Market-disrupting Dyson Supersonic hair dryer now in SA

Home appliance company, Dyson, has made waves in the hair care market with the launch of its Supersonic hair dryer, which has just arrived in South Africa.

Spending four years in development and with over 100 patents pending, the Dyson Supersonic hairdryer was engineered to address the issues experienced with traditional hair dryers.

“Hair dryers can be heavy, inefficient and make a racket. By looking at them further we realised that they can also cause extreme heat damage to hair. I challenged Dyson engineers to really understand the science of hair and develop our version of a hair dryer, which we think solves these problems,” says Dyson founder and designer James Dyson.

The hair dryer is said to use a fast but focused airflow, is engineered for balance in the hand and intelligently controls the temperature to help protect hair from extreme heat damage.

The company has invested £50 million in the development of the hair dryer including creating a laboratory dedicated to investigating the science of hair. Engineers studied hair from root to tip, understanding how it reacts to stresses, how to keep it healthy and how to style it. Over four years they tested the product on different hair types and built test rigs which mechanically simulate hair drying techniques – which can differ around the world. To date 1,625 km of real human hair has been used in testing.

Digital motor V9

The appliance is powered by the patented Dyson digital motor V9, created in-house by a team of over 15 motor engineers specifically for this machine. It is Dyson’s smallest, lightest, most advanced digital motor and is reportedly up to eight times faster than other hair dryer motors and half the weight. The digital motor is small enough to be positioned in the handle rather than the head; because of this, the machine is engineered for balance. Most conventional hair dryers have the motor in the head of the machine.

Intelligent heat control, focused airflow

According to Dyson, the hair dryer's intelligent heat control helps to ensure hair isn’t exposed to excessive temperatures. A glass bead thermistor measures the temperature 20 times a second and transmits this data to the microprocessor, which

controls the patented double-stacked heating element.

The Supersonic uses Dyson's patented Air Multiplier technology. The volume of the air drawn into the motor is amplified by three due to this technology, producing a high-pressure, high-velocity jet of air. Traditional hair dryers can sometimes have a weak airflow, meaning they are slow, while others can have strong airflow, but it is not necessarily controlled. The Supersonic creates a focused jet of air, angled at 20° for controlled, precise drying and styling.

Acoustic engineering

A team of Dyson aero-acoustic engineers sought to understand how the acoustics of this machine could be optimised. By using an axial flow impeller inside the motor they have simplified the pathway of the air reducing turbulence and swirling. And by giving the motor impeller 13 blades instead of the usual 11, the engineers pushed one tone within the motor to a sound frequency beyond the audible range for humans. Also, because the motor is small and compact they have been able to embed it in the handle surrounded by acoustic silencers to further reduce sound.

Settings and attachments

The hair dryer has four heat settings, three airflow settings and a cold shot. There are three magnetic attachments, with 16 patents pending, to further control this airflow, allowing users to achieve a range of different styles.

The smoothing nozzle dries hair gently using smooth, wide air, allowing you to dry and style at the same time, while the diffuser attachment is engineered to disperse air evenly around each curl, which simulates natural drying, helping to reduce frizz and improve definition.

The attachments remain cool to the touch. Using Heat Shield technology the hot air is contained within a sandwich of cold air meaning the surfaces of the attachment stay cool. Being magnetic, each nozzle is easy to attach and adjust.

The Dyson Supersonic carries a two-year guarantee on its parts and labour and retails locally at a recommended price of R6,499. It is available from all Gary Rom salons and online at shop.dyson.co.za, as well as online at @Home and Hirsch's.