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COSSMA

COSMETICS, TRENDS, TECHNOLOGY

DYNAMIC

Sustainable ingredients
with extra benefits

DELICATE

Packaging for sensitive
products

COLOR TRENDS

Where brilliant color
meets innovation

QUALITY UNDER PRESSURE

The quality seal “Made in Germany” enjoys a high level of trust abroad, while it is sometimes less recognized at home. Yet, this label represents much more than just an indication of origin: Strict legal requirements, high ethical standards, and deep expertise characterize German-made cosmetics.



At the same time, challenges arise – from global competitive pressures to regulatory hurdles. A look behind the scenes reveals how complex yet powerful Germany’s role in cosmetic production truly is. The term “Made in Germany” in the cosmetics sector primarily stands for transparency, safety, and trust. Products

manufactured in Germany are subject to the EU Cosmetics Regulation, one of the strictest legal frameworks worldwide. These rules ensure that all ingredients are safe for human health, cruelty-free, and properly declared. In combination with additional standards such as GMP (Good Manufacturing Practice) or DIN EN ISO 9001, they create

a high level of consumer protection and product quality. But “Made in Germany” means more: It also includes ethically and qualitatively secure supply chains, meticulous documentation, safety assessments, and if necessary the full traceability of every batch.

CHALLENGE 1: GLOBAL COMPETITION AND LACK OF ENFORCEMENT

A central issue for German cosmetics manufacturers is unfair competition in the global market – particularly when compared to suppliers from the U.S. or China. While European producers are subject to strict regulations and extensive documentation requirements, products from non-EU countries often enter the German market via online retail without undergoing comparable scrutiny.

In theory, the same rules apply to all products sold in Europe. In practice, however, effective enforcement mechanisms are lacking. As a result, cosmetics containing ingredients banned in the EU – such as certain aluminum compounds or oversized pigment particles – can be freely distributed via platforms like Temu.

For companies producing in Germany, this creates a significant competitive disadvantage: they commit to proven quality and product safety, while imported goods don’t always meet the same standards.

CHALLENGE 2: COMPLEX AND CONSTANTLY CHANGING REGULATIONS

Another characteristic of the German and European cosmetics industry is its dense regulatory landscape. Legislative changes – such as new packaging directives or bans on specific substances – often require significant investments from manufacturers:

- New formulations must be developed, tested, and approved.
- Existing products must be reviewed, adapted, and re-registered.
- Entire batches and packaging solutions can become obsolete.

These processes not only cost money but also demand flexibility and specialized expertise. At the same time, they provide a strategic advantage: dealing with such requirements fosters deeper knowledge, particularly in specialized areas such as natural cosmetics, clean beauty, or vegan formulations.

CHALLENGE 3: RAW MATERIAL SOURCING AND SUPPLY CHAIN LAW

Although the industry increasingly values sustainability and ethical sourcing, implementation remains difficult. Most raw materials – especially pigments and exotic plant extracts – are imported. Full traceability, as required by the German Supply Chain Act, is often nearly impossible for small batches. The reality: small European companies frequently face rejection from raw material suppliers when

requesting detailed evidence of production conditions. The demand for complete transparency should therefore not be placed solely on European manufacturers but should apply globally – especially to imported goods.

STRENGTH: EXPERTISE DRIVEN BY REGULATION

Despite all challenges, companies evolve into highly specialized providers through constant engagement with EU regulations. Developing formulations that are effective, stable, cruelty-free, and legally compliant requires in-depth expertise, not only in chemistry but also in packaging, processing, and quality assurance.

Continuous adaptation to new rules fosters one of Germany’s greatest strengths: innovation born out of necessity. This results in solutions that stand for precision, responsibility, and long-term trust.

WEAKNESS: LACK OF MARKETING – AN UNDERESTIMATED FACTOR

A key disadvantage of “Made in Germany” lies not in product quality but in marketing. While American and Asian brands successfully position their products with emotional and trend-driven campaigns, the German industry – and often German policymakers – struggle to communicate their strengths. Although the quality promise of “Made in Germany” is valued internationally, the visible communication of what the label truly means – sustainability, transparency, safety, and ethical responsibility – is lacking.

CONCLUSION: QUALITY NEEDS SUPPORT

Cosmetics “Made in Germany” stand for responsible production, the highest standards, and profound expertise. But to remain competitive in the global market, more than good products are required:

- The EU and German policymakers must establish and enforce better import controls.
- The industry itself should strengthen communication and emotionally highlight the “Made in Germany” label.
- Consumers are called upon to value quality over price and to trust Europe’s strict standards.

As long as regulations are applied unevenly and international competitors face less scrutiny, “Made in Germany” risks losing not its value but its visibility. Now is the time to take pride in this quality – and to reposition it as a compelling selling point.



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