

china beauty event report

China's biggest cosmetics trade show China Beauty Expo takes place each May in Shanghai. With more than 1 billion consumers, mainland China is a highly lucrative market; according to Chinese market research company iResearch, the beauty sector was worth RMB583bn (US\$87bn) in 2017, with annual growth slated to increase by more than 20% over the next five years.

The increasing internationalisation of the Chinese C&T market was also visible at China Beauty Expo 2018; some 3,000 exhibitors, including more than 1,200 brands from outside of mainland China, presented their products at the trade show.

There were 26 country pavilions this year with 500 international direct exhibitors. According to the organisers, this equals an increase of 90% over the past two years. Considering that the show has been taking place for more than 20 years (up until around five years ago CBE was primarily a domestic trade fair), this development reflects how attractive the Chinese market has become to local and international beauty brands.

China Beauty Expo is the most important date in the calendar for Chinese beauty brands and international brands that are eager to enter the Chinese retail market. Most of the domestic C&T brands that exhibited at the trade show are not distributed outside of North Asia, which means that there were plenty of interesting brand discoveries at CBE 2018.

1 YOSEIDO

Skin care brand Yoseido was launched in 2017 by Hangzhou-based Nongfu Spring, one of the biggest premium bottled water manufacturers in China. Yoseido is Nongfu Spring's first venture into skin care; the brand's face care products are based on birch sap, which is trending strongly in Asia at the moment in beauty.

Yoseido sources its birch sap from Finland and the actual products are manufactured in Japan – Japanese beauty brands are currently seeing a surge of popularity in China and 'made in Japan' is a very valuable product claim.

Yoseido's five beauty products – three sheet masks and two hydrating toners – are water-free and contain birch juice as a first ingredient. With stylish minimalist packaging and Japan-inspired visuals, Yoseido hopes to expand its presence in China and other Asian countries.

At the moment the brand's products are only available in China and are mostly sold online. However, Nongfu Springs founder Zhong Shanshan has big plans for his brand, announcing that he is planning for Yoseido to become one of the top five domestic skin care brands within the next five years. Although the Chinese beauty industry is still



5 Chinese brands you never knew existed

China Beauty Expo 2018 recently took place in Shanghai and there were plenty of interesting brands to discover. **Annemarie Kruse** reports



dominated by foreign brands – especially from Europe, the US, Japan and Korea – there seems to be a growing interest among younger Chinese consumers to try domestic brands.

2 MELISSA SAYS

Natural ingredients and clean beauty formulae were visible at exhibition booths all over China Beauty Expo, with Chinese beauty brand Melissa Says a good example of this trend.

The Anhui-based beauty brand was launched three years ago and has a strong natural positioning. Its products are formulated with plant extracts and aromatherapeutic essential oils, most of which are sourced from the UK.

The portfolio offers nine facial care products, including the best selling alcohol-free Botanical Cleansing Balm, four body care products and 12 essential oils blends.



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Melissa Says is sold online on Taobao and Aliexpress (two of Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba's online marketplaces) and offline, and the company says it is just starting to expand into other Asian markets.

3 BIMELLY

Chinese beauty brand Bimelly's products are built around an innovative key active: alligator oil. Or more precisely, the oil extracted from the stomach fat of Thai crocodiles. Crocodile oil is said to have superior anti-ageing moisturising, firming and repairing properties.

Bimelly was launched two years ago with a portfolio of about half a dozen face care products, including cleanser, serum, face cream, lotion and sheet masks.

The brand's newest launch, Crocodile Oil & Oil, is a four-sku range of oil serums in which the crocodile oil is blended with other plant oils. The pink serum, for example, also contains peony seed oil, inchi oil and jojoba oil, while the green serum is based on camellia seed oil.

4 FORCLARITY

Forclarity is a Chinese make-up brand with a single product: Protect Hydrate BB Cushion Spray is a BB foundation spray. Protect Hydrate was launched in March 2018 and is already selling very well in China, the company says.

With playful, attractive packaging and appealing marketing visuals, Protect Hydrate BB Cushion Spray is aimed squarely at a young millennial demographic.

The liquid foundation contains glacier water, ginseng extract, algae extract and snow lotus extract – a good example of the hybrid skin



Bimelly uses crocodile oil for its skin moisturising and repairing benefits



Forclarity's Protect Hydrate BB Cushion Spray comes in an innovative aerosol pack

Although the Chinese beauty industry is still dominated by foreign brands, there seems to be a growing interest among younger Chinese consumers to try domestic brands

care/make-up products that are trending so strongly in Korea and China at the moment.

The packaging is innovative: the foundation is packaged in an aerosol bottle. You shake the bottle, pump the top up and down a few times and the foundation is then expelled through three little holes in the dispensing cap. The pack also includes a small sponge, which you use to apply the foundation to the face. The company claims that this packaging design is more hygienic and less messy than a traditional jar cushion foundation.

5 LIHT ORGANICS

Liht Organics is not actually from mainland China but from Singapore. However, what makes this brand interesting is that it is one of the first organic colour cosmetics labels from Asia. And founder Nerissa Low has set her sights firmly on the Chinese market.

Low launched her make-up brand three years ago under a different brand name. The product range is now being repackaged and rebranded as Liht Organics ('liht' is an ancient spelling of the English word 'light'). All products are vegan and gluten-free and contain up to 90% USDA-certified organic ingredients.

The brand's 140-sku portfolio covers all make-up product categories except nail care; the line-up includes liquid foundations, cushion compacts, blushers, lip and eye make-up. The packaging on some of the products, like the liquid foundations, is refillable: simply pull the glass bottle out of the white outer packaging sleeve and insert a replacement bottle.

Because of the animal testing issue associated with selling foreign beauty products in the Chinese offline market, Low is launching her brand online through the cross-border e-commerce channel. Eventually, Low says, she would like to expand her brand into Asia Pacific and then into the US market ●