Consumer Behavior toward Face Primer

Yelena Loginova, Tracy Breiner, Laurie Welsh,
Beate Boutwell, Isabelle Hansenne, Leslie Smith, Ralph Macchio

Coty Inc.
Research and Development Center
500 The American Road, Morris Plains, N.J., U.S.A., 07950

Introduction

Developing face primer is a challenging task due to the complex biophysical parameters of the skin, anatomical variations, and other factors (Marrakchi & Maibach, 2007). Consumers’ concern regarding the appearance of their face is high and they are willing to overspend on a face primer only if they will really see a beneficial performance. The purpose of this study was to investigate consumer behavior toward a face primer in regard to application, wear, removal, and satisfaction with performance. The study was designed as exploratory research for clarification of product development and specific formulation approaches to fill the gaps in consumers’ needs. The study was focused on the finding of ideas and insights by accumulating statistical data, defining possible product issues, and areas of potential enhancement of face cosmetics to advance the category’s growth. This study is pioneering in the field due to the learning objectives, scale of participants, and the wide range of disclosed aspects. The literature shows that interest in face primers is high from professionals in the cosmetic industry and dermatologists (Palm, 2012; Neill, 2012). The primer contributes to skin perfection and applying it before foundation and concealer helps face makeup stay in place to make the skin appear smoother and more even-toned, hiding imperfections. It is a fact that most of the female population expresses concerns regarding the face pores (Saint Louis, 2011). Aging and sun damage are significant promoters of face pores and wrinkles and only with the right skin care and invasive or non-invasive cosmetic remedies these nuisances can be minimized.

Materials and Methods

The study was conducted on a diverse female population of 1071 panelists consisting of 73.9% face-primer wearers and 26.1% non-wearers, but potential buyers.

The panelists’ ages were from 15 to 65+ with the following face-skin types: dry, normal to dry, normal, oily, troubled oily, and combinations thereof.

The e-survey research was administered through a questionnaire of open-ended questions to get better quality information in context that could help Marketing and R&D create new initiatives
or discover problems that should be addressed. The survey was conducted with high ethical considerations to preserve the subjects’ confidentiality.

The qualitative data were grouped by similarities in order to apply quantitative measures. The statistical evaluation was based on commonly used methods.

**Results and Discussion**

The study was conducted on a diverse female population in terms of ethnicity, age, facial skin types, and makeup habits. The ethnicity and age deviations are shown in Figures 1 and 2. The majority of the panel consisted of Caucasian females in the 25-to-34 and 45-to-54 age groups with a significant portion in the 35-to-44 and 55-to-64 age groups.

![Figure 1. The panel’s ethnicity.](image)

![Figure 2. Age categories.](image)

Due to the larger participation of Caucasians this study didn’t aim to correlate between ethnicity and skin types. The overall data analysis is presented in Figure 3. The observed data on the self-perception of panelists’ facial skin types shows that approximately the same amount of people had the normal, combination, or normal-to-dry skin types (approximately 30% for each group). The panel included 4.5% of females with oily skin and 5.3% of females with dry skin. Only 1.6% of panelists had troubled oily skin. That could be the motivating observations for product development approaches in distinguishing between special consumer needs, clarifying premium product benefits, and product positioning.
The compiled data (Figure 4) shows that the habits of primer applications vary. About 75% of the panelists apply primer after moisturizer before applying their face makeup, and about 27% apply it on bare skin. The study showed that 3.2% usually apply face primer after their face makeup to add more luminosity to their face (not included in Figure 4).

There was a curiosity if people change primer depending on the season. This study showed that only 21% of consumers have this tendency. The majority of users prefer to have “all weather” attributes in their primers.
The study showed the popularity of face primer among consumers related to the expected product benefits as summarized in Figure 6.

Figure 6. Consumer-perceived benefits of the face primer.

As seen in this figure the highest benefits people see in their face primer is skin preparation before makeup application, then to even their skin tone, and to improve their skin smoothness. Fewer consumers see the face primer as improving the durability of the face makeup application. This is a valuable point for product development approaches, and could be the starting point for new ideas in this category.
Preferences in texture showed that currently most panelists prefer the light texture vs. a heavy primer consistency (Figure 7). That correlates with the preferences of sheer application vs. full (maximum) coverage (Figure 8).

An investigation of the habits of face makeup removal showed that the majority of consumers use soap and water, fewer users prefer specialized makeup remover, and even fewer use makeup-removing wipes.

Due to increasing launches of tinted primers we surveyed consumer feedback on this intention. Figure 10 shows the panelists’ preferences in colored primers. With the dominating data on uncolored primers, a relatively high percentage of consumers see benefits of tinted face primers to even their skin tone.
These data can be used to assess product developers’ thoughts and opinions toward advancing the Face category by balancing consideration between the market size and consumer interests.

**Conclusion**

The versatility, efficiency, and generalizability of this survey’s research allowed us to gather and analyze significant data on consumers’ behavior in regard to face primers.

The study covered the different aspects of using face primer that are not usually disclosed in the available industry sources of information. Overall the interest in face primers among consumers is high. Users see this product as a good addition to their face makeup routine and one of their daily rudiments of skin care.

The study can be helpful to Marketing and R&D product developers, makeup artists, and other specialists in the cosmetic field.

The growing importance of product development satisfying the diverse population of users suggests a deeper investigation of ethnical consumer behavior and needs for face primers.

**References**


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