

Brand Builders

NEW PRODUCTS

Old Spice Does New Tricks



Spice team: P&G's Heiert (l.) and Lipinski bring a classic men's cologne and deodorant brand up to date.

If there's one thing women have learned about men, it's that often it's important for him to feel that trying something new is *his* idea. Most men do not like being given an ultimatum, whether the demand is regarding marriage, picking up dirty socks from the floor or any of his personal hygiene habits.

Thus far, that's how male consumers seem to be responding to the men's grooming category. The recent spate of beauty products for men—such as facial cleansers and moisturizers—have had spotty success as marketers have been unable to convince large numbers of average Joes to spend the extra time and money on their appearance.

Procter & Gamble knows this all too

well. The company was forced to retrench last year after a brief trial with Old Spice Cool Contact wipes, one personal cleansing item American men clearly weren't ready for just yet. However, that P&G was even able to introduce such a product says a lot about how far it has come in expanding the Old Spice franchise and invigorating its venerable brand name.

Since acquiring Old Spice in 1990, P&G

has revamped the original brand by giving it more modern packaging—via design shop Interbrand, Cincinnati—while adding several new products under extension labels High Endurance and Red Zone. Last year, P&G introduced High Endurance deodorant soap and antiperspirants in clear gel and aerosol forms, followed by a body spray in December.

In doing so, the company has succeeded in drawing younger consumers into the franchise. More than one out of three young males today uses Old Spice antiperspirants/deodorants, according to P&G. Once merely a staple on their grandfathers' dressers, Old Spice has become a favorite of teens at a time when

With its retro ads and white bottles, "There's a lost generation of Old Spice users."

they are making their first, and often lasting, brand decisions on deodorant. At the same time, teens are prone to using more deodorant, more often, than age 50-plus consumers.

Meanwhile, P&G has kept up the success of the original cologne in white bottles. "There's almost a lost generation of Old Spice users, since males under [age] 25 really don't remember it as their dad's or grandfather's cologne," said Alexandra Lipinski, brand manager on Old Spice antiperspirant.

The cologne remains No. 1 in sales in the men's mass fragrance category, bringing in about \$30 million per year, according to P&G. (Data from IRI, which does not include Wal-Mart and club stores, lists sales at \$20.2 million last year.)

UPDATING THE BRAND

Today, the 65-year-old Old Spice brand—famous for its cologne's retro TV commercials with sailors rushing ashore to the bravado of an instrumental jingle—features a more modern image with bright red packaging and a smaller script label. Since the early '90s, Old Spice advertising, created by agency Saatchi & Saatchi, New York, has reached out to active young men with sports-themed campaigns. Seasonal spots now focus on different sports, such as boxing, NASCAR



It's a guy thing: Deodorant ads feature athletes like Stewart (l.), while body wash makes a hero of the everyday male.

racing and skateboarding.

"We wanted to be plain spoken in the attitude," said Sean Kiener, creative director at Saatchi. In trying to relate to men, Kiener said, "We didn't want [a message that] was overly medicinal."

Instead, one ad features images of Nascar Winston Cup champion Tony Stewart pitching Red Zone deodorant as "the strongest stuff you can get—made just for guys." As in all Old Spice antiperspirant and deodorant ads, the spot is tagged with an 800-number for returns, with a satisfaction guarantee.

For the core products, at least, the tactics have been working. Overall, Old Spice antiperspirant/deodorant sales have logged increases for 34 consecutive quarters,



KEY PLAYERS

Program: Old Spice men's care
Marketer: Procter & Gamble, Cincinnati
Agency: Saatchi & Saatchi, New York
Key players: P&G: Chris Heiert, mktg dir; Alexandra Lipinski, brand mgr; Sam Kim, gm-antiperspirant deodorant; Adil Mehboob-Kahn, gm-personal care; Saatchi: Sean Kiener, crtv dir; Bob Eck, global equity dir

with sales of \$86 million for the year ended March 23, per IRI. (Old Spice is No. 2 in the deodorant category, behind Colgate's Mennen Speed Stick.)

That success has yet to filter to some of the newer items, including the wipes and Old Spice body spray. P&G has sold only \$4 million in Cool Contacts and about the same for the body spray. Unilever's Axe body spray, by comparison, has generated some \$26 million in sales in its first year.

What observers consider key is not incremental sales but the fact that P&G has become a more efficient marketer, shifting tactics early on in the face of evidence that a new product or line exten-

sion isn't performing up to snuff.

In introducing items that haven't lived up to expectations, "I don't think P&G has hurt the brand at all," said Gary Stibel, founder of New England Consulting, Westport, Conn. "What P&G did in the old days, setting aside \$20 million or so, sticking to a plan and then seeing what happens . . . that wasn't wise. Now they're getting in and out much quicker," said Stibel.

Even the body wipes, he said, should not be considered a disappointment, since P&G has put "very little" money into the effort.

P&G spent \$7 million on Cool Contact media last year, per TNS/CMR—cutting back spending plans after an initial spurt—versus a \$61 million outlay for the entire brand.

Procter & Gamble isn't writing off those items, either. It recently began re-airing a television spot for the body spray. Old Spice may also expand further into items for the face, just as Beiersdorf has done with Nivea for Men and Johnson & Johnson with Neutrogena Razor Defense.

BODY WASHES LATHER UP

P&G is confident that men are beginning to embrace the body wash. Especially younger guys, who may already use body wash instead of bar soap in the shower, and who have generally grown up on liquid hand soaps and shower gel, said Chris Heiert, marketing director for Old Spice.

In traditional focus groups and in one-on-one home interviews, Heiert said, "We found that half of men had already been using body wash, essentially just because they found it in the bathroom."

The more traditional personal cleansing products, namely the bar soaps, appear to be a more natural evolution for the brand beyond deodorant. Sales of

"Guys purchase body wash like condoms: Look over the shoulder and throw it in the basket."

Old Spice High Endurance Deodorant bar soap were a healthy \$10 million for the year ended March 23, per IRI.

The marketers also took research participants on individual shopping trips, which evidently was an eye opener. "Guys purchase body wash in the same way they'd buy condoms: look over their shoulder and quickly throw it in the basket when no one was looking," said Heiert. "The whole process gave us an insight that if men were buying body wash, they would hide it."

Despite many choices for hearty "men's" soaps, like Irish Spring and Dial, few if any body washes could be considered masculine looking. Essentially, guys were drawn to any brand that didn't appear overly feminine, said Heiert, anything from Dial body wash to Unilever's Suave or Colgate's Softsoap.

The sexes, he added, have a different take on the concept of a body wash. For men it's just about getting clean, lots and lots of lather and smelling great, said Heiert. "And in talking to guys, they're real straightforward about telling [marketers] what they want." Thus, product attributes such as moisturizing are replaced by a deodorant formulation and more suds.

Also, women generally apply body wash and shower gels with either loofah sponges or what's known as a "pouff," a light puffy round sponge made out of synthetic net-like material. Even the word "pouf" makes some men nervous. Since Old Spice body wash contains more foaming agents than those marketed to women, such an implement isn't necessary to create a thick lather, said Heiert.

In its research, P&G has found that half of men just use their hands, 25% use washcloths and the rest use some other washing implement.

While P&G is cautiously introducing traditional line extensions into its Old Spice portfolio, it nevertheless views men's beauty care as a bona fide category with new growth potential. Observers, like Stibel, agree.

"The next logical step is items like facial cleansers and moisturizers," he said. "But it'll be interesting to see how it plays out, because for men, the big stretch is the face." In other words, "The neck is the great divide."

—Christine Bittar