

Retailers try to capitalize on Gen Alpha's beauty obsession

Article

The trend: Beauty brands and retailers are embracing [Gen Alpha's beauty obsession](#).

- **Daise**, a fragrance and body care brand for tweens, began selling its products in **Target** stores this month following a January launch at **Ulta Beauty**.

- Ulta's Mini Brands collection, which includes 68 toy versions of best-selling products from brands like **e.l.f. Beauty** and **Supergoop!**, is a viral hit among younger consumers eager to show off their hauls.
- **Nordstrom** added beauty kiosks focused on young adults to its teen apparel departments and a "Youth Adult Beauty" category on its website late last year.

The market opportunity: Despite some initial misgivings about whether kids under 10 should use anti-aging products, slowing beauty growth and fierce competition for spending have pushed brands and retailers to embrace Gen Alpha consumers.

- US prestige beauty sales rose 7% YoY from January to September 2024, per Circana, due primarily to sizable increases in spending from parents with children under 18 years old.
- And as in 2023, beauty was high on Gen Alpha's holiday list: 41% of households with children intended to buy beauty products during the holiday season, 11 percentage points higher than the general population.

What retailers and brands need to know: Like their Gen Z forebears, Gen Alpha has discerning tastes, honed by an incessant flow of beauty content on **TikTok** and **YouTube**. Bright, colorful packaging helps but isn't enough to win them over. Brands and retailers must also offer products that are effective, provide good value for money and, if possible, align with core generational values such as sustainability and body positivity.

Other trends of note:

Kids of all genders are gravitating toward beauty goods at increasingly younger ages. Roughly 7 in 10 girls and 50% of boys ages 10 or younger expressed strong interest in beauty products, per an August survey of parents by The Benchmarking Company.

Social media is a major driver of purchase behavior. Brands with the most success among Gen Alpha have significant online presences and big TikTok followings, according to research by NielsenIQ. The rising number of Gen Alpha "skinfluencers" is also fueling spending.

Virtual try-on tools and other retail tech can fuel sales. Younger shoppers are comfortable using augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality tools. Twenty-eight percent of 12- to 14-year-olds already use AR to make purchases, according to Mintel.

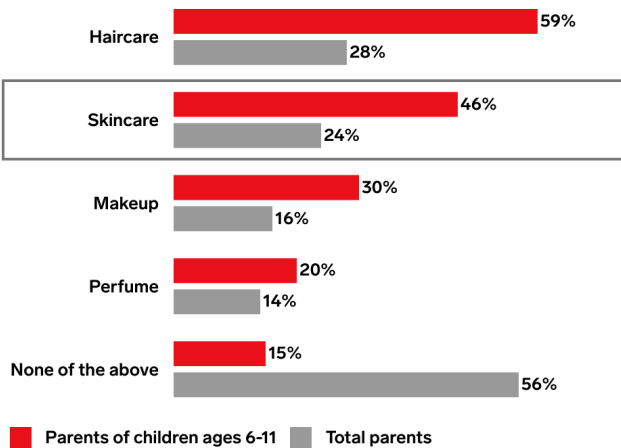
Our take: While Gen Alpha is becoming an undeniably important cohort for the beauty industry, companies should tread carefully when marketing and selling to the demographic.

- Many products promoted on social media are ill-suited for children’s sensitive skin, making it imperative for brands and retailers to offer educational resources for both Gen Alphas and their parents to ensure proper use.
- Some parents and dermatologists are worried that the beauty industry’s efforts to encourage spending from younger demographics, coupled with social media’s relentless stream of beauty content, are creating unrealistic beauty standards. That could eventually lead to backlash and stricter marketing and advertising rules for targeting tween consumers.

Gen Alpha Parents Buy Skincare Products at a Much Higher Rate Than the General Population

% of US parents of children ages 6-11 vs. total parents, by product category, April 2024

Q: Which of the following have you purchased for your children in the past three months? Select all that apply.



Note: n=1,040 to 1,730 ages 18+
Source: CivicScience, "How Gen Alpha's Parents Are Shaping the Beauty Industry," April 23, 2024

351958

