

Board Member Spotlight

Men's Grooming Market Update

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Photo from DMagazine, October 2012

A recent article in the Wall Street Journal covered how men are shopping more like women – they buy on impulse, they scan websites for style ideas, they try new brands and fall for trends.

We are seeing this change manifested in men's attitudes and shopping behaviors in the grooming and skincare categories, as well. Men today are more aware than ever of the importance of taking care of their skin and hair. This is now viewed as an integral part of living a healthy lifestyle, along with exercising and eating healthy. Grooming is part of a larger masculinity narrative that says it is good to take care of yourself, it is no longer viewed as "feminine" to use skincare.

Millennials (ages 18-34) are particularly enthusiastic about grooming and will drive future growth of the category on a global basis. Younger guys are over twice as likely as older men to try new products and use products in a variety of face, hair and body categories. Additionally, they are significantly more likely than other age groups to pay more for products they feel really work and to place importance on the brand in their purchase decisions. Millennials are leading the beard trend, with almost 50% reporting either a full beard or some facial hair.

Hot product trends are centered on taking care of hair – on the head and face.

Men's shampoos, conditioners and styling products are driving the growth in men's personal care. The beard trend is generating high interest among men of all ages in beard care (beard oils, wax, wash, combs). This is a small but very fast-growing sub-segment, resulting in many new niche brands and exploding sales of beard oils.

Men are also increasingly buying serums, facial oils, and eye creams/gels, although these type of products remain a relatively small part of the overall market.

Sampling is crucial with men as they tend to be much more loyal and less likely to switch or experiment with new products than women. In order to get men to change up their routine, they need to actually try the product on skin, experience the texture and aroma, and witness the benefits first hand before deciding to buy or switch brands.

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The woman's influence on the types and brands of products he uses remains important. She is a key influencer in his usage of products and her approval of the brands he uses is important. She continues to make replenishment purchases for him, with approximately half of all women reporting that they purchase grooming products for men in the past year. More men than ever (over 75%) report self-purchasing, and they typically replenish their supplies every 2-3 months.

Product sharing is also very common, with over half of men in the U.S. reporting that women in their household use

their grooming and/or skincare products.

Online sales for prestige men's grooming are growing at over triple the rate of brick and mortar prestige sales. Online subscription programs are growing in popularity for razors and related shaving and skincare products.

Additionally, the men's grooming market remains very dominated by the mass channel. However, facial skincare is twice as likely to be purchased from a prestige retailer than other grooming categories.

Communicating to men about grooming and skincare is quite different than what works for women. What resonates with men is about taking care of what you have and feeling good about yourself, without looking like you are trying too hard, or spending too much time and effort on your grooming. Humor helps communicate product benefits. Product naming, positioning and packaging should be straightforward and easy to understand.

Marketing Challenges

Marketing challenges include getting men to use additional products and expand their basic routine. The majority of men (80%) use some type of grooming product, with deodorant, hair care and shaving products most commonly used. Facial skincare is the category least likely to be used by men, with only about 25% of men using a moisturizer, cleanser or anti-aging treatment.

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