

## Robin McGraw Launching Skin-Care

By RACHEL BROWN



Products from Robin McGraw Revelation.

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Robin McGraw, best known as the wife of television talk show host Phil McGraw, is putting herself first by starting a new lifestyle brand that encourages other women to do the same.

Robin McGraw Revelation launches on HSN in April and shortly thereafter in infomercials with five skin-care products priced from \$19.95 to \$44.95: Absolute Glow Purifying Facial Cleanser, Total Renewal Micro Polishing Scrub, Vital Hydration Serum Infused Moisturizing Treatment, Jewel Drops Anti-Aging Serum Capsules and Awaken Youth Regenerating Overnight Treatment. The brand is expected to generate in excess of \$20 million in first-year sales, and profits from select products will support McGraw's domestic-violence prevention and education foundation, When Georgia Smiled.

In an interview last week in Los Angeles at the Paramount Pictures offices of "The Doctors," a daytime program produced by Robin and Phil McGraw's son Jay McGraw and Phil McGraw, Robin McGraw traced the origins of Robin McGraw Revelation to the death of her mother, Georgia, almost 30 years ago. During an otherwise-pleasant phone conversation about pumpkin pie and the McGraws' then-new house, Georgia mentioned she was feeling a bit funny and, before McGraw could find out much more about what was ailing Georgia, undiagnosed heart disease had taken her mother's life.

McGraw recounted, "I can remember standing there with Phillip [McGraw] and saying, 'How can this be? She's never been sick a day in her life. She's only 58 years old. She's never been to the doctor. Then, it hit me. I had a revelation. I saw the big picture of my mother's life. She never took care of herself. I wanted to be the kind of mother-in-law that she was, the grandmother, the mother, the woman, but I did make a decision that day that I would not perpetuate her legacy of self-neglect. I am going to take care of myself.'"



Robin McGraw

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For McGraw, taking care of herself means making sure she feels good inside and out. As a makeup wearer devoted to skin maintenance, skin care seemed like a natural initial step on the way to building a bigger brand. "Skin care is very important to me, and it always has been," said McGraw. Still, she needed a little nudge from her husband to get into skin care. She said, "His demographic [on 'Dr. Phil'] is all women, and the producers are always getting letters saying, 'I love Dr. Phil, but I'd really like to ask Robin a question, What's her secret?' He was like, 'You know, they love you and they want to know this. You should do a skin-care line.' I went, 'You're right. I should. I want to do that.' He lit the fire."

After she decided to do skin care, McGraw dove into researching product ingredients and scouring the universe of skin-care technologies with the help of beauty-product development and marketing firm HatchBeauty LLC. That resulted in McGraw determining that Flora-Cell Complex, which combines Swiss Alpine Edelweiss Extract with skin-compatible liposomes, was ideal for her brand's skin-care products. "I wanted something that no one else had. That was just very important to me because I didn't want women to go, 'Oh, this is just like everything else,'" she said.

Further explaining the Flora-Cell Complex, Elizabeth Harris, director of product development at HatchBeauty, said, "Beauty and rareness have made the Edelweiss flower a symbol for pure and balanced nature, but the elegant alpine plant also has surprising inner strength. Growing in high altitudes and exposed to UV radiation and extreme climate conditions, the seemingly delicate flower has become an expert in self-protection. It's this very rare resilience that is the heart of its powerful protection. When we were looking at this, I brought this to Robin and thought, 'It's her.' It's exactly who she is. She has resilience. She's tiny and beautiful, but has a self-protection to her."

In addition to selling Robin McGraw Revelation on HSN, infomercials and the brand's Web site robinmcgrawrevelation.com, McGraw will discuss the brand on "Dr. Phil." McGraw is a constant presence on the show and takes her husband's hand at the end of each episode, a gesture of affection that came about by accident at the show's premiere taping when she was in the audience. McGraw said, "They had not decided how he would end the show, so he just said, 'Well, thank you, that was my first show.' I clapped, and he came over to me and said, 'What'd you think?' and I said, 'You did great!' He said, 'Well, come over with me and let's walk and talk.' So, we just walked off. We didn't know cameras were still rolling, and his whole control room was all women and so they loved it."

David Stern, president and chief operating officer of Robin McGraw Revelation, emphasized that the connection McGraw has with women through "Dr. Phil" will enable her to overcome credibility issues that known personalities tend to have when they break into beauty. "Robin has an incredible base of people that are waiting for something like this. We have the advantage of being in front of four million people everyday that we can communicate with and that is a tough thing for most brands, developing that awareness. This is not a typical celebrity brand," he said. HSN clearly agrees. "HSN believes Robin's sincerity and relatable presence will really resonate with our customer and so we wanted to be the exclusive partner for the launch of Revelation," said Erica Evans, vice president of merchandising for HSN's beauty division.

Robin McGraw Revelation was developed with the demographics of "Dr. Phil" in mind, which happen to closely mirror HSN's demographics. The brand is targeting women 35 years old and above. "It's designed for women who are busy, who want to derive pleasure from their skin-care regimens and have products that they love using, but they also demand speed and performance," said Stern. Following skin care, Robin McGraw could enter categories such as makeup, nutrition, fitness and home. Stern said, "The brand is really a comprehensive lifestyle brand, so there are other areas that Robin is passionate about that tie into the overall philosophy of taking care of yourself."

Although she believes the Robin McGraw Revelation skin-care range will be a hit with her fans, McGraw underscored the definition of success for the brand can't be boiled down to dollars and cents. "I will know that the skin-care line has been a success when I really believe in my heart that I have reached all the women out there and convinced them that it is not selfish to take care of yourself," she said. "It is not selfish to put yourself first because, really, if you cannot take care of yourself, how can you take care of those you love?"