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## Are lipstick brands alienating older women?

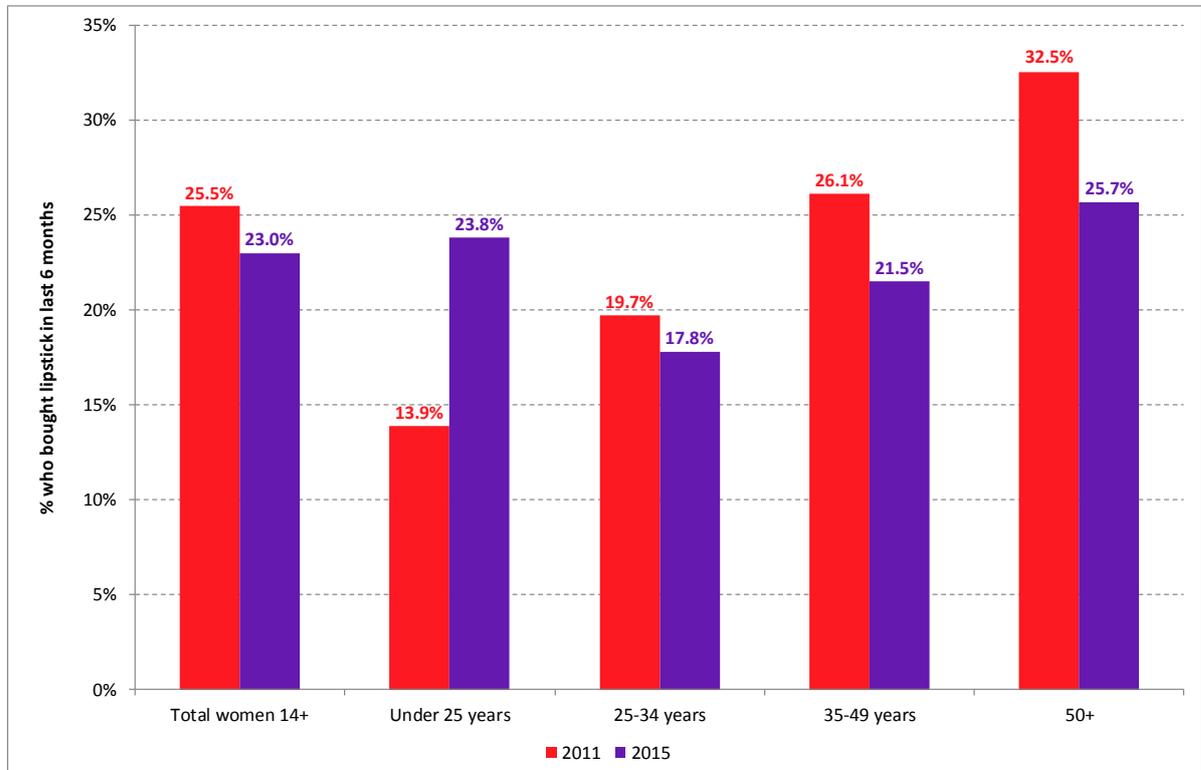
A cursory Google image search for lipstick advertisements reveals an endless sea of gorgeous young models smiling, pouting and puckering up — with one noteworthy exception, 81-year-old Sophia Loren (who has a Dolce & Gabbana lipstick named after her). Is this relentlessly youth-oriented focus alienating more mature buyers? Certainly, the latest results from Roy Morgan Research show that lipstick sales among Australian women aged 50+ have declined by 20% since 2011.

In 2011, 32.5% of women 50+ bought at least one lipstick in any given six-month period, a substantially higher proportion than women aged under 25 years (13.9%), 25-34 years (19.7%) or 35-49 (26.1%).

Fast forward to 2015, and lipstick purchasing has declined among most age groups. While Aussie women aged 50 and older remain the age group most likely to buy lipstick in an average six months, their decline (to 25.7%) has been the most substantial.

In contrast, the proportion of lipstick buyers aged under 25 has sky-rocketed by some 70% to 23.8%.

### Lipstick-buying incidence by Aussie women of different ages: 2011 vs 2015



**Source:** Roy Morgan Single Source (Australia), January-December 2011 (n=10,352) and January-December 2015 (8,791). **Base:** Australian women 14+

While the increased purchase incidence among women under-25 is good news for lipstick brands, the decline among the 50+ bracket – historically the age group most likely to buy lipstick – is less so. Of [all the cosmetic items](#) measured by Roy Morgan Research, lipstick is the only one for which women aged 50 or older lead the other age groups in purchase incidence: for most others, they come in well below average.

As well as the declining proportion of women aged 50+ buying lipstick, there have been some noteworthy changes in the brands they buy since 2011. Between 2011 and 2015, Revlon has overtaken Avon to become the most popular brand for this age group. Although still a respectable second, Avon's decline was substantial (from 25.5% of lipstick buyers aged 50+ to 18.1%). Estée Lauder and Maybelline also made headway, while Max Factor and L'Oréal saw decreased sales among this group.

**Andrew Price, General Manager – Consumer Products, Roy Morgan Research, says:**

*“Just like other make-up items, lipstick is almost exclusively marketed to a youthful audience, despite women 50+ being more likely to buy it than any other age group. While they remain the nation's most avid lipstick-buyers, their purchase incidence has slipped quite markedly -- with direct selling company Avon hardest hit.*

*“One could say that by focusing on the youth market, lipstick brands are doing the necessary groundwork to establish a lifelong relationship with these customers – and indeed lipstick sales among young women under 25 have risen dramatically since 2011. Yet our data shows that young lipstick-buyers are much more likely than those aged 50+ to be swayed by advertising and recommendations by others (make-up artists or friends/family).*

*“But why would women aged 50+ be influenced by advertising when choosing which lipstick to buy? With Dolce & Gabbana's Sophia Loren campaign being the obvious exception, older women might as well not exist in the lipstick universe.*

*“Brands wishing to leverage this age group's obvious interest in purchasing lipstick would do well to tailor their marketing accordingly – either by featuring the occasional mature model, by highlighting the qualities that these women prioritise when buying cosmetics (anti-ageing benefits, moisturising benefits and sun protection) or by gaining a better understanding of where and how this demographic likes to shop.”*

**For comments or more information about Roy Morgan Research's cosmetics and skin care data, please contact:**

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#### **Related research findings**

View our extensive range of cosmetics profiles, including the [Lipstick buyers profile](#), the [Avon Lipstick buyers profile](#) and the [Revlon lipstick buyers profile](#).

Compiled with data from Roy Morgan's Single Source survey (the largest of its kind in the world, with 50,000 respondents p.a), these ready-made profiles provide a broad understanding of the target audience, in terms of demographics, attitudes, activities and media usage in Australia.

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### About Roy Morgan Research

Roy Morgan Research is the largest independent Australian research company, with offices in each state of Australia, as well as in Indonesia, the United States and the United Kingdom. A full service research organisation specialising in omnibus and syndicated data, Roy Morgan Research has over 70 years' experience in collecting objective, independent information on consumers.

### Margin of Error

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. Margin of error gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

Sample Size	Percentage Estimate			
	40%-60%	25% or 75%	10% or 90%	5% or 95%
5,000	±1.4	±1.2	±0.8	±0.6
7,500	±1.1	±1.0	±0.7	±0.5
10,000	±1.0	±0.9	±0.6	±0.4
20,000	±0.7	±0.6	±0.4	±0.3
50,000	±0.4	±0.4	±0.3	±0.2