

BEAUTY

Credo Hires Dawn Dobras as CEO

● While it has only eight stores now, Credo is “going to be big,” according to Dobras.

BY ALLISON COLLINS

Dawn Dobras has taken the helm at Credo Beauty, the clean beauty retailer started by Sephora veterans Shashi Batra and Annie Jackson in 2015.

For Credo, Dobras is thinking big. “We sit here as a leader in clean beauty,” she said. “When I think about that and this as a company, we’re going to be big. There is not a niche play, this is not something for just the high end of a few markets. The industry is slow, and the danger for the industry is not recognizing that consumers don’t want to put harmful chemicals in their bodies.”

While she declined to discuss specifics of



Credo’s expansion plan, she did say that, for now, she’s focused on learning from the retailer’s first eight locations and planning

to “double down” on what is working in those stores, noting they are seeing double-digit comparable sales.

“We’re ambitiously looking at growth, both on the retail expansion side, as well as on the digital side,” Dobras noted. Credo is gathering information about the Asian market to look into expansion possibilities, but doesn’t have formal plans for international outposts plotted.

“We’ve started to do information gathering around Asia, but it doesn’t feel like clean beauty is as strong a priority in Asia,” Dobras said. “I look at the U.S., and we ship across the country to every single state – we’re growing like a weed. There’s a ton of room for us to be aggressive on a real estate footprint as well as a digital footprint.”

Since Dobras joined the business, Credo has said it will tighten its standards for clean beauty. The business issued new

Brand Standards in June that include an update Dirty List – the list of banned product ingredients – as well as manufacturing practices, ingredient purity, disclosure of fragrance ingredients and packaging. Brands in the assortment have until October 2019 to comply.

So far, Dobras says the store has gotten positive feedback from the initiative.

Dobras is Credo’s first chief executive officer since Batra died in mid-2017. Jackson has been running the business as chief operating officer. “As a right-hand person for me, I couldn’t dream of a better partner,” Dobras said of Jackson. “What I bring are things she doesn’t have experience in – I’ve worked more on the digital side.”

Dobras started at the Gap in the Mickey Drexler days, spending time across strategy, marketing and merchandising before moving to the team that launched oldnavy.com. She’s also worked at a series of startups, including Decorist, an online interior design program that Bed Bath and Beyond acquired in 2017, and Zobha, a luxury yoga wear business.

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Avon Appoints Two Execs

● The business hired its first chief digital officer, as well as a chief technology officer.

BY ALLISON COLLINS

Avon Products Inc. is on a hiring kick.

The beauty business has appointed Benedetto Conversano senior vice president, chief digital and information technology officer, a newly created role. As chief information officer, Conversano succeeds Sue Liddie, current global vice president and chief information officer – she is retiring. Avon has also brought in Heather Payne as chief technology officer. Before, Payne was cto for

Daily Mail Group, the media business.

Conversano joins Avon from Jerónimo Martins, an international food, health and beauty business, where he was chief global information officer. He’s also served on Ikea’s e-commerce board, helping to steer the furniture business’ multichannel strategy. Before that, Conversano was with Procter & Gamble, working to build out automation systems.

At Avon, where he starts Sept. 3, Conversano will work to develop a new digital strategy. He will also work to build, develop and standardize technology delivery across the company globally. As part of that digital plan broadly, Avon is developing a digital board, to be led by Conversano.



Avon Life Colour fragrance by Avon and Kenzo Takada.

“We are thrilled for the opportunity to benefit from Benedetto’s proven, strong, strategic, consumer-focused digital, technological and operational skill set, having played a pioneering role in helping some of the world’s best-known brands deploy

consumer-friendly digital platforms,” Avon chief executive officer Jan Zijderveld said in a statement. “Avon is undergoing a period of significant change, and customer-friendly digital interfaces, supported by a much more efficient technology infrastructure and rich data analytics, are a key strategic driver of the organization’s future progress.”

Zijderveld, who joined Avon from Unilever in February, is the latest ceo to attempt to turn around the business. Digital has been one of his key areas of focus.

“This is an exciting time for Avon, and I am eager to jump in to this newly created role during a turnaround,” Conversano said.

The news of the Conversano and Payne hires come shortly after Avon appointed two new marketing executives and new regional general manager. On the marketing front, Avon’s hires are meant to target fast beauty.

BEAUTY

CVS, Kiss Products Team on K-beauty Line

● With a sales tailwind created by K-beauty skin care, CVS is diving into makeup inspired by South Korean beauty created by Kiss Products.

BY FAYE BROOKMAN

Kiss Products Inc., best known in the mass market for artificial nails and eyelashes, is getting into the K-beauty cosmetics business.

The Korean-American brand – its founder is of South Korean ancestry – is launching Joah, Korean for “I like it,” this month exclusively on cvs.com. In September, it will be distributed in about 4,000 CVS doors, according to Andrea Harrison, senior director, divisional merchandising manager of beauty at CVS.

This is the latest move for CVS as the retailer doubles down in the beauty category. In the past two years, CVS has added more exclusives and first-to-market beauty launches to keep shoppers from migrating online or to specialty doors.

While CVS stocks some K-beauty cosmetics in select doors, Joah is a full line consisting of 158 stockkeeping units – 23 eye items, 19 brow products, 64 lip choices, 47 face options and five brushes. CVS will position the line in prime end of aisle locations.

The brand is thought to be the first full-range mass K-beauty-inspired cosmetics line in the mass market. Prices range from \$2.99 for cosmetics wipes to \$15.99 for products such as a cream contour palette.

According to Harrison, Joah mirrors the retailer’s belief in having fun with beauty, while delivering “indulgent moments” of me time. “[It is a] philosophy that aligns with the values at the heart of our Beauty in Real Life and Beauty Mark visions,” she said of CVS’ campaign to celebrate women of all ages, sizes and ethnicities along with a vow not to alter its collateral materials in the beauty department. “It [Joah] brings a point of difference to our assortment, through its cheeky, on-trend positioning that is a unique offering in our channel.”

Joah will be sold at CVS and cvs.com.



Annette DeVita-Goldstein, senior vice president of global marketing at Kiss, added, “We feel this is the right time for this brand given what is going on with K-beauty. CVS was the perfect partner given their support of K-beauty.” CVS is considered to have the largest array of K-beauty products in the U.S.

But Kiss is delivering products beyond the wide skin-care array at CVS with the color brand. The timing could be fortuitous. According to Kline research, dollar sales of beauty products from South Korea are growing at more than a 30 percent clip and exceed \$250 million in U.S. sales. There is tremendous potential in makeup, which is estimated to produce less than 1 percent of sales to date.

Moreover, skin-care brands built awareness of Korean beauty rituals that DeVita-Goldstein believes can generate interest in cosmetics. In fact, several of the products blur the line between skin and makeup such as a primer called Glow Activator.

CVS’ Harrison confirmed K-beauty resonates with its consumers. “K-beauty has driven fun, excitement and trend to the facial-care category, and is a now a natural fit, and rapidly growing segment in the cosmetics landscape. The development of Joah was inspired by Korean makeup and packaging trends. It is a line of cosmetics that invites you to have fun and enjoy your makeup experience. We continue to find new ways to expand upon our current offerings, particularly when it comes to K-beauty-inspired brands like Joah that encourage playful exploration through cosmetics,” she said.

Although Kiss isn’t well known in mass

cosmetics for color lines, the company distributes cosmetics within the professional market and internationally. “We are very familiar with cosmetics,” DeVita-Goldstein said. Kiss is the number-one brand in artificial nails, according to IRI data, and a leader in lashes – a segment the company only entered in the mass market seven years ago. Moreover, she said, Kiss can leverage its knowledge of South Korean manufacturing with its understanding of the U.S. beauty consumer.

Joah’s vibe is “unapologetically girly and feminine,” said DeVita-Goldstein, but with sophistication. Unlike K-beauty skin products loaded with unique, albeit sometimes bizarre ingredients, DeVita-Goldstein said Joah was created for performance. “We didn’t create a medley of ingredients and sprinkle them into the products. We didn’t feel that was necessary for color cosmetics. It was more important to create the highest performing products, rich color payoff, easy to understand, easy to use and good for your skin. In addition, Joah offers eye-catching packaging and engaging names such as, I’m Your Jelly Bae Matte Gel Lipstick and Selfie Ready Setting Spray.”

Marketing materials behind Joah feature women of all complexions and ethnicities. “We have a robust marketing plan behind this, including a recent preview at Beautycon L.A., digital media, in-store promotions, plus an influencer campaign with an army of online tastemakers. We are working with celebrity makeup artists on tutorials and red carpet appearances, coupled with out-of-the-box sampling programs.