

FRAGRANCE AND PERSONAL CARE

L'Oréal Group shows hidden impact of beauty in new podcast

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*Two episodes are now streaming on various platforms. Image courtesy of L'Oréal*

By ZACH JAMES

Beauty group L'Oréal is delving into how the industry affects everyday life through audio programming.

The new podcast series, titled "This Is Not a Beauty Podcast," explores the various roles that cosmetics play in sports, technology, business, science, health and politics, with each episode focusing on a different subject area. The release fits into the company's larger Essentiality of Beauty initiative, which highlights the social and psychological ethics L'Oréal follows as high-end consumers demand more from the brands they choose to support.

Cosmetic convergence

Debuted just weeks ago, two chapters of the digital content are now available on [Apple Podcasts](#) and [Spotify](#).

The series, hosted by Italian-American actress Isabella Rossellini, begins by discussing the intersection between beauty and politics. This first episode, titled "Leaving a Mark," chronicles cosmetics' role throughout history, starting with the rebellious nature of tattoos, discussing make-up in Elizabethan England and rounding out with how figureheads in Washington D.C. are impacted by beauty norms and the public's expectations.

Ms. Rossellini and the show's producers interviewed a variety of sources for this inaugural outing, including Capitol Hill-based makeup artist Carl Ray, anthropologist Lars Krutak and Philippino tattoo artist Apo Whang-Od, who is 107 years old.

"I find it fascinating that cultural identity, of course, goes through your appearance, and if you're not allowed to express your culture anymore because you're being dominated by another culture, you can still find sneaky ways to do tattoos to keep your culture going," says Ms. Rossellini in "Leaving a Mark."

"It's not just self-decorating, it can be a political act," she says. "So whether we are a politician trying to signify our values to our constituents, a 16th-century queen looking to stake her claim in a male-dominated Europe or a Kalinga warrior earning decoration for accomplishments in battle, beauty is, really, an impulse to define who we are as people and how we want others to view us.

"And where else could that be more important than in politics?"

The second episode, "The Lipstick Effect," delves into the economic implications behind a person's choice of lipstick and men's

heightened embrace of personal cosmetics, both of which have massive implications for the business world. Throughout the remainder of the series, the host sits down with guests ranging from renowned names from academia and business to tech industry leaders and social media influencers.



Representatives from tech giant Meta, as well as accomplished athletes, will appear in upcoming episodes. Image credit: L'Oral

"This Is Not a Beauty Podcast" is a joint venture between the group and New York Times Advertising, which also helped L'Oral publish its recent [The Essentiality of Beauty](#) study. Much like the podcast series, the findings also detail the intersectionality between make-up and everyday life, science, technology, wellness and business.

The remaining four episodes of the podcast will drop fortnightly, with the third edition set for release on Oct. 28. The sixth episode, titled "The Social Mirror," will close out the series on Dec. 9, 2024.

L'Oral has been apt to showcase its industry's ties to the economy, as well as science, in recent months, unveiling short films under the umbrella of "The Art & Science of Fragrance" earlier this year to assert the necessity and value proposition of beauty amidst widespread financial uncertainty ([see story](#)).

Technology, which is set to be highlighted in episode three of "This Is Not a Beauty Podcast," and its convergence with sustainability has also been top-of-mind for the company as of late, evident through recent partnerships ([see story](#)).

Good talk

L'Oral's latest digital content release is far from its first entrance into the podcast space.

The beauty group has released several audio-only programs since the onset of the pandemic, including "Open Air," which focuses on internal sustainability progress and commitments, "Skin Goals," which centers on dermatological care and "Inside Out," a series of looks into the lives of employees within the multinational corporation, among others.



Podcasts are said to be a reliable way to reach multiple generations of consumers, from Gen Alpha to Gen X. Image credit: L'Oral

Other prominent luxury names have also embraced this kind of long-form content, including French fashion house Louis Vuitton ([see story](#)) and French jeweler Boucheron ([see story](#)), as well as many others.

While some previous studies have shown the podcast market to be oversaturated from the listener's perspective ([see story](#)), the medium only continues to rise in popularity and listenership.

According to recent findings from [EMarketer](#), podcasts will have 135.4 million unique listeners this year in the United States, equating to 44.1 percent of all internet users domestically. The publication also asserts that the medium will grow in the coming

years as Gen Z and Gen Alpha grow older and access more adult-oriented content, such as business-focused and news shows.

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