

Kenra Goes Platinum

LOS ANGELES — Blondes do have more fun.

Last year Kenra, the Indianapolis-based maker of hair care products, doubled sales to \$80 million, all because of Kenra Platinum, an upscale hair care collection that continues to add heft to the company's bottom line.

While the line doesn't cater exclusively to blondes, its "platinum" branding has garnered many A-Listers, and was even included in one of the pre-Oscar baskets that was making the rounds among celebrities at the awards show.

"We wanted to create something unique and fun with an upscale, high-end look that was still easy and simple to use," said Patrick Ludwig, Kenra's vice-president.

Taking its cues from prestige skin care and fragrance brands, the company a year ago unveiled Kenra Platinum with five styling products, among them a Freezing Gel and a Texturizing Taffy.

According to Ludwig, the products are designed for everything from maximum hold to dealing with a light case of the frizzies. The Freezing Gel, for example, almost "locks" the hair in place, while the Taffy sculpts and helps to separate tangled hair.

Ludwig said it isn't just the packaging that makes the collection distinctive: Kenra, which is privately held, makes all its own formulations.

In January of this year, a line of six sulfate-free shampoos and conditioners was added, designed specifically for color-treated hair. Packaging for the shampoos and conditioners are in vivid colors of red, purple and yellow. And, this fall, there are plans to introduce a new shine spray, as well as a root volumizing product. In total, there are 11 sku's in Kenra Platinum. The products, combined with sales of additional items slated for later this year, are expected to boost overall business by at least 30 percent for 2005.

Platinum

packaged in shiny, reflective to make a statement on ed. At the Abby awards — best of the professional ly in Los Angeles, Kenra for in-salon display.

ances the company's core tioners and treatment 1929 and is now called aged in silver-brushed

Kenra Platinum items.



containers. The entire Kenra collection, which consists of 20 products, is currently stocked by 10,000 salons nationwide.

Ludwig described sales of Platinum as "phenomenal," adding that sales of the new products were about five times what they had projected. Retail prices for the Platinum line are in the \$15 to \$17 range.

"We have used a lot of new high-tech resins and silicones. We're one of the few remaining privately run and privately held companies in the professional beauty industry that still make and formulate our own products."

— Kavita Daswani

