

TITLE OF CASE STUDY: Olay Smooth Finish Facial Hair Removal Duo

BUSINESS SITUATION

Olay is known by women worldwide as a leader in women's skin care, with best-in-class products across facial cleansing and moisturizing, personal cleansing and cosmetics. As a category leader backed by decades of skin science and rich brand equity and heritage, Olay has a strong business case to continue delighting consumers and growing the category with game-changing innovation.

Our search for opportunity brought us to facial hair removal. According to a groundbreaking 2010 Olay Global Consumer Needs survey, over 80% of women occasionally remove facial hair, and – this was a surprise to us – they are more concerned about unwanted facial hair than they are about fine lines and wrinkles. Plus, women were very dissatisfied with current hair removal options – so dissatisfied, that 80% told us that they would change their habits if offered a gentler product that wouldn't lead to redness, irritation or pain.

Seeing this huge unmet need, Olay developed a specially formulated two-step system to give women smooth, visibly hair-free skin in a way that's as gentle as a feather. The product itself was a winner, addressing the key functional needs in the category in a new and effective way that women recognized as a clear step up from existing hair removal methods.

But, the opportunity also came with a major challenge. Facial hair removal (FHR) is a sensitive topic for women – one of those categories where embarrassment prevents active engagement. We needed to figure out how to market our product, and throughout this process we were guided by women through a comprehensive research program designed to understand their emotional, as well as, rational interaction with the category.

CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVES

Our vision was to make the category more accessible and break down the taboos that have long been associated with female facial hair removal. By doing this, Olay aimed to convert women who were dissatisfied with other removal methods, while also bringing new women into the benefit space for the very first time. Long term, Olay's vision is to make facial hair removal an integral—and uncompromising—part of every woman's beauty routine.

To do this, we had to establish Olay as a credible entrant into facial hair removal, and educate the consumer on how/why the product is so revolutionary, compared to the current set of well-established competitors.

The key pillars of our strategy were:

1. Leverage Olay's existing skin-care heritage to provide beauty credentials, broad acceptability and trust in the product that competition doesn't achieve.
2. De-stigmatize facial hair removal with information, conversation, and **use advertising as a vehicle to re-frame positive engagement with the category**.
3. In particular, **use advertising to create a feminine, playful and carefree tonality** to overcome existing attitudes toward FHR as masculine, embarrassing and harsh.

4. **Engage the consumer across multiple touch-points** with education and discussion to overcome the many myths and skepticism about FHR.
5. Create such a positive connection with women that they will support a premium price point

RESEARCH STORY

Research was central to the definition of every element of the campaign. We used a diversified research program, including: traditional and innovative approaches comprised of foundational research (H&P, Segmentation), concept qualification (online discussion panels, in-depth qualitative, brand stretch/naming, concept testing), communication screening/qualification (qualitatives, Print & TV iterative testing, eye tracking) and in-market tracking. At each stage we were able to use consumer understanding to inform smarter decisions.

Global Habits & Practices research, **Segmentation** research and **Market Measures analysis** in multiple countries helped us define the opportunity, proving that Olay had the right to succeed in this new space. The Non-Blades & Razor Facial Hair Removal segment is surprisingly large - 75% the size of current Blades & Razor market. This was a significant opportunity our Company was missing, with our focus to date on the B&R segment via the Gillette Venus brand. With women spending on average \$5 a month on 'inadequate' facial hair removers, we learned that if satisfied, they would be willing to pay up to 4x that in order to find a solution that works to meet their needs.

Quantitative and qualitative **Brand Stretch/naming** and **Concept Testing** in North America and Western Europe showed women trusted Olay to provide a gentle and effective product, and would be willing to try it if we could communicate effectively. It also made more sense to them as a skin care item from Olay than as a hair removal adjacency from the Venus brand. With these basics resolved, we were ready to start developing the integrated advertising campaign.

Through consumer research we quickly identified one primary barrier and key consumer insight: EMBARRASSMENT.

It's hard to overstate the emotion associated with this category. Women often dread walking down the depilatory aisle, cringe at the thought of painfully removing their unwanted facial hair and shudder at the idea of red, irritated skin as a noticeable side effect. If our target consumer refuses even to talk about her facial hair and is too embarrassed to seek advice or find a better solution, how could we expect her to buy our product? It was clear we needed a fully integrated campaign not only to introduce the new Olay Smooth Finish Facial Hair Removal Duo, but to reshape the category by reinforcing her femininity, despite the ugliness of the topic, and to encourage engagement with our brand with confidence. The first real impact came not from what was being said, but from the fact it was being said at all, and our research allowed executions across all channels to be relatable, approachable and educational.

Developing a unified campaign idea.

We used an iterative research process to guide development of the creative. Starting with the discipline of "**Printcepts**" – simple creative ideas presented to women in the recognizable form of print ads – we explored a variety of ideas in relatively inexpensive online research using Ipsos **ASI's Next*Idea** platform. From this we learned what worked and what needed to be improved, refining the basis for the campaign idea that we adapted to TV, Print, In-Store and other media.

Connecting through Insight. Embarrassment was a key issue. Women felt a lack of femininity and a need to hide from the topic, creating a 'grab and go' mentality at the point of purchase and a reluctance to engage with advertising. So, the first obstacle was to reach and engage her, which led to a key strategic decision: *Approach the issue directly, yet in a playful and approachable way.*

In early quantitative copy testing we found the ads with a very clear and simple message were better received. While we learned to keep the communication short and to the point, we knew it was also important to be a bit witty to try and relate to our consumer. By using clever language and positioning the copy in an unexpected way, the team found a way in. The copy was placed close to the model's mouth/upper lip in text that was distinct enough to get noticed, yet still somewhat subtle, and research confirmed a better response to this. We also learned ads that included props and playful facial expressions further brought the story to life in a way women found relatable.

Tonality was Light-Hearted yet Confident: The print work isolated the idea, but TV allowed us to bring it to life. We couldn't just say femininity, we needed to show it! The TV testing took facial expressions and the use of props to the next level. **The feather visual** became the clever link to the product and end benefit, representing humor and gentleness, and became the unifying image for the advertising campaign. This provided a consistent campaign personality and POV that was the driving force behind the strong emotional response that we observed in the research.

Emotional End Benefit with Function: Now that we had created a clever way to reach her, we needed to communicate the message as simply as we did in the print ads. The team invested in explaining and visualizing the 2-step process thoroughly. We knew from earlier qualitative and quantitative research that the product's new 2-step process was intuitive and reassuring, so visualizing the product in use was key. Most current products featured 1 step that was painful and irritating. Women saw Olay's Smooth Finish Facial Hair Removal Duo as a 'cool new tool' with a differentiating, competitive edge. The pieces were coming together.

Integrating the campaign idea across media

Overcoming the "Aisle of Shame": We learned shopping for depilatories can sometimes be even more embarrassing than talking about them. The depilatory aisle has been referred to as the "Aisle of Shame." *"I'd rather shop in skincare than that other aisle. There's more hope there."*

That meant we needed to start the conversation about women's unwanted facial hair before she even went to the store. **TruthorHair.com** was developed as a content hub to educate her on facial hair removal in a safe environment. It was a rich source of information, where she could view videos, read articles and reviews, and uncover the myths and facts surrounding hair removal. It also included links to eRetailers where she could purchase the product, providing the discreet, convenient shopping experience that is especially important to many women. **In-store**, Olay Facial Hair Removal Duo was strategically placed in the skincare aisle along with other Olay products to position it as a beauty product, while easing the shopping experience by dodging the "Aisle of Shame". To aid find-ability in-store, we leveraged **out-of-aisle shopper communication** tools in the depilatory aisle to direct her to find the product within Olay skincare. Finding an innovative FHR product in an aisle that makes her feel beautiful was a unique way to prompt product trial. We also ensured that she could easily find and purchase the product online.

Navigating the Unknown: The FHR category lacks a "norm" or basis for building a relationship with the shopper. She purchases products that she hopes will work and finds that her current solutions have been discovered through trial and error. She is extremely skeptical about finding a solution that will not irritate her skin and actually work. Also, since there is little brand loyalty or guidance in-aisle she is left to navigate the category on her own. *"I would never ask someone for help. If I couldn't find what I was looking for, I'd just go to a different store."*

We set out to create a nomenclature and a dialogue about the "problem" and then offer a solution from a trusted brand with 60 years of experience in skin care. **In-store education and in-aisle and out-of-aisle shelf tools** interrupt the shopping trip and communicate product benefits and point of difference. **Print** and **out-of-home** executions drive awareness and continue to disrupt the FHR category by positioning the product as a transformative beauty skincare experience. **Online search** was a priority to ensure she

could identify Olay as the proper solution for her facial hair removal needs and find content to make her feel more comfortable prior to purchasing. **On Facebook**, we engaged our close-knit, but extensive group of over ½ million Olay fans in a fun and whimsical way to not only raise awareness for the new product, but also to provide a sense of camaraderie – which took off with huge success. Our **online community** manager was well-versed in facial hair removal so she could respond to our consumers’ intimate questions and dispel any myths on our discussion tab. From the Facebook discussions we heard important feedback about how the product worked, which **helped us refine communication** to emphasize applicability to the largest segment of users, those with fine-to-medium facial hair. It also added energy and insights to our development plans for future skus.

International research sessions and testing confirmed existing barriers and provided additional local insights. Our advertising research was done in the US, UK, Spain and Mexico giving us confidence in the transferability of the basic campaign idea, and Canada is the first international launch so far. Our research revealed slightly different creative triggers with Canadian consumers. The feather, which was the icon for gentleness, became less of a focus as we adapted to the Canadian taste for more practical, less fanciful ads. The upper lip problem area became the focus in the CA market, and was creatively addressed with a “copystache” which we had experimented with in earlier research. **Eye Tracking** research confirmed a positive consumer response to the “copystache” which was executed in “peel and reveal print” and out-of-home transit executions. The **“Peel and Reveal print”** addressed the price barrier and encouraged trial with a removable coupon, while **Out-of-Home bus shelters and subway take-overs** in Toronto continued to drive the unexpected FHR dialogue, helping build mainstream acceptance of the message.

CAMPAIGN DESCRIPTION

Based on habits & practices and segmentation research, we designed our campaign around a target This consumer is involved in the beauty category and wants to look her best however she does not associate facial hair removal with her skincare routine. The goal of the holistic campaign was to reframe her mindset by introducing Olay’s facial hair removal solution as the foundation of her beauty regimen.

Creative and media plan elements were specifically designed to address our target’s barriers to purchase, as identified by our research:

Barriers to Trial/Purchase	Solution
Awareness <i>I would be interested in facial hair removal from a new brand because I have unwanted facial hair but don't want people to see me show interest.. I didn't know Olay had this product.</i>	Launched with high levels of National TV across women’s programming once the product hit shelves.
Skepticism <i>I hate my method because it irritates my skin, but I'll do anything to remove the hair. I want a better solution, but I don't believe there is one (so I don't look).</i>	Developed custom advertorial content with top beauty/fashion titles (i.e. Allure, Cosmo, Elle, Glamour, Marie Claire, New Beauty, etc.) featuring expert dermatologists to educate her on facial hair removal and position Olay Smooth Finish Facial Hair Removal Duo as the first step in her beauty routine.
Education <i>I want more information on how this works & have had trouble discreetly finding information in the past, and I am too embarrassed to ask.</i>	Created a discreet information portal with Truthorhair.com, which provided FHR myths and facts, product info, videos and an opportunity to buy discreetly in the comfort of her own home. Additionally a Facebook site was created to serve as a forum for FHR discussions and allow women to trade stories/advice.
Value <i>I'm used to paying \$5-10 for my current product. This (Olay) is a lot more expensive and I don't understand how much \$20 is getting me.</i>	Highlighted efficacy of product duo across all channels to overcome purchase anxiety.
Purchase <i>I find shopping for FHR embarrassing so there's no way I would ask anyone in the store for help finding it.</i>	Place product within skincare aisle among her other Olay beauty products to allow her to avoid the aisle of shame. Close the sale with efficacy based product claim throughout multiple POS shelf tools and product displays.

The fully-integrated media plan was rooted in our consumer understanding, **allowing women to explore the products discreetly online**, providing information and a forum for discussion, while **broadcast media put a clever public face on a common, but “unmentionable” problem**. The campaign carried through in-store and promotional materials, and continued the unexpected discussion of FHR in out-of-home and transit advertising.

	Running Dates
TV	September 26, 2011 to present
Print	September 26, 2011 to present
Online + Mobile	August 1, 2011 to present
In Store	September 27, 2011 to present
Outdoor	November 7, 2011 to present (Canada Only)
External Relations	August 1, 2011 to present

BUSINESS RESULTS

The campaign so far has been an amazing success—**Olay’s Hair Removal Duo rose to become the skincare category’s biggest new item of Q3 2011***, and in less than 2 months, **Olay’s weekly product dollar sales were more than 3x greater than the next leading Facial Hair Removal cream***, earning the brand the #1 position in the category in the US.

- Copy test results showed significant boosts in Persuasion among our target and the broader sample of females 18-65, with Branded Recall significantly above norms.
- In-market ad tracking confirms the ads are driving purchase, with 69% of target consumers who saw the ads claiming positive purchase intent (64% among the broader Total Female sample).
- Trial: Month 2 trial is exceeding goal by 3x, driven by strong in - store launch fundamentals synced with high - scoring TV/Print media.
- Repeat: Initial reads show that Sophia is on track to meet or exceed best in class repeat rate for the FHR category—a huge accomplishment given the super premium price point (\$24.99) relative to other competitors in the category (\$3.00-8.00).
- Less than 12 hours into the online presale, Olay FHR was the #1 bestseller on Amazon Beauty
- More than 500,000 women have visited Olay’s TruthorHair.com to learn more about FHR.
- Olay’s #1 sku in Canada, even ahead of Regenerist Microsculpting cream! (dollar sales).
- Olay’s #1 ranked product in terms of \$ sales amongst both US Hispanics and US African Americans (dollar sales).
- Olay’s #2 best selling sku in US—an amazing feat given this is an all-new adjacency & benefit space, still in year one, from a brand that has over 100 other skus in market! (dollar sales).
- Olay’s #1 best selling sku on Olay.com, selected 50% more often than the next best-seller.
- Consumer Relations data shows the top question (32%) is “where can I buy it”!
- Beauty Editors are in love with Olay’s newest product...
 - *Lucky* magazine said about the product... “Um. Best. Idea. Ever.”
 - *Marie Claire* said it was one of the “top 25 new products that will seriously change your life.”
 - *Real Beauty Magazine* “Best Beauty Products of 2011” Gold Star Award

- And the best result of all – from a happy consumer: *“This is the best purchase I have ever made. It's so easy to use, doesn't hurt at all, and totally beats going to the salon and getting your lip waxed. Cheaper and better by far! I am going to use this stuff on a weekly basis from now on.”*

*Nielsen US Weekly Sales Data