

Reimagining personal care may ease plastic pollution crisis

Rethinking the way personal care products are presented could reduce the amount of plastic waste associated with the industry, according to Sagentia, a Science Group company.

This is one of the plastic reduction initiatives recommended by the science and technology specialist. It also emphasises the need to fully understand the important multifunctional role plastic can play. Without a deeply-rooted and integrated approach, Sagentia cautions that gaps in the ability to replace, reduce or reengineer plastic packaging will remain unclosed. Consequently, plastic reduction schemes will fail to properly address the issue.

In a move to help the industry tackle these problems, scientists and engineers at Sagentia have produced a white paper [‘Breaking up with plastic’](#). Available for download free of charge, it outlines a three-phase technical framework to facilitate the reduction of plastic waste linked to items such as haircare products, contact lenses and disposable razors.

Simon Norman, one of the paper’s authors and applied science consultant at Sagentia, says that in some cases it will be necessary to change the way products are presented, prepared or used.

“Much of the time, development in areas such as haircare or skincare is considered separately to the end-product packaging,” he explains. “But with such a siloed approach there is less opportunity to get to the crux of the issue. Different departments and specialists need to work together to reduce single-use plastic. We need to start with the end goal – whether that’s clean, shiny hair or luminescent skin – and put preconceived notions about how we achieve that to one side.

“Addressing this issue requires consumer insight and understanding of the manufacturing and distribution stream, combined with scientific knowledge of the products themselves and properties of various packaging materials. And crucially, the industry needs to find ways to cut plastic waste without compromising important factors such as product quality and consumer satisfaction.”

Breaking up with plastic, Technical steps to rethink, replace and reduce plastic packaging is available at <https://www.sagentia.com/insight/breaking-up-with-plastic/>

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About Sagentia

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Sagentia employs over 150 scientists, engineers and market experts and is a Science Group company. Science Group provides independent advisory and leading-edge product development services focused on science and technology initiatives. It has 14 European and North American offices, two UK-based dedicated R&D innovation centres and more than 400 employees. Other Science Group companies include OTM Consulting, Oakland Innovation, Leatherhead Food Research & TSG Consulting.

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