

ASSESSING THE EFFICACY OF EMOTIVE AND WELLNESS CLAIMS

AYTON GLOBAL RESEARCH

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Introduction

The beauty industry has become a major player in the wellness revolution as self-care has become part of physical, mental, and emotional health. Consumers are developing a holistic approach to health and beauty, with a growing realisation that to look good on the outside you must feel good on the inside. As such, brands making advertising claims that are based on emotion and wellbeing are more and more appealing to the current cosmetic audience. But how can brands ensure that these subjective claims have substance and do not mislead consumers?

The EU Cosmetics Regulation guidance on subjective claims states:

'Claims must be supported by reliable, relevant, and robust evidence. There is no difference between subjective, objective, established or new advertising claims: all must be supported by relevant, reliable and robust evidence. A subjective claim can be a sensory, performance or aesthetic claim based on consumer perception, as it expresses the consumer experience when using a product.'

Ayton Global Research, as consumer research specialists for claim substantiation, are at the forefront of perception claims and consumer insight. Therefore, they have conducted a survey to investigate what consumers want to see in advertising for products with emotive and wellness claims. They have reviewed how brands can communicate this in their marketing, all whilst staying compliant with advertising regulations.

Methods

This market research study was conducted in January 2022 in the form of an online survey in the UK. The study protocol was developed and executed in accordance with Good Clinical Practice (GCP) [1], and the Market Research Society (MRS) code of conduct for ethical market research practices. [2]

A total of 493 female (95%) and male (5%) volunteers, aged between 18 and 70 years actively participated in the study. 63% of volunteers were aged between 30-50 years. Volunteers were recruited through AGR's search engine optimisation and referrals between volunteers. Volunteers were selected according to the profile criteria that they must regularly purchase wellness cosmetics. Eligible volunteers were invited to take part in the study and acceptance was purely voluntary.

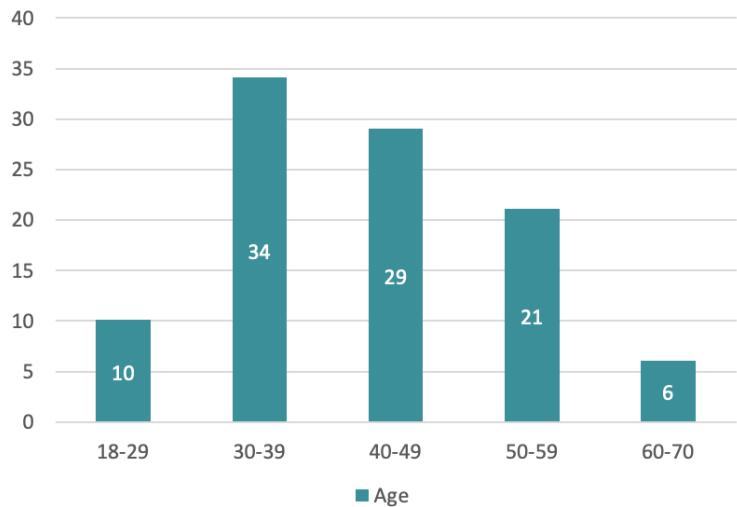
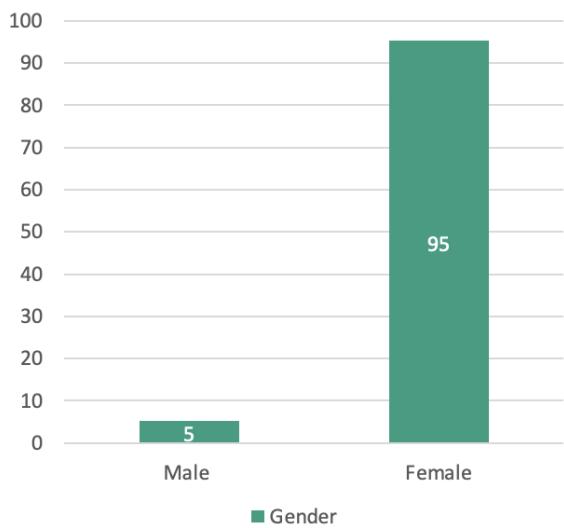


Figure 1: Percentage of Genders and ages

The study comprised a questionnaire of a total of 9 questions relating to product and brand usage, influences, claims and advertising. All data was reported through the Ayton System Software.

A 95% confidence interval was applied to all report statistics. Single and multiple answered questions were analysed through Chi-Squared Test. Open answer questions were analysed by the Study Manager through the sentiment analysis technique. Analysis was carried out in accordance with the procedures of the Ayton Global Research Quality Management System, ISO 9001 quality standard, ESOMAR, MRS and/or MRC principles and guidelines or any other applicable standards associated with the in which the study was carried out.

Discussion

Consumers see the connection between cosmetics and wellness and act accordingly

In the first question, we wanted to get a better understanding of the motivations behind using cosmetics. Not surprisingly, the key reason is the improvement of skin clarity and beauty (91% of respondents) which is closely followed by anti-ageing (84%).

However, almost two-thirds of the respondents (63%) state that the improvement of mental health is a key motivation for using cosmetics. They clearly see the connection between mental health and your outer appearance. More than a quarter of all respondents (27%) even see this reflected in physical health.

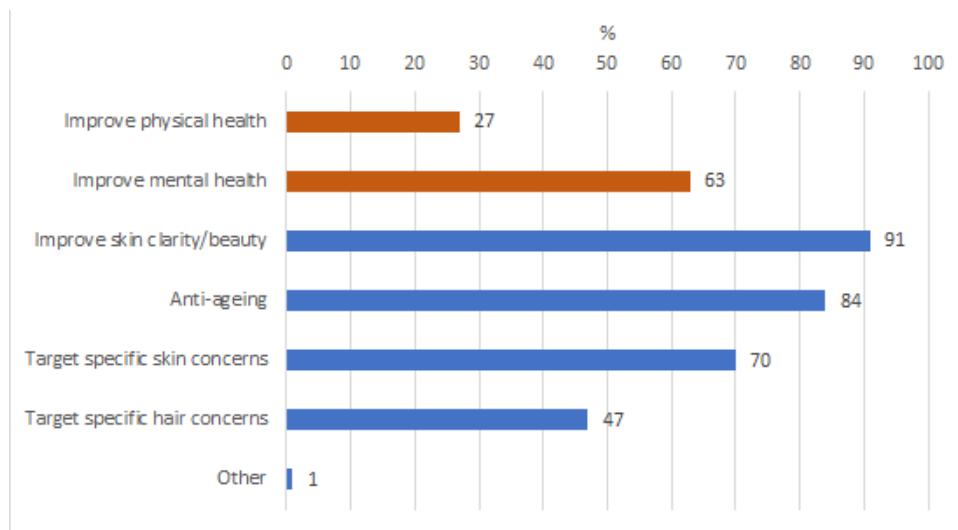


Figure 2: What motivates you to use cosmetics? (Multi Select)

Wellness cosmetics are dominating

We have found that 77% of the participants purchased cosmetics that promote self-care or wellness. This clearly shows that this factor is dominating the market of the respondents.

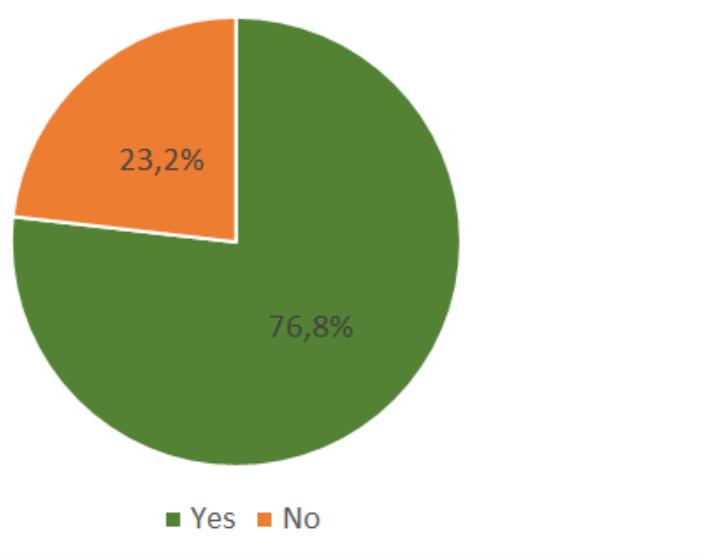


Figure 3: Do you purchase cosmetics that promote self-care or wellness?

Promotion of Emotional Positivity

Looking at wellness cosmetics, in particular, the question was posed as an open answer to negate any bias as to why the panellists are attracted to cosmetics that promote a self-care or wellness message. The answers surrounded the idea of an overall holistic approach to beauty, and by feeling better consumers expect to look better. Top trends through sentiment analysis are that wellness cosmetics promote emotional positivity (28%), give people time to relax (20%), and improve visible imperfections (20%), linking to improving beauty and appearance which is expected from cosmetics.

Top Reasons	=N	=%
Promote-emotional-positivity	105	28%
Improve-imperfections	77	20%
Time-to-relax	77	20%
Improve-mental-health	53	14%
Promote-body-positivity	49	13%
Improve-physical-health	45	12%

Figure 4: Do you purchase cosmetics that promote self-care or wellness? If yes, why?

A wide variety of interesting benefits

The relevant benefits consumers search for are as diverse as the number of brands used. However, “hydrating” is by far the most mentioned benefit, it is among the top three benefits for almost half of the respondents (43%).

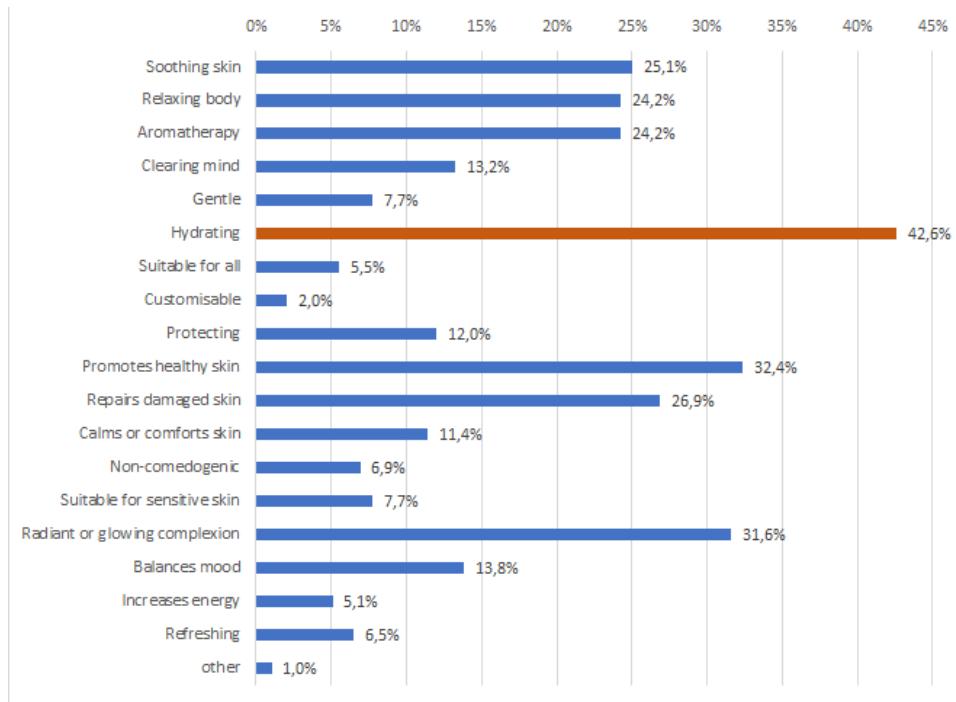


Figure 6: Thinking about wellness cosmetics in particular; which of these benefits do you look for? (Select top 3)

The importance of proven claims

If we look at the motivations to purchase a specific product, we see that list led by customer reviews, a detailed description of product effects and clinically proven results. This shows the importance of being very clear on what a product does and having this validated in a test. This notion becomes even more visible when we look at fourth most selected motivation on the list, with 30% selecting ‘Testimonials from clients or study panellists’.

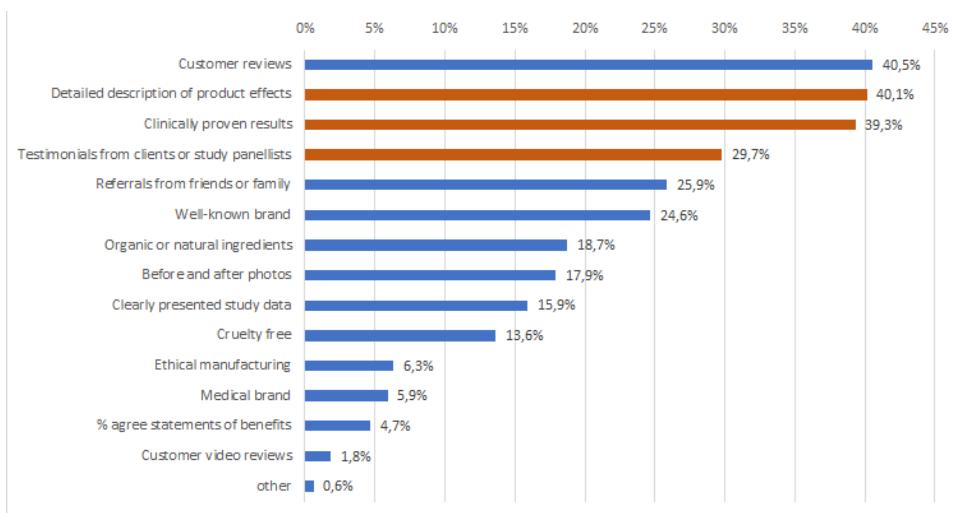


Figure 7: What would motivate you to purchase a wellness cosmetic the most when shopping? (select up to 3)

Information sources: Online

We continued by asking the panellists where they would look for information on a wellness product. It is evident that good and relevant information on the internet is an absolute must as 76% look at the brand website, 62% consult social media, 41% look at the internet and 30% read relevant blogs. POS information on the physical packaging is relevant for less than half of the respondents (42%) and TV/radio does not play as much of a relevant role anymore at 15% and 3%.

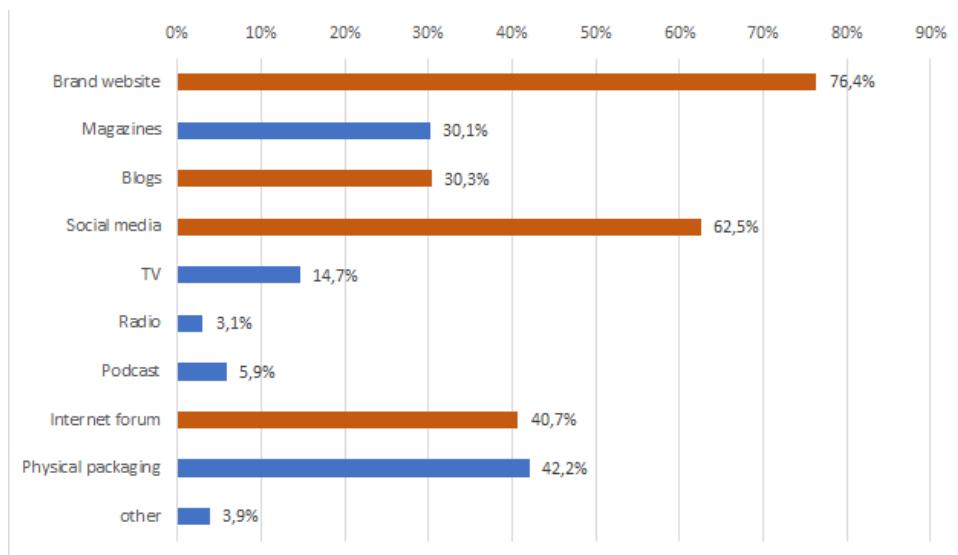


Figure 8: Where would you look for information on a wellness cosmetic? (Multi Select)

Validation is recognised

When asked if they see the validation of claims, three-quarters of the respondents confirm that they see it often. This strengthens the fact that substantiating your claims will sell products.

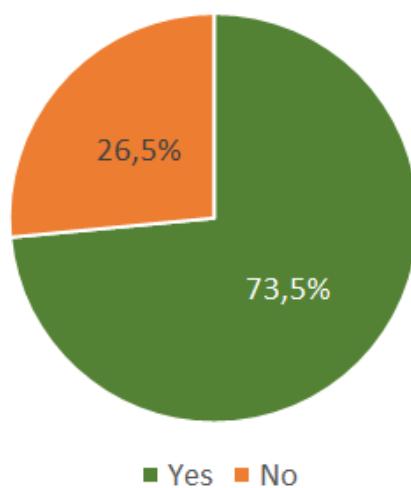


Figure 9: Do you often see research data, such as % agree statements of benefits, behind wellness cosmetic adverts?

Lack of evidence leads to lack of trust

When asked what would make people lose trust in a wellness cosmetic product, it is primarily by wrong product reviews or by misleading information. The third most popular answer was that there is no evidence behind the product benefits (58%), by far more of a threat when compared to negative press (32%) or lack of detailed information (28%).

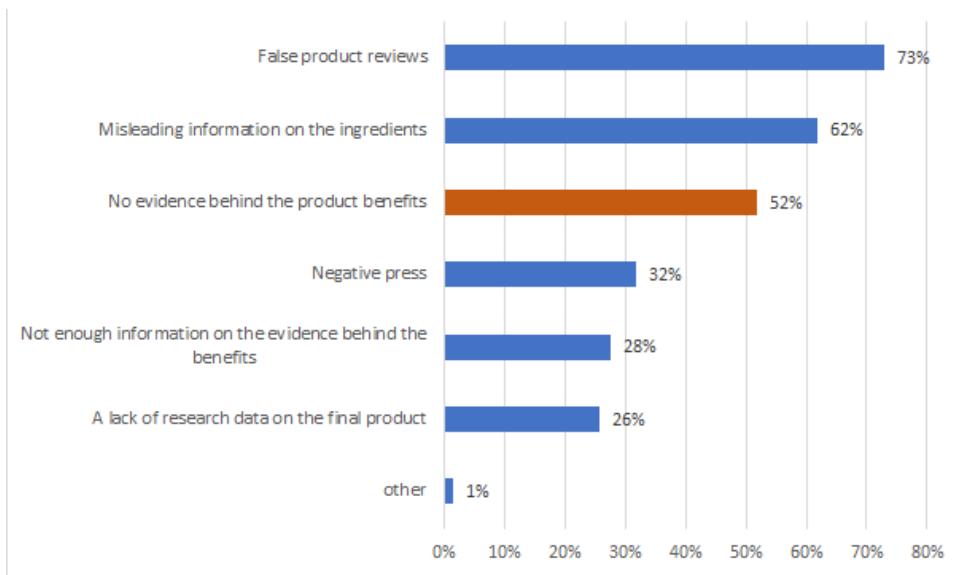


Figure 10: What would make you lose trust in a wellness cosmetic brand? (Select up to 3 answers)

Conclusions

From the research we have conducted, consumers want to see that cosmetics are promoting emotional positivity. Emotional and sensorial claims need to be substantiated but are purely subjective, demonstrating the requirement for consumer research to gain data. There is sufficient evidence to suggest that emotive and wellness claims are what consumers are looking for and that many want to see these claims on the products.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Ayton Global Research's Sales & Recruitment Assistant, Oliver Beckingham, and the Managing Partner for AGR Deutschland GmbH & Co. KG, Thomas Marquart, for all their support for this research.

Conflict of Interest Statement

NONE

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