

FRAGRANCE AND PERSONAL CARE

## How Esté Lauder Cos.' Lab Series reinvented itself for a new generation

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Race Imboden for Lab Series. Image courtesy of Lab Series

By SARAH RAMIREZ

Esté Lauder Companies' male skincare line Lab Series is encouraging men to embrace self-care through a brand repositioning emphasizing innovation and ambition.

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In fall 2021, Lab Series introduced all new product imagery, brand logo and sustainable packaging. At the crux of this refresh is "Invent Yourself," a global brand campaign starring a diverse group of talented men.

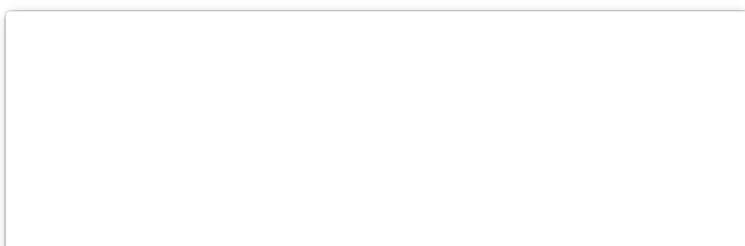
"Lab Series is a playful space of invention," said Klitos Teklos, senior vice President, global creative director of **Lab Series**, New York.

"With a simple yet empowering call to action, Lab Series asks its community of men to 'Invent Themselves;' to be who they want to be, and the brand provides them with expert and efficacious solutions to enable their confidence and self-expression," he said. "This was the idea behind having multiple ambassadors using different products that suit their individual needs."

### Brand reinvention

Although male skincare and makeup has grown in popularity and acceptance in recent years, in large part due to trends in Asia, Esté Lauder Companies introduced Lab Series 35 years ago.

"Lab Series launched in 1987 with a lab dedicated exclusively to understanding men's physiology and unique skin needs," Mr. Teklos said. "We were pioneers in this field long before it was fashionable to speak about the importance of men taking care of their skin."



[View this post on Instagram](#)

A post shared by LAB SERIES (@labseries)

### *The Lab Series line up includes anti-aging products*

To better meet the demands of men and male-identifying consumers who have many more skincare options than they did in the late 1980s, the brand used market research and consumer insights to refine its repositioning.

"Lab Series has always put the consumer at the heart of what we do," Mr. Teklos said. "Our extensive research around the world showed how men have evolved in their self-care rituals, what they are looking for in skincare products and where they are searching for information.

"We used these deep learnings to look at every detail of the brand and ensure that everything from image, packaging, education and communication answered the needs of today's consumer," he said. "The Lab Series reset is intelligent, intuitive and functional."

The result was an approach centered on the brand's legacy of high performance and innovation, complemented by an "always-on" optimized, digital platform with straightforward product navigation. Packaging got a sleek makeover, with tech-inspired shapes, a matte finish and a curated color palette pulled directly from the brand's archives.

The brand's new cool-yet-minimalist aesthetic fits into men's on-the-go lifestyles, with skincare products including cleansers, moisturizers and serums looking at home in bathrooms, gyms and travel bags. Lab Series also introduced refillable packs in a nod to sustainability and in line with other Este Lauder Cos. brands.

For a new global campaign, Lab Series tapped Francisco Lachowski, a model and fashion entrepreneur; Armando Cabral, a model and shoe designer; Barton Cowperthwaite, an actor and professional ballet dancer; Alexander Schlab, a student and athlete and three-time Olympic fencer Race Imboden.

### *The new hero film starring Barton Cowperthwaite, Race Imboden, Francisco Lachowski, Armando Cabral and Alex Schlab*

The men appear in a series of videos and social media content, including a hero film that shows off their unique talents. Each ambassador is also paired with one product line, ranging from the "Daily Rescue" collection focused on hydration and skin recovery to the oil control and "all-in-one" lineups.

"We selected a diverse group of inspiring men that reflect our consumers and their values, and who have aspirational stories and accomplishments to share," Mr. Teklos said. "All of our dynamic storytelling celebrates these men, tells their story in their own voice, and shares their various moments of invention as the products act as catalysts and enablers for them to feel and look confident in their skin."

### Category growth

The Lab Series refresh comes as Este Lauder Cos. looks to capitalize on the boom in male skincare and personal care, which was further accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The men's personal care market was predicted to hit \$166 billion by 2022, according to Allied Market Research, while male beauty and skincare was one of China's fastest-growing consumer product segments in 2019 ([see story](#)).

Luxury brands are experimenting with different strategies of presenting consumers with male skincare products. For instance, in 2017, Estée Lauder Cos.' Crème de la Mer is creating a series of content for the audience of Mr Porter to gain visibility for its men's skincare line ([see story](#)).

The group's skincare sales have grown from pre-pandemic levels ([see story](#)), and Lab Series will likely play a bigger role in the category going forward.

"With over 30 years of leading research and development, we are proud of our legacy and continue to build on this by creating high performance products and formulas that effectively answer men's skincare concerns," Mr. Teklos said. "Lab Series has many exciting things in the works for 2022, spanning new products, technologies, and collaborations, which we will share in due time."

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