Men's Toiletries

Contributed by MINTEL
Thursday, 10 July 2008

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Men's skincare market just doesn't scrub up

Even though the likes of David Beckham and former James Bond, Pierce Brosnan, are now regularly seen advertising men's skincare, British men are still not getting in touch with their feminine side. In fact, latest research from MINTEL finds that despite the hype, men spent a mere Â£57 million on skincare, such as moisturisers, cleansers and facial scrubs last year.

This is a minuscule amount when compared to what women splash out on their skincare lotions and potions, with sales here worth over 10 times that of men's products at Â£602 million. It also means that the average man actually spends less than Â£2.50 a year on taking care of their skin! What is more, although sales increased 21% between 2005 and 2007, skincare still only accounts for just 7% of the total men's toiletries market, up only marginally on the 6% of 2005.

"Companies have invested huge amounts of money into men's skincare. And with all the talk of the new aged man and metrosexuals, everyone has been waiting for British men to really buy into looking after their skin. But this has clearly not yet happened," comments Alexandra Richmond, senior beauty analyst at MINTEL.

"These days a scruffier, unshaven look, like that of Russell Brand, has become much more popular and acceptable amongst younger men, which means they have little need for moisturisers or post shave balms. Britain's ageing population and the real reluctance amongst older men to use flashy skin care products has also undoubtedly played a key part in the market's disappointing performance."

A return to a bygone era

A splash of water, a bar of soap and a dash of talc may sound like an old fashioned routine. But with over 65 year olds soon to outnumber every other age group in Britain this simple regime may just be the future of men's beauty products. Indeed, today's older gents donâ€™t much care for the newfangled beauty products, as just 17% of over 65s think it is okay for men to use skincare products, compared to around 45% of younger men.

Can't teach an old dog new tricks

Those over 65 are living proof that old habits die hard, as three-quarters (77%) of them still use bars of soap, compared to fewer than half (48%) of the 16 to 24 year olds. Similarly, talcum powder is still very popular with 20% of men over 65 using it, compared to just 7% of younger men. Meanwhile, when it comes to more modern introductions, just 1% of over 65s use facial scrubs compared to 17% of their younger counterparts.

"The key here is that men are clearly creatures of habit and they hold onto their skincare regime. Manufacturers need to focus on simple old-fashioned products that appeal to the growing number of older men. But if menâ€™s skincare is really going to succeed, they will also need to target teenagers with more advanced products that they will then continue to use throughout their adult life," explains Alexandra Richmond.