A man in a dark suit, light blue shirt, and grey tie is holding a stack of US dollar bills. The bills are fanned out, showing various denominations including a \$20 bill and a \$100 bill. The background is a solid blue color.

Getting GUYS TO BUY

To make that men's skincare sale, focus on benefits and show gentlemen—and their women—their results.

by April Miller

For many reasons—be it wanting to look younger or dealing with the environment—skin care is on the rise. And while there is ongoing debate on just how interested men are in caring for their skin, it's a growing product category that beauty store owners, managers and beauty product distributors should tap into.

"As personal appearance increases in importance, trends in men's skin care are beginning to echo those established in women's facial skin care, including a focus on antiaging and vitamin-enriched formulations," states Steve LeDuc, director of marketing at Scottsdale, Arizona-based SKIN Probiotic Systems. "Today, men are no longer embarrassed about shopping for skin care. In fact, the popularity of men's skincare products has had a positive effect on young males, especially those in the 18-29 age range, who indicate that they have no qualms whatsoever about using moisturizers and other male beauty products."

However, it's not just the younger guys who are taking more time with their appearance. As LeDuc notes, baby boomers are struggling to maintain their youth and are becoming more self-conscious about their looks. So be it younger or more mature men, how can you make the sale?

MULTIPLE-BENEFIT PRODUCTS

While women may have no qualms about purchasing—and using—multiple skin-care products with each one formulated for a specific area, it just isn't so with men. Generally, they're looking for products that can do double, or even triple, duty.

"Guys are lazy and they're looking for something simple and quick," shares Lee Jacobs, president of Lescoja in Marana, Arizona. His company's Matte For Men brand includes an all-in-one lotion that moisturizes, protects and reduces shine. Currently, the five-SKU line can be found in boutique retailers, Sephora, Nordstrom and dermatologists' offices, and Jacobs want to expand his distribution into more beauty stores. He notes that he sells more per SKU than companies offering 40 products with 20 different moisturizers because, he asks rhetorically, "How many moisturizers do you need?"

LeDuc agrees that straightforward, multipurpose products are what sell in this highly niched category. His company's two-in-one Cleanser can be used in its concentrated form for shaving or added to water for a foaming cleanser.

"A guy is more concerned about the time he will have to spend to get the results he's looking for," says Bill Kochanski, men's category manager for American International Industries' Woody's Quality Grooming in Los Angeles. "And if one thing will take the place of three things, he's more apt to use it. Guys like speedy results that are uncomplicated."

As for what men are willing to spend on these multi-benefit products, manufacturers differ on the price points. Yet, all agree that it's much less than what women will pay. Kochanski suggests the \$5 to \$10 range, while others say \$10 to \$20. Jacobs, whose products fall in the \$20 to \$30 range, considers that to be a premium price for men. "For guys who are used to a 99-cent shave gel, this is a lot," Jacobs relates. "Women think it's a bargain."

LeDuc says ultimately it's not the price point as much as the results they experience that's the deciding factor for men. Conveying just what those results will be takes educated employees, easy-to-understand packaging and in-store displays. Men are looking for a simple skincare regimen; they aren't going to spend a lot of time trying to figure out a product's benefits.

NO FRILLY, GIRLY PACKAGING

Manufacturers say packaging that attracts the male eye is basic and never feminine-looking. "A large part of promoting a men's skincare line is making the product approachable," SKIN Probiotic Systems' LeDuc comments. "The male customer doesn't want to be intimidated by 'pretty' products in cellophane nor heavily fragranced formulations."

"Men need to know what the products are for, when to use them and how they will see improvements."

His company's white unisex packaging includes minimal copy. According to LeDuc, men have found the packaging appealing and 45% of sales are purchases made by males while the product is also marketed to women and teens. Many of derma e Natural Bodycare and Nordic Care's products are also gender-neutral and have predominantly white packaging.

Matte For Men and Woody's Quality Grooming take a macho man's approach to products. Matte For Men packaging includes browns and organic-looking colors to reflect its ingredients, Jacobs says. And with products such as MAN Powder and a tag line of "You know where to use it!," it's definitely not trying to speak to the ladies. Woody's plays up the surf culture and uses irreverent, good-natured packaging in black, red, white and orange to target red-blooded males. Shoppers will find nothing feminine here—its Meat and Potatoes hair and body shampoo bar is packaged like a pound of beef.

NOTEWORTHY DISPLAYS

No matter what products you choose to stock and even if you decide to dedicate only a small area to men's skin care, give it the attention and focus it deserves. Make sure the area and displays are prominent and easily found by your male customers. Most men tend to fit the "hunters" psychological profile, so they want to walk into a store and immediately determine where their products are. If they can't, you risk them leaving the store and never returning.

Use any point-of-sale materials and product literature provided by manufacturers, says Matt Stearn,

Southern California sales manager for derma e Natural Bodycare in Simi Valley, California. Shelf-talkers, sales sheets, educational materials and coupons are a few of the tools a supplier can provide to retailers.

"The products should have adequate signage," Stearn adds, "allowing the consumer to understand what the products are and how they can be used. When marketing skin care to

men, it's important to emphasize benefits that relate to them. Men are not seeking beautiful, soft skin; they're looking for healthy, strong skin that can survive the everyday elements they encounter."

If you can bullet point the features and benefits, that's even better, say manufacturers. "Men like simple and clean," says Tami de Vries, account manager at Nordic Care in Scottsdale, Arizona. "Men need to know the basics: what the products are for, when to use them and how they will see improvements. Keep it short—key benefits only."

As with other store areas, keep the skincare section clean and well lit. To make the area more appealing to males, include photography of men.

EDUCATE EMPLOYEES

Once you have the guys in your store, employees can make or break a sale. First, staff members must be trained to welcome men in the store and to make them feel comfortable. Next, knowing that skin care can be confusing for many consumers, employees must have product knowledge and be able to easily convey that to shoppers.

"The more educated the store owners, managers and employees become about the products offered, the more successful the store will be," Stearn says. Derma e provides retailer education as well as monthly call-in training seminars.

Jacobs, whose company also provides retailer training, says education is best when focused on the benefits and the results—not the chemistry behind the products. "It works and it's not sticky," he says as an example of his Matte For Men Complete Face and Head Care Lotion with SPF 25.

“Educating your sales staff to understand the skincare products, how they work and the results they deliver will typically convert the sale very easily,” adds LeDuc. “Skin care is no different than any other product you sell in your beauty store—you have to understand the product well enough to communicate it to your customer. A friendly salesperson who is laid back and available to invite men to try the products will also help a great deal.”

IF THEY TRY IT, THEY’LL LIKELY BUY IT

Samples and testers are key to connecting with this demographic. “Sixty-five percent of men will buy a product they have had a chance to test or sample as compared with 22% of women shoppers,” says LeDuc.

“Sampling is a great way to introduce men to something new,” recommends Nordic Care’s de Vries. She also says two-for-one promotions can entice customers to new products.

Testers allow men to check out the product for themselves, opening the package, smelling the product

and using it. Jacobs says testers help introduce customers to the Matte For Men line—70% of men that purchase a Matte For Men product end up buying another one. “Our products are very unique,” he adds. “They try them and immediately see the results.”

Ask your manufacturers reps and sales reps for full-size testers; the way a product feels matters. “Men’s hands are generally larger than women’s hands, so they don’t want anything petite,” Woody’s Kochanski says. “They want to grab onto a jar or bottle and have it feel comfortable in their hands.”

Numerous stores opt to keep their skincare products behind the counter, notes LeDuc, but he cautions that sales can be lost if customers don’t know that you have the products and are not offered the chance to touch, feel, smell and read about them. “If you select to keep your skincare products behind the counter or locked in a cabinet,” he says, “be sure to use your product display, testers and brochures in a well-visited shelf area to help customers find it.”

WORK WITH THOSE WOMEN

A store’s biggest ally when it comes to increasing men’s skincare sales is ... its female clients. “Ask your female customers if they have a male family member or friend that might need some help with their skin,” suggests de Vries. “If so, give them a sample of something easy like Nordic Care Foot Care Cream. Your female clients are your key to introducing products to men.”

Kochanski, who questions if there truly is a strong market for men’s skin care, says the only way to sell these products is to target women. “If you can get a woman to buy skin care for a man, you have half the battle won,” he adds.

“Naturally, women want to keep their men looking great,” LeDuc points out, “so very often they will select [beauty] products that they both can use. Women especially can be allies in getting men to try and buy skincare products when they themselves have experienced a product that worked.”

According to Jacobs, 40% of Matte For Men’s sales come from women buying it for men. Women are great at

introducing men to the products and for something like the company’s Antioxidant Shave Gel, women love it and even use it for themselves.

Ultimately, as with any product category, it comes down to knowing your customers. “Don’t just choose men’s products that you think are going to sell and hope that they do [well],” Stearn advises. “Learn about your customers’ expectations and skincare needs.”

And once you’ve determined their needs, look for products they can’t find just anywhere. “There are some brands that are everywhere, and nothing is unique about them,” Jacobs says. Look for different technologies—products that are the most effective and address specific needs.”

Remember, customers who shop in beauty stores are looking for unique products. “We believe that sales will continue to increase as men demand higher quality skincare products that are results-driven and straightforward to use,” concludes LeDuc.

April Miller is a Cleveland-based freelance writer.

Skin Care For Him

Creating or expanding the men's skincare selection in your beauty store? Then consider the following 12 supplier sources.

SK1N Probiotic Systems www.sk1nprobiotics.com **800.717.7516**

This company's products are all-natural and formulated using the maximum percentages of probiotics to deliver phenomenal results. Short-term effects of probiotics are the prevention of inflammation and infection, such as acne. Long term, they help to minimize the premature formation of wrinkles. The company's top-sellers for men are its Cleanser, Masque, Serum and Eye Cream.



Derma e Natural Bodycare www.dermae.com **800.521.3342**

The Tea Tree and E line helps a wide variety of skin problems, such as athlete's foot, ringworm, scalp or skin fungi and blisters. All products in the line are made of blends of eco-friendly tea tree oil, a potent antibacterial, antifungal and natural antiseptic; and vitamin E, nature's best-known antioxidant and moisturizer.



Nordic Care www.nordiccare.com **877.588.3700**

The simple and effective Foot Care Cream pampers the often-overlooked feet. It softens and reduces the

appearance of calluses, soothes the uncomfortable itch associated with dry skin, treats cracked heels and helps protect the skin against bacteria. Key ingredients include urea, the skin's natural moisturizer; glycerin; lactic acid; and eucalyptus.



Matte For Men www.matteformen.com

The best-selling item in this skincare line from Lescoja is the Complete Face and Head Care Lotion with SPF 25. The nonsticky formula is marketed as the only all-in-one lotion that provides powerful protection against UVA and UVB rays, noticeably reduces the appearance of unwanted skin and scalp shine, and moisturizes and conditions the skin and scalp.



Woody's Quality Grooming
www.woodysgrooming.com
888.294.9663

For the guy looking to "roll the Woody's way," this brand from American International Industries serves up a line of basic, no-frills products that gets the job done, including Pre Shave, Foaming Shave Gel and Post Shave Rescue. Show the men the results, but know that they exfoliate, reduce fine lines and wrinkles, and moisturize the skin.



All Season Nails
www.allseasonnails.com
800.762.6245

The Natural Lava Rock Pumice Stone from this Star International brand is great for smoothing away rough,

dry patches of skin in one step; the Pedicure Fizzers soften skin and nail cuticles.



GYM Grooming
www.gymgrooming.com
888.205.3355

This brand's Comfort Smooth Shaving Gel, manufactured by parent company Christopher Philip, includes essential oils and moisturizers. These help prep the area, provide easy razor glide and assist in preventing nicks. The gel contains no fragrance, and is not only great on a man's face but on shaved heads as well.



Bump Solutions For Him
www.frommonline.com
800.323.4252

From Fromm International's Diane Products, this relieves ingrown hair and visible irritation from shaving, and comes in four and eight ounces. Recommended for daily use, it has an antibacterial agent; an anti-inflammatory agent to reduce itching, redness and irritation; and a moisturizer to hydrate and heal the skin. All imagery, packaging and in-store displays target men and showcase the product's benefits.



GYM GROOMING MODEL PHOTO CREDIT—PHOTOGRAPHER: JASON ELLIS;
HAIR/MAKEUP/STYLING: CHRIS CAMPBELL FOR GYM GROOMING

Skincare Solutions by Bodyography

www.bodyography.com

800.783.9969

This Robanda International brand incorporates the very latest in antiaging ingredient technology, placing it in the cosmeceuticals category. Within five to six weeks of continual use, users will see a visible difference in their skin. Products of particular interest to men include the Sun Defense Lotion with SPF 20, a night treatment and an eye treatment.



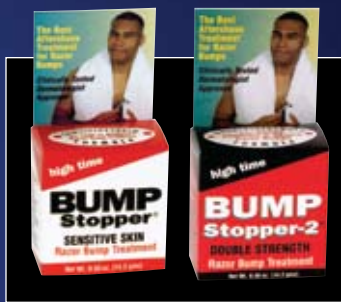
Bump Stopper

www.bumpstopper.com

800.843.5376

From High Time Products, this is marketed as the original razor bump treatment created in 1972 and has a loyal following. It helps clear and prevent unsightly razor bumps caused by ingrown hairs, and is available in sensitive formula

or double strength. The company offers a money-back guarantee and says that most customers see results in less than three days to five days.



Eshu

www.eshu.com.au

888.259.5824

This is a men's skincare line from Australia that's now available in the United States and is targeting beauty stores. Fresh scents of eucalyptus, citrus and mint create a clean and subtle scent that refreshes and then quickly fades. The line includes a face wash, two moisturizers (one with SPF 15) and a face scrub. The smart packaging is part of the line's personality and is sure to stand out.



Vineyard Collection Grapes

www.performancebrands.com

800.555.8895

From Performance Brands, this is an antioxidant skin moisturizer made with 100% nutraceutical-grade California grape-seed extracts to restore skin's resiliency and elasticity. The moisturizer is quickly absorbed into the skin with a fresh scent of vanilla, black raspberry and soft orchid that dissipates quickly. ■

