

# Youth and Teen Packaging

## Growth spurts

No one can afford to ignore the growing importance of teen and tween consumers.

By **MARIE REDDING**  
Senior Editor

**"I** want a makeup compact that wakes me up in the morning...tells me I look fabu...yells at me when the color is all wrong...I want a lipstick case that is teeny tiny and glows, so that when I'm in the club, and see HIM across the floor, I can find it and touch up..."

"I want beauty products that rock..."

—from the latest issue of the *Crystal Ball Beauty Trend Report, Teen Edition*, published twice a year by Mirror Mirror Imagination Group.

In the teen and tween markets, packaging trends change quickly, and competition is especially fierce. Younger buyers shop often, and are always looking for something new, which makes them one of the hardest—and potentially the most profitable—groups to target.

There will be 33.6 million teenagers by the year 2005; and 35 million by 2010, according to Teenage Research Unlimited, a market research firm in Northbrook, IL. A survey conducted by Bolt Lab Research, a division of Bolt.com, asked 604 teenage girls whether they wear makeup: 85% said they do and two out of three don't have a brand preference, switching brands often. As for tweens, there are now more cosmetic and bath lines marketed to 6–12-year-olds than ever before.

Flashy looks, techno shapes, and kitschy cartoon images might all work when it comes developing and marketing a product for the Millennial generation—but just because you have their attention today doesn't mean you'll keep it tomorrow. A constant focus on visual appeal and innovative packaging is therefore extremely important. "Packaging is definitely a lot cooler now," says Brandon Holly, editor-in-chief of *Elle Girl* magazine. "It all started with Urban Decay—they brought the punk rock edge to make-up, and it's continuing."

### HIGH-TECH COMPONENTS

Rocket City Cosmetics began targeting younger consumers three years ago with just 13 SKUs, and now it's up to 100. "You have to stay on the forefront of design trends and that means constantly being creative, which isn't always easy," says Robin Smith, creative director for Rocket City Cosmetics. The company's Space Case eyeshadow set flips up to open on its own with the touch of a button. They are about to launch a compact that contains lip gloss, two eye shadows, a black eyeliner pencil, a mirror, and a double-ended applicator—and it's just 3½ × 3½ in.

"We try to give companies new

ideas," says Charles Chang, vice president of Topline Products Co. (Wayne, NJ), which produced an acrylic compact in the shape of a cell phone for Jordache Cosmetics. Topline has also worked with the Caboodles and Jane cosmetic lines. According to Chang, acrylic has replaced SAN as the plastic of choice. "It's compatible with hot-pour formulas and is crystal clear, while SAN has a slight tint. Acrylic is a more expensive resin, but now people are willing to spend more money to get the right look."

"Performance is key," says Tim Crawford, director of research and development at CSI Packaging, who says the firm's latest product in development is an airtight, waterproof container for lip balm that can withstand the pressure of high impact. "Some teenage girls are into extreme sports, so we want to make extreme product packaging."

### CARTOON KITSCH

Eyeko is a cosmetic company based in London, founded by Max Leykind and his wife, Nina. Both worked on the Hard Candy line when it was one of the pioneers in trendy cosmetics.

Nina Leykind designs the packaging and says she is inspired by "Hello Kitty, McDonalds, pop art, kitsch, and all things Japanese." Leykind



visits Japanese supermarkets for inspiration, because Japanese firms "package everything from hair dye to sweets so creatively, and they always have a cartoon character explaining everything on the package."

Eyeko's Makeout Palette, filled by Intercos, is a miniature, round pink case with separate compartments on top that swing out to reveal more products on the bottom level.

Sanrio's signature Hello Kitty cartoon cat has inspired many designs over the past 29 years, and she's still going strong. Marketing director Bill Hensley describes the firm's marketing strategy: "We do lots of variety, in very low quantities...we may introduce up to 200 to 300 new products in any given month, but we'll only make a couple of thousand of each, so there's a bit of collectibility to each item." Sanrio understands its customer's mantra: "If all your friends have it, it's not cool anymore." Hensley says some items sell out within days.

This spring, there will be new Hello Kitty Keychain Lip Glosses, packaged in tins, and during the summer, a Lip Gloss Palette will be launched. Next fall, there will be Hello Kitty Mascara and Hello Kitty Eyeliner with collectible mascots in the cap.

Coty's bath and body line company, called Smiley, targets 6-12-year-olds and uses a nostalgic, standard smiley face as its cartoon logo. Daisies and tie-dyed colors are incorporated into the design, in hopes of attracting parents who grew up in the 1960s and 1970s.

A tube makes an innovative package for Eyeko mascara.

## CANDY COLORS

Lotta Luv LLC has licensed classic candy brand names to appeal to teens, tweens, and their parents. Company president Steph Fogelson says he kept in mind the candy shape when designing the packages, which include round, bubble-shaped clear bottles that contain Bubble Yum bubble-gum-colored nail polish. Part of the line has been in a few specialty stores since last fall, and the rest hits shelves this spring.

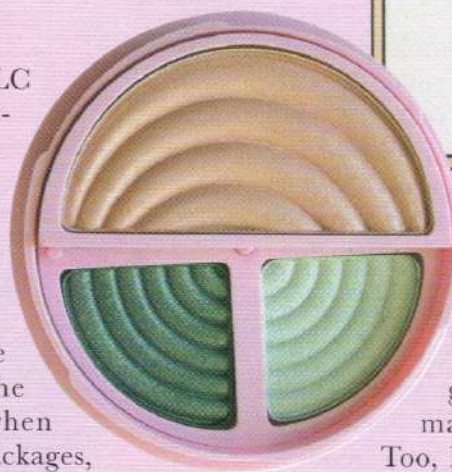
Crawford at CSI Packaging, which makes "goop" as well as packaging, says "sour candy flavors for lip products are extremely popular now, and so are bright glosses. We've been doing lots of sparkly lip balms and glittery body gels for various clients. Kids love that stuff."

Limited Too's new line called Allie, which targets girls aged 7-14, was created this past fall and contains extremely vibrant products in clear PET bottles with oversized caps.

Many of the interesting-shaped bottles are custom molds from Roberts Cosmetic Containers. Terri Ferraro, account manager at Roberts Cosmetic Containers, says the Allie bottles "represent the big focus there is right now on showcasing creative fillings."

HK Insights is the product innovation company that came up with the concept for the Allie line. HK's creative director Michael Koulermos says, "We had to develop a special ink with glitter fine enough to be silk-screened onto the bottle, to get a holographic effect on the label."

Senior vice president and



Only 3 in. in diameter, Eyeko's Makeout Palette contains blush, two eye shadows, a lip gloss, and a double-ended applicator.

general merchandise manager for Limited Too, Paula Damaso, says

her firm even formulates its makeup differently for different ages. Lip glosses that look bright pink in the package actually go on very sheer for younger customers.

There is a lot of work involved in developing a fragranced product, like the Allie Glitter Lotion, Glitter Splash, and Glitter Shower Gel. Damaso explains, "Once you add glitter, everything changes—the color and the scent—so we had to develop new processes to make our formulas. We wanted our fruit scents to be very intense, to smell almost like you can eat it."

Fruit-shaped lip balm is part of a new line of containers by HCT Packaging called Eye Candy. The line includes designs for formulations scented like watermelons, cherries, strawberries, grapes, and lemons. "The cases are clear, but will look and smell like the actual fruit when they are filled with a formulation that is colored and scented," says Dennis Anderson, at HCT.

A bubble-gum-flavored lip gloss called Bubble Blitz, packaged in a miniature gumball machine, is the newest item (shipping in April) in the Hotsie Totsie line by Worldwide Cosmetics. The current line includes glitter body gel in a "princess frog" container; a lip gloss that looks like a butterfly with mesh wings; and a light-up lipstick, which has a red light inside the clear plastic base that turns on as you twist up the lipstick.

"My inspiration for Hotsie Totsie was to make toys and cosmetics in one, and I like to do weird things with





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packaging. Opening molds to make componentry has become the only way to do something different," says Dana Siegel, marketing director.

Bonne Bell, a name known throughout generations for its candy-flavored, super-shiny gloss, has three lines targeted to different ages: Smackers, Whirly Girl, and Bonne Bell.

K. MacDonald Parris, Bonne Bell's associate director of marketing, says its packaging is updated annually. "We keep our look in line with trends in fashion and music," says Parris. One of its top selling lip glosses, called Lip Fashion, is shaped like the Eiffel Tower and has a roll-on applicator.

### ALMOST GROWN UP

For the older teen, cosmetic packages as well as formulations look very different from those meant for



Lotta Luv's Tootsie Roll lip gloss, Sugar Daddy lip gloss, Blow Pop lip glosses, and Jr. Mints lip balm.

tweens and younger teens. Packaging grows up with the customer, and formulas lose the glitter, opting instead for a subtle shimmer.

Avon has a new line called *mark*, targeting 16–24-year-olds, which will be

introduced in the United States this fall and globally in 2004. Its packaging concept reflects the idea of "remarkable young women making their mark on the world." The components look smart in black and clear, with white lettering. "It's a transition period for older teens," says Holly from *Elle Girl*, which targets 16–20-year-olds. "They go back and forth between the sophistication of Chanel or Bobbi Brown, and they're still attracted to the cuteness of Bonne Bell," Holly adds.

Ever since Bobbi Brown wrote the book *Teenage Beauty*, published in 2000 by Harper Collins, she's gained a teen following. Her firm's new lip balm, shipping in May, is packaged in a round, shiny silver tin.

"For older teens, we'll develop flavors with a different twist, like a tangerine-lime balm instead of orange," says CSI Packaging's Crawford.

Holly says, "There's a cool sophistication to the Jane Cosmetics line and Bonne Bell's older line that our readers are attracted to...and they like to wear things that define them. Maybe it's Aveda because she likes its stand on green politics, or it might be MAC because she relates more to its image of being a more-glamorous, fashion-forward company. A brand has to have an individual personality to get their attention."

Jane Cosmetics' core customer is 16-24. In April, the brand is launching Lucky Star, which is a retro, bullet-shaped lipstick, with a brushed aluminum base and a clear, rounded cap. The pink wax-gel formula looks like it

Allie's blueberry scented glittery body lotion is housed in a bottle from Roberts Cosmetic Containers, topped with an Elfantino pump, nicknamed "elephant ear."

has sparkly stars in it.

Shaunda Swackhamer, director of product development at Jane, says, "The gel formula allows the pearl sparkles to twinkle. This is a giant trend in lip products—sophisticated glitter, which won't turn off even a 20- or 30-year-old."

John Lown, executive director of materials at Jane, says "we take a standard, high-quality cosmetic package and try to make it look 'Jane' by tweaking it until it looks trendy." Typical colors are silver and black, but its new mascara, which will also be in



stores in April, has a bright purple or turquoise polypropylene barrel (to match the color of the product inside), with a matte black cap.

When developing new packaging and thinking about products to add to their line, Swackhamer says, "it all comes down to passing the 'purse test'. We ask ourselves, is our girl going to be comfortable pulling this out at a formal dinner with their boyfriend, and at a casual party with friends?"

Swackhamer sums it up with these final words on good package design: "It can't look too old, too young, or too overdone. If it does, we won't consider it." ■