

WUTTKE GROUP

Evolving International Standards for Authentic Green Skin Care

By Mark Wuttke, Principal, Wuttke Group www.wuttkegroup.com

It's official. Green is mainstream.

Over the past decade, the increased demand for natural and organic skin care products resulted in more green companies and more green products. The good news is that consumers have more choices than ever before. But while some of these companies and products are authentically green, others are merely semi-green, or just barely green. Yet many of them claim the same benefits and quality. How can this be?

The short answer is it can't. So how do consumers make the right choices, and separate the authentically green companies and products from the mimicry and marketing spin that comes with expanding markets?

Certification: Is it What it Says it Is?

Certification provides a common language to the industry and consumers, ensuring we agree upon and honestly communicate minimum standards and requirements for the products we use. Not all certifications are made equal, and having a basic understanding of the common ones goes a long way to knowing what you're getting.

Safety and Toxicology: Natural does not mean Safe!

Products that we physically come into contact with or ingest have both short and long-term effects on our well-being. There are benefits and risks to any product whether it is natural or chemical-based. I'll break down the main things to look for and stay away from, and explain some of the trade-offs between health risks, environmental risks, and costs.

Evidence Based: Does it Work?

How do conventional and natural products work, and what are the active ingredients that yield the results claimed on the bottle? Evidence based clinical trials provide the benchmark by which the effectiveness of products are measured. While conventional products have utilized clinical tests as the basis for their claims for decades, organic and natural products are now gaining enough consumer support to justify the investment into clinical results to prove their efficacy.

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Social Responsibility: Green at whose expense?

How are products created and what are the human eco-systems that support the production of them? Companies are in the business of making money, but the organic movement has raised the bar for the way companies treat their partners. From the farmers who cultivate the ingredients, to the packages that deliver them, every choice a company makes can have as much impact on whether consumers choose to use their product as the product itself.

Sustainable: Personal vs. Planetary Beauty!

Companies also need to consider how to minimize their impact on the environmental resources from which they harvest their products. For decades chemical and petroleum-based methods were utilized to meet continuing demand. What are the ways in which companies can build a regenerative process to ensure that the products we create are not only safe, effective and responsible, but in the long-run sustainable?

Mark Wuttke heads the Wuttke Group, LLC, a world-class business development team with a focus on sustainable luxury, spa, boutique retail, organic luxury and the emerging category of eco-chic. Mark is an editorial advisory board member of Organic Spa Magazine, and works closely with LOHAS, Green Spa Network, and Natural Beauty Summit in America & Europe.
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