



The Future is Here

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By Sara Mason

Mike Efting, president, Viachem, Ltd., offers insight on how the industry is responding to consumers' desires for innovative and results-driven anti-aging products.

What role does innovation play in bringing enhanced quality of product to consumers?

Efting: Innovation is the life blood of new product introductions. We're seeing major personal care companies increasing their R&D budgets in 2010, and planning to introduce new, higher quality products into the market. For example, to target the growing aging population, which is expected to grow as much as 115% over the next 10 years, many companies are targeting the segment with innovative and high-end quality products tailored to their needs. Necessity is the mother of invention, which is why we saw 2009 bring the first introduction of an anti-aging aftershave by Dermaplus. This month, Olay is expanding its anti-aging offering with facial and full-body creams, lotions and body washes.

How do innovations help products achieve marketing/technical goals?

Efting: All products have a "life cycle", especially in the personal care industry. Consumers can be fickle, motivated by competing factors (price, brand, ingredients), and have constantly evolving needs (from feminine hygiene to diapers). New products, especially niche products, help personal care producers meet their marketing goals. Especially when tailored to popular trends as in the use of botanicals (now organic botanicals) in creams, lotions, conditioners and shampoos. When we work with our end-use customers, it's to understand how to incorporate fine or specialty ingredients into products in development to ensure the best product possible. Again, the growing aging population, as well as the spending power of younger demographics. I also feel the economic downturn had a lasting effect on the buying habits of those with limited spending power, reinforcing the need for affordable development.

What is the future of skin rejuvenation?

Efting: With the burgeoning aging population, product developers and marketers have a real opportunity to capture the pursuit of "youth" through skin treatments.

Given budgetary restrictions for clinical treatments, skin rejuvenation is being adapted to products available from brands, or sub-brands, familiar to this demographic. Again, Olay has a handful of anti-aging introductions this month, CoverGirl cosmetics is targeting the market with new products, men have anti-aging aftershave and even dishwashing liquid from Dawn promises to beautify hands.

Stem cell technology, cell-targeting and even research into fetal skin healing presents real opportunities in the development of everything from anti-aging formulations to scar-smoothing.