

LUSH FRESH HANDMADE COSMETICS

Inspired by Imagination



AS IT NEARS
1,000 STORES
WORLDWIDE,
LUSH'S IDENTITY

REMAINS THE SAME, MAKING EFFECTIVE PRODUCTS FROM FRESH ORGANIC FRUIT AND VEGETABLES, THE FINEST ESSENTIAL OILS AND SAFE SYNTHETICS. HERE, RLI SITS DOWN WITH DIRECTOR KARL BYGRAVE TO TALK ABOUT THE BRAND AND WHAT LIES AHEAD.

Lush continues to invent its own products and fragrances, buy ingredients only from companies that do not commission tests on animals and believe that words such as 'fresh' and 'organic' can have an honest meaning beyond marketing.

Launched in 1995, the company now has 933 stores across such countries as the Netherlands, Spain, Italy, France, Japan, Hong Kong and many more; in total the company operates in 49 countries.

"Over the past 12 months, like for like sales have grown by around 20 per cent," says Karl Bygrave, Director at Lush. "However it is in perception that I feel the company has experienced real growth. There is a far greater understanding of what we do and what we are about," Bygrave continues.

Hard work has been undertaken to initiate this understanding, and this has resulted in improvements across all aspects of the business, from clearer messages

in store, to social media improvements, to additional interaction with customers and more streamlined product development.

In the last few years the company has evolved significantly. Recently, they have gone against type and tested a larger store format on Oxford Street which came in at around 9,000sq ft, a much larger size than normal. "There has been a strong learning curve with this larger store, but it has highlighted to us that people are interested in the bigger store format," says Bygrave. The company has also begun operating Lush spas where people can enjoy



LUSH DUBAI MALL, UAE



LUSH TVERSKAYA, MOSCOW, RUSSIA



LUSH OXFORD STREET, LONDON, UK



tailored spa treatments and there is now 17 of these in operation across the world.

Lush continues to open new stores, another larger format store was opened a couple of months ago in Scottsdale, Arizona. Other new stores were opened in Lille in the last quarter of last year, whilst another opened in the high profile area of Milan Piazza del Duomo.

Over the next couple of years, the company is looking to open 5-10 stores a quarter to reach its long term target of 1,000 stores. Lush is also developing

its overall store portfolio, closing smaller stores and relocating to larger stores which can provide a better experience for customers.

So is the company considering any new markets?

"We just opened in Thailand, and we are looking at Taiwan as a possibility as well. At the moment the focus is more on the South American markets, in particular Argentina. There is still several markets available to us, it is about finding the right ones at the right time for us," explains Bygrave.

Even more than 20 years after the opening of the first store, the founders remain heavily involved in the creativity of new products, and this creativity is ingrained into the business as it remains a product driven company.

Operating in many different countries, the company maintains similar product lines in each of the markets in which it operates. "Our products are accepted around the world, so we don't see massive differences in what's popular from one market to another, there are only slight variations in our product offering across different borders," says Bygrave.

Lush has always been a very open company, welcoming input from customers and offering several avenues for them to voice their opinions. This attitude ties in well with the current importance of social media; and the company has put a lot of work into this aspect of their marketing strategy. "We've always liked to hear from our customers, and social media is an excellent platform for this. Customers can contact us, we can put out messages as well and it is a strong driver for us moving forward," explains Bygrave.

Never possessing a particular type of customer, Lush prides itself on making its stores as open and inviting for men and women as well as boys and girls. Part of the reason for the new larger stores is to ensure that within this wider selection there is choice for every member of the family, promoting an inclusive philosophy rather than an exclusive philosophy.

So what does Bygrave consider to be the key drivers behind the brand's success to date?

"Our products and our people, we try to make fun, interesting to use and environmentally friendly products. We make products that have everything, products that smell great, are effective on the skin and look fantastic. We've also got excellent, committed and caring staff members, who want to do the best they can for each customer that comes through the Lush doors."

Looking ahead, Bygrave believes that the company is only limited by its imagination and that the greatest challenge is the mobility of people in this current unstable environment. "In our way of developing products, our inspiration comes from all over the world and we want to continue to celebrate this in the future," concludes Bygrave.



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