

SUKIN

staying ahead of the pack

It's smart thinking to be ahead of your time. The tagline of Sukin is - Skincare that doesn't cost the earth - a dual message that boosts the brand's natural skincare cred and also tells consumers that being 'eco-economic' is as important as being eco-friendly. The affordability factor is becoming a popular catchcry for other natural beauty brands, too, as it has become increasingly obvious that consumers want value in addition to organic ingredients and effectiveness.

BY ELISABETH KING

Sukin's tagline – Skincare that doesn't cost the earth – was a eureka moment for the company because it so sweetly and succinctly summed up the brand ethos. Alison Goodger, General Manager of Sukin, confirms the point: "Quality skincare that is also easy on the pocket has been our goal from the beginning." A marketing mantra that has also helped Sukin to gain traction overseas. "In June, we entered the Canadian market," says Goodger, "and Sukin is also sold in the UK, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, Hong Kong, Ireland and the Middle East. We've had a lot of help from Austrade and also received a grant from the City of Melbourne."

Such official confidence is well-placed. The three-year-old, Melbourne-based brand is family run and owned by Goodger and her father and brother, Peter and Simon O'Connor. "We launched our core range in 2007," says Goodger. "with 14 products and 22 lines. The following year was equally exciting for us with the introduction of travel sizes in getaway packs, our dedicated beauty club and our first Christmas promotional program. 2009 continued the momentum with the launch of an eye serum, rosehip oil, two shampoos and conditioners, hair treatments and a face masque."

Australia has a clean, green image and is also technologically advanced in the manufacture of skincare which is a big uptick in Asia notes Goodger. "We are also very proud of the fact that we are vegan, use recyclable packaging and are carbon neutral. We have teamed with the Carbon Reduction Institute and gained certification. It's a very strict program that monitors unavoidable emissions and participation in purchasing carbon off-set credits. We are committed to reducing



Above: Alison Goodger, General Manager of Sukin
Left: Sukin stands tall in pharmacy where customers and sales assistants can equally search out the product(s) they want, check out the ingredients and read up on the eco-friendliness of the brand

the effect of our business on the environment and that means all our products, manufacturing, business operations and employees are focused on leaving the lightest footprint possible."

Sukin's eye-catching, five-shelf display units are featured prominently in leading pharmacy chains such as Amcal and Pulse Pharmacy as well as independents. Priceline also now stocks a range of Sukin. The best-selling product in Sukin's 42 SKU lineup of facial and body cleansers, moisturisers, eye care, hair care and scrubs is our 100% rosehip oil says Goodger. "Our pharmacy business accounts for just over half of total sales, with health food stores making up another 40 percent. Our distributor tells us that people love the fact that they can buy products such as a one litre bottle of botanical body wash for only \$19.95."

The fact that Sukin products are Australian-made has very very strong appeal with our core market - predominantly women aged 25 to 45, says Goodger. "We are also experiencing a major spike in sales among women aged 46 to 55, too. Word of mouth is a very powerful sales driver for us because women who search for natural, effective and, most importantly, safer skin and haircare products tend to spread the word quickly when they discover a brand that delivers all these qualities."

One of Sukin's major initiatives this year was the April launch of a new website - www.sukinorganics.com - reports Goodger. "There was a very fast uptake and over 500 new members joined our Beauty Club in the first month, taking membership past the 7000-plus mark. It's a great tool in communicating with our customers, introducing promotions and launching products."

Even though Goodger is very proud of the entire Sukin range, which has garnered major coverage in such prestigious magazines as Marie Claire and Women's Health, she's even more gung-ho about hero products that have scored major international awards. Sukin Eye Cream duked it out with major finalists such as Estée Lauder and Guinot

In support of Keep Australia Beautiful Week, August 2010, Sukin has released a limited edition Body Lotion, donating \$1.00 from the sale of every specially marked bottle to the Keep Australia Beautiful campaign.

to win the runner-up gong at the 2009 New Zealand Sunday Star Times Beauty Awards. "We were also delighted when Sukin Moisture Restoring Night Cream won the Gold Award at the Watson's 2009 Health, Wellness and Beauty Awards in Hong Kong."

Further international expansion is on the cards. "We are seeing a lot of growth in the body and soul sections in department stores, in Australia and overseas and Sukin is a great fit in that category. We ensure that retail staff are up to speed with product training so it's an easy segue, and we feel Sukin is at the perfect development stage to harness this potential for growth into a major department store group." One last question. What does Sukin mean? "It's a loose translation of a Japanese word for skin," reveals Goodger.