



## MARKET

"We Care How You Look" is a slogan that best exemplifies the Darling experience in the Hair and beauty industry.

Darling Hair has been in the African market for over 26 years and currently has manufacturing plants in fourteen countries in Africa. Darling Hair is manufactured in Kenya by Style Industries Ltd. The



company prides itself in manufacturing only the highest quality hair additions. The African woman is very beauty conscious and Darling endeavours to go the extra mile in helping her redefine her beauty, style and sense of uniqueness everyday with the wide range of products.

The brand's ultimate aim is to enhance confidence in a woman.

Darling Hair consists of an assortment of braids, weaves, extensions and wigs specially designed to satisfy the desire, taste and aspiration for beauty in every woman. Darling hair has forged links with producers of high quality raw materials and, as a result, the quality of the hair additions can hardly be outmatched. It was the first brand in Africa to introduce Kanekalon fibre, which allows hot water setting. The raw material used is among the best in the world.

Darling Hair Additions are manufactured from the highest quality Kanekalon Japanese synthetic fibres to give soft, strong and light braiding styles and the weaves and wigs are soft, smooth and tangle free with long lasting curls and the colours are of Natural Lustre, resembling your natural hair.

Darling Hair commands loyalty among customers in Kenya and regionally, making it the leading hair brand in East Africa.

The expansion of supermarkets like Nakumatt Holdings, Tusky's and Naivas has seen Darling products freely displayed whilst many wholesalers have also adopted a similar approach and now display their items on shelves to give better access to customers. The fact that customers are able to freely select Darling products has increased both turnover and demand for the products. Branding and packing of Darling products ensure that, at a glance, the customer



is immediately informed about the product. The attractive images of models on the package clearly demonstrate the style as it appears once adorned on a woman's head. Furthermore, step-by-step directions are concisely given at the back of the package instructing one on how to use the product and how to achieve correct results such as hot water setting for braids, or how to maintain weaves in order to attain a particular style for longer. Customer satisfaction is achieved through branded display units allowing retailers to return slower moving products to the factory for exchange.

With the continuous planned quality improvement programmes in the production processes and adaptation of new innovative styles of hair additions and product presentation, coupled with improvement in service delivery and focus on expansion the distribution channels in Mombasa, Nakuru and other East African countries Darling Hair is set to continue being the market leader in Kenya and East Africa as a whole.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

Darling is proud to have partner with the Nike foundation in setting up a Micro franchisee project in Kenya to assist destitute girls in acquiring hair dressing skills in order to make them self-reliant. It is the success of this project that saw Darling Hair featured on the BBC "Focus on Africa" programme highlighting this success on the social corporate responsibility front. Also, as part of CSR activities, Style Industries runs two hairdressing academies in Mwingi Town - Eastern Kenya and Rongo Town - South Nyanza where women are professionally trained in hair dressing. This has empowered many so far and given them a source of livelihood.

Darling Hair was the first hair company to open a factory outside Nairobi when they started their Mombasa factory back in 2009, when it was still operating as Strategic Industries Ltd.



They were the pioneers in the introduction of a product specifically designed for children. The Princess Braid was designed with children's soft hair in mind.

Darling was the first to introduce a hair salon loyalty programme, Fidelity, which recognises the role of the hairdresser as an advisor and custodian of the brand to the customer.

Darling was the first to use the Kanekalon Eclat and Futura fibres in Africa, the highest quality synthetic fibres worldwide.

## HISTORY

The Darling brand in Kenya was started in the early 90s in a small Godown at the Industrial Area in Nairobi with only 25 staff and five braid machines. The brand was limited to only six braids and one weave, known as Perm Calypso. The Company started with little capital and everything was done on a shoestring budget. There was no means of transport and hair was transported using a hand drawn cart by one of their delivery personnel who doubled up as marketing executive to prospective buyers. In 2007 the company partnered with Japanese suppliers of raw materials to carry out market research on quality of their products. Their recommendations and subsequent changes saw the brand quality improve overnight and the market open tremendously. After a year, the Japanese suppliers certified Darling as the top hair manufacturer in the region and, in the last few years, Kenya has been rated among the top three African countries in hair manufacturing in both quality and styles.

## PRODUCT

The main products under the Darling brand are braids, weaves, wigs, wiglets and hair cosmetics.

### VIP Collection.

The VIP collection targets the upper/upper middle class and popular styles include: Mexica, Sonya, wet wave, Italian and Celio

### Classic Collection

The Classic collection targets the middle/upper middle class; popular styles include: Paris, Kiki, Dream curl, Miami and Valencia

### Hype collection

The recently launched hype collection targets the younger generation of ages 18 to 25: popular styles include Dake, city girl, Roma, Wrapping cut, Body twist and Chanel

### Darling Collection

The Darling collection targets the middle class; popular styles include Flat Iron, Boy Cut, Crop Lazer, Rumba, Short Bob and Daniella

### Celebrity Collection

The Celebrity collection targets the lower/lower middle class; popular styles include Iris, Mayfair, Honey curl, and Daniella.

### Darling Cosmetics

target the middle class; popular cosmetics include vibrant sheen, darling polisher, 4 in 1 braid spray, hair food and olive oil

Darling hair products are packed in proper, well-designed and labeled boxes that ensure the product remains upright and correctly positioned to guarantee that the quality and style of the product inside is maintained. The box itself has a specially designed die-cut that ensures the hair is secured in place by a golden string. On the VIP and Classic Collection, the box has an inside label on which the hair is fast secured. Darling endeavours to brand all points of sale where



their products are sold to make sure they reflect the quality, uniqueness and value of the products.

## RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Darling Hair has recently introduced the Celebrity collection to meet demand for quality and style in the lower to middle class market. Darling has also introduced new budget braid styles: Jumbo Braid and Super Star.

Darling recently opened a factory in Mombasa to meet demand of the whole coastal region. Darling also opened a factory in Nakuru March 2013 that has solidified its presence in the greater Rift, Nyanza and western regions of the country.

In November 2012 Darling partnered with one of the largest conglomerates in India, Godrej Consumer Products Ltd, this has seen it expand product range created a complete structure more professional better control while meeting customer demand for a high quality range of products.

Darling has recently rebranded its VIP and Classic collection to reflect the continuous style and innovation that is at the core of its strategy. It also introduced the Hype collection that caters for the youth market.

## PROMOTION

Darling Hair carries out promotion through outdoor advertising and print media. Avenues used in outdoor advertising include billboards, signposts on shops, wall paintings and bridge boards: Print media via posters, calendars, newspapers adverts and magazines. TVC ads have also been produced and aired on mainstream media in 2014.

Darling carries out promotional activities all year round targeting women from all walks of life, from the women in the village doing farming to the professionals working in the big metropolis. There are also area specific promotions through their road shows that traverse the entire country, joint promotions with re-sellers like Naivas chain of supermarkets, Bestly Cosmetics, Nakumatt Holdings, Tuskys etc.

Darling's first slogan "Be a Star" was successful and propelled the brand to the top in a market that had hardly used hair additions before. Another slogan was "Hair that lasts longer" whose main emphasis was on the durability of Darling hair making it cost effective. "We Care How You Look" became the most successful slogan and is currently on all their products.

## BRAND VALUES

Darling's essential qualities are high quality, value for money, style, uniqueness and durability. They have consistently produced unique styles such as Diva W, Honey curl and Rose deep. Darling products are durable and maintain the style for longer with little effort in maintenance and, above all, the quality is unmatched.

Darling Hair is committed to consumer satisfaction through high quality hair additions targeting every woman of African origin as is clear from the Mission statement: "To be a consistent world leader in manufacturing of the highest quality hair additions, with great care being put into each look in regard to creative and innovative designs that meet the needs and style of the everyday woman of African origin; while providing an exciting, competitive, safe and friendly environment for our employees."

The word Darling is synonymous with looking good and being greatly liked or desired which

is what every woman wants. Darling Hair logo is made out from the letter 'D' which stands for Darling. On one side; there is the image of the human face, representing a woman, emphasising that all actions are geared towards satisfying her need to look good and feel great.

The hair strand on the right half signifies their primary product - hair, designed to satisfy woman's need to look good and feel great. The slogan "Highest Quality hair Additions" attests to their commitment to produce only the best quality hair products.

### Vision

- Consumers: To passionately provide the best and constantly search for innovative ideas that will lead to new, modern, unique and beautiful hair styles for customers.
- People: Provide a great working environment for staff to execute their tasks. This reflects in their efficiency, personal growth of each staff member.
- Network: Cultivate an enduring network of customers and suppliers to create a mutual and enduring partnership.
- Excellence: Aim to achieve excellence in the production of each hair piece from design to delivery.

[www.darlingkenya.biz](http://www.darlingkenya.biz)



## Things you didn't know about DARLING

Darling employs over 5,000 people currently making it among the highest employer in the hair industry in East Africa.

Darling hair currently has manufacturing plants in fourteen countries in Africa.

Darling runs three training centres countrywide that are dedicated to training young destitute ladies who have dreams of being hairdressers but due to poverty, cannot raise the fees required for such training. The centres are located in Nairobi- Likoni road, Mwingi Town-Eastern Kenya and Rongo Town- South Nyanza.

Darling sponsors several students through their high school education and college to assist them get a good stepping-stone into their future. Darling also runs a computer programme for a local primary school in Mt. Kenya region to aid in computer skills penetration to children in remote regions from an early age. Darling assists HIV positive hairdressers in Muranga County by providing training in Hair Dressing to enable them earn an income that ensures they get a chance to live long healthy lives.

Superbrands