

# Universal Companies' Top 10 Skin Care Trends for 2011

Total US spending on anti-aging skin care products, including cleansers and toners, as well as specialty solutions, is over \$6.1 billion, with \$1.7 billion being spent annually on anti-aging specialty solutions (Euromonitor). "Today, most women are looking for highly effective but fast at home facial treatments to support their more aggressive in-spa treatments," says Laura Fennema, principal of Integrated Spa Consulting. "Spa managers need to be knowledgeable about the products they offer and stay in tune with what their customer segments are seeking."

Let's examine the top trends driving skin care sales and learn how to take advantage of the abundant opportunities in this huge market segment.

## 1. Multitasking Products

Consumers are searching for products to do it all, or at least eliminate a few steps. "When it comes to skin care, people have too many choices and too little time," says Ellen Clark, President of Control Corrective Skincare Systems®. "Our Lactic-C Firming Cream replaces several products, as it provides a moisturizer, vitamin C, and lactic acid to both hydrate and exfoliate." Tracie Wertz, National Manager of Business Development for Universal Companies states, "Some of the most requested 'multitaskers' include moisturizers with sunscreen, exfoliating cleansers, and eye products that provide anti-aging, firming, and hydrating benefits."

## 2. Sustainable Skin Care

"Naturals are still in the spotlight in terms of ingredient trends," according to Ada Polla, co-founder of Alchimie Forever®. Consumers desire natural and organic, and they are more scrupulous of ingredients now than ever before. However, adds Wertz, "They also demand results." Consequently, there has been an increased focus on botanicals in clinical trials. "Newest developments include research in the realm of plant stem cells, which show incredible promise in terms of healing and anti-aging," says Polla. One natural ingredient gaining popularity is topical resveratrol, a potent antioxidant found in red wine and reported to have 17 times greater antioxidant activity than idebenone, a synthetic compound closely related in structure to CoQ10. Therefore, with this kind of research being done, clients will be able to have their proverbial cake and eat it too.

## 3. The Ingredient Race

"There are some exciting new ingredients popping up, like human growth factor and plant stem cells, that are providing pretty amazing and visible results, both immediately and over the long-term," reveals Wertz. "And there are new formulations of tried and true ingredients that offer better results. For instance, vitamins C and A, well known

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and important to healthy skin care, are now formulated in permeable yet gentle textures. We are also seeing new combinations of effective ingredients that are proving more powerful and efficient in their symbiotic combinations. These new formulations offer our professional estheticians the confidence they need to deliver the results their clients are seeking.”

Ingredients that continue to be hot include:

- *Ferulic Acid* – a phytochemical found in plant cell walls
- *Peptides* – short chain amino acids that create collagen and elastin
- *Retinols* – stimulate collagen and slow down the aging process

#### **4. Cult of Personality**

“Our collective voice as an industry has to become stronger to cut through all the noise,” asserts Clark. Like Estee Lauder before her, Clark’s personality comes through in her branding. Medical doctors are experts at “standing behind their brands” (think Dr. Murad, Dr. Brandt, and Dr. Perricone). However, brand leaders need not be famous doctors to be successful. As an esthetician, Clark found practical solutions for her own problem skin and sought to help others by introducing her line. She’s a testament to her brand. Alchimie Forever’s Ada Polla also builds credibility within the industry, as well as with the general public. In addition to speaking at conferences and writing for trade publications, she can be seen on her local TV news in Washington DC discussing skin care trends and offering tips.

#### **5. Niche Focus**

Boutique skin care brands are targeting and segmenting, understanding that they can’t be all things to all people. Global Cosmetic Industry Magazine reports that women over 45 concerned with aging can’t decipher how one product is different from another. “Today it is not enough to say ‘we have the best eye cream’. Consumers tune you out,” says Clark. Enter niche skin care—brands that effectively satisfy a particular market or skin condition. Examples of lucrative skin care niches include specialty markets, such as men, teens, pregnant women, and clinical skin conditions such as acne, hyperpigmentation, and rosacea.

#### **6. Mix and Match**

More than ever, spas are mixing and matching product lines to satisfy different client segments. Although they’re still loyal to their core vendor partners, spa directors are now wise to the fact that one line won’t (and shouldn’t) cover every single base. “To simplify the world of skin care products, Universal defines three main categories: Results/Active, Organic/Natural, Luxury/Spa,” says Tracie Wertz. “To meet the needs of all consumers, many spas offer products across these three main categories. Ideally, the brands should all work synergistically to offer results, experience, and luxury to spa clients.”

#### **7. Customization**

“Consumers want to visit the spa and receive truly customized experiences that deliver results, relaxation, and an authentic experience,” says Wertz. “One of Universal Companies’ greatest strengths is offering the most varied array

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of products and treatment ideas available. This allows our customers to provide unique, customized treatments combining ‘off the shelf’ products or they can work with us to develop proprietary formulations.” Wertz also points to the trend towards buying chunks of time instead of treatments from a standardized menu. “Spa guests can book a completely customized experience within their preferred amount of time,” she explains.

## **8. Clinical Goes Retail**

Professional skin care products can now be easily purchased online. “Consumers can find any product online,” states Clark. “You can fight or embrace it.” Control Corrective’s new packaging is designed to speak directly to the consumer. On one side of the box is “fun” marketing copy and on the other side is “factual” technical copy, succinctly outlining the product’s clinical benefits and suggested use. “Since clinical skin care is being sold outside of the treatment room, packaging must become the voice of the esthetician,” adds Fennema. “It must convey the brand message and educate the consumer about specific product attributes.”

## **9. Retail Goes Clinical**

Mass retailers jumped on the natural bandwagon several years ago and are now introducing more technically advanced skin care products, such as Olay Professional Pro X, with price points of \$40 and up. Duane Reade, a New York-centered drugstore chain with more than 250 outposts, opened its first Look Boutique in its new location in Manhattan’s Herald Square in fall of 2009. Located on the top floor, the 5,400-square foot space is dedicated solely to beauty retail—selling exclusive cosmetics, skin care and hair care lines that are typically found solely in high-end spas and salons.

## **10. Home Skin Care Devices**

Are portable home skin care devices threatening the future of the spa industry? Smart spa operators say “no” and have found clever ways to capitalize on this trend. When Rianna Riego of Global SpaVantage noticed diminishing demand for facials at her former resort, she made up lost revenues by retailing handheld skin cleansing units. Another benefit of home care regimes is that they produce better results. The Baby Quasar® handheld unit, designed for use between professional treatments, uses the same photorejuvenation technology as the in-spa model Quasar Pro Powerpack. (Both Quasar units are sold by Universal.)

Because tapping into your clients’ needs is paramount to maintaining their loyalty and attaining word-of-mouth referrals, Universal Companies hopes to help you by providing these trends and offering invaluable education and optimal brand support.