

Every now and then a client brings in a multi-level marketing skin care product believing it to be the absolutely best anti-aging product ever developed while trying to convince us to sign up, sell the product to clients, whom will then sell it to others.

Firstly, I think MLM is a terrible business model. People behind these products are absolute masters of convincing their followers that the product is the best ever and that it is the road to riches. This brings me to thinking about the whole anti-aging skin care product business.

I have studied skin care products and ingredients for fifteen years and while I am not a chemist, I have visited some of the best laboratories in the country and have talked to chief chemists at each one. So, let's deal with facts. The basic product market may be divided as follows:

Products sold over the counter at malls, drug stores or elsewhere.

Products sold via the media in its various forms. TV, radio, direct mail, print etc.

Products sold by multi-level marketing companies

Products sold by dermatologists, plastic surgeons and estheticians.

The major cost of Item #1 is celebrity endorsements, marketing, public relations and packaging.

The same comments apply to item #2

By far the major cost of item#3 is multi-layered commissions paid to sales people (they really do have fancy titles these days!). It is a well known fact that 90% are worker bees and the other 10% are the queen bees. Note that every MLM has a story around one ingredient and , generally speaking, it is not that ingredient that is effective, other than being an anti-oxidant or other non-exotic ingredient. (There is nothing wrong with anti-oxidants!)

Item#4 are products, where the cost is in the product.

The first three, market products contain fillers, have low percentages of active ingredients and other unnecessary ingredients. I have seen products that sell for \$120 where I know the cost is below \$5, and that is being generous. I have seen a well known product where the preservative is half way up the ingredient list and preservative is always less than 1% so anything below it is pretty well ineffective. In this particular case, the **last** ingredient was a peptide (a very good one). It's percentage is so small as to be ineffective and it is called "window dressing" in the trade. It can now be called anti-aging!

Products sold by dermatologists, plastic surgeons and estheticians (most dermatologists rely on an esthetician to choose which products to sell) contain 100% active or necessary ingredients - no fillers, no nonsense, no celebrity endorsements, no marketing costs etc. The cost is in the ingredients, pure and simple. When you consider that peptides (many good ones come from Europe) cost between \$4000 and \$5000 per gallon, let alone the cost of other ingredients, you begin to understand. Ingredients are, generally speaking, formulated at their optimum percentage in order to achieve the best results.

I have made this comment before and I will make it again. One of the biggest scams perpetrated upon women are skin care products masquerading as anti-aging elixirs of life. For the most part, they are glorified moisturizers, all of which are probably better than nothing.

John Fisher