

Forbes

Arbonne Celebrates Forty Years And Continues To Push Its Sustainability Initiatives

I never tire of discovering brands that are new to me—even ones that have been around for a while that I've never experienced firsthand.



Arbonne COURTESY OF ARBONNE

I wasn't super familiar with beauty + wellness brand Arbonne, until a few months back when a friend of mine introduced me to a few of their [products](#) and I was pleasantly surprised by how much I liked them and their effectiveness. It was my first encounter that piqued my interest in learning more about the brand that happens to be celebrating forty years in business this month.

Arbonne, whose products are sold through a social selling company structure, was founded by Petter Mørck. “Arbonne was born out of the desire my father had to create cleaner products,” shares Stian Mørck, Brand Ambassador of Arbonne and son of the founder. “Growing up in Norwegian countryside, it was his close relationship with nature that would stay with him throughout his life.”

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It was Mørck’s experience working in the cosmetic industry and seeing the ingredients used that led to his ‘a-ha’ moment when he decided to create options that were healthier for humans and the planet. “In 1975, my dad began developing botanically based products in Switzerland, but it wasn’t until 1980 when his pioneering spirit brought him to the U.S. that Arbonne was born,” continues Mørck.



Since its beginnings forty years ago, sustainable healthy living has been at the foundation of the brand. Jean-David Schwartz, CEO of Arbonne tells me, “Before ‘clean’ was a trend, Petter believed that harmful chemicals didn’t have a place in skincare products. Today, we carry on that legacy through our portfolio of products including skincare, nutrition, and personal care products, and are committed to putting people and the planet first while leading change in the industry.”

When I ask if they consider themselves a clean beauty brand by today’s standards Carole Diarra, CMO of Arbonne responds, “We have been pioneers in the clean beauty space for 40 years and continue to innovate using plant-based ingredients grounded in science and clinical research with high standards for safety and 3rd party certifications. Our holistic approach encompasses more than clean beauty. It embraces the connection between a healthier mind, stronger body, and more beautiful skin. That is what sets us apart.”

An acquisition in 2018 by [Groupe Rocher](#) has helped further invigorate the brand’s commitment to pushing the envelope when it comes to being environmental stewards. “It was Groupe Rocher’s dedication to the planet that further challenged us to look at how we could be better stewards of not just the industry, but the planet. Under their umbrella and leadership we have accelerated our efforts in order to achieve our shared goals,” explains Fabienne Smolinski, SVP Chief People Officer of Arbonne.

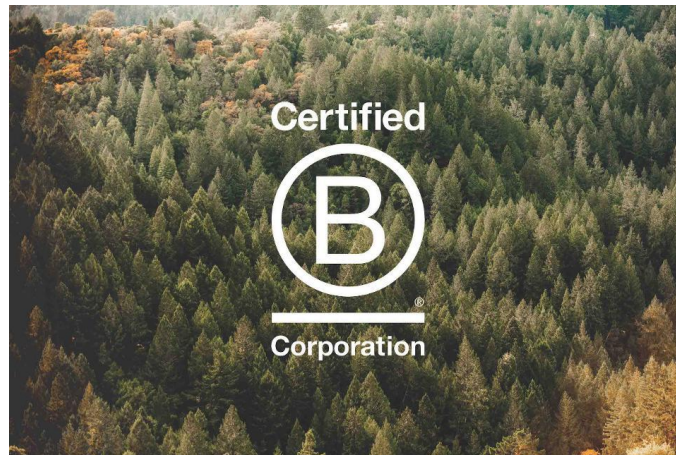




One of the changes was moving towards becoming zero waste by 2030. “This undertaking is an investment on our part and will affect the way we operate and what is delivered to our consumer—from internal waste considerations to changes in packaging. It’s a long-term goal that will take the support of our employees and Independent Consultant community and we’re grateful that they have met the challenge with enthusiasm and a commitment to make change,” continues Smolinski.

This month Arbonne announces two new initiatives. The first is a partnership with global leader [TerraCycle®](#) to launch [ArbonneCycle™](#), their new recycling program that provides a solution for the difficult to recycle parts of the brand’s packaging. The second is that, as of today, the company is B Corp certified.

Most of Arbonne’s product packaging components can be disposed of in local recycling programs. But the company wanted to improve on easy to miss items like product pumps and packaging.



“Our business model will be a key factor to the success of this program,” explains Diarra when I ask how they will ensure customers will return these product elements to continue their life cycle. “Our close partnership with our Consultants is unlike retail and will allow us to keep them informed, trained, and engaged with the program so as a group we can help the planet flourish. We hope that by making these changes as a brand that we inspire our business leaders and clients to also make change.”

Today marks Arbonne’s official coming out as a **Certified B Corporation**. “We are thrilled to announce our certification, which was a formal step on our mission to be a purpose-driven company,” Schwartz proudly tells me. “It’s an exciting step on our sustainability journey and it has already changed everything. Through our assessment to become certified, we had to review how we were doing business, and how we could do better. It is a change of mindset that will inform all our business practices moving forward—from the guiding principle of living wages to the way we select vendor partners.”

The new certification has not only changed how Arbonne operates internally but has also inspired Groupe Rocher to make changes too. “As a result of our journey, our parent-company, Groupe Rocher, has committed to working toward B Corp certifications for the rest of their brands by 2030 and we are empowering our global network of business leaders to live waste-conscious lives,” continues Schwartz.



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The company seems to be taking sustainability very seriously. Looking ahead in the upcoming three to five years Schwartz tells me, “Our aim is to have even more sustainably sourced key ingredients in our products, a 50% reduction of plastic by 2025, and to continue empowering people on their journey to sustainable healthy living.”

I like where [Arbonne](#) is headed and it will be interesting to see how all of their initiatives shake out. Big businesses don't have to be the bad guys. Making efforts to minimize waste at the manufacturing level and educating consumers on how their behaviors can impact the environment are good things. Keeping costs in check for the final product while doing so may be the challenge.

When I ask Schwartz what has made Arbonne so successful through these last forty years, he tells me, “The passion and commitment of our Independent Consultants and employees make us, and our story, unique. It's the power of our people that make our business thrive.”