

Pushing beauty's boundaries

Global appetite for fun, high-tech and novel beauty products from Asian brands has never been higher. **Annemarie Kruse** presents highlights from the 2015 edition of Asia's biggest beauty event

Asia Pacific's biggest beauty trade show, Cosmoprof Asia, celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2015 with a record performance. From 11-13 November, 2,504 exhibitors from 46 countries presented their brands and products, up 6%, while total exhibition space grew 3% to over 84,000sqm. Visitor numbers climbed 5.5% to a total of 63,241 attendees from 119 countries. The majority of visitors came from outside the Hong Kong area which marks an increase of 7% compared with the previous year.

As always, Cosmoprof Asia was divided into six sectors: Cosmetics & Toiletries, Natural Health, Hair Salon, Beauty Salon, Nail & Accessories and Pack & OEM. The Spot on Beauty section, an area of 3,700sqm dedicated to personal care, spa and wellness products, returned in 2015, as did charity initiative Boutique. Boutique offered visitors the opportunity to purchase travel-sized products from participating beauty brands, with proceeds going to Hong Kong-based NGO The Women's Foundation. Spot on Beauty also featured a new exhibition area this year: Discover Trends showcased 29 innovative brands and companies from nine countries, focusing on some of the fastest growing sectors in the international C&T industry: men's care, baby care and natural and organic beauty.

There were 22 country and group pavilions at Cosmoprof Asia and the countries of honour were Italy and the US.

K-BEAUTY RULES

With a total of 212 exhibitors, Korea was one of the biggest participants at Cosmoprof Asia – not a big surprise



Korean colour care brand Berrisom was a big hit at Cosmoprof Asia, presenting products like men's hair colourant cream Silver Ash, while Jeju-based brands, such as Blossom Jeju, leverage the island's strong reputation for nature and beauty

considering that most of the recent international beauty trends have originated in Korea.

Colour care brand Berrisom presented one of its Asian bestsellers, the Oops! My Lip Tint range, which was launched in 2014. These are temporary liquid lip tattoos which last for approximately 24 hours. Berrisom is a long standing Cosmoprof Asia exhibitor – Hong Kong and China are two of the company's biggest Asian markets – but the brand is also available in Japan and Taiwan, and in the Southeast Asian countries Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam and Thailand. Another interesting Berrisom product was Silver Ash, a men's styling

cream recently launched in Japan and soon to be introduced in Korea as well. Silver Ash is a temporary hair colourant cream which turns black hair silver.

Skin care brand Lady & Skin, also from Korea, was founded in 2008. The company's products are mostly sold online and in duty free stores and its main target group is Chinese consumers. At Cosmoprof Asia, Lady & Skin showcased its latest launch, Blooming White Oxybright Overnight Mask. This is a classic sleeping pack – an already established Korean beauty trend that is only now reaching the European C&T markets – which is formulated with botanical extracts and has a foamy, bubbling texture.

Fellow exhibitor MdoC, on the other hand, is going squarely for the male demographic. Men's cosmetics is one of the strongest growth sectors in Asia at the moment and MdoC is offering over 40 skin care skus for men, including an HD primer, powder, BB cream, sheet masks and a wide range of whitening and anti-ageing serums, toners, lotions and essences.

Korean beauty brand Caolion's pore packs are cult products across Asia. At the



trade show, Caolion introduced its latest launch, the duo cleansers Hot Deep Pack Foam and Cool Relax Pack Foam. Hot Deep is a self-heating product, while Cool Relax cools the skin down.

And no Korean C&T trade show presence would be complete without at least a few Jeju manufacturers. The island of Jeju is a popular holiday destination for Korean and Asian visitors alike; Jeju stands for clean ingredients, a holistic lifestyle and the highest-quality organic products.

Blossom Jeju is a premium skin care brand founded in 2013. The company's distribution is very selective indeed; in Seoul, Blossom Jeju is available at several outlets of Korean perfumery chain Belpoit and in various high end Korean department stores. Blossom Jeju's latest launch is a two-part mask – one of the big face mask trends at the moment. A small pouch contains pure camellia oil which is massaged into the face first. Afterwards the sheet mask is applied to the face. There are three mask variants: Marine Collagen, Soy+ and Vitamin+.

Another interesting Jeju label was Jejuon, a niche brand manufactured by Korean Beauty Industry Development Institute. Jejuon was a first-time exhibitor at Cosmoprof and presented its range of face masks and skin care formulated with Jeju-grown curcuma (one of the trending superfoods in Europe at the moment) in combination with regionally sourced ingredients, such as horse oil.

TAIWAN'S MASK MAKERS

Taiwan is another Asian country famous for its sheet mask brands, which have an excellent reputation throughout Asia. The biggest Taiwanese face mask brands include My Beauty Diary, Sexy Look and Lovemore.

Face mask manufacturer Annie's Way also has a large distribution in Taiwan and abroad. The company was one of the exhibitors in the Spot on Beauty section and presented its latest mask launch, the three-sku Secret Garden black face mask range. However, Annie's Way also offers a range of other mask textures – and this is an interesting trend in Asian face masks at the moment. While sheet masks are still the classic (and traditional) face mask format, manufacturers are now launching new formats: rubber masks (DIY powder masks which are mixed with water to create a rubber-like texture) are really hot at the moment, as are splash masks that are applied in the shower, and cream masks sold in little containers or sachets. Jelly masks are also popular and this is one of Annie's Way's specialities: the company

A majority of Cosmoprof Asia exhibitors in 2015 were Asian, like Japan's Tunemakers brand (below), but there was also a strong Western presence (Russia's Natura Siberica is pictured right)



offers a range of differently coloured thick gel masks which are packaged in jars.

Boutique company MasKingdom from Taipei was also at the show. It was manufacturer TenArt Biotech's second Cosmoprof Asia visit. MasKingdom specialises in high end sheet masks made with locally-sourced ingredients. At Cosmoprof Asia, it showcased its new launches: black-and-white Lace Masks for the eyes, lips and chest area, as well as October 2015's six-sku Biocellulose Mask extension of the best selling Aboriginal range.

Cosmeceutical brand Dr. Wu also had a big stand at Cosmoprof Asia. The premium skin care brand was founded in 2003 and has managed to build up a stellar reputation across Asia. In 2014, the company was acquired by a subsidiary of luxury retail group LVMH so further international expansion seems likely. Dr. Wu's portfolio comprises ten ranges, which include the best selling Mandelik Renewal range, the Hyalucomplex Hydrating line, the Vitamin C + Whitening range and the Ageversal Youth Repairing line.

JAPAN: OPPORTUNITIES ABROAD

Although Japan's C&T manufacturers might not be as famous as their Korean counterparts for constant product innovations, Japanese cosmetics have an excellent reputation across Asia with an extensive distribution to match.

Japanese manufacturer Naturelab owns



several well-known beauty brands, primarily in the hair care and body care categories. The company's Moist Diane, Oilim and Medel shampoo ranges have a particularly wide distribution in Asia. At Cosmoprof Asia, Naturelab presented its entire product portfolio, including men's care range Maro. Maro is only available in Japan at the moment but Naturelab is currently preparing the brand for distribution in further international markets – another indicator of how strongly men's C&T is growing in Asia at the moment.

Fellow Japanese company Tunemakers is a niche brand specialising in single-ingredient serums that can be mixed with other skin and body care products. Tunemakers' range includes over 24 different serums, including two types of ceramide and two varieties of hyaluronic acid, honey extract, liquorice extract, elastin, retinol, EGF, egg shell membrane, placenta, snail, AHA, amino acid powder and number of vitamin serums. The company was a first-time exhibitor at Cosmoprof Asia in a bid to find distributors for other Asian markets.

WEST LOOKS EAST

Although Asian countries accounted for the majority of Cosmoprof Asia exhibitors, Western countries are traditionally well-represented, especially in the Cosmetics & Toiletries, Beauty Salon and Hair Salon sections of the show. Companies like Altea Organics from Bulgaria, colour cosmetics brand Flormar from Turkey or beauty brand Natura Siberica from Russia are very popular across Asia. And Cosmoprof Hong Kong is a key event for these manufacturers – as it is for countries like Germany, Switzerland and France who have particularly strong salon beauty brands.

With a total of 107 exhibitors, Italy was one of the largest European participants at the trade fair. However, with the exception

of big retail brands like L'Erbolario and Bottega Verde – both of which attended the show – most Italian exhibitors at Cosmoprof Asia were medium-sized salon brands.

L'Erbolario was at Cosmoprof Asia for the second time. It is one of the best-known Italian beauty brands in Asia; the company says that Asian markets account for 51% of the brand's total international exports. At the show the company introduced several new launches, including the certified organic skin care range Goji and two new body care ranges for Christmas 2015: Frescaessenza and Indian Jasmine.

Bema Cosmetici is from Northern Italy; the company retails a number of beauty brands including salon brand Naturys, organic range Bema Bio, BioEco Natura (a brand for supermarkets) and BioEc, which is sold in pharmacies. At Cosmoprof Asia Bema presented its latest launch from summer 2015: the skin-brightening Bema White range.

France was present with a total of 108 exhibitors. Among these were salon heavyweights like Ingrid Millet, Académie and Laboratoires Filorga. Another key exhibitor in the French pavilion was the Cosmetic Valley Association with a number of individual companies. But there were also several French mass market brands, including Le Petit Olivier, one of the country's best-known personal care brands.

Organic bee beauty brand Abellie is manufactured by apiculturist Famille Mary. Products are formulated with different bee-derived ingredients, such as honey, propolis, royal jelly and pollen. The brand retails in a total of 15 countries, including Hong Kong, Korea and Taiwan; Taiwan is its biggest market. The Crème Nutrition Intense is one of Abellie's international bestsellers and in Asia the Crème Jade is the most popular product.

Switzerland was also present at Cosmoprof Asia with a number of Swiss beauty companies. Swiss C&T brands are tremendously popular in Asia; often these brands are manufactured in Switzerland exclusively for the Asian markets, like Suisse Programme and La Colline, two of the most high-profile and expensive Asian skin care brands.

Salon brand Swissline, on the other hand, has a genuinely Swiss heritage. The brand is produced by Dermalab and has a wide distribution in Switzerland and across Europe. However, Swissline is also popular in Hong Kong where the brand's products have been available for 25 years.

Germany was one of the smaller European countries but the German

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pavilion with its 46 exhibitors was still very impressive. The line-up included the biggest names in international salon skin and body care, such as Marbert, Rosa Graf, Klapp Cosmetics, Jean d'Arcel, Charlotte Meentzen, Janssen, professional make-up brand Kryolan, Schwan-Stabilo (one of the biggest manufacturers in cosmetics pencils, liners and sticks), personal care manufacturer Mann & Schröder and German beauty manufacturer Artdeco's ICB Cosmetics.

The UK was represented with some 30 companies, including bath and body care brand Heyland & Whittle, Heathcote & Ivory and Bomb Cosmetics, as well as trendy spa brand Cowshed.

A more unusual UK beauty brand was insect-repellent brand Alfresco. Launched in 1996, the brand's products are formulated without chemical insect repellents; instead a blend of 22 essential oils is said to drive mosquitoes and insects away. A company representative said that the brand's products are especially popular in humid sub-tropical Hong Kong. At the trade show Alfresco presented its latest launch, a body wash, shampoo and conditioner all scented with the same spicy floral essential oil blend.

THE FULL PACKAGE

As usual, the packaging section at Cosmoprof Asia 2015 was dominated by Asian companies, particularly China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Korea.

Among the exhibitors was Baotai Packaging from Shangyu City in China. Baotai produces containers for creams and lotions, and at this year's show it presented its latest premium ornamental bottle ranges including the Diamond Round Series.

Yuen Myng Industrial from Taiwan was at Cosmoprof Asia for the third time. The company specialises in brushes and applicators for liquid make-up products,

such as lip glosses, mascaras and lip butters. At the show it introduced its latest product innovation, a twist-up balm pack.

And Hana from Korea is one of the biggest manufacturers of airless packaging dispensers for lotions and creams. At its booth the company showed some of the packaging designs it has developed for high-profile clients, such as luxury skin care brands Déclaré, Juvena and La Prairie.

SPECIAL EVENTS

As it was Cosmoprof Asia's 20th anniversary, show organisers UBM and Bologna Fiere pulled out all the stops; on the first evening the exclusive Red Party honoured Cosmoprof Asia's most loyal exhibitors and business partners. There was also a special fragrance performance by Paris-based design agency Centdegres. In cooperation with fragrance manufacturer Firmenich, Centdegres created four unisex fragrances exclusively for visitors and exhibitors at Cosmoprof Asia 2015. And, as always, the trade show was accompanied by a comprehensive programme of workshops, seminars, lectures and special events including the 8th Cosmoprof Asia Spa Conference, the International Nail Days and the Spot on Beauty Forum.

Because Cosmoprof Asia has grown so much in recent years, the organisers are launching a new concept for the 2016 show: Cosmetics & Toiletries, Beauty Salon, Hair Salon and Nail & Accessories will remain in the Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre. Pack & OEM, on the other hand, will move to Asiaworld Expo, a venue directly connected to Hong Kong International Airport and Hong Kong City Centre. The fair dates are 15-17 November 2016 for the Convention Centre, allowing visitors an additional day to take in both parts of the trade show. **cb**