

## Vanessa Paradis

Woody Allen,  
love songs and life after  
Johnny Depp



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The birds that flew back from the

CLEAN AGES

Unilever's plan to save the v

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**Claire Vero, founder, Aurelia Probiotic Skincare**

Aurelia isn't just a lovely looking brand with an original formula, it came to the market in a thoroughly modern way. As the ex-global marketing director at GlaxoSmithKline, its founder Claire Vero had good insight into brand development from seed to shelf, and understood that products must perform like workhorses but also look good. She launched her first product, Miracle Cleanser, which sells for £34, in February. She focused on probiotic-based formulas because, she explains, 'as well as offering skincare benefits probiotics is a wellbeing buzzword'. The company's products have been developed from a science-based approach but have kept the emphasis firmly on natural ingredients. Trials found that Aurelia's probiotic technology improved cell vitality, for example, ensuring that the products have a healthy credibility. Vero invested in a small production run and got distribution via the MyShowcase stylists network, effectively bypassing the high street. By that



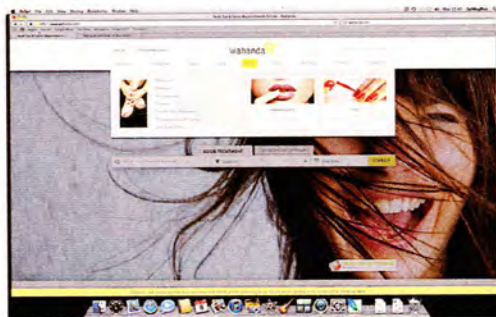
time it already had an active following on Facebook and Twitter. 'Stores focus on driving value per square foot, so despite the growth of small brands people don't get to see them, as they can't afford a conventional high-street roll-out,' Vero says. She hopes more retailers will start supporting promising small brands.

**Lopo Champalimaud, founder, Wahanda (above right)**

The man behind Wahanda, Lopo Champalimaud, says, 'The spa and salon business is a £10 billion market, yet the way we shop for it is antiquated. Only one per cent of salon bookings are made online. I couldn't understand why, when so much else is booked online – restaurants, hotels and theatre tickets – we weren't booking beauty like this.' Quite simply, no one had developed the system. So he launched Wahanda to revolutionise the bookings side of professional beauty. Champalimaud, previously at lastminute.com, spent five years creating a means to

check the availability of a treatment anywhere in the UK, book it and rate the salon. So if you want a leg wax in Sherborne, you can find out which salon does it best and book it, in some cases for the same day.

Wahanda hosts the appointment books, and in making that side of their business more efficient salons can offer discounts. There are currently 2,025 hair salons, spas and beauty parlours signed up to the service nationwide. 'We encourage salons to discount at different times,' Champalimaud explains. 'The average spa/salon runs at less than 50 per cent capacity so there are gaps of unused time. So we advise salons to price according to peak times because with our system they can fill those empty gaps quickly and customers can make informed choices about when to book.'



**Kay Montano, make-up artist and social networker (with Thandie Newton, below)**

One of the most influential make-up artists of her generation, Kay Montano has worked with all the great photographers over the past 20 years, yet she admits that more people now know about her work through her social media activity than anything else. Montano is part of a clique of beauty experts – names such as Sam McKnight, Pam McGrath and Josh Wood – who have found a new relevance, audience and creative outlet through digital media. For her, the appeal of blogging, Instagramming, vlogging and tweeting is their limitless inventiveness. 'It's like I've created a new career for myself. I love finding different references and putting them together to make a story. I can do make-up in



my sleep, but I've learnt how to use Photoshop in a similar back-to-front way as the photographer Mario Sorrenti used to work: he had the pictures in his mind and learnt the technology to create them. It's the same principle with blogging – you learn as you go.'

For her followers the interest is Montano's experience – if you want to know how to do a smoky eye, you watch Montano to show you – and her world: the little Instagrammed vignettes from a shoot with Thandie Newton, the shoes she finds at a vintage boutique in New York or images from her archives of shoots for *Vogue*. 'The internet has made me feel perennial,' she says. 'I feel part of the 21st-century world in a way that I didn't before. It's creatively freeing, and there is positivity in reminding each other what's great about stuff.'

