



Nov 18 2011

BEAUTY PACKAGING 2011  
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## Beauty Packaging 2011

This year saw brands seeking new strategies to package glamour in the context of the recession. From minimalism to signifiers of quality and individuality, Stylus explores the approaches taken in 2011.

### Modest Packaging vs. Bright Colours

• An overriding trend this year was the **muted palette**. "We saw a lot of browns, muted yellows and greys this year," says **Timothy Han**, environmental advocate and founder of eco-friendly beauty line Timothy Han London.

• Neutrals and **unadorned or sans-serif fonts** were certainly king among natural brands like **Sans Ceuticals**, **Cochine** and **Aesop**. "A few years ago we had lots of packaging with strong visuals all over them – like Cowshed and Face Boutique – and this is a kind of reaction to that," explains Han.

• Another big focus is the **sustainability of materials and printing methods**, as established by **InfoTrends** (a worldwide market research firm based in the U.S) in their recent report, Packaging and the Brand Owner.

• "Good designers naturally look for original, unusual materials for packaging and product finishes, using sustainable sources where possible," says UK based beauty packaging designer, **Angus Barnes**.

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• At the other end of the scale, there was a flurry of bright colours across all sectors. **L'Occitane** invigorated its usually muted Shea Butter collection with bold African prints, while **The Sanctuary** eschewed its two-tone palette for rich jewel tones for its new Spa Therapy range, and **Elemis Fresh Skin** was branded in bright purple-pink to attract a younger demographic.

• Bright colours were even out in force in the 'minimalist' naturals sector, with new launches from **Jason**, **Aveda**, **Gud** and **Ila**.



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## Minimal Graphic Typography

- “With a trend in the last few seasons for 'revivalist' or 'heritage' brands like **Soap & Glory** and **Benefit**, there is now an overall general consumer move towards a 'simpler experience'. “We’re moving away from ostentatious consumption and an aesthetic driven by the flood of mass production and the overload of technology,” says Barnes.
- This was seen in the **proliferation of unadorned typefaces** – such as Neutra Text, Lucida Console, Calibri, Century Gothic and Courier New (or variations on the classic Courier) – with **fewer script fonts**.
- Adopters of minimalist typography included the new **Jo Loves** fragrance collection by Jo Malone, **Algenist** (with a decidedly scientific but still simple script), **Super by Dr Perricone** and **John Masters Organics’ new Bare range**.
- “Minimal graphics also convince the customer that the ingredients are 'minimal',” says Zu Rafalat, founder of online beauty store **Zuneta**.

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## Style

- “In general, packaging is more design-led,” says Han. “Lots of brands are **focusing on capturing the zeitgeist and growing edgier**, rather than being traditional.”
- This ethos was certainly evident in the design of shapes this year, as brands deconstructed or twisted traditional packaging forms to stand out on the shelves.
- Make-up brand **Illamasqua**’s new fragrance **Freak** and **Diesel**’s **Loverdose** scent both balance on their sides, while pop star **Beyonce**’s **Pulse** fragrance seemed to emerge from a silver, galvanized lily.
- “With an ever-more savvy consumer desperate to be seen as an individual and not to follow the crowd, **consumers are interested in products that stand out from the current moods**,” says Barnes.
- **Vintage appeal** is evident with brands reviving classic shapes and styles to tap into the escalating trend for nostalgia. “People are still looking for the **craftsmanship**, quality and originality they associate with **'revivalist'** or **'heritage'** brands,” says Barnes.
- While **Dior**, **Chanel** and **Shalimar** drew upon their iconic original designs when relaunching heritage scents, **Tom Ford Make-up**, **Bobbi Brown** and **Gucci** used gold and tortoiseshell finishes reminiscent of the 1970s.



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## Decorative Surface Design

- Another shelf-appeal strategy, many brands sought to use 3D visual codes to attract the wandering eye of the

consumer.

• Working on the premise that **the consumer instinctively equates heaviness with quality**, fragrance bottles including **Gucci Guilty, Fendi Fan and Versace Vanitas** were **encased in a gold-effect metal**.

• **Illustration** was a key decorative facet in 2011. New beauty launches like **Charlotte Ronson for Sephora, Percy & Reed** and **Malibu Fix** all featured delicate line drawings, while a lace impression for **Dolce & Gabbana Lace** and elaborate floral paintings for the re-bottling of **Stella McCartney's** signature scent brought the trend to the big players.

• "Looking to next year, I would expect to see next season's fashion trends in evidence – **overprints, metallics, art deco** **chance**" says Barnes. "We'll see lots of unusual textures, papers and finishes, like laser and die cuts, or perforations."

# November 2011

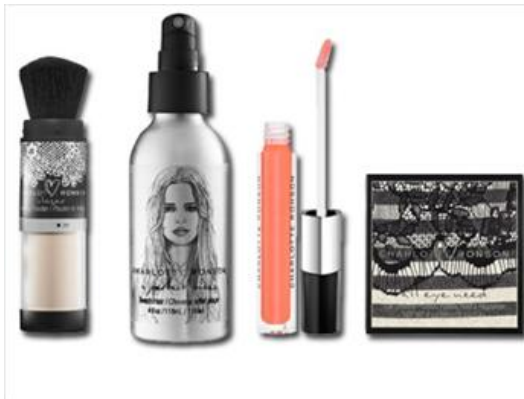
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## Stylus Summary

Packaging underwent a **dramatic downscaling** into **minimalist, muted and unadorned styles**, in line with previous recessionist eras such as the 1990s.

**Minimal graphics communicate both a modest ethos and minimal ingredient list in eco and budget-conscious times**, often belying a high price point.

At the other end of the scale, **bright colours, unexpected shapes and 3D surface details** **battled for consumers' attention** – particularly in fragrance.

Brands also looked back to history, reviving **vintage details** in their packaging. Such heritage styles both remind the consumer of a more affluent, glamorous time, and capture the ever-growing trend for nostalgia.

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