

# Federici Brands puts the ‘Wow!’ into colored hair

**C**olor Wow, the newest offering from Federici Brands, is founded on a 25-year legacy of award-winning, problem-solving hair care innovation from CEO Gail Federici. From launching Bain de Terre, the first professional spa-inspired hair care line, to teaming with renowned British hair stylist John Frieda to create, grow and sell his eponymous John Frieda Frizz Ease and Shear Blonde retail hair care lines, Gail has achieved an unrivaled level of success by breaking rules and traditions, ignoring conventional wisdoms and creating new beauty categories.

After revolutionizing the retail hair care channel, Gail and her team have returned to their roots to shake up and rev up the professional side of the beauty business. Their first launch? Color Wow, which has taken the beauty industry by storm and captured more than 30 prestigious beauty awards.

**Beauty Industry Report** recently caught up with Gail, who’s a long-time friend, to find out about her newest offerings and how she continues to build on her company’s reputation as the “Apple of Hair Care.”

**BIR: Welcome back to the professional beauty industry, Gail. In the past 25 years, you’ve been forging a trail of beauty innovation. Please give BIR’s readers a brief overview.**

**Gail Federici (GF):** Thanks, Mike. It’s great to be back! Early in my career at Zotos, we sensed the coming spa trend, so we created Bain de Terre, the first spa-inspired line in the professional sector. Subsequently, in partnership with renowned British hair stylist and my close friend, John Frieda, my team of marketing and creative experts and I forever changed the way hair care products were marketed and merchandised by creating the first complete “prescriptive” ranges to address problems unique



*Gail Federici, power brand developer, consumer behavior expert and CEO of Federici Brands*

to frizzy and blonde hair types. The word “frizz” wasn’t on any packaging in hair care before Frizz Ease, and now, as you know, it is ubiquitous.

**BIR: What were the most important lessons you learned that you’re sharing with and applying to the pro beauty market today?**

**GF:** Our strategy is very much the same as it was in retail. We are a problem/solution company. Our mission is and always has been to find solutions to real hair problems. There are so many issues that are the unintended consequences of color processing. We started with the roots and continued to dig deeper into the gradual degradation of the color and texture. That led to surprising discoveries and, subsequently, to a totally different approach to shampoo formulations and styling formulas.

**BIR: Which brings us to your newest venture.**

**GF:** Federici Brands (Federici Brands LLC, US and Federici Brands LTD, UK) are privately-held companies known for disruptive innovation in the beauty industry. Customer-obsessed renegade thinkers, we are committed to creating the highest quality products to address real, unmet beauty needs to help consumers, upgrade professional salon services and provide unique, high performance retail offerings.

Those philosophies led us to develop Color Wow, a brand that systematically and effectively addresses every problem associated with color-treated hair, including universally dreaded “roots.” Our mission is to support salon professionals with Wow tools, techniques, education and opportunities. The best colorists in the world can’t go home with their clients, but Color Wow can!

**BIR: Tell me about the products.**

**GF:** Our first transformative product, **Color Wow Root Cover Up (SRP \$34.50)**, is a professional mineral powder in a cosmetic-like compact. It brushes on easily to camouflage gray roots instantly and lasts until your next shampoo. It’s also the first and only root cover to cover dark regrowth without peroxide. It’s available in seven shades for a perfect color



*Color Wow Root Cover Up is the next hand-held device to change your life—from the “Apple” of hair care.*

match. For the 75% of women who color their hair (single process, highlights or a combination of both), Color Wow is a life-changer.

Other products in the line include **Color Wow Color Security Shampoo (SRP \$22.00)**, **Color Wow Color Security Conditioner** for either fine to normal or normal to thick color-treated hair (SRP \$23.00), **Color Wow Speed Dry Blow Dry Spray (SRP \$24.00)**, **Color Wow One Minute Transformation Styling Cream** and **Color Wow Pop & Lock Crystallite Shellac (SRP \$18.00)**.

**BIR: Your first-class merchandising materials at shelf and online support and education, guarantee that your products sell themselves. Tell me about your approach. Does that come from the retail world?**

**GF:** I think our merchandising materials work well because we are very clear from the outset who our audience is. We are not ingredient-led, we are consumer-led. When you deliver something that answers an unmet need, it resonates.

**BIR: You’re known for breaking the mold in**

**both pro beauty and the retail sector when it comes to product innovation. What's been the key to your success?**

**GF:** We import and adapt best practices and philosophies to the beauty industry. Like Apple, we:

- “Think different.”
- Lead, don't follow.
- Focus on creating a unique, positive user experience.
- Have earned the reputation for creating disruptive technologies that improve lives, have lasting impact and ultimately achieve iconic status.
- Embrace pop culture in an effort to wrap our prescriptive regimes in an aspirational blanket that resonates with the consumer as much as the problem solving.

Then, now, and always, our mission is to create products to solve the beauty problems that are plaguing women everywhere. Our motivation and innovation stem from real needs. At the core of our corporate mission is a simple truth: necessity is the mother of invention.

Existing competitive products don't dictate our benchmarks. We look for real, unaddressed “holes” in the beauty industry. That leads to actual disruptive technologies that ultimately achieve iconic status (eg, the first serum to conquer frizz, the first styling product line for frizzy hair, the first formulas to optimize blonde, the first fast, easy, natural-looking mineral powder to effectively cover roots).

**BIR: What is your distribution model?**

**GF:** Color Wow has partnered with independent distributors to reach fine salons across the United States and Canada and is also available in Ulta stores. Color Wow is currently sold in 60-plus countries.



*Salons create beautiful hair color. Federici Brands keeps it Wow with a range of products.*

**BIR: Who else on your team would you like our readers to know?**

**GF:** **Giles Robinson**, our global director of training and education, has been with John Frieda salons for 16 years. He is a brilliant educator and appears on TV shows in major cities promoting Color Wow. **Kevin Moss**, Color Wow's creative director, has been with John Frieda for more than 25 years. Based in London, he is a guest artist at shows and travels the world promoting Color Wow. **Nicola Clarke**, our global creative color director, has worked in

the John Frieda Salons as head colorist for 13 years. She is a favorite of A-List celebs, including Kate Winslet, Kate Moss, Sienna Miller, Cate Blanchett. And of course, our vice president of sales, **James (Mac) McMillan**, and our vice president of business development and education, **Larry Kane**, oversee our distributor sales and chain account sales, respectively.

**BIR: What does the rest of 2016 look like for Federici Brands?**

**GF:** We are launching our **Cocktails**, which

are leave-on supplements we call “bionic tonics.” They come in three flavors—kale, coconut and a carb cocktail. Each one addresses one of the three unintended consequences of color processing, helping to return the hair to its virgin state. We are in over 60 countries at the moment and will continue to build our Wow Team of educators worldwide. We will be launching our TV advertising campaign to support salons and drive clients through their doors.

**BIR: Tell me about HAIRraising, your grassroots cause-marketing program.**

**GF:** The 7th Annual HAIRraising Cut-A-Thon is scheduled for Sunday, April 10. Top salons, including **John Frieda, Sally Hershberger, Gretta Cole, Mario Russo** and others will open their doors, with 100% of proceeds benefiting the Heart Center at Boston Children's Hospital, the No. 1 ranked pediatric hospital and research facility in the United States. To register, visit [hairraising.org](http://hairraising.org).

**BIR: How can the industry help?**

**GF:** By spreading the word. We need as many salons as possible to sign up and raise money for Boston Children's Hospital. Its breakthroughs are changing the lives of children around the world, and we want to be part of that.

For more information, contact Gail Federici, CEO, Federici Brands, at 203-762-7667 or [gail@federicibrands.com](mailto:gail@federicibrands.com). Visit [colorwowhair.com](http://colorwowhair.com).



*The next big breakthrough in pediatric cardiology can start in salons, thanks to HAIRraising. The 7th Annual Cut-a-thon takes place Sunday, April 10, benefiting Boston Children's Hospital.*