



VALERIE KAMINOV – BIOGRAPHY

Having spent over twenty years working with a vast array of luxury, premium and niche beauty brands and fragrances, Valerie has extensive knowledge and practical experience of their supply, distribution and retail, pertinent commercial practices and consumer habits on a global and local basis.

Her expertise has been highly valued by multi-national organizations, SMEs, start-ups, privately owned companies and financial investors.

Certified in Corporate Governance from INSEAD Business School, Valerie has the remarkable ability to successfully set the company's strategic direction, often across diverse product markets and geographies, and monitor the firm's risk profile.

As a qualified Non-Executive Director who was awarded the prestigious Financial Times Post-Graduate Diploma, Valerie Kaminov is highly trained in corporate governance and is an experienced NED and Director enabling her to have an holistic understanding of boards.

She advises both as a consultant and an NED.

Valerie's experience earned her a reputation with major players in the industry who hired her to establish them globally.

Her expertise in brand evaluation, acquisition due diligence, risk assessment and commercial growth has been highly valued by Private Equity Funds, multi-national organizations and financial investors.

She is also dedicated to passing her knowledge along through a range of conferences and events.

Valerie has been a guest speaker at the non-profit organization CEW's Mentoring Services where leading executives offer insights into beauty industry issues and inspiration for professional growth.

As the International Manufacturers & Distributors Forum (IMF) Master of Ceremony, Valerie organizes one of its kind conference in Europe, key global gathering for manufacturers, brand owners and distributors to come together and discuss the challenges facing the industry and their businesses by giving the attendees unlimited networking opportunities.

COSMETICS WITHOUT PLASTIC

CALLING TIME ON PLASTIC POLLUTION

The beauty industry is a glittering, glamorous world of lotions, potions and brightly coloured bottles on bathroom shelves. Everything seems so pretty from the outside... but it has an ugly side. In 2018, *Zero Waste Week* – an annual awareness campaign – reported that more than 120 billion units of packaging were produced every year by the global beauty industry, most of which are not recyclable. In the time it takes you to cleanse your face, one truckload-worth of plastic is dumped in the ocean. The beauty industry has officially been recognized as one of the worst offenders when it comes to the overuse of plastic packaging, of which an alarming percentage is non-recyclable. This plastic packaging will end up in landfills and waterways where it will remain for centuries, causing toxicity to our oceans, rivers, lakes, beaches and lands. Most plastic items will never fully disappear they will just get smaller and smaller. They will be swallowed by animals mistaking them for food, making their way back onto our dinner plates and into our tap water. Today, we have become addicted to disposable plastics and it is having severe consequences on our environment. In total, half of all plastic produced is designed to be used only once and then thrown away. Around the globe, one million plastic water bottles are purchased every minute and 5 trillion single-use plastic bags are used every year. These worrying trends are intensifying each day. As you read through this article, plastic waste continues to clog sewers and provides breeding grounds for mosquitoes and pests, increasing the transmission of vector-borne diseases like malaria.



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So how did we even get here? In the past century, plastic production has ballooned. It's cheap, light, strong, and versatile making it no surprise that it has become so popular. But plastic consumption has heavily contributed to climate change by polluting our waters and threatening our wildlife. Since the early fifties, researchers estimate that more than 8.3 billion tons of plastic have been produced, with 60% of it having ended up in either a landfill or in the natural environment. The rate of plastic production has grown faster than that of any other material. But where does plastic come from exactly? More than 99% of the plastic we use is produced from chemicals derived from non-renewable resources including oil, coal and natural gas. By 2050, if current trends continue, the plastic industry is expected to account for 20% of the world's total oil consumption.

PLASTIC CONSUMPTION, AN UNCONTROLLABLE EXPERIMENT GONE WRONG

Plastic pollution has become one of the biggest environmental concerns. While it might seem like plastic waste is inevitable in the world we live in today, each one of us can help with tackling the plastic pollution issue by being aware of its dangers and taking steps to reduce waste. As the population grows, the amount of disposable plastic products, including beauty products, continues to increase at a worrying rate.



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Plastic is dangerous and it's found all over the planet. It contains toxic pollutants that damage the environment and contaminate our land, water, and air in the long-run. Today, 300 billion pieces of plastic waste can be found in the once-pristine Arctic and on various remote islands in the Pacific, making it the highest concentration of plastic pollution in the world. Less than a fifth of all plastic gets recycled globally. In the U.S., it's less than 10%. There are 500 times more pieces of microplastic in the sea than there are stars in our galaxy. By 2050, it is estimated that there will be more plastic than fishes in the ocean, with 99% of all the seabirds on the planet having consumed some. To sea turtles, plastic bags in the water can look like jellyfish. To seagulls, floating plastic bags on the surface of water can appear to be a tasty snack. Marine litter has harmed more than 700 marine species so far, with some predicting it to be the 6th mass extinction of life on Earth. If this doesn't make you flinch, think about the fish you eat for dinner. You have very probably already eaten some of the plastic that's been thrown in the ocean and of course, just as it is for animals, plastic finding its way into our body tissues can have harmful consequences. But that's not all. Plastic microparticles contained in synthetic clothing and beauty products are washed away into the sewage system. While a huge percentage passes through treatment plants and ends up in the sea, the rest of the particles are caught up in the sewage used to fertilize fields. After it dries out, it may get picked up by the wind and blown about, polluting the air we breathe.

THE BEAUTY INDUSTRY IS DROWNING THE EARTH IN PLASTIC

The beauty industry has officially been recognized as one of the worst offenders when it comes to the overuse of plastic packaging, a high ratio of which is non-recyclable. The industry also utilises plastic ingredients in a wide variety of products. The plastic materials we are referring to include synthetic, non-degradable, water insoluble solid materials made up of polymers mixed with additives to give materials the desired properties and functionalities. But many of these plastic particles found in beauty products – including thermoplastics, silicones and polymers – are so small they are invisible to the naked eye. These materials have various functions such as film formation, viscosity regulation, skin conditioning and emulsion stabilizing to name just a few and can be found in a wide range of beauty products including shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste, wrinkle creams, moisturizers, shaving cream, sunscreen, facial masks, makeup and even children's bubble bath.

THE START OF GOVERNMENT POSITIVE ACTION

The world is slowly waking up to the problem with governments starting to act, from running public awareness campaigns, to offering incentives for recycling and from introducing levies to banning certain products outright. In the last few years, national and local governments around the globe have started adopting policies to reduce the use of disposable plastic; and the number continues to grow.



The world is slowly waking up to the problem with governments starting to act

In the United Kingdom, shifts have been noticeable since 2015. The government has pledged to make sure that recyclable plastic is actually recycled and to build the necessary infrastructure that is needed. Plastic bags in supermarkets now cost 5p and advertisements discouraging the use of single-use plastic bottles have become common. More recently, it has banned microbeads (summer 2018). But it is important to highlight that many of the synthetic polymers found in cosmetic formulations do not fulfil the criteria for microbeads and microplastic. The WWF (*World Wide Fund for Nature*) has been welcoming the governmental pledges but keeps emphasizing on the fact that big companies producing the plastic waste in the first place should be taking responsibility for all the toxic material choking our oceans and killing our wildlife. *Greenpeace* has pointed out how many of the leading consumer brands involved in the beauty industry have no plans of reducing their overall plastic output in the near future. While the industry is slowly responding to consumers' concerns about the impact of plastic waste, the individual commitments being made by the companies to date just don't go far enough. The problem is that leading beauty brands have already produced more plastic waste than our recycling systems can cope with, with the overflow is being dumped in southeast Asia or burnt in incinerators.



Together, they launched the Clean to Skin, Clean to Planet campaign to raise awareness on the importance of preserving access to clean waters and keeping beaches plastic-free.

Remember, just because something is recyclable doesn't mean it will be recycled. But it's not only the plastic particles that are harming the environment. Harmful skincare ingredients include BHA and BHT, two popular toxic preservatives often found in moisturizers and makeup that tend to bio-accumulate and kill aquatic organisms. Another toxic chemical is the oxybenzone, which is often found in sunscreen and contributes to the destruction of coral reefs. With profits, often being the core focus of many global beauty brands, only relatively minor changes in the way companies are tackling sustainability and actively finding alternatives to packaging materials have seen daylight. Positive action has just started but the truth is, we all need to take part in it and do more. On June 5th, the world celebrates the World Environment Day, with the United Nations calling on people around the globe to take concrete actions to beat plastic pollution.

BEAUTY BRANDS ARE LEADING THE WAY

Multinational corporations have promised changes but consumers are still being exposed to the health risks caused by the microplastics present in beauty products. All large multinationals in the industry still add these microplastics – pieces of plastic smaller than 5 millimetres in size to their cosmetics.

The *United Nations Environmental Program* has revealed that there are 67 different types of microplastics used in cosmetics, making it almost impossible for consumers to buy plastic-free products from big groups. Consumers therefore take part – unwittingly – in the growing *plastic soup* in our oceans; and because of their extremely small size, these microplastics are not filtered out of our waste water, causing us to increasingly be exposed to important health risks. If this wasn't enough, plastic does not decay and is often a source of toxins, particularly endocrine disruptors and plasticizers. So far, products have not been designed with these facts in mind. But the industry is waking up to the problem and brands are starting to act. Boots, one of the U.K.'s leading beauty shopping destinations, with over 400 brands has started carrying the *Pack Recycling Logo* along with other recycling guidance to ensure consumers start engaging with recycling plastic. In addition to this, Boots has also committed to reducing single-use plastic by welcoming the U.K. *Plastic Pact* – working towards best practices, packaging redesigns and recycling options. Other beauty brands including MAC, through its *MAC Programme* initiative, have started offering incentives to customers with recycling systems. Every time customers return six primary packaging containers; they will receive a free lipstick. Le Labo, high-end perfumer encourages customers to bring back their empty bottle to the P.O.S. for a refill and in return, gives 20% off the final price.

Hourglass and Dior have also launched their first refillable lipsticks. Such incentives seem to be a positive drive for change, with more than 25% of British consumers saying they would be more inclined to live a sustainable lifestyle if they were rewarded through incentives. But the brand that has caught our attention the most is REN Clean Skincare. The London-based skincare brand has always challenged innovation in its category. From its inception, back in 2000, REN has had at its heart the objective to deliver high-performance results-focused products which avoid any skin unfriendly and toxic ingredients. By saying no to harsh chemicals and waste since the very beginning, REN has led the way in finding new ways of improving positive impact on the world. Ahead of Earth Day 2018, the brand announced its partnership with the *Surfers Against Sewage* – an organization committed to protecting beaches and ocean from toxic waste. Together, they launched the *Clean to Skin, Clean to Planet* campaign to raise awareness on the importance of preserving access to clean waters and keeping beaches plastic-free. REN has since encouraged its customers, retailers and employees both in America and the U.K. to participate in more than 300 *Surfrider Beach Cleanups*. So far, more than 1,600 beach cleanups have been organized, welcoming about 70,000 volunteers and recording more than 27,000 plastic bottles – not including debris – intercepted and recycled.

As part of the #GivingTuesday campaign, REN also gave £5 of every order to the organizations, helping them to keep their efforts going to get cleaner beaches, oceans and spread the word. Impressive, right? But the brand didn't stop there.

It organized its own *Black Friday Cleanup*, giving back 4 days, 18 hours of its employee's time for each order taken during the Black Friday week. To show its Clean to Planet ethos goes beyond the act of helping out to clean beaches, it also partnered with *TerraCycle*, leading innovator in recycling to create a new 100% recycled bottle – 20% of which will be plastic collected by global NGO's from oceans, rivers, lakes and beaches – for its *Atlantic Kelp* and *Magnesium Body Wash* products, in homage to its sustainable ocean-sourced bio actives. The bottles will, in turn, be recyclable. To further reduce the environmental impact of these *Ocean Plastic Bottles*, their pump, which contains a metal spring, has been replaced with a metal-free pump, making it even easier to recycle.



To show its Clean to Planet ethos goes beyond the act of helping out to clean beaches, it also partnered with TerraCycle, leading innovator in recycling to create a new 100% recycled bottle – 20% of which will be plastic collected by global NGO's from oceans, rivers, lakes and beaches

This comes at a time when plastic consumption has reached a crisis state. The Great Pacific Garbage Patch is said to be 4 to 16 times larger than previously estimated and contains approximately 80 thousand tons of plastic. This toxic floating island has become a striking symbol of the urge to act to save our environment and the wildlife that inhabits it.

At the end of the year, REN also took centre stage at *Stylist Live*, where it showcased its products on sustainable stands made from upcycled materials including repurposed scaffolding and compressed wood chips. There, it was able to collect over 1,000 customer empties for recycling that were traded in for samples. Last but not the least, the brand teamed up with environmental activist Lizzie Carr to become *REN Clean to Planet Hero*. It supported her to become the first person to successfully paddleboard the Hudson River in New York. With community help, Lizzie was able to geotag over 2,000 samples of plastic waste collected and logged into Plastic Patrol, while educating guests on the environmental effects of plastic pollution and the importance of recycling. REN Clean Skincare has become one of the first prestige skincare brands to offer consumers a product in a 100% recycled bottle containing reclaimed ocean plastic.

As REN progresses towards its 2021 Zero Waste goal, additional programmes and initiatives will be announced in the near future. To get there, the brand pledged to remove all unnecessary packaging and make all packaging completely recyclable. In addition to this, it will choose recycled plastic over making new plastic for products and will let customers choose whether they would like their products housed in refillable or reusable packaging. In the not-too-distant past, beauty products did not involve any plastic packaging: perfumes, a symbol of luxury, were packaged in elaborate glass containers, soaps came in bars and hair-care products were powders or pomades packaged in small jars. During the mid-20th century, however, the beauty and personal care industry, along with many other industries, jumped on the full-speed plastics bandwagon. Plastic was revolutionary: it could be moulded in packaging that was sturdy, flexible and most of all, light, making it easier for once heavy and delicate glass containers to be transported further and more easily. Fast-forward to 2019, the beauty and personal care industry's plastic footprint has exploded. In the U.S. alone, the amount of plastic packaging has increased by over 100 times since the sixties with approximately 70% of that waste piling up in landfills.

Shampoo, lotions, deodorants, cleansers, you name it, they all come in hard plastic cases, often fully or partly unrecyclable. The excessive and pervasive use of plastic packaging is becoming too much. We have come to be dependent on it and we are drowning in it. Each year, 12 million tons of plastic will end up in the sea, with only 9% of all plastic waste being recycled. In the last year alone, more than 700 marine species have been found entangled in plastic. These are scary statistics, but if you thought only the packaging was made out of plastic, think twice: the packaging is only the visible tip of the iceberg. Scrubs, shower gels and toothpastes are just some of the products containing the biggest amounts of microbeads – solid plastic particles of less than one millimetre frequently made of polyethylene, polypropylene or polystyrene, mainly used because of their exfoliating properties. A single shower, according to the product used, could result in 100,000 plastic particles entering the ocean. More types of plastics are added to beauty products, other than the classic plastic microbeads including polyethylene, polypropylene or nylon. These microplastics, once released into the environment, not only persist for centuries but also cause particle toxicity in diverse biological systems. Only recently have governments started to take a stand against plastic pollution. Many large beauty companies have also started to respond to changing consumer behaviours by making commitments to phase out plastic particles by 2020. Interesting alternatives have begun to appear with the invention of biodegradable and bio-sourced plastics, but efforts and results remain to be proven. Some companies – including REN Skincare, Neal's Yard Remedies and Aveda – are trying to pare down their plastic footprint by reconsidering their products, packaging and supply chains. In the coming years, the industry will undertake substantial efforts to go forward with proactive and voluntary initiatives. Refills are available for washing up liquid and fabric conditioner, why not shampoo, conditioner and cleansers? Through research, investment and reformulation great progress will be made. The results achieved so far, through lengthy, complex and costly processes have demonstrated outstanding progress towards the industry's objective of removing all plastic particles by 2020.