It’s been a tough year for make-up sales, and lipstick in particular, as lockdowns and mask-wearing have pushed this former must-have item much lower on consumers’ priority lists. But the easing of lockdowns in the UK appears to have unleashed huge pent-up demand with e-tailer Escentual.com saying sales have surged 85% in the past few weeks to the point that the product category is now at “pre-pandemic levels”.

The company said that as well as general lockdown easing, sales have been boosted by the revival of celebrity activity, in particular the Oscars. Celebrities such as Amanda Seyfried and Vanessa Kirby focused on bold lipstick shades for the event with the former choosing an intense purple (Purple Temptation) by Lancôme and the latter a deep red by Gucci.

Escentual’s Communications and Campaigns Manager Chelsey Edmunds said the announcement of the path out of lockdown was the initial spur for rising make-up interest with sales having “exploded” since then.

And she added that within the 85% sales rise, it’s the “luxury cosmetics brands and bold colours that have been selling the best. Clearly after the year of Groundhog Day and staying in, women are ready to get out there and want to look their very best.”
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She also said that as well as the brands worn by Seyfried and Kirby, other strong-selling prestige brands have included YSL and Givenchy.

By Sandra Halliday

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