

X-RAY VISION

By Leah Genuario



Get the inside scoop on the latest packaging trends.

We've all heard the old saying, "Don't judge a book by its cover." It's a great reminder when dealing with people, but such sage advice flies out the window when scooping up beauty products. All too often, your clients form judgments about a product based on its packaging—not its formula. And if they don't connect with what they see, they won't buy. Check out the latest design elements of pro-beauty products that promote salon retail sales by meeting the needs and desires of your clients.

Trend 1: LITTLE LUXURIES

In a down economy, consumers trade big-ticket items for little luxuries. Successful haircare brands boost their luxe appeal through small touches of bling, making your clients feel extra pampered via packaging that dazzles. "Particularly in hair care, metallics are still very hot for increasing brand value," says Scott Oshry, executive vice president for Zorbit Resources, a beauty and cosmetic branding, design and manufacturing firm. Metal caps, hot-stamped graphics and other metallic touches tempt your clients with the promise of a luxurious experience. Translucent caps and bottles also promote an upscale experience, "giving weight, depth and a higher-quality feel to products," explains David Snyder, design director for beauty brander TricorBraun Design Group.



The Sebastian Professional Flaunt Collection's see-through packaging projects an upscale look, while showcasing the technologically-advanced dispenser.



Alterna's TEN Shampoo and Conditioner communicate luxe appeal through gold-color caps and graphics.

Trend 2: TAKE THIS PRODUCT AND CALL ME IN THE MORNING

Repêchage's Hydra Medic packaging features a clean, medical-inspired design to "drive home the point that it's almost prescription-strength," says Repêchage marketing manager Michael Corradetti.



While some brands showboat, other brands simplify. With this in mind, some companies choose a more sterile look for their packaging to champion perceived medical benefits. "It's no secret; the majority of the population wants to be healthier and look better," says Steven Nussbaum, director of marketing for O'Berk Company, a packaging resource company. While some beauty brands have teamed up with doctors who endorse their products, others have simply designed their packaging to appear more medical. Nussbaum sees an increase in the color white and simplified packaging that project a perceived medical benefit, which Oshry affirms "helps to underscore the brand promise."

Americans don't have time to eat dinner together. So one can only imagine the minimal amount of time the average woman spends on her beauty regimen. Your client needs packages that can keep up with her busy lifestyle, accommodating her whether she's at home or on the road.

Trend 3:
CONVENIENCE IN A BOTTLE
AWAY FROM HOME...

Today's airline restrictions may be a headache for travelers, but they're golden opportunities for haircare and other personal-care brands. The U.S. Transportation Security Administration mandated that carry-on liquids, gels and aerosols must be housed in three-ounce or smaller containers. While some brands are offering mini-sizes in stock bottles, others are seizing the opportunity to make a brand connection. "There's no doubt about it," says Oshry. "Custom bottles and eye-catching decorations also aid busy consumers while promoting the brand."



Traveling on an airplane? Forget about carrying on your full-size haircare products. Tuck in a few of ThermoFUSE's two-ounce travel sizes instead.



This mini-set of branded goods allows curly-nistas to take their DevaCurl experience with them wherever they go.

WHILE AT HOME...

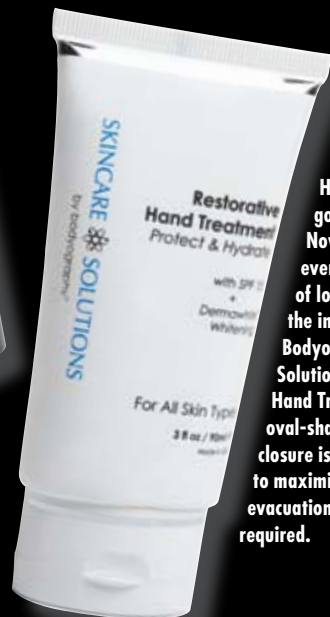
Customers demand convenience at home too. That extra couple of seconds spent shaking out the last of the hair gel is a hassle they'd rather not have to handle. This is why there's a proliferation of products with dispensers on the bottom. Airless dispensers are also on the rise: They offer consumers controlled product portions, prevent air from getting into the container and help to eliminate formula contamination.



Lola Cosmetics' sexy lipstick packaging makes a great conversation piece and includes a mirror for ultimate convenience while on the go.



Joico's Gloss Wax airless dispenser protects the formula and delivers controlled portions.



Has the economy got her down? Now she can eke out every penny's worth of lotion thanks to the inverted design of Bodyography Skincare Solutions Restorative Hand Treatment. The oval-shape dispensing closure is on the bottom to maximize product evacuation—no shaking required.



The new Sexy Hair Organics line utilizes up to 95% organic ingredients and is housed in packaging made from up to 35% post-consumer recycled material.



The bottles of all Onesta shampoos and conditioners are 100% recyclable.



Privé's Firm Hold Hair Spray sleek silver container can be recycled after she's done enjoying the benefits of its strong-hold formula.

Trend 5:
BEING ALL THINGS TO ALL MEN

Step aside, ladies: Brands are counting on men to increase sales. But these Martians don't like the same kind of packaging as their Venusian counterparts. Instead, they want "heavy grip patterns, bold detail and more of a hard-lined look that would generally be considered when designing automotive or car care products," says Snyder. This segment also prefers dispensers that are extremely easy to use.

Billy Jealousy's crazy-cool Lunatic Fringe packaging graphically speaks to the hip male demographic.



Simple and straight-to-the-point—just like a man: Aveda Men Pure-Formance Exfoliating Shampoo

Featuring a sleek, timeless design, American Crew Precision Shave Oil appeals to the classic man.



Trend 4:
NATURE CALLS

Being environmentally hip is no longer a passing fancy. "Everyone is concerned about the environment," says Oshry. Following suit, today's beauty products must look, work and do good. It may be a tough task, but consumers now demand some degree of ecological-mindedness from the brands they choose to support. Many beauty brands are removing parabens and sulfites from formulations, and are using labeling to herald these environmentally-friendly steps. Beauty's green movement also extends to responsible packaging these days. Whether containers are made from post-consumer recycled resins, are fully recyclable or simply use less material, eco-minded consumers have thrown down the gauntlet, and many brands are meeting the challenge.

The testosterone-pumped crowd is attracted to the macho design of B for Men's Power Surge Strong Hold Hairspray. The innovative twist-lock closure provides another desirable design element.

