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Kenra Expands Platinum Line

By Kavita Daswani

LOS ANGELES — Hair care company Kenra is embracing its Platinum side.

The 50-year-old Indianapolis-based company, which rings up annual sales of approximately \$45 million, is expanding its signature Kenra Platinum line, one that is widely regarded as the premier collection in the Kenra stable. Kenra was purchased last year by Toronto-based Imperial Capital for an undisclosed amount.

“In what is a currently flat industry, sales of our Platinum products have increased at a rate of 100 percent every year for the past four years,” said Patrick Ludwig, president of Kenra Ltd. “The collection makes up 30 percent of the total sales of the company.”

Platinum was originally launched four years ago, with a core collection of five products specifically designed to maintain the lustre and shine of color-treated hair. There are now 18 stockkeeping units in the collection, pitched to those who color their hair or not. This includes two that launched last month. But Ludwig said the new additions were just the start of an ongoing effort to capitalize on the success of Platinum.

“We expect to launch another eight to 10 new Platinum products over the next 24 months,” he said. “We’re aiming for the first two to come out by the last quarter of this year, or early 2009 at the latest.”

The just-launched Platinum Working Spray and Platinum Finishing Spray are considered a big step forward for the company, based on its success with the Kenra Classic Volume Spray 25, consistently voted a favorite among stylists.

“There was a high level of expectation in the market for the sprays, and this is really our best foot forward,” said Ludwig.

“Since the launch, we’ve had very positive feedback,” said Ludwig, adding that the additions help to round out the Platinum line of sulfate-free shampoos and conditioners, as well as styling aids. Ingredients include silicones, high-grade copolymers and propellants, combined to guard against humidity and to easily wash out. The Finishing Spray offers more hold while the Working Spray is





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for those who want a brushable effect. They are scented with Sparkling Apple and Passionfruit Guava fragrances and retail for \$19.

Upcoming additions to the line will include products for conditioning, styling and smoothing.

“We really want Kenra Platinum to be a stand-alone line,” said Ludwig. “We’re aiming for around 30 products in total, across all categories.”

Ludwig said that his objective is to keep the line’s high-end image by restricting distribution through salons only; it is currently in about 3,000 salons nationwide, where it sells for between \$18 and \$25.

“It’s not mass, it’s not everywhere, and it’s not diverted,” he said. The packaging is also important; the sleek cylindrical silver containers were inspired by sophisticated skin care brands, as well as the etched glass bottles in which upscale vodka is sold.

In August, Ludwig opens distribution in Canada, where it will be in around 1,500 to 2,000 salons.