



20 years of cosnova beauty – the market leader's recipe for success

No company sells more nail polish, lipstick and other make-up products in Germany and Europe than cosnova. What began with a vision of a brand with high-quality make-up products at the best possible price in 2002 is now entering its third decade and is more successful than ever in over 80 countries around the world. cosnova started its jubilee year with its highest net sales to date of 467 million Euros.

To mark its 20th anniversary, the message is: 'Make beauty fun'. The company and its brand essence, which is also turning 20, are both presenting themselves with completely new as well as familiar faces that tell their own individual stories.

Sulzbach, 27th May 2022

Twenty years ago, hardly anyone believed that the start-up company cosnova would rise to the top of the German and European cosmetics industry. And yet the family business has been the unit market leader* for decorative cosmetics in Germany since 2007 and in Europe since 2010, and is number two** in terms of turnover. The secret of its success is as simple as it is convincing: top quality and innovation at low prices and a family of brands that consistently delivers on its promise to "make everyone feel more beautiful".

"The cliché used to be that cosmetics were a luxury and that women were happy to spend a lot of money on them," says company founder Christina Oster-Daum. "There were some low-priced brands, but they lacked some important ingredients for success. The market was ripe for a trendy cosmetics brand that every woman could afford without having to compromise on quality, innovation and design.

With products that they could be proud of carrying around in their handbag. For me, that's exactly the approach I've taken ever since. To this day, my mission is to "make everyone feel more beautiful" and that's what it will remain in the future".

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Christina Oster-Daum,
Founder and president of cosnova GmbH



Market leader in
Ger by number of
units**



Around 700 employees



In over 80 countries

467

million euros net sales in 2021
(cosnova Group)

*essence ** Nielsen, LEH/DM/KWH, Oct. 2021

20 faces for 20 years

This mission is also supported by the jubilee campaign, which encourages consumers to show all the colours and facets of their personality. The focus will be on encouraging their creativity. Make-up helps people to express themselves and to underline their own identity. At the same time, one thing remains clear: beauty is not a competition, there is no pressure to strive for conventional beauty ideals. It is about each individual's joy in it. And this is what the 20 faces of the cosnova family represent.



For the jubilee campaign, cosnova is placing its employees and their very personal stories in the spotlight, thereby showing the people who have made the company what it is today. They come from the most diverse business areas and levels and represent all of the aspects that make cosnova so successful.



A team of influencers who embody all of the facets and beliefs of essence will support the brand during the jubilee year. They share their stories and define beauty from their own personal perspective, for example by talking about topics that are important to them, such as body positivity, diversity and gender neutrality. Others talk about living in two worlds as people with a migration background or as adolescents coming of age.

Deliberately different

From the very beginning, Christina Oster-Daum and her co-founder and husband Javier González did many things differently than was the norm in the industry at that time. Both of them knew the market very well, they had gained a lot of experience at companies like Procter & Gamble, Coty, Nestlé and Wella. They launched their business quite unglamorously from the dining room table in their home in Frankfurt, where they marketed the first 50 or so products of the essence brand. These cost an average of two euros and were around five euros cheaper than the market leader at the time. Soon, there were more and more products and their apartment proved to be too small. "At some point, there were piles of boxes around our bed in our bedroom. That's when we realised that we urgently needed an office and storage space," the founding couple reminisces about this important milestone. Today, cosnova is an international player with around 700 employees worldwide, of which around 450 work at the German headquarters in Sulzbach alone.

cosnova also broke new ground in terms of advertising right from the start: essence managed to carry out its market launch without any advertising at all - previously unthinkable in the world of glossy ads with supermodels. The drugstore chain dm gave the newcomer a chance and was the first retailer to include the brand in its portfolio in 2002. The new brand with its surprisingly low prices attracted many customers who wanted to try it out, and they stayed loyal to the brand. Similar successes were quickly achieved in other drugstores and retail outlets, as well as in more and more countries around the world. The products are now available in over 80 countries worldwide. These include Europe and the Middle East, as well as North and South America, Asia and Africa.

Two brand lines - one promise

In 2004, the second brand followed with CATRICE. While essence is primarily aimed at Gen Z, who are playful and enjoy having fun with different beauty products, CATRICE is more geared towards women who have already found their style but still like to experiment with make-up. That's why it's important to keep delivering new and innovative products. Every year, about 50 percent of the approximately

1,500 different items in the range are exchanged. In addition, there are monthly Limited Editions featuring the latest trend topics. Nowadays, an essence counter contains more than 500 products. It is hard to imagine a beauty bag without the brand's bestsellers; the essence Lash Princess Mascara alone is sold around the world every 4 seconds. Every year, cosnova sells an estimated 400 million products. 90 percent of these are manufactured in Europe, especially in Germany, France, Poland and Italy.

Sustainability remains a top priority

Since its foundation, cosnova has placed great value on a responsible and sustainable approach to nature and the environment. From the very beginning, all products have been manufactured 100 percent without any testing on animals. Since the essence Fall/Winter 2021 update the entire range consists of 100 percent vegan ingredients. At CATRICE, this is the case 99 percent of the time. In addition, cosnova makes sure - on the basis of strict, self-imposed Clean Beauty Standards - to use ingredients of natural origin whenever possible.

cosnova has taken another important step towards its goal of achieving the greatest possible climate protection: Since 1 January 2022, the family-owned company as well as all products from essence and CATRICE have been climate neutral through compensation. Together with ClimatePartner cosnova chose a compensation project in India: The wind farm project in Jangi, is certified according to international standards and the TÜV Nord Cert. To reduce CO2 emissions in the long term, cosnova - as a new member of the "Science-Based Targets Initiative (SBTi)" - will develop a comprehensive climate strategy by the end of the year. The main focus will be on the increased use of recycled materials and a generally more climate-friendly design of the packaging, a reduction in the use of particularly climate-damaging transportation, an even stronger use of European suppliers as well as innovative mobility concepts for all employees.

The democratization of beauty continues

cosnova still largely makes do without classic advertising. The communication with consumers and collaboration with influencers on its various social media platforms is more important and more successful. The exchange is much more targeted and direct there, which also facilitates and accelerates any needed adjustments to the product portfolio.

For Oster-Daum, it is clear: "We don't talk about our customers, we communicate with them. By engaging with them, we learn to understand their wishes better and can develop products and services that are tailored to their needs."

The beauty visionary has a lot planned for the coming years. In addition to the ambitious climate goals, she plans to further expand the digital sector, intensify the collaboration with influencers and make the company's own content production even more strategic. New markets are already on the list, and existing ones will continue to be expanded - especially in the area of e-commerce. New concepts are also already in the starting blocks.

"Things will definitely stay exciting! We have a lot planned and are in an ideal position to do so. I'm looking forward to the rest of the journey and the next 20 years of cosnova Beauty," is how Christina Oster-Daum sums it up.

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About cosnova Beauty

cosnova Beauty with headquarters in Sulzbach/Germany is managed by the Executive Managers Mathias Delor, Javier González, Gesine Hild, Dirk Lauber, Christina Oster-Daum, Hilko Prah and Yvonne Wutzler. At the end of the fiscal year 2021, cosnova Beauty had around 650 employees around the world. Meanwhile, its cosmetic brands essence and CATRICE are sold in over 80 countries in Europe, North and South America, the Middle East, Asia, Oceania and Africa. The company's customers include drugstores, food retailers, department stores, perfumeries and fashion chains as well as various online trade partners. In addition, essence and CATRICE are also each represented with their own online stores.

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