

Cosmetics industry builds on trends

Edward Schack, principal of the distribution firm EES Cosmetics Solution, says the cosmetics industry is an ever-changing sector that has reinvented itself to survive the downturn.



Edward Schack,
cosmetics expert

What's ahead for the cosmetic industry?

The industry experienced nice growth in 2010, despite some gloomy national economic trends. And it has historically been recession proof, the driving factor being that women may not have \$100 to \$200 for that new dress but they will spend smaller amounts to change their makeup regimen. Coupled with this is the huge expansion into the men's market. Companies are

providing a lot of resources to this segment, and men are responding as they are becoming more aware of the importance of a good skin program.

What are the fastest-growing segments of men's cosmetic products?

Definitely skin care. The market has evolved way past shaving items. The defining of the metrosexual (a term coined in the 1990s relating to a man's concern about his appearance) has certainly escalated the process. The younger-aged baby boomer demographic also wants to maintain skin more effectively, giving rise to brands such as AXE and Kiehl's. Even traditional product lines such as Aqua Velva are responding.

Discuss the emotional bond that links consumer loyalty to cosmetic brands.

We're human and we tend to be creatures of habit. The adage that if something works, don't fix it, applies here. Women are particular about their skin care and makeup, and when they find something that works, they develop a bond. Typically it may take some trial and error to get the results they want, but when they do, companies potentially have a customer for life.

What is behind the trend of younger girls using cosmetics?

In 2005, the average age a woman began using beauty products was 17; today it is 13.7, according to the market research firm NPD Group Inc. We've seen the rise of child stars, Brittany Spears, Lindsay Lohan and Miley Cyrus, who have a huge younger-girl fan base. And because many of these stars represent their own products, the younger girls want them. There's also the Libby Lu brand for pre-teen girls. Experian Market Research shows that 43 percent of 6- to 9-year-olds already use lipstick or lip gloss, 38 percent use hairstyling products and 12 percent use other cosmetics.

-Dawn House

