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letter from the editor

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen

Normally, writing the final foreword of the year should be an easy task: You look back at the year gone by - especially the positive aspects of it - and add a pinch of optimism about all the things that await in the upcoming year. Then you top everything off with holiday greetings. This year, however, is different. February 24, 2022, turned the whole world on its head. In light of Russia's attack on Ukraine and the tragic consequences it has wrought, it is difficult to focus on the good things that happened in 2022, even though there were many. Just think of how our market, with retail stores being able to open their doors again, with trade shows having their big comeback after a two-year break ... As far as our predictions for 2023 are concerned, I'm afraid we'll also have to skip those. There is simply too much uncertainty in the air right now. Which leaves me with just one thing to do: On behalf of Mediatainment Publishing Verlags GmbH, I thank you for your loyalty. I wish you peaceful Holidays, a happy New Year, the best of health, and lots of success for 2023. We are particularly thankful to our ad partners and supporters for their unwavering trust throughout the years.

That's it for this year!
Matthias Johnson

Biird announces strategic B2B sales partnership with Gisele International

Expansion into a new distribution channel

Rotterdam, The Netherlands - Pleasure products company Biird has announced their strategic B2B sales and marketing partnership with Gisele International in Europe.

This new collaboration opens up Biird's B2B business channels, which previously only sold their products directly to consumers.

"We're thrilled to have the chance to represent Biird and can't wait to introduce them to our retail partners" said Lisa Sananes, co-founder at Gisele. "Our company values align very much with those of Biird, so a partnership only made sense. We see Gisele as an in-house sales team which works closely together with the Biird team to roll out their adult retail channel across Europe." Andrea Rey, co-founder of Biird added "Since founding Biird, we've focussed relentlessly on building a strong brand and a close relationship to our customers. Now



that the foundations have been built, it's time to spread our wings and introduce Biird in the wider adult retail space. We're very much looking forward to

working with Gisele and have full trust in their team to reach the right partners." Biird is a multi-award-winning pleasure brand known for its pleasure products Namii and Evii. They've just released a co-branded edition of their 2-in-1 stimulator Namii with best-selling author Jüne Plä of the internationally acclaimed book Bliss Club, reinforcing the brand's focus on innovation, design, education and fun. Gisele International is a strategic sales and marketing agency for sexual wellness brands.

e

Shunga's Intimate Massagers

Wijchen, The Netherlands - Shunga proudly presents the new range of intimate massagers, created to meet the need of every woman. Several hours were spent on the drawing board to design elegant and luxurious toys that meet women's requirements



in terms of ergonomics, vibration, quality and above all, the achievement of pleasure. Their innovative, exclusive, and refined designs will lead straight

to the climax of sexual arousal, female orgasm. The new Intimate Massagers are available from SCALA now!

e

Dear readers,
Dear business partners of ean and eroFame

If you remember, last year the motto
of our Holiday greetings was
"2022 will be a better year ..."

Well, that year is nearing its close now and alas,
many things have not really improved.
We are still living in troubling times -
a war in Europe, energy shortages,
and the climate change are particularly worrisome.

we wish for a peaceful world **2023**

Nonetheless, we maintain the hope that things
will take a turn for the better next year
and that we will slowly but
surely return to a normal life.

"Stay healthy and happy!"
This phrase seems more important than ever right now,
and we want to extend these same wishes to you.

In spite of all the crises,
we hope that you will find
peace and quiet amid family
and friends these holidays.
And let's all share the hope that
2023 will be the year
when peace wins out in the end.

We are looking forward to seeing you again
and until then, we thank you
for your great, long-lasting support!

We wish you a Merry Christmas, a happy New Year,
and the best all around!
Yours truly, the Mediatainment Publishing & eroFame team

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Eropartner Distribution introducing Le Wand vibrating necklaces

A collection of 4 compact, discreet batons for on-the-go pleasure with style

Zwaagdijk, The Netherlands - Eropartner Distribution introduced Le Wand Necklaces in Europe during the eroFame trade show in Hannover.



Le Wand Necklace Vibe is a collection of 4 compact, discreet batons for on-the-go pleasure with style and is available for retail customers to order now.


Le Wand Necklace Vibe is a strong, slim vibrator that doubles as discreet, elegant jewelry. This powerful vibe delivers on performance and aesthetics featuring 8 sensual vibration modes that are whisper quiet. Le Wand Necklace Vibe comes complete with a USB Charger, and micro-suede travel pouch for discreet storage. The chrome collection includes 4 colors; Rose Gold, Gold, Silver, and Black and comes with a 26" chain necklace and optional 4" extender. „We are excited to be the first to introduce Le Wand necklaces in Europe.“ Said Chris Bakker, CEO at Eropartner Distribution. „These beautiful items are a perfect gift for Christmas, Valentine's Day or any other reason to celebrate love. We want to thank

Kimberly and her team from COTR for their ongoing love and support, they are truly amazing. We are thankful for the great partnership, and we can't wait to bring Le Wand necklaces to our customers. We are sure that they are as excited as we are.“ “COTR is thrilled to debut the new Le Wand Necklaces in Europe with Eropartner being the first to market with the collection. Commented Kimberly Scott Faubel, Sales Director at COTR. “We debuted the collection at summer's ANME show and, more recently, showcased the 4-color collection at the Eropartner booth during the eroFame trade show in Hannover - the response was more than we could have hoped for! We know Eropartner's sales team does an incredible job with Le Wand and with the Necklaces shipping with plenty of time for the winter holidays – it's going to be a very happy new year... and Valentine's day” 

Nexus releases Thrust



London, England - Thrust, the latest in the Nexus range, held centre stage on their booth at eroFame last month. The three-speed gyrating prostate massager was met with a positive reaction from attendees who will be pleased to know it is now available to order. Thrust is the first gyrating

massager from Nexus and was designed to emulate the feeling of penetration. The shaft is shaped for targeted P or G Spot stimulation and the curved handle makes it perfect for solo or partner play. Thrust is waterproof and rechargeable and comes with a one year warranty. 


Pipedream's Ultimate Pleasure PRO

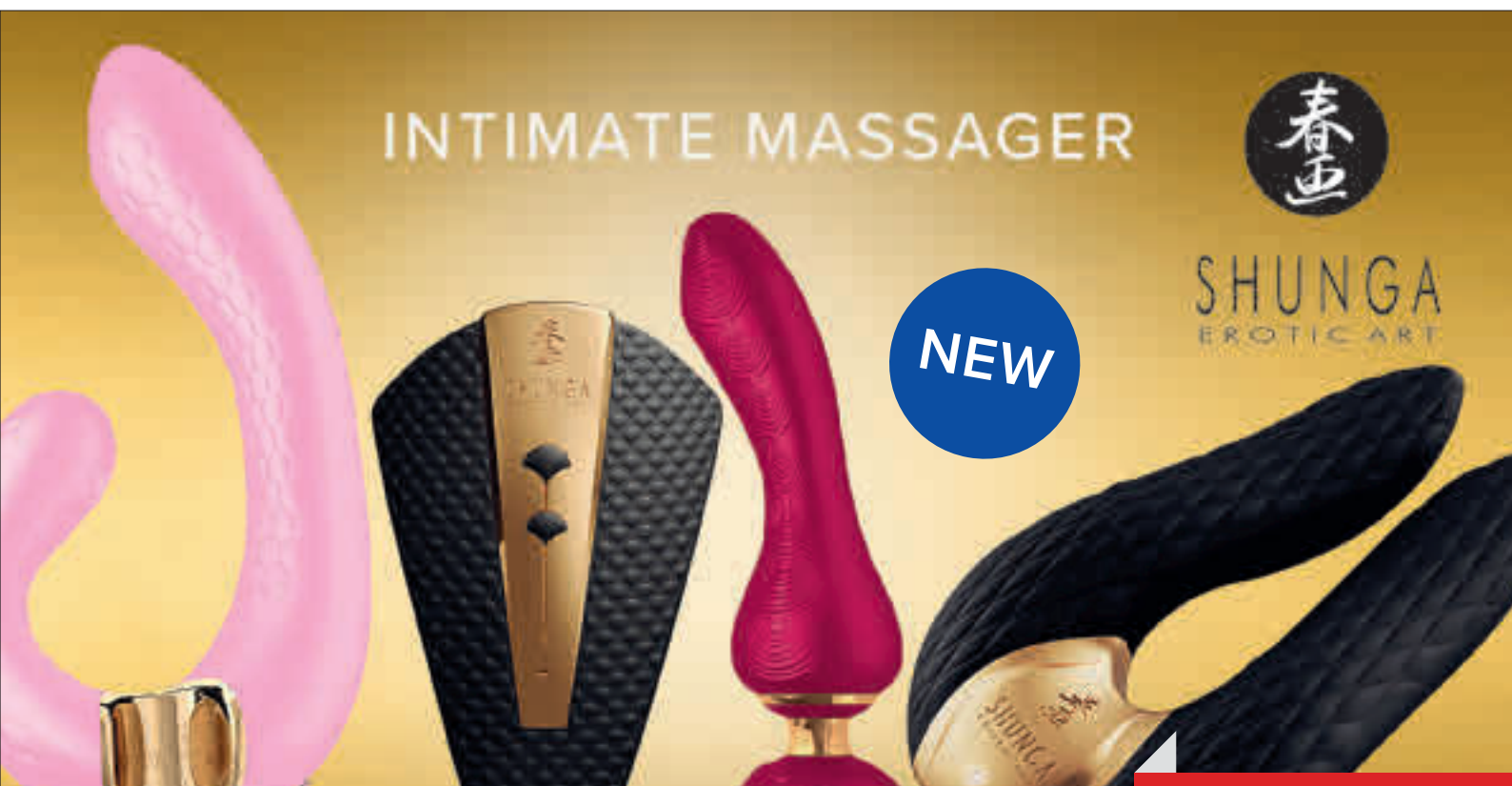
Licks, Sucks, Vibrates, and Stimulates the G-Spot at the same time

Wijchen, The Netherlands - Inspired by the multiple award-winning Ultimate Pleasure vibrator, Pipedream Products is introducing its next multi-orgasmic device with the Ultimate Pleasure PRO.

This latest innovation gives consumers all the thrilling, award-winning action of the original plus all the perks of intense g-spot stimulation. The Ultimate Pleasure PRO features 4 powerful motors that create a pleasure powerhouse that will thrill users to the core. They can enjoy pulsing, milking



suction on their clit and labia, sensual tongue flicking on their sensitive sweet spot, and powerful internal vibrations with the flexible g-spot vibrator. The Ultimate Pleasure PRO from Fantasy For Her by Pipedream is now available from SCALA. 



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Womanizer OG

Womanizer launches first Pleasure Air G-spot vibrator

Berlin, Germany - Eight years ago, Womanizer's proprietary Pleasure Air technology disrupted the sexual wellness industry by pioneering an entirely new category.




This breakthrough technology was specifically designed to awaken the clitoral nerve endings and deliver a new kind of extraordinary orgasm that can't be achieved by vibration alone. Womanizer OG takes this technology to a whole new level and breaks the norm that penetration alone is the best way to the vagina by creating a new way to stimulate the G-spot. The Womanizer OG targets the G-spot by using the brand's signature, patented Pleasure Air Technology. Starting in 2018, it took four years of research, multiple prototypes and designs to develop the Womanizer OG. Ergonomics, design and adjustability were some of the main challenges faced while creating this product. The most challenging technical hurdle in developing the Womanizer OG was determining the appropriate degree of the Pleasure Air Technology so needed for sexual arousal. Due to the product type of insertion through the vagina, the pressure field must be carefully calibrated to produce

a pleasurable and targeted stimulation of the erogenous zone or more specifically, the G-Spot. To date, most studies believe that the G-spot exists, but even among those there is disagreement. For example, while recent literature claims that the G-spot exists as a pleasure receptor, it also acknowledges that it is not a defined, anatomical organ. Rather, it is a functional, dynamic and hormone-dependent area that is highly individual in its development and ability to be pleased due to several biological and psychological factors. Because of the G-spot's varying location and individualized sensitivity levels, the OG's dimensions had to be carefully calculated. The extensive development process therefore focused on creating just the right intensity and flexibility to lead to vaginal sexual sensation. This can be described as more diffused, longer lasting and more satisfying, resulting in stimulation that radiates throughout the body and offers greater potential for orgasms. 

New Penthouse Lingerie products are now available from ST RUBBER



Wadgassen, Germany – Many new products of the brand Penthouse Lingerie are now in stock at ST RUBBER. First-class quality and the very large variety make the brand very attractive for consumers.

If you have any further questions, ST RUBBER's customer service will be happy to help under the telephone number: +49 6834 4006-0 or simply visit the online shop: www.strubbi.com 

International LoveCherry is introducing a new sex machine

New to the Intoyou Collection

Alicante, Spain - The Intoyou Sex Machine is the new product of LoveCherry's Intoyou BDSM Line.

This Sex Machine is a toy conceived and created by and for the most basic but satisfying pleasure there is.

It has an ergonomic base for a spectacular grip, but what really stands out is the built-in dildo on top. With a realistic shape, a rounded glans and a body full of veins, this dildo is perfect for a real experience. It has 10 vibration functions (something common) but, at the same time, it has 10 thrusting functions (up and down movement) and a heat function. These



functions can be controlled directly from the control panel at the base of the Sex Machine or from the included wireless remote control. At the base there is a suction cup so you can put the Sex Machine on almost any flat surface and enjoy wherever and whenever is needed. It is rechargeable by USB, both the sex machine and the remote control.

e



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Flexible, realistic dildos with movable 'skin' from Nature Skin

New at ORION Wholesale

Flensburg, Germany - Three new, impressive and realistic dildos, made out of extremely soft Nature Skin material, are now available at ORION Wholesale.




The dildos are in a realistic penis shape and they have bulging glans, veins on the shaft and testicles. They also have a suction cup so that they can stay up perfectly and are compatible with strap-ons and harnesses. They are available in three different sizes: 18.7 cm, 19.9 cm and 24.7 cm. The special thing about them is that the dildos are flexible but they also stay in position once they have been bent into the desired shape. Their velvety soft surface is movable and it moves back and forth during penetration for extremely realistic pleasure. The Nature Skin material doesn't

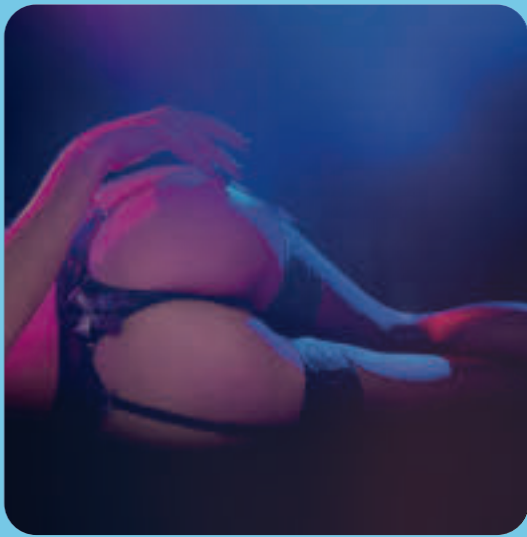
just look like real skin – it feels just as velvety soft too. Available are: Dildo with moveable Skin (Size S / 18.7 cm), Dildo with moveable Skin (Size M / 19.9 cm) and Dildo with moveable Skin (Size L / 24.7 cm). The realistic dildos from Nature Skin are delivered in promotional packaging with a description of the product in various languages on it as well. The packaging can also be stood up or hung up with the hanger in the middle. More products will now fit into the sales space because they're more compact. They also take up less space when they're in storage as well. 

Blaze Elite – stylish bondage in red and white



Axel, The Netherlands - Tonga added new products to the Blaze collections, called Blaze Elite. They come in stylish white and red, with gold coloured hardware. You may be familiar with the previous Blaze bondage products that are available in black with several textures, such as a croco leatherlook, a diamond stitch padded design, a purple embossed design, red embroidery decoration and in smooth artificial leather. With the new lines your customers can now choose the familiar Blaze price-quality ratio in new classy colours. The red as well as the white line includes handcuffs, ankle cuffs, a collar & leash, a ball gag, an eye mask, a paddle,

a flogger, and a hog tie. A 5-piece set is also available. The white and red artificial leather combined with gold coloured metal parts make the items look so stylish and kinky at the same time! Adjustability for different body sizes is guaranteed with the buckle closures on the cuffs, the collar and the ball gag, and with an elastic strap on the mask. Collar and cuffs also come with a metal clip to attach the items to each other or to chains, furniture or extra weights. The same for the hog tie that has 4 clips to easily attach wrist and ankle cuffs to it. All new Blaze Elite products are expected to arrive at the Tonga warehouse by mid-December. 



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Ronja Rehpenning joins the sales team at ORION Wholesale

ORION Wholesale

Flensburg, Germany - For decades, ORION Wholesale has been a reliable partner of the international erotic industry and today it's one of the largest erotic wholesalers in Europe – and with customers in over 50 countries, it is also successful beyond the continent.



In addition to a broad, quality-tested range of bestsellers, the company is known for its service and tailor-made sales solutions. This service is constantly being optimised and expanded and this is why Ronja Rehpenning has joined the ORION Wholesale sales team. Ronja Rehpenning has already completed her training as a business woman in wholesale and foreign trade at ORION, which she successfully completed at the beginning of 2021. She then joined ORION's Wholesale Operations department before she went on to support the sales team as a Junior Key Account

Manager. Here, she will mainly look after B2B customers in Scandinavia. „I am very curious about the direct contact with our customers,” Ronja Rehpenning is pleased to say. „I got to know some of our customers at the eroFame, and I hope that I will get to know many more in the coming weeks. The first trips to our Scandinavian neighbours are already on my agenda.“ In her free time, Ronja Rehpenning also enjoys travelling around Denmark – especially on the water, ever since she took up sailing. Or you can find her in a camper near the Baltic Sea - preferably reading an exciting thriller. **e**

EDC Wholesale becomes ONE-DC



Veendam, The Netherlands - EDC Wholesale will change its name as of January 2023 into ONE-DC. The Holland-based wholesaler previously changed the name of its platform and will now also change its company name to ONE-DC. „As a modern wholesaler, we are always looking ahead, seeking the best opportunities and chances to improve ourselves,” said Eric Idema, CEO of EDC Wholesale. „With our international expansion and overseas ambition, it is time for a change. Last year, we changed the name of our platform and next year we are changing the name of our company. But

we are staying close to ourselves. To make it easy for our customers we chose a name that sounds like EDC (when pronounced in English). ONE-DC will be the new name for our international ambitions, it's short and easy and with the new name we are ready for the future.”

Starting Monday the 2nd of January 2023 visitors to the company's platform will see the ONE-DC logo. Not only will the website be updated with the new name, but also the company's social media platforms, newsletter, advertising, and other touch points will also be updated. **e**

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Arcwave expands product portfolio

CleanTech Silicone strokers Pow and Ghost are available now

Berlin, Germany - Arcwave has already revolutionized the stroker market with the Arcwave Ion and Voy. Now, the brand is expanding its portfolio with two new strokers – Pow and Ghost.




Both products come in three vibrant colors: black, mint and blue. Typical for Arcwave products, Pow and Ghost are made with patented CleanTech Silicone, which offers a hygienic and long-lasting experience in addition to a silky-smooth feeling. Arcwave Pow is a premium manual stroker which combines a smart and elegant design with intense and suction-driven stimulation. This suction intensity can be adjusted just by placing a finger over the air pressure release valve during use. The featured inner sleeve is made from CleanTech Silicone, Arcwave's patented and modern silicone material, which is durable, hygienic, and flexibly adapts to any penis size. It stretches and tightens to provide the desired level of intensity to any body. The smart helix

structure within Pow's inner sleeve makes cleaning and drying easy as well as quick. Specially, the shaped ventilation lids protect the toy when not in use and enable better ventilation for fast and hygienic drying. Ghost looks like a simple pocket stroker, but its innovative features are surprising: the toy is a textured stroker made from CleanTech Silicone. The stroker flips inside out to reveal a second pleasure surface mixing up two different sensations. The ergonomic shape and compact size make it incredibly easy to handle while providing a perfect grip. In addition, a slim design allows easy and discreet storage. What's more, the durable Clean Tech Silicone means that Ghost can be used again and again, unlike most other products on the market. 

New sex toys from Shunga now available at ST RUBBER



Wadgassen, Germany - Retailers can now order the new sex toys from Shunga at ST RUBBER. Shunga presented the new product line for the first time this summer and then also with great success at the eroFame. It convinces by very noble and high-quality toys in terrific design. As usual from Shunga, the packaging is also completely thought out and unique. You can choose between six different products in different colors. ST RUBBER's CEO Werner Tiburtius is also

enthusiastic: "For more than 20 years we have been very proud to be a strong and reliable partner of Shunga. Now we are very happy about the new Shunga toys in our assortment! The design and quality are fantastic and the response at the eroFame was correspondingly terrific." If you have any further questions, ST RUBBER's customer service will be happy to help under the telephone number: +49 6834 4006-0 or simply visit the online shop: www.strubbi.com. 

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pjur wins 'Brand Development of the Year' award

eroFame 2022

Wasserbilg, Luxembourg - pjur was announced as the winner of the EAN EROTIX Award for 'Brand Development of the Year' at this year's eroFame in recognition of its bold decision to take the brand in a new direction with a complete redesign.




Yellow and black are the colours traditionally associated with pjur – but since the branding refresh, pjur has acquired a new logo, a new claim, new imagery and new colours. The new pjur logo retains the famous yellow dot but has been updated for a more modern and relevant look. This is supported by the claim 'Feel the Real.', which encapsulates the new values that pjur now wants to convey: self-determination and self-fulfilment. The new colour gradients of the fluid shapes in purple, blue, turquoise,

yellow and red complete the established pjur colour spectrum and give the brand a fresh new aesthetic. The new shapes are a visual representation of diversity and openness, fascination, lightness and limitless dreams. "We're very pleased to receive this award, as it shows us that we've been on the right track with all the work we've done over the past two years to sharpen up the core brand message, values and aesthetic, as well as our future brand communication", says Alexander Giebel, CEO & founder of pjur. 

OUCH! – Glow in the dark



Beneden-Leeuwen, The Netherlands - OUCH! is excited to announce that they are adding a very bright addition to the current portfolio. The newest addition to the OUCH! collection was firstly introduced at the ANME in LA last July, and after a huge successful receipt it made it's European debut at the eroFame 2022 with again a very enthusiastic receipt. It includes a full range, all gender inclusive, glow in the dark pleasure devices. "Glow in the dark stirs nostalgia." said Yaël Toonen, Product Manager at SHOTS. "There is something intangible and magical about it. It's a revival

of the 90's and this trend is now back. Left and right we have seen some brands develop a glow in the dark product while the demand is growing, but none of them is offering a full glow in the dark portfolio, like OUCH! is doing right now. This is something we are very proud of." With eye to detail the product developers at OUCH! where not only thinking about when the lights go out, instead they designed all products with a bright green color giving it a much fresher and cleaner look and feel. Making sure all products can be used when the lights are on and off. 



new **exclusive** sizes!



For Wholesale inquiries please contact:
Leroy Klunder – Brand Ambassador
Email: leroy@shots.nl
Telephone: +31 (0) 6 82 38 6706



pjur going Down Under

pjur trains Australian retailers and presents its latest innovations

Sydney, Australia / Wasserbillig, Luxembourg - pjur's Katrin Kühnrich, Senior Key Account Manager Sales, and Sabrina Singh, Marketing Manager, spent almost two weeks in Australia visiting retailers, presenting the company's latest innovations and training local teams.




The itinerary over the two weeks took the pjur team from Melbourne via Sydney, Byron Bay and all the way to Gold Coast. As well as visiting various boutiques and retailers to train on-site teams on different topics, appointments with Sugar & Sas, the exclusive pjur sales partner in Australia and New Zealand, were also on the agenda for the pjur team. Three important topics were the focus during the trip to Australia. Firstly, retailers were informed about the new European Medical Device Regulation, known as the MDR. This law is also relevant for Australia, as the Therapeutic Goods

Administration (TGA) has fully aligned its new regulations for medical devices with the MDR. In September, pjur was one of the first manufacturers of personal lubricants to become a medical device manufacturer certified according to the MDR. Secondly, the Australian retailers were enthusiastic about the new, modern brand design with new logo, claim, fresher colours and photos. The partners in Australia were also keen on pjur INFINITY, the premium personal lubricant in an elegant glass bottle. It's the first product to show off the new brand design, and thus heralds pjur's new direction. 

New trend collection from Cottelli Lingerie



Flensburg, Germany - The new collection from Cottelli Lingerie whets appetites for seductive hours for two, because it combines pure sensuality with sophistication in the trendy colors petrol and black. The lingerie has been designed exclusively at ORION's headquarters so that women can show off their seductive curves in a sexy, stylish and confident way. The seven new breathtaking outfits in different designs are made of seductive lace, hot wet look material and sensual silky stretch material. Special eye-catchers are loving accessories such as beads and chains. The new Cottelli Lingerie

collection is available from ORION Wholesale. The lingerie is delivered in packaging that is in a new look and feel. It is delivered in a high-quality cardboard box that can also be used as a gift box. This cardboard box is covered in an additional slipcase with a detailed image of the respective product and a description of the product in nine languages on it as well. The packaging can be stood up or hung up with the hanger in the middle. More products will now fit in the sales space because they are more compact. They also take up less space when in storage. 

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Spice It Up

Lola Games

Prague, Czech Republic - Taking care of the health and satisfaction of clients the Lola Games Brand has presented marvelous anal stimulators in the Spice It Up collection.



Both devices are made of velvet and hypoallergenic silicone that does not contain phthalate. This material is not porous and it will be extremely easy to take care of it. Caring for intimate toys is an important condition for sexual wellness. The prostate massager Grace is perfect for men to maintain health. It will also be an excellent unisex toy that will bring you vivid sensations. The massager is rechargeable and has a convenient magnetic charger at the base of the device. 7 vibration modes are complemented by 7 stretching modes that can be used together and separately. Two powerful motors will provide the best stimulation not only inside but also in the perineal area. The massager has a remote controller. With it, you will be able to fully dive into the process and operate the device comfortably. The anal plug Allure made of velvet

silicone is ideal for those who are already familiar with anal sex, and for those who want to try anal affection. The device is very pleasant to the touch and has 10 powerful vibration modes that will make your sex life more interesting. The plug has a flexible stem, thanks to which its wearing will be much more comfortable and pleasant. The device is rechargeable and has a USB charger. Both toys have protection from streams of water and strong jets from any direction. Lola Games is a guarantee of quality in the market of products for sexual health. The brand has been repeatedly awarded international design awards for its principles of environmental friendliness and technological solutions. The brand's team tirelessly monitors the development of modern technologies and implements modern solutions in their devices to present the most functional and aesthetic products to the market. **e**

Bangers Fuck Machines by Hidden Desire



Wijchen, The Netherlands - The search for the perfect fuck machine is over – thanks to the Bangers Fuck Machines from Hidden Desire. The best thing about them is that they are very compact, what makes it easy to store and quick to use, but with the same features and power like 'normal' bigger fuck machines. The Bangers Fuck Machines

deliver 285 strokes per minute. Both Bangers Fuck Machines come with a remote control, 17 cm dildo, and two adapters. The Vac-U-Lock and Suction Cup adapter make it possible to use the sex machines with almost any dildo and dong. The Bangers Fuck Machines are available from SCALA. **e**



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Masturbator OTOUCH AIRTURN 2 awarded at eroFame

'Product of the Year: Masturbator'

Shenzhen, China - OTOUCH was announced as the winner of the EAN EROTIX Award for 'Product of the Year: Masturbator' for AIRTURN 2 at this year's eroFame.



Luxury masturbator AIRTURN 2 undoubtedly is a unique device, its discreet casing hides inside a passage to pleasure similar to oral sex. Notably, its silicone interior with a variety of textures makes it last much longer than masturbators made of porous materials. The AIRTURN 2 is a perfect example of what modern masturbators can offer their owners – whisper quiet, 5 different suction functions, 6 vibration patterns and 2 heating levels that can be turned on and off separately. It was all of these things that earned OTOUCH AIRTURN 2 the 'Product of the Year: Masturbator' award. "It is our first European award", said

OTOUCH sales representative Brian Yu, "As a new brand in this business line, this award is a powerful endorsement for our hard work and professional male masturbators. EDC is an exclusive distributor for OTOUCH male toys. We know this honor is also belongs to them." OTOUCH aims to further expand its products range and takes the award as motivation to continue working hard on the development of new products. "In the next few months, we will release several new models with some patented technology, including new female toy. We hope our new models will be like AIRTURN-2 accepted and welcome by users".

e

BeauMents wins at eroFame!



Wadgassen, Germany - BeauMents is happy about winning the EAN Erotix Award 'Product Line of the Year, Couple Toys' at eroFame. It is already the fourth award for the successful couples toy brand from ST RUBBER. The team of the wholesaler is thrilled about the award: "We are very happy about this great award and thank the jury! With BeauMents we have been developing innovative sex toys for couples in first-class quality for years. We are strongly represented throughout Europe, both

in bricks & mortar retail and in e-commerce. The BeauMents brand is clearly a must-have for every retailer! Also this year we have introduced a new product at eroFame 2022: the Polypos Massager! This is a powerful toy for a sensual couple massage or for woman or man alone, in an innovative and ergonomic design that can help to promote blood circulation and relieve muscle pain. Playfully easy to reach all parts of the body and massage away tension easily and effectively."

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XR Brands introduces 'Racy Rose' Licking & Vibrating Stimulator

New incarnation of viral sex toy combines 3 sensations for unparalleled pleasure

Huntington Beach, USA - XR Brands is thrilled to unveil the latest addition to the Inmi Bloomgasm line: the Bloomgasm Racy Rose Thrusting & Licking Rose Vibrator.




The latest incarnation of the social media sensation rose-shaped clitoral toy, the Racy Rose Thrusting & Licking Rose Vibrator combines three different sensations – licking, thrusting, and vibration – all in one eye-catching pleasure device. The rechargeable, waterproof, silicone Racy Rose Thrusting & Licking Rose Vibrator is equipped with a seductive tongue powered by 3 speeds and 4 patterns of licking, plus an insertable “stem” with a thick textured shaft featuring 3 speeds and 2 patterns of vibration and thrusting. Simply put, the Racy Rose delivers next-level stimulation that is unparalleled. The Racy Rose Thrusting & Licking Rose Vibrator is not the first impressive licking vibrator to join the Bloomgasm collection. Consumers and retailers alike have already fallen in love

with the entire Bloomgasm collection of beautiful and powerful stimulators. Consumer favorites include the French Rose Licking & Vibrating Stimulator, the Wild Violet 10X Licking Stimulator, and the Wild Violet Licking Silicone Stimulator. “We’re so excited to add the Racy Rose to the Bloomgasm family,” XR Brands President Rebecca Weinberg said. “Bloomgasm started from a social media sensation and now the line boasts high-quality vibrators and suction devices all with the signature flower-shaped design. These are high-quality toys that offer world-class stimulation and look gorgeous doing it! The collection has grown so much in the last year, and we think the Racy Rose Thrusting & Licking Rose Vibrator is going to be a hit for the holidays and beyond.” 

Orgie awarded 'Sexual Wellness Company of the Year'



Caldas da Rainha, Portugal - On the mark of Orgie Company's 5th anniversary, eroFame returned to the trade shows calendar and the celebration would not have been the same if not where the brand was launched. “To celebrate Orgie's 5th anniversary at eroFame was meaningful to us because it was its first showcase and where Orgie started its way into the

market. The Sexual Wellness Company of the Year Award certainly doubled our celebration this year. This is Orgie's third EAN Award, we are proud and grateful for the recognition given to Orgie through each one of them, and aware of the responsibility that comes with them”, Raquel Shaw, Chief Operating Officer of Orgie Company. 

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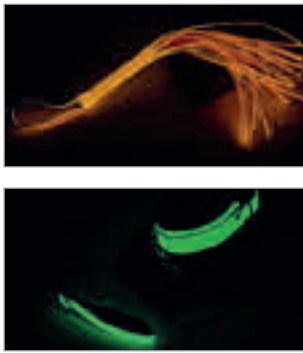


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Soon available from Dream Toys: Radiant BDSM

Tonga

Axel, The Netherlands - Radiant means sending out light, shining or glowing brightly, and that is exactly what the new Dream Toys collection does.




The Radiant collection for BDSM is available in bright orange and bright green which glows in the dark! This collection offers all the usual BDSM tools such as handcuffs, ankle cuffs, a collar & leash, a paddle, a flogger, a whip, a ball gag and a mask. There's also a hog tie and a strap-on harness. The orange and green colour of the products look bold in daylight, and in the dark they're stunning with their radiant glow. The metal details of the Radiant gear are nickel free and the cuffs and collar have a soft neoprene lining for wearing comfort. Sizes can be adjusted with the buckles. To attach extra weights or chains the bondage products have rings and clasp hooks. In the glow-

in-the-dark Radiant range you will also find matching dildos and plugs with suction cups. These are made of semi-transparent silicone with a coloured core that glows in the dark. The smallest plug has a green core that glows green in the dark, the midsize plug with a purple core glows blue and the largest plug glows purple from a core that is pink in daylight. The colour scheme for the dildos with glans, veins and balls is the same. The green dildo glowing green in the dark has the smallest size, the purple dildo glowing blue is medium sized and the pink dildo glowing purple is the largest. All Radiant products are expected to be in stock in the Tonga warehouse by mid-December. 

INSCUP 1



OTOUCH unveiled its new masturbator INSCUP 1 and announced that it will go into mass production now. As a superior male masturbation device, the INSCUP 1 is made of advanced silicone material with advanced electronic technology. It has a 500g Penis Sleeve, which is attached tightly through the magnetic suction fixation ring for easy removal, cleaning and reinstallation. It is made of soft and

skin-friendly TPE material for bringing strong sense of impact, also equipped with dual motors and a 7-frequency vibration mode to achieve a variety of stimulation from the top to the bottom, endowing fuller pleasure and richer experience. It has built-in intelligent heating to further enhance the comfort of the use process. To learn more about OTOUCH visit otouch.com or send email to info@otouch.com 



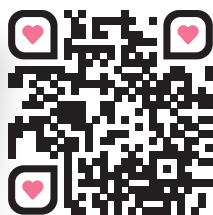
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Kiiroo releases Pearl3

The next generation

Amsterdam, The Netherlands - Kiiroo announced the release of the next generation of their award-winning touch-sensitive Pearl vibrator; Pearl3.



The highly anticipated new release celebrates an upgrade to the the much loved design, shape and intensity that customers have been looking forward to. The Pearl3 features an improved and very responsive touch-sensitive exterior, an exhilarating 3 hour long battery life - double its predecessors - 3 nubs for intensified G-spot stimulation, waterproof for personal enjoyment and 2 beautiful new colors chosen by current Kiiroo users. Managing Director of Kiiroo, Helen Zeal says "We are excited to be launching our latest iteration in the Pearl line up, responding to feed-

back from trade partners and consumers. We continue to build our range of female interactive products to cater to the growing demand for these devices and shall be revealing further products imminently." Pearl3 boasts some of the most unique interactive features on the market to date. It can control and be controlled interactively by other Kiiroo and FeelTechnology-enabled partner devices and can also be used for interactive webcam using FeelPerformer.com and be controlled by interactive 2D and VR content for a fully immersive pleasure experience. 

Sportsheets prepares to launch the Amber Collection



Cerritos, USA - Sportsheets launched Amber, the newest collection from Since-ly with the first-of-its-kind design in the sex toy industry. With nothing comparable on the market, Amber's high-quality products offer an exclusive tortoiseshell-inspired design with supple yet malleable material that allows for durability without sacrificing beauty or functionality. "We really put the very best of everything into this collection," says Joe Parisi, Product Development Director. "For example, we went through four different suppliers trying to nail the PVS material. We broke 10 chains before finally finding one we felt

met our standards, and we changed the cuff and collar shapes multiple times until they fit the body the way we wanted it to." After months of product research and development, the team at Sportsheets is counting down to the days to their collection in stores. Just in time for the holidays, this 9-piece collection is perfect for the holiday season and beyond. "While most companies wind down at the end of the year, we ramped up to release Amber," says Kelly Sofferman, Sr. Brand & Marketing Manager. "It's the perfect collection for those looking to escape the cold of winter and turn up the heat indoors." 

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Magic Stick

OTOUCH unveils new vibrator

Shenzhen, China - OTOUCH is glad to announce that its new patented innovative wand vibrator will be put into bulk production in November, 2022.



The Magic Stick is a luxury massager that combines high-grade silicone material with advanced electronic technology. The massager comprises the main vibrator and several attachments, which can simultaneously stimulate the sensitive point in the vagina and clitoris. The main vibrator is designed with a metal conductor rail, and the attachments can be adjusted back and forth on the rail, thereby accurately tailoring the insertion depth to each user whose sensitive point in the vagina differ. These attachments are multifunctional and replaceable,

which can bring vibration, licking, kneading, suction, and so forth to the clitoris (specific attachments might differ according to different countries or regions). The main vibrator has 4 vibration modes and 1 heating level, while each attachment respectively can be driven with 3 intensity modes by vibrator, so can enjoy as much fun as possible. The Magic Stick is rechargeable and waterproof for carefree fun between the sheets. OTOUCH has successfully got the patent for Magic Stick in EU and China, and the UDS patent will be released soon.



International LoveCherry releases three new harnesses



Alicante, Spain - LoveCherry's BDSM Line by Intoyou grows with three new male chest harnesses: Darius, Adonis and Odiseo. Darius is a very sensual harness, it has both a front and back part full of straps, studs and metal rings that add that spicy touch to any look. In the back of the collar part you will find a small stud so you can put the strap that you like the most. Adonis has an X shape, with a series of adjustable straps that, thanks to its buckles, make it suitable for a wide

variety of bodies. Both in the front and in the back, in the centre, there is a large hoop, ideal to combine with your any favourite toy. Odiseo has a series of adjustable straps that, thanks to its buckles, make it suitable also for a wide variety of bodies. In the centre, both in the front and in the back, it has a ring that you can be used to combine any favourite toy. With their high-quality studs and materials, these harnesses made of vegan leather will become a must-have in any BDSM collection.



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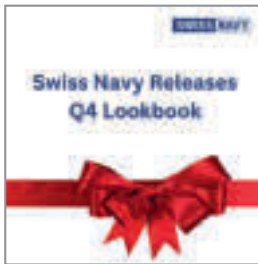
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Swiss Navy releases Q4 Lookbook

www.B2BSwissNavy.com/Lookbook

Pompano Beach, USA - M.D. Science Lab, makers of the iconic Swiss Navy brand, has released their fourth quarter Brand Image Assets Lookbook specifically created for their retail partners.



The Lookbook contains a variety of images designed to build consumer awareness, increase sales, create customer loyalty, and give retailers a competitive edge in the marketplace. This new Q4 Lookbook focuses on holiday images to help promote consumer shopping. "We had such an incredible response to our first lookbook which we launched last month that we were eager to get this holiday-centric lookbook out early for our retail partners," said Briana Watkins, ACS, M.D. Science Lab's Vice President of Sales and Marketing. "As always, we look for ways to better serve

our customers. This is the busiest time of year for them and by providing them with intentional images that can be sized to meet their needs we hope to make their lives a bit easier so they can focus on holiday shoppers." Swiss Navy's Q4 Brand Image Assets Lookbook has images that are available for download and can be created in a variety of sizes depending on retailer needs. Retailers are encouraged to contact their sales representatives with their requests. The fourth quarter Lookbook is now available to retailers at www.B2BSwissNavy.com/Lookbook



'Survey of Pleasure' results released from Wicked Sensual Care



Los Angeles, USA - The personal lubricant company Wicked Sensual Care has released the results from their informal 'Survey of Pleasure'. The survey reveals interesting statistics about the participants' sexual preferences, masturbation habits, kinks, and more. Over 200 participants in this survey ranged from 18-71+ years in age, and included trans, polyamorous, and asexual representation. The results of this survey provides intriguing insights into the needs of participants, such

as: 35% of respondents said their sex life has 'room for improvement', 21% of respondents masturbate daily and 19% of respondents are into foot play. "We're so impressed to see the robust and diverse participation in Wicked Sensual Care's Survey of Pleasure," said Resident Sex Educator jessica drake, "It gives us insight into people's pleasure-based needs, personal sexual preferences, masturbation habits, kinks, and more, which will help us create an even better consumer experience."



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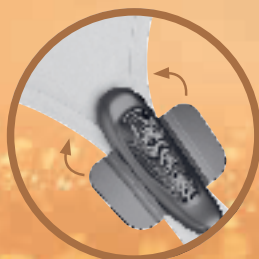
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XR Brands introduces double-sided silicone & glass Vibrators from Prisms

Form & function come together to create unique, beautiful, versatile vibrators

Huntington Beach, USA - XR Brands is thrilled to announce that they are now shipping three exciting double-ended Vibra-glass silicone and glass vibrators from Prisms Erotic Glass, some of the first to feature both glass and silicone ends.



Shoppers love silicone vibrators, but glass dildos are widely recognized as superior tools for penetration – and now users can have both in one beautiful toy. Prisms Vibra-glass vibes are available in three different IPX6 waterproof, rechargeable vibrators from Prisms Erotic Glass. Each features 3 speeds and 7 patterns of vibrations in an eye-catching package with soft, silky premium silicone on one end and strong, smooth borosilicate glass on the other. The pink 10X Rosé Dual Ended Smooth Silicone and Glass Vibrator is 7 inches long and has a sleek, smooth double-ended bullet shape. The teal 10X Bleu Dual Ended G-Spot Silicone and Glass Vibrator is curved for G-spot stimulation and features a pronounced non-representational “head” on each end. The purple 10X Pari Dual Ended Wavy Silicone and

Glass Vibrator boasts a sensual, ergonomic wave shape with slightly different ends that allow users to comfortably enjoy insertable pleasure and apply more pressure with less effort. “The Prisms double-ended vibrators are completely unique and so pretty to look at,” XR Brands President Rebecca Weinberg said. “Silicone vibrators and glass dildos are both super popular, and we’re so excited to offer our customers quality toys that bring the two together. Also, these vibrators are just beautiful. Now that the holiday shopping season is underway, we know shoppers will be on the lookout for giftable pleasure objects that look as good as they feel, and these head turners fit the bill perfectly.” Each Prisms vibrator comes complete with a velvet storage bag and is packaged in a sleek and sturdy box suitable for both shelf and slatwall displays. **e**

Pipedream's Ultimate Pleasure PRO



Wijchen, The Netherlands - Inspired by the multiple award-winning Ultimate Pleasure vibrator, Pipedream Products is introducing its next multi-organismic device with the Ultimate Pleasure PRO. This latest innovation gives consumers all the thrilling, award-winning action of the original plus all the perks of intense g-spot stimulation. The Ultimate Pleasure PRO features 4

powerful motors that create a pleasure powerhouse that will thrill users to the core. They can enjoy pulsing, milking suction on their clitoris and labia, sensual tongue flicking on their sensitive sweet spot, and powerful internal vibrations with the flexible g-spot vibrator. The Ultimate Pleasure PRO from Fantasy For Her by Pipedream is now available from SCALA. **e**

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Moving on

Is 2022 a forgettable year?

Yes



Colleen Godin,
EAN U.S. Correspondent

As the last calendar sheets fall, we are used to being inundated by the media with a wave of end-of-year reviews. While not exactly following that tradition, EAN does attempt to put the waning year into perspective. So, how will 2022 be remembered in the annals of the sexual wellness market? A year of transition? A year of new beginnings? A year like any other? Or maybe even a year of stagnation?

Try not to hate me too much for my closing thoughts on 2022, industry pals. While I say this with the most sincere empathy and care for my colleagues, this last year has been rather forgettable as a whole. However you slice it, it makes sense, though. Factories were just getting back into proper production mode. International shipping still proved extremely difficult. Retailers were finally able to open their doors for good. And as anyone in the B2B space will tell, my lord, did the costs of doing business rise!

Some sales folk and product trainers began to hit the road again, and travel was abound with glitches. Facebook posts told endless stories of canceled flights, sold-out rental cars, and even bookings made for the wrong city. Similarly, product innovation and design hit a lull. It was just too difficult, and sometimes impossible, to bring a ground-breaking, sex-tech-y idea to market without a fully functional supply chain.

Trade shows returned, but these events were more like cozy family reunions. Bear hugs and late-night dinners among

friends trumped flashy product debuts. However, can you really blame the industry for finally putting on the brakes? Sometimes you need a forgettable year to step back, rest up and reassess, and recover. The pandemic put a halt to our personal and professional lives for an entire 2 years. There's no reason to downplay that fact.

The industry took its first, big fall after decades of non-stop success, and 2022 was the year we all picked ourselves up and brushed off the dust. No different to needing a few days of rest and recuperation after a week at the eroFame trade show, we all couldn't get back to inventing new sex toys, hopping flights, and re-stocking inventory without some serious R&R. Now that we've all regained our energy, I can only imagine what 2023 will bring as we hit warp speed within the sex toy universe.

e

No

How you answer the titular question probably depends on your expectations going into the year. Following two years of pandemic, many had hoped for a lot more 'normality' than we actually ended up getting. 2022 kind of stumbled out of the gate as nobody knew what the future would bring - even now, the effects of the coronavirus pandemic are still omnipresent, and people are warning of new virus variants and a 'tough winter.' Looking at things from that angle, 2022 certainly qualifies as a year of transition. But of course, that is not the whole story. There have also been lots of positive memories that will be tied to this year, especially since we have finally been able to share these moments with friends and colleagues after two years of isolation and travel and contact restrictions. Therefore, 2022 can't be a forgettable year. Just think about the buzz and excitement that pervaded pretty much every trade show. Which trade or industry member did not have a big smile on their face when meeting familiar faces at these shows, hugging old friends and shaking hands with business partners? Sales and product training has also picked up again in 2022, with sales managers and brand reps travelling all over to visit their clients in person rather than communicating with a face on a screen. Everything that had been sorely missing from our industry in 2020 and 2021 has been reawakened this year.

Closing this gap after two full years of a global pandemic is no small feat and should qualify as a big step for our industry. Therefore, 2022 deserves to be remembered as a year of new beginnings. It is quite obvious that things are not back to the way they used to be, but we have definitely made promising strides this year.



Matthias Johnson,
editor in chief

Competitive Advantage: Compassion

A column by Dominnique Karetsos



Last month we considered the transition from Founder to embracing the title of CEO. This month Dominnique Karetsos, CEO of Healthy Pleasure Group, asks what compassionate leadership as a competitive advantage looks like.

The Sexual Health & Technology industry was born in an era of disruption and challenges. It's an industry that has cultivated winning models while navigating censorship, imploding vice clauses, rewiring investment biases and reshaping narratives to tackle taboos and shame. All of which requires fast-paced efficiency. As you can imagine, this leaves little room for businesses and their leaders considering the messy world of emotions.....like compassion.

Compassion is a verb. Compassion, unlike its cousins empathy and sympathy, is both recognising and feeling then acting to solve or alleviate both of these sensations, head on. Compassion as a leadership style for competitive advantage is not new. But, in a world of fighting fires and striving to make an impact and income, it has become a lost and forgotten art.

Businessman and ex-LinkedIn CEO, Jeff Weiner, says it best when he says "Cultivating compassion in your company is an upfront investment that pays off handsomely in the long run." I wholeheartedly agree with him that, "It is impossible

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to create a culture of compassion unless CEOs and top executives take the lead. They must not only model compassion in their own behaviour, but also deliberately and mindfully cultivate the group norms that make compassion and empathy a reality—and not just words in a mission or values statement.”

So what does compassionate leadership as a competitive advantage look like? Well to create a culture of compassion and trust you must start with permission. Permission for your teams to take risks and make mistakes. Big lessons can be learned from mistakes and it's in these spaces that innovation breaks through. It means providing a space that welcomes everyone's voice, choice and opinion. It is egoless and, in the words of my late father, "no question is a stupid question, except the question you don't ask."

Business leaders must face empathy and sympathy head on. We can no longer dismiss people within our businesses with the attitude that that work is work and their private lives are separate. This is especially so in our industry, a world where we reshape narratives about the most innate and intimate human experiences. Our industry demands that we pay tribute to the vulnerabilities and authenticities that are neces-

sary to democratise sexual health. We must not make a false distinction between work and the rest of our lives. When compassion is applied in business, great teams bring their whole self—with all its richness and complication—into the workplace. Every day a new article is published about how the decline of our mental health is hurting business; cultivating compassion is not only the right thing to do, it also affects businesses' bottom line.

You may still consider this a soft topic, in fact some readers may have even stopped reading when they saw the title. The truth is, in the business world, topics like compassion are often considered more of a woman's thing. Back in 2013, the Dalai Lama called for more leaders with compassion and argued that women have more biological potential for compassion than men. While science might not support this argument, I think we can all agree that socially, women are expected and encouraged to have more sensitivity about others' well-being. It is why the SH&T industry is bursting with innovations and brands led by women who are compassionately prioritising underserved markets. If more leaders adopt a compassionate leadership model, dare I predict that these will be the brands that will gain the hearts and minds of their people, their customers, their stakeholdersand win? 

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How to measure your PR efforts to see if it is working

A column by Kathryn Byberg



In the ever-growing, ever-changing world of public relations, the full impact of PR activities can be difficult to track. However, it's essential to track results to see if PR delivered a return on the investment. How do you measure the success of a PR initiative? It's not just about media coverage and if that is all you are tracking, then there's a chance you are missing out on some key impacts of PR. It's also not just about generating sales, though that is a nice perk. There are so many different methods of measuring performance, depending on what you want to track, but ultimately the overarching goal is to make sure your brand is being seen positively by the public. Back in the day coverage was measured based on how many press clippings you received, and how much that placement would cost, along with readership and any other relevant metrics that you could gather without the use of the software. Many old-school PR agencies will try and sell you on the success of their efforts based on these metrics, but in a world where e-commerce is becoming more important to business strategy, there are many other metrics you can, and should, be monitoring and many of them are free too!

Setting out KPIs

We do still look at press clippings, and we still measure the success of print, but there is so much more we can look at now too. Firstly, it's important to map out your goals. To measure any PR campaign, you establish your Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Traffic to your website, or maybe brand awareness? Getting featured in listicles? Backlinks to your brand's website? Increasing organic or referral traffic? Once you have determined your goals, your PR team can write pitches and press releases, and target select reporters with these KPIs in mind.

Types of PR content

If you want brand awareness, then brand campaigns, CEO opinion pieces, and interesting news stories, that spread around, are a great way to do this. But these types of coverage peak early and then rarely generate traffic months down the line. They are top of the funnel, so they will get your brand in front of people, but not necessarily the people who will purchase. Listicles on the other hand are what we call "evergreen content". They will not bring massive amounts of traffic in a short period of time, but they will bring small amounts over a long period, even years. These types of articles are typically SEO heavy and will show up high in google searches when people are specifically searching for this type of content. These people are further down the marketing funnel and are more likely to convert to a sale.

If you are launching a new product, then reviews are another key type of content that you will want. Consumers can't try out a sex toy before purchasing it, so they rely on reviews to make informed decisions. These review articles may not bring any traffic to your site, but they are an important part of the consumer journey. If someone has already read about your product in a listicle, then a savvy consumer might do more research and look for product reviews.

There are many different types of content and depending on which type you are trying to secure, the results you measure will be different.

Tiers of Coverage

Just like there are different types of content there are different tiers of media. Big mainstream names like Cosmopolitan, Vice, Vogue, GQ and Mashable are all Tier 1 media. They have a lot of readers and the potential to put your brand in front of a lot of people. Plus they are well respected and a nod to your brand in one of these from a respected editor gives credibility to your products..

SEO and DA

Another really important metric to measure, is domain authority, not just in PR but for marketing too. The higher your domain authority, the higher your site will sit on search results. The more links you get from big tier-one sites back to your site, the higher your DA will become. One of two well-placed backlinks to your site on a tier-1 site can do wonders for your brand's SEO and will have a bigger impact than multiple pieces of coverage on smaller sites.

How can you tell how big a publisher is?

Domain Authority can be tracked using free tools like Moz Blog. A link from a publisher with a DA of over 80 back to your site can be more valuable than 10 links from a website with a DA of 20.

Unique Monthly Visitors

When looking at DA, and links back through to your website, it's important to note unique monthly visitors.

UMV is the number of people that have visited a website for the first time over a month, this is different from overall website hits, as this includes people that have come back. While not every single one of these visitors to a site will have read our brand's article, it is something we can measure to get an idea of the potential reach of that article.

You can measure this with free tools like Similarweb. While not 100% accurate it gives a rough idea.

Google Analytics

You can also tell if your PR campaign has been successful, as there may be a spike in traffic, particularly from brand campaigns and news alerts, when looking at Google Analytics or the back end of your website.

Here you can work in unison with your marketing team to review data in direct, organic searches and referral traffic. While referrals are good to measure, as you can track people clicking on backlinks in articles, it's not entirely accurate. Many people do not like to click links. They might Google your brand after reading about it, so the organic search will go up. If the



url to your site was printed then they might type it in directly to their search bar.

Share of Voice

Another metric to look at to determine the success of your PR is how many mentions your brand gets compared to competitors. You can look at social chatter, trends in topics and any other mentions of your brand! You can find social listening tools on platforms such as Cision, MuckRack and MeltWater, though these can come with a hefty price tag.

Key Messaging

Of course, all of these metrics to measure success are important, but it's important to remember the purpose of the campaign in the first place. Was the message clear, and have you hit the goals you mapped out? Did the message you were trying to convey become apparent throughout the coverage? A great starting point, within your team, is to have a key messaging document to refer

back to, and once the coverage lands, check against this document to see if the key messaging is portrayed. Did you land in outlets that you wanted to feature in? Did you gain the coverage you wanted?

Sales and Conversions

Ultimately, PR is not about driving sales, it's about building a reputation and gaining awareness. PR will help you gain testimonials, reviews, and traffic. It's about building the brand. PR is a good way to get qualified traffic to your site, however, if your website has a confusing consumer journey and low conversion rate, then the sales will not come, no matter how much traffic you generate.

When entering the world of PR, it's important to remember that the purpose of PR isn't to drive sales, but it's even more important to remember that the sales, marketing, and web team need to work in unison to make sure all channels are running effectively.

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pjur end-of-year review for 2022

A time of change



pjur has had an eventful and successful year. In 2022, new partnerships were created, successful digitisation projects continued, and pjur became one of the first manufacturers of personal lubricant to receive MDR certification as a manufacturer of medical devices, in addition to presenting both a new brand design and an associated premium product. pjur's new look made it shine, attracting customers with fresh colours and images.

"In 2022, we achieved a lot and demonstrated that pjur can repeatedly reinvent itself, enabling us to respond to the needs of customers in innovative ways. We've received consistently positive feedback from our customers about our changes and the new brand presence – and we're very proud of that", Alexander Giebel, founder and CEO of pjur says.

2022: Reviewing an eventful year

In January, the year got off to a successful start at the SIGN Awards, with pjur winning the award for 'Lube Supplier of the Year' for the fifth time. At the same time, the campaign 'Use Quality Lube' drew attention to the high

standards pjur places on its products to ensure it offers consumers a quality personal lubricant that is perfectly balanced. In the first few months of the year, pjur also announced various new partnerships: in February the collaboration with International Dreamlove S.L. (Spain) and in March its collaboration with U-GEM Corporation (Taiwan), which began in April. These partnerships enabled pjur to build on and strengthen its position on the international market. In April, pjur launched the #FemaleMasturbation campaign, which extended the #NormalizeLube campaign launched in 2021 to also cover female masturbation. The aim was to

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break taboos and normalise conversations around solo sex and personal lubricant. In mid-June, the Digital Days Partner Summit was held again, after being initially introduced in 2019 as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. We discussed our current campaigns and plans for the second half of the year with our customers and partners during countless appointments. In 2022 once again, the New York Museum of Sex dedicated a window display to the pjur brand. Under the slogan 'Love Always Wins', the display was a diverse, colourful beacon on the street, focusing on the rainbow and its associated diversity. Appropriately, over the summer pjur moved onto its #loveislove campaign, with the goal of boosting people's self-esteem in relation to their sexuality. In July, the North American region again played a big role for pjur. The AQUA product range was extended at the ANME Show with pjur AQUA NATURAL and pjur AQUA NAKED.

Considerable changes at pjur

In the autumn, pjur won customers over with many important changes:

in September pjur became one of the first manufacturers of personal lubricant to receive MDR certification as a manufacturer of medical devices. This means that pjur personal lubricants are certified Class IIb medical devices according to the MDR regulations, and can continue to be sold as 'personal lubricants' once the transition period has ended in 2024. pjur also trained its employees as 'medical product advisors' so that they can respond in the best possible way to questions from retailers and customers. Not long afterwards, pjur presented a new, fresh brand design. The logo was reworked, and a new claim was added: 'Feel the Real'. The new pjur look is modern, light and contemporary, with a Lights On image world for all products in white packaging and Lights Off for personal lubricants in black packaging, combined with a new colour palette and fluid shapes. Retailers and customers discovered how the new market presence was being implemented in October at eroFame. pjur also took the opportunity to present the first product bearing the new design: pjur INFINITY in silicone- and water-based versions is the new premium personal lubricant in a glass bottle. These bold steps were admired by both retailers and customers, as pjur was awarded the EAN Award 'Brand Development of the Year' at the trade fair. In October, ÖKO-TEST also gave pjur AQUA the rating 'very good'. "The 'Brand Development of the Year' award shows that pjur is on the right track and has taken an important step into the future with its brand refresh. It really makes all our hard work over the last few years worthwhile. Now we can enjoy the end of the year. And on that note, we wish our customers, employees and partners a happy and relaxing Christmas," says Alexander Giebel, who is already looking forward to an exciting year in 2023.



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SHOTS have a successful eroFame

Exclusive partnerships with four new brands



After three years without being able to see customers in person, eroFame 2022 was a major moment for SHOTS - even more so because this was the first trade show with Hein Schouten in his new role as CEO. "This show was special because we were able to truly highlight our strengths, message, and brand identity," said Schouten. "We debuted our new booth - one side featured our own seven hero brands and our new releases. Each section was designed as an experience to showcase the lifestyles each brand can appeal to."

These SHOTS brands had strategic new releases:

OUCH! debuted Glow in the Dark versions that offer great quality at competitive prices. Most glow-in-the-dark products are an unappealing white colour in light, but OUCH! Glow in the Dark products are a lovely green in light and have a strong glow in the dark effect. OUCH! also released new non-realistic hollow strap-ons, bondage glasses, and Puppy-Play products. Real-Rock, a price leader in the dildo marketplace that is known for having no scent, introduced their Crystal Clear non-phallic collection in trendsetting colours. SHOTS made sure these were also well priced. VIVE debuted three new designs that were technology-driven, with three independent motors that each work with their own vibrational patterns. SHOTS created these new designs 100% themselves using their own technology, designs, and development to ensure the best quality. LE DÉSIIR had two new lingerie collections to show for: Shapes Shade and Panties Belle, each fea-

turing two sizes, Regular and Queen, with top quality, high-end designs crafted with exceptional fabrics and details, made and marketed to be relatable to the end-consumers. Shapes Shade debuted their new technical knitting element that helps provide comfortable control and promotes body-positivity.

SHOTS is now the exclusive distributor of Aneros and Doc Johnson in Europe

SHOTS announced four new exclusive partnership brands at eroFame and proudly presented their new partners to new and established customers over the three-day show. "Our booth was enormous at 240 square meters total," said Schouten. "We wanted to show the full SHOTS operation at our booth because we are the ideal partner for designing, manufacturing, and distributing. And besides our own brands and manufacturers, we dedicated over 150 meters to spotlight our exclusive distribution brands: Doc Johnson, Swiss Navy, Boneyard, Maia Toys, Cloud 9, Perfect Fit, Aneros, Playwivme (cumface), and Kixies." The big news at this show was the addition of Doc Johnson and Aneros to SHOTS' roster of exclusive distribution partners. The two brands join Swiss Navy, who in turn entered into an exclusivity agreement last year, and Perfect Fit which had been in an exclusive distribution relationship with SHOTS even longer. Considering this announcement and the companies involved, this creates an impressive distribution powerhouse. Each brand introduced their own new releases within the booth. For instance, Swiss

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Navy debuted a whole new range of bottles that offer the same great formulations but in larger sizes at the same price—customers are essentially getting 50% more volume for the same price. Over the next weeks, SHOTS will be working to stock up on more products from their exclusive distribution partners, including new releases as they become available. To help onboard these new partners, SHOTS will be using their own strategic formula, the so-called 'SHOTS D.N.A.', developed to familiarise their customers with Doc Johnson, Aneros, Perfect Fit, and Swiss Navy. Each brand put their trust in Hein and the SHOTS team to make their products penetrate deeper and become more well-known throughout Europe. A new, dedicated Doc Johnson Brand Ambassador will be introduced shortly. His name is Marco and he will be taking care of the Doc Johnson brand throughout Europe. Meanwhile, Leroy Klunder added Aneros to his Brand Ambassador portfolio. For now, Leroy can be reached directly at leroy@shots.nl for any questions regarding four of SHOTS' exclusive power brands, namely Doc Johnson, Swiss Navy, Perfect Fit, and Aneros. Also included in the booth was Pharmquests, which continues to provide SHOTS customers with private label solutions through their Intimate Cosmetics programme.

'Creating happy moments'

Of course, SHOTS has a tradition of providing complete experiences for their customers, and

eroFame 2022 was no exception. Their new booth featured a full kitchen with refreshments and drinks provided by the Dutch beer brand Guilty Monkey. This, along with giveaways hosted by mainstream models wearing lingerie of SHOTS' own LE DÉSIIR brand, kept the booth super busy during all three days of the show. Schouten was particularly proud of the way the SHOTS team supported each other and their exclusive partners before and during the eroFame show. "It was incredible how the entire SHOTS team came together in the process of designing the booth, catalogue, and brand identities long before eroFame opened its doors on 5 October," said Schouten. "And I would like to congratulate our team for winning EAN's award for 'Best Sales Team'."

"The responses, feedback, and of course, orders we received at this year's eroFame were phenomenal," said Ard van den Brandhof, Purchasing Director at SHOTS Europe. "Maybe we can attribute this show's success to our customers missing us so much or maybe it was the addition of our new products and curated brand partnerships, but our SHOTS team can confidently report that we had the most sales ever at this eroFame. At the end of the day, it's the SHOTS customers who are front and centre. SHOTS' core message is 'creating happy moments', which is their overall goal. SHOTS believes that happiness will make a difference and will have an impact on each individual's daily life. "Our commitment to our customers, to servicing their needs, to helping our partner brands grow in the European marketplace, and to creating our own strategic product lines is always at the forefront of our activities. It's what drives our success here at SHOTS," said Schouten. "eroFame allowed us to reconnect with our customers and partners and once again provide everyone with what they were looking for to create their own success stories."



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It is my strong belief that there are more golden ages for sex toys to come

Sinful's Marketing Director Thomas Jensen talks e-commerce in tough times



Will e-commerce remain the dominant sales channel for sex toys in the upcoming years? How do the current crises affect the toy business online? Which trends will shape the e-commerce market of tomorrow? Those are just a few of the question we have for Thomas Jensen, Marketing Director of e-commerce sex toy business Sinful, in our EAN interview.

Let's start with the most important question: Will online sales remain the all-dominant sales channel for sex toys over the next few years? Or could other business models - such as social commerce - end this supremacy?

Thomas Jensen: I think online shops and marketplaces will remain dominant for the years to come. The owners of the largest social media players still, unfortunately, do not have an interests in letting sex toy companies advertise on their platforms, and this makes a shift in the market difficult.

Back to the present - what have been the most serious changes in the e-commerce segment this year compared to previous years?

Thomas Jensen: We have experienced challenges with supply chains due to closed China harbours. Another change is that we are now in a post-Covid society where customers can once again spend their money etc. in restaurants and on travels - and then of course, we have the war in Ukraine and the resulting energy crisis and inflation.

Which of these changes are specific to the sex toy product category and which are related to e-commerce in general?

Thomas Jensen: None of our most serious challenges are related to the sex toy category and they are also not limited to e-commerce - except the part about Covid.

What challenges is the e-commerce segment facing right now? For example, what role do all-powerful online marketplaces play? And what about the price war?

Thomas Jensen: Price war is not a new thing in our industry, we have been working with this for all the years we have been active. So this is business as usual. The biggest problems we are facing are the above stated: energy crisis and inflation - which affect almost all e-commerce.

E-commerce is considered one of the winners of the Covid years. However, this development has also intensified competition as there are more players

in the market - also in the sex toy product category. In this context, how important is it to appear as a brand and not just an online store?

Thomas Jensen: It is always important to build your brand so you differentiate yourself from being just another online store. We have seen a number of new players in recent years, but in the markets where Sinful operate, it is not unusual that new players come and go. On the other hand, I expect that we will see a consolidation in the market in the coming years where fewer but stronger stores will take more of the business - making brand-building even more important.

During the pandemic, many predicted a golden age with rapid growth after Covid. But now we are faced with inflation, rising cost of living, the war in Ukraine, etc. Will this development affect the growth of the sex toy market? Does the worsening consumer climate threaten the flourishing sex toy e-commerce business?

Thomas Jensen: In the short run, the sex toy industry will be affected like most other industries. In the long run, however, things will settle, and it is my strong belief that there are more golden ages for sex toys to come. People won't stop having sex, and they will still want to explore the fun and fantastic world of sex toys. Sex and intimacy are important for our well-being - even more so in times of crisis where you need to focus on the positive and playful aspects of your life.





What's clearly going to have a big influence on consumers' purchasing decision is the desire for sustainable consumption. E-commerce and sustainability - how do they fit together?

Thomas Jensen: Sex toys are traditionally made of materials which are not very eco-friendly, and a lot of them use batteries. Our entire industry needs to look at where we can improve and contribute to a more sustainable world. At Sinful, we have developed our brand ohhcean, which is the first-ever collection of sex toys made with recycled ocean-bound plastic. Furthermore, we are optimising many of our products, making them rechargeable and more durable. This is just a small drop in the pond but we hope it will make waves and inspire others to do the same.

What conclusions do you draw from these developments? How is Sinful adapting to the ever-changing market conditions?

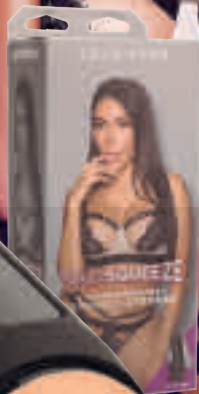
Thomas Jensen: ohhcean, as I mentioned earlier, has had a great impact. The products have won several prizes and awards. And the feedback from customers and the sex toy industry in general has been very positive.

What are your plans for the next few years? And how is your international expansion going?

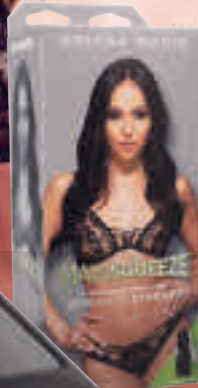
Thomas Jensen: Sinful turns 15 next year. We have gone from 2 employees to more than 200. We started as a small webshop in Denmark and now we are the largest shop in Northern Europe and operate in 11 countries. Our expansion is on track but we need to expand at a pace where we can maintain our values and our good service, so we need to be clever and cautious in the current market. We have done well in our new markets but we have only just begun - you will see a lot more of Sinful in the years to come.



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Real talk with Gary Ayckbourn

Gary Ayckbourn, Partner &
CEO Concept to Consumer



EAN asks Gary Ayckbourn, CEO of Concept to Consumer, to give his take on 17 statements about the sex toy market, covering everything from current trends to the future of the market, from failing and booming business models to the next big thing and when it will hit, from big hopes to the global crises that are affecting everybody, including the sexual wellness industry.

Sooner or later, the mainstream will swallow up the market as we have known it so far.

Gary Ayckbourn: As an industry, we are clearly at our own defining moment, and if we do not adapt, we run the risk of being left behind, swallowed up or bypassed by the beast we have all helped to create.

We should take a moment to congratulate ourselves and all we have achieved. Many of us have been in the industry for decades and remember all too well the difficulties we have experienced. We have all contributed to the vision that we could make the sex toy business a mainstream one. Acceptable in everyday life, and a desire to promote and support people wanting a healthy sex life, in whatever form that may be. We have changed the industry from within, and have put our market on the mainstream, global map to an ever-increasing audience. This is an incredible achievement.

The issue we now face is one of adaptability. We have seen the market change and we have observed the signs that we as an industry need to also change to benefit. Consumers want more and they expect more. It's about more than just the product. It's about the customer experience, the brand identity, how the brand communicates to the customer whilst navigating the all the parts that make a brand stand out in the market and communicating authentically through the various methods available. It was this reason, why we came togeth-



er with numerous friends and colleagues in the industry back in 2020 and ultimately launched Concept to Consumer in January 2021. We wanted to bring together all the moving parts and our understanding of the sex toy market to our clients that were looking to adapt by selling into mainstream retailers or who were looking to create a better customer experience. As well as to clients who were new to this market and needed guidance from a team that came from a place of proven experience and understood this market inside and out.

As an industry, mainstream needs us, even if they don't know it. They can benefit from our collective wealth of experience and knowledge. We have seen brands in the mainstream 20+ years ago so this is not new. There are just more opportunities and channels to reach the end consumer.

There are far too many of the same types of products on the market.

Gary: Ha! Tell me something I don't know! There have always been far too many products on the market! The good news now is that the majority of products on the market are thoughtfully designed, made to high standards, and conform to global safety standards. The real question is how do brands capture the attention of the customer and retain it and convert this to sales. To stand out, brands need strategy, branding techniques, and innovative marketing.

Vibration technology and silicone will continue to dominate our market for the time being.





Gary: For the majority of the market and for the time being, agreed. It is however, inevitable that the demand for silicone alternatives and more eco-friendly products will increase and this makes sense. It's the right way forward and the ethical way forward. But this does need to be balanced with costs and accessibility. Brands need to be honest and transparent with their customers so that their customers can make an informed purchase. For example, we see brands saying their packaging is made from recycled materials, but they might not tell customers that because of this, the packaging cannot then be recycled further. We have all seen brands making big claims like 'world's first gender neutral designed range', but when we (or the customer) take a look at the actual products, there are products that are actually already on the market and not unique in terms of design or brand story. Although the intention is to create attention grabbing headlines, you have to back it up otherwise you could potentially alienate your customer.

Our market is crisis-proof and will also make it through the current situation intact.

Gary: No market is immune to the current global economic and standards of living crisis. These are unique times, with unique global implications, that will affect everyone, including our market. It is something, like all industries, we are going to have to learn to deal with, and to cut our cloth accordingly and adapt to be ready when it eases or come to an end. I don't think we are going to go back to what the global market was like pre-pandemic for some time to come.

E-commerce will continue to grow and sooner or later, it will completely usurp all other distribution channels.

Gary: As technology has evolved, more and more of us are shopping online. We all know from personal experience that it is easier and more cost effective to shop online. We know from looking at consumer behaviour, we like the accessibility and the ability to click a button to 'buy now', whilst also being able to compare pricing or read reviews at a click of a button. Technology has made the world smaller and has increased the access of variety of products. It is the same for our market too. Brands need to at least, incorporate an online offering and integrate a digital marketing strategy to benefit from online sales. This does have benefits too! By selling direct to consumer, there are bigger margins, and you are able to connect directly with your customer. It doesn't mean the death of distribution channels; people are still shopping in stores and enjoy the in-person experience of shopping. There are just more purchase options, and a successful brand needs to ensure it maximised every channel.

The emergence of investors and the merging of companies we saw in 2021 were just isolated incidents.

Gary: I did not think so until the recent cost of living crisis and downturn in the financial markets. I think, like in every sector, when the



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market is nervous, money gets tighter and investors stay within markets they know, understand and trust. I think for the next few years at least, there will be less money coming in, and the money that does come in will be targeted and based on direct-to-consumer access.

The sex toy market has not yet understood that sustainability will be one of the dominant megatrends of the coming years.

Gary: I think it's unfair to say that the sex toy market has not yet understood sustainability will be a megatrend. I think we do actually know this and as an industry, we have been exploring how to become more sustainable. I don't think we are the only industry that is trying to do better and become more sustainable. Inside and outside of the industry, companies across the world are trying to figure out the same thing. Although it may take time and there will be cost involved, we are all looking for sustainable solutions.

Sex tech will not have its big breakthrough moment in the next few years.

Gary: As a market, I think we are incredibly innovative and creative and always seem to find the next 'big thing'. There are countless examples of this. What is interesting in the merge into a broader 'Sexual Wellness' market. There will be increasing opportunity to partner with companies from different markets to support their offering with adult products, knowledge, and education. As a company, we have always tried to be at the forefront of development and learnt over the years on how to adapt to create effective and mutually beneficial partnerships. All I can say is that we know there are a lot of exciting developments in the pipeline, so watch this space!

The current problems with the supply chains are just a foretaste of what will happen if the conflict between Taiwan and China escalates further.

Gary: I don't even want to think about the global implication of this. At worst, there would be no supply chain. Let's hope sensible heads prevail and that at the very least, the status quo is maintained. At the same time, we as a company are looking at alternatives should the worst arise.

The boom during the Covid pandemic has been blown out of proportion and didn't even reach a lot of market players.

Gary: I would have to disagree with this statement. I don't think it was overstated, as the coverage we received during the pandemic was incredible. I think most if not all sex toy businesses that have a strong online presence, have enjoyed the direct positive impact and the boost in sales. I do think it has been halted somewhat since, but this is a reflection of the global economic crisis and impact on the markets as a result of Russia's war in Ukraine. It would also be fair to say that with China still being closed off to visitors, new product development has been slowed and is even more reliant on good rela-

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tionships with Chinese manufacturers or finding alternative design options outside China.

The traditional supply chain (manufacturer - wholesaler - retailer) is a relic of days gone by.

Gary: Brands are no longer reliant on the traditional supply chain. This has definitely changed. We are seeing more wholesalers adopt the retailer model, by selling direct to consumer and we are seeing more brands selling direct to consumer. In the past, we have seen brands push an aggressive marketing campaign to support their retailers and to stand out amongst competitor brands. Whereas now, brands are using their marketing to bring brand awareness and to generate direct to consumer sales.

Without 'Sex and the City', 'Fifty Shades of Grey' and the pandemic, sex toys would still be sold in dingy shops in dark back alleys.

Gary: It would be naïve to assume that the sex toys going mainstream is purely down to 'Sex and the City', 'Fifty Shades of Grey' and the pandemic. Sex toys were around before then and were slowly gathering more mainstream attention.

It could be argued that if there wasn't an appetite for sex, there wouldn't be these programmes or books! The products featured in 'Sex and the City' and 'Fifty Shades of Grey' were around before, maybe those products inspired the creators. Saying that, they have definitely helped sex reach a broader audience and has helped us talk more about sex openly.

Attitudes towards sex and sex toys have changed and have evolved, and that I believe is down to our industry and our determination to make sex toys more mainstream and more acceptable.

The sex toy market is in no way different from other markets.

Gary: The thing I love about the sex toy market, is that it IS unique, and I believe it will continue to be so. Although you can apply some methods from other markets to this market, those techniques need to be adapted to understand the complexity behind sex toy purchases. Purchase drivers in the sex toy market are based on psychographics, on the individual and their sexual journey. There is an opportunity to build a brand, create brand loyalty and providing a space in which the consumer is comfortable to explore their sexuality.

The ability to adapt to changes in the market is crucial for success today.

Gary: Without a doubt. It is even more important given the current global economic crisis. Successful companies will invest heavily in marketing at times like this. They will be flexible in their approach and plan for the future when this crisis is over. Standing still is not an option.

The use of modern technologies is a justification for products to be expensive.

Gary: The driver with the technology has always been to be able to offer consumers as something different, whilst at the same time to



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reward companies willing to invest in developing and bringing new technology to market. Being in manufacturing for over two decades, I know first-hand how much creativity, time, effort and investment it takes to bring the 'next new thing' to market. The goal was always the tech, not the retail price. Not all tech means high prices. It purely depends on the quantity and costs of components to achieve that technological feature. However, it is also fair to say some brands and retailers do use this exclusivity to drive prices. But that is the same in every market in the world. Unfortunately, our market has a history of knock off products and companies willing to 'copy' creativity. As a direct result, companies leading and creating this tech, either have to add in cost to finance the inevitable lawsuits or accept that people within our market will copy and try to claw back their investment in the first year, before the copies come out. We should be celebrating investment in technology and supporting it, not willing to accept lazy manufacturers who simply copy. This does not drive future development, which we all need.

The promise of a golden age for the sex toy market is based on nothing more than optimism.

Gary: Absolutely not. Our market is only going to continue to grow, as I outlined previously. The opportunity and risks remain the same and as industry founders and veterans we must ensure we remain relevant and capitalise on the decades of hard work and ensure we benefit from this inevitable growth.

The invention of suction toys was the last really big innovation in the sex toy market.

Gary: The invention of this tech was excellent, unique, and highly innovative. It was also very quickly copied by almost everyone, despite there being patents. As a manufacturer we were asked many times to copy this tech, and every time we refused. We lost opportunities and revenue as a result. However, we could always sleep at night knowing we have never intentionally infringed on anyone else's patent. Nearly every other industry regulates itself and honours companies' patents or works together with the companies owning the patent and then pays an applicable and acceptable royalty fee. However, our market still seems to think those rules do not apply. Until of course, they too have a patent to defend!

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From EDC Wholesale to ONE-DC



From January 2, 2023, Dutch company EDC Wholesale will operate under a new name. Then, EDC Wholesale will become ONE-DC. We explore the reasons for this name change in our EAN interview with Eric Idema, CEO of EQOM Group, the mother company of EDC Wholesale.

At the beginning of the new year, EDC Wholesale will change its name to ONE-DC. Have you outgrown your old name due to your many different activities and your international expansion?

Eric Idema: Especially our international ambitions made us rethink our company name. We want to grow our company internationally and to do so, we want to have a modern name that fits with our ambitions and our modern team.

Could you provide some insight into the naming and name change process? Which strategy did you follow? Which criteria were important for you when finding a new name?

Eric: When we were looking for a new name, we were looking for something that sounded similar to EDC. We want to stay close to ourselves and make sure our customers can adapt to the name quickly and easily. ONE-DC sounds quite similar but is shorter than EDC Wholesale. We already used ONE-DC as an internal term to emphasize that we

are one team, with one goal and one mission. It was used to empower and unite, and this was exactly what we were looking for, so it made absolute sense to make it our new company name.

What exactly does ONE-DC stand for?

Eric: The 'one' in the name is very powerful and unites us as a team and as a company with our partners and customers. We all have one mission: to be successful with our sexual wellness business - and one goal: to let people all over the world enjoy intimacy and self-love. We are a one-stop-shop and offer our customers everything in the field of sexual wellness.

Your B2B platform has been named ONE-DC.com since back in March 2021... and every now and then, there were rumors that a complete name change was going to take place but nothing happened. Why is now the right time?

Eric: To be honest, we did plan to change our name in March 2021. We thought we were ready, and all the preparations were made, but it just wasn't the right time to change our name during the pandemic. It didn't seem like the right move, knowing that we weren't able to bring the message of the name change to our customers personally. We now have the confidence that it's the right time to let our customers adapt to the new name and connect it to our team and company.

Is it just a name change including a new logo etc., or are there also deeper, structural changes involved - put differently, what will change for your customers?

Eric: We want to stay close to ourselves while changing into a new name that fits our mission and vision. So, in that sense, nothing significant will change. We will continue to use the same look and feel to stay recognizable, but we will also take this opportunity to update our appearance a little. As a company, we will always look for ways to improve ourselves. Our Marketing and Sales teams will work more closely together to structure our service and support our customers in the best way possible.

Are you concerned that the name change could lead to confusion? People associate names with certain products, services or feelings. Some might assume there is a new owner or that it's an entirely different company with a new company name... It is also said that it takes five years for a name to take root in the market...

Eric: This is certainly a concern that we are taking into account in our communication plans. But we are confident that it will be a smooth transition and we will give people plenty of time to adapt to the new name. I'm sure having all the familiar faces of our team will help people quickly put the new name to our faces.





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Over the course of the past eight years, we have proven time and again how innovative our products are

Womanizer OG, the first Pleasure Air G Spot vibrator, launched in early November



In this interview, Tobias Zegenhagen, Chief Product Officer at WOW Tech, tells us about the four-year research and development process that brought us Womanizer OG, a product which combines the Pleasure Air technology and vibration to ensure powerful stimulation.

Your press release for the launch of Womanizer OG proclaims 'a new revolution in the sex toy industry.' What makes your new product so groundbreaking?

Tobias Zegenhagen: Eight years ago, we breathed fresh air into the sexual wellness industry when we introduced the Pleasure Air technology - a truly innovative technology, designed specifically to stimulate the nerve endings of the clitoris. Now, we have taken this technology to the next level. The OG is nothing less than the first Pleasure Air G Spot Vibrator. This type of G spot stimulation is unique and enables the user to explore and pleasure their erogenous zones in wholly new ways. The

OG underscores the importance of holistic pleasure as it encourages people to further explore their needs and preferences. It creates new and highly individual ways for female pleasure to blossom.

Does this new product mark the beginning of a new era in the history of Womanizer? Is the Womanizer OG opening the door to further technological developments? What expectations do you have for this product?

Tobias Zegenhagen: I think that over the course of the past eight years, we have proven time and again how innovative our products are. Not only did we refine and

improve our 'classic' Womanizer but we also introduced alternative modes of stimulation, for instance by adding Womanizer DUO. The OG is testimony to the brilliance of the Womanizer R&D team who are working tirelessly to create the most innovative and effective toys on the planet. I can assure you that we still have lots and lots of ideas on the backburner, and several more that are already in the R&D phase. Of course, I can't talk too much about future projects - suffice it to say that the next year will be a very exciting one for us.

When did you get the idea to combine your patented Pleasure Air technology with vibration for the purpose of G spot stimulation?

Tobias Zegenhagen: As a matter of fact, that idea surfaced pretty quickly after the launch of the Pleasure Air technology. We knew immediately that this technology could pave the way to all kinds of innovations and invite women everywhere to a new world of pleasure. At first, the ideas for the OG were rather abstract, but over the course of four years, we streamlined the ideas and found ways to implement them in the actual toy.

Speaking of which, implementing these ideas can't have been easy, otherwise the development process wouldn't have taken four years. What challenges were you faced with along the way?

Tobias Zegenhagen: We started developing the Womanizer OG in 2018. Overall, the pro-

cess took more than four years to complete, and the biggest challenges along the way had to do with ergonomics, adjustability, and the adaptability of the toy. Other challenges included creating the user interface and determining the right stimulation intensities and the right mixture between Pleasure Air technology and vibration. But our main goal was always to make the toy as user-friendly as possible. It was very important for us that using the toy was super easy.

The Womanizer OG has also benefitted from scientific research in the area of the G spot and vaginal erogenous zones. Could you tell us more about this research. Has the search for the G spot finally come to an end?

Tobias Zegenhagen: Until this day, it isn't proven 100% that there even is a G spot or G zone. That's also why some women don't feel this area. Well, it is obvious that there is no magical button somewhere in your body that simply conjures up an orgasm. Rather, it is a functional, dynamic, and hormone-driven area of the body. The menstrual cycle, age, the anatomy, and a person's general mood also have an impact on sexual desire and consequently also on your orgasms. At present, many scientists believe that the G zone is actually the clitoris as it can be stimulated from the inside through the vaginal wall. In a state of complete arousal, the clitoris swells up, so its two crus enclose the vagina. The blood vessels expand, and given the right stimulation, you experience an orgasm.





Not only is the Womanizer OG the first Pleasure Air G Spot vibrator, but it is also gone through more testing than any of your other products.

Could you describe this testing process for our readers?

Tobias Zegenhagen: Generally speaking, the development process is the same for all of our innovations: brainstorming, preliminary testing to make sure we achieve the desired level of technological maturity and to finetune the stimulation the product is supposed to provide. Then, there's the technological validation (ETV) to ensure we have a marketable product on our hands, followed by design validation (DVT) to optimise the UI and the final design so everything is up to the highest quality standards. And finally, there is product validation (PVT) to confirm that our product is ready for mass production. For the Womanizer OG, we submitted a total of 10 different prototypes for preliminary testing. There were 10 EVT prototypes, 3 rounds of DVT prototypes, and one round of PVT prototype testing. The first round of user testing began in April of 2019. On the whole that makes 12 rounds of testing with a total of 269 testers, including 108 interviews and 10k+ data points over a time span of four years.

Who is the target audience for the Womanizer OG?

Tobias Zegenhagen: The OG is made for more experienced sex toy users who want to explore their body and do so in new ways. You see, this kind of stimulation may seem unusual at first, so you have to 'train' a little to get the full experience. Therefore, we recommend users take their time to find



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and get a feeling for their G zone with the Womanizer OG.

Apart from the combination of Pleasure Air Technology and vibration for G spot stimulation, the Womanizer OG also boasts other impressive qualities. What can you tell us about those?

Tobias Zegenhagen: The Womanizer OG has 12 different intensity levels, 3 vibration patterns, and it is water tight (IPX7). Moreover, the OG has an Afterglow feature, gradually reducing the air pressure pulses to the lowest setting so the stimulation fades away smoothly and organically after the user has reached an orgasm.

When will the Womanizer OG be available? When will you start shipping units to your retail partners?

Tobias Zegenhagen: The OG launched on November 4, and it is now available via the Womanizer web shop and from all of our trade partners.

Will there be special POS materials or campaigns to accompany the launch of the Womanizer OG?

Tobias Zegenhagen: The launch campaign focuses entirely on the innovative nature and the development of the product. We want to give people a clear idea of what the OG is; to that end, we have created a content hub where you can get information about the toy and how it's used as well as background information about G spot research, our Pleasure Air technology, and brand videos.





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An interview with Robert-Jan Kooij, the new CEO of Cobeco



Robert-Jan Kooij (CEO),
Dino Corrado (former CEO), and
Martijn Hillen (Operations Manager)

There has been a baton change at the upper echelon of Cobeco: After more than 25 years at the helm of the company, Dino Corrado has retired, and Robert-Jan Kooij has taken over the reins. This change was already made public at the end of September, but when EAN had the opportunity to talk with Robert-Jan Kooij about his ideas and plans for Cobeco, we obviously sharpened our pens.

Before we talk about your new position at Cobeco Pharma, we would like to know more about you. For example, what did you do for a living before joining Cobeco?

Robert-Jan Kooij: After finishing my university Master's degree in Rotterdam in 2007, I started my career at Procter & Gamble. Throughout the years, I fulfilled different sales and marketing positions, being responsible for big international retailers and different P&G brands. After 12 years at P&G, I decided to make a career change towards a SME company, where I was more directly linked with the business.

Why did you decide to join Cobeco?

Robert-Jan Kooij: Our previous owners built a great company that specialized in a category that is becoming more and more relevant for retailers and consumers. I see a big potential in building

our organization, our people, and in building even better relationships with our partners to help them sell more and better products and concepts.

What attracted you to the task of taking over the management of Cobeco?

Robert-Jan Kooij: The combination of the growing market, the cooperation with Martijn Hillen, our highly experienced Operations Manager, and the talented people working at Cobeco Pharma

What strengths of Cobeco convinced you to accept this great challenge?

Robert-Jan Kooij: We deliver very high-quality products in a growing market. Cobeco Pharma is the one-stop private label partner for companies who want to benefit from this growing and profitable category.

To what extent will your previous professional experience help you with the new challenges of being Cobeco's CEO?

Robert-Jan Kooij: I know how consumers think and shop. I know how to seduce consumers to buy more and better products and how to help consumers try new things. With this knowledge, we can further build on our strength to advise our partners with the products, trends, and new concepts.

What ideas, visions, plans do you want to implement in your new position?

Robert-Jan Kooij: I believe that we should help and advise our partners so they can become even more successful in this growing category. We should be able to act fast, be flexible and innovative and that for a competitive price.

Cobeco has been active in the market for more than 25 years. What will the new era under Robert-Jan Kooij look like? How will the corporate culture develop under your leadership?

Robert-Jan Kooij: We will focus on building even better relationships with our customers. This will enable us to share more knowledge, trends, and new concepts. We should be able to help our customers better and faster and on top offer more high-quality products.

Will there be serious changes in Cobeco's corporate strategy under your leadership?

Robert-Jan Kooij: In the coming months, our new strategy will be finalized and shared with our key partners. Two key pillars. First pillar is customer first: We will pro-actively interact with our customers and offer them our highest service. We will help them with (new) concepts to benefit in this growing category. Our second pillar will focus on sustainability, the way we operate and what offer to our partners.





The intimate wellness market is a growth market. How will you make Cobeco fit for the future?

Robert-Jan Kooij: Over the past years, we have been growing consistently so we are used to re-inventing ourselves. Our operations department is flexible, and we are more than capable of increasing our production to meet our customers' needs. We recently invested again in new machines for production expansion. We also will invest more in our people to help them become better at what they do. On top of investing in capacity and people, I'm a strong believer that we should incorporate a more sustainable way of working. This is relevant for our products, packaging, and the way we ship our products to our customers. Sustainability will play a key role in our '27 strategy growth plan.

You come from the mainstream market and are now dealing with products for sexual wellness. Does that make a big difference?

Robert-Jan Kooij: In the end, I believe that we should offer the right concept for the right consumer. This means we need to tailor the concepts we offer to different customers.

Would you like to reveal anything else about yourself as a private person? For example, what do you do outside of work to relax?

Robert-Jan Kooij: I love to spend time with my family (my wife and two young kids) whether this is coaching the football team of my son or joining swimming classes from my daughter. I like to do sports on a regular basis where I run and spend time on my road bike. During the winter season, you can find me on the slopes in the mountains skiing. It is also very important to spend quality time with my wife. We both have busy lives, and we made the agreement to go diving once a year for a week with only the two of us. **e**



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For Orgie as a brand, the demands did not change, they expanded

Orgie celebrate five-year anniversary

The team of Orgie were very happy that, on the occasion of their five-year anniversary, they could finally return to the place where the success story of their brand had begun: the eroFame trade convention. You see, when Orgie burst out of the gate in 2017, that's where the official premiere of the brand took place. In our EAN interview with Raquel Shaw, the company's Chief Operating Officer, we look back at the past half decade of Orgie and the many highlights the brand has seen over the course of these years.

Congratulations on your fifth anniversary! What is the predominant feeling for you these days? Pride? Satisfaction? Or are you already focusing on the next five years?

Raquel Shaw: Thank you! We certainly feel good and grateful about the achievements and the growing recognition that our brand and products have received in the market, the media and among end consumers over these first five years. Our hard work has earned us the trust of all those who brought Orgie to its fifth anniversary together with us. Now, the anniversary party is over, and I would say that we are focused on what we can bring to the market in the next two years and to prove worthy of the goodwill and recognition Orgie has earned. We are down to earth people!

Coinciding with the anniversary, you returned to the place where it all began for you: eroFame, which is where you presented your brand for the first time back in 2017. Did that bring back a lot of memories for you?

Raquel: We were finally all together under the same roof again. To reunite with long-term partners, to meet in person those who embraced Orgie during the time when meetings and travelling were just not possible, to share a hug and some good laughs with friends from other brands. The celebration of our 5th anniversary would not have been the same had it not been the place where Orgie debuted. Luckily, it coincided with eroFame's much waited comeback after

the two-year pandemic gap. This whole scenario was the ideal background to share memories stirred up within us and our partners, and to create lots of new memories in the process.

What other highlights or milestones in the company's five-year history do you look back on with a smile?

Raquel: Throughout our five-years history, we have been fortunate enough to experience several highlights, especially for a young brand such as Orgie. Its fast-growing range of best-selling products, an impressive roster of customers, the whole team that makes Orgie happen - those are some of the highlights. Apart from that, there are those small daily things that make a huge difference. For example, a couple of weeks ago, we got an email from a customer asking for an update of their order because (and I quote): „Everybody wants Orgie.“ These sorts of comments may be commonplace for those who send them, but they are extremely rewarding to us. What else could we ask for? As for milestones, Orgie reached its fifth anniversary as a young, award-winning brand, receiving five important awards in five years. Our brand has entered (and stayed!) in an impressive number of markets worldwide, not to mention that Orgie was still a newcomer in markets packed with other big brands when the pandemic started in early 2020. Our most recent milestone was submitting our products

to efficacy, dermatologic, gynaecologic, and/or urologic studies carried out by independent research entities. The first five products Sexy Vibel Liquid Vibrator, Orgasm Drops, She Spot, Time Lag Delay Spray, and Touro XXXL were tested and certified with high rates of approval.

And what would you do differently from today's perspective and with the experience of five years in the market?

Raquel: The more than 20 years of experience in the industry that we brought from Brazil have been very useful, allowing us to establish Orgie here in Europe, and foreign markets are not entirely foreign to us, either. But that doesn't make us better than anyone else, nor does it make us infallible. For instance, we should have had an Orgie media kit available for our customers since the beginning instead of assisting our customers on a request basis. This year, we hired a second agency to produce video and photo content, and we put together the Orgie media kit including banners, 3D images, a whole new collection of photos of each product, product videos, corporate videos, artwork for all social network posts, magazine ad artwork, and more. This media kit will always be a work in progress as we keep adding materials, and our customers can access it anytime to download whatever they need.

You definitely had your work cut out for you five years ago. Establishing a new brand in a market that has no shortage of established brands is no small feat. How would you define the pillars of Orgie's success?





Raquel: The Orgie team works like a well-oiled machine and is committed to reaching our common goals: creating effective, high-quality products; adding our Brazilian know-how to formulas with sensuous features; innovative ingredients; appealing branding; well-planned order processing; efficiency in post-sales assistance and customer service; and the excellent work of our commercial department. Our exclusive R&D cosmetic engineers capture Orgie's philosophy by combining their knowledge and expertise with the creativity and innovation of our formulas. The level of commitment within the Orgie team is also reflected in the fact that we have had zero turnover of collaborators within these five years. Each one of us have our share of responsibility, and similarly, we all share in the success.

How have the demands on a brand in the sensual cosmetics category changed over the past five years?

Raquel: For Orgie as a brand, the demands did not change, they expanded. In November, we launched the Sexy Therapy and Tantric Massage Oils Mini Size collections, which was a suggestion from a French partner. Upon the launch of the pheromone booster eau de toilette perfumes Sensfeel Woman and Man, we had suggestions pouring in from everywhere, asking us to develop Sensfeel 10 in 1 body and hair lotions to go along with the perfumes. This demand was inspired by our The Secret Seduction Elixir 10 in 1 body and hair lotion, a bestseller since day one. There are requests for new products, and for new flavours and new versions of existing products. And while we filter them and respond to the demands that are workable, we are also developing new products lines. All this resulted in 11 new products in 2022, and there is more coming up in 2023!

Are there any products or product lines that have been particularly important to the growth of your business?

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Raquel: There are product lines and individual products that have been particularly important to the development of our business. The lines Orgasm Drops, Touro, Sexy Vibe!, and all our other products that have the liquid vibration feature; Time Lag Delay spray, The Secret Seduction Elixir 10 in 1, and more recently the Sensfeel line. Wow! buccal spray had a rough start in the first year, but then it became a bestseller, with the market demanding new flavours.

It's always said that you shouldn't chase trends but set them. How difficult is this task? And how have you managed to uphold your brand values at all times?

Raquel: The way I see it, to chase trends has never been our primary intention, and to believe that Orgie have set any would be pretentious. We obviously look at the trends in the market, but Orgie is not strictly guided by them. We manage to uphold our brand values by balancing our decisions between market trends and the calculated risk of going in different directions.

Innovative products are important, a tightly meshed network of resellers, distributors, etc. is vital. To what extent do your business partners contribute to your success?

Raquel: I usually say that success is volatile, and prestige is a form of consolidated success that won't fade or can't be taken from those who achieved it. Beyond our success, we can certainly say that our business partners have contributed to turning Orgie into a brand of prestige. No less than this.

In how many countries around the world are your products sold and which markets are on your to-do list?

Raquel: Orgie is currently being sold in more than 60 countries; actually, we are about to reach the mark of 70. Among the countries on our to-do list are the USA, a couple of markets in the Latin and Central Americas, and some African countries and Israel.

Let's take a look into the future: 2027 - Orgy celebrates its tenth anniversary... What position will your brand hold in the market by then?

Raquel: It is always wise to look ahead, but difficult to look further than you can see – said Sir Winston Churchill.



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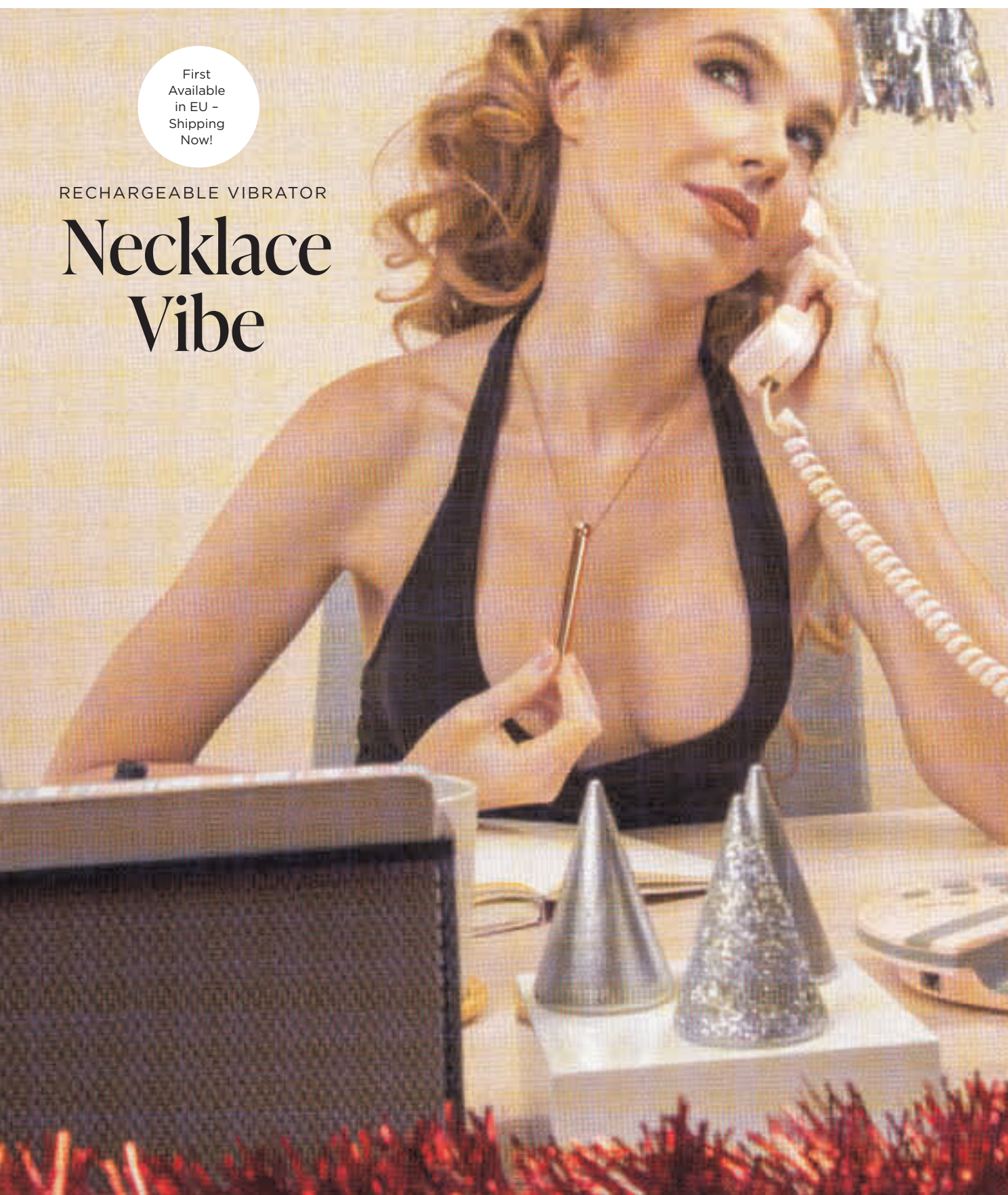
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This Season we are serving up a Dreamy & Steamy fantasy of a collection...

Making holiday sales with lingerie



Janelle is a designer at Allure

How important is the holiday season for the lingerie market? To answer this question, EAN turned to the team of Allure. As we learn, the lingerie brand already started planning for this year's Holiday season back in September of 2021. Team Allure tells us which trends will dominate this festive season and which Allure products are of particular interest to retailers and consumers looking to put a sexy little gift under the Christmas tree.

How important is the holiday season for the lingerie market and for you as a company?

Team Allure: The holiday season gives us a chance to play with our favourite boudoir colour, red! We combine vibrant shades of red and gold trim to create timeless classic pieces that span Christmas, Valentine's Day, and beyond.

Allure has been on the market for 30 years - how has the holiday business changed over that period?

Team Allure: Over the past 3 years, due to the interruption of the supply chain, as well as better predictability of the market, customers are now ordering well in advance to have the styles & quantities they want, instead of ordering last minute and running the risk of not getting their exact selections. Also, the Holiday season keeps shifting to start earlier every year, so we find ourselves being prepared ahead of time to be able to better accommodate the customers.

Which distributors/wholesalers sell your products in Europe? And how do you support your European partners? Are there POS materials, do you offer product training, etc.?

Team Allure: We distribute through SHOTS & CL-Diffusions in Europe. We offer high-res images for posters and of course product training for each of our lines.

When do you start preparing for the Christmas season and what exactly do these preparations look like?

Team Allure: Research on fabric and trims for the current Holiday 2022 collection began in September of 2021, with design sketches and patterns being finalised shortly thereafter. By November of 2021, our production facility was already working on our initial samples for approval. We had pre-production samples on hand and were 'photoshoot ready' by January.

What do you have in store for this year's holiday season? Do you focus on special collections or products?

Team Allure: This season, we are serving up a Dreamy & Steamy fantasy of a collection... Comprised of intricate lace and tantalising sheer mesh, each piece holds its own space in the fantasy with teasing cut outs, featuring body hugging soft elastic bands adorned with gold trim. Each piece is available in Luscious Red and Smouldering Black. Yours to have and hold in 2 size offerings of O/S & O/S X.

Are there big differences between the products consumers buy during and outside the holiday season? One might assume that the holiday shopping season is 'vanilla' and more mainstream....

Team Allure: The lines between mainstream and 'vanilla' lingerie are being blurred more and more. We find customers are ready to step out of their



comfort zones and try something a little more 'risqué', especially during the Holidays. Most lingerie stores are carrying a wider variety of crotchless and open styles as they try to tap into a changing market. For the Holiday season, we see customers leaning more towards the more traditional red instead of black.

How can new customers who only buy lingerie at Christmas or first-time buyers be turned into regular customers?

Team Allure: Most of our 'Holiday styles' are also available in traditional black staple. If a customer enjoyed an item from the Holiday collection in the red option, they can find a variety of other complimentary styles offered in black as well. Most women tend to choose the black option when buying for themselves outside of any seasonal buying.





What are the trends for this year's Christmas season?

Team Allure: Luxurious reds in a variety of fabrics / an Addition of sparkle or glitz as pieces can carry through to New Year's / intricate laces / sheer materials / more accessory options such as garter skirts, waist-cinchers, and under bust corsets.

Are trends in the Christmas season fast-moving and subject to permanent change, the same way they are outside of this special season, or do the same trends always return?

Team Allure: We usually see the same seasonal colours emerge for holiday lingerie - red, black, emerald green, and deep plums - as those colours evoke a sexy luxury feel. The difference lies within the fabrics offered: lux velvets, soft to the skin satins, transparent sheers, or intricate laces. This year, we are seeing a greater mix of fabrics as we are looking to dress up, show off, and live in the moment, rather than hunker down in comfort.

Do you have some tips for retailers - online or bricks-and-mortar – on how to maximize lingerie sales at Christmas?

Team Allure: Online: Eye-catching holiday web banners; group holiday items together so customers can see all holiday products in one area; link to fun add-on items like stockings, eye masks, and pasties Brick and Mortar Stores: Make it a sexy & fun display, group similar items together, use Holiday props, incorporate other fun add-on items throughout the display, for instance naughtier accessories like whips, cuffs, blindfolds & pasties.



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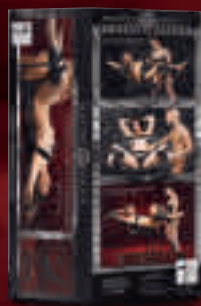
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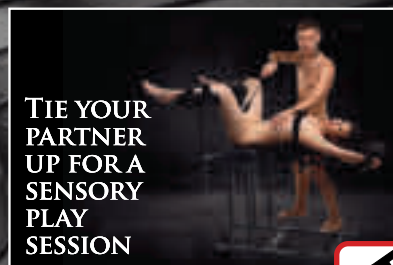


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Entering the B2B market feels like the natural next step in our brand's story

Biird takes flight in the B2B market

Andrea Rey,
co-founder of Biird



If there is a brand the entire industry is talking about right now, it must be Biird. After marketing their products exclusively via b2c channels in the past, the brand has recently announced that Biird would finally enter the b2b market. EAN had the opportunity to talk with Andrea Rey, co-founder of Biird, to learn more about the reasoning behind this decision and why the team picked Gisele International as their partner for this big step.

After focusing on the B2C market for a long time, you are now entering the B2B market. Why did you make it a point to gain a foothold in the B2C market first?

Andrea Rey: Serving the B2C market first was a very conscious decision we've made from the get-go. Biird is about so much more than just its products. We knew we had to create a strong brand and a loyal following in order to stand out and that's why we chose not to enter the B2B market before our brand had gained traction.

Your success could be taken as proof that it is enough for sex toy brands to be active in the B2C market. So, why move into the B2B market now?

Andrea: We've worked towards entering the B2B market for the last 2 years as we see it as a complementary part to what we are already doing. Retailers provide a whole new way of reaching customers and, very importantly, can really help customers find the perfect product for their needs as they are closer to them. Our products also perfectly lend themselves for offline sales as they are meant to be seen, touched, and experienced as a whole. We believe this in-person contact is an integral part of the Biird experience. We also wanted to make sure we had more than one product when entering the B2B space so the launch of Namii proved the perfect time



to do so as we are now able to offer more of a range, with many more products launching in the coming months. Last but not least, the demand from key retailers had been steadily building and so we knew the demand for Biird was there both from a customer and from a retailer perspective.

What do you expect from this step?

Andrea: Entering the B2B market feels like the natural next step in our brand's story. It will help us to enlarge our reach by collaborating with local shops who have themselves built strong audiences of customers who trust them and speak their language. Working hand in hand with retailers will also give us a better understanding of their expectations

for the brand, the market and to ensure we keep growing in sync with our audience and partners.

Will it help your B2B activities that your brand is already well-known?

Andrea: It's definitely a plus but that's just the beginning. Our partnership with Jüne, the international best-selling author of the book *Jouissance Club* also helps to open some doors with retailers as some of them have been carrying her book, but we know more work needs to be done. Retailers are very thorough when it comes to choosing new brands to work with, so we have to make sure we meet all of their product, branding, and messaging requirements.



For your B2B activities, you cooperate with Gisele International. Why are you going this way instead of working directly with wholesalers and/or distributors?

Andrea: Working directly with wholesalers or distributors doesn't have to be exclusive of working with Gisele. Their team helps us to create a coherent omnichannel strategy and guides us in finding the right partners across all of our channels. Getting our brand out there and making sure it reaches the end customer is what really matters as well as making sure that our B2B and B2C channels nurture each other.

Why did you choose Gisele International? Do Biird and Gisele fit together well?

Andrea: Choosing Gisele International was almost a no-brainer for us. The Gisele team's drive and energy closely matches ours. We all come with previous experience in the adult product world and share the same view of where we see the adult retail space move to, as well as how to best address the ever-changing needs of our market. And at the end of the day, we all love to have a good dose of fun while we're at it.

What expectations are tied to your collaboration with Gisele? What are your goals for this endeavour?

Andrea: We're planning to gradually build out our brand internationally and appreciate their guidance on how to best do this without compromising our brand values and standards. Gisele already has strong ties with a very large retail and distribution network and this way, we're able to accelerate our roll-out all while being in safe hands.

What's next for Biird?

Andrea: Our B2B reach-out and introduction is in full swing. We're in talks with dozens of potential partners all over the world so a lot of our focus is going to ensure we're addressing the needs of our new partners.

At the same time, we're also fine-tuning the last details of a new range of products we will be launching in early 2023. As always, never a dull moment here!



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This partnership is about two titans joining forces to build something larger than they could create on their own

SHOTS is now the exclusive distributor of Doc Johnson in the European Union



Kristen Denton (Doc Johnson),
Hein Schouten (SHOTS),
Kerin De Francis (Doc Johnson),
and Scott Watkins (Doc Johnson)

SHOTS and Doc Johnson have a long-standing, successful partnership, so it's no surprise they have decided to take their collaboration to the next level: Products of the well-established US brand are now available exclusively via the Dutch distribution company across the EU region. Scott Watkins, Vice President of Sales and Marketing at Doc Johnson, and Hein Schouten, CEO SHOTS EU, provide more details about this deepening partnership in our two-pronged interview.

Having closely with SHOTS for several years, Doc Johnson is now expanding this partnership. What were the reasons for this step?

Scott Watkins: The pandemic highlighted the need for a more focused effort on the Doc Johnson brand of products with the European Union. SHOTS stepped up to help effectively form Doc Johnson EU.

What are the advantages of distributing exclusively through SHOTS in Europe from now on?

Scott: Outside of our cosmetics - which will be coming soon - SHOTS has

committed to being a full-line distributor of our products and carrying our entire catalogue. This means more selection for the retailers, and a commitment to always having stock. It's very important to note that this agreement only covers the European Union countries. You can still find out range of products in the UK from ABS Holdings. We are excited to continue this long-standing partnership with ABS and know the will continue doing a great job representing our products in the UK.

You have been working with SHOTS for a long time, so you obviously chose Hein and his team for a reason, but we'd still like to know: What makes SHOTS the right partner for Doc Johnson?

Scott: Though we love Hein and have much faith in his ability to grow our presence in Europe, it is the team of people around him that sealed the deal. We've had the chance to work with all of the departments from sales to marketing to accounting to purchasing and believe that they are world-class organization. Year after year they have provided us with increased sales as well as valuable feedback on how we can be more successful. We know that under Hein's leadership, this partnership will be extremely successful.

How important is the EU market for Doc Johnson? And where do you see room for expansion?

Scott: The European market has always been an important part of Doc Johnson's success. It holds a special place in our hearts as at one point, Ron Braverman (owner and CEO of Doc) owned stores in the Netherlands.

What will your partnership with SHOTS look like in the future, especially when it comes to growing the Doc Johnson brand in Europe and helping retailers maximize sales?

Scott: Time will tell, but we're planning for this partnership to last quite a while.


Will SHOTS carry your full product line, which we know to be very large and diverse, or just selected products or product lines?

Scott: SHOTS will carry everything! At the moment, that excludes cosmetics, but soon they will be added.

Hein, how pleased are you that SHOTS is now the exclusive distributor of the iconic Doc Johnson brand in Europe? Is this a milestone in your company's history?

Hein Schouten: For many years now, SHOTS has distributed Doc Johnson products all over Europe and our teams have an amazing friendship. We treat each other as family and throughout the years, we have come to respect each other more and more. This made the shift from distributor to exclusive distributor comfortable for both our companies because we'd already synergistically worked together. Of course, both SHOTS and Doc Johnson are established companies with individual success stories. We know that by partnering up, our future can be even more successful. This exclusive partnership will mould our teams' passions and perseverance into a great future for our European wholesale and retail customers.

What does this step mean for your customers? What will change for them?

Hein: Our customers will now have the opportunity to access special European promotions and marketing plans that will be exclusive to the EU market. We will also have a dedicated Doc Johnson Brand Ambassador to help support, service, and train our customers directly. 



This Brand Ambassador will be visiting stores and customers to help everyone with the process of integrating Doc Johnson further into the European marketplace and will be able to assist both current and new customers. We will be introducing our new Doc Johnson Brand Ambassador to your EAN readers shortly. In the interim, we encourage customers to contact Leroy Klunder at leroy@shots.nl.

It's important for our customers to know that SHOTS will stock all of Doc Johnson's releases. We are in the process of stocking up for the demand of the upcoming holiday season. If you are a SHOTS customer and there are specific Doc Johnson products you would like us to stock up on, we encourage you to reach out to your Sales Representative directly. Anyone who does not have an account with SHOTS is invited to reach out to us at www.shots.nl. We are always available to help our customers grow their retail business.

How does such a distribution agreement come about? Would you give us a little insight into the negotiations?

Hein: It really progressed from our two companies being business-partners, then friends, and now family. Throughout the years, the SHOTS and Doc Johnson teams have become closer and closer, and we found that we all have similar work ethics and business goals. Our exclusive partnership grew from our mutual respect.

SHOTS has a proven sales and marketing system that has helped our partner brands grow their footprint in Europe. Doc Johnson is known for their sales and marketing efforts globally. It made sense for us to join forces.

I want to thank Scott Watkins and the Doc Johnson team for believing in me. It means a lot to me to have them support my future growth plans now that I've stepped into the role of CEO of SHOTS EU.

There are a lot of discussions about the pros and cons of exclusive distribution. SHOTS distributes third-party brands both exclusively and non-exclusively. What criteria do you use here?

Hein: I'm glad you included this question. We have meticulously gathered sales and marketing data over the decades that we have been in business, and it's this data that we use and refer to when making decisions about potential partners.

Throughout the years of distributing Doc Johnson products, we've witnessed a steady increase in sales. We saw that a lot of this had to do with the support they offered through their own marketing and training programmes. Being able to partner with Doc Johnson's sales and marketing teams to combine their knowledge with SHOTS' strategic programmes will ensure continued growth and success for both of our companies and our customers.

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The teams of SHOTS and Doc Johnson are looking forward to a new level of collaboration

Doc Johnson is undoubtedly one of the most well-established brands in our market. Why should any retailer carry the products of this US company?

Hein: Doc Johnson is practically a legend in our industry, and their name is iconic. Doc Johnson is known for launching the sex toy industry in 1976, and they continually create new, unique designs that are primarily made on their 6-acre campus in Hollywood, California. I would encourage retailers to carry Doc Johnson products because of their quality. The fact that they've been in business for almost 50 years means they've perfected their designs, moulds, manufacturing practices, etc. And they are so dedicated to creating original designs; they have an on-staff artist to keep their products fresh and appealing to multiple audiences. This correlates to an incredibly high percentage of best-selling products, meaning more sales and profits for retailers.

Doc Johnson has been active in the European market for a long time, which raises the question whether SHOTS will focus on

preserving the status quo or exploring previously untapped potential?

Hein: This partnership is about two titans joining forces to build something larger than anything they could create on their own. We know that this exclusive partnership will allow both our companies to tap into opportunities that may have previously been elusive. Think about this - we are combining our sales and marketing efforts, we are creating promotions and plans specifically for our EU customers, and we will have a dedicated Doc Johnson Brand Ambassador on our staff to assist retailers directly. All of that means we are setting the Doc Johnson brand up for unparalleled growth throughout Europe by using the systems that SHOTS has developed.

I would also like to add: SHOTS knows that our customers' success is our success. We keep that in mind when we consider our partners, such as Doc Johnson. We know that there are plenty more customers out there who are yet to be introduced to the Doc Johnson brand and with this exclusive partnership, we are now able to do just that. **e**



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A woman with long, wavy brown hair is shown from the waist up, wearing a grey, draped halter-neck top. Her arms are raised, and her hands are near her head, with her fingers spread. She is looking upwards and to the right. The background is a warm, orange-red sunset sky with soft clouds. The overall mood is sensual and relaxed.

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We both have decades of experience in this field and I know our product will reflect that

Demon Kat: Rob Reimer and Buck Angel join forces to launch a brand



The founders of Demon Kat:
Rob Reimer and Buck Angel

They have known and respected each other for a long time, and they both have years of experience in the sexual wellness industry. So why not work together? That's what Rob Reimer and Buck Angel thought when they started their new brand, Demon Kat. In our interview, the two explain how they intend to provide new impulses within the sex toy market, and we also learn that they already have a distributor for the European market.

Most people in our industry already know you, but still, could you briefly introduce yourselves. How long you have been active in the industry and what have your careers in this industry looked like so far?

Rob Reimer: I started in adult in 2002 doing DVD marketing for All Worlds, Catalina and Dirk Yates. I then got recruited to the original hook-up site, Manhunt, in 2005, which was exploding at the time and was an insane but amazing time to be in that industry. I went back to school in 2008 and got my BA in Sports, Event and Entertainment Marketing. During that time, I was asked to help start a new toy brand called Perfect Fit and eventually started my own brand, Boneyard. Now I

am thrilled to partner with Buck Angel with Demon Kat.

Buck Angel: I've done so many things in the adult industry, I've lost count! I was the first transman to make serious, adventurous, and supportive porn featuring fellow FTMs as well as myself, to show the world how proud we are of our bodies and identities. My positive attitude about the fluidity of sexuality led me to create the first pleasure product for the FTM trans community, the Buck-off, which I launched in 2016. It became an award-winning product which led me to keep going and come up with a line of lubricants and body care products with Sliquid, T Lube, specifically for the vaginas of transmen. It continues to be really popular to this day. Now I'm devoted to Demon Kat, which is all inclusive and I can't wait to burst out even more in the adult industry.

What was your inspiration and motivation to join forces and launching a new brand together?

Rob: We ran in the same circles in the LA underground scene in the late 90's through the early 2000's when I owned a Piercing Studio on Melrose Ave. I pierced his nipple before he had top surgery and he was strapping, so we were always very supportive of each other when body piercing and being trans were just becoming a thing. We

both ended up working in the porn industry, so it was just a natural thing to come together.

Buck: All that is true, Rob! I think it's destiny that we finally are working together, calling our own shots and making the products that we truly believe in without having higher ups tell us what to do. We both have decades of experience in this field, and I know our product will reflect that.

Between the two of you, you have a huge amount of experience in different areas of the industry. How does that help you with the challenge of positioning a new brand in a market where brands and products are a dime a dozen?

Rob: Yes, we are both lucky to have had incredibly diverse careers and experiences and have each developed good reputations which can be tough in this industry. So that has been important to both of us and will be very important for the development of the new brand. Also, we both worked for Perfect Fit Brand when Buck released the Buck-off, which was revolutionary, but I think we both knew deep down that we wanted to create this new brand together, and it was just time.

Buck: I think it's important to be all inclusive. In no way am I turning my back on the trans community – it's just that it's a big, wide world out there and there's plenty of products to be dreamed up and shared with anyone, no matter your sexual identity, preference,

gender, anything. We live in the perfect times to bring our products to the market.

What does Demon Kat bring to the market? What are the unique selling points of your brand?

Rob: Both of us have been very successful with creating completely new designs for our brands and have each won several awards for those designs. One thing we never did was to create toys together. Once we started brainstorming on creating new designs, they just flowed out of us. We only have a handful of products now, but we have almost a dozen new ones that we are very excited about that are being manufactured and will be released in the next few months.



The motto you have chosen for Demon Kat is: 'Toys with no Boundaries'. How is this motto reflected in the products?

Rob: This concept came to us very early and we didn't want to place any rules or boundaries how to use our products in our messaging. We don't mention gender in any of our product descriptions or marketing. We want people to be free to use these products however they want to. Of course, something like a cock ring will be mostly used by males, but they also are



enjoyed by women who buy them for the partner or used as bumpers or even bracelets.

Buck: I wanted to expand the world of gender-free products because I feel that gender fluidity will be embraced by more and more of the population, with the lead being taken by the younger generation. Sure, some of our products will seem like they are made for particular body parts but being open to different ways of using them will expand the way people think about many of them.

What can you tell us about your current portfolio? Which products are currently available and what is special about them?

Rob: The Demon Kat paddle/dildo was our first official product which is a true crossover product. The paddle face is our Demon Kat brand mascot which imprints on to your skin. The handle is a ribbed dildo which gives the paddle

a firm grip, but also can be turned around to use as a dildo. We also have the BuFu rings which is a beefy cock ring which has a flat inner edge which keeps it incredibly firm and in place, so it doesn't roll against the skin. They are really stretchy and come in Black, Blue and Orange. I will let Buck tell you about the Pack n Jack.

Buck: Of course, the Pack n Jack is close to my heart. A lot of guys who are on T (testosterone), often have enlarged clitorises that definitely are small penises, yet there aren't many products that we can use to masturbate with. So why not create something? That's what the Pack n Jack is – it adds stimulation at the base, mildly hugs and suctions, and can also be used as a really comfortable packer.

Can you also tell us something about your upcoming product releases in the next months?

Rob: Since they are original designs, we are keeping these close to the vest and are still waiting for the patents to get wrapped up. But like I said, they will be released very soon!

How would you define your target group? Who are Demon Kat products made for?

Rob: I guess the target group is edgy people who enjoy sex! Going along with our concept, we don't want to place any boundaries on who can use our products.

Buck: I love the retro packaging look of the brand, so I think Demon Kat is going to appeal to those who want a fun, laid back, and refreshing take on adult products.

Which distribution channels do you want to use to market your products? Are you interested in

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working with distributors or do you want to work directly with retailers?

Rob: We just signed a deal with SHOTS in Europe, which is pretty impressive for a new company. I prefer dealing with distributors because then it's a win/win for the supply channel, supporting our company, distributors, and ultimately, the retailer. It also makes it easy for the retailers to include Demon Kat in their orders, to get their discount from their distributors, and fill their walls with our products. As with any new company, we are working on increasing the number of our distributors now.

What do distribution partners have to bring to the table for you to do business with them? What do you look for in your partners?

Rob: As always, it's nice to get wall space to bring attention to the Demon Kat brand, and to place our products in a gender-neutral area, which is, in our opinion, the way to display products that appeal to everyone. Of course, being a sex-positive company all the way around is a priority, too. We will be beefing up the educational segment for our line so the retailers and customers will know more about who we are, what and why we create what we do, and why Demon Kat is the awesome brand it is.

Could you give us some insight into what your plans are for the next few months? Most importantly, where and how do you plan to showcase and promote your new brand?

Rob: We will be participating in a few important B2B shows here in the US, starting with ANME in early January, which is the B2B section hosted by the world-wide media brand, AVN. Afterwards in March, we will be showing at Altitude in Las Vegas, and we have more shows planned for the rest of the year. As for new products, we are releasing several products every month for 2023 that we're really excited about. Between Buck and I, there's no limit as to what we can design and come up with!

Buck: I don't think I've had as much fun with a new company as I am working with Rob on Demon Kat. When we get together in person or on Zoom, we always have a good time! Sure, we get serious when it comes to product design after we let our minds reach new levels of 'What needs to be created that's different?' I can't wait what the future will be with Demon Kat!

e

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It's a real mission. It's to tell women that we deserve pleasure

An interview with Marie Comacle, founder of the Puissante brand



No one can deny that the TV show 'Sex and the City' marks a very important milestone in the history of the sex toy market. It also had a big impact on Marie Comacle, ultimately inspiring her to launch the Puissante brand. But while the TV shows opened Marie's eyes to the world of sex toys, she quickly realised that these products were still shrouded in taboos. It is this stigma and lack of acceptance that Marie has been fighting ever since.

Let's go all the way back to the beginning: When did you first stumble upon sex toys and what memories do you have of that moment?

Marie Comacle: The first time I saw sex toys, it was on Sex and The City and I was around 16, 17 years, I guess. I bought my first one at 18 and really liked it, that's what gave me the idea to build a sex toy company. I wanted to explain the benefits and how it's soooo cool!

Were you aware at that time that topics like sex toys, masturbation etc. were strongly tabooed?

Marie: Yes, totally. When I talked about it to my friends, it was really awkward and they didn't understand why I used toys. Especially in France, I guess, it's really, really taboo and we have a lot of explaining to do to convey that it's okay.

To what extent did your experiences contribute to your decision to enter the market with your own sex toy brand in 2021?

Marie: It really contributed to my decision a lot as I wanted to tell everyone that it was okay. Because when I talked about it, everybody was uncomfortable. I was convinced that there was something that needed to be done in order to make women comfortable with their sexuality.

Before you entered the market, you invested about a year and a half in research and development. What results did that research yield? How did you feel about the existing product offering at the time?

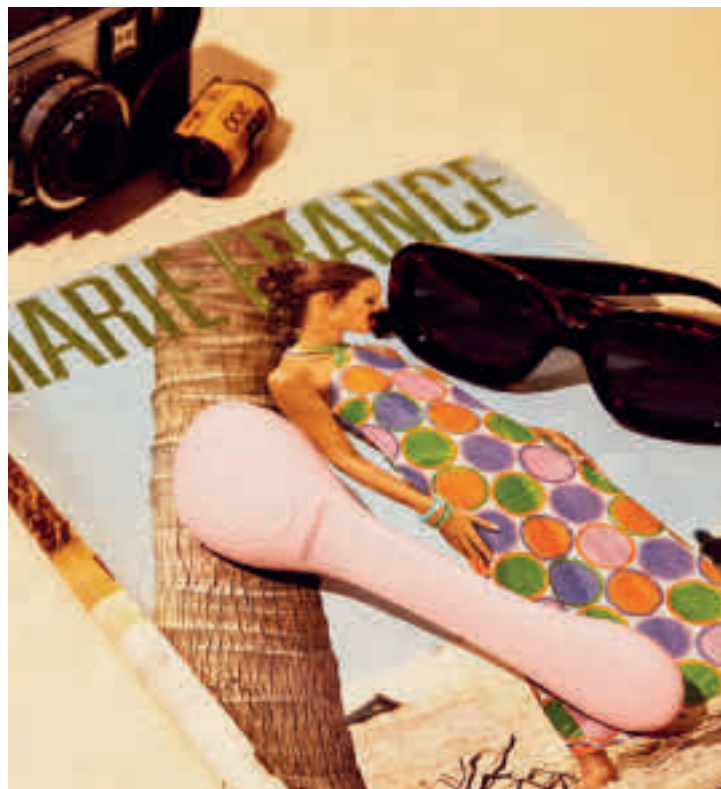
Marie: After spending months looking for a French provider, we finally went with a Chinese one in order to produce Coco. We thought about it as the ultimate sex toy - one that can be used by everyone. The idea was to offer two options, with or without penetration since that didn't exist in the market.

Could you describe the mission of Puissante? What do you want to achieve with the brand and its products?

Marie: We really want to get rid of the taboos around female masturbation and explain that it's normal to have pleasure. Firstly, because it lets you explore and get to know what you like, but also because it helps you to feel good in your body and your mind. That's why we create products for women.

The market for sex toys is extremely crowded. How important is it for you that Puissante stands for more than just products?

Marie: It's a real mission. It's about telling women that we deserve pleasure. We deserve to feel good. There is no shame in that. We can do it. And it's okay. It's really important to say it out loud and thanks to the testimonials we get, we know that it's really useful.



Who is your brand aimed at? How would you describe your target group?

Marie: We cater to women of all ages. All women who want to discover themselves.

What expectations does your target group have regarding your brand and products?

Marie: Our target group is looking for a well-designed wellness accessory that accompanies them on their journey of self-discovery and self-love. An object that is discreet, nice



to look at, and helps its user feel powerful. Our clientele is sensitive to our message, that differentiates us from other brands in the sexual wellness space. We solely focus on women and their overall well-being - we consider it our number one mission to normalize female masturbation and sexuality. We also nurture a personal and close relationship with our audience; not only did they contribute to the creation of our first accessory, Coco, but we are also in constant conversation with them.

How do you communicate with your customers? How and where do you promote your brand and your mission?

Marie: We really talk about well-being and not that much about sexuality. We promote our brand on social media (Instagram, Facebook, and Tiktok) and sometimes on TV! Our communication is really important to us. Delivering our messages is the biggest goal of the brand.

How many and what kind of products does Puissante currently offer?

Marie: Right now, we have four products, the Coco, the Toupie, the Ho Ho de Noël, and the lubricant. In due time, we want to open up the brand and offer more products.

What are the key selling points of your products? What do you look for when it comes to products and their functions and features?

Marie: We really want to create products that you can't see anywhere else and that provide totally new experiences. It's also really important to have beautiful products that don't scare anyone away and are cute, deserving of a place in your intimate life.

For your product Coco, you went the crowdfunding way. Why?

Marie: Because we needed funds in order to produce our Coco, and banks didn't want to support us! It was also the perfect way to find out if the French market was ready for this kind of proposition.

The crowdfunding campaign for Coco ended up being very successful. What conclusions have you drawn from that? Should more sex toy brands rely on this type of funding?

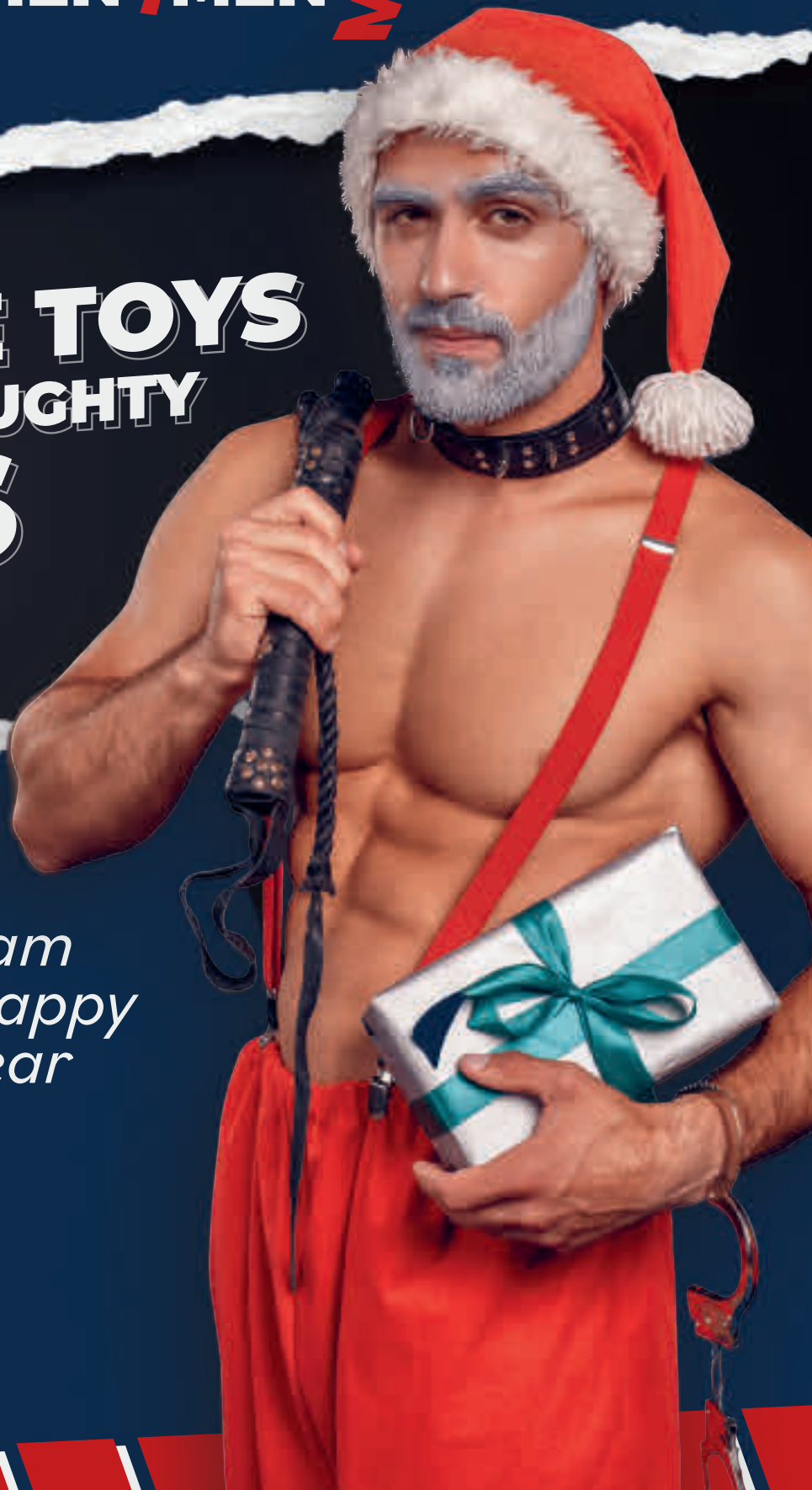


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Marie: Yes, I think it's a good way to talk about those subjects and to motivate people to pre-order your products.

Do you plan to expand your portfolio? What will Puissante's product offering look like in the future?

Marie: Yes, we want to add different products other than sex toys. With our Puissante brand, we can offer different things centred around

women, that's what we want. For instance, clothes or other retail products!

Is there interest in expanding your network in the B2B market with retailers and/or distributors?

Marie: Yes, of course. We're always more than happy to talk with anyone in this network!

What do potential partners need to bring to the table for you to consider working with them?

Marie: We are searching for partners who share the same values as Puissante and could help us spread our message everywhere in the world.

Puissante supports the charity organization 'Les Orchidées Rouges.' What does this organization do exactly? How important is it for you to give back some of your success?

Marie: It's an association that fights against excision and violence against women and female children. It's really important because of what it means. Excision means getting rid of a part of the clitoris, but because of the clit you can feel better and stronger, so it was an obvious choice for us to support that cause.

What are your plans for the future? Where is Puissante heading in the next few years?

Marie: We want to grow and help more and more women to feel confident in their lives and their sexuality.



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The whole process, starting from the production to the first sales, was quite challenging

Irina Teniaeva delineates the success story of the Snail Vibe

How important is it to clearly communicate the unique features of your product, from its functions to the way it is used? Well, as it turns out, it is immensely important. For proof, look no further than the Snail Vibe. It is a product with an unusual look, for sure, but to really understand what makes it a 3-in-1 toy and how its development was inspired by scientific research, you need to provide the consumers with more information. Speaking of which - here to give us all the details about the Snail Vibe and its global success is Irina Teniaeva (Snail Vibe Sales and Marketing Department).

'Oh no, not another Rabbit!' - How many times have you heard this statement during the presentation of the Snail Vibe?

Irina Teniaeva: Oh, it's not that bad, honestly. Nut sometimes we really do hear that it looks like a rabbit and here comes the misunderstanding of how to use it. Some people think that the handle is the insertable part and that's why the toy seems 'too big' for them, if you know what I mean, BUT! We offer product training for all our customers and that solves the issue.

The Snail Vibe is much more than just another Rabbit. What are the unique qualities of the Snail Vibe? What can the Snail Vibe do that Rabbit vibrators can't?

Irina: Actually, the Snail Vibe is more like a 3-in-1 toy. Due to its unique shape and two independent motors that can be turned on and off separately - one in the spiral head and one in the insertable part - it can be used as a classic vibrator, as a clitoral stimulator solely, and as a dual vibrator for simultaneous clitoral and vaginal stimulation.

Is the Snail Vibe proof that the topic of 'dual stimulation' still offers many new possibilities?

Irina: The Snail Vibe was inspired by the work of two pioneering sexologists, psychiatrist Dr. Helen Kaplan and psychotherapist Edward Eichel. The Bridge Technique

developed by Dr. Helen Kaplan helps to create new neural connections between erogenous zones. External and internal stimulations are connected by the 'Bridge' through which the clitoral orgasm becomes a vaginal orgasm or vice versa. The Snail Vibe provides tailored pleasure to both the clitoris and vagina through the motion and stimulating vibrations with a quick click on a button.

The Coital Alignment Technique, a sex position developed by Eichel, benefits from the simultaneous stimulation of both clitoris and vagina through rocking strokes that create pressure and counter pressure, much like the movement in The Snail Vibe's flexible Spiral Head.

The Snail Vibe has been a success around the world for quite some time, but how long did it take and how difficult was it to get the product's unique selling points into people's minds?

Irina: The whole process, starting from the production to the first sales, was quite challenging. First of all, we needed to find a manufacturing base which would bring our ideas to life, match all our requirements, and offer the highest production standards. Then, after revealing the product to the world, we had an enormous number of presentations and trainings to educate people on how to use the toy and to build the connection with our customers. So, I'd say that it took us several years to get to the point where we are today.

You only just presented the Snail Vibe at eroFame 2022. What was the reaction like? Was the Snail Vibe a success or is the high demand for suction toys outshining everything else right now?

Irina: To be honest, the reaction was even better than we expected! We had lots of appointments with our current customers and had a chance to gather feedback about the toy which was extremely positive overall. Also, we met some new for us customers from the industry and were a bit surprised that so many people had already heard about the Snail Vibe and came to our booth to learn more. Some random visitors also expressed a hefty interest in our toy, so, I can say with 100% certainty that the show was successful for us.

How important is it that the Snail Vibe uses patented technology?

Irina: Of course, it's very important. How could it be not? There are years of studying, research, and inventions behind the toy. That's why there isn't another toy like the Snail Vibe on the market, is it?

Who is the target audience for the Snail Vibe? Is it a product for more experienced sex toy users due to its complexity?

Irina: In my subjective opinion, the target audience for the product is more experienced users rather than 'newbies'. However, the reason is not the 'complexity' of the toy but the 'simplicity' of the demand of a new customer. Let me try to explain: What do most new sex shop customers





want? Just a new experience, to feel something new and different from what they felt yesterday. And any simple classic vibrator can give them this 'something new' feeling. But if you go deeper and analyse your needs more thoroughly, here comes that you may like both external and internal stimulation all at the same time or separately, different modes for 'here and there', and to get these you have to buy a wand, a classic vibrator, a rabbit and whatever else. Can you have them all in one? Easy! Buy the Snail Vibe!

Where can European retailers get the product? Which wholesale and distribution partners do you work with?

Irina: We work with several distributors located in Europe: ORION Wholesale, ONE-DC, Eropartner, Dreamlove.

Why did you decide to cooperate with several distribution partners instead of granting exclusive distribution rights to one company?

Irina: As of today, this strategy seems more convenient for us and our customers and it is easier and more cost-effective considering logistics

factors. We are not aimed at direct distribution, although it's still possible; we prefer to work through distributors. Partnerships with several companies have resulted in the brand's widespread availability on the market.

What criteria do you go by when selecting your retail partners?

Irina: As we sell through distributors mostly, we trust them in this choice. Going by the market analyses we did recently, we can see that the percentage of the market coverage is quite high and the Snail Vibe is in stock on the biggest online platforms, in the big offline chains, and in some mid-size and small boutiques.

What support do you offer to your distribution and retail partners to help them achieve maximum success with the Snail Vibe?

Irina: First of all, we offer product training. In our experience, that boosts sales drastically. We provide lots of different digital assets: videos, lifestyle product images, web banners, etc. We offer displays and testers for offline stores. And we have different marketing strategies which we discuss with our partners individually depending on their needs.

The Snail Vibe is currently available in two colours. Are there plans to add more colours or even new versions of the product?

Irina: Yes, we are planning to launch a new Snail model in different colours at the beginning of the next year! We presented its mould to our customers at the Hannover show and got really good feedback. I don't want to disclose all the details right now. I can only say that the new Snail is coming soon!





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Creating a refined and improved version of existing classics is a very noble route to focus on

Zoe Ligon, founder of Spectrum Boutique, breathes fresh ideas into popular product lines



Zoe Ligon, founder and CEO of Spectrum Boutique

If your most experienced consumers had a chance to play sex toy designer for a day, would they create something worthwhile for your brand? Zoe Ligon is the sex toy industry's own expert witness, and she's put her carnal knowledge to use as co-conspirator to some of the industry's most celebrated brands. (By the way, 'Carnal Knowledge' is also the title of Ligon's debut sex-ed book, a coffee table-worthy title photographed by Elizabeth Renstrom.) Pleasure industry folk will recognize Ligon as the founder and CEO of Spectrum Boutique, a very modern and gender-neutral online retailer that's uber popular with Millennials and Gen Z. However, Ligon is so fond of sex toys that she'd probably know (almost) as much about them even if she weren't a shop owner, which made her the perfect collaborator for companies like b-Vibe, Chakrubs, and Pelle. In this exclusive EAN interview, Ligon was chided (while remaining her usual, humble self) to admit that her social media star status was a big contributor to the success of her co-designed sex toys. However, in the game of marketing and design collaborations, that doesn't mean just any old influencer will do. Ligon's combined experience as a consumer, educator, and business woman played equally important roles in bringing value to her manufacturer partnerships. Zoe Ligon gives EAN a peek behind the strategy and schemes that went into her now-iconic brand contributions.

Spectrum Boutique has collaborated with sex toy manufacturers several times over the last handful of years. How did these collaborations come to fruition? Who approached whom, and what made each party feel so aligned in your shared values?

Zoe Ligon: I've been selling sex toys for 'almost' 10 years now, but at the time of these initial collabs, I didn't have much design experience and wanted to be able to create more of the sex toys I wanted to see in the world. I would say all the collaborations were quite mutual! All 3 brands I've made unique designs with are all folks I consider industry friends, and are brands whose products I already sold at Spectrum.

Which brands have you co-designed with? Can you tell us the timeline of these collaborations?


Zoe: Initially, I did a design with Chakrubs in early 2019, and the b-Vibe Texture Collection came out at the end of 2019. The Pelle collab was very recent, and we released these within the past couple of months in 2022. COVID threw a wrench in any plans to create new things in 2020-2021, so it's great to be having somewhat of a return to normal as far as production turnaround times go.

When retailers and manufacturers come together for a product line, we often get more of the same, which is usually another white-labeled line of typical, classic sex toys with new packaging. Quite contrarily, your collabs with b-Vibe, Chakrubs, and Pelle have produced totally unique products that actually added something worthwhile to each manufacturer's line. How did you

and these design teams decide what to create together?

Zoe: White labeling definitely has an important place in our industry! These designs were ideas that lived in my sketchbook and my brain or were modifications of existing items from these brands. As you can probably tell from what we made, I love textures! With b-Vibe, for instance, the neck and base of the toys were similar to the Snug Plug. A lot of what made these collabs great wouldn't have been possible without the existing brand line! That's why I had so much more fun making these as partnerships instead of trying to reinvent the wheel on our own at the time.

In addition to owning an online retail boutique, you're something of a brand in itself as a sex educator, author, and social media personality. Was this crucial to the marketing and subsequent success of each of these collaborations? Do you think it helped your manufacturer partners in making their decision to collaborate with you?

Zoe: That's difficult to answer because I see my solo work and Spectrum Boutique as being separate yet interconnected things. The shop's successes are my and my team's successes, and vice versa! I initially gained an audience from the articles I was writing for VICE, Refinery29, and similar outlets, as well as good old social media and my show, 'Sex Stuff'. Without that existing media personality facet of my work, Spectrum may have struggled to acquire customers as quickly as we did. So yes, I definitely think it helped put me on people's radar more than if I didn't have all these other endeavors happening! 

Let's look at each collaboration separately, starting with b-Vibe. What did you and COTR feel was missing from their lines that you could add? Which aspects of these designs were most important to you in making it to the final products?

Zoe: b-Vibe has so many solid classic shapes such as the Snug Plugs, or the Novice, but also unique, more advanced innovations like the Rimming Plugs! I love textured plugs because they feel like an extra massage. Textures feel great vaginally too, but for some reason, I just find textured anal toys particularly enticing to work your body around. At that point in time, none of their designs had surfaces with bumps and ridges, and through sketches and photographs of textures, we came up with the 3 cuties that exist today!

Moving on to Chakrubs, how did you and Chakrubs CEO Vanessa Cuccia decide upon a curvy version of her original crystal sex toys? The crystal wand you helped create was so wonderfully different from Vanessa's other designs!

Zoe: I loooooove intense, girthy g-spotters, that was the inspiration! There was such an unexpected joy upon using the Chakrub we created for the first time – it was weighty like stainless steel, except with a slight texture, and really lovely heft! It was a limited run, and ultimately became too tricky and pricey to create, which is why it no longer is available, but I absolutely adore the few I have left in my bedroom. Definitely one of the most beautiful dildos I've ever laid eyes on!!

Lastly, you literally JUST collaborated with grinding sex toy brand Pelle. And again, the ideas you produced with company founder Caitlin Royal were awesomely unique, even for her niche-y line. How did you decide what needed to be added to the Pelle brand?

Zoe: Gummy Worm was my idea, and Caitlin came up with Orange Slice as a compliment to my Gummy Worm! Gummy Worm was inspired by wanting to have a long grinder that could be shared by two people, or provide more of a full front-to-back grinder. Pool noodles used to be a favorite humping toy of mine, and it is loosely inspired by that same idea. It's also SO soft, and technically could be vaginally inserted if you don't mind the flat bottom, so it gives people a lot of options to work with. Caitlin Royal is a super-talented creator who works wonders with silicone, and I was honored to be able to contribute a shape to the line.

What's next up in your (hopefully!) coming collaborations with sex toy brands? Where is the industry still lacking in certain product categories?

Zoe: Oh, ho ho!!! I can't wait to discuss this more, but it's far too early for me to say anything specific! I think the new excitement around grinding toys has been a welcome recent category added into the mix. There has also been a lot more focus on toys that are marketed towards trans men or folks with bottom growth, and I hope more products like that are on the horizon. I think there are so many redundancies in our industry, which is not a bad thing, but it does mean that creating a refined and improved version of existing classics is also a very noble route to focus on. How lucky are we to be in the pleasure product industry?!

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This interview is contributed by Colleen Godin, EAN U.S. Correspondent



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Culture change has to start at the top

Online retail owner Crystal Gilbert assess the state of the pleasure industry for people of color



Crystal Gilbert, owner
of online retailer
NaughtierDreams.com

especially those intended to resemble real, human genitals, rarely offered realistic skin tones that matched the many shades of the world's brown and black people. When Gilbert asked a handful of manufacturers if a wider range of tones would be offered in the future, she was generally met with blank stares and, in one more disturbing case, a look of sheer disgust. Gilbert's discovery opened the doors for further fair scrutiny, as she realized that darker skin tones weren't only missing from product lines. Gilbert saw very few black and brown people working the manufacturer booths, and in company advertising banners and marketing materials, only a single brand stood out to Gilbert in featuring people of all races and body types. Gilbert believes that all of these pressing issues can be traced to a singular problem: there aren't enough black and brown people employed in decision-making positions in sex toy companies. After all, how can a company represent and properly serve consumers of every race without also employing people of every race? Gilbert learned in graduate school that without a staff composed of the general population, a brand can never properly serve the people to whom they're trying to reach. As Gilbert tells EAN, we've still got a long way to go when it comes to understanding the needs of consumers of color, and the best way to create change is from the top.

Big conversations often begin over small details. Could color choices in product design pave the way for a truly inclusive pleasure products space? Crystal Gilbert, owner of online retailer NaughtierDreams.com, thinks it could really be that simple. While browsing the summer's most popular trade show after a long-awaited, post-Covid return, Gilbert noticed a disappointing trend. Sex toys,

You recently attended the popular summer trade show in Los Angeles. What was your takeaway from this experience regarding skin tone options in sex toy design?

Crystal Gilbert: For this to be a billion-dollar industry that keeps up with the time, the progression in skin tones and the names of people of color items are far behind. My takeaway is that some companies offer a few color tones, but others manufacturers are lagging in adding variety to their product line. The replies from companies shocked me, but sadly, it's just swept under the rug. We keep hearing representation matters, so why does it not matter in this industry?

Similarly, how did you feel about the marketing and advertising you saw while walking the trade show floor? Did you feel that racially inclusive marketing has grown at all in recent years?

Crystal Gilbert: As a person of color, I feel we are seen as invisible when no representation or skin tone is thought of. While walking the show floor, I saw a few people of color in some marketing ads. But honestly, I do not believe the marketing has grown to where it should be for people of color. It was not as expected compared to all the conversations that were had during Covid over the uproar of diversity.

You mentioned that you spoke with some manufacturers about the possibility of including more skin tone options in their sex toy lines. What were their responses? Did anyone seem positive about this idea?

Crystal Gilbert: I asked about two to three companies, and I vividly remember one company just blatantly saying not right now. The way the salesperson looked at me with disgust, as if they wondered why I would even ask that, shocked me. In comparison to the other companies I asked, they stated that they would consider it. In 2022, the sex toy industry has quickly pivoted from toys to sexual wellness. You would think (but like my mother says, when you assume, you make an ass out of yourself) that a variety of skin tones would be available, or at least the conversation would have existed.

On the other end of the spectrum, were there any brands that DID include more skin tone options and more inclusive marketing at this summer's trade show? Have any companies already done a good job of tackling this?

Crystal Gilbert: I noticed a lot of companies are moving away from using people in marketing images and instead using products on displays ads. Yes, one company did have a fantastic inclusive marketing display. Svakom had an exhibition on the wall and their gift bags showed all people of color, shape, and size. The fact that I had to ask other companies, while they showed me a new product, if they would be coming out with different skin tones tells me that this topic is still not at the forefront of the marketing team's minds.

Many sex educators and other professionals in the industry have pointed to the simple fact that there aren't enough People of Color in general who are employed in manufacturing in deci-

"FOR THIS TO BE A BILLION-DOLLAR INDUSTRY THAT KEEPS UP WITH THE TIME, THE PROGRESSION IN SKIN TONES AND THE NAMES OF PEOPLE OF COLOR ITEMS ARE FAR BEHIND."

CRYSTAL GILBERT:

sion-making or marketing and design positions. What was your take on the folks representing the sex toy brands who exhibited at the trade show? Did you notice any increase in the amount of POC who were working the booths, compared to past years?

Crystal Gilbert: I agree there is not enough representation in many of these companies. Over the last few years that I have attended trade shows (in person and virtual), I have not seen an improvement in POC working for the exhibitor's companies. Quite frankly, I do not see many POC attending the trade shows either. I can usually count the show-goers of color on my hand, and I understand that people do not like to attend shows, but how can you scream for change when you are not showing up?

As an industry, what are we doing wrong that's not attracting People of Color to work here? Or are we initially attracting them, but then pushing them away once they get here? For example, you often see a lot of POC at the retail floor level, but they rarely advance past working at an adult store to attain higher positions at the B2B level.

Crystal Gilbert: I have often wondered this myself. Why or how is the industry still predominantly white and male-driven? Despite how the industry has evolved, the main characters have stayed the same, and I think this is one of the main reasons

people of color have not remained in the industry—old ways of thinking and no progression. No one wants to stay in a job where no one takes what you have to say seriously. I see many people of color get taken advantage of or paid less. These facts keep people of color from advancing.

What do you personally do within your own retail business to make it comfortable and appealing to POC? What can other businesses learn from you in doing better for both POC consumers and potential new hires who may also be POC?

Crystal Gilbert: When I started Naughty Dreams, I said I would be the face of the company because, at the time, I did not see many Black Female sex store owners or sex educators. To appeal to people of color, I maintain a wide range of products from companies that incorporate a variety of skin tones. I would say other businesses can first look and see if they are being inclusive. From some research during my grad program, I have learned The Walt Disney Company has a diversity, equity and inclusion program. The program teaches (in-house) employees how to implement their motto and company culture. Disney's 'intention is to progress towards a workforce reflective of the diverse audiences we serve.' If people become understanding, open, and willing to make the changes, the industry could advance in many ways. This issue is in a gray area. Many people see what's wrong, but are either too scared or too comfortable to help make the change in the industry. But like any significant company, culture change has to start at the top.



This interview is contributed by Colleen Godin, EAN U.S. Correspondent

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Do you know anyone who plays the ocarina? Or anyone who loves the horrors of Arkham? Maybe someone who is a connoisseur of 90s video games (and farming simulators)? No? Well, we do. Which brings us to this Monthly Mayhem with SVAKOM's Lydon Colston.

What exactly is the appeal of working for a sex toy brand in communications, PR, and branding?

Lydon Colston: The variety of the tasks. One minute creating content for new releases, then events, then more silly stuff. Keeps everything fresh and stops it from getting boring.

What was your childhood ambition?

Lydon Colston: As a kid, I desperately wanted to be an author or video game designer - I used to go around with very badly written 'horror story chapters' and try to charge my extended family £1 to read them.

How did you get into the industry?

Lydon Colston: The opportunity basically fell into my lap. I enjoyed love toys and was eager to change career (I was a kindergarten teacher before joining this industry) so when the opportunity arose, I dove at it.

If you weren't in this industry, what would you be doing now?

Lydon Colston: If I wasn't in this industry I imagine and hope I'd still be working with words. Maybe as a critic writing reviews or maybe more on the creative side?

What was the biggest step in your career?

Lydon Colston: This might sound bland but seeing my work just... out there. On websites and such. I still get a little giddy seeing something I've written or created published.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years' time?

Lydon Colston: In 10 years... I can't say I've thought too far into the future, but I guess I see myself surrounded by love toys and continuing with writing. Words are definitely my passion so any future that lets me keep working in that format is going to keep me happy (and with plenty of time for video games I suppose, ha ha)

How do you envision the future of the industry?

Lydon Colston: I see technology advancing along with the industry. Already tech-based products are becoming the expected and with consistent leaps in technological advancements we're bound to seeing some wild inventions coming up (perhaps a more succinct way of explaining is that I see the industry turning into a series of mad scientists screaming 'it's alive!!')

What is your idea of a perfect working day?

Lydon Colston: Productive and social. I love the days where I've got a list of content I need to write whilst talking with my colleagues. When I'm really into what I'm writing I get somewhat tunnel vision and just sit typing feverishly so having the odd bit of banter to break it up is great.

How do you relax after work?

Lydon Colston: Varying types of games from 'Star Ocean' to 'Silent Hill' (I have a tiny obsession with 90's video games) to the

Lydon Colston

Questions & Answers

living card game 'Arkham Horror'. And lots of farm games ('Story of Seasons' is an absolute obsession of mine). Other than that, however, I do the typical things like reading, watching Netflix, practicing lockpicking, and attempting to learn the ocarina. (And using SVAKOM products of course)

Who would you consider your role model and why?

Lydon Colston: A tie between Clive Barker and Alice Oseman – two incredible authors who use written and painted art to tell widely different types of stories that extract violently different emotions in the best way.

Imagine you have been asked to award a medal to someone. Who's the lucky winner?

Lydon Colston: Most likely to my good friend Beth Ashley-Gilliatt - she's created many impactful pieces for a variety of magazines which promote a positive attitude on sex, classist issues within the UK, and much more. She deserves a medal for consistently shining a light on the stigma's people (especially women and sex workers) face.

Which personal success are you proud of?

Lydon Colston: Very silly things that truly mean nothing to others ... like becoming a finalist on 'Brightlocker' and having lived in a variety of countries and places. Knowing that I pursued different short-term goals wherever they took me and didn't limit my worldview.

What do you particularly like about yourself?

Lydon Colston: My humour and ever-changing hair colours.

Which vice could you never forgive?

Lydon Colston: Malice hidden behind a smile. Upfront malicious intent can be forgiven but hiding behind being 'good' is, to me, an unforgivable crime.

What song do you sing in the shower?

Lydon Colston: I practically perform a whole concert whenever I take a shower but most often 'City by Hollywood Undead' and 'Weak' by AJR

Who would you never ever like to see naked?

Lydon Colston: Any of my colleagues, I like them, I like working with them, I'd like them to keep their clothes on.

With whom would you like to go to the cinema and what film would you watch?

Lydon Colston: I would love to go and watch every version of 'IT' with Stephen King purely to see his reactions to them.

You have a month's holiday. Where do you go?

Lydon Colston: Norway, so I could catch up with old friends and chill in a cabin by a lake. Or, Japan, purely so I can go to Super Nintendo Land.

Which three things would you take with you to a deserted island?

Lydon Colston: Hedy X – If I'm going to be stuck I'll need to pass the time and I don't want anything that will need to recharge





(can you imagine the heartbreak once it finally dies?). A lighter or flint to start fires with because I most certainly do not know how to start a fire from scratch. A durable sword so I can hunt local wildlife for food and I guess defend against potential threats?

If you could swap lives with somebody for a day, who would it be?

Lydon Colston: I would commit atrocities to swap lives with Tyler Joseph from 'Twenty One Pilots' because I just feel like it would be a right laugh.

Is there anything you would never do again?

Lydon Colston: Radio. It was a small extracurricular thing during my studies, and I quickly realised that I do not enjoy hearing my voice or the whole process.

Do you have some good advice you want to share with our readers?

Lydon Colston: Have fun with life and don't fixate on anyone's opinions of you. If there's a change you want to make, a risk, or you want to get creative with something you're working on – do it. If you want to do something (that doesn't hurt anyone) then go do it! Try not to let the idea of being embarrassed hold you back, laugh with everyone with unadulterated enthusiasm and focus on the stories you'll be able to tell in the future.

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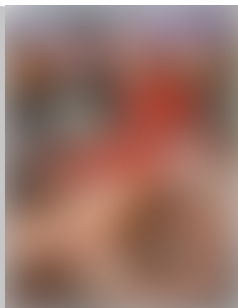
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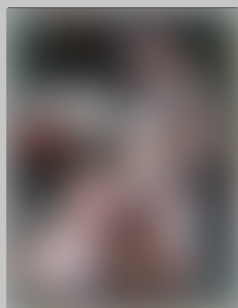
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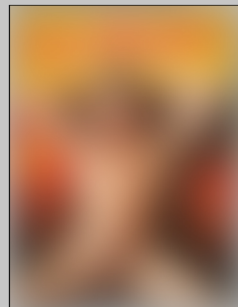
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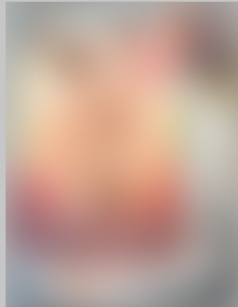
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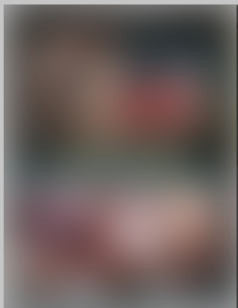
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