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CeraVe.com: Review and Recommendations

CeraVe is a skincare and haircare brand offering cleansers, moisturizers, and shampoos, all developed in collaboration with dermatologists and grounded in scientific research. The brand excels at behavior-based marketing by effectively leveraging social listening, AI driven tools, the regulatory focus theory, psychological heuristics, and a cohesive omnichannel experience, all of which are clearly reflected in its website, CeraVe.com.

The Consumer Journey on CeraVe.com

When first visiting CeraVe.com, users are greeted with a pop-up stating, “CeraVe has entered the Villa!”, a playful reference to the current popular television show *Love Island*. This prompt encourages users to enter their email and phone number to subscribe to promotional emails and text messages. In return, users gain access to exclusive product information, sales, and skincare tips related to items featured “in the villa this season.” This campaign exemplifies an omnichannel marketing experience, where the television and digital channels work together to create a cohesive brand interaction. According to Flaherty (2016), collaboration in an omnichannel experience involves the integration of two or more typically separate platforms to form a unified customer journey. In this case, viewers can see CeraVe products featured on *Love Island* and then seamlessly transition to the brand’s website or mobile interface to learn more and make a purchase, effectively bridging entertainment and e-commerce. In addition, this use of social listening by



CeraVe has entered the Villa!

Sign up to see which CeraVe products are featured in the villa this season.
Plus, get exclusive access to sales & expert skincare advice when you join.

Email Address

CONTINUE

By submitting this form, I confirm I am a US resident, and agree to CeraVe's [Terms of Use](#) (which includes an arbitration provision), [Marketing Disclosure](#), and I have read and acknowledge CeraVe's [Privacy Policy](#) and [Notice of Financial Incentives](#).

collaborating with a current, popular TV show creates a sense of excitement among consumers, increasing engagement.

The pop-up also leverages the scarcity effect heuristic with the phrase “*exclusive access*.” The scarcity effect suggests that consumers are more likely to desire or purchase a product or service when they perceive it as limited or difficult to obtain (Leach, 2021, p. 184). In this instance, while the product itself is not explicitly positioned as scarce, the offer, such as access to special deals, product insights, and skincare tips, is framed as limited. The use of the word “*exclusive*” generates a sense of urgency and taps into the user’s fear of missing out (FOMO), motivating users to subscribe to secure perceived benefits before they disappear.

Overall Website Design

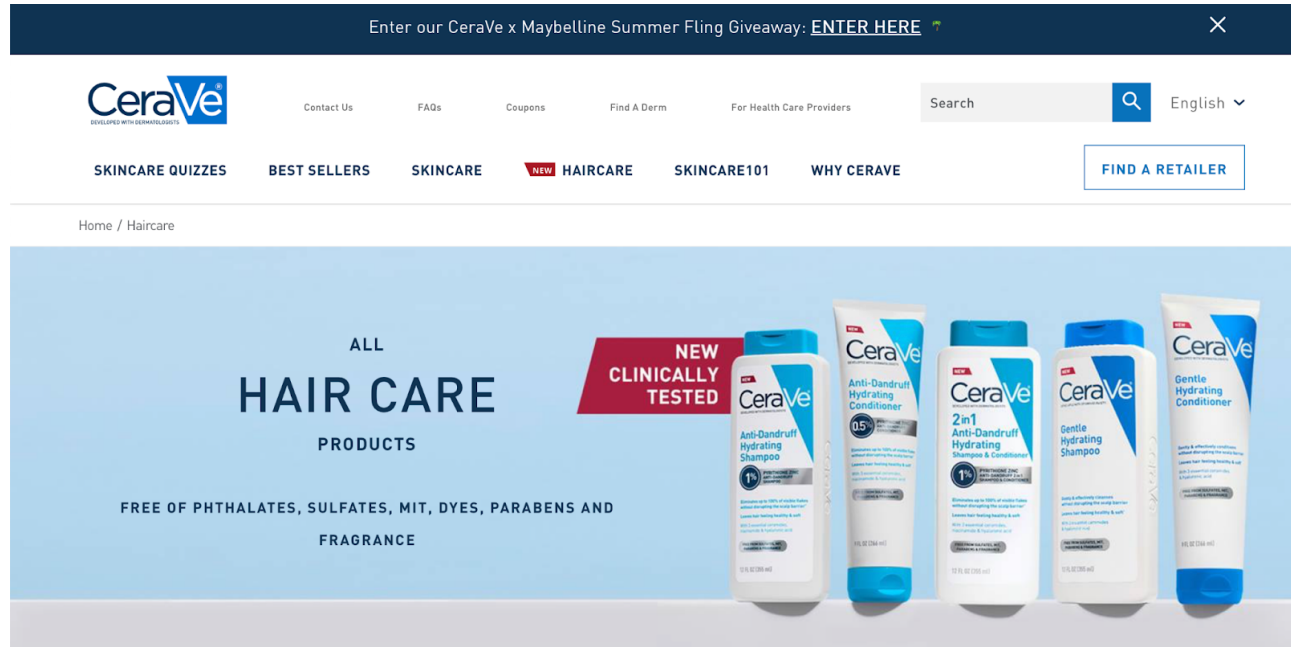
The CeraVe website employs cardinal orientation in its overall design, favoring boxes, straight lines, and grid-based layouts. This structure enhances the user experience by making content easier to scan and cognitively process. In contrast, the product packaging features slightly curved edges, which are generally more difficult for the brain to process quickly (Leach, 2021, pp. 78–79). This visual contrast naturally draws the viewer’s attention to the products themselves, increasing user interest and directing focus toward the items being sold.

The website’s color scheme prominently features shades of blue, aligning with CeraVe’s brand logo and product packaging, which often includes blue accents such as text and bottle caps. According to color psychology, blue is commonly associated with cleanliness, purity, and trustworthiness (Branding Compass, n.d.). Additionally, blue evokes imagery of water, which is fitting given that many of CeraVe’s products, such as shampoos, conditioners, and cleansers, are used in conjunction with water. This makes blue a strategic and cohesive color choice, reinforcing both the brand’s identity and the functional context in which its products are used.

The Homepage

CeraVe recently expanded its product line to include hair care items such as shampoos and conditioners, which are prominently featured on the homepage. The brand employs a blend of promotion-focused and prevention-focused marketing strategies to appeal to a wide range of consumers. A key example of prevention-focused marketing is the emphasis on the hair products being “*free of phthalates, sulfates, MIT, dyes, parabens, and fragrance*.” This messaging

appeals to consumers who take a cautious, risk-averse approach to personal care, aligning with the prevention focus described by Leach (2021, pp. 142). By highlighting what the product does

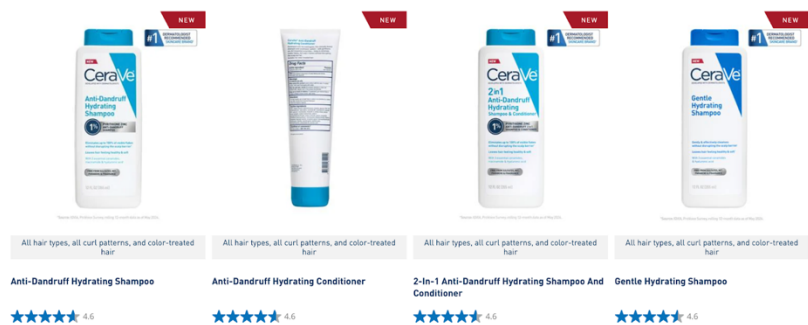


not contain, CeraVe addresses safety concerns and builds trust among users who are particularly sensitive to potentially harmful ingredients.

As users scroll down the homepage, they encounter a section featuring CeraVe's new line of hair care products. The accompanying headline reads, "Explore CeraVe hair products to find ceramide-infused shampoos and conditioners for hydrated, healthy-looking hair." This language reflects a promotion-focused marketing strategy, as it highlights a positive outcome: achieving hydrated and healthy-looking hair. According to regulatory focus theory, promotion-focused messaging appeals to consumers who are motivated by growth, aspirations, and the pursuit of ideal outcomes (Leach, 2021, p.

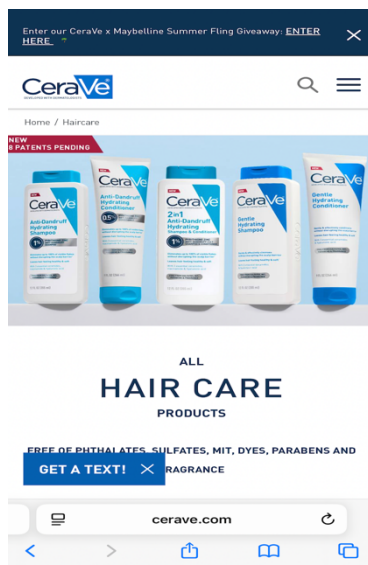
143). By emphasizing a desirable goal, CeraVe positions its hair products as tools for enhancement and self-improvement, complementing the prevention-focused elements also present on the site.

Explore CeraVe hair products to find ceramide-infused shampoos and conditioners for hydrated healthy-looking hair.



When users hover their mouse over each product on the homepage, the item spins to reveal the back label, creating an interactive and engaging experience. This dynamic feature enhances user involvement and mimics an in-store product inspection. The product line is labeled as “*anti-dandruff*,” which reflects a prevention-focused marketing approach by directly appealing to consumers who are seeking to avoid an undesirable condition: dandruff. This aligns with the behavior of risk-averse individuals who are motivated by the avoidance of negative outcomes (Leach, 2021, p. 142). Additionally, each product displays a star rating and customer reviews, which taps into the social proof heuristic. The social proof effect is the tendency for individuals to adopt behaviors or beliefs that are perceived as popular or endorsed by others (Leach, 2021, pp. 184–185). For example, a visible rating of 4.6 stars signals high user satisfaction, fostering trust and increasing the likelihood that new users will feel confident in purchasing the product based on others’ positive experiences.

At the top of the homepage, users can navigate through various sections using the menu bar, which includes links to “Skincare Quizzes,” “Best Sellers,” “Skincare,” “Hair Care,” “Skincare 101,” and “Why CeraVe.”



The mobile version of the CeraVe website translates well from desktop, offering an accessible and easy-to-navigate experience. Notably, the search and menu buttons are positioned on the right-hand side, which facilitates easier access for users navigating with their right thumb. Supporting this design choice, marketing research, including studies with Bombay Shaving Company, shows that heatmap and click pattern analyses indicate the right-hand side of mobile screens is the most frequently visited area by users (Kumra, 2021, p. 7).

Skincare Quizzes

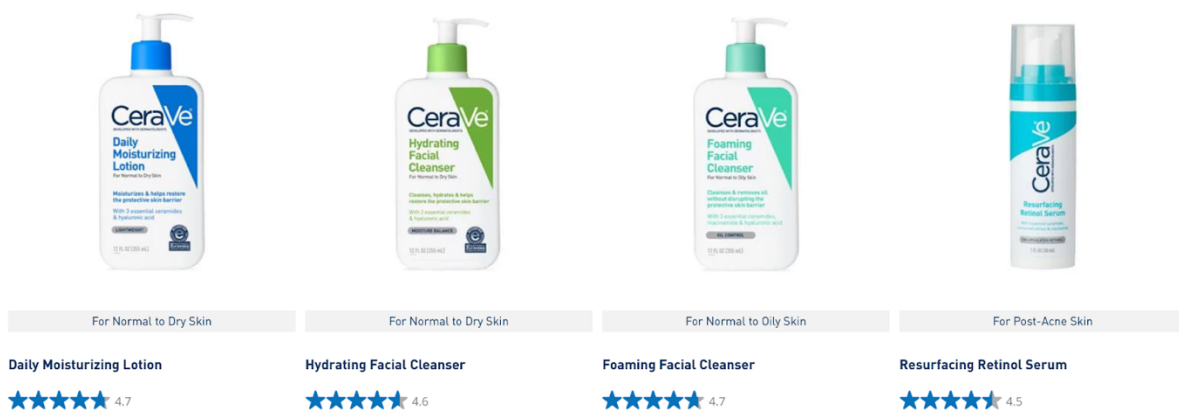
The Skincare Quizzes section offers users tailored assessments in categories such as acne care, moisturizers, cleansers, and full skincare routines. Each quiz matches users with personalized product recommendations based on their specific needs. This use of AI-powered personalization enhances the user experience by making product discovery more intuitive and

relevant. Personalization is a proven marketing strategy, shown to increase user engagement, drive revenue growth, and improve customer satisfaction by creating deeper emotional connections between the brand and consumer (Adobe Experience Cloud Team, 2024).

A similar approach was successfully employed by Bombay Shaving Company, which allowed customers to build their own shaving kits and select personalized razors (Kumra, 2021, pp. 6–7). CeraVe applies the same principle by offering users the opportunity to “build” a skincare routine through interactive input. This strategy also taps into the IKEA Effect, a cognitive bias in which consumers place higher value on products they feel personally involved in creating (Leach, 2021, p. 179), ultimately enhancing product satisfaction and perceived brand value.

The Shopping Experience: Best Sellers, Skincare, Haircare

The shopping experience on the website is organized into three main categories: “Best Sellers,” “Skincare,” and “Haircare.” Within each category, products are further segmented based on the specific skin conditions they target, such as acne, eczema, or oily skin.



All products prominently feature customer reviews below them, further leveraging the social proof effect to build trust and encourage purchases. While the website predominantly maintains a blue color scheme consistent with the brand, some products, such as the Hydrating Facial Cleanser and Foaming Facial Cleanser, incorporate green accents in their packaging. Introducing green elements into the website’s design and logo could help shoppers more easily recognize these products in stores and strengthen their association with the overall CeraVe brand.

When clicking on a product, users are presented with a detailed description. For example, the Daily Moisturizing Cream is described as a *“lightweight, oil-free moisturizer with three essential ceramides that locks in skin’s moisture and helps restore the skin’s protective barrier.”* It is also highlighted for its hydrating benefits. This description employs promotion-focused marketing by emphasizing positive outcomes for the user, such as maintaining moisture, restoring the skin’s barrier, and improving hydration, appealing to consumers’ aspirations for healthier skin.

In addition, providing detailed information about the product and its ingredients leverages the ambiguity effect or the tendency for consumers to avoid options that are unclear or have uncertain outcomes (Leach, 2021, pp. 173–174). By offering extensive details about the product’s composition and expected benefits, CeraVe reduces uncertainty, helping users feel more confident and informed in their purchasing decisions.

Each product also features a statement from a board-certified dermatologist explaining the product’s benefits and why they recommend it. This strategy leverages the social proof heuristic, as users are more likely to trust and try a product endorsed by a credible authority figure. Expert endorsements have proven effective in other marketing contexts as well. For example, Headspace features its founder, Andy Puddicombe, a former Buddhist monk, as the voice guiding its meditations, which builds trust and establishes credibility with users. Similarly, Calm employs experts to lead meditations within its app, further enhancing user confidence (Israeli et al., 2022, pp. 4–5). By incorporating expert-led advice, CeraVe fosters a sense of trust and reliability around its products and brand.

Daily Moisturizing Lotion

★★★★★ [4.7 \(9516\)](#) [Write a review](#)

CeraVe Daily Moisturizing Lotion is a lightweight, oil-free moisturizer with three essential ceramides that locks in skin’s moisture and helps restore the skin’s protective barrier.

Useable for both men and women.

- **Made For:** Normal to Dry Skin
- **Helps With:** Hydration



I recommend CeraVe Moisturizing Lotion for daily use on even the most sensitive skin types because it contains no sulfates or fragrance and helps restore and protect dry skin.

**DR. LATANYA BENJAMIN, BOARD CERTIFIED
DERMATOLOGIST**

How To Use

How To Steps

- 1 Apply liberally as often as needed, or as directed by a physician

When

Time of Day:

ANYTIME

Routine Order:

Cleanse Tone Treat Moisturize Protect

Where

Face and Body



Each product page also includes a “How to Use” section with an embedded video tutorial, which further engages users by providing clear, visual instructions, and further diminishing ambiguity around the product. This interactive element enhances the user experience, increases confidence in proper product use, and can help reduce hesitation at the point of purchase.

CeraVe’s haircare products employ both prevention-focused and promotion-focused marketing approaches in their descriptions. For instance, the Anti-Dandruff Hydrating Shampoo is described as eliminating “up to 100% of visible flakes” and helping to “reduce itching and irritation,” appealing to consumers who want to prevent these uncomfortable symptoms. The description then highlights the product’s ability to leave hair feeling “healthy and soft,” which

reflects a promotion-focused approach by emphasizing a positive and desirable outcome.

Additionally, the product is endorsed by a board-certified dermatologist, further reinforcing consumer trust through expert recommendation.



*Source: OTCRA, Proforma Survey, rolling 12-month data as of May 2024.

Help eliminate up to 100% of visible flakes and help reduce itching and irritation with CeraVe Anti-Dandruff Hydrating Shampoo.* When used with Anti-Dandruff Hydrating Conditioner, this dandruff shampoo cleanses without disrupting the scalp barrier and leaves hair feeling healthy and soft. [Developed with dermatologists](#), the [allergy-tested formula](#) is also free of phthalates, sulfates, dyes, parabens, fragrance, and MIT for both men and women.

[100% SATISFACTION GUARANTEED OR YOUR MONEY BACK ON CERAVE HAIRCARE**](#)

*with regular use as a system

**For a limited time only

- **Made For:** All Hair Types; Including: All Curl Patterns & Colored-Treated Hair
- **Helps With:** Flakes, Itching, and Irritation



CeraVe's Anti-Dandruff products stand out because they combine proven anti-dandruff ingredients with moisturizing and skin barrier-repairing ingredients like ceramides and hyaluronic acid. Most other dandruff shampoos focus solely on reducing flakes, but CeraVe goes a step further by also nurturing the scalp, ensuring

UP FOR OUR NEWSLETTER X

Skincare 101

The “Skincare 101” page features a variety of blog posts offering skincare tips and advice, such as *“Understanding and Caring for Different Types of Acne,” “7 Tips for a Better Bathtime,”* and *“What Causes Itchy Skin and How to Get Relief.”* Beyond enhancing SEO performance (Quantifi Media, 2025), these blogs help establish credibility and trust by sharing valuable knowledge that empowers users to address their skincare concerns.

This content strategy also taps into two cognitive heuristics: the reciprocity effect and the availability effect. The reciprocity effect suggests that when consumers receive something valuable from a company, they feel motivated to give back, often by making a purchase or further engaging with the brand (Leach, 2021, pp. 183–184). By providing useful solutions, CeraVe encourages users to develop loyalty and positive associations. Meanwhile, the availability effect refers to how easily something comes to mind based on prior exposure (Leach, 2021, p. 175). For example, after reading *“7 Tips for a Better Bathtime,”* parents may recall CeraVe products when bathing their children. Someone experiencing itchiness might remember the blog *“What Causes Itchy Skin and How to Get Relief”* and choose a CeraVe solution accordingly.

The brand emphasizes nurturance motivation in its marketing psychology, which is defined as the “feeling of being loved and taken care of, or taking care of others” (Leach, 2021, p. 122). For example, the website features a dedicated “Skincare for Baby” section, accompanied by imagery of a mother gently caring for her baby. This appeals to consumers’ innate desire to nurture others. Additionally, CeraVe encourages consumers to nurture themselves by promoting the importance of taking care of their own skin, fostering a sense of self-care and well-being.



SKINCARE FOR BABY

3 Nourishing Ingredients Your Baby Needs For Healthy Skin

When choosing the products to use on your little one, it's important to understand a baby...



SKINCARE FOR BABY

3 Reasons Why Your Baby's Skin May Be Dry—and How to Care For It

We expect a baby's skin to be smooth, soft to touch and pretty much perfect. So why does your...

Why CeraVe

The “Why CeraVe” page offers an in-depth explanation of the brand’s science-backed approach. Notably, the subpage “Developed with Dermatologists from the Beginning” details how CeraVe products are created in collaboration with dermatologists and rooted in scientific research. It also highlights the proprietary MultiVesicular Emulsion (MVE) Delivery Technology, which gradually releases active ingredients over an extended period for prolonged skin support. An embedded video further showcases clinical trials and testing conducted alongside dermatologists. This science- and clinical-based marketing strategy has proven effective in other campaigns as well. For example, Headspace launched Headspace Health, the first FDA-approved prescription medication app for chronic illness, leveraging scientific authority to build trust (Israeli et al., 2022, pp. 4–5). Similarly, Excedrin’s Game Over Campaign used clinical research to explore the link between video games and headaches, strengthening its credibility with consumers (MMAGlobal, n.d.). Both campaigns demonstrate how science-backed marketing can successfully establish authority and foster consumer trust.



FACTS ABOUT CERAVE

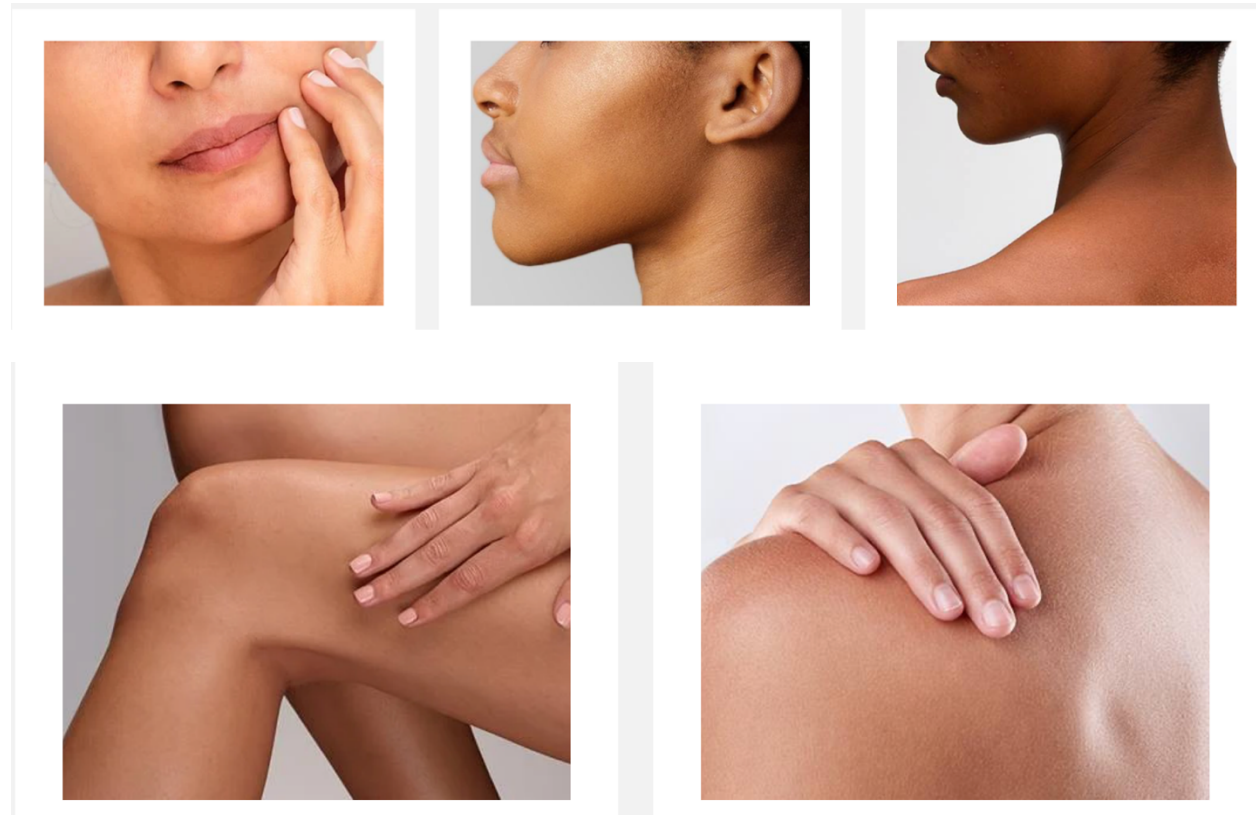
- Our products are formulated with a blend of [three essential ceramides \(ceramides 1, 3, and 6-II\)](#), fatty acids, and other lipids that are found in skin's natural barrier.
- MultiVesicular Emulsion Delivery Technology (MVE) allows many of our products to release moisturizing ingredients over the course of 24 hours
- Available at most [major retail outlets](#), CeraVe dermatologist-approved skincare products are an accessible option for those who want high-quality products without a prescription.

[TRY A FREE SAMPLE](#)

The page also includes a link to request a free sample, effectively tapping into the reciprocity effect. Offering samples is a powerful marketing tactic because when users receive something of value at no cost, they often feel a subconscious obligation to reciprocate, frequently by making a purchase or engaging further with the brand.

The Target Customer and Her Need

While CeraVe's products are designed for both men and women, the primary target audience appears to be young women aged 20 to 35, as evidenced by the predominance of young women in the site's imagery. Additionally, the section focused on baby skincare likely targets young mothers.



The User Need Statement

Stacy, a caring new mother, needs a gentle, effective, and clinically backed skincare solution that helps her care for both her own skin and her baby's, so they both feel nurtured and protected.

Stacy exhibits both optimistic nurturance, which appeals to consumers' desire for care, growth, and positive outcomes (Leach, 2021, p. 238), and cautious security, which addresses consumers' needs for safety, trust, and risk avoidance (Leach, 2021, pp. 253-254). By balancing these dual motivations, CeraVe can create messaging that resonates more deeply with its core users, fostering greater brand loyalty and driving sustained growth.

Recommendations

While CeraVe effectively incorporates motivation psychology, regulatory focus theory, and cognitive heuristics in its marketing strategy, there remains potential for refinement and enhancement. To improve the CeraVe website and overall brand experience, several key improvements can be implemented:

1. Optimize Color Psychology

A stronger use of color psychology is recommended by incorporating green hues throughout the site to complement some of their best-selling products, such as the Hydrating Facial Cleanser and Foaming Facial Cleanser. Green evokes feelings of calmness, sustainability, and stability (Webflow Team, 2025), while the combination of blue and green can inspire serenity, healing, and renewal (Figma, n.d.). This color strategy would resonate well with the target persona, Stacy, a young mother seeking gentle, calming, and effective skincare solutions.

2. Elevate the Regulatory Focus Theory

Further leveraging the regulatory focus theory would strengthen the site's messaging. While CeraVe already employs promotion- and prevention-focused language, expanding this use can better engage diverse consumer mindsets. For example, changing product descriptions from phrases like "for acne-prone skin" to more action-oriented language like "prevent acne" can increase click-through rates. Since individuals' responses to promotion or prevention messaging vary, even within the same person depending on context (Leach, 2021, Ch. 6), the site should balance both approaches. Stacy, on a good day, might respond positively to optimistic messages like "keep your skin hydrated and feeling fresh," while on a stressful day or a morning where she spent all night up with her crying baby and noticed some stress acne appear, prevention-focused language such as "protect your skin from acne" would appeal to her security motivation, which is heightened during vulnerable moments (Leach, 2021, pp. 122-123). This dual focus can deepen emotional connection and product relevance.

3. Enhance Heuristics

The site can improve its use of heuristics to influence consumer behavior. While it currently leverages social proof through reviews and dermatologist endorsements, this can be expanded by integrating influencer marketing and user-generated content. Collaborations with skincare experts and dermatologist influencers, such as Dr. Muneeb Shah or Dr. Sandra Lee (“Dr. Pimple Popper”), would reinforce the brand’s clinical credibility and appeal to niche audiences. Encouraging consumers, especially those matching Stacy’s profile (e.g., busy moms), to share testimonials or videos would also engage the in-group bias, wherein users trust recommendations from those they perceive as similar to themselves (Leach, 2021, p. 180). Additional heuristics like the scarcity effect (through limited-time offers), the halo effect (by featuring products alongside images of healthy skin), and confirmation bias can also be strategically employed. For instance, emphasizing CeraVe’s eco-friendly packaging and ethically sourced ingredients would align with Gen Z’s strong preference for sustainable brands, leveraging their preexisting beliefs to reinforce brand loyalty with confirmation bias (Shaw, n.d.).

4. Implement a Strategic Omnichannel Experience

To create a more seamless omnichannel experience, CeraVe should consider developing a dedicated mobile app. While the current website performs well on both desktop and mobile, an app could enhance engagement through features like a loyalty program, gamification, exclusive deals, and personalized push notifications. For example, if a user searches for eczema solutions online, the app could send targeted promotions for CeraVe’s hydrating lotion formulated for eczema, creating a more personalized and connected experience.

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