

Inclusivity, eco-friendly trends seen reshaping the beauty industry

By Patricia B. Mirasol
Reporter

THE push for inclusivity and eco-friendly practices continues to impact the landscape for beauty businesses, according to an industry player.

The beauty industry is not just about enhancing one's appearance; it is also a platform for empowering individuals while safeguarding the environment, said Theresa Carbonel-Buenafior, founder of the 16-year-old makeup brand Ellana Mineral Cosmetics.

The push for inclusivity in the beauty industry acknowledges that beauty knows no bounds. This means offering products that cater to individuals with diverse skin tones, Ms. Buenafior said in an interview with *BusinessWorld*. Ellana Mineral Cosmetics was established on Sept. 9, 2007, with the goal of addressing the concerns of individuals with delicate skin, she noted.

Her inspiration stemmed from a friend who grappled with the scarcity of makeup suitable for her.

"I wanted to make something to address Coney [Avellana's] problems," Ms. Buenafior said.

According to her, the challenge was apparent — individuals with *morena* (medium brown) skin tones found themselves underserved in a market dominated by Western brands.

"She had *morena* skin, and there weren't a lot of options for people with *morena* skin," she said. "It was a lot of Western brands then."

"It was hard to match the shade of the Filipina skin tone. We were the first in that movement," she added.

The early years saw Ellana Mineral Cosmetics selling prod-

ucts at bazaars from 2008 to 2012, carving a niche presence. Soon thereafter, it transitioned to a recognized name in the beauty sector, securing spots in retail giants such as Landmark, Watsons, and Robinson's Department Store.

Ellana's core customer profile is predominantly female, aged between 18 to 45 years old, living in urban and urbanizing areas, and within the B, C1, and C2 socioeconomic classes. They are also knowledgeable about skin concerns and value-driven, Ms. Buenafior said.

NEW GENERATION

The new generation, known as Gen Z Filipinos, is redefining beauty standards.

They are not merely consumers; they are conscious advocates for eco-friendly products and brands, Ms. Buenafior said.

The values and preferences of Gen Zs revolve around sustainability, environmental responsibility, and ethical consumption. Hence, the brand remains vegan and cruelty-free, adhering to principles that resonate strongly with Gen Z Filipinos, Ms. Buenafior said.

They're really more into the eco, the clean beauty, and it resonates to them more versus the

people who are used to traditional makeup," she noted.

Producing vegan makeup is not as stringent as *halal* products, she said, referring to ingredients and processes permissible under Islamic law.

"Vegan is just choosing plant-based ingredients. You can use synthetic ingredients as long as it's not animal-based," she noted. "Cruelty-free is easy because it's simply doesn't test on animals nowadays, and a lot of people can claim that."

The eco-friendly promise, in contrast, is challenging because "not a lot of people understand what it is all about," she also said.

To reduce its carbon footprint, the company made the decision to cut down on packaging by introducing refillable sachets and reusable jars. It also started using glass instead of plastic.

Availing of a loose mineral foundation from its product line, for instance, means having to purchase the refillable sachet separately from the reusable jar.

"A lot of people would ask me, 'Why are you making it hard on the customer? Just put the powder directly in the jar.' It's the effort. It's that conscientious act of



ELLANA MINERAL COSMETICS founder Theresa Carbonel-Buenafior

reusing your jar that... you don't have to throw it away."

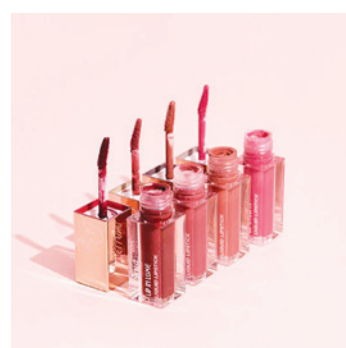
Ms. Buenafior, who grew up with parents who are vegan, said it was about the advocacy of being conscientious about what one uses.

She said the larger beauty industry is likewise heading towards this direction.

"I went to Cosmoprof [an international beauty trade show] in Singapore last year, and the theme was everything sustainable," she said, adding that it was not like that in the past.

An August 2023 study by Statista cited the global beauty and personal care market's 2023 revenue at \$579.2 billion. Its compound annual growth rate (CAGR) is also forecasted to be 3.53% between 2023 to 2028.

In the Philippines, the same market amounts to \$5.89 billion in 2023, with a 2023-2028 CAGR of 0.83%.



PRICING

Ellana has recently started lowering its product prices in a bid to become more accessible to its core market.

"As a 16-year-old brand, you're not young anymore," Ms. Buenafior said. "The values that we have are being championed by the younger generation, so we need to be more leveled towards that demographic."

"That's why we're also addressing accessible prices," she added.

Planning and bulk prices are how the company manages this. Apart from the raw materials, "a lot of the costs that go into it are actually the packaging," which makes buying in bulk a means to achieve its objective of lower prices, Ms. Buenafior said.

Planning is a crucial aspect, and ingredient sourcing is another challenge, she noted. Half of Ellana's raw materials are from South Korea.

"Everything has to come from outside," she said. "There's a lack of processing plants and manufacturing facilities that are really focused on ingredients in [this] country."

Even so, the Philippine beauty industry, Ms. Buenafior said, has become more competitive since she started selling lip balms as a college student in 2003.

Even during the pandemic, "there was an explosion of beauty brands, which is good, honestly," she noted. "I believe that with a lot of competition comes innovation, more creativity, and many more things to play with, unlike 20 years ago."

The industry is still perceived as a shallow one, according to Ms. Buenafior. "We get a lot of those — even up to now," she said, "but to see how a transformation is... even putting on red lipstick can build confidence. I think it's very rewarding to see that."



Cybercriminals use multiple methods to attack enterprises — cybersecurity firm

CYBERCRIMINALS are employing various methods to attack small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and infiltrate their corporate networks, cybersecurity firm Kaspersky said on Monday.

Bad actors primarily employ threats through exploits, trojans, and backdoors, putting the data and finances of SMEs at risk, Kaspersky said in its report.

At the same time, it highlighted the prevalence of potentially unwanted applications or those labeled by the company as "not-a-virus," which need to be addressed, although they do not exhibit malicious behavior.

"Four in ten employers admitted that a cybersecurity incident would be a major crisis for their business, superseded only by a slump in sales or a natural disaster," said Yeo Siang Tiong, general manager for Southeast Asia at Kaspersky, citing the company's cyber-resilience report.

"A cybersecurity crisis would also be the second most difficult type of crisis to deal with after a dramatic drop in sales if judged by the results of the survey," he added.

Data from Kaspersky showed a 325% increase in the number of

unique hits across SMEs in the Philippines in the first half of the year, totaling 1,847, up from 434 in the same period last year.

It also revealed that 196 SME employees encountered malware or unwanted software disguised as legitimate business applications from January to June. This figure grew from 76 in the same period in 2022.

Exploits were seen as the biggest threat to SMEs in the first half of the year, Kaspersky said. These refer to malicious and unwanted software that take advantage of security vulnerabilities and cause applications to crash even without user action.

Trojans followed the list, which is known to enter the system and wreak havoc on network data and performance, among other malicious activities.

Backdoors ranked third, pertaining to extremely dangerous malware that provides cybercriminals complete access to confidential network data, which they can then harvest without user knowledge.

"Cybercriminals attempt to deliver this and other malware and unwanted software to employees' devices by using any means necessary, such as

vulnerability exploitation, phishing e-mails, and fake text messages," Kaspersky said.

"Even something totally unrelated to business, such as a YouTube link, may be used to target SMEs, as their employees often use the same devices for work and personal matters. If the user clicks the link, malicious code is uploaded into the system."

To curb the growth in cyber threats, Kaspersky suggested providing staff with basic cybersecurity hygiene training, including conducting a simulated phishing attack to practice recognition.

"Set up a policy to control access to corporate assets, such as e-mail boxes, shared folders, and online documents," it said, alongside clear guidelines on employees' minimum access to services and resources, as well as regular backups of corporate data.

Strong passwords and multi-factor authentication for all digital services must also be observed among employees, Kaspersky noted. Security solutions and comprehensive defensive frameworks can also be sought through professional services, it added. — **Miguel Hanz L. Antivola**

ROCKWELL LAND BREAKS GROUND ON EDADES WEST AT ROCKWELL CENTER IN MAKATI CITY

Rockwell Land held its Groundbreaking Ceremony last September 20, 2023 for Edades West, the latest residential tower to be launched in Rockwell Center Makati. Present during this milestone were Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Nestor J. Padilla, President and Chief Operating Officer Valerie Soliven, along with esteemed executives, consultants, and contractors.

Launched in 2022, Edades West is considered a legacy development by Rockwell Land, designed to meet the evolving needs of a post-pandemic world. It features 217 expansive units with only a limited number of two- to three-bedroom units, ranging from 100 to 373 sqm. Select units will have provisions for a seamless entrance through its foyers, wide balconies, spaces for a work-from-home setup, and premium finishes, from engineered wood flooring in the living and dining area, to sleek quartz countertops in the gourmet kitchen - all of which blends functionality and elegance. This residential tower redefines exclusivity and convenience, benefiting from its prime location near the Power Plant Mall in Rockwell Center. The groundbreaking ceremony marked the beginning of the



(L-R) Rockwell Land Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Nestor J. Padilla; Chapel of The Sacred Heart of Jesus Chaplain, Fr. Rolando Garcia, Jr.; PRSP Founding Partner, Arch. Jun Rodriguez; ASDEC Builders Corporation General Manager, Philip De Castro, Erfe Associates and Partners Principal and Senior Architect, Arch. Alice Erfe; Rockwell Land President and Chief Operating Officer, Valerie Soliven; Sy2 Executive Vice President, Engr. Wilson Sy; ALT Vice President for Construction Administration, Edwin Agustin; ARCADIS Executive Director, Engr. Darneil Perez; Meinhardt Philippines Project Director, Engr. Alfredo Rodriguez



Edades West redefines luxury living by offering innovative features tailored to the demands of a post-pandemic world. The development is expected to turnover in July 2029.

tower's construction. As a symbol of this momentous occasion, a time capsule was ceremoniously placed at the site, exemplifying the essence of the development's enduring legacy.

Edades West is expected to turnover in

July 2029. Through this development, Rockwell further commits to providing spaces of refined living in the heart of the city, showcasing the true essence of Living Done Rockwell.

For more information, please visit <https://edadeswest.com/>