

# Board Member Spotlight

## Packaging and Branding: Telling the Brand Story

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Imagine that you are shopping in your favorite beauty store. As you browse the aisles or website what makes you stop to learn more about a specific product or brand?

In today's beauty market, outside influences such as traditional advertising levers and – ever increasingly - targeted social media and digital efforts, have an impact and trigger the impulse to stop and try.

But, it is the instore experience that ultimately influences a purchase, and more importantly, loyalty to the line. Creating an environment for packaging and branding to meet product formulations in an authentic, relatable way, is crucial to the success of beauty brands.

### Develop Your Brand from the Inside Out

One great idea does not a brand make. Perhaps the most difficult part of any brand journey is defining company DNA not only for a single item but also to build a platform for sustainable growth.

Think back to the last industry mixer you attended. When asked about your brand, were you able to describe it in a succinct, differentiated way, that connected with your listener? If so, your brand platform is on track. If not, you're not alone. We are amazed with the number of established brands seeking our agency for assistance with this type of ideation.

At HATCHBEAUTY, our brand exploration phase typically lasts 8 – 12 weeks. During this time, we dive deep with our clients to understand a brand's existence, define the position statement, and formulate a pitch that clearly states the company's

key attributes and identifies properties that resonate with consumers. From there, we define distribution, assortment and pricing strategies.

### The 360 Approach

Once brand positioning is developed, make sure this ethos runs throughout every point of the client experience, through outside visual influences such as packaging, merchandising and advertising, as well as the experiential components of the product formulation.

### Packaging

Primary and secondary packaging play key roles in your brand story. In skincare arena think about the differences you see in packaging between clinical and natural brands. Products that are marketed on a scientific, technical platform most often use packaging that is minimalist and sleek. Natural, organic offerings tend to veer towards using color and natural elements to tell their story. In color cosmetics, there are differences between rich luxury offerings, and the more playful direction of mastige items. Whatever your approach, a consumer must be able to quickly assess and understand your brand promise. Most importantly, this messaging must correlate directly with their experience once they try the product whether instore or at home. Failing to deliver on expectation will result in confusion and disappointment in your brand.

Differentiation in packaging is also key. We encourage clients to explore unique artwork options, delivery systems, and when feasible, custom packaging, to set themselves apart in our highly crowded space, keeping in mind that all of these must remain true and authentic to the brand DNA.

### Merchandising is a continuation of brand story

Instore merchandising is an extension of your primary and secondary packaging. Now more than ever, it is important to prioritize the instore environment, as open-sell, self-shop environments become the norm. We create our instore branding as we develop primary and secondary packaging to ensure that the instore shopping experience strongly conveys every aspect of the brand. Understanding the rules within each retail environment is the key to maximizing the power of in line signage, displays, shelf strips, and video to reinforce your message and clearly communicate with your consumer. Consider the quality of materials, compelling imagery selection and the tone of written copy, as well as strong logo identification. E-commerce platforms should be reevaluated regularly to ensure that they reflect the instore experience.

### Outside Advertising

It is important to keep merchandising and packaging in mind as you develop imagery to drive consumers to your brand. Advertisements and social media images should be designed to provide consumers a preview of what they will see in stores, which facilitates a connection to your brand. For example, a prestige hair care line that features rich tones of purple and gold on their primary packaging, and instore visuals, should ensure that outside imagery consistently highlights these elements, setting a consumer expectation of what to look for instore.

Once you connect your packaging, merchandising and outside assets throughout your brand, it is important to realize that these facets will evolve over time. Continue to evaluate this eco-balance of forces to ensure offerings are interesting and ultimately compelling to consumers.