

**twimbit**



BASEL HOLDINGS

# Twimbit's top 10 beauty brands of Asia

INSIGHTS FOR SUCCESS | IDEAS TO EXECUTE

September 2020

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# Preface

Asia has been highly praised for its skill in developing innovative products which use natural but at times bizarre ingredients. They have unique textures and are known to satisfy a wide range of customer needs. As the biggest global customer of beauty products, Asia has also given rise to some amazing brands including the likes of SKII, Shiseido, Bioré, Innisfree, Kosé, and Sulwhasoo.

Emerging brands need recognition to exhibit the potential for success. Twimbit embarked on this research to identify the brands we believe have demonstrated tremendous potential for growth.

- ● **We hope this list inspires these brands to continue on their strong journey of innovation and growth. Our hope is that, through this list, we will continue to discover new amazing Asian brands that will go on to transform into something bigger. ● ●**

# Selection Criteria

In selecting the top 10 brands, Twimbit wanted to identify brands that not only have a great product line and an impressive brand story, but also demonstrated proof of success.

## Pre-requisite

- Years of existence: Between 1 to 10 years
- Brand not started and conceptualised by leading group companies, such as: COTY, L'Oréal, Shiseido, Estée Lauder, or Olay
- Headquartered in Asia
- Market presence in at least one country outside of home market

## Measuring Criteria



### 1. Market presence

- Physical
- Digital



### 2. Social media presence



### 3. Unique nature of product

- Cosmeceutical
- Clean beauty
- Asian-infused ingredients





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Twimbit's  
Top 10





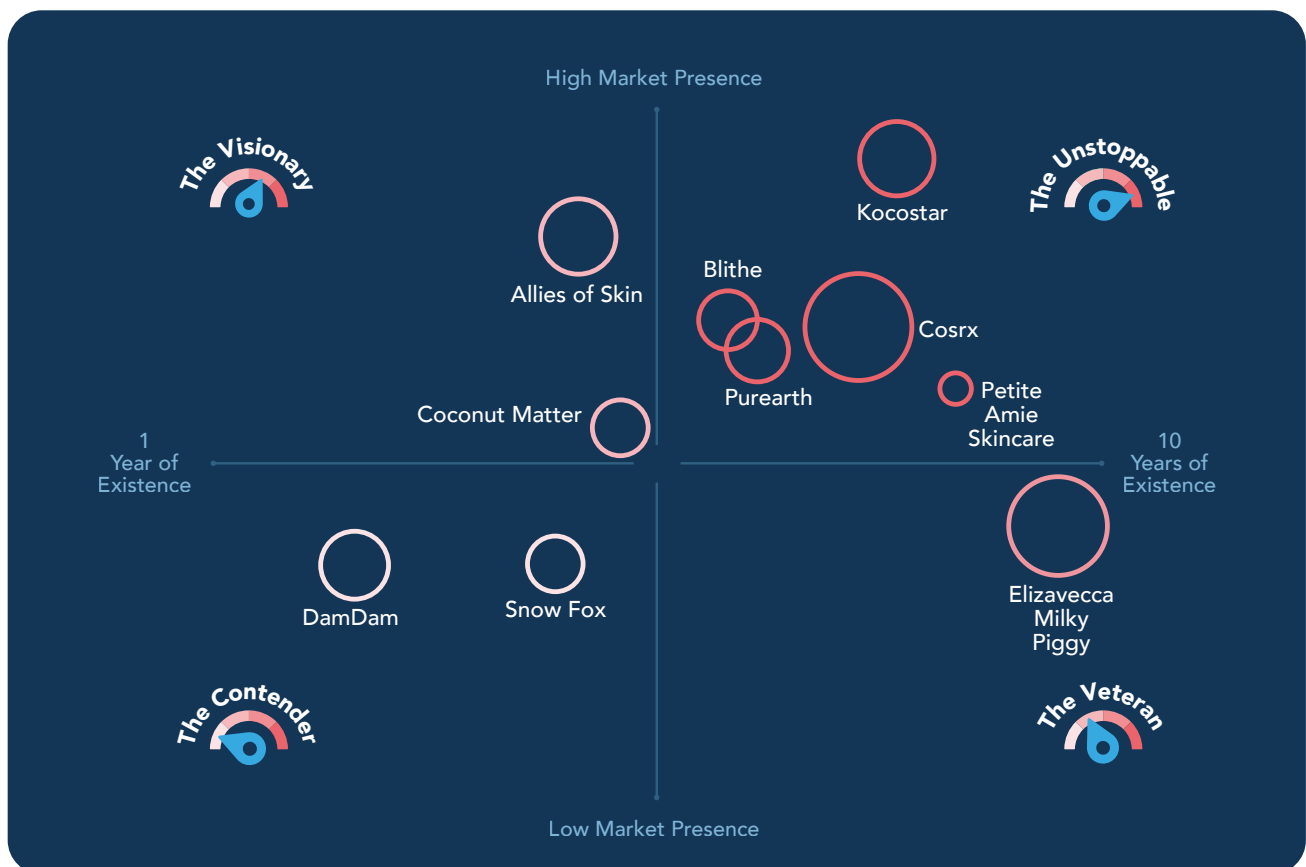
Number	Brand	Founding Year	Country of Origin	Nature of Product	Bestseller
1	Cosrx	2013	Korea	Cosmeceutical	Low pH Good Morning Gel Cleanser
2	Kocostar	2013	Korea	Clean Beauty	Slice Mask® Series
3	Elizavecca Milky Piggy	2011	Korea	Asian-infused Ingredient	Carbonated Bubble Clay Mask
4	Allies of Skin	2016	Singapore	Cosmeceutical / Asian-infused Ingredient	1A All-Day Mask
5	Petite Amie Skincare	2012	Taiwan	Clean Beauty	Chillin' Masque
6	Purearth	2014	India/ Hong Kong	Clean Beauty	Mitti Raw Honey Clay Masque
7	Blithe	2014	Korea	Clean Beauty	Tundra Chaga Pressed Serum
8	Coconut Matter	2015	Hong Kong	Clean Beauty	Mood Natural Deodorant
9	DamDam	2018	Japan	Clean Beauty	Magic Drops
10	Snow Fox	2016	Hong Kong	Clean Beauty / Asian-infused Ingredient	Arctic Breeze Detox Mask

# Brand Positioning

These ten brands have surged due to a shift in consumer preference for natural, effective products. While some brands may have been founded recently, their popularity with the global consumer are not geographically limited.

From the findings, each emerging brand is placed into four categories:

- **The Unstoppable** – more than 5 years of establishment with high market presence
- **The Veteran** – more than 5 years of establishment with mid-range market presence
- **The Contender** – less than 5 years of establishment with low market presence
- **The Visionary** – less than 5 years of establishment with high market presence



Here, Twimbit maps the relative position of the qualifying brands according to the below:

- **X-axis:** Years in existence
- **Y-axis:** Market presence
- **Circles:** Social media presence

## Cosrx

**“Rather than focusing on marketing materials, we plan to sell products that give consumers a high level of satisfaction, including in terms of price”**

*Jeon, Owner of Cosrx*

### Brand story

With an extensive experience of 14 years ranging from marketing to distribution of cosmetic and skincare, along with an in-depth understanding on consumers' wants and needs, Sanghoon Jeon launched Cosrx in 2013. Cosrx was founded with a mission to provide the best solution for a variety of skin problems using skin-friendly ingredients. This aligns with the brand slogan, “Expecting Tomorrow”, where it wants the customers to see their skin improve day-by-day. Its brand concept pillars further solidify its focus on sensitive skin, providing gentle treatment with tailor-made solutions for every skin issue including acne, blackheads, scarring, discoloration, dullness, and dry and flaky skin, at the root. Rather than pursuing temporary beauty, Cosrx has enabled consumers in discovering their natural hidden beauty.

### Road to success

Cosrx is derived from the words “**COS**metics” and “**RX**” from prescription due to its adoption of a medical approach for its products. This sets Cosrx apart from its Asian counterparts whose emphasis is placed on natural, plant-based or organic ingredients. Cosrx removes unnecessary components and focuses on central, proven ingredient for tackling specific skin issues. One of the interesting ingredients used is snail secretion, commonly known as *snail slime*. These snail mucin-related essences and cream have super healing properties that are highly packed with antioxidants that calm breakouts and fade acne scars. Moreover, its one-step series also fulfils the needs of the urban on-the-go users where their skincare routines are replaced with layers of clear pads infused with Cosrx serum.

To grant high accessibility to all its consumers, the brand spends minimally on operating costs for promotion, marketing, and packaging. Even its product distribution begins with only online purchases rather than listing in physical stores. For instance, all Cosrx's packaging embraces the term “minimalistic” and looks very basic compared to other K-beauty brands.

**Year launched:** 2013

**Country of origin:** Korea

**Target group:**

Mass affluent groups with varied skin problems

**Price range:**

US\$5 – US\$32

**Bestseller**

**Low pH Good**

**Morning Gel Cleanser**



A gel cleanser with mildly acidic pH level imbued with noteworthy ingredients for anti-aging, acne regulation, and skin-renewal

**Outcome**

Cosrx's revenue stands at around US\$33.2 million after 6 years of incorporation with a portfolio of 5 award-winning products since 2017



Although Cosrx is conservative on marketing expenditure, this indie K-beauty brand has made the news and has been on numerous blog posts, thanks to its highly effective products that speaks for themselves. Its bestseller, *Real Fit Vitamin C Serum C-23*, sold out within 24 hours of its launching, and had more than 10,000 customers on its waiting list. Meanwhile, in Philippines, Cosrx's *2-in-1 Poreless Power Liquid* sold out within a few hours after its release in Asia.

Through its e-commerce store, Cosrx ships to about 13 countries including the US, Canada, the UK, Germany, Russia, Japan, Taiwan and some Southeast Asian countries. Following the overwhelming demand of its consumers, Cosrx began shelving its products in large health and beauty stores across Korea – *Olive Young*, *Lotte Duty Free*, *Shilla Duty Free* – and on e-commerce websites such as *Gmarket*, *Coupang*, *Hmall*, and *Kakaotalk Store*.

In recent years, Cosrx expanded its market to other parts of Asia by replicating a similar

strategy – revitalising the local health and beauty stores and local e-commerce platforms. In Taiwan and selected Southeast Asian countries, Cosrx tapped on one of the largest flagship drugstore chains, *Watson*, as its point of entry to the market of around 600 million people. Cosrx also enhanced its distribution network in Middle East, Oceania and Russia via e-commerce platforms such as *Myriad Beauty*, *SOMEI*, and *Nudieglow*.

In North America, Cosrx fully leveraged the high impact of *Amazon* as the largest global e-commerce. The brand made use of the platform's *Early Reviewers Programs* to engage with consumers and its well-designed sales page to provide detailed information on its products. As a result, its products are distributed to physical stores such as *Urban Outfitters*, *Riley Rose* and *Ulta Beauty*. Over the years, Cosrx has gained enormous recognition in the USA. It was selected as a *Global Brand Success* story by *Amazon* in 2018 and in June the following year, clinched three awards in the *Teen Vogue Acne Awards 2019* held by the US edition of *Teen Vogue*.

### Summary

- **Customer-centric product** - Cosrx consistently receives and analyzes consumers' feedbacks to make necessary improvements on future products
- **Address concerns** - products are targeted at specific concerns with simple and direct names i.e. *Cosrx Acne Pimple Master Patch*
- **Cost-effective distribution** - leveraged on a cost-effective strategy by collaborating with local flagship drugstores while tapping into the largest brick-and-mortar distribution network

### Future outlook

Cosrx plans to expand its nourishing and moisturising skincare range to combat skin dryness and, as a customer-centric brand, intends to grow as a channel where customers can learn about skincare easily and efficiently.

## Kocostar

**“Our aim is to design masks for every part of the body, allowing DIY spa/salon quality treatments at home.”**

*Ahn Jong Jin, CEO & Co-founder of Kocostar*

### Brand story

Short for Korean Cosmetics Star, Kocostar is a mask specialty brand focused on capturing the global beauty market with K-beauty products, delivering quality range of hair-to-foot masks for home beauty care. During a visit to one of the top cosmetics exhibitions called *Cosmoprof Worldwide Bologna*, Kocostar founders, Ahn Jong Jin and Ham Jeong Soo had the idea of having a mask for nails when visitors with damaged nails stood forming long lines at booths with nail care products. They then began working on a nutrients-filled nail mask, and in 2013, launched the brand's first product, *5 Finger Nail Pack*, which received great acclaim. Shortly thereafter, a hair and chest pack was also introduced.

### Road to success

Despite only participating in international beauty fairs, Kocostar was approached by several famous social media influencers for online collaborations and product reviews due to its product novelty, effectiveness and attention-grabbing marketing. The brand surged overnight when mega influencer of more than 39 million followers, Huda Beauty, posted a message for a purchase which led to UGC videos by 996,000 beauty creators. Subsequently, the focus was turned to skincare masks as Kocostar worked closely with five to six different factories, each with their own expertise in developing masks from head to toe.

From its portfolio of over 90 products, its bestsellers are the hydrogel lip patches (packaged in an award-winning lip-shaped container), the *Rose Lip Mask* and the *Slice Mask Series*, (fashioned from 12 individual fabric slices infused with goodness of a fruit, a vegetable, or a flower it was designed after) as a convenient alternative to using raw fruits and plants. Its design-patented *Waffle Mask Series* is another customer favourite, containing OEKO-TEX® certified cotton sheet woven in waffle pattern and drenched in gel-like essence. Over one million pieces were sold within two months of its launch in May 2019.

**Year launched:** 2013  
**Country of origin:** Korea  
**Target group:**  
 Beauty conscious,  
 family-friendly homebodies  
**Price range:**  
 US\$4 – US\$60

### Bestseller

#### Slice Mask® Series

Mask patches that can be placed on any part of the body, and are infused with aromatics and nutrients derived from a fruit, a vegetable, or a flower they were designed after



### Outcome

Sales have grown 2.5 times between 2016 and 2018, with a continued two-fold growth expected in 2019 due to positive demand for hair, foot and face masks from its domestic market

Since its inauguration and as part of its pledge, Kocostar annually participates in 15 to 25 globally scaled cosmetics exhibitions to both promote its innovative products and cultivate trusting relationships with its partners. Kocostar fosters trust at exhibitions through its interaction with potential buyers and annual participations, showing resilience and growth, unlike most of its direct competitors. Its participation in trade shows has enabled physical meetings to gauge the trustworthiness of the partners before joining forces. Once an agent in a country signs with Kocostar, it neither sell its merchandise to another retail business within the country nor to a global e-commerce business, in order to control pricing and preserve the trust of its partners while simultaneously growing the brand's long-term value. As a result of this distribution strategy, Kocostar is the only Korean brand distributing its goods in over 2,600 Watsons outlets in the region within the contract.

As Kocostar burgeoned, its marketing campaign grew in tandem, from collaborations with artists, actresses, and beauty pageants. Its growth strategy included video promotions worldwide, media advertising such as TV programs and national magazines, SNS influencing via influencing platforms such as *Inspree* and *Glossybox*, and promotional activity such as subscription boxes and retailer limited time specials.

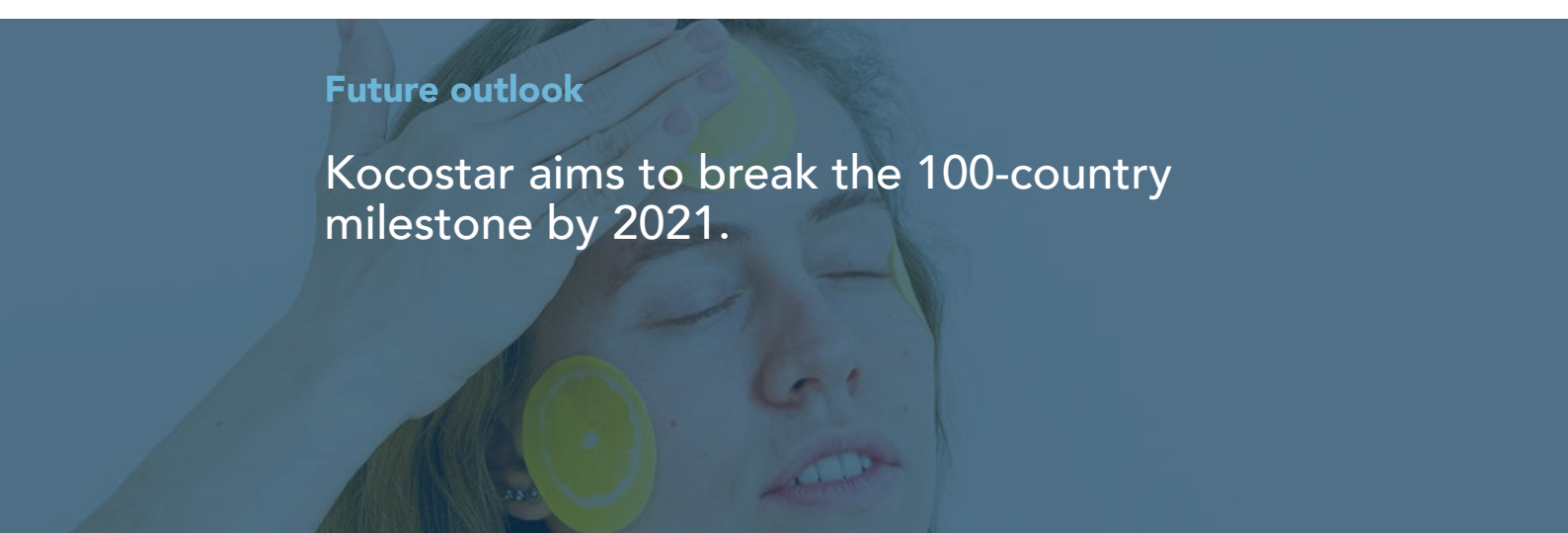
Within six years, it penetrated over 80 countries, including USA, Canada, China, Russia, Spain, Italy, Colombia, Chile, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Australia, Singapore, and Indonesia (and plans to venture into Turkey). From renowned US retailers to luxury European department stores, its retailers comprise *Neiman Marcus*, *Nordstrom*, *Urban Outfitters*, *Ulta Beauty*, and *Anthropologie* in the US, *Sephora Europe*, *Gallery Lafayette* in France, *Larina Cente* in Italy, *El Corte Inglés* in Spain/Portugal, and at major European airports with *Heineman Duty Free* and *Dupree Duty Free*. Over 90% of Kocostar's sales is derived from overseas distribution.

### Summary

- **Product design and packaging** - won awards for its packaging design and at least two of its products' design are patented
- **Product differentiation** - steered influencer marketing with influencers self-purchasing the products and providing their reviews
- **Exhibition participation** - key overseas expansion strategy lies in participating in international beauty trade shows

### Future outlook

Kocostar aims to break the 100-country milestone by 2021.





## Elizavecca Milky Piggy

**"This mask gets results – which is why it has amassed a cult following and more than 5,000 reviews on Amazon."**

*Aline Peres Martins, Women's Health Editor*

### Brand story

Elizavecca was founded by Professor Kim Hee Jun under the company MIZ Trade Inc. which was incorporated in 1986. The company's first skincare brand, Sesalo focuses on professional skincare products which are exclusively supplied to more than 2,000 aesthetics clinics and beauty centers in Korea. Elizavecca was established in 2011 to allow consumers the experience of quality professional skincare made affordable through its production technologies expertise.

Elizavecca believes in customer-centricity – consistently listening to consumer feedback – and only uses top-notch ingredients that are in compliance with strict GMP system to ensure product safety and efficiency. Its core ingredients are based on natural compositions such as low molecular weight pig collagen, charcoal, plant extracts, etc. The product range covers the basic skincare routine including cleanser, toner, exfoliant, moisturiser, and a repairing and whitening serum. Other products such as sunscreen, BB cream, foot mask, mask pack, eye mask patches are also available.

### Road to success

Elizavecca positioned itself as a young, energetic and fun skincare brand from the renowned beauty mecca, South Korea. The convenient and cute packaging gives consumers a fascinating impression and appears to be singularly aimed at Elizavecca's targeted market audience. The brand also prides itself in offering products that are reasonably priced, and hence, granting its consumers access to an excellent affordable skincare experience.

**Year launched:** 2011  
**Country of origin:** Korea  
**Target group:**  
Urban middle-class under 30  
**Price range:**  
US\$9 – US\$30

#### Bestseller

#### Carbonated Bubble Clay Mask



A clay mask with mud, charcoal, collagen, and green tea for absorption power to clean up skin waste and carbonic acid while keeping skin moisturised and smooth with botanical moisture ingredients

#### Outcome

Elizavecca Milky Piggy's Carbonated Bubble Clay Mask was Amazon's viral, best-selling face mask in 2017 with more than 5,000 reviews

Between 2011 and 2013, Elizavecca's sales exploded, following the introduction of its three legendary products – *Carbonated Bubble Clay Mask*, *Collagen Jella Pack* and *Hell-Pore Clean Up Mask* – and sales for the first month surpassed expectations. Elizavecca became one of the top selling skincare brands on multiple Korean e-commerce platforms such as *GMarket* and *Naver*. Furthermore, the effectiveness of Elizavecca's products created rage reviews and ongoing discussions among skincare vloggers. This brought the brand its cult status in the global skincare market.

Undoubtedly, Elizavecca's success did not come overnight. Its series of products came about through a combination of its past experience on *Sesalo*, the modern production technologies by *Schneider Germany*, and its stringent selection of natural ingredients. The unique formulation and effective results shown on consumers have become the best marketing tools for Elizavecca to tap into the skincare market.

In 2014, Elizavecca started three skincare counters in Myeong Dong, South Korea and appointed a trading company from Guang Zhou as an authorised importer to one of the largest skincare markets around the globe – China. Its products were quickly scattered across the Chinese market and could be found on e-commerce platforms including *Taobao*, *JD*, and *Jumei* as online retailers sold on these platforms. The brand continued its international expansion and the products are currently in various countries including Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Australia, United States, and Canada. The distribution channel of Elizavecca is mainly through authorised online resellers such as *YesStyle*, *Korean Kiwi Beauty*, *Jolse*, *Althea* and even *Amazon* and *Walmart*. These resellers adopt a dropshipping model where they receive orders from their customer base through their respective platforms and then notify Elizavecca to ship the products from its warehouses in South Korea to the resellers' customers.

### Summary

- **Well-verse distribution network** - Elizavecca has leveraged the online platform and established an extensive distribution network to rapidly expand its brand into the global market
- **Affordable pricing** - compared to similar products in the market (*Holika Holika Pig Collagen Jelly Pack* - \$20), its affordable pricing (*Collagen Jella Pack* - \$10) presents an opportunity for every consumer to try on the brand's products
- **Brand positioning** - Elizavecca is clear on its own brand position and target market – young adults that are concerned with natural ingredients, users' reviews and pricing

### Future outlook

Elizavecca plans to augment its consumer base to include a diverse demographic through the expansion of its product mix, which consists of hair masks, 24K snail cleanser, ginseng-infused essence, and by marketing its brand via social media platforms such as *TikTok*.

## Allies of Skin

**“We put our customers front and centre of all that we do – we let them speak for us and we also let our products speak for themselves.”**

*Nicholas Travis, CEO & Founder of Allies of Skin*

### Brand story

Allies of Skin was founded in 2016 by Nicholas Travis, with only three products launched: a day mask, an overnight mask and a mist. The brand is built on clean, honest, concentrated formulas backed by clinical trials and designed to work well with other brands to manifest effortless skincare. The product development journey for Allies of Skin spanned two and a half years of research and development. The formulas, perfected after about 12 revisions, went on to achieve cult status in key customer categories.

### Road to success

Initially, the company's products were sold exclusively on its online store. The founder's relentless efforts spent "repeatedly cold-calling international stockists" paid off when it secured its first American retailer, *Bloomingdale's*, after its launch. Four months later, it clinched its first British retailer, *Space NK*. *Net-A-Porter*, *Mr Porter*, *Farfetch*, and *Barneys* followed suit, dubbing it the first Singaporean-based brand stocked at these luxury retailers. Starting from July, its products were shelved on all *Sephora* Asia stores, making them available in 12 countries by 2018. The following year, it was persistent in penetrating the European market with beauty chain, *Douglas*, *Galeries Lafayette's*, and *Sephora* Europe. By April 2020, Allies of Skin was present in 23 markets worldwide.

Despite all the positive progressive opportunities, cashflow was always an issue for Allies of Skin as is with most start-ups. The business was kickstarted at a mid six-figure sum with the founder's own savings and some loans from his siblings. It broke even within nine months of operation and by the end of the year, reported sales at around S\$700,000 with e-commerce accounting for more than half of total sales. It also closed two funding rounds within the first year and amassed S\$450,000 for its international expansion. As it scaled up, the company remained competitive, integrating its supply chain by linking its e-commerce site to the fulfilment centres and its inventory system. The closing revenue for 2018 was more than S\$2mn. However, to fully support the brand distribution expansion, new product creation, revision of existing formulas, and marketing strategy, funds were still insufficient.

**Year launched:** 2016  
**Country of origin:** Singapore  
**Target group:** Modern day multi-hyphenate  
**Price range:** US\$38 – US\$120

### Bestseller

#### 1A All-Day Mask

The first time-released treatment mask that can be worn under makeup and sunblock, layered over essences and serums, or even slathered on its own to prevent and repair damage from pollution



### Outcome

Broken even within 9 months of operations and is currently available in 23 markets worldwide



During its infancy, Allies of Skin had a small budget and relied on word-of-mouth through numerous press coverage to grow the brand organically. This also secured its international retailers. Its founder's dream of establishing a global brand fuelled the utilisation of digital marketing for its branding to reach international audience at an affordable cost. In 2019, Allies of Skin partnered with Drve. By November of that year, it achieved the highest online revenue since its inception. Via its

investment programs, Drve funded the advertising budget and fully managed the digital marketing strategy using a data-driven approach. This approach scales online advertising spend with automated systems and strategies resulting in compounded online revenue growth and takes a cut from the recurring reinvested sum. Its channel business exploded and Allies of Skin placed its largest orders yet, for inventory.

### Summary

- **Product differentiation** - fills the market need for products that can be used together with other products
- **Product efficacy** - slow and steady R&D approach in refining its effective formula
- **Word-of-mouth marketing** - efficacy led to an effective marketing tool
- **Distribution network** - persistent cold-calls and follow-ups with retailers, and conscientious relationship building with buyers

### Future outlook

Allies of Skin, with its unconventional darlings, is further expanding its geographic footprint to attain global prominence.

## Petite Amie Skincare

"Well hydrated skin that felt soft, smooth, and supple. It also looked a bit brighter"

Eshoe, Sephora Beauty Editor

### Brand story

Petite Amie Skincare (PAS) is an emerging Taiwanese skincare brand, founded by Pu-Chen Yen in 2012 with a simple intent to make a difference by reinventing skincare through creativity and quality design. The initial line of products was segmented into four different series, namely *Anna*, *Lily*, *Mavis* and *Elisa*, each targeting different skin types and ages, respectively. PAS also prides itself as the first brand that introduced the serum series without a chemical solvent, said to be highly efficient for skin absorption. However, in 2016, PAS decided to redefine its branding position to offer luxury skincare.

### Road to success

PAS adopted a new approach of innovation and re-launched a whole new range of facial sheet masks infused with comprehensive skincare formulations. All ingredients incorporated into its products are intricately selected to address varying skin conditions and deliver the best after-effects for its users.

PAS is 100% vegan and does not contain any questionable ingredients. PAS classified its masks into 3 collections – *Classic*, *Emoji* and *Miint* – each with a targeted product mix of three to seven products. For instance, its *Classic* series is on the higher end of the spectrum with its classic trio that addressed 3 key skin concerns. One of its latest releases is the *Hybrid-cellulose Masque Luminous*, the most luxurious mask (\$15) that contains very exotic ingredients such as hydrolyzed okra, beetroot and dragon's blood – a natural tree resin known as a healing gem for all skin conditions.

The *Emoji* series is aimed at providing a fun, engaging experience for skincare treatment. PAS used trendy emojis to convey the varying benefits of its facial sheet masks to the consumers. The emoji-designed masks have flashed across social media for its cuteness. Its *Miint* series, on the other hand, consists of eye mask, skin mask patches and lip masks which are top sellers.

**Year launched:** 2012;  
re-launched in 2016  
**Country of origin:** Taiwan  
**Target group:**  
Mass affluent on-the-go young adults, social media active users  
**Price range:**  
US\$4 – US\$15

### Bestseller

#### Chillin' Masque

A plant-based moisturising mask formulated with niacinamide, matsutake mushroom, and matricaria flower to ensure hydration



### Outcome

Petite Amie Skincare was selected as the official gift for guests who visit *MacArthur Place*, the crème de la crème of luxury hotels in Sonoma, California

The lip masks were honored by *Harrods* for its unique formulation infused with damask rose, lavender and Vitamin B5. Furthermore, all PAS masks are made from ultra-fine fiber while the packaging are made from recycled paper, making the products 100% recyclable and highly environmentally friendly.

Despite the limited range of products offered by PAS compared to other skincare brands, the brand has successfully differentiated two target groups to focus on – the classic, quality skincare embracers and the trendy, social media hipsters. A notable mention is that PAS was selected as the official gift for guests who visit *MacArthur Place*, the crème de la crème of luxury hotel in Sonoma, California. Ever since PAS re-launched, its products have come highly recommended and have often been featured by the arbiters of skincare including *Byrdie*, *L'Oreal USA*, *Huffpost*, *The Zoe Report* and *Marie Claire France*. It has

also been participating in global trade shows and yearly exhibitions to connect with buyers, press, consumers and investors to discover and transact with the largest collection of independent beauty brands in the world.

The brand is accessible on its own online store which ships the merchandise from Taiwan to over 37 countries including the US, Canada, EU, ANZ, Japan and Singapore. PAS products are also widely distributed in renowned retail and online stores specifically in the US, the UK and UAE. By 2018, its products were on *Sephora* shelves and by April 2019, it partnered with *Selfridges* and with *Harrods*, shortly after. Its other retailers include *Francesca's*, *Aerie*, *American Eagle*, *Beauty Hall*, *Galerie Lafayette*, *Tryano*, *Harvey Nichols*, and *noon.com*, to name a few.

### Summary

- **Product focused** - PAS only focused on producing sheet masks (face, lip, eyes) which streamlined production resources and created the finest quality sheet masks
- **Organic marketing** - PAS adopted the "let-the-product-speaks-for-itself" strategy and was elected for the Top 300 global luxurious brands by Amazon, for the product efficacy and established organic marketing via reviews
- **Creative and photogenic masks** - the emoji sheet masks created an online ripple on social media, quickly establishing the brand among the youngsters
- **Branding flywheel through partnered distribution channels** - PAS distributed its products through top online stores or signature retail stores in respective regions to elevate its position as a luxurious skincare product to consumers

### Future outlook

With intentions to further penetrate the international market while working towards a sustainable future, Petite Amie Skincare has been participating in several international conferences and exhibitions such as *Cosmoprof* and collaborated with a speciality paper distributor in Japan to produce packaging using FSC-certified paper material for its new botanical series.



## Purearth

**“Where we source our ingredients our most unique brand attribute, as each ingredient is sourced from the potency of an eco-habitat within the Himalayan Mountains.”**

*Kavita Khosa, CEO & Founder of Purearth*

### Brand story

The social venture, Purearth, is an artisanal skincare and wellness brand that draws upon ancient Ayurveda for its clean and luxurious line. Its Himalayan-sourced ingredients are harnessed at the peak of their potency, and hand-poured into Miron glass jars to preserve the effectiveness of its formulations. Its plant- and mineral-based formulations are infused with ingredients such as steam-distilled rose essential oil, cold-pressed Himalayan wild sea buckthorn and rosehip seed oils that are foraged responsibly by micro-credit and women-led groups in the Himalayas, enabling the marginalised to engage with urban markets on fair terms. Apart from tea infusions and beauty accoutrement, its product offerings include creams, serums, toners, oils and masques, produced in limited batches at its zero waste studio.

### Road to success

Adamant in her cause to impact social change via sustainable, fair trade instead of aid through donation, corporate lawyer-turned-social entrepreneur, Kavita Khosa, with her knowledge of Ayurveda, founded Purearth in 2014. She conducted extensive research, travelled across the Himalayan villages, and partnered with NGOs, empowering women through microfinance and encouraging them to forage for seeds and products from the wild. Although the business model was cost-effective and convenient, sourcing mountain ingredients was a lengthy process. Since its various ingredients are sourced from different places, a centralised collection center was set up in Delhi for the ingredients to be shipped by bus to its Kangra workshop where the founder is personally involved in handmaking the products. The women foraging in the mountains are given microloans for a year, and throughout the season, they pick and dry the ingredients. Purearth collaborates with 1,500 women and pays them 15-20% above market rate. Funds are transferred into a joint account held by the self-help group to ensure the money is streamlined responsibly.

**Year launched:** 2014  
**Country of origin:** India / Hong Kong  
**Target group:** Conscious, ingredient-focused individuals  
**Price range:** US\$40 – US\$100

**Bestseller**  
**Mitti Raw Honey Clay Masque**



An award-winning clay mask infused with high-performance, organic Ayurvedic botanical actives and clays

### Outcome

Purearth reported a 140% increase in revenue in 2019 with 32% of sales from repeat customers

Despite the high price tag on Purearth products, the initial months were challenging with limited capital due to high import cost for its French biophotonic glass bottles which preserved the bio-active energy of its ingredients. Nevertheless, by 2017, her conviction paid off with Purearth doubling in revenue yearly since its beginning with a 100% growth rate for each of the last two years. In its endeavour to make the brand global by mid-2017, Purearth, had partnered with luxury resorts (such as the conglomerate-owned, *Leeu Collection* in South Africa), American retailers of over 200 stores *Anthropologie*, and a five-star airline to offer first class amenity kits via an agency. As of 2020, Purearth has a full-fledged retail cycle in over 20 luxury retail outlets across 11 countries including the UAE, Switzerland, and Australia, with established presence in major cities like New York and Paris.

As an advocate of conscious consumption, the brand introduced a recycling initiative

to move towards a zero-waste business by collecting Purearth glass jars and bottle from the customers' doorstep, free of charge and repurposing them in non-commercial ways. For every returned jar or bottle, Purearth plants a tree. Another initiative towards its zero-waste commitment which is underway is its *Refill Program* wherein in-store refill service will be available at selected locations. To further position the brand's commitment to high ethical standards and potent, natural ingredients of the purest forms in February 2020, Purearth invested in blockchain technology with a British partner auditing and verifying the brand's claims of transparency, accountability and sustainability to allow consumers to discover of the origin, journey and impact of Purearth's creations through a QR code on each product. Purearth stays true to its value and beliefs in its conscious effort towards a greener Earth and greener business practices.

### Summary

- **Retail distribution** - vital as its consumers are ingredient-conscious individuals with an elevated approach to clean beauty
- **Word-of-mouth marketing** - a majority of its consumers are acquired through word-of-mouth and direct selling
- **Brand value** - places equal importance on its profits, people, and the planet
- **Ingredients** - natural and foraged from the Himalayan Mountains' eco-habitat

### Future outlook

Plans are in place to further expand its geographic footprint into Asia and Europe through online and offline retail channels.

## Blithe

**“They use a special method of ‘slow cooling’ over a 36-hour period, versus processing ingredients with heat, so that efficacy is preserved and the unique texture is created.”**

*Christine Chang, Co-CEO & Co-founder of Glow Recipe*

### Brand story

Formulated to uniquely treat a combination of aging and pollution, Blithe products are innovative multi-taskers that use ingredients from exotic places on earth to rejuvenate and restore the skin. As a ‘smart’ skincare designed to minimise skin irritation caused by pollution and stress through the use of frontline scientific technology, Blithe is known for its 3-step skincare solution to refresh, recover, and recharge the skin with its portfolio of 5 collections namely, *Patting Splash Mask*, *Vital Treatment*, *Pressed Serum*, *Inbetween*, and *Special Care*.

### Road to success

In developing the skincare range, the Blithe team had to conduct extensive research on the lifestyle of women dwelling in cities as well as methods to effectively combat skin-aging. It ventured into optimising its formulation for its plant-based ingredients and maximised its products’ efficacy through increasing the potency of the products. For instance, in creating its pressed serums, Blithe uses a special method of 36-hour ‘slow cooling’ to mix its ingredients to preserve efficacy and its unique, jelly-like texture. The concoction also contains a blend of fermented natural oils to micronise the ingredients and improve absorption into the skin. Besides extracts from traditional sources like honey and green tea, its products are also infused with exotic extracts ranging from chaga mushroom to African baobab fruit. With K-beauty fans demanding unique yet effective ingredients, Blithe continues innovating with its unconventional formulas.

Renowned K-beauty specialists, Christine Chang and Sarah Lee discovered Blithe on one of their many trips to Korea during their search for gentle, yet concentrated, effective products for their then US-based natural K-beauty site, *Glow Recipe*. They partnered with Blithe and brought the brand onto their e-commerce site to re-market the brand’s products to the US consumers through the right translation and education.

**Year launched:** 2014  
**Country of origin:** Korea  
**Target group:**  
Urban, on-the-go women  
**Price range:**  
US\$15 - US\$38

### Bestseller

**Tundra Chaga  
Pressed Serum**



A custard-textured moisturiser imbued with chaga mushroom from the subzero tundra region

### Outcome

In less than 2 years, Blithe’s products swept the market, having sold out on several occasions

Apart from featuring potent serums and sheet masks, Chang and Lee used their platform to share their expertise and experience with the brands. From the endorsements of these two beauty industry veterans and product seeding efforts, Blithe was featured in many influential beauty publications such as *Allure*, *Glamour*, and *Refinery29* due to their reputation and the products' effective 15-second in-shower mask innovation, the *Patting Splash Mask*. With its concentrated, unadulterated ingredient list of lactic acid and botanical extracts, users raved about the noticeable results which increased Blithe's sales.

However, Blithe only grew exponentially when it was featured on *Shark Tank* in December 2015. Its *Tundra Chaga Pressed Serum* which contains 60% chaga mushroom extract, sold out several times due to its multi-tasking abilities as both a serum and a moisturiser. As *Glow Recipe* grew to be one of the biggest K-beauty retailers in the US, Blithe rode the waves and went on to gain more exposure at the KCON 2016 culture and music festival. By 2016, Blithe had already made its way onto the shelves of *Sephora*.

In July 2019, Blithe was no longer on *Glow Recipe* as the platform decided to focus on growing its own brand that was launched in 2017. Nonetheless, Blithe is available globally in over 15 countries in North America, Southeast Asia, Middle East, and Europe on the shelves of major big-box retailers including *Sephora* in Southeast Asia and the Middle East, Russia-based *Gold Apple* and *Rive Gauche*, *Kicks* in the Nordic region, high-end Italian retailer, *La Rinascente*, and French department store, *Le Bon Marche*. For its tech savvy consumers, Blithe is accessible through beauty e-commerce sites such as *YesStyle* in USA, Indonesian beauty chain *C&F*, and British e-tailer *Skin Library*.

### Summary

- **Partnership branding** - *Glow Recipe* curated Blithe, educated the American market, and featured the brand on *Shark Tank* and its online store
- **Self-branding** - Blithe branded themselves as a "smart" skincare for the urbanite
- **Unique selling point** - products itself were multitaskers i.e. 15-second masking treatment, *Patting Splash Mask* & 2-in-1 serum and moisturiser, *Pressed Serum*

### Future outlook

In an effort to continue streamlining the skincare routine without compromising efficacy, Blithe intends to establish itself in the world of makeup to enhance makeup wear and protect the skin.



## Coconut Matter

**“Moments like when my customers tell me that I’ve helped them live a more plastic-free life – it is these things that I hold dear to my heart and will keep me going.”**

*Diane van Zwanenberg, Founder of Coconut Matter*

### Brand story

With conscious consumption in mind, Diane van Zwanenberg founded Coconut Matter in 2015, to create a sustainable future that begins at home. With over 30 handcrafted lip and body care products, Coconut Matter is a plastic-free, natural and vegan beauty brand that promotes low-waste living. Its core value focuses on is fair trade, organic, virgin coconut oil that improves the livelihoods of rural Solomon Island communities. Other natural ingredients are derived from flowers, shrubs, fruits, seeds, plants, trees and minerals.

### Road to success

Having stumbled upon an Australian social enterprise which collaborates with the people in Solomon Islands to produce pure, virgin coconut oil, Diane was determined to understand the process better and help create a sustainable source of income for the people in Solomon Islands. She brought the coconut oil back to Hong Kong but the product did not gain traction. There was a mismatch between the cost-conscious consumers and their desire to be socially responsible. Subsequently, Diane decided to incorporate the coconut oil into beauty products.

Prior to Coconut Matter’s launch, many factors were taken into consideration to ensure that its products are plastic-free and contain only natural ingredients. Through rigorous research and testing, product formulation were altered to ensure compatibility with its compostable, eco-friendly packaging. The absorption rate of the different types of oil on paper materials varies, and so, ingredient selection was delicate. Each ingredient was first evaluated for its functionality and tactile benefits and then appropriately incorporated.

For instance, its coconut oil is harvested within an hour to retain the bioactive nutrients. The wild coconuts are de-husked and split by hand before being grated for their flesh. They are subsequently weighed into small batches for drying and once ready, are cold-pressed by hand. The freshly extracted coconut oil is then filtered to ensure purity and is ultimately bottled. In 2015, the *Wild Virgin Coconut Oil* was its first ever product to be sold.

Similarly, lemongrass was included in its signature deodorant tubes of 19 ingredients to calm and de-stress. The most challenging and time-consuming task was ensuring that the deodorant glided smooth and dry after application.

**Year launched:** 2015  
**Country of origin:** Hong Kong  
**Target group:**  
 Low-waste, organic consumer  
**Price range:**  
 US\$12 – US\$27

**Bestseller**  
**Mood Natural**  
**Deodorant**



Natural deodorant sticks sustainably packaged for zero ecological footprint

### Outcome

Coconut Matter was nominated for best sustainable packaging in 2019 *Best In Show*

The interior of the tube are made of cardboard lined with food-grade wax paper with a biodegradable lamination on the outside. The decomposition rate for the cardboard and wax paper are the same as leaves in the forest while the biodegradable laminate takes 3-5 years. From the R&D phase to market testing, and after nearly 300 formulation adjustments in a span of two years, its prebiotic deodorants finally came to be.

In September 2016, Coconut Matter tested the concept of plastic-free packaging with the launch of its lip balm packaged in paper tubes. Sales were trifling. However, when a typhoon washed ashore Styrofoam and plastic trash in 2017, over 1,000 paper tubes of lip balm were sold. This invigorated Diane to continue experimenting with other plastic-free packaging and product ideas, and by 2018, its plastic-free natural deodorant was born. Although the deodorant was well-received, continuous reiteration on the product formulation introduced its second-generation deodorant, *Mood*, in May 2019. Later that year, the brand launched a Kickstarter campaign for *Bliss Mood Deodorant* – a tough, yet gentle all-day deodorant, and raised US\$50,000 to scale up production and

distribute globally. *Mood*'s success broadened the brand's reach into international markets.

Coconut Matter is headquartered in Hong Kong and its products are stocked in over 90 physical stores across Hong Kong, Macau, China, UAE, Vietnam, and the US. Although the brand ships globally, it has partnered with more than 10 e-commerce sites that are based in Hong Kong, UK, and Australia, all of which have the same vision of protecting mother nature. Its stockists include the likes of *O'Farm Organic Store* (organic grocer of imported products), *Erewhon* (Los Angeles' priciest health food market), *Ecomode* (Macanese distributor of eco-friendly product), and *Zalora Hong Kong* (online fashion retailer).

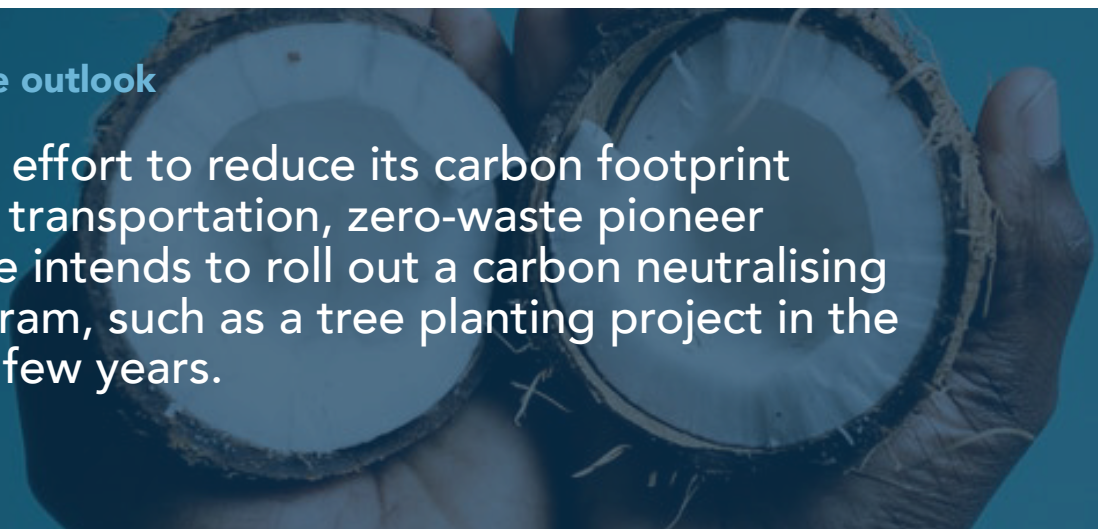
While its social media content played an important role in conveying its brand story, a great deal of marketing effort was put into establishing media partnerships and attending some of the most niche events such as the *Indie Beauty Expo* in New York. The brand has been featured in publications including *Cosmopolitan*, *Vogue*, and *Harper's Bazaar*, creating quite a reputation within the clean beauty industry.

### Summary

- **Brand value** - its adherence to its values on being a socially responsible brand on its zero-waste journey
- **Targeted marketing** - it focused on a niche market of organic, toxin-free beauty consumers
- **Product differentiation** - the creation of its biodegradable, plastic-free packaging set the brand apart from its competitors

### Future outlook

In an effort to reduce its carbon footprint from transportation, zero-waste pioneer Diane intends to roll out a carbon neutralising program, such as a tree planting project in the next few years.



## DamDam

**“Japan has a lot of know-how and hundreds of years of experience in formulating. It's just about creating something in a cleaner way. We have been applying questionable ingredients on our skin for years now, which get absorbed in the blood. And we wanted to change that.”**

*Giselle Go and Philippe Terrien, Founders of DamDam*

### Brand story

Launched in 2018, DamDam is an affordable skincare line that focuses on easy, everyday products with clean formulae in chic packaging. Its skincare range comprises just five essential products – a cleanser, an essence, a face oil, a 5-minute mask, and a lip and skin balm. Its toxin-free products are made from locally sourced, natural ingredients and are packed to deliver potency perfected by clean technology. Its star ingredients include moisturising konjac mannan, exfoliating kaolin, skin-repairing sesame oil, and restorative jojoba seed oil.

### Road to success

Giselle Go and Philippe Terrien, DamDam's founders, began sourcing natural plant ingredients local to Asia, with their ideal brand concept already in mind. Its kitchen-turned-laboratory ran trial and error tests for scents, waxes, oils, textures, and efficacy. They then collaborated with a Japanese laboratory for more than a year and a half to develop its products under the guidance of a Parisian chemist.

During its official launch event in Tokyo, DamDam welcomed family, friends, and over 200 journalists and editors to its showroom. They were encouraged to experience the products while the founders shared some facts on how the brand came about and on the importance of eliminating toxins daily. Herb-infused water, spice-spiked coffee, and custom banana-ginger macarons were served to complement the brand's concept.

Its founders' passion for artisanal, handmade goods moved them to collaborate with artisans from around the world and have extended DamDam's duty as a platform to share their products. Japanese artisans and makers, in particular, are their core focus as part of their commitment to celebrate Japanese craftsmanship. As a result of its community building strategy, DamDam's portfolio of micro-influencers grew through connections with friends of friends and vice versa.

**Year launched:** 2018  
**Country of origin:** Japan  
**Target group:**  
Eco-friendly city dwellers  
**Price range:**  
US\$25 – US\$70

#### Bestseller

##### Magic Drops

A balancing oil known for its lightweight, radiance-boosting actives that forms a protective barrier against 'pollu-aging'



#### Outcome

In less than a year, DamDam was on the shelves of *Makeup Kitchen*, a subsidiary of Mash Holdings, a fashion and beauty conglomerate

DamDam's main source of social media marketing is done via its Instagram, having amassed over 30,000 followers. Its feed features micro-influencers who use the DamDam products along with a slew of assorted photography on nature and lifestyle subtly integrating its brand, products, and values. Its micro-influencers are from a wide array of backgrounds including fashion freelancers, models, actors, bloggers, freelance art directors, sound therapists, stylists, consultants, and directors from all around the world.

DamDam is sold throughout Japan with global shipping available on its online

store. Prior to launch, DamDam invited retailers to its showroom for a *tenjikai* to secure partnerships. These partners were only selected if their brand image and values are aligned with DamDam's. Its Japanese retailers include Mash Holdings' natural and organic beauty chain retailers – *Cosme Kitchen* and *Makeup Kitchen*, American luxury department store – *Barneys New York Japan*, American boutique store – *Ron Herman*, import retailer – *Restir*, and Japanese fashion conglomerate – *Tomorrowland*.

### Summary

- **Reputation** - although clean beauty is still a niche market in Asia, DamDam is one of the more well-known brands within the clean beauty landscape
- **Formulation** - thousand-year old natural medicine and precious, potent resources within the Asian region are embodied by DamDam
- **Influencer marketing** - social media increased the brand awareness amongst international audience
- **Customer engagement** - pop-up events, media coverages, and collaborations with artisans and independent artists kept local consumers engaged through interaction and communication

### Future outlook

Its founders revealed expansion plans for its skincare range with formulations underway and further collaborations with new artists while its distribution network expansion takes off in 2021, starting with the US and subsequently, Europe.



## Snow Fox

**“Taking good care of your skin, knowing your skin, and understanding what it means is the key to maintaining the way I look now. That’s what drives Snow Fox’s formulation and technology.”**

*Phoebe Song, Founder of Snow Fox*

### Brand story

Snow Fox was initiated by founder Phoebe Song as a result of her personal health challenge. She was a skin disease patient diagnosed with Rosacea Type 2, an immunity-related disease. Dedicated to helping those who face hypersensitive, chronic skin conditions, Phoebe developed products that delivered the art of “Clean Potency” which keeps the skin in an optimal state and free from any side effects. The brand has a wide product range from cleansers, face oils, moisturisers, sheet masks, tonics and serums to hand, bath and body care products, as well as accessories such as facial rollers and a *Gua Sha* set to complement one’s skincare routine. However, most of its recommended products are often packaged in a set on its website as they are meant to be used together due to its complex formulation for combating problematic skin.

**Year launched:** 2016  
**Country of origin:** Hong Kong  
**Target group:**  
 Individuals with sensitive skin  
**Price range:**  
 US\$35 – US\$82

### Bestseller

**Arctic Breeze  
 Detox Mask**



An award-winning, organic mask infused with peppermint oil and aloe vera leaf to hydrate, brighten and calm skin irritations

### Outcome

Within six months, Snow Fox garnered a cult following for its organic mask, triggering a global shortage of two months

### Road to success

After two years of research and development, Snow Fox decided to adopt a combination of traditional Eastern, herbal concepts and modern dermatological technology to produce high performing yet sensitive-skin friendly products that are compatible for both professional grade and personal consumer usage. Snow Fox emphasises on clean beauty through use of organic, natural substances with an eco-conscious vision of ethical sourcing, recyclable packaging, and the use of renewable energies. The brand launched in November 2016 with only three products – a cleanser, a mask, and a cream.

Within six months, Snow Fox had acquired cult status. Four months after its release, Snow Fox was listed in the *Top 10 Best Green Beauty Brands* by *Marie Claire*. The quality and the visible results delivered by its products spoke for themselves, when the *Arctic Breeze Detox Mask* sold out worldwide, causing a two-month-long global waitlist. A year later, the brand once again took up another challenge claiming that the new formulation works like a natural “Botox” – a commonly known medical aesthetics procedure to fight against ageing – when it introduced its *Herbal Youth Oil*. Rare and exotic medicinal plants like the Brazilian paracress and ancient Chinese longevity tonic, the astragalus root extract, were utilised in achieving the anti-ageing goal.

Although Snow Fox has been featured on numerous publications including *Elle*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *Cosmopolitan*, and *Marie Claire*, its best marketing yet was through its founder. Phoebe went through numerous interviews with different media to share her personal encounters and problems with skin irritation. This particularly resonated with readers who struggled with skin concerns. Her authenticity and genuine intention of helping others with similar skin issues to regain self-esteem and confidence was the brand's best marketing approach as consumers were able to see the results of its products on none other than the founder herself.

Initially, Snow Fox was exclusively available only in Asia and Switzerland. When the brand gained serious traction, it offered worldwide shipping through two main logistics warehouses in Hong Kong and Brooklyn. With the exception of the US and Canada, most of its international orders are shipped out from its international hub in Hong Kong. While the brand's products are also available on *Amazon*, they are rarely seen on other e-commerce platforms. In addition to the direct-to-consumer strategy, Snow Fox also targets wholesalers. Snow Fox partnered with *Faire*, an online wholesale marketplace, for interested retailers to make large-scale purchases at bulk pricing.

### Summary

- **Focused goal** - products were designed with a simplified goal of promoting long-term effective system of management for people with different skin issues
- **Leveraged natural ingredients** - Snow Fox studied and infused ancient medicinal ingredients such as astragalus root extract used by ancient Chinese emperor to exploit its longevity benefits
- **Brand values** - its founder's values are exhibited in the brand with an intentional purpose to positively impact family, friends, work and the society

### Future outlook

Snow Fox intends to shift its R&D focus to experiment with new and rare active-ingredient-based products that remain sensitive skin-friendly for more specific treatments of different skin conditions.

## About Twimbit



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## About Basel Holdings



Basel Holdings is a diversified group headquartered in Singapore with investments in local market distribution of fragrances and beauty care as well as operating multiple travel retail outlets in Southeast Asia, Central Asia, Africa and Indian Sub-continent. Our operations span 15 countries across 2 continents and touch over 50M people each year. With the strong support of the world's leading brand houses, we are committed to improve the customer experiences across our outlets by using breakthrough technology with a personal touch. We look forward to seeing you in one of our outlets soon.

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