

Partner up with the next big trend: Marula

The beauty world and consumers alike are very aware of how argan oil has taken the beauty industry by storm over the past 10 years, and now with the introduction of an entire menu of oils, “oil” is now its own category. As a distributor or beauty buyer, it’s imperative to have an oil brand in your portfolio, just like a color line, wet line and professional tool brand.

With that in mind, *Beauty Industry Report* recently met with **Ian Murphy**, president of Marula Oil, the newest entry into the oil category, to understand how Marula is different and why distributors need it.

BIR: Welcome, Ian. We’ve heard about so many beauty oils. What’s the big buzz about marula oil?



Ian Murphy, president, Marula Oil

Ian Murphy (IM): Marula oil is the next generation in beauty formulas, including both hair care and skin care products. In Africa, it’s called the “miracle oil” because of its many benefits. It’s a pure and organic, sustainably harvested oil that has been clinically proven to hydrate and add shine to hair and provide superior anti-aging skin care benefits.

BIR: How is it different from argan oil?

IM: Clinical studies show that marula oil has the highest concentration of a fatty acid called Omega 9—almost double the concentration found in argan oil. That means it penetrates deeper and faster into both the skin and hair. Translated, this

means that Marula beauty products work better, because there is less residue left on the surface of the skin and hair, and more active ingredients at work. The first thing you notice when you rub a few drops of Marula on to your skin is how well it absorbs. It’s non-greasy.

BIR: What makes your marula oil special?

IM: It’s all in the quality of the oil. We have the best partners who collect the fruit off the marula trees, carefully extract the nut inside (imagine an apricot) and then after the nuts are left out to dry, they are cracked to reach the precious blond kernels inside. These kernels are hand-picked to maintain the highest quality, and then cold-pressed like olive oil.

The important thing to know is that the oil isn’t boiled to remove bacteria and contaminants like other oils. Instead, we use a proprietary process that maintains the richness of the nutrients. Imagine if you boil your vegetables too long, you get a soggy mess and the goodness is floating around in the hot water instead of in the food.

BIR: What makes Marula products perform better?

IM: When the oil arrives in Los Angeles, we formulate the most advanced beauty solutions that combine the “born-in” organic richness with the newest technology from the science world. We call this approach “Nature-Tech.”

Marula’s Hair Oil Treatments contain a proprietary ingredient called Marula ShinyWrap, which is clinically proven to repair,



The elegant Marula Skincare Collection features pure marula oil, which absorbs into the skin quickly and locks in hydration, making it a great anti-aging moisturizer. Used daily, it helps skin fight free radicals and reverse the signs of premature aging.

protect and infuse shine into the hair shaft.

In skin care, the hottest new category is

Anti-Aging Essences, and

Marula’s Skin Renewal combines marula oil with advanced hexapeptides, which improve the skin’s complexion in just 60 days or less.

Marula Shampoo formulas use the proprietary MarulaClean Sulfate-free Surfactant system, making them color-safe.

BIR: How did you get involved with Marula?

IM: Just over a year ago, I was approached by the investment company **Lucas Brand Equity** from New York, led by **Bain** expert **Jay Lucas**, who had



Marula Weightless Moisture Shampoo is infused with the oil from the precious marula nut to replenish moisture and shine, naturally.



Marula offers its silicone-free, color-safe hair treatment and styling oil in intensive and light formulas to moisturize and smooth all hair types.

recently acquired Marula. I was excited about Marula's efficacy versus other oils and the heart-warming philanthropic background story....it's like the **Tom's Shoes** of hair care, employing thousands of impoverished women in Southern Africa, helping put food on the table for their children.

In addition, Marula's formulas are doctor-recommended by leading Orange County, CA, plastic surgeon **Ashton Kaidi MD**, which brings a real credibility to the brand, as does the luxury, prestige-looking packaging that distributors need in their portfolios today, to compete with department stores, chain beauty and the big game-changer, the internet, where it is easier than ever for consumers to access luxury brands.

BIR: What is the brand's price positioning?

IM: Marula is a prestige brand. The hair-care products are priced to the consumers from \$28.00 for shampoo and conditioner to \$36.00 for treatments. The hero skin care sku, the **Pure Facial Oil**, retails for \$58.00 for the 30-ml bottle. Marula is a brand for those salon distributors that have A and B accounts and for beauty retailers that can support prestige price points.

BIR: What are your expansion plans?

IM: We are actively looking for partners in the beauty industry to distribute the brand. For salon distribution, we have been testing the brand in southern Florida, with the help of **Morlin Login** at **Affinity**, who had great success with the brand



New 5-in-1 Volumizing Spray (SRP \$29.00) features a patented dual-volume nozzle that helps create immediate volume at the roots and builds overall body and thicker-looking hair.



The Pure Marula hair-care range features luxe packaging and effective formulas, creating a prestige line with limited skus for manageable inventory control. Proprietary MarulaClean technology cleanses gently without stripping color, while formulas are free of sulfates, parabens and phthalates.

at the recent **Premiere Orlando** show. Next up, **John Philipp's Tru Beauty Concepts** is launching Marula across eight states. We have conversations planned with more distributors at **Cosmoprof North America** in Las Vegas and invite parties interested in **exclusive territories** to meet with us to learn more about how they can get in on the ground floor with the "next big thing" in beauty.

BIR: How are you creating brand awareness to support your business partners?

IM: We are using **QVC** to generate interest. In addition, today's beauty consumers are engaged with subscription boxes, so we have launched programs with **IPSY, Boxycharm** and **BirchBox**.

In the field, we support every Marula distributor with sample sizes and DSC presenter kits. We use the partnership of public relations and social media to create identity and awareness, and to that end, Marula has surrounded itself with two industry leading partners, **Creative Media Marketing** and **BeachHouse**. In the past few months, Marula products have been recognized by magazines such as **Star, Marie Claire, Dr. Oz** and **Prevention**, and has been featured on **Good Morning America**.

BIR: What have been some

of the special highlights for Marula so far?

IM: In the first 12 months, the Marula team has built a new office, hired a new team, launched into 10 countries around the world, launched three new products (**Facial Renewal Essence, Nourishing Lip Oil Treatment** and **3in1 Rejuvenating Eye Treatment**) and exhibited at beauty trade shows in Russia, Dubai and Las Vegas. (We also raised the office puppy, which was the most challenging of all.)

Find Marula in booth 51461 at Cosmoprof North America. In addition, interested buyers and distributors are invited to contact Ian Murphy, president of Marula Oil, at ian@marula.com or Andre Chiavelli, beauty distribution expert, at andrechiavelli@yahoo.com to set up an appointment. Visit marula.com.



Marula Oil supports its distributors and retail partners with beautiful deluxe sample sizes to encourage interest and trial, and markets through subscription boxes.