

Wellness and Wisdom: market and consumer trends in skin ageing

Hello.

Thanks so much making time to be a part of this year's Anti-Ageing Skin Care Conference and for attending my presentation on market and consumer trends in skin aging.

I am Deanna Utroske, industry thought leader, Editor of CosmeticsDesign.com, and creator of [the #duviews beauty-business-commentary video series on LinkedIn](#).

It was back in 2015, as part of my cosmetics and personal care [forecast video](#) for the year ahead, when I called attention to pro-aging, an updated body- and age-positive approach to ingredient development, product formulation and (eventually) beauty marketing.

pro-aging is about wellness and appreciation. It's about skin care, hair care, and body care that doesn't criticize or correct but instead, supports and sustains and celebrates. The Dove brand, from Unilever, was early in this space, launching a pro-age collection into the market in 2007.

But more recently, in 2017 Michelle Lee, Editor in Chief of the consumer-facing publication [Allure Magazine](#) here in the States, announced that that publication would be phasing out use of the word 'anti-aging' altogether.

Just this year, in January, L'Oréal launched its Age Perfect product line of both skin care and makeup, developed specifically for women 45+. Also in 2020, the New York City – based digital media and marketing agency Stella Rising published data from their [Glimmer Insights Community](#) that shows 37% of women in that community want to see “the end of the term ‘anti-aging’ this year.”

And last month, the popular [probiotic skin care brand TULA](#) proposed a whole new category: ageless beauty.

Yet here we are, at a reputable event, dedicated to anti-aging skincare, and attended by hundreds of industry insiders, with programing from numerous trust-worthy experts.

Now, before we sort out why anti-aging is still relevant, what anti-aging looks like in the beauty marketplace today, and which current and emerging anti-aging trends you need to know about to succeed, I want to pause to remind you of my particular perspective on the beauty industry, because as I like to say, context can be just as important as content.

My vantage point as a thought leader and commentator on the business side of the cosmetics and personal care industry lets me spot trends early, ahead of consumer media, ahead of retail, ahead of shoppers' Google search data, and even ahead of social media.

As Editor of the business news site [CosmeticsDesign.com](https://www.cosmeticsdesign.com), my focus is on the Americas region. Though even now, while most of us are staying close to home, we all live in a global community; and so, I keep my eye on the worldwide beauty industry too.

For my work, I talk with ingredient makers: those who source, those who synthesize, and those who invent and ferment ingredients with the help of biotechnology. I talk with cosmetic chemists, R&D pros, and new-product-development experts at both small and multinational beauty brands. I talk with contract manufacturers, packaging companies, independent consultants and industry organization leaders; with countless indie brand founders, makeup artists and nail techs, retail insiders, marketers, investors, and, well, this list could go on.

But that's my point. I am fortunate to have a perspective on beauty that is broad and that starts well behind the scenes. So now that you know where I am coming from, let's get back to anti-aging.

The basic premise of anti-aging skin care is that topical and ingestible products can slow, limit, or otherwise mitigate the visible physiological and environmental changes that impact the skin over time. Some of those changes entail discomfort, some limit function, and others are nearly or purely aesthetic.

Of course, there is—or was—a notion at one time that anti-aging products could stop or reverse the impacts of time. This notion is, in most sectors of the consumer goods industry, passé.

I mentioned in some of the promotional materials for this presentation, that even before COVID-19, anti-aging was changing. And now certainly, in our current moment, wellness and self-care matter to consumers in a whole new way, which in turn, influences what anti-aging means what skin care is expected to deliver.

Current and emerging trends in skin aging span ingredient launches, product development, and category. And in recent years, there's been a move away from consumer and category segmentation by demographic and toward psychographics.

But more importantly, we're seeing a move toward product benefits and the sort of personalization that aligns with lived experience rather than with socially assigned categories.

However, one chronological moment does have new relevance in the skin aging space. And that is where I'd like to start.

That moment, is menopause.

And, speaking of lived experience, quite literally every woman, should she live past 45, will have at least some experience of menopause. And while I've never met a woman who isn't appreciative—if not thrilled—about the wisdom, freedom, and experience that comes with age, it is fairly rare that the beauty and personal care brands she's grown loyal to over the years acknowledge or address her needs and expectations during and after menopause.

[A couple of standout brands in the menopause skin care space are a startup called Pause Well-Aging and Avon's forthcoming Adapt Sync brand.](#)

Both brands boast a hero-ingredient-technology story. All of the [Pause Well-Aging](#) products are formulated with what that brand calls The Pause Complex, and describes as “a carefully researched fusion of vitamins, antioxidants and peptides that synergistically help fuel collagen production while improving and diminishing the visible signs of skin aging.” The two most prominent products in this facial skin care collection are a Hot Flash Cooling Mist and a Collagen Boosting Moisturizer.

Rochelle Weitzner launched the brand in June 2019 and pointed out in her remarks to the press at that time, that “for all the noise we make about aging and all the products aimed at anti-aging, it was as if the whole topic of menopause was forbidden.”

[Avon](#) has been talking about skin care for women in menopause since 2019. But (as of mid-September 2020) that company's Adapt Sync brand was yet to launch.

Avon also has its own ingredient technology: a proprietary aptogen called tillacora. And thus far, the Adapt Sync brand has plans for a day cream, a cooling mist, and an on-the-go serum. But most of Avon's efforts in this space—to date—involve consumer education and marketing.

It's worth noting also, that [this summer an industry ingredient supplier called Sederma \(owned by Croda\) launched Feminage](#), a skin care ingredient expressly developed to address the loss of skin elasticity and firmness attributed to glycation and oxidation.

As inclusive as this new facet of skin care is, the Feminage ingredient, for instance, has only been clinically tested on a relatively small sample of Caucasian and Asian women.

In today's diverse and global marketplace, it's important to develop products that are effective for not only white and Asian consumers but also for Black consumers, Latinx consumers, and a spectrum of Indigenous peoples as well.

And, if I may say so, to truly do this right, businesses must also distribute and market genuinely inclusive skin care and beauty, which means, you need to have a genuinely inclusive team of employees in the lab and throughout your company that are representative of not only your customer but the end consumer that your product is aiming to reach.

That said, I want to digress from skin care for a moment and take a quick look at a few hair care brands that also exemplify how contemporary beauty is addressing the personal care needs of women over 40.

Save Me From, has a hair treatment product called [Save Me From Age Acceleration](#) that promises to thicken hair by up to more than 200%, leave hair more flexible, stronger, more hydrated, and with fewer split ends.

And, this is a brand reaching consumers over the age of 40.

I'll also draw your attention to [a hair brand called Better Not Younger](#), founded by Sonsoles Gonzalez—an indie brand leader since 2018 who has decades of experience with multinational companies like L'Oréal and P&G.

According to her brand's site, "Better Not Younger is a haircare brand for women over 40 whose sense of confidence and beauty gets better every day. Our products are the first specifically designed for aging hair."

Looking at just that quotation, we can see that this is a brand speaking to women who are over 40, who are confident and beautiful, and who are themselves aging, as is their hair. The marketing language used does not imply that there is anything wrong with this scenario or that anything needs to be corrected.

With these brands, we can get a sense of the benefits and marketing that speaks to today's 40+ beauty consumers.

So while some of the products and formulas that we may have historically or conventionally thought of as anti-aging are still in demand, what is truly contemporary are formulations and brands and marketing language that meets the consumer exactly where they're at. And helps her or him live well now.

I'll jump back and remind you that today, for the most part, skin care (in fact, beauty, personal care, and fragrance in general) doesn't need to align with any set consumer demographic. Another way to think about that is to think about anti-aging as a skin care category that can benefit and appeal to all beauty consumers.

Where anti-aging was once a category that targeted older women and told them that they could and should look younger, it is now becoming a category—well, maybe not a category but a concept—that asks all women and men to care for themselves and their skin in a way that will slow, limit, or otherwise mitigate the visible physiological and environmental changes that impact the skin over time.

Which makes protection one of the top trends for skin care consumers across the board. Protection is a newer category and in fact comprises both protection and repair products that address the effects of UV radiation, of airborne pollution, and of blue light.

Sun care, UV protection, is without a doubt a crucial piece of contemporary anti-aging skin care. And brands like [Super Goop!](#), which makes SPF products in countless formats and for seemingly every application, including shimmer shade eyeshadows, setting powder, cc cream, lip balm, serum, daily moisturizer, etc., are dedicated to making sure that sun care is part of every consumers' everyday routine.

Blue light protection and repair products as well as pollution protection and repair products are much newer. I was first shown blue light and pollution protection work at the 2017 edition of in-cosmetics North America, where I had a conversation with scientists developing clinical testing protocols that would eventually be used to substantiate the benefits of ingredients and finished product formulas in these emerging categories.

This year, blue light protection is front and center. Much of the global workforce is currently remote, working from home or from other outposts beyond the conventional office. And this has made the time that we spend in front of screens—any screens—and under florescent lighting more apparent and more of a concern in terms of our everyday health and wellbeing.

Indeed, a recent study commissioned by Unilever found that some 60% of consumers spend more than 6 hours in front of a digital device every day, and within a week's time, that exposure can

do damage comparable to nearly 30 minutes in the midday sun and can significantly increase skin cell inflammation.

Blue light lenses—eye glasses that block blue light—are gaining a fair amount of traction in both D2C and video commerce spaces lately. I've personally bought several pairs of blue-light glasses in recent months—pairs with blue-light protection only to wear while I am sitting in front of my laptop or looking at late-night TV as well as glasses with both blue-light protection and reader magnification to use while I am reading, scrolling, posting, and texting on my iPhone.

And all this is only a good thing for blue light protection and repair skin care—it's a form of consumer education and normalization that is setting the stage for blue light skin care to be quite commonplace in the months and years to come.

The ingredients that will be in those blue light protection products have been coming to market in recent years. While some UV protection ingredients have also been shown to have blue light protection benefits, innovations like [Lumicease from Lipotec](#), the natural Kakadu plum extract, and the brand new powdered version of [Blumilight P from Ashland](#), which is expressly for use in color cosmetics formulations, are helping make blue light protection products more common and more effective.

The prevention concept piggybacks neatly on protection because at the center of preventative skin care is the prevention of common environmental and physiological aggressors that precipitate signs of age.

Prevention is a category that targets younger consumers and is intended to establish habits and routines, in much the same way that personal oral care and dietary habits are encouraged from a young age.

All of the protection categories I just spoke about—sun care, blue light care, and pollution care—flow neatly into prevention. But prevention products are also about multi-step skin care routines, beauty tools, facial massage, and masking.

Brands like [Peach&Lilly](#), [Angela Caglia Skincare](#), and [Ayuna – less is beauty](#), make good sense in the prevention space. And it's worth noting that these are all brands used in spa services.

Longevity circles back to that pro-aging concept that we started this presentation with. Longevity is about living better lives longer. It's about well aging, aging well, and healthy aging.

It's about formulations and products, brands and messaging that help you care for yourself as you are today without any aspiration to be anything other than confident and positive about who you are and about the skin you're in.

When we cross into the regulatory space, the ideas and concepts around longevity and wellness are verging upon skin health. I am not a regulatory or legal expert, but I can say that skin health claims are very carefully regulated in most markets around the world. So in terms of CPG benefits and marketing claims, longevity and wellness can be a bit if-y.

Still, the skin care consumer is ready to think holistically about healthy living, about skin appearance, and personal care.

In terms of dermatology and clinical brands, there's tremendous potential for longevity. But I am not that well-versed in the medical skin care space. So I won't go into any detail there.

Some of what I can cover in terms of longevity is that this is where much of microbiome beauty sits; so, that's skin care with prebiotic, probiotic, and post biotic ingredients. This is why TULA skincare, the brand that I told you earlier has just introduced the Ageless Beauty category, fit in the longevity space. Skincare supplements, like those from Planted in Beauty, as well as any number of ingestible capsules or collagen drinks, are also part of the longevity concept.

Longevity is about planning for the future and caring for and about yourself and your skin today.

Wellness itself has been a significant factor in beauty for years now.

Last year in 2019, [the Global Wellness Institute put the wellness economy at 4.2 trillion dollars—a figure up from 3.7 trillion dollars just 2 years earlier in 2017](#). And according to the [Institute](#), beauty, personal care, and anti-aging account for the largest segment of the wellness economy.

Just for context, other segments of the wellness economy comprise fitness, nutrition, preventative medicine, the spa industry, and (so far as it still exists) wellness tourism.

Wellness brands are dedicated to genuine self-care—something that consumers have gotten a lot more clarity about over the past 8 months. Brands and product collections that encourage time, tranquility, and touch, as well as those that are energizing, enlightening, and elevating are situated in wellness.

Brands that capture the wellness concept include [5YINA](#). This brand's product portfolio includes a Décolletage Treatment that's not only about skin care and lymphatic drainage but also about self-breast exams and the importance of knowing what's normal for your body and about reaching out for a medical opinion before it's too late.

And, I'll add here that I have tried this product in fact, I've used and sampled many, many skin care products over the years. I am not the pseudo-objective beauty biz outsider. I don't simply sit on the periphery of the cosmetics and personal care industry and look in; I do what I can to empathize with every stakeholder along the beauty continuum.

So getting back to business, I know from experience that the Décolletage Treatment from 5Yina is not a simple moisturizer or run-of-the-mill balm. The 5YINA Décolletage Treatment has its own texture, color, and scent. It's the sort of wellness product that I very sincerely wish was on every woman's bathroom counter, or vanity, or in her medicine cabinet and of course one that she uses regularly.

Other brands with conceptual gravitas in wellness might have an aromatherapy angle or a hygiene angle or take a stress-mediation approach to skin care.

A couple of indie beauty brands that offer aromatherapy, just for example are [Aba Love Apothecary, a plant-based skincare brand that's all about skincare and healing aromatics](#), and [LifeTherapy, a scented body and bath brand with the tag line "choose your mood."](#)

And dedicated-hygiene brands like [Hygiene Hero, which for now just sells hand sanitizer and facial coverings, fit neatly into the 2020 wellness space as well](#).

And wellness is a concept where anti-inflammation, calming benefits, and stress repair also come into play. Here, I am thinking of ingredients from the biotech company [Mibelle, which makes the Ice Awake skin care ingredient that](#), "helps rejuvenate skin that is showing the effects of age caused by prolonged periods of inadequate sleep," as I've written on CosmeticsDesign.com.

And that same company's [Black BeeOme ingredient](#) is, according to [Mibelle BioChemistry's site](#), "designed for the recovery of the individual skin microflora after stress."

Now, just between you and me, consumers don't spend too much time thinking about personal care product categories or about the various sectors of the CPG industry. Therefore, it stands to reason that market and consumer trends in skin anti-aging extend well beyond skin care.

In much the same way that hair care brands figure into today's anti-aging conversation, all skin care product formats, including skin care with anti-aging benefits, and protection, prevention, or wellness benefits, are expanding beyond the face and neck.

Anti-aging skin care is expanding into scalp care, hand and nail care, and hygiene; into mechanical and electric and digital beauty tools; into body care, and more.

If it makes sense in anti-aging skin care, it makes sense in any and every category in cosmetics and personal care now.

Ingredient makers, contract manufacturers, indie brands, and multinational beauty makers are all hoping to monopolize on these opportunities.

Brands like [Adesse New York](#) have been leading in the nail care – as – skin care space recently. This indie brand, led by Suzanne Roberta recently launched [a collection called the Intensive Nail Defense trio](#), comprising a Nail Defense Serum, a Nail & Cuticle Energizer, and a Marine Algae Hydration Serum—also for the nails.

Like I said, ingredient makers, or specialty chemical companies, are also in on the expansion of skin care. [INOLEX](#) has, for instance been promoting its LexFeel 7 and Lexgard O ingredients as add-ins for hand sanitizer product formulations that can meet consumers' needs for both hygiene and moisturization.

Givaudan is helping shift skin care into scalp care with its [new Wintergreen-derived ingredient Neosalyl](#), which promises exfoliation, anti-inflammation, and anti-microbial benefits.

And brands like Better Not Younger, which I spoke about earlier, as well as [the hair supplement brand Nutrafol](#), are bringing pro-aging or well-aging sensibility into the hair category.

So are beauty tool innovations like the body Gua Sha, for instance. And according to the NPD Group, sales of body serum were up over 30% in Q1 of 2020. All over body care, scrubs, self-tanners, and glow creams, for instance, have seen a sales lift since COVID hit.

Spa access has been limited in 2020, and as a result, consumers are more invested in wellness and more likely to appreciate the wisdom and physiological changes that come with age.

Consumers are seeing self-care differently. And what matters—in contrast to what commercial or social pressure was selling them in the past—has changed. In 2020, beauty consumers are aspiring to live well, to feel good, and to look exactly like themselves.

With that, I'll thank you again for making time to be here for my presentation and, now that we've met, I encourage you to stay in touch.

You can find my contact information and social media links on [DeannaUtroske.com](https://deannautroske.com)

deannautroske.com

[#duviews on LinkedIn](#)