

Men may not be great shoppers,  
but they do buy lots of stuff.

# Oh, Man!

## What really makes a man open his wallet and spend?

**Lisa Klauser:** We're seeing a trend around men who are really starting to care a lot more about how they look. A Nielsen study we did found that 67 percent of men agree that it was more important for men to look their best.

There are certain other things that become apparent when you start to delve into that particular insight. First, the product has got to perform. There's a real comfort level amongst guys with brands that they know and trust. They are definitely looking to stick with what they know.

**Peter Leimbach:** Our Nielsen research tells us that men are becoming much more likely to be the primary shopper in the household. Some of the quantitative data from our syndicated resources also tends to show that these male primary shoppers are not as concerned about price as the female primary shopper.

However, one of the really interesting things that we saw in our recent ethnographic research is that these male primary shoppers know prices; they can just rattle them off. So, since the recession,

there may not be as much distinction between the way men and women shop as there was before.

**Katrin Ley:** First, they want products that are easy to understand and that enable them to be ready for anything and at their best at all times. So, versatile products that have a multi-purpose functionality — for running, training, going for a walk — are very important to men.

A fourth factor is that being a father leads men to being much more open and willing to spend on fitness products. This goes back to the notion of being prepared for anything, because they want to exercise and also play pick-up games with their children, for example.

**Gary Wagner:** Men have a particular need or are looking

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In addition, men are much more brand-driven than women. Men won't choose a brand if they're not familiar with it. Although women still look at the brand as important, there are many more elements such as style or color that makes the brand less important to women.

Third, men really don't want to spend a lot of time shopping around. A friend of mine calls this "mall disease." If they know their sizes they don't feel they need to try it on and so the online channel is much more appropriate and easier to shop.

for a net result. If you can meet that need, or assure them of a particular net result, they will spend money against that.

A man does not watch a detergent commercial and attempt to understand what that detergent can do for him. A man looks at his shirts in the morning and determines whether those shirts are in a condition that meets his need for that day.

It doesn't matter whether the net result costs two dollars or ten dollars; what matters is meeting

### A ROUNDTABLE FEATURING

**Lisa Klauser**  
Unilever

**Peter Leimbach**  
ESPN

**Katrin Ley**  
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**Gary Wagner**  
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Marketing  
Services

his need. Men are not going to talk about it. It's never going to be: "Wow, is this shirt soft!" It's always going to be about whether the shirt met his needs.

### What's the most surprising insight into the way men shop?

**Klauser:** The thing I would want people *not* to forget is that women are still doing a majority of the shopping for men. So, when we're developing solutions, particularly in-store, we cannot lose sight of that fact. You don't want to alienate the women who are shopping for men.

We are now also seeing the rise of men doing more shopping for themselves. When they are shopping, it is very much about getting in, and getting what they are looking for. It is "commando" shopping and so we need to simplify the shopping experience so they can get what they're looking for.

However, there are certain "linger points," when men are doing their shopping. Electronics and music are places where they will take a little bit more time to browse. So, the ability to capture them and present your brands when they are in those parts of the store is very compelling.

**Leimbach:** What is surprising is that men who are the primary shoppers say that grocery shopping is a way to relax. Men tend to like to do their shopping at night, sometimes during the week, after work.

They also say they'd rather do the grocery shopping than clean the bathroom.

When you get these guys to the store, we've observed that they don't see the average advertising

around them. Guys will pass 54-inch HD LCDs hanging from the ceiling and not even notice them. So, we've come to the conclusion, at least directionally, that messaging within the store is often lost on guys.

Another interesting insight is how often guys say that word-of-mouth is important to them. If they find out about things through trusted friends and co-workers, they will take that advice and act on it. They also really want to be the person giving the advice. They like getting the credit for turning somebody on to something new.

**Ley:** With men, you have this juxtaposition on one side of the importance of looking good, but then on the other side spending very, very little time shopping. If they feel a product allows them to function at—or look—their best, then men will go for it. So, the

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PETER LEIMBACH

priority message should focus on looking good.

However, because they spend very little time actually shopping and exploring, they buy relatively few pieces of apparel and footwear. So, these few pieces have to have that element of versatility and be something they are able to wear on a repeated basis.

**Wagner:** The greatest surprise is that the only reason that men shop is because they couldn't find somebody who would do that work for them. I don't mean the physical work; I mean the mental work. Men are buyers, not shoppers.

As a result, men are far more "viral" than most marketers think they are. If my friend has a television that meets my needs, I'm going to buy it. All I want is to become a buyer. I don't want to be a shopper and so simply buying the same set as my friend has cut out the shopping.

### Are there any product categories that are particularly underdeveloped for men?

**Klauser:** We look at this a lot. The majority of the growth is really coming from outside of the shaving category. For example, male toiletries are actually growing a lot faster than shaving. So, categories like personal wash, hair care and deodorant are really driving growth.

Unilever, over the past five years, has driven two-thirds of the growth in the male category. For example, in 2009, men's-care was about a \$4.8 billion category, and it's grown about nine percent from 2005 to 2009.

If you take razors out of that, it's actually grown 21 percent. This growth is all based on the insight that men care more about how they look than they did in the past.

**Leimbach:** In the cereal category, some of the cereals that are targeted to kids, like Corn Flakes and Cheerios, might be marketed to men. Men are not going to

reach for the Special K and they're certainly not going to be reaching for most kids' cereals. But there really isn't all that much for them in cereals, so maybe there's an opportunity to target men in that space.

**Ley:** In the sporting-goods arena, I would point out two areas. One is the toning category. This would be shoes that stimulate and activate your muscles while doing normal activities, or provide you with extra muscle stimulation while running or training.

That is a category that, so far, has focused mainly on women. We believe that there is a really large opportunity to make this relevant to men. We have done research that shows that the actual concept of toning is highly relevant to men.

Most men do have opinions and influence — from detergents to baby products to almost anything in the cupboard. However, that doesn't mean it necessarily makes financial sense to market those products to them.

### What is the best way to get at insight for men?

**Klauser:** The methodology is the same as with women, but the experience is very different. For example, we do a lot of shop-a-longs to understand how men are doing the shopping. But the difference when you shop with a man versus a woman is like night and day.

Men are going to plow through whatever it is they need to get

in their own home environment where they are comfortable, where the products and the things that they are using are there. Nothing can beat the opportunity to observe them in-store, either.

There are interesting situations during shop-a-longs where the guy's significant other is trying to put something in the cart impulsively and he's stopping her because he's much more on-task. You're not going to get those kinds of little nuggets just doing survey research.

**Ley:** The best way to get at male insights is just to talk to them. The problem is that men tend not to be as forthright or honest in some of their responses, specifically as compared to women. Men are more likely than women to say what they are expected to say.

So, there is this difference between what they say versus what they do. Women are much more authentic and forthcoming. They share a lot, sometimes almost too much. They are very, very open and very articulate regarding what they feel.

To address that, we are often doing anonymous boards, where men can comment on things in an anonymous way. Very often men admit things anonymously that they wouldn't admit to their buddies — whether it's the usage of eye cream or that they get their eyebrows waxed.

**Wagner:** Women do incredibly well on panel discussions and surveys because that's not so different from their day-to-day discussions with other women.

Men, on the other hand, are not prepared because the conversations they've had with their peers in no way relates to the questions that the marketer is looking for. Men

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The second arena in sporting goods is performance apparel. Women spend two times as much on apparel than on footwear in the athletic arena. Most men are still wearing cotton tees without any performance sports technologies — that's true for the US, as well as Europe and Asia.

**Wagner:** Many products could receive more focus, but finite budgets dictate ROI-based decisions and the male ROI is lower.

But if there is a category where you might shift more focus, it would be products that are used in the home and that are generally marketed to women.

and then if they have a few extra minutes, they'll spend time looking at things that are interesting to them. Women, on the other hand, go up and down every aisle, and are much more thorough.

We also do home visits, where we look at not only how men shop but also how they are loading, stocking and then ultimately consuming the product. We also have sophisticated tools that enable us to look at different shelf sets on a virtual basis and have men evaluate them.

**Leimbach:** I don't know if there's anything that's going to beat just talking to them and seeing them

tend to re-invent themselves to be who they want to be versus who they are.

So, to understand a man when it comes to marketing flat-panel televisions, you want to spend a day at Best Buy just watching, listening and learning — not asking. If you find yourself asking questions you're going to be taken

mindset has always been: "I'm going to grab whatever is there in the shower."

But now there's this choice and a need to explain why they might want something new. Beauty-care brands are all doing a pretty good job not just on the younger end, as some of the newer brands in the space are doing, but also certainly

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off the track. Observational studies with no interaction are critical to understanding men's buying habits.

### Who do you think is doing the best job marketing to men and why?

**Klauser:** ESPN does a fabulous job of connecting with guys and doing it in a way that's so relevant for them, both on television and online. They've really found a strong place in the hearts and minds of their male viewers, and they've done a fabulous job of building that loyalty.

I'm certainly proud of the work we've done here at Unilever on brands like Axe and Dove for Men. We've gotten celebrity talent like Michael Strahan and Chase Utley to talk about how they take care of their bodies by working out, and then take care of their skin afterwards with Vaseline.

**Leimbach:** There are a number of brands doing a great job in the male grooming area and particularly in extensions like body wash. For most guys the

in talking to the high school or college-age guy.

**Ley:** Old Spice does a good job with its "smell like a man's man" communication by having fun with the consumer perception of the brand. Humor is an important emotional trigger for men and it creates a viral effect.

Our research finds that there are a lot of men who are not really inspired by a hard-core performance message. They are working out and staying in shape. But it's really more to have fun and enjoy the journey and not just about the outcome.

This fun, irreverent idea of sports is the approach that we are taking with our campaign for Reebok Zig Tech shoes. It's a nice illustration of how you can explain the performance benefits of a product using athletes like Chad Ochocinco but do so in a lighter, more fun, way. It's not so brash or intense.

**Wagner:** I'm a big fan of Gillette because they don't surround the brand with aspiration. Men just need their razors to work and that's the beauty of Gillette. What am I going to do? I'm going to



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walk into the store. I'm going to look for the Gillette razors. I'm going to say, "Damn, they are not on sale." And then I'm going to buy them. And that's it.

Miller does an effective job in the beer category because they use a direct message and stay within the real world. Men do not like to leave the real world regardless of what people think. They don't believe that drinking Corona is going to put them on a beach with a beautiful woman. Miller speaks more to who men really are than their aspirations. ■