and confusing ingredient listings is now as much an important determinant of purchasing behaviour as is the desire to gain perfect skin.

This doesn't mean that brands with a deep legacy in science, research and a desire to offer no-compromise formulations won't continue to flourish – witness La Prairies launch of Platinum Rare Cellular Night Elixir with an RRP of £900.

But a new sensibility is driving consumers to be as well informed about product and brands as the companies that produce and sell those brands. This consumer seeks clear communication, wants to know what's in the bottle and why it's there and will be dismissive of claims that have no basis in fact.

“ Make it easy for your consumer and you will have a friend for life. Make it hard and she or he will go elsewhere. ”

Transparency is effective when what is going to be made transparent is understood. And that can only work if language is simple and easy to understand.

Simplicity doesn't mean that every product should be simple in its formulations - although a recent Mintel survey showed that 20% of US consumers want facial skincare with as few ingredients as possible. If your product works because it has a powerful mix of 20 ingredients, explain why and how in terms that are crystal clear. If it has complex science to deliver efficacy, find ways of making that science easy to understand.

The days of hiding behind complicated and confusing information are over, simplicity is about making life as easy as possible for your consumer.

Men particularly want products that are easy to use and grooming routines that save time. Braun's global study of male grooming showed that over 75% of time-poor men want multi-tasking products to make life easier. Men who maintain a beauty routine limit the number of products they use to save time. Women are equally time-poor so why shouldn't they expect the same?

Make it easy for your consumer and you will have a friend for life. Make it hard and she or he will go elsewhere. Transparency is now high on the agenda for brands.

“ Transparency is effective when what is going to be made transparent is understood. ”

Cosmetics Business Skin Care Report (Feb 2018) had it right in their broad statement that, "the new goals in skincare are transparency and trust". But without simplicity, transparency is impossible.

As the beauty landscape changes faster than ever, those brands that adopt an ethos of transparency and simplicity will forge ahead. Those that don't will simply be left behind as their consumers find what they want elsewhere.

STIRLING MURRAY
FOUNDER & MANAGING DIRECTOR

THE RED TREE
BEAUTY BRAND CONSULTANTS

The Red Tree is a leading international beauty brand consultancy with a proven track record in building businesses, brands and people. We develop and steer your ideas, challenge your thinking and deliver results.