



March 28, 2014

Beautycounter Launches Countertime

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As it celebrates its one-year anniversary, Beautycounter is turning back — or at least, slowing — the clock.

The emerging direct-sales beauty brand that specializes in safe products by avoiding chemicals linked to serious diseases in its formulas has launched Countertime, a collection of seven products priced from \$40 to \$75 developed to fight the unwanted effects of aging. Don't call it an antiaging line, though. In keeping with Beautycounter's mission to

empower and support women, the term "antiaging" has been banned from the brand's Santa Monica, Calif., offices.

Christy Coleman, head of creative design at Beautycounter and a celebrity makeup artist who has worked with the likes of Heidi Klum, Miranda Kerr and Emmy Rossum, spearheaded the ban. "We are focused on aging graciously and in a positive way. Women can look amazing for a long period of time, and we are about preserving what's there for a long time. We are all going to grow old, but we should feel good about it," she said.

On the subject of feeling good, Coleman and Gregg Renfrew, chief executive officer and founder of Beautycounter, underscored Countertime doesn't contain harsh ingredients widely used in antiaging skin care such as hydroquinone and retinyl palmitate. Instead, its products, which are Nourishing Cleansing Balm, Soothing Face Wash, Enlightening Treatment Pads, Radiance Firming Complex, Uplifting Day Cream, Restorative Night Cream and Vibrant Eye Perfector, have natural ingredients including extracts from the Spilanthes acmella flower, marine algae, lentil seed, Arctium lappa root, Boerhavia diffusa root and more.

"People don't believe that botanical ingredients in these kinds of products are high-performing. We have done clinicals and have gotten great results," said Renfrew. "We had to work extra hard to find ingredients that may have not been used in this way or in this combination to get results. To keep things safe and effective, it is an arduous process, and it takes a long time."

When it got off the ground last year, Beautycounter set the stage in its product assortment with largely universal, gender-agnostic products that could appeal to a broad audience. The brand is addressing a specific slice of that audience with Countertime, but Renfrew said that slice represents an "enormous opportunity" for Beautycounter. Discussing products for aging skin, she elaborated, "People use them younger and younger now. It's not like when I was younger and you didn't even think about it until you were in your 30s. Now, people in their 20s think about it."

Although Countertime is a big launch for Beautycounter, Renfrew stressed that the brand doesn't aim to be driven by a single "It" product or "It" line. Rather, it seeks to diversify sales across a tight range, currently amounting to 39 stockkeeping units. That way, she continued, the brand can tailor product offerings for people of many sorts while delivering simple regimens. "We are not going to be throwing everything at you. We will never be that company," said Renfrew.

That doesn't mean that Beautycounter isn't releasing additional products, and in fact, Renfrew pointed out the brand is on pace to triple the number of sku's it has this year. A sunscreen line and color cosmetics are on the docket for the fall. "We have aggressive rollout plans for merchandise," said Renfrew.

Beautycounter relies on sales consultants to spread its message of safe, effective products to customers throughout the country. To date, it has attracted 2,000 consultants, and it has a goal of reaching 4,000 to 5,000 consultants by the end of this year. "Our timing is right. The message has resonated with people. People understand how committed we are to safety and education," said Renfrew. "We are an information-first, product-second company."

Industry sources estimated Beautycounter would generate \$2 million in first-year sales and predicted it would roughly double that figure during its second year in business. "It's been a great year. We have been really pleased with our results. We shipped almost 125,000 units of product out," said Renfrew. "We exceeded our expectations with the results."