

# Cosmetics billionaire, Estée Lauder, dies

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Estée Lauder, marketing guru and founder of a multibillion dollar cosmetics company, has died in New York, aged 97.

The distinguished founder of Estée Lauder Companies passed away at her home in Manhattan on April 24, 2004. Until her death, Lauder served as the Founding Chairman of the Company, an honorary position that will not be filled. She had not been active in the Company since her retirement in 1995.

The personification of the American dream, Lauder began a family cosmetics business that evolved into a beauty empire spanning six continents. Her business and creative instincts, marketing breakthroughs and years of incredibly hard work made her a legend of the beauty and fragrance industry. Hers was not merely a success story; it was an inspirational tale of achievement through dedication. "I didn't get there by wishing for it or hoping for it, but by working for it," she reminded the Company's employees during sales meetings. She was renowned for a life of elegance and beauty, and her eye for exquisite detail.

"My mother was passionate about three things: her family, the wonderful Company she founded and her mission of bringing beauty into the lives of women everywhere," said Leonard A. Lauder, Chairman of The Estée Lauder Companies. "She was an inspiration to the women she touched through her products and appearances through the years, to the many employees of The Estée Lauder Companies, and, above all, to her family, through her constant love and support. We will miss her immensely."

"My mother was not only a rare businesswoman, but also an extraordinary wife, mother and grandmother," said Ronald S. Lauder, Chairman of Clinique Laboratories, Inc. "She brought joy, unique vision and determination to all things. Her spirit lives on in all of us."

Speaking for the Company, President and Chief Executive Fred H. Langhammer said, "I had the privilege to know and work with Mrs. Lauder and witnessed, first-hand, how she was able to bring out the best in both her employees and her customers. I learned a great deal from her. To honor her legacy, we will maintain the standards of beauty and prestige she set, which remain the hallmarks of The Estée Lauder Companies."

Estée Lauder began by selling four homemade skin care products and in 1930 married Joseph H. Lauder, who became her partner in the business. They remained partners in life and business until Mr. Lauder's death in 1982. She loved to sell, and those talents led to a counter at New York City's Saks Fifth Avenue in 1948, which was soon followed by contracts at other leading department stores. In 1960, the Company began business at Harrods of London, the first of many international accounts. Today, The Estée Lauder Companies' brands are solid in over 14,000 stores in over 130 countries and territories worldwide. The Company's fiscal 2003 sales were \$5.12 billion.

Although she demonstrated her success in the skin care industry, Lauder went on to become a noted fragrance expert as well. "The lingering scent of a beautiful woman as she passes by is one of those memories that unaccountably live forever," she said. Under her direction, the Company introduced Youth Dew in 1953, and numerous other fragrances, including Private Collection in 1973, White Linen in 1978 and Beautiful in 1985. The Estée Lauder Companies now markets more than 70 fragrances.

Estée Lauder left more than a legacy of business success; she created a culture of beauty and customer service that changed the cosmetics industry forever. She taught her sales force meticulously, personally coaching them during her attendance at nearly every opening of a new Company door. Her advice on one-to-one marketing was memorable: "Telephone, telegraph, tell a woman," she often remarked. Lauder was also a passionate advocate of sampling who used

her early promotional budgets to give free gifts at counters and fashion shows. She pioneered the "gift with purchase" by giving customers free packets of other products.

Among her many contributions was the choice of Estée Lauder's signature blue, which she believed would coordinate with the décor of most bathrooms and bedrooms. In every detail, she sought to make her clients beautiful. In addition to handling the challenges of a multi-national corporation, Estée Lauder worked tirelessly to shape the image of beauty in the United States and abroad. She insisted that advertising portray beauty that was both inspirational and approachable. "Whether you are the chairperson of the board or you want to charm him, you need beauty and femininity as well as wisdom and strength," she said.

Lauder was widely acclaimed both within and outside her field. She was awarded both France's Legion of Honor and the Gold Medal of the City of Paris. She was one of the American Business Women's Association's 10 Outstanding Women in Business in the United States in 1967. Cosmetic Executive Women presented her with its Lifetime Achievement Award in 1989, and The American Society of Perfumers awarded her its first Living Legend award in 1994.

The Estée Lauder Companies Inc. is one of the world's leading manufacturers and marketers of quality skin care, makeup, fragrance and hair care products. The Company's products are sold in more than 130 countries and territories under well-recognized brand names, including Estée Lauder, Aramis, Clinique, Prescriptives, Origins, MoAOC, La Mer, Bobbi Brown, Tommy Hilfiger, Donna Karan, Aveda, Stila, Jo Malone, Bumble and bumble, kate spade beauty, Darphin Paris, Michael Kors and Rodan & Fields.

Estée Lauder is survived by her sons, Leonard A. Lauder and Ronald S. Lauder; her daughters-in-law, Evelyn H. Lauder and Jo Carole Lauder; her grandchildren, Aerin, Gary, Jane and William, and six great grandchildren.

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