

FRAGRANCE AND PERSONAL CARE

Luxury is a philosophy, not a price tag, says Beauty Pie founder

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Beauty Pie sells luxury beauty products at a drastically reduced prices

By DANNY PARISI

LISBON, Portugal Membership-based beauty service Beauty Pie shows that luxury can be more about a state of mind than about the cost of a product.

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Speaking at FT's Business of Luxury Summit May 16, Beauty Pie founder and beauty entrepreneur Marcia Kilgore spoke about the service's business model as well as how it relates to traditional ideas of luxury as needing to be expensive to satisfy a luxury buyer's desire. Ms. Kilgore is dismissive of that notion, stating that luxury is about how you feel and not about how much you pay.

Beauty Pie

When people think of luxury, one of the things that inevitably comes to mind is price. Luxury goods are expensive and that is just a fact of the business.

But Ms. Kilgore set out to challenge that notion with her new membership service Beauty Pie.

During the "From Bliss to Beauty Pie" session, Ms. Kilgore spoke with FT's fashion editor Jo Ellison about the way her business works.

Essentially, customers pay a monthly membership fee to join Beauty Pie. From there, Beauty Pie goes directly to factories where many luxury beauty supplies are produced, buys products and then resells them to members at flat factory costs, or exactly what the company purchased them for wholesale.

Most of the cost in luxury beauty products, Ms. Kilgore said, is in mark ups. While a luxury brand might purchase a product from a factory for one price, they could sell it for 60 times more.



Marcia Kilgore

Beauty Pie removes the middleman from this equation and makes it so that customers can skip the mark ups and buy luxury beauty products for their actual costs.

The products remain the same, Ms. Kilgore notes. No bit of quality is lost, only the fact that it is bought straight from the factory rather than through a brand or retailer.

In this way, Ms. Kilgore claims that customers can save thousands of dollars on luxury beauty products without sacrificing quality. The factories do not miss out either, since to them, a sale is a sale.

When asked if this would undermine the traditional notion of what a luxury product must cost, Ms. Kilgore chuckled and responded: "Probably."

Luxury state of mind

Ms. Kilgore's philosophy on luxury is not that it must cost a certain amount or have a certain level of exclusivity, but that the consumer must feel like they can be completely comfortable with the product and not have to worry what anyone else thinks.

By offering the exact same products at significantly reduced prices, Beauty Pie is making a stand against the idea that in order to be luxurious, something must be expensive. After all, the same bottle of fragrance bought from Beauty Pie versus one bought from a retailer is still the same bottle.



Ms. Kilgore and Jo Ellison

Other brands have also taken to this affordable idea in the past year, such as Jean Paul Gaultier, which released its own affordable collection.

The collection includes women's wear, children's wear and accessories, and displays many of Jean Paul Gaultier's quintessential themes, such as prints and elaborate details. Prices for the collection go no further than \$270, a figure that would seem minimal for Jean Paul Gaultier's main products, but the partnership's underlying and temporary purpose preserves the brand's integrity ([see story](#)).

Beauty Pie's philosophy is less about making customers feel like they have something no one else has and more about making customers feel like they have access to whatever their hearts' desire.

1 thought on “Luxury is a philosophy, not a price tag, says Beauty Pie founder”

1. [Andreu](#) says:

[May 17, 2017 at 9:05 am](#)

Luxury is a state of mind and as I always say, rich are rich but not stupid. A rich maybe can be 5,000 for a product or a service but if she/he pays that amount, she/he will expect in return something according that value. Of course she/he will understand that we have a business and we have to earn a benefit, but the thing that they will not accept is that the benefit we earn is higher than product or service we offer in return for that amount.

An expensive product is only that an expensive product, but that does not make that product a luxury product

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