

COMMERCIAL BULLETIN

ALOE VERA

FACIAL SHEET MASK



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The beauty industry is shaped by the ever changing customer demands. Along with the ubiquity of social media, beauty users now can pick up popular trends from anywhere across the world and follow it. With this increasing demand to stay updated, it is imperative for companies to provide innovative products that satisfy such customers. Skincare is the biggest segment in the beauty industry with its global sales expected to cross \$130 billion by 2019. Hence, it becomes important to know the trends that will drive forth the skincare segment in this year and also beyond.

They may make you look temporarily terrifying, but sheet masks are a great go-to for an instant hit of hydration. A brilliant quick fix for dull and dehydrated skin, they're essentially Phantom of the Opera-style fabric or gel masks doused in serum which penetrates into the skin while you lie back and take a selfie. Pop one on while you're drinking your morning coffee or ahead of a night out and enjoy a plumped-up, perky complexion in a matter of minutes.

The promise of making your skin look good is no longer enough, tough. Despite being used in the privacy of your own bathroom, the mask must now themselves be thing of beauty and come in increasingly prefitted forms.

WHAT IS A SHEET MASK?

Face masks, also known as sheet masks, are single-use mostly cotton pads that have been soaked in powerful skin-rejuvenating ingredients. True to their name, these masks are often of the full-face variety and are reminiscent of the early hockey masks that goalies (or an infamous 80s film villain) wore.

Most face masks are designed to rest on the curves of your face. While there, the masks infuse their active ingredients into the skin for slightly visible results in a short amount of time. It's this delivery of skin-smoothing ingredients that have earned face masks their popularity.



But despite all the hype, face masks produce only a limited and temporary number of surface benefits and results. Some very important deep-down healing that you need to look your best is beyond the power of even the best face mask. Sheet masks have two components. The first one is the sheet itself. This is the piece of paper or fabric that you apply to your skin. The sheet is cut out in an oval or circular shape, to fit the face, and has holes cut into it for the eyes, nose, and possibly mouth. The second component of a sheet mask is the "essence", the skin-saving liquid that the sheet mask is soaked in. As the sheet mask sits on the skin, it totally occludes it, preventing product evaporation and making sure that a maximum amount of the skincare essence soaks into the skin.

WHAT DO FACE MASKS DO?

As we have already mentioned, face masks infuse their active ingredients into your skin. But there's more to the story than just those active ingredients. In fact, as you'll see in the last few sections of this article, "active ingredients" are only a very small part of the actual healing. The real power of the face mask lies in its power to lock those active ingredients against your skin. Think of it this way: most skin care products evaporate after a few minutes on your skin. But it can take upwards of twenty minutes or more for the ingredients to really penetrate your skin. So most of the time, the moisturizer you put on your face is evaporating before it can do any real good. Enter the face mask. The sheet forms a barrier between your skin and the air around it to keep the moisture where it belongs: on your skin.

A sheet mask is a pre-cut mask (so that it matches the contours of your face) made up of special fiber; that is soaked in a concentrated easily spreadable serum like solution, with the most beneficial "essences" or active ingredients such as Aloe Vera for the skin.

They are typically one-time use mask, individually wrapped; this makes them convenient, hygienic, and easy to use. Most importantly they don't require rinsing off, so they can be used pretty much anywhere. They work like an instant fix by nourishing the skin using its essence and giving the skin an energetic boost.



Face masks, although they aren't a completely new product category, have never been as popular as they are now. The recent K-beauty phenomenon has increased their popularity, enormously. Add social media to the mix, and the mask category is on track to grow further, experts say.

Another benefit of the sheet mask is that it doesn't get dry and hard like many of the mud- or cream-based masks on the market. These spreadable masks do a great job of drawing out excess oil (clay masks, we're thinking of you), but when they dry, they crack and break. This allows moisture—the thing that all skin(normal, dry, or oily) needs most of all—to literally slip through the cracks. The sheet mask doesn't have that problem, but it certainly is messy, wet and sometimes difficult to apply.

The mask keeps moisture in contact with your skin for as long as you wear it. As miraculous and wonderful as all that sounds, face masks can only do so much. And that's where we start to really see the benefits of the alternative we'll talk about in a moment. Before that, though, let's investigate what face masks don't do.

- Superior delivery of moisture. They leave skin plump, dewy and glowing, while eliminating all signs of dryness.
- You'll see many other instant effects too. Think skin brightening, softness and improved firmness.
- Unlike regular masks, you don't have to wash the residue off. Easy.
- They feel instantly cool and wonderfully refreshing on the skin.
- A convenient beauty treat. They're great for on the go. (Hello plane journeys). Or use in the comfort of your own home, while you're watching a movie or reading a book.
- They're an easy way to pamper yourself vs. going for a facial.
- They're seriously budget friendly.

WHAT DO NOT FACE MASKS DO?

Are you familiar with the adjective "skin deep"? Perhaps you've heard it in something like, "Johnny's kindness is only skin deep." This term implies that something is not true or lasting and that it is really only superficial. Skin deep is a great way to describe the benefits that the face mask produce: they really only scratch the surface and are basically just superficial.

That's not to say that sheet masks aren't a valuable asset to your skin care routine. They are. But they really only work their "magic" on the top layer of skin (the epidermis). That leaves the deeper layers of skin (the dermis and hypodermis) untouched. And those deeper layers contain two of the most important components for healthy, radiant skin. What are those components? Collagen and elastin. These proteins provide support to the skin that rests on top and are the primary reason for the smoothness and tightness that we're all searching for. Face masks don't affect these deeper structures.

What does that mean for your skin? It means that face masks have very little effect on wrinkled skin. Sure, they may smooth out fine lines just a bit, but they won't be able to heal the deeper, more stubborn wrinkles that form as you age. Face masks are ineffective at this important task for precisely the reasons mentioned above: they don't penetrate to the deeper layers of skin or affect the collagen and elastin.



One of the main reasons for this is the amount of time they're worn. Most face masks are only worn for twenty minutes. That doesn't give the healing effects time to penetrate through the top layer of skin to the lower levels. But even if you wear a face mask all night, it really won't do any more good. That's because the mask isn't designed to be additionally effective when worn for longer periods. The thin material that the mask is made from will eventually dry out and lose its moisture-trapping abilities. And as you'll see in the next section, that is the real key to the whole process.

So even though these sheet masks do a great job at healing surface skin, they may contain ingredients that can do your skin harm over the long haul. Many face masks contain alcohol, polyethylene glycol (PEG), and phenoxyethanol or ethylhexylglycerin (preservatives). Sometimes, even the fragrances can have negative effects on your skin.

Add to that the fact that many of the active ingredients in these sheet masks are really nothing special. Most can be found in even the most basic moisturizing cream you buy at your corner drugstore or supermarket. At this point, you may be wondering, “If it’s not the active ingredients, what’s the real reason for all the fuss?” Excellent question! We’ll answer it in the next section.



THE REAL REASON WHY FACIAL MASK WORKS

Sheet masks are fun to use but, more importantly, they are a fantastic way of delivering active concentrated ingredients to the skin, sheet holds the ingredients against the skin and allows them to penetrate deeper.

Many “experts” will claim that the “active ingredients” the masks contain are what is doing all the good (even though those ingredients may actually be causing more harm). This, in fact, is just a smokescreen for the true hero of the skin care world. The real reason facemasks work can be summed up in one word: Moisture.

Moisture performs many essential roles:

- Keeps skin soft and supple which allows it to resist damage
- Encourages collagen and elastin production in the deep layers of skin
- Helps filter out and minimize the damage caused by environmental factors like dust, dirt, allergens, and the sun’s harmful UV rays

Unfortunately, face masks don’t harness the full force of that healing moisture. Remember that sheet masks are only worn for twenty minutes and don’t heal the deep-down skin problems (like wrinkles and crepey skin) that many women face. So is there a more powerful alternative to the face mask that makes use of the healing power of moisture ? We’ve been hinting all along that there is, and we can finally answer that question definitively: Yes, there is a better option!

A MORE POWERFUL ALTERNATIVE



It may surprise many of you to learn that a more effective alternative to the face mask exists, and has existed for years. “What is it?” you ask. Silicone patches.

Silicone sheets were first used by physicians to help heal serious skin damage like burns, scars and deep cuts. Not long after, scientists began to see the benefits these skin patches could have on regular (undamaged) skin. That’s when silicone patches were adopted by the Gigi Howard founder of SiO Beauty to help heal dry, wrinkled and saggy skin.

The science behind the effectiveness of the silicone patch is really very simple and has already been mentioned in this article. The silicone patch, much like the sheet mask, forms a barrier on the surface of the skin that keeps moisture from evaporating and traps it next to the skin. Unlike the sheet masks though, the silicone patch allows oxygen and moisture through from the air outside. Once underneath the patch, this new moisture is trapped like the rest and can be pushed into the deep layers of skin.

What’s more, the silicone patch is designed to be worn for extended periods of time (eight hours or more). This gives the moisture time to have a very real healing effect on the collagen and elastin that support your skin and keep it smooth and wrinkle-free. In fact, silicone skin patches have been known to revive, rejuvenate , and stabilize collagen production. face masks can’t do that. So how can you harness the power of the silicone skin patch? Simple.

According to Euromonitor’s research, the face mask is a prominent part of a beauty regimen. Euromonitor states in a recent report, “The Face Mask category was the fastest-growing category in the U.S. skin care market in 2015.” The company says the market grew by 11% - and this growth is expected to continue.

A strong growth driver, Euromonitor says, was the “sheet mask selfie” trend, which was hugely popular recently on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter - even with celebrities.

The sheet mask market is expected to reach U.S. \$336.7 million by 2024, according to the report by Transparency Market Research, “Sheet Face Masks Market - Global Industry Analysis, Size, Share, Growth, Trends and Forecast 2016 - 2024.”

That number represents tremendous growth from 2015, when the market was valued at U.S. \$160.4 million. During the forecast period of 2016 and 2024, the global market is expected to exhibit a CAGR of 8.7%. Facial masks – a trend that has its roots in Asia – are big news in the beauty industry. ‘Masking’ was the most searched-for skin care term earlier this year, according to Google statistics, and manufacturers are now taking varied and innovative approaches in textures and materials.

As a beauty regime must-have, it is not surprising that it will feature heavily at this year's in- cosmetics Asia. According to Mintel, 88% of urban females in China aged 30-39 used a sheet mask in the six months to April this year. Three in four used sleeping masks overnight, while 69% of these consumers used sheet masks in the evening. Facial masks that contain snail cream from are extremely popular in Hong Kong, with consumers changing their facial care regime to include the use of a mask as much as twice a week compared with once a week a few years ago.

Skincare regimes including facial masks that incorporate healing and anti-aging properties and ingredients such as argan oil serum, green tea extract, Vitamin C and Mandelic acid are popular.

The popularity of sheet masks remains high and will continue to do so as a result of the product's ability to offer consumers different skincare benefits in a convenient manner and short turnaround time.

The latest developments in the sector include the use of watermelon in facial masks, which has captured the imagination of manufacturers and consumers alike for the implied sensation of refreshing coolness. Clay masks in sheet format are also on the rise, due to their improved usability with less mess than traditional clay face masks; and the multi-mask.



Perfect for consumers with combination skin concerns, the multi-masking concept enables consumers to address contradictory skin problems simultaneously. Growing interest and demand for sheet face masks.

The market researchers say that great interest is being shown in sheet face masks by the cosmetics and body care industry, and they predict that research and development in this segment will also boost market growth. Another reason for the upwards trend in the market is the growing interest being shown by older consumers in the anti-aging effects of masks incorporating appropriate substances, as well as by men, an increasing number of whom are taking an interest in cosmetics and body care.

MARKET DRIVERS

What's driving the market? The high adoption of sheet face masks in the personal care industry, combined with extensive research and development in making innovative sheet face masks, analysts say.

Several manufacturing companies are focusing on developing products that cater to the needs of consumers, and address various skin issues, including pores, wrinkles, dry lines, sagging skin, and blemishes.

The fact that men are using masks is also contributing to market growth. (Plus, there are a few new face mask subscription boxes.



EXPANDING THE FACE MASK CATEGORY

There are the usual types of wash-off masks, many of which are mud formulas that claim to clear pores. But there are also exciting new face mask categories. Sheet masks have been the most popular right now - but the next types to trend are Molding Masks and Bubble Masks.

We've curated some of the best sheet masks that include ingredients such as honey or coconut which are known to hydrate your skin. We've put four in each box because we recommend using the sheet masks on a weekly basis to glean all the benefits.

What are the different types of sheet mask:

1) Based on the skin issues they targeted

- Hydrating or moisturizing or repairing(contents hialaronc acid, ceramides, squalene snail extract, Aloe Vera,etc)
- Calming (eg containing Aloe Vera, chamomile, under eye, etc)
- Purifiyingor clarifiying (eg containing alpha hydroxyl acids, etc)
- Regenerating eg containing Aloe Vera with essential vitamins, etc)
- Brightening or lightening (containg Aloe Vera , vitamic C, licorice extract, etc)
- Firming or anti-ageing (eg containing Aloe Vera with collagen, retinol, etc)

2) Based on the material they are composed of:

- Fibre or thin cotton sheets: fibre mask feature a non-woven fabric; they have a coarse texture that feels and behaves like paper. Fiber maskare very inexpensive and have some capacity to replenishnoisture to your skin
- Pulp: pulp mask have a finer texture than fibre mask. Rayon cellulose is an exampleof mask created from pulp
- Hydrogel: Hydro-gel mask offer better perfomance than low-end fibre and pulp mask. They are typically produced as a " mak system", with top and bottom halves that are applied separately. The

hydrogel is made of polymers that are very absorbent and hold water against your skin

- Bio cellulose (a fruit or vegetable fibre). Bio cellulose mask fabrics provide skin-tight dermal adhesion, allowing them to transfer cosmetic ingredients very efficiently. The texture of bio cellulose mask feels like a cool, moist gel under the underlying structure is incredible strong and resilient.
- And many more variants must be on their way

BIO-CELLULOSE FABRIC SHEET MASKS ARE MOST POPULAR

Which types of sheet mask are expected to be in most demand? The global sheet face mask market is segmented into the types of fabric used to make them — non-woven, hydrogel, bio-cellulose, and cotton.

Of these, the bio-cellulose fabric masks are expected to show a remarkable progress during the forecast period, according to the research company.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF USING ALOE SHEET MASK

- These masks are prepared with exactly the right amount of the active ingredients or essences needed to benefit your skin and your face can do nothing but soak up the goodness while it's resetting under the fibre.
- These masks effectively penetrate into the deepest layers of the skin. The active ingredients in liquid form cool the skin by drawing heat away from its inner layers, this allows the ingredients to penetrate deeper and evenly into the skin.
- They are available in variable forms offering a wide range of skin care benefits in one easy application (eg hydrating mask, purifying mask, firming mask, etc)
- These masks are very helpful in de-stressing and relaxing the skin inside out.



Advanced Face Masks:

Face masks have always been an important product for the skincare segment. Currently there are different variations in this category, including masks made of clay, tea, charcoal, caffeine, and even dry sheet masks, and instantly revitalizing face masks. The trend of beauty companies launching innovative products in the mask category is expected to continue this year, as well.

The multitude of facial masks in the market today is massive and shows no signs of slowing down.

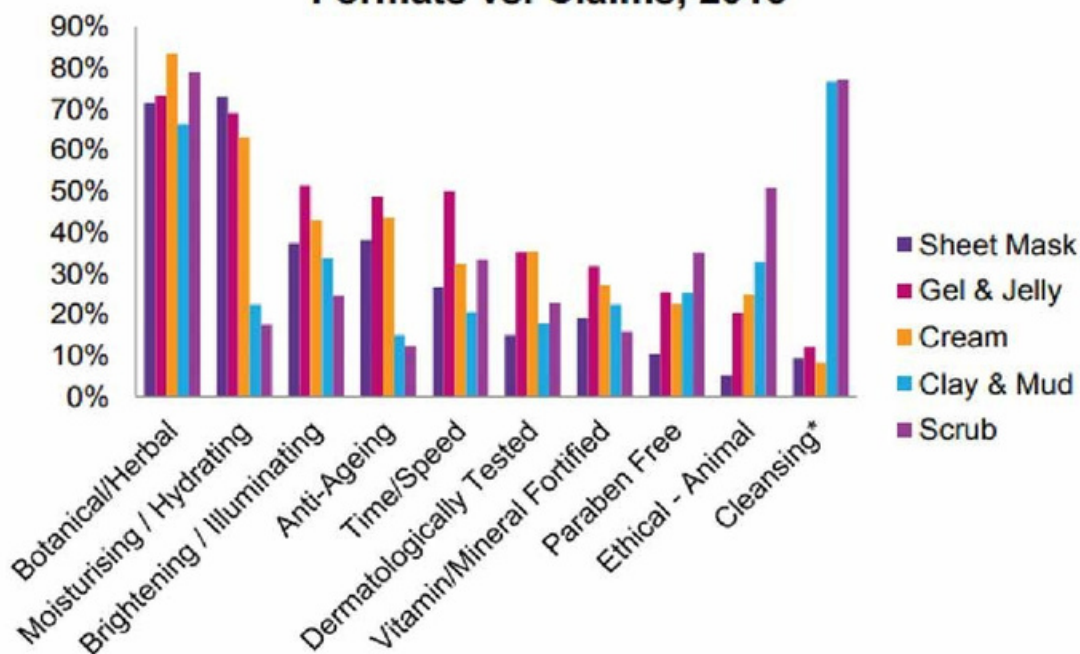


Overview of Facial Masks Market

Hydrating sheet & leave-on are most popular; cleansing works via clay or scrub formats

- Replenishment of moisture is important to skincare consumers.
- Growing interest in natural ingredients drives the botanical claims.
- Clay or scrub formats are preferred for cleansing or purifying functions.

**Global masks launches:
Formats vs. Claims, 2016**



ANTI-AGEING SHEET MASKS GAIN POPULARITY IN THE WEST

Claim

Moisturising/Hydrating

Botanical/Herbal

Anti-Ageing

Brightening/Illuminating

Time/Speed

Firming*

Vitamin/Mineral-Fortified

Whitening

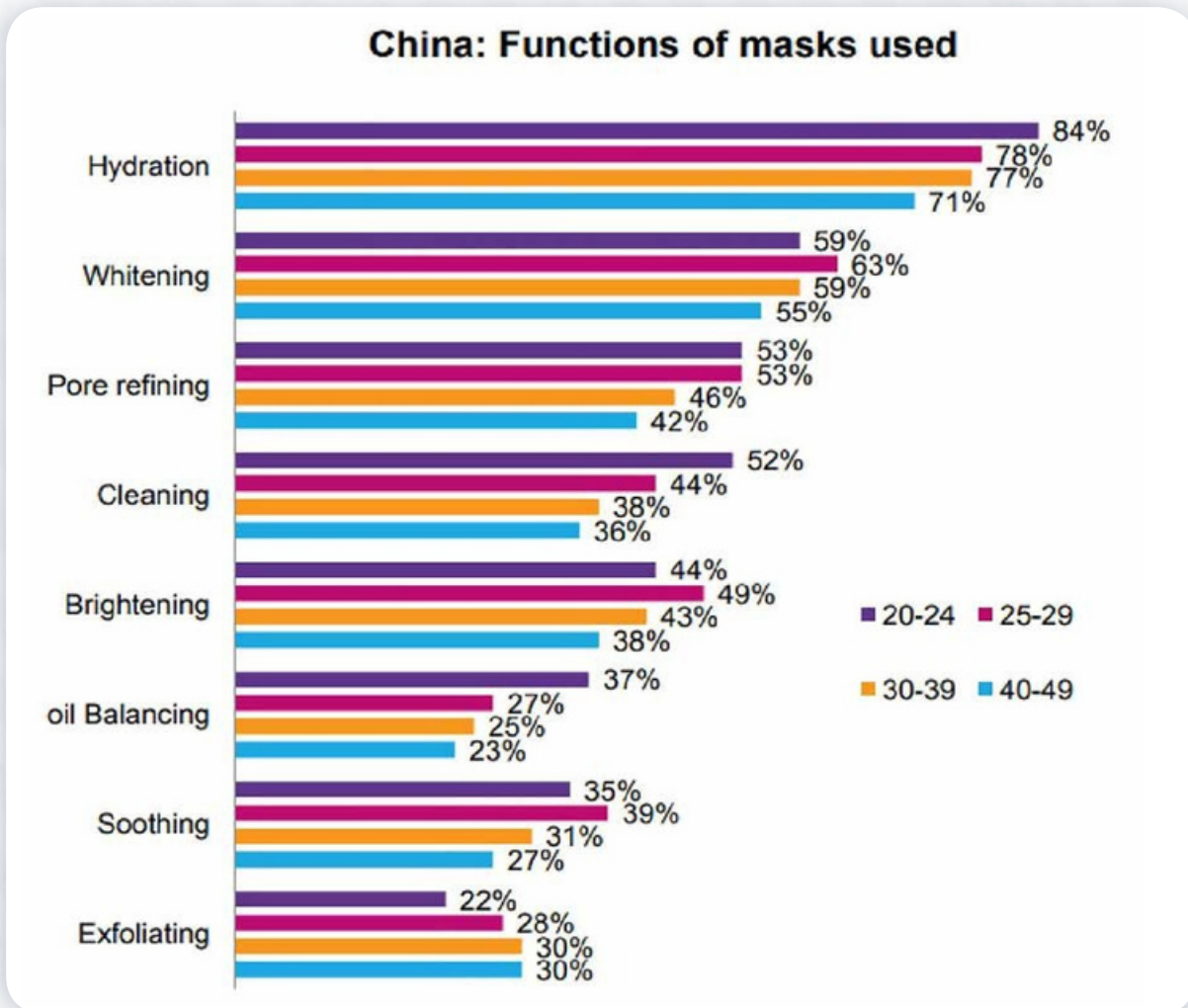
Reduces Fine Lines/Wrinkles*

Long-Lasting*

Usage and perception towards facial masks

Among the younger generation, healthy, radiant skin that glows has become the new definition of beauty. This drives brightening and whitening claims, especially in Asia.





Sheet mask Sheet mask (or sheet mask pack) usually means a cloth or paper saturated in a high dosage of skincare ingredients for one-time use. Common sheet masks include non-wove masks, cotton masks, hydrogel masks and bio-cellulose masks. The latest innovations in sheet masks are designed to be washed off the skin.

Premiumisation has growth potential

- Premiumised segment opportunities lie in 'high-end sheet masks' that incorporate aesthetic salon/ plastic surgery equivalent treatments (that can be used at home), differentiating itself from the luxurious versions of moisturising sheet masks. This is especially important for Asia, where micro cosmetic surgery is common and deemed as a trend.
- Consumer upgrade is increasingly prominent in Asia, with the rise of a middle class with disposable income. Premiumisation holds great potential across different Asian countries, such as China and Thailand.
- Visible instant results are key in premium facial masks, to appeal to consumers who are willing to splurge more on higher quality masks.

EXPANDING THE FACE MASK CATEGORY

Many beauty brands - from the most obscure Indie brand to Estee Lauder - are marketing all types of face masks, in all types of packaging.

There are the usual types of wash-off masks, many of which are mud formulas that claim to clear pores. But there are also exciting new face mask categories. Sheet masks have been the most popular right now - but the next types to trend are Molding Masks and Bubble Masks.

See the slideshow: So Many Masks, So Little Time for more about these types of masks, the brands marketing them, and the packaging for each.

DIVERSIFYING TO BE DIFFERENT

With the market getting more crowded, differentiation has never been so important and imminent for the manufacturers of facial masks.

In the earlier story Uncovering the Growth In the Facial Mask Market back in 2015, I touched upon differentiating from three aspects:

- 1) Formularies with actives drawing inspiration across all cosmetic categories as well as food and pharmaceutical industries and forms delivering novel sensory feelings.
- 2) Substrates varying in material sources, fibers/ structures and shapes.
- 3) More specific/segmented claims in terms of application occasions and target groups.

Nearly two years later, these are still deployed by manufacturers. Among all types of masks ranging from sheet and clay to gel, cream and even spray/foam, sheet masks have dominated—in both market share and growth rate—ever since they entered the market nearly a decade ago. The popularity of these products is expected to be maintained in the near future, largely due to increased diversification, from formulary to substrate.



For the former, whether it is emulsions, gel or suspensions, the differentiation lies largely in ingredients, particularly the actives. For the latter, fiber/fabric plays a vital role as the sheet substrate is moving beyond simply acting as a carrier to enhance or complement the skin care benefits of the formulary.

SUBSTRATE SOPHISTICATION



The fact that substrates have become an important way for sheet masks to expand and differentiate seems to make sense after all. As you can imagine, today's consumers crave both novelty and value for the money. Which claim sounds more tempting when it comes to purchasing? "Formulary containing botanics sourced from exotic lands?" or "Substrate infused with botanics to deliver double benefits?"

Behind today's dazzling promotions like "heavenly silk," "feather light" or even "leaf-fiber sourced from high altitude tea with antibacterial activity," the vast majority of the substrates used in sheet masks are actually nonwoven fabric, but varying in fibers/fiber combinations and processing technologies/shapes.

Once dominated by cotton and synthetic materials like polypropylene and nylon, fibers of nonwoven fabrics recently have been expanding and diversifying to other natural-positioned materials, ranging from lyocell (mainly Tencel from Lenzing) and cuprammonium (marketed as 'silk' as it mimics the appearance and skin feel of real silk), to bamboo/wood/fruit-derived ones and real silk (infusing silk-derived nanosized protein fiber into nonwoven fabric, to be accurate).

Nowadays, the game of mix and match in sheet substrates is getting heated up as we see more sophisticated fiber combinations in the market, such as bamboo+charcoal+viscose or pulp+food-grade- latex. Furthermore, substrates added with actives are emerging, like incorporating camellia oil to claim extra moisturizing or banana flower extract for soothing.

At two big beauty expos in China last year, a few interesting products with fusion substrates were on display. One of these sheet mask combines Tencel with tourmaline and organic germanium, to claim the benefits of repairing and detoxifying by emitting infrared to maintain the skin temperature between the range of 25-30°C, at which cell metabolism and microcirculation are said to be accelerated and therefore improve the absorption of actives and maximize the skin detoxification. Another one is Tencel combined with silica-encapsulated nonmagnetic powder, said to stimulate microcirculation and activate dermis and subcutaneous tissue via bio-magnetic effects, to deliver the benefits of smoothing out wrinkles and slimming the face.

Think these two are at the risk of overclaiming or unsubstantiated? Then how about a patented one? The substrate combines some natural vegetable fiber with chitosan, a versatile biopolymer already seen in medical applications. In addition to acting as a carrier, a substrate containing chitosan can possess bacteria-inhibiting properties while absorbing residual chemicals. The final product comes in the form of two separate packages for sheet and essence, which are to be combined upon application. This is to overcome the formulating difficulties and minimize the amount of the preservatives used by the manufacturer.

Apart from nonwovens' dominance, biomaterials are on the rise as well, particularly for the products with niche positions. Bio-fibers of the substrate are produced with bacteria (mainly acetobacter xylinum) and plant-derived materials like coconut milk and grain mash via bio-fermentation technology. This type of substrate is positioned as safer and fitter with claims like "injectable/medical grade" and/or "a second skin," as such biomaterials were initially used as artificial skin/bio addressing in medical applications.

No matter how sophisticated sheet substrates become, performance expectations can still be boiled down to the following: safety, user experience and efficacy. Specifically, the sheet materials should not be irritating to the face, it must fit properly and tightly to the face and it must be thinner, lighter and more breathable while facilitating the absorption of actives and enhancing the skin care benefits.

By varying in weight, strength, thickness/density, softness/cushioning and water absorbency, substrates are apparently up to the job of differentiation for sheet masks via materials and shapes and structures.



Then, what new directions can they go in future? They can integrate better with formulas and facilitate the controlled release of actives, Wang Pu, senior expert at the Shanghai Truly BioCosmetics company, points out. This domestic OEM/ODM manufacturer has long been well-known for its research and development capabilities in innovative cosmetics, including eye-catching facial masks produced with its patented bio-fermentation technologies.

Actives, emollients, emulsifiers and film formers are ideal ingredients for facial masks. Our collaborative approach means finding the right solution to help customers meet local needs and trends. AMB Aloe ingredient can be used in a variety of mask types, including peel-off, clay, warm oil or non-woven tissue. The rise of multifunctional facial masks across multiple regions has led to consumer demand for innovative new formulas. These masks draw impurities out of the skin, and can also be used as delivery systems for exfoliating, hydrating, soothing and toning.

All in all, mega trends emerging in facial masks are largely consistent with those already existing in traditional cosmetic categories: natural/eco-friendly, safer and effective. The major obstacles to the development of this category are nearly the same as the ones confronted by today's domestic brands across all categories, namely varying and inconsistent quality, too much similarity/lack of differentiation and too much focus on promotion. As many industrial experts pointed out, there seems to be a long and winding road to maintain and drive the prosperity of the category for domestic players.

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SKINCARE ROUTINES AND INGREDIENTS DRIVE NPD

- Consumers curate their own facial mask routines according to their skin types, lifestyles and products offerings. For example, one mask a day; two masks a day; multi-masking; sheet mask use after a modelling mask etc. This will drive NPD with different positioning claims and opportunities, as well as ingredients to match different facial mask formats that deliver maximum efficacy.
 - Western brands can look to include local ingredients to appeal to consumers who don't currently use facial masks, and can slowly introduce Asian ingredients that are increasingly of interest to consumers in the West.
 - The facial mask trend will continue to gain strength in the West, as it grows to become part of a regular beauty routine for consumers.
- Such popularity has spawned a truly diverse range of offerings: sheet masks, mud masks, overnight masks, bubbling masks, splash masks and more.



SPLASH MASKS

The newest on the block, splash masks, originated in several markets and are meant to play nicely with your in-shower lineup. Simply do your usual regimen, then splash on the mask and rinse off. Even so, Neil Sadick, a dermatologist in Manhattan, is skeptical. "The point of a mask is that it improves target delivery because it's sitting on your skin," he said. "This delivery system is more a cleanser than a mask."

BUBBLING MASKS

These are novel for their texture — they actually froth — and claim oxygenating benefits. Some very bubbly formulas may even tickle when under your nose. While the effervescent bubbling mask won't replace your morning run, it produces a noticeable brightening effect.

SHEET MASKS

When even Justin Bieber posts on Instagram about his sheet mask experience, this is a beauty trend that has gone pop. The gist? Slap on an individually packaged, serum-soaked sheet mask (often made of cellulose or cotton, but also offered in gel form), frighten your significant other with Freddy Krueger scary faces and come away with a more glowing countenance. (Most sheet masks are of the hydrating variety.)

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MUD AND CLAY MASKS

If a splash mask is Snapchat, a mud mask is Facebook. The category has been around but keeps mixing things up with eye-catching new features. One recent arrival, boasts glacial clay to sop up oil and boost tone. The nifty part? The mask turns from white to chrome (tailor-made for Instagram, or what?) after application.

HYDRATING MASKS

Often found as creams but also more recently in gel form, hydrating masks are generally straightforward: They offer a boost of moisture for parched skin.

EXFOLIATING MASKS

Though the idea of sloughing away sun damage sounds enticing, Dr. Sadick suggests a more cautious approach to exfoliation. "Masks can be concentrated, and if you're using a mask with a strong ingredient like glycolic acid, make sure you know what the concentration is," he said. "Otherwise, something with a vitamin C base might be a little safer to use."

SLEEPING MASKS

If moisture is what you're after, it's usually best to leave the mask on longer. That's where sleeping masks, which profess to revitalize complexions while you snooze, come in.

TANNING MASKS

If you're willing to put your pillowcases to the test, these overnight self-tanning formulas, promise gradual (ergo, believable) results without staining bed linens.

MASK PRIMERS

The spray claims to prep skin for mask treatments, though we can't say for certain that a long hot shower wouldn't do just as well.



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FACIAL MASKS IN CHINA, LOSING FACE NOW?

Chinese media have been widely reporting the use of controversial and even unsafe ingredients like topical hormones and preservatives in some facial masks in recent years. The misuse of these ingredients has led the Chinese Food and Drug Administration (CFDA) to ramp up efforts to better regulate this quickly growing market as consumers have also become more aware of these ingredients.

In fact, when facial masks are mentioned nowadays, three keywords immediately jump into Chinese consumers' minds thanks to massive media coverage—topical steroids (addictive hormones or skin opium in the mainstream media's terms), fluorescent brightening/whitening agents and preservatives.



The issue of topical steroids first gained public attention in 2014 when Chinese state media CCTV (China Central Television) reported that a young woman suffered a serious allergic reaction after using some facial masks bought on WeChat. The subsequent investigation found that many of the facial masks available on the social platform used low-end ingredients/materials, and some of the products even reportedly contained 6000 times the level of topical steroids permitted by domestic law.

Topical corticosteroid, especially fluocinolone, has caught particular attention since then. It's already known that the excessive use of the steroid could cause serious side effects such as subsequent dependence/addiction. When it comes to skin applications, such steroids are only allowed to be prescribed by doctors to treat inflammation such as eczema and allergies and its use cosmetics have never been legally allowed.

TIGHTENING REGULATIONS

With media reports increasingly highlighting slack supervision of this issue, government officials began to take actions on this matter in 2015. A series of inspections have been conducted and subsequent warnings have been issued by CFDA ever since. In its official announcements, the agency reveals that those facial masks disqualified upon inspection all have been found illegally adding banned topical corticosteroids, and warns that such products could cause serious skin problems including pigmentation/ melasma and atrophy. After issuing its first guideline on a standard method for identifying fluocinolone illegally added into facial masks in May (No.88.2016), CFDA widened its screening range for topical steroids in November's inspection, announcing that 50 batches of the facial masks were disqualified as containing synthetic glucocorticoids including Betamethasone (No.140.2016).

At the end of last year, the inspection has even gone beyond facial masks and topical steroids. In its latest notice issued in December (No.170.2016), the agency announced that 60 out of 4332 batches of anti-pigmentation cosmetic products were found containing banned substances, mainly topical

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corticosteroids and mercury. And facial masks still make up quite a proportion (12 out of 60) of the unqualified products, and some of them are even from the well-known local brands.

New Spotlight On feature to examine the rise in and innovation of facial mask products and showcase the latest ground-breaking variants

Facial masks – a trend that has its roots in Asia – are big news in the beauty industry. ‘Masking’ was the most searched-for skincare term earlier this year, according to Google statistics, and manufacturers are now taking varied and innovative approaches in textures and materials. According to Transparency Market Research¹, the global sheet face masks market is expected to reach US\$336.7M by the end of 2024 (evaluated at US\$160.4M in 2015). They project a year-on-year growth of 8.7 percent from 2016 to 2024.



BEAUTY FACIAL MASK TRENDS



Analysts have identified emerging economies such as Indonesia, Argentina, China, Brazil, and India as lucrative markets for sheet face masks for the next few years. The strengthening economies of these countries, growing disposable incomes, and changing lifestyles are all expected to make a significant contribution to the rising revenue of the global market. These markets will also benefit from the increasingly strong presence of manufacturers in the region.

Sharon Kwek, Senior Innovation and Insights Analyst, Beauty and Personal Care at Mintel, said: “The popularity of sheet masks remains high and will continue to do so as a result of the product’s ability to offer consumers different skincare benefits in a convenient manner and short turnaround time.”

The latest developments in the sector include the use of watermelon in facial masks, which has captured the imagination of manufacturers and consumers alike for the implied sensation of refreshing coolness.

Clay masks in sheet format are also on the rise, due to their improved usability with less mess than traditional clay face masks; and the multi-mask. Perfect for consumers with combination skin concerns,

the multi-masking concept enables consumers to address contradictory skin problems simultaneously. Mr. Glazman credits millennials on Instagram for the proliferation of face mask products. “Millennials are triggering something in beauty, and then the other groups are looking and maybe following,” he said, adding that he has learned a lot from his daughters, ages 18 and 22.

“When you look at what millennials love, they like to see something that happens quickly,” he said.

“That’s what you can get with a mask: the instant effect.”

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