

ART



DIRECTION

**AT
LAST!**

EXPLAINED,

STEVEN HELLER + VERONIQUE VIENNE

THE ALLURING ART OF ALLURE

CASE STUDY: Kiehl's Cosmetic Packages

Allure is a slippery term. For some it connotes elegance in the extreme, for others it means sublime simplicity. Kiehl's, the quirky cosmetic and sundry brand, builds its allure on tradition—an old-style drugstore approach to packaging that is almost antidesign. So how does Victoria Maddocks, creative director for Kiehl's, art direct for allure?

First and foremost, she says, "I know my subject thoroughly." Having this innate understanding allows her to work more instinctively, and ultimately gives her more freedom in the communication of the overall message. "After all," she adds, "it's simply about hiring the best talent, be it photographer, stylist, or postproduction specialist." Then she focuses on the details. "When conceptualizing ideas, I always consider such things as composition, color, and lighting—ultimately assessing the overall impact of every aspect of the look and feel."

Are there any tricks or tropes that Maddocks has mastered to make Kiehl's products alluring? The straightforward, educational—almost medicinal—appearance of Kiehl's products represents a primary means of communication, and is important in appealing visually to customers. Using materials such as stainless steel for caps and necks gives, for example, the anti-ageing range of formulas an element of prestige. Even practical and functional additions such as pumps add allure. As do better evacuation and dispensing systems that help preserve formulas. And, ultimately, more use of color in packaging across the board sometimes helps to seduce, while copy, though generally serious, is sometimes playful.

Kiehl's has a distinct, low-key, virtually non-design style. But this has changed over the past five years to increase the allure factor.



▲ FOREST RAIN

Designer: Darren Kuhnau; Creative Director: Victoria Maddocks

◀ ALOE VERA BIODEGRADABLE
LIQUID BODY CLEANSER

Designers: Victoria Maddocks
and Darren Kuhnau

Creative Director: Victoria Maddocks

Kiehl's
SINCE 1851
"ALOE VERA"
BIODEGRADABLE
LIQUID BODY CLEANSER

In partnership with Brad Pitt for JPF Eco Systems

KIEHL'S FORMULATED THIS PRODUCT TO
MINIMIZE THE IMPACT WE HAVE ON OUR ENVIRONMENT.
ALL PROCEEDS WILL GO TO BENEFIT GREEN
INITIATIVES AROUND THE GLOBE.

100% of net profits from the sale of
this product will support global environmental
initiatives of JPF Eco Systems

Brad Pitt

100% Biodegradable Ingredients

6.8 fl. oz. - 200 ml



805987XX



Kiehl's ***LIP***
BALM #1

***SPF 4 Sunscreen
Petrolatum Skin
Protectant***

Temporarily protects and helps relieve chapped or cracked lips. Helps protect lips from the drying effects of wind and cold weather. Apply liberally to lips and allow an excess of the balm to be absorbed.

KIEHL'S SINCE 1851 LLC
NEW YORK, NY 10014

MADE IN U.S.A.
www.kiehls.com

0.5 fl. oz. - 15 ml

With the introduction of new products and categories “we have simultaneously opened up our design palette and allowed for a bit less rigid or uniform look to our packaging,” explains Maddocks. “We are even touching the very iconic Lip Balm #1 tube package, in that we’re adding a red ribbon to honor World AIDS Day, with the proceeds from all the sales of this product benefiting local AIDS charities around the world.”

What typefaces say allure? Maddocks believes there are typefaces that are most definitely more alluring or beautiful than others. “Of course everything working together in harmony in any piece of design is what makes something really alluring. We consider our written communication to our customers—on our product labels as well as our in-store collateral and signage—to be an important means of messaging to them about our company, so it is also imperative that we always strike a balance between consistencies and design in the typefaces we select.”

As for alluring products, Maddox admits the fragrances are extremely alluring, and the packaging for Forest Rain, the company’s newest fragrance, communicates that allure—along with the tradition of the original Kiehl Pharmacy—in a most modern and evocative manner.

◀ **KIEHL'S LIP BALM #1**

Designer: Darren Kuhnau

Creative Director: Victoria Maddocks

But what is the least alluring? “Ultra Moisturizing Eye Stick SPF 30,” she says. “While the product itself is perfectly functional and is apparently well loved by athletes and sailors around the world, I’d love to redesign its packaging. I see opportunities to better communicate our history of supporting adventurous and athletic endeavors, as well as our commitment to educating our customers on the importance of using sun protection regularly.”

What makes Maddocks’s art direction different? “I understand business. Having this strong commercial instinct partnered with a highly creative storytelling capacity is more unique than common, and I consider this left-brain, right-brain combination to be a distinctive attribute. Having a very clear picture of the business objectives in sight while listening to multiple ideas is a trait an art director must hone.”



◀ KIEHL'S ABYSSINE CREAM +

Designer: Darren Kuhnau

Creative Director: Victoria Maddocks