

IS FAST BEAUTY SUSTAINABLE?

Can the current trend for fast-paced innovation and product launches match the values of the eco-conscious? And can this pace be sustained?



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Mintel recommends

Maintain the 'newness' factor

With the rapid pace at which new products and new brands are entering the market, staying ahead of the pack with **innovation is critical to sustain the fast beauty trend.**

Don't compromise on quality

At a time when safety has become a main focus for consumers, the shortened time frame for launches could compromise safety or quality. **Allowing ample time for testing is a must.**

Consider eco concerns

Following the fast fashion trend and the recent backlash against 'disposable fashion', there is room for brands to **address the concerns of the eco-conscious consumer.**



The Kylie question

Beauty brands ColourPop and Kylie Cosmetics are both produced by Seed Beauty and have come under continual **scrutiny from consumers and beauty bloggers because similarities between formulations and shades keep popping up.** There is a multitude of YouTube videos and blogs dedicated to side-by-side comparisons.

This highlights a big question when it comes to fast beauty, are there enough innovative ideas in the pipeline to sustain the rate of product launches? Similarities from brand to brand could illustrate the fact that the wave has crested. Brands need to maintain uniqueness in order to stand above the crowd.

Source: Her Campus

When 'innovation' isn't very innovative



Brands can easily fall into a trap of creating "gimmicky" products based around fads perpetuated on social media. Using technology like 3D printing is innovative but the concepts and products themselves aren't necessarily bringing innovation to market that **solves a problem or fulfills a need-gap for consumers.**

Source: glamspin



Tarte Shape Tape
Foundation swatches

Tightening the launch timeline can spell disaster

Tarte Cosmetics came under fire with the launch of its Tarte Shape Tape Foundation due to a lack of diversity in the shade range offering. Many took to social media to complain about the lack of options for people with darker complexions. The brand responded to let consumers know that additional shades were already in development but many pushed back saying Tarte should have waited until the full range was ready prior to launch. A Tarte spokesperson commented: "We're always pushing ourselves to work as quickly as possible." **This highlights the race to market that can sometimes lead to negative outcomes.**

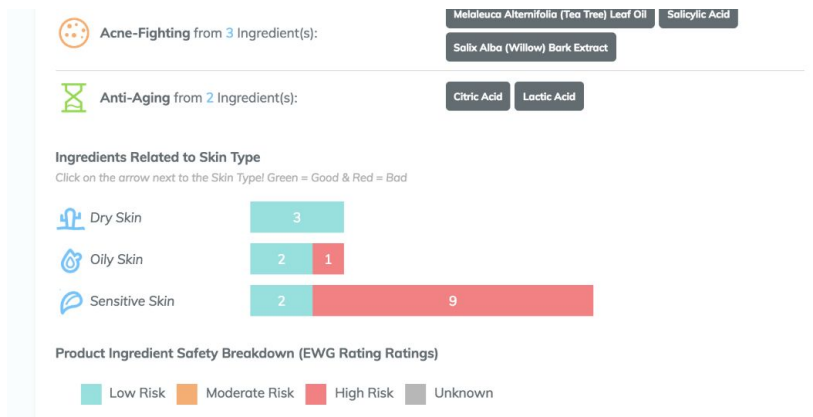
Brands need to be aware of any potential limitations or backlash to an accelerated timeline and think through the full launch, as well as marketing and consumer perception, so they don't alienate potential consumers or create a PR disaster.

Source: INSIDER

Consumers focus on safety

As safety becomes more important to consumers, concerns are raised over the fast pace of launches. Does an accelerated timeline really allow ample time for evaluation? Many brands have responded by using **'turn-key' formulations**, which has created a new business model for many contract manufacturers and packagers. By having **a menu of tried and tested formulations that can be customized with fragrance or color, brands can ensure safety and quality are prioritized**. This is a simple approach for color cosmetics but could still be a challenge for skincare. When consumers demand skincare that works and has demonstrated efficacy, 'fast' brands may struggle to keep up.

Checking labels and researching ingredients



Consumers have a wide variety of tools at their fingertips allowing them to research products and brands and to better understand the safety profile of products before making a purchase. Websites like **SkinCarisma** help consumers understand ingredients and the effect they may have on skin and overall health. In a world where new brands are popping up nearly every day, **online and digital resources** give shoppers a chance to educate themselves before buying.

Source: 'G_l b7 Uf]ga U

Fast beauty follows the fast fashion model



Fast beauty has followed fast fashion as the latest in trend-led, quick-to-market consumer products. Brands are in a race to be the first when it comes to bringing unique and innovative products to market. Fast fashion has taken over with retailers like Zara and H&M leading the way but recent awareness around sustainability and environmental impacts has raised the question, does fast beauty pose the same risks?

In a world where influencers are driving trends that change at the speed of light, encouraging consumers to buy every product and try everything that is new, does the amount of waste increase? **Consumers increasingly express concerns over throwing away more products than ever before.**

Source: 'Gi a a Yf': f]XUng'-bghU] fUa

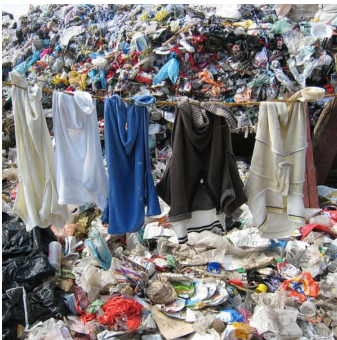
The power of influencers

Beauty consumers follow online influencers for a variety of reasons, but the end result remains that influencers drive brand awareness and product sales.

IN THE UK	IN THE US	IN ITALY
53%	42%	50%
of those who follow influencers on social media do so in order to discover new beauty brands	of those who use social media as a resource for information about beauty products	of those who feel tutorials on social media made them more skilled at makeup application

Base: 586 UK internet users aged 16+ who like/follow beauty brands, retailers, influencers; 1,033 US women aged 18+ who use beauty products; 477 Italian internet users aged 16+ who have seen beauty related content on social media in the last 6 months

Source: Lightspeed/Mintel



The environmental cost of fast fashion

Water pollution, use of toxic chemicals, and textile waste are just a few of the **environmental issues coming into focus as a result of the fast or 'disposable' fashion industry**. Brands focus on speed and costs as well as staying on top of the most current trends. With the rate at which trends come and go, fast fashion is now showing itself to have a major environmental impacts, and this doesn't even touch on the 21 billion tons of textiles that end up in landfills around the globe each year.

There is movement toward circularity in fashion, this refers to systems that allow for products and materials to be recovered, regenerated, and reused in some way rather than being disposed of. **Beauty brands can easily take cues from the changes in the fashion industry and work in a more circular way.**

Source: Ugly Cycle by H&M

Cosmetic recycling programs help to offset waste

One of the biggest issues facing the fast economy is the potential for waste, particularly when it comes to recycling or disposing of beauty products. Many brands have started programs helping consumers with solutions for getting rid of end-of-life products. Garnier partnered with TerraCycle to create a free recycling program for hair, skin, and cosmetic product packaging. Makeup brand MAC encourages consumers to recycle packaging by offering an incentive; if six MAC products are returned in-store or online, the brand gives a free lipstick. While programs like this do exist, they are limited and mainly offered by larger, well-established brands.



There is room for start-ups and indie brands to **address the consumer concern over recycling by creating programs and making sustainable packaging a key initiative.**

Selling direct to consumers helps lessen excess inventory



Many fast beauty brands focus on e-commerce and digital direct selling as a way to avoid the waste associated with excess inventory.

Traditional retail can often be more rigid in terms of product displays and shelving plans, but **online offers a faster-pace of replenishment and more flexibility.**

Brands can **use websites and social media as a testing ground** for product success before pushing their high-performers out to wider brick-and-mortar retailers.

Source: '6 YU l mVci bHf'



Meet the expert

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Sarah has over 16 years of experience developing ingredient technologies for beauty and personal care companies. Having worked for a variety of companies over her career, Sarah has gained an in-depth understanding of the industry and draws upon not only her work experience but also degrees in Biology, Biochemistry, and Evolutionary Biology.