

BREAKTHROUGH PRODUCT OF THE YEAR

From reinventing the mascara wand to reimagining the at-home hair color experience, this year's standout products captured the imaginations (and dollars) of consumers and retailers alike.

PRESTIGE COLOR COSMETICS

GIVENCHY PHENOMEN'EYES MASCARA

See a ball where a brush should be on a mascara wand and it's natural to assume its creator has lost his or her marbles. Givenchy proved quite the contrary, though, with Phenomen'Eyes, a sphere-topped mascara wand that proved form and function go hand in hand. "The ergonomic brush allows the mascara to grab the very roots of the lashes and, by coating this critical area, the mascara mimics the same effect as eyeliner: Eyes appear fresher, enhanced and more awake," explained Nicolas Degennes, Givenchy's creative director of makeup. Phenomen'Eyes' formula was as innovative as the wand, with fluid waxes for maximum playtime and molding polymers to keep lashes in place once the desired amount has been applied. For the launch, Givenchy created buzz with pop-up galleries outside Sephora doors, nighttime video installations in New York and a create-your-own-screen saver Internet campaign. The plan worked: Launched as a Sephora exclusive in August, Phenomen'Eyes sold out in a month and continues to be a top seller in both the U.S. and France, with sources estimating that first-year retail sales will exceed \$7 million in the U.S. alone. —JULIE NAUGHTON



PRESTIGE FRAGRANCE

HARAJUKU LOVERS

Creating five different scents and five different doll-shaped bottles for a simultaneous launch would be viewed by many companies as nuts. Coty isn't most companies, though, and that's exactly what the house did with Gwen Stefani's September launch of Harajuku Lovers. For the project, Stefani created scents based on herself and her four real-life backup singers, Love, Angel, Music and Baby. "I didn't think this project would actually come to life," she admitted. "The idea that Coty would let me do five fragrances was a fantasy. [But] it really had to be five. Each girl has her own personality and sense of style." Stefani has long been fascinated by the whimsical style of Tokyo's Harajuku area. That whimsy is reflected in the Harajuku Lovers bottles, which consist of a glass base holding the juice and a personalized doll on top, each meticulously crafted with hand-applied detailing. The scents are inspired by Stefani's views of her singers. Love is described as "sweet, caring, free-spirited and off in her own little world." Lil' Angel is "constantly looking out for others," but is no saint. Music is "looking to make someone laugh," and Baby is "enticing in her frilly innocence." And then there's G, representing the singer herself. Coty's risk has paid off: Sources say the scents will hit \$30 million globally in first-year sales. —J.N.



TRIA **LASER**

At-home high-tech devices had retailers raving this year, and earning the biggest kudos of all was the Tria Laser. The first laser hair remover approved for direct-to-consumer sale by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the \$995 device launched in Bergdorf Goodman, Studio at Fred Segal, select Bliss spas and dermatologists' offices earlier this year. Already available in select European and Asian markets under the name i-Epi, the device sold 15,000 units in two years at a higher price point of \$1,600. Created by SpectraGenics, the company that developed the first diode-laser hair-removal technology more than a decade ago, Tria was called "easy and effective" by Bergdorf's Pat Saxby. "My customers want things that really work," she said earlier this year. One of a handful of FDA-approved personal-use devices, Tria has consumers migrating from dermatologists' offices and spas to the privacy of their bathrooms for services that were previously only performed by professionals. Said dermatologist Eric Bernstein, who started selling the device shortly after its U.S. introduction: "You cannot stop a field-changing technology. You have to embrace it." —JENNY B. FINE



PRESTIGE **HAIR**

INTELLIGENT **NUTRIENTS**

Horst Rechelbacher isn't one to mince words or think small. He's the person, after all, who introduced aromatherapy to the U.S. with his line Aveda, which he sold to the Estée Lauder Cos. in 1997 for a reported \$300 million. So, after years of criticizing the beauty industry for "harmful" product formulations, he put his money where his mouth was with the launch of Intelligent Nutrients, a hair care line bearing the USDA Organic seal. All items, save for two designed for color-treated hair, are 100 percent certified organic; each contains a proprietary seed oil complex, described as an antiaging, antioxidant blend of black cumin, pumpkin, red grape, raspberry and cranberry seed oils. Pure enough to drink—as Rechelbacher himself demonstrated by quaffing hair spray during the line's debut luncheon—Intelligent Nutrients' products contain many ingredients sourced directly from his 600-acre farm in Wisconsin. The entrepreneur enlisted a team of scientists and marketers to launch the venture, with an innovative cross-channel distribution strategy that ranges from the trendy—such as ABC Carpet & Home, Studio at Fred Segal and Barneys New York—to the populist, like the specialty chain Pure Beauty. —J.B.F.

