



Bare Essentials





Check out the latest ways to keep customers smooth and sleek all year long.

by Bridget Coila



It's that smooth time of year once again. As the temperature shoots up this spring and summer, many women will be looking for at-home hair-removal products to help them get ready for the season's skin-baring clothes and bathing suits. A growing number of your customers—the younger generation, in particular—may even be focused on achieving the smooth look year-round. “Teens and tweens don't want any body hair at all,” says Suzanna DeSoto, marketing manager for waxes and depilatories at Stamford, Connecticut-based Conair Corp. “They associate a hairless body with a cleaner body, and feel that hair removal is a necessity, not a luxury.”

That should all come as good news for stores that offer do-it-yourself hair-removal products. Even better, the painful waxing products of the past are no longer a woman's only option for attaining perfectly smooth skin. At-home hair removal doesn't have to mean discomfort or suffering anymore, nor is it the province of women only, as men are now getting into the act. Manufacturers have unveiled a host of new products designed to make hair removal easier, less irritating to the skin, and even somewhat pleasant. Here's a look at some of the options that are creating a buzz among smooth-skin devotees, and which are also attracting the attention of curious customers who want to try their own hand at creating a barely there bikini line or perfectly shaped eyebrows.

HOT WAX

When most consumers think of long-lasting hair removal, waxing is the first thing that comes to mind. This traditional method of hair removal involves heating wax to soften it, applying the formula to the skin, covering the area with a cloth strip and rapidly pulling it away to remove the hair. While most companies still offer this type of product, there's a growing trend toward easier application methods. As a result, women who once visited salons for leg-, underarm- and facial-hair waxing are now performing these services just as easily on themselves. Some consumers, especially younger women, are even branching out into at-home bikini and Brazilian waxing.





Conair Corp.

One method that's growing in popularity uses roll-on applicators. "Roll-on products don't require a separate applicator," explains Ira Shuldman, national sales manager at Emjoi, based in New York. Emjoi Roll-on Microwax can be heated in the microwave and rolls on in smooth rows. A cloth strip is then applied over the wax and pulled off, along with the unwanted hair. American International Industries, based in Los Angeles, also offers a line of roll-on waxing products: clean + easy Aromatherapy Microwavable Roll-On Waxes. The formulas heat in seconds, roll on with no drips or mess, and are available in formulations for sensitive skin, normal skin and coarse hair.

For customers who prefer the press-on, peel-off approach to hair removal, waxing strips are another way to get smooth. Conair offers the new Pure White Wax Pre-Waxed Body and Face Strips, which don't even need to be put in the microwave. Customers simply warm them between their hands before applying. The strips are available in 12-count boxes that also include Satin Release Post-Treatment Oil to soothe skin and remove any wax residue. "Strips are safe, convenient and disposable," attests DeSoto.

Orange, California-based T.R. International offers an assortment of waxing strips. The Moujan 2000 Pre-Waxed Strips help ensure mess-free hair removal, while the Aromatherapy Waxing Strips feature the perfect amount of wax to get the job done. Both are simple and effective treatments and are available in formulas for the face and body.

Los Angeles-based Spilo Worldwide has placed its focus on making the waxing process less messy and wasteful. "Waxing usually involves heating the entire jar of wax," says Chayu Pho, marketing manager of Spilo Worldwide. "But La Petite Cream Wax beads can be poured into a warmer, so the user only heats the amount that's needed. They're economical and make the whole hair-removal process easier to clean up."



American International Industries

Creating formulations that cause less irritation is another area where waxing manufacturers are making their mark. Many new products are now enriched with all-natural ingredients. "Companies are focusing on the recent influx of people with sensitive skin who are trying waxing," says Pho. "They're creating formulas that are gentle and won't irritate the skin."

Conair's Satin Smooth line contains titanium dioxide, which acts as a barrier to protect skin from irritation and prevents the wax from sticking to it. The line also contains formulas made with aloe vera, emollients and essential oils, all of which help soothe and smooth the skin during and after waxing. "Since some of the wax gets into the pores during the hair-removal process, all-natural ingredients reduce the chance of causing an allergic reaction," says Emjoi's Shuldman.

Beyond practical ingredients that benefit the skin or make the waxing procedure easier, some manufacturers



Halsik Ltd.

THE SOURCE

The following manufacturers can help you round out your store's selection of hair-removal products:

ALEXANDRIA PROFESSIONAL BODY SUGARING, 800/957-8427
www.alexandriasugaring.com

AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL INDUSTRIES, 800/621-9585
www.aiibeauty.com

APEX MARKETING GROUP
888/990-2739
www.dermanude.net

BELAIR MANUFACTURING CO.
818/727-7071
www.belair-usa.com

BRANDON FEMME CO.
800/228-2984
www.brandonfemme.com

COLORA, 800/989-0969
colora@rcn.com

CONAIRPRO, 800/726-6247
www.conairpro.com

DIVI INTERNATIONAL
800/233-7453
info@depilave-usa.com

EMJOI, 888/993-6564
www.emjoi.com

EQUIBAL LABS, 800/247-2405
www.nufree.com

FORTUNA WAX, 818/749-4561
www.fortunawax.com

HALSIK LTD., 630/613-7202
www.f103creamshave.com

MASTEX INDUSTRIES, 800/343-7444
frank@mastex.com

MP2 COSMETIQUES, 800/778-9850
www.mp2cosmetiques.com

PARISSA LABS, 888/986-9974
www.parissa.com

SPILO WORLDWIDE, 800/347-7456
www.spilo.com

STICK WITH US PRODUCTS
800/492-9464
www.moom.com

T.R. INTERNATIONAL
800/446-3998
www.moujan2000.com

WAX 'N WAXING BY NATURAL WAY
800/643-1626
www.waxnwaxing.com

XTREME TOOLS INTERNATIONAL
877/223-4782
www.xtremetools.net

Emjoi



are branching out to make waxing a more pleasant experience with the addition of fragrances. "The most recent trend we've seen is the addition of different scents and flavors," says Pho. "Companies have developed wine-, fruit- and even chocolate-scented waxes." AII's clean + easy Aromatherapy Microwavable Roll-on Waxes, for example, are available in fragrances of lavender and white grape, ginseng and mango, and green tea and apple. More recently, AII introduced Gigi Milk Chocolate Creme Wax and Espresso All Purpose Honee wax. The sweet fragrances of floral and fruit extracts can be found in T. R. International's Moujan Aromatherapy Waxing Strips, as well.

CREAM AND SUGAR

Sugaring is a hair-removal method similar to waxing. The practice dates back to ancient Egypt but is enjoying a resurgence in popularity among manufacturers and consumers alike. One advantage of sugaring, according to Pauline Yee, key account sales manager for Port Roberts, Washington-based Stick With Us Products, is that sugar formulas melt at a lower temperature than wax. "The head of our company invented the MOOM line for her daughters because she didn't want them getting burns from waxes," explains Yee. The MOOM collection includes a Botanical Hair Remover and formulations made with rose essence, lavender and tea tree oil. In fact, for body areas where only a small amount of hair is to be removed, customers don't have to heat MOOM at all—it adheres to the hair instead of the skin even at room temperature. "But for larger areas, we do recommend that the product be heated to a honey-like consistency," says Yee.

Parissa, based in Vancouver, British Columbia, has also caught on to the sugaring craze with its Quick & Easy 2-in-1 Roll-On Body Sugar and Chamomile Body Sugar products. The Roll-On formula is all-natural and gives salon-smooth results that last up to eight weeks, while the gentle Body Sugar is perfect for use on sensitive skin. A

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Stick With Us Products

few other sugar-based hair-removal items that might help you round out your store's product selection include AII's all-natural Gigi Sugar Bare products, made with pure cane sugar, and Conair's Satin Smooth Water-Soluble All Natural Honey Wax, which may be used on fine to medium hair and spreads easily over large areas of the skin.

Aside from ease of use and natural ingredients, sugar-based hair-removal products have other advantages over waxes. Sugar is a natural preservative; therefore, the risk of contamination by harmful bacteria is reduced. "It's gentler on the skin than products that contain alcohol and preservatives," adds Yee. Sugar products also make cleanup easy. Some body waxes require a special lotion to remove residue that's left on the skin, but sugar-based products typically require only soap and water.

For customers who are hesitant to try waxing or sugaring for fear of pain or damaged skin, depilatory creams provide another option. These products are even simpler to use. Just spread the cream on the target area, wait a few minutes and then wipe the hair off along with the product. But there is a caveat. Depilatories only work on the hair that's growing above the skin's sur-

Spilo Worldwide



face; therefore, the smooth results they provide don't last as long as with waxing or sugaring, which remove the hair from the root. Depilatories do, however, last longer than shaving—a plus for customers who are tired of next-day stubble.

"Depilatory creams are often viewed as a more temporary type of hair-removal product," says DeSoto. "Someone looking for longer-lasting results will probably want a wax." Customers have many depilatory products to choose from, including Conair's Satin Smooth Hair Removal Face Cream and Hair Removal Body Cream, which are designed for sensitive skin, and Moujan's aloe-vera-enriched Depilatory Foam Spray. Other professional depilatories targeted for home use include AII's Surgi-Care line, which now includes Odor Control Technology, and Apex Marketing Group's Derma Nude.

FOR MEN ONLY

The male demographic has not traditionally been associated with waxing and depilatories, but manufacturers say this is changing fast. "The age and gender of our customers now stretches across the board," says Pho. "Men are a new niche, because it's now more acceptable for them to get waxed."

Halsik Ltd., based in Wilmette, Illinois, is one company dedicated to guys. Its Formula 103 razorless hair-removal line is focused on ethnic male consumers. "We found that razor burns are an important issue for men, especially in the ethnic community," says Nnamdi Uzokwe, principal for Halsik Ltd. "And one of the best ways to prevent razor burns is to avoid using razors in the first place." Younger men in particular are willing to try products like Formula 103, and Uzokwe considers the 17- to 34-year-old ethnic male as Halsik's primary demographic. "This is a very dynamic group," he

says. "They're willing to try something new if they're convinced that it has a new technology or formulation that will benefit them." The Formula 103 line includes versions for sensitive skin and coarse beards; there's also a new Sport formula for those who want the bald look without shaving.

Stick with Us Products recently introduced MOOM4Men, a sugar-based product that leaves the skin smooth and hair-free for up to eight weeks. The formula features boswellia and aloe vera to help soothe the skin and prevent swelling or redness. "Men are becoming much more conscientious about the hair on their bodies," says DeSoto. "They don't want to be viewed as hairy Neanderthals, which is why the men's hair-removal market is growing by leaps and bounds."

EDUCATION AND MERCHANDISING

Manufacturers believe that education is key to effectively marketing at-home hair-removal products. Retailers need to know exactly who their customers are and the best ways to market to them, and customers need to know how to properly use hair-removal products. "People buy hair-removal products for themselves, or perhaps a mother will buy it for her daughter," says Shuldman. "They're not generally purchased as a gift for someone else."

Most manufacturers make a point of providing educational information for both of these groups. In addition to counter and floor displays, a lot of companies produce marketing materials that educate customers on product usage—an important selling point for those who've never attempted at-home hair-removal.

A key selling point for anyone who seems a little hesitant about at-home hair removal is the time-saving factor of these products. "Women are looking for ways to remove hair that will save them time in the long run," remarks Shuldman, "and customers gain back personal time, especially if the results last for

weeks." Whether they choose wax, sugar or depilatory products, they'll certainly save time by not going back and forth to the spa or salon—and probably quite a bit of money as well.

Retailers also need to understand the difference between hair-removal methods in order to help customers choose the products that are best for them. "They need to know that facial and bikini-area waxing require different products," explains Pho. "And sensitive skin might be a factor in product selection as well."

Knowing customers' needs should help boost the final sales bill. Retailers can increase profits on hair-removal products by offering add-on items too. Pho suggests

Parissa



recommending a warmer unit to heat up the wax, especially for customers who wax frequently. Wood application sticks and a lotion to soothe the skin after hair removal are other popular accessories, as well as a cleanser to remove oils from the skin before the hair-removal process. Making sure that customers have the proper accessories not only helps store sales, but also keeps customers satisfied and comfortable with the process. This, of course, will most likely lead to repeat sales a few weeks down the road. After all, hair doesn't usually stop growing, and neither should your waxing, sugaring and depilatory profits. ■

Bridget Coila is a freelance writer based in Burien, Washington.