

# Ones To Watch 2021: Sustainable Sampling Strategies

Try on and discovery is a vital part of beauty shopping, but safety and sustainability are making this critical stage of purchase more challenging. We look at five brands with a hygienic and responsible strategy

the WGSN Beauty Team | 09.01.20

8 minutes

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## Overview

**Sampling is mission-critical to the beauty path to purchase, but in a post-pandemic world brands must abandon single-use while still offering safe try-on.**

Beauty buyers love samples. In fact, 58% of online consumers say not being able to try a product stops them shopping. Pair this with 61% of adults saying it's important to buy from ethical brands, along with the crucial presence of safe and contact-free sampling, and the need to provide protective, ethical sampling has never been more urgent.

Hygiene-conscious consumers are naturally unwilling to compromise their health in the search for beauty buys. Shoppers are seeking minimal germ exposure, with virtual try-ons, special beauty tools and cosmetic application storage options, touch-free packaging and sanitising products designed to increase their safety.

The beauty industry is seen as a leading culprit of environmental impact, with single-use packaging becoming the focus of efforts to turn the tide on plastic waste pollution. Eco-conscious shoppers are calling for sustainable and zero-waste packaging that promote biodegradable, renewable or soluble materials.

To survive, beauty testing is going to have to be revolutionised. Brands will have to replace messy multi-user samples with safe contact packaging via sensor-activated distribution options, antibacterial and antifungal coatings and disinfection using UV and beauty AR apps.

Consumers' new beauty behaviours will ensure brands offer hygienic sampling that enables interaction and product engagement without impact on the planet.



# At a glance

Five approaches that could meet the new consumer demands for hygienic and planet-friendly sampling.



All Earth Mineral Cosmetics

## All Earth Mineral Cosmetics

Winner of the UK's Most Eco-conscious Cosmetics Brand in the 2020 Health & Beauty Awards by Lux Life Magazine, the zero-waste make-up brand offers 100% plastic-free refill options for its natural mineral cosmetics range.



Arcade Beauty

## Arcade Beauty

US multinational Arcade develops beauty product sampling solutions and technologies that are sustainable. The company has identified the urgent demand for self-serve innovations and retail experiences that are contact-free and is delivering this for a range of beauty brands across multiple categories.



Glow Organic

## Glow Organic

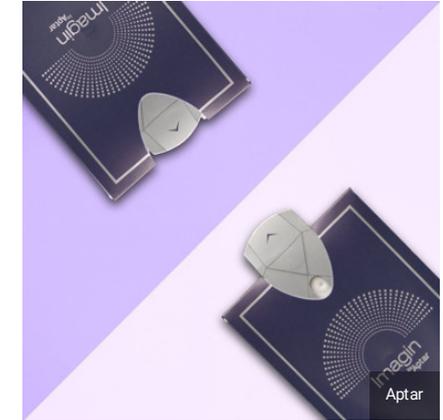
Answering consumer cries for safe-contact cosmetics and unique beauty personalisation, the UK eco-beauty brand offers bespoke, sanitised sample tester and tools, packaged in aluminium jars.



V-Shapes

## V-Shapes

Innovation is pocketed in this single-portion sampling packaging via its patented opening system. With 98% product restitution, consumers can access samples without having to touch formulations or the inside of packaging.



Aptar

## Aptar Group

Aptar Group has combined its innovative sampling systems with personalised, fun and easy-to-use digital formats to support and enhance consumers' discovery of new beauty products.

## All Earth Mineral Cosmetics: refillable pots for life

All Earth Mineral Cosmetics embraces easy-to-choose and use environmentally friendly and ethically and sustainably sourced beauty.

**Why it's one to watch:** the brand is passionate about creating a zero-waste make-up routine and its samples are delivered in plastic-free and biodegradable packaging. After ordering a sample, they can then be decanted into the brand's new Eco Pots for Life. These 100% sustainably sourced, biodegradable and recyclable Eco Pots are designed to be kept forever, with a plastic-free sifter alternative to control product that you tap out to minimise wastage.

The 'kind to skin, animals & planet' eco-swap service enables consumers to send old plastic and mixed-material containers and brushes in the post, which are recycled through Terracycle.

**How can you action this:** take inspiration from your surroundings and create a unique sample that depicts your brand's safety and sustainability stance. Made in Cornwall, this brand's Pots for Life are from sustainably sourced beechwood and plastic inners from 100% recycled fishing nets recovered from the sea – a nice nod to its heritage.

Join sustainable initiatives such as Terracycle to provide consumers with a convenient way to recycle their plastic or beauty products. Consider investing in products that are sustainable but reduce waste, as consumers will be concerned about over-consumption and getting value for money as we feel the economic impact of the pandemic. Design in plastic-free or fully recyclable applicators that contribute to a hygienic experience without having a detrimental effect on the planet.



All Earth Mineral Cosmetics

## Arcade Beauty: self-serve and contact-free sampling innovations

Arcade offers colour cosmetics and fragrance digital try-on technology, single-dose packaging and automated dispensing sampling solutions that are sanitary and sustainable.

**Why it's one to watch:** the shades and formulas of colour cosmetics and fine fragrance have to be tried and tested as shoppers want to feel they are choosing what is best for them and most suits their personal style, but delivering that range of choice sustainably is a challenge. Hailed 'an industry first', Arcade's self-serving fragrance sample, ScentStrip, encapsulates fragrance oil between two layers of paper. The paper is snapped open to release the fragrance.

The brand's colour cosmetics BeautiSeal solution encloses formulas in heat-sealed, pressure-sensitive wells, offering 12 formulas in one sample.

The sampling manufacturer plans to make 80% of its products from recycled materials and offer only 100% recyclable products by 2025. Arcade is searching for mono-material or materials that can be easily separated to achieve these targets. It strives to improve its corporate social responsibility scores for every launch.

**How can you action this:** sustainable, promotional and deluxe samples are a must to attract beauty consumers who will not sacrifice quality from their sampling experience as it is such a perceived indicator of product performance. Work with in-store display retailers to build unique environments that add to the experience of using the tester, offering reassuring, uplifting and luxury touches to encourage consumers to return to retail and interact with products.



Arcade Beauty

## Glow Organic: sanitised personal sampling pots

Glow Organic focuses on brands that respect health and the environment. It produces small-batch samples to order, minimising waste and the need for large storage premises.

**Why it's one to watch:** make-up artist and founder Mel Jenkinson designed the sample jars, which are made from aluminium, to enable customers to try products and then easily recycle the jars. Its customer support is perfectly pitched for post-pandemic operations, offering virtual consultations and make-up lessons to customers who can purchase personalised sampling pots.

Its sample returns programme will enable customers to send the pots back to the brand to clean, re-use and refill. Jenkinson says this kind of sampling strategy results in a circular economy that is “more effective than any other solution to the current waste problem”.

**How you can action this:** communicate your sanitary and sustainable sampling strategies at every opportunity. Show consumers how you are pivoting your brand to ensure they feel safe and reassured when engaging with your products. Ask customers to bring in or send back their own sample pots so they can be sanitised to a commercial standard before reuse, offering peace of mind.

Emphasise that sustainable beauty does not mean compromising on quality and efficacy. Innovate with current packaging, investigating more sustainable materials where possible, maybe in just one part of the product such as a cap or paper – consumers will accept small steps towards this goal if you are open about where improvements are still necessary to reach your goals.



## V-Shapes: patented, one-hand, single-dose sampling

**Contact-free and hygienic, consumers use three fingers to fold the packet in half and deploy the V-shape patented technology to release the liquid or powdered beauty sample.**

**Why it's one to watch:** the Italian manufacturer describes its single-dose packaging system as 'safe', 'multifunctional' and 'adaptive'. It is opened with three fingers, simply by folding it to release the liquid or powder contents.

Samples come in a 100% eco-friendly, single-portion sampling sachet, in volumes ranging from 0.2–25 ml.

The samples are delivered in airless packages and protect the formulations inside by preventing any external contamination, making them ideal for consumers who are concerned about product safety and freshness. They are also recyclable and compostable.

In July 2020, V-Shapes announced its partnership with beauty sampling specialist Orlandi to promote the technology's wide application base, which includes hydro-alcoholic sanitisers, haircare and perfumes.

Contributing to the circular economy is a key aim of V-Shapes, so it joined forces with materials manufacturer NatureWorks to produce its 100% compost-suitable multilayer packaging option. The packet, ink and adhesives are all from materials certified by the European packaging and packaging waste EN 13432 standard.

**How you can action this:** shoppers are looking for intelligent and novel solutions, but they must be simple and convenient to use. Be sure to make them aware of the simplicity of your solution in visual and verbal messaging.



V-Shapes

## Aptar Group: contact-free sampling backed up by an online experience

The flat-spray innovation from Aptar recreates the experience of spraying fragrance, but in a sustainable sample packaging solution

**Why it's one to watch:** signalling its circular economy approach to plastic and waste, Aptar is committed to achieving 10% recycled content by 2025 for its beauty dispensing solutions. The brand is candid about the impact of regulatory constraints and the limited availability of suitable materials on this target, but is working to identify and qualify new technologies to help it attain these goals.

Its patented, fragrance sample dispenser, Imagin, is described as an 'extra flat spray' that delivers up to six sprays in its safe and contained 'in-an-envelope' sample.

Its exclusive partnership with beauty scanning app MyPack Connect launched Imagin Connected. Using visual recognition and Messenger, consumers can take a sample image and access brand content, such as photos, videos, information on the product and the brand's online shop. This innovation also enables brands to obtain information about the return on investment on sampling campaigns, with data available on the number of flash, purchase transformation, geolocation and analysis of the performance across various distribution channels.

**How you can action this:** as shops struggle with footfall, brands will need to find new ways to ensure their products are discovered and experienced by consumers in a hygienic way. Digital activations and unique delivery systems that can attract consumers with their innovative approach will become increasingly important.



## Action points

# 1

### Challenge your traditional formats

It is time for a revolution in sampling. The need to be sustainable and safe requires a huge rethink, so consider sample options that start from scratch and create a new user experience

# 2

### Message your sustainable principles

Consumers might assume your samples use single-use plastic, so make sure you clearly message any information about the ethical credentials of your sample packaging

# 3

### Use tech to support your strategy

Team up with software development, online platforms and contract manufacturers to provide contemporary and seamless sampling solutions and mass production with minimal investment

# 4

### Create refillable, reusable samples for cosmetics

Small samples don't have to be wasteful if they can be commercially reused as part of a circular economy pledge. Investigate the commercial suitability of this to at least some of your range to run as a pilot