

Apr 8

The beauty industry confronts new paradigms: between rationality and emotion

Three questions for:

Michele Superchi

Global Vice-President

Beautystreams



What are the most structuring marketing trends today, and why are they accelerating?

The global beauty industry is currently being driven by five major forces reflecting a profound shift in consumer priorities, economic realities and ongoing structural transformations.

Firstly, there is a renewed focus on locality, culture and proximity. Beauty is reconnecting with local identities and regional realities, as in a world perceived as unstable and fragmented, consumers favour brands that feel culturally close, more authentic and firmly rooted in their territory.

Secondly, we are witnessing the rise of more rational, value-oriented consumption. In a context of inflation and economic uncertainty, purchasing decisions are becoming more considered. Efficacy, multifunctionality and tangible value – alongside a growing acceptance of price comparison, alternatives and simplified routines – are taking precedence over accumulation.

Thirdly, traditional boundaries between categories are fading. The distinctions between beauty, wellbeing, health and technology are becoming increasingly blurred. Consumers are seeking hybrid solutions capable of meeting aesthetic, functional and emotional expectations simultaneously.

This search for meaning is translating into a return to simplicity, clarity and restraint. Complex routines and opaque formulations are being rejected. Consumers favour products that are understandable, transparent and easy to integrate into daily life.

Finally, beauty is emerging as an everyday emotional lever. Rather than exceptional experiences, consumers are looking for accessible pleasures that enhance mood and wellbeing. Beauty is becoming as much an emotional tool as an aesthetic one.

These dynamics are accelerating because they respond to deep-rooted shifts, including economic uncertainty, information fatigue, evolving societal values and a broader search for meaning.

This global vision aligns with Beautystreams' initiative through the launch of Beautynexos. Through the manifesto "Beauty is Borderless", the platform aims to connect beauty stakeholders beyond geographical, cultural and sectoral boundaries, supporting the industry in a more open, collaborative and interconnected world.

Which channels of influence will dominate customer relationships in the coming years?

The most influential touchpoints will be those capable of combining proximity, personalisation and seamless continuity between the physical and digital worlds. Social media remains structurally important, but its role is evolving: it is becoming a space for education, diagnosis, recommendation and co-creation, far beyond simple visibility. Communities, micro-creators and experts are gaining influence over traditional advertising narratives.

At the same time, physical retail is being reinvented. Stores are becoming spaces for experience, service and relationship-building: skin or hair diagnostics, personalised advice, care rituals, events and exclusive content. They are no longer merely points of sale, but engagement platforms.

"Phygital" is emerging as a key lever. Consumer journeys are now built fluidly between online and offline environments: discovery on social platforms, in-store testing, replenishment via apps, personalised post-purchase follow-up. Immersive technologies, connected diagnostic tools and proprietary digital ecosystems extend the experience well beyond the point of sale.

Finally, brand-owned relational platforms (apps, loyalty programmes, personalised services and educational content) are becoming strategic assets. They establish continuous, individualised and lasting relationships with consumers. In the years ahead, the challenge will no longer be to be present on every channel, but to design coherent, interconnected and genuinely useful experiences at every stage of the journey.

How can brands stand out and build loyalty in a saturated market?

In a mature market, differentiation will rely less on multiplying launches and more on long-term brand clarity and consistency. The companies that succeed will be those able to articulate a clear value proposition, grounded in tangible benefits, credible expertise and strong cultural positioning.

Trust will become central, nurtured by transparency, proven efficacy and consistency of messaging. At the same time, loyalty will depend on the quality of the relationship built with consumers: support, services, personalisation, useful content and the ability to integrate into everyday life rather than intervening solely at the moment of purchase.

In this saturated environment, desirability will no longer stem solely from novelty, but from relevance, authenticity and a brand's ability to forge a lasting, emotional and functional connection with its audiences.

Please note:

Michele Superchi, Vice-President of Beautystreams, will be speaking at in-cosmetics Global 2026, Porte de Versailles, Paris, in the Marketing Trends Theatre on "From Volatility to Value: Future-Proof Cross-Category Strategies for 2028", on Thursday 16 April, 11:30-12:15.