

Duty Free Americas scores a 3-peat at 10th Annual Golf event, raising a combined \$1 million with partners for Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital



The Falic Family bestows a ceremonial check for \$500,000 to the representative of the Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital at the DFA Golf Tournament Dinner on Feb. 8.

Duty Free Americas (DFA) scored another extraordinary success at its 10th annual DFA Charity Golf Tournament, held on February 6 in Miami. The highly anticipated, sold-out event united a record-breaking 400 friends, colleagues, and suppliers from the global travel retail industry, raising \$500,000 in support of Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital (JDCH), which was matched dollar-for-dollar by donors from the hospital—for a total of one million.

This is the third year in a row that DFA partnered with institutions and raised a combined one million dollars for the designated charity. In 2023 and 2024, DFA partnered with Miami's hometown football team through its Dolphins Challenge Cancer (DCC) organization, to raise a combined one million for the Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center. This year's designated charity, Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital, is a renowned leader in pediatric care located in Hollywood, Florida, where DFA's world headquarters is located.

Jerome Falic, CEO of DFA and Principal of the Falic Family Foundation, expressed his gratitude, stating: "It is truly inspiring to witness the global travel retail community come together year after year in support of such an important cause. This 10th annual milestone event underscores our shared commitment to making a meaningful impact to communities worldwide."

"The funds raised will directly contribute to expanding life-saving pediatric care at Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital, ensuring children receive the highest standard of treatment. My family, the Falic Family Foundation, and the entire travel retail community are honored to contribute to the effort in helping to raise a total of \$1 million, including matching funds, and we remain steadfast in our commitment to supporting young patients and their families."

Duty Free Americas extends its deepest gratitude to all participants, sponsors, and contributors for their generosity and steadfast support. The Falic family also acknowledges Jonathan Bonchick, DFA's Vice President of Spirits & Wine, for his dedication in organizing the annual DFA Golf event, which has become a key fixture in the global travel retail industry's efforts to support charitable causes each year.

"Between today's difficult business environment and consolidations, and with some suppliers being more cautious than in the past, it was more challenging to raise money than in the past," Bonchick tells TMI. "But through the great working relationship that DFA has with its suppliers, we were able to work together to raise the most possible for the given charity."

"This year's event ran very smoothly – we had beautiful weather – and we will continually strive to improve even more for next year," he concluded.

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The tournament featured an 18-hole scramble competition, alongside a tennis tournament and a relaxing spa day. The event culminated in an evening reception with cocktails, dinner, a silent auction, and a raffle, all contributing to the remarkable fundraising total.

Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital (JDCH) is a leader in pediatric care, with 216 beds and over 375,000 patient encounters annually. It is the only Level I pediatric trauma center in South Broward County and is home to one of Florida's two pediatric heart transplant programs, as well as Broward County's only pediatric kidney transplant program.

Additionally, JDCH's orthopedic program ranks number one in Florida and among the top 50 nationwide. The hospital has also provided over 25,000 families with free accommodation at Conine Clubhouse, while children are being treated at JDCH.

In 2024, JDCH achieved Magnet recognition for nursing excellence, further solidifying its reputation as a leading hospital in pediatric healthcare.

HKG Duty Free secures 8-year DF contract at Austin-Bergstrom International Airport



HKG Duty Free has been awarded an exclusive eight-year duty free retail contract at Austin-Bergstrom International Airport (AUS) in Texas. This landmark agreement will allow HKG Duty Free to introduce its world-class shopping experience to travelers at one of the fastest-growing airports in the United States, says the company.

HKG Duty Free will offer a selection of core product categories, including perfume & cosmetics, liquor & tobacco, and will add categories such as confectionery, accessories and electronics in future. HKG Duty Free says that it is committed to enhancing the passenger experience at AUS by bringing an exceptional range of international and local brands to the airport's diverse traveler demographic.

"We are excited to partner with Austin-Bergstrom International Airport and to bring our unique retail expertise to this dynamic and vibrant city," said Ross Khaledi, President of HKG Duty Free. "Our goal is to provide travelers with an unparalleled shopping experience that reflects the spirit and culture of Austin, while also offering the finest global brands."

Travel Retailer HKG has an established presence in Texas and California on the U.S. / Mexico border where it offers a curated selection of high-quality products and a superior shopping experience.

"We're excited to welcome HKG Duty Free to AUS," said John Gallo, Deputy Chief of Commercial Management for the airport.

"As our community continues to grow as an international destination, having a premier Duty Free experience is important for our travelers. We look forward to HKG Duty Free elevating the retail experience at AUS."

Austin-Bergstrom International Airport recently transitioned from a medium-sized airport to a large one, serving more than 20 million passengers a year since 2022. With a reputation for outstanding service and a focus on sustainability, it serves as Central Texas' gateway for both domestic and international flights, offering travelers a wide array of nonstop destinations, facilitating convenient travel to major business and leisure destinations nationwide.

AUS offers nonstop international flights, connecting Austin to key global cities like London, UK, Frankfurt, Germany, Montréal, Toronto, Vancouver Canada, Amsterdam, Netherlands, Panama, and several destinations in Mexico. These international routes expand Austin's global reach, supporting both business and tourism.

In response to increasing passenger traffic, AUS has embarked on its largest expansion program in history. The "Journey With AUS" program is a multi-year initiative aimed at meeting the

AUS welcomes three new concessions

In addition to the new HKG Duty Free contract, Austin-Bergstrom International Airport (AUS) announces the addition of two more new concessions to the Barbara Jordan Terminal.

Miami's famous Half Moon Empanadas, a fast-casual, minority-owned eatery opening in airports across the U.S with its handcrafted empanadas, offers authentic Latin flavors to travelers on the non-secure side of the airport.

The opening of Half Moon Empanadas also marks a significant milestone for AUS. This is the first new sit-down hot food concession on the non-secure side of the airport since COVID-19. The space was made possible through recent construction updates to improve the passenger experience and through a joint-venture partnership with AUS

current and future needs of the growing region.

The Central Texas region has experienced significant growth in recent years, with the airport's expansion reflecting the region's development. Austin is home to a diverse array of major companies, such as Apple, IBM, Oracle and Tesla. The city hosts several art, music and food festivals as well as major international events such as the Formula 1 Grand Prix of the Americas.

Founded in 1977 in Laredo, Texas, HKG Duty Free today is a multinational conglomerate, headquartered in Miami, Florida, with increasing presences in the USA and Mexico.

Under the leadership of Ross Khaledi, HKG Duty Free grew from an electronics distribution company to having numerous retail shops on the US/Mexico border, airport concessions in Mexico and now focusing on US airport Travel Retail.

The expansion of HKG Duty Free at such a prominent airport as Austin marks the beginning of a bright future, says the company.

concessionaire, Delaware North Company.

Half Moon conducted a soft launch opening in Fall 2024 and celebrated its grand opening on January 29, 2025.

Half Moon is located in between the east and west ticket counters and across TSA Checkpoint 2 West.

Austin's legendary blues club **Antone's** has opened a satellite location at AUS, giving travelers an authentic taste of the "Live Music Capital of the World" without venturing far. Antone's also celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2025.

Founded in 1975 by the late Clifford Antone, the iconic venue has served as a "home away from home" for such legends as B.B. King, Muddy Waters, Jimmy Reed, Ray Charles, and James Brown. The new venue reflects the signature look and feel of Antone's current 305 E. 5th Street location, with features like its distinctive neon sign – handcrafted by local neon legend Evan Voyles – vintage show posters, a memorabilia wall showcasing historic artifacts, and photos celebrating Austin's musical legacy.

Antone's is operated by the Delaware North Company.

"We are delighted to welcome Half Moon Empanadas, Antone's, and HKG Duty Free to Austin-Bergstrom International Airport," said Ghizlane Badawi, AUS CEO. "These new additions embody the vibrant culture, rich flavors, and iconic experiences that make Austin a one-of-a-kind destination."



The grand opening of the Miami's famous Half Moon empanadas at Austin-Bergstrom International Airport at the end of January.



TFWA announces line-up for TFWA Asia Pacific Exhibition & Conference 2025

The 2025 TFWA Asia Pacific Conference – beginning Monday, May 12, at the Marina Bay Sands Expo & Convention Centre in Singapore – will offer a conference that will explore the evolving travel retail landscape, with a firm focus on the future of the travel retail industry. It will open with a state of the industry welcome address from newly elected TFWA President **Philippe Margueritte**, who will be followed by **His Excellency Alvin Tan**, Minister of State for Trade and Industry of Singapore, and APTA President **Sunil Tuli**.

The first session, Tech with Purpose, will feature tech innovator **Charles Reed Anderson**, who will discuss how the industry can leverage cutting-edge technologies to meet the evolving expectations of today's digital-first, sustainability-conscious consumers. Following this, the Future-Ready Travel Retail session, led by visionary retail designer **Ibrahim Ibrahim**, will explore bold strategies to innovate and transform retail spaces in the dynamic Asia Pacific region.

The conference will conclude with a session called Next Generation: Leadership, in which musical conductor and leadership expert **Jason Lai** will draw parallels between conducting an orchestral performance and leading in a fast-paced business environment, offering insights on fostering collaboration and inspiring innovation.

The conference will take place on level 5 of the Marina Bay Sands Expo & Convention Centre in Singapore on May 12. It will be moderated by author, venture capitalist and former AirAsia X CEO, **Azran Osman-Rani** and TFWA Conference Director **Michele Miranda**.

Networking coffee breaks and lunch will provide ample opportunities for attendees to connect and share ideas immediately after the conference sessions.

The TFWA Asia Pacific Exhibition will open on the same day as the conference, and delegates will have access to the exhibition from 14:30.

Two workshops to take place on Tuesday, May 13th, will focus on China and India.

The **Market Watch: China** workshop, taking place 8:00-9:00, will explore how China, as one of the world's largest travel markets, is regaining momentum and how brands and retailers must rethink their approach to engaging the traveling Chinese consumer.

Tuesday afternoon, from 16:00-17:00, **Market Watch: India** will dissect the key forces shaping India's retail trajectory, from evolving consumer behavior to digital innovation and infrastructure development.

TFWA will announce more details on its social channels as the line-up of speakers is confirmed.

Visitor registration for TFWA Asia Pacific Exhibition & Conference 2025 will open in mid-February.

Changi Airport Group is the official host of this year's TFWA Asia Pacific Conference, which is also supported by local partners of the **City of Singapore** and the

Singapore Exhibition & Convention Bureau. **Avolta** will be the conference's platinum sponsor. The welcome coffee will be sponsored by **Mondelēz International**, **Lindt** will sponsor the networking coffee and **SKROSS** will provide charging stations.

Qatar Duty Free will be the TFWA Asia Pacific Lounge main partner, and snacks and refreshments are kindly offered by **Duty Free Global**, **Crafter's**, **Herita Marzotto Wine Estates**, **Wonderful Pistachios** and **Perfetti Van Melle** at the TFWA Asia Pacific Lounge.

"Asia is the location of some of the world's most dynamic economies. As passengers across the region continue to take to the skies and seas in ever greater numbers, it's paramount that we turn these travelers into shoppers."

"This conference will give attendees plenty of fresh ideas on how to do just that."

Philippe Margueritte, TFWA President

Qatar Duty Free enrolls 50 key team members at the DFWC Academy

The Duty Free World Council Academy announces that Qatar Duty Free is enrolling 50 of their key team members in the DFWC Academy's Certificate in Duty Free and Travel Retail. This initiative will make Qatar Duty Free the largest participant in the certificate program and reinforces the travel-retailer's commitment in investing in its people.

The Academy was originally formed in 2016 as a key arm of the DFWC with a mission to raise industry standards through responsible retailing online training courses designed to equip participants with core selling skills and information. There are several courses, ranging from a comprehensive certificate course to open-to-all training courses in key categories. Delivery is through a partnership with ACI World Training's best in class Online Learning Centre.

Since the creation of the Academy there have been over **7,000 students** across many levels including some key industry figures from the advisory board who provide constant feedback to course content by completing the courses themselves.

Leading retailers sending members of their teams on the courses are Avolta (formerly Dufry), 3Sixty Duty Free and Dubai Duty Free, along with Harding+ in the cruise sector. Qatar Duty Free has now become the largest course participant to date.

Sarah Branquinho, President of DFWC said: "I am delighted to welcome Thabet Musleh's team to the Certificate Course programme and know that they will also be providing us with the valuable and ongoing feedback that allows us to constantly improve content and delivery. The

Academy has made great progress in the last year with fantastic course registration numbers in 2024. It is encouraging to see that retailers like QDF, brands and agencies alike are putting some traction behind training their teams in an industry leading way."

Thabet Musleh, Chief Retail and Hospitality Officer at Qatar Airways, said:

"Our staff are the heart and soul of our business's success, and investing in them is one of our greatest priorities. At Qatar Duty Free, focusing on people and responsible retailing is crucial to our retail strategy. We are proud to select 50 of our top team members for certified courses offered by the Duty Free World Council Academy. Together, we will continue to develop our teams and elevate the industry even further."

ACI-NA launches Workforce program

Airports Council International – North America (ACI-NA) has launched its new Airport Workforce Development Accreditation to support the North American airport industry's efforts to strengthen its workforce of the future. San Francisco International Airport (SFO), Rapid City Regional Airport and Fort McMurray International Airport were among the first five airports to receive accreditation under this new program, joining at Level 1. Toronto Pearson International Airport and Denver International Airport achieved Level 3 accreditation.

The new program provides a structured, multi-level framework to help airports and their partners address workforce challenges, designed to equip airports with a strategic roadmap for workforce development by enhancing skills, elevating employee engagement, and strengthening workforce readiness across the industry.

Joint ACI World-ICAO passenger traffic report, trends, and outlook calls for recovery and cautions growth

Airports Council International (ACI) World and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) have released a joint Passenger Traffic Report, Trends, and Outlook offering insights into the evolving air transport landscape.

2024 preliminary analysis

ACI World estimates that 2024 will be the first year for global passenger volume to fully recover and surpass 2019 levels, reaching 9.5 billion passengers (104% of 2019).

In its early 2023 short-term forecast, ICAO predicted that most route groups would return to or exceed pre-pandemic levels by the end of 2023. While this was largely achieved, the overall recovery remained slightly below expectations, at 94% of 2019 levels, primarily due to underperformance in certain route groups, particularly those involving Asia and especially routes to and from China.

ICAO forecasts that global Revenue Passenger Kilometers (RPK) will reach 8.8 trillion (101% of 2019) in 2024, with most routes recovering or exceeding pre-pandemic levels.

By 2025, ICAO projects global RPK to rise to 9.4 trillion (108% of 2019), driven by the recovery of these lagging routes, further solidifying the overall market rebound.

Medium- to long-term outlook

Despite positive macroeconomic developments, such as easing inflationary pressures, the medium- to long-term outlook has become more cautious due to escalating geopolitical conflicts, persistent labor market bottlenecks, and constraints on aircraft deliveries.

While the gradual recovery of international passengers and the return to profitability for airlines signal positive momentum, travel costs remain elevated compared to.

pre-pandemic levels, and uncertainty surrounding global trade policies continues to grow

Key highlights:

In 2024, global passenger traffic is expected to surpass pre-pandemic levels, reaching 9.5 billion passengers (104% of 2019 levels). Revenue Passenger Kilometers (RPK) are expected to reach 8.8 trillion (101% of 2019 levels).

By 2030, global passenger traffic is forecast to exceed 12 billion, driven by growth in international markets, particularly in the Asia-Pacific and Middle East regions.

By 2042, global passenger traffic is projected to reach 19.5 billion, representing a twofold increase compared to 2024.

By 2050, global passenger traffic is projected to grow at

a CAGR of 3.6% to reach 244% of 2019 levels, driven by strong growth in emerging markets. RPK are expected to grow at a CAGR of 4.2%, reaching 284% of 2019 levels by 2050.

In 2023, the largest passenger markets were the United States, China, India, and Spain. By 2042, emerging markets like Indonesia and Thailand are expected to enter the top 10.

By 2052, the largest markets will include China, the United States, India, and Indonesia.

By 2052, domestic routes in China/Mongolia, North America, and Southwest Asia, along with long-haul connections between Asia, the Middle East, and Europe will dominate the top 20 global routes, reflecting the growing influence of Asia-Pacific and Middle Eastern markets in global air travel.

ACI-ICAO TREND REPORT: TOP 20 ROUTES

| Rank | 2023 | 2042 | 2052 |
|------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1 | United States | China | China |
| 2 | China | United States | United States |
| 3 | India | India | India |
| 4 | Spain | Indonesia | Indonesia |
| 5 | United Kingdom | Spain | Spain |
| 6 | Japan | Japan | Turkey |
| 7 | Turkey | Turkey | Japan |
| 8 | Brazil | United Kingdom | United Kingdom |
| 9 | Italy | Russian Federation | Thailand |
| 10 | Germany | Thailand | Vietnam |
| 11 | Mexico | Vietnam | Mexico |
| 12 | France | Mexico | Russian Federation |
| 13 | Indonesia | Brazil | Brazil |
| 14 | Russian Federation | Italy | Philippines |
| 15 | Canada | Germany | Italy |
| 16 | Australia | Korea | Korea |
| 17 | Korea | France | Australia |
| 18 | United Arab Emirates | Australia | Germany |
| 19 | Thailand | Philippines | France |
| 20 | Vietnam | United Arab Emirates | United Arab Emirates |

Paulina Porizkova returns to Estée Lauder as Global Brand Ambassador



again not despite these values, but because of them,” said Porizkova. “Unlike the first time around, this is more than a job. It’s my purpose – an opportunity to be exactly who I am, to speak only about products I genuinely love and believe in, and to show women around the world that with age comes power and possibility. This is about more than representation. It’s about being seen and celebrated.”

Porizkova will endorse skincare and makeup products that authentically align with her proaging values, while driving conversation and fostering community around the topics she is most passionate about.

“Today marks a milestone moment for the brand as we welcome Paulina back to the Estée Lauder family; this time not as a spokesmodel, but as a role model,” said Justin Boxford, Global Brand President, Estée Lauder. “Paulina’s voice, authenticity, and ability to connect with women on the deepest level is the embodiment of everything Estée Lauder stands for. She is changing the conversation around aging, and we want to be the megaphone to help amplify her message.”

Porizkova’s first campaign will debut in Spring 2025 across print, digital and in-store in support of Estée Lauder’s Revitalizing Supreme+ franchise. Porizkova joins Estée Lauder’s current roster including Ana de Armas, Bianca Brandolini, Carolyn Murphy, Grace Elizabeth, Imaan Hammam, IU, Karlie Kloss, Shu Qi and Yang Mi.

Estée Lauder has announced that Paulina Porizkova, who famously served as a spokesmodel for Estée Lauder from 1988 – 1995, will return to the brand as its newest Global Brand Ambassador. Porizkova, actor, writer, model and anti-ageism activist, has appeared in some of the brand’s most celebrated campaigns, solidifying her legacy as a beauty industry icon.

The evolution of the partnership between Estée Lauder and Porizkova marks a new kind of collaboration, with a shared mission to redefine standards of beauty. As one of the most powerful and authentic voices leading the conversation around aging, beauty and self-worth, Porizkova will use her highly influential platform to inspire and empower women around the world to see their value and celebrate their beauty at any age.

“Over the last 30 years, I have become a woman who has a voice, strong opinions and an even stronger sense of self. Estée Lauder approached me to work with them

FDA authorizes ZYN Nicotine Pouch products in the U.S.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has authorized ZYN nicotine pouches making ZYN the first and only authorized nicotine pouch in the United States.

According to Philip Morris International, the FDA’s authorization of all ZYN nicotine pouches currently marketed by Swedish Match in the U.S. is an important step to protect the public health by providing better alternatives to cigarettes and other traditional tobacco products for adults 21+.

“The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) decision to authorize the marketing of 20 ZYN products is very welcome news for PMI and will undoubtedly strengthen awareness of the product within the US region’s airport duty-free stores,” comments Beste Ermaner, PMI Duty Free Vice President.

ZYN is available in USA Duty Free and in 21 markets in the duty free channel across the globe.

Ferrero Travel Market celebrates World Nutella Day 2025



World Nutella Day – which takes place annually on February 5TH – brings together people worldwide in their love of the iconic spread.

In travel retail, the occasion is being marked by a celebratory website takeover of www.ferrerotravelmarket.com. And Ferrero Travel Market is once again calling on travelling consumers to celebrate World Nutella Day and spread the joy of Nutella by sharing their special moments on social media using #WorldNutellaDay #spreadanutellasmile.

Nutella is also inviting fans celebrating World Nutella Day to engage with a program of multi-channel activities in local markets worldwide.

The innovation that built an icon

Nutella, which celebrated its 60th anniversary last year, is a story of invention and passion. Nutella has been spreading smiles across the globe for six decades, continually evolving and innovating to find new ways to surprise and delight its fans across 170 countries.

It was this love and passion that sparked the creation of World Nutella Day in 2007. When Sara Rosso first invented the celebration, Nutella was enjoyed as a hazelnut and cocoa spread only. Now, 17 years later, fans around the world can celebrate the many ways to enjoy Nutella —as a biscuit, snack, bakery item, or even ice cream. Last year Nutella also launched a new plant-based version, extending the experience to even more fans worldwide.

Looking ahead, the company announces the upcoming launch of new products dedicated to the travel retail channel.

Ferrero Travel Market General Manager Sergio Salvagno commented: “World Nutella Day is a truly global celebration for an iconic brand, and we are thrilled to share in the excitement with our valued travel retail partners.

“We know that this beloved brand resonates deeply with travellers seeking a taste of home – or a unique souvenir – and its success in the channel highlights the potential of the food category, beyond confectionery. We look forward to spreading the joy of Nutella, and generating many more smiles, not just today, but throughout 2025 and beyond.”

Tito’s Handmade Vodka appoints Zamora Iberia in Spain, Andorra and Gibraltar

Tito’s Handmade Vodka has appointed Zamora Company Iberia as its exclusive distributor in Spain, Andorra and Gibraltar.

“Zamora Company is one of the most respected drinks companies in the world, especially in their home market of Spain,” says John McDonnell, Managing Director International at Tito’s Handmade Vodka. “With their rich history, deep commitment to the industry, and strong reputation in the market, we’re excited Tito’s Handmade Vodka has joined the Zamora Company Iberia portfolio.”

Zamora Company is a 75-year-old 100% family-owned Spanish company that has produced, marketed, and distributed world-class spirits and wines that are available in 80 countries across the globe.

Leading false eyelash brand Ardell to enter TR through Premier Global Trading

False eyelashes are a huge trend in the beauty industry and Elizabeth Taylor's Premier Global Trading is now introducing Ardell Professional lashes, the leading lash brand in the world, to the duty free/travel retail channel around the world. This partnership aims to expand Ardell's global presence, making its products more accessible to travelers and beauty enthusiasts.

TMI had the opportunity to speak with Taylor and Mickey Fenig, Vice President of International Sales at American International Industries, parent company of Ardell, during the Cosmoprof Miami Beauty show in January, about why the time is right for Ardell to enter the travel retail channel.

"False eye lashes are a huge trend right now. Ardell is the No. 1 lash brand in the world. I am confident we can build this category into an important niche within the beauty segment in travel retail. Ardell's quality and innovation have made them the global leaders for a reason," Taylor told *TMI* at the Ardell booth, one of the busiest stands at Cosmoprof.

Ardell's parent company, America International Industries, is a family owned business founded in 1970-1971 by Zvi Ryzman. Over the past 50 years it has expanded through organic growth and strategic acquisitions. Today it encompasses over 75 different individual brands that include lashes, skincare and waxes, nail care, haircare, men's grooming, and fashion solutions under the Hollywood Fashion Secrets label (fashion tapes, body cover-ups, etc.).

"American International Industries – A.I.I.—is a full scale manufacturer. We've got about 1,000 people in the facility in Los Angeles, and a total of some 850,000 square feet in production, warehouse, marketing, sales, and graphic arts," says Fenig.

"Our biggest and best known brands are our DUO lash adhesive and Ardell lashes which dominate the market. Duo became the best

known lash glue and Ardell is the best known, largest eyelash company for many years. Ardell is sold in 150 countries; it's huge, it's global, and it's synonymous with lashes. Ardell lashes are a staple in beauty retailers across the U.S. and Europe," says Fenig.

Quality and innovation

Boasting numerous patents across its diverse product lines. Ardell stands apart from its competitors due to its quality and innovation, he notes.

"We pride ourselves on the safety and the efficacy of our adhesives, as well as the quality and the natural look and feel of the fibers we use. In contrast, the market is flooded with poor-quality lashes — many sold on Amazon, sold straight from China, made with unnatural-looking plastic fibers. Also adhesives that are loaded with harsh chemicals that you don't want anywhere near your eyes," he says.

"We're also leading in innovation. Ardell has developed new systems so advanced that you cannot tell if someone is wearing false lashes. With products like our New Seamless Underlash Extensions, designed to be undetectable, lashes go under your natural lashes so there are no visible seams on the eyelids. This technology ensures a flawless, natural look, further elevating Ardell's position in the market. This is all part of our innovation," Fenig adds.

Premiumizing pricing

Ardell will focus on this innovation to help premiumize the appeal of false eyelashes for the travel retail channel.

"While the price points on Ardell are more accessible than some other beauty brands in travel retail, the quality of these lashes the quality of these lashes really puts them in a premium position," explains Taylor. In addition to the lashes themselves, PGT will be offering Ardell lash accessories such as a lash cleaning kit, application tools and DUO adhesives for multi-unit sales to increase basket



spend at POS.

"The technology really has changed significantly over the last couple of years," explains Fenig. "If you look at the Nielsen or IRI market data retail numbers, there's been a drop in the volume of units sold, but an increase in dollars sold in the category. This is because of the demand for the new technology, which is more costly. And the new lash sets are larger, so people are spending more per unit.

"But we are still offering value. The technology in our Seamless Underlash kit will last users for up to 10 days and it gives you enough product to apply your lashes five or six times. The consumer is getting that value and that technology all in one box. This has come a long way just within the last year, and has stretched the price point for a lash kit to an entirely different level," says Fenig.

PGT and Ardell are also developing a variety of display units for travel retail to optimize shopper appeal, engagement and spend. Initial plans call for two-sided floor stands featuring Ardell lashes on one side and the company's Hollywood Fashion Secrets brand on the other side, thereby maximizing a small footprint and space efficiency, while delivering strong ROIs, says Taylor.

From salon to consumer

A.I.I. got its roots in the professional channel initially, and maintains that quality standard today, stresses Fenig.

"When I started in the company,

almost 30 years ago, our business was 80% professional, 20% consumer, and now that has flipped. But the Research & Development continues to be very professional. We provide all our nail lines and lash lines to salons, and we take that technology and bring it over into the consumer side. So we bring a better product to market with more innovation than your average company.

We're really involved in the R & D of all our products, and they have to stand up to salon quality. That's very much part of who we are and what we offer," he says.

Why travel retail?

"The time is perfect to introduce Ardell in DF/TR," says Taylor.

First, Ardell is offering amazing new innovations and technologies (I.e.: New UnderLashes and long-wear solutions). Second, false eyelashes are becoming a daily beauty essential, much like mascara has been for decades. Additionally, DIY false eyelashes are embraced with no boundaries— young and old, from everyday users to professionals, special occasion shoppers, and travelers seeking convenience and long-lasting beauty solutions, making Ardell's travel retail offerings especially appealing.

"This business is exciting! The category is exploding with new growth and technologies! And most important, Ardell is at the forefront. It is a brand name known around the world. We're bringing a brand to Duty Free that's already established, has a history and credibility. And, as an added plus, PGT will offer products in Duty Free/Travel Retail before they hit retail in domestic markets," concludes Taylor.

PGT will be attending the 2025 Summit of the Americas to discuss opportunities for Ardell lashes in duty free and travel retail. To learn more, contact Taylor at LizT@PremierGlobalTrading.com