

Board Member Spotlight

Staying Relevant in Competitive Times

By Lisa Thurman

It's interesting when I think about the challenges my partner and I faced when we were a startup so many years ago. There are more challenges now than ever. When we launched AMAZINGCOSMETICS® 17 years ago, we truly had no idea the changes that would occur in the beauty sector. It's been a wild ride for sure! What keeps us in the game is the positive affect products and messaging can have on people. It still never ceases to amaze us how impactful a beauty product can be on a person's sense of self; of the building up of their confidence. It's honestly what keeps us going.

A few things were responsible for why we launched a business, including; a strong desire to experience entrepreneurship, the Internet as a selling tool, and bringing out products that were missing in the marketplace that could solve a problem. I had long wanted to start a cosmetic company leveraging the Internet and looked to a friend who was a makeup artist to partner with. Our main focus, from our earliest conversations, was "where's the white space?," "what's missing and how do we fill that in with a product that does what it says?." First and foremost, we're consumers like everyone else and there's nothing more frustrating than spending your hard-earned money on a product or service that doesn't do what it says it will do. We set out to develop a concealer, because we found it was such an important product in the first step in realizing a flawless complexion, yet it was practically non-existent in the industry. Our mantra became "whatever we develop, and no matter how long that process takes, its got be effective and in a big way!"

To this day, developing products that have efficacy and don't disappoint have been key in not only establishing the brand early on, but have allowed us to

remain competitive with much bigger brands who have hefty resources, to say the least. This brings me to the challenge and struggle of staying relevant and in front of your customer. We focus on launching two or three products a year, but work extensively on formulation; going back to the brand promise of high quality and high performance; believing that if you give someone both, you can succeed. One of my favorite stories to tell, is when we practically forced a meeting with a very major retailer telling us initially that they'd sit with us but weren't in a position to take the brand. But, after trying the AMAZINGCONCEALER®, and realizing the power of the product, said "We can't not take you". We then launched in every one of that retailers' doors with our full line. That's the power of products that work!

To say we have a loyal brand following is an understatement. So what's been the most difficult hurdle then to overcome? Gaining more exposure, because it's not about a person not loving our products, it's about us acquiring them in the first place. Once we get them, they stay.

This takes us to marketing and how to most successfully get the word out. Always a big feat when you're small, but social media has been key in leveling the playing field, along with maintaining and cultivating continued strong relationships with professional artists and influencers. In the early days, we had to rely on word of mouth and happily this opened a lot of doors, but never to an extent that satisfied us. We didn't have the large advertising budget other brands had, so we couldn't play in the world of ads and big splashy press events. But what we could count on was a treasure trove of professional makeup artists, many in the field of film and television, loving the brand, using it on their celebrity clients, and then spreading the word.



This opened many doors for us with press and with new channels of distribution. They also provided the brand with much appreciated credibility, and along with influencers, continue to do so.

Today's challenge is how to continue to harness new fans in such a crowded space. How to make your voice heard over a lot of noise. We believe it's staying true to the original premise of being authentic in what you say and what you bring to market. Truth often breaks through all the distractions and people will always come back to what works.

Bio:

In 1991, Lisa Thurman started The Amazing Concealer based on her passion for makeup and packaging. Working with several department store chains, home shopping networks, and various beauty boutiques throughout the country, she is now expanding to numerous international markets by offering a "global palette" with the launch of the ever expanding shade range of the AmazingConcealer.