

The Changing Faces of Man

The rise of the 'modern man' has been portrayed as both media myth and valid social trend. Following the lead set by icons such as David Beckham in their attention to personal grooming and body image, a growing cohort of cosmopolitan, predominantly urban young men are exemplifying the 'modern man'.

Grooming is booming, and younger men seem more health and body-conscious than might be expected. They are buying products and taking care of their appearance more than they might have done a couple of years ago.

Perhaps surprisingly, when men were asked whom they would most like to be for the day, the most popular choices were Brad Pitt and David Beckham, who came significantly ahead of Tony Blair, Richard Branson and comedians such as Ricky Gervais and Peter Kay. As Pitt and Beckham are known more for their looks and style than their intellect or personality, this could be taken as an indicator of 'modern man' tastes.

Male Grooming update with Mark Sproston

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Myself and my company recently conducted a survey of 225 men, with 52% of respondents having visited a salon for hair removal, followed by body massage (38%). More than 28% of respondents had visited for a facial, while 63% had experienced a 'Wet Shave Facial'.

The 'Wet Shave Facial' is fast becoming one of the most popular treatments offered by high street salons and high end spas, and equates to over 85% of our students, having trained over 2500 hair and beauty professionals the art of the 'Professional Hot Towel Shave' since January 2007.

Evolving attitudes

Our research shows an increasing amount of male participation in grooming and buying of grooming products in salons and spas, on average adding 40% additional revenue to the business.

Research firm Key Note estimates that the male grooming market will grow from £850m now to £1.5b in 2015, while Mintel, which last year published a 'Men's Grooming' report, has identified a strong bias to under-24's in the use of skincare products, suggesting that there is greater acceptance of the practice among younger men. While five years ago just 15% of males had visited a high street salon or spa, the level is expected to reach around 65% by 2015.

We have seen a huge growth in men visiting salons and spas, and in 2013 we trained over 500 hair and beauty professionals who wanted to bring the professional wet shave service into their business. The two day course teaches the student all about men's skin; how it differs from that of the female's, to identifying hair growth patterns – a key indicator to how you will shave your male client. It also covers how to professionally advise your clients on shaving techniques and products, not to mention practising the professional shave on ten willing models.

Functional marketing

So how do salons and spas make their products appeal to the 'modern man' without turning off more traditional men? The use of language is key. The company's Shavedoctor range of shave and skin care products uses a clear, masculine vocabulary to convey the fact that these products are functional and not effeminate, for example, 'Face Scrub' rather than exfoliator. We have even cleverly named our post shave cream a 'Moisturazor' not Moisturizer, so currently trending that men moisturaze and women moisturize.

We use this masculine language so that men won't feel threatened (by the products). We aren't women. We need an instant result.

It is currently a very exciting time to be in the male grooming market, and introducing a masculine treatment like the professional wet shave will help you increase your male client base tenfold. Remember, men moisturaze and women moisturize.

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