



MORE THAN MERE MAKE-UP

**MIDNIGHT DIVA**

What to wear after dark

**BRING DOWN THE MOON**

Beirut gets ready to party



**HOLY NIGHT!**

DEL20037 JANE0000

## MORE THAN MERE MAKE-UP



Ever spend a few hours at the cosmetics counter trying desperately to find a foundation that's the perfect match for your skin? Sure you have. And, like for some women, that little chapter of your day might not have had a happy ending. That is, unless you stumbled across upstart FACE atelier's Ultra Foundation. While FACE atelier ([www.faceatelier.com](http://www.faceatelier.com)) has a product for just about any make-up 911, it's the foundation that is the company's wonder product and has helped hoist this newcomer right up there with the big boys and girls of the beauty industry in just two years since its launch in 2003.

"I made very good connections early on," says President and CEO Debbie Bondar of her quick success. "When I saw the door opening, I rushed through it and didn't sit back." An outsider to the beauty industry, but already a successful businesswoman, Bondar was able to

wow some beauty schools, make-up artists and celebrities with her products early on. A nod of approval can't get much better than that for a cosmetics company. In September, FACE atelier was official make-up sponsor at the Style Lounge, part of New York Fashion Week.

The difference between some make-up companies seems to be little more than the name and packaging. But Bondar came up with a few unique concepts that, along with a substantial dose of hard work, enabled her to get that door to crack open. Forgoing fancy packaging, FACE atelier is about offering high-end cosmetics for a reasonable price.

Then, she took a product that is notoriously unsatisfactory – foundation – and made it work for just about any skin tone or complexion. A silicone-based mixture, FACE atelier's foundation fills in tiny lines and pores to create a

smooth finish without creasing. It hydrates the skin but is oil-free. Also, as your skin color darkens and lightens with the change in seasons, a dab of Zero Minus or Zero Plus will adjust the foundation accordingly. There's also the Transforming Gel that can turn a powder into a paint, an eye shadow into a liner or a cake eyeliner into a brow kit.

Bondar has proven that mixing and adjusting make-up isn't just the realm of make-up artists, with professional sales accounting for only one-third of her market. "Never underestimate the intelligence of consumers," she says. Besides, 51-year-old Bondar is targeting a more sophisticated and discerning customer, rather than 20-somethings, who can put just about anything on their face and still look good. And these women tend to want something tailored specifically for them.

**Kirsten Vance**