

CASE STUDIES

Gillette Fusion ProGlide Case Study:

Using consumer-focused marketing to instill brand confidence

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DATAMONITOR VIEW***Catalyst***

In June 2010, Gillette launched its new Fusion ProGlide razor. Boasting seven new technological advances, the Fusion ProGlide claims to provide males with enhanced shaving performance and optimal comfort. Within ten weeks of being launched, Gillette had sold 2.5 million Fusion ProGlide razors; exceeding sales achieved by Gillette Fusion in 2006 and in doing so has become the world's bestselling razor. This case study will examine how Gillette has evolved its marketing strategy to establish a more consumer-focused approach and in doing so has successfully instilled brand confidence among an increasingly skeptical male consumer base.

Summary

- Over the past two decades, Gillette has been at the forefront of innovation in the male grooming category, becoming a brand that is synonymous with shaving. In a bid to retain its brand status, Gillette launched the Fusion ProGlide razor in June 2010 in an attempt to address men's shaving comfort needs.
- With research showing that 65% of males still experience shaving discomfort, Gillette decided to extend its Fusion shaving range with the introduction of the ProGlide razor. Its several high-precision innovations together promise reduced "tug and pull" for men during shaving, thereby enhancing both performance and comfort.
- The immediate market success of the Fusion ProGlide razor falls down, in large, to Gillette's shift towards a more consumer-based marketing strategy. With a unique pre-launch marketing campaign and experiential marketing efforts, Gillette has successfully responded to male consumer skepticism surrounding the launch of Fusion ProGlide, allowing the product to speak for itself.
- By focusing its marketing efforts on the consumer, Gillette has managed to successfully position the Fusion ProGlide razor across the entire consumer adoption lifecycle. In doing so, Gillette has ensured market growth for the brand moving forwards.

ANALYSIS

As male interest in grooming increases, consumers in this market have become more demanding - expecting on-going and meaningful innovation that caters to their specific needs. Brands such as Gillette have learnt that it is not enough to rely on previous success to retain market share and that continued innovation is necessary to ensure long term success of the brand.

In June 2010, Gillette launched its new Fusion ProGlide razor with seven new technological advances which that provide men with an enhanced shaving performance and optimal comfort. Within 10 weeks of being launched, Gillette had sold 2.5 million Fusion ProGlide razors. This exceeded the sales achieved by Gillette Fusion in 2006 and in doing so has become the World's best selling razor.

To ensure that the new Fusion ProGlide razor appealed to its target consumer audience, Gillette evolved its marketing strategy. Taking on a more consumer-focused approach, Gillette used a unique pre-launch trial campaign, consumer use testing and experiential marketing efforts to successfully install brand confidence into its increasingly skeptical male consumer base.

With a greater focus on the consumer, Gillette has been able to successfully communicate the relevant benefits of the Fusion ProGlide razor to its male consumers. In doing so, Gillette has positioned the Fusion ProGlide for growth across the entire product adoption lifecycle.

The global male grooming market is expected to grow further by 2014

Growth of the global male grooming market looks set to be a long term trend. Recent estimates from Global Industry Analysts, inc. estimate that the men's global grooming market will exceed a global value size of \$33.2 billion by 2015. It is therefore clear that the shifting mindsets of men towards grooming and beauty products is here to stay, with the male grooming market displaying significant growth potential moving forwards.

Although European countries (such as France, Germany and the UK) along with North America continue to dominate the male grooming category in terms of sales, emerging markets such as Brazil and China will play an increasingly important role in driving global value sales moving forward. The promising future growth potential of the developing regions is due, in part, to rising disposable incomes and an appearance conscious culture that prevails, where by men's desire to optimize their appearance is being fuelled by the culture of competition in the workplace.

However, the burgeoning opportunities in the male grooming segment will not guarantee market success for personal care manufacturers moving forwards. As the number of male grooming product launches continues to increase, it will become increasingly important that brands make efforts to align product innovations with male consumer needs. Indeed, a 2011 online consumer survey conducted by the male grooming blog, apetogentlemen.com, has highlighted that the most important factor influencing a man's choice of grooming product is the effectiveness of the product, with 65.42% of respondents choosing this variable. This was considered significantly more important than factors such as price and ease of use, which highlights the fact that the male grooming market is very much a necessity and results driven industry. Therefore, for manufacturers to successfully capitalize on the significant future growth potential of the male grooming

market, it will prove necessary for brands to ensure that product innovations are results-driven, effective and are tailored to meet the specific skincare concerns of male consumers.

Figure 1: Male consumer demand for grooming and beauty products will continue to grow globally, driving the growth of the male grooming market through to 2014



Source: Datamonitor's Market Insight data

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In 2010, Gillette once again redefined the male grooming category

Procter and Gamble (P&G), the global leader in the Beauty and Grooming category, decided to extend its Fusion shaving range with the launch of Gillette Fusion ProGlide Series in the US, in June 2010. This was the first major innovation for the Gillette brand since it was acquired by P&G in 2005 and has claimed to have made "significant advancements" in male shaving performance and comfort. The new range, which includes a more innovative five-blade razor and four skincare products, hopes to bring together the best of Gillette's razor technology and P&G's skincare expertise in addressing male skin discomfort. In doing so, Gillette has confirmed its intentions to stay at the forefront of innovation in male grooming, in a bid to hold onto its three-quarter market share of the US razor and blades category.

Figure 2: The launch of Gillette Fusion ProGlide in 2010 has served to redefine the male grooming category



Source: Datamonitor, www.finercut.com

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Gillette has used precision engineering to address male comfort needs

Despite the impressive advances in shaving technology that Gillette has introduced over the past two decades, the majority of males continue to experience a level of discomfort during and after shaving. According to Gillette's internal research, sixty-five percent of men still feel shaving discomfort, particularly that caused by the blades when they "tug and pull". To address male demand for a more comfortable shave, Gillette launched the Fusion ProGlide in early 2010, which saw the addition of several "high-precision advancements" to the breakthrough technology already installed in Gillette Fusion (the world's best selling razor). In contrast to previous Gillette razor launches, the Fusion ProGlide was not about the simple addition of more blades but rather about meaningful technological advances. All innovations are based on the findings of Gillette's extensive research carried out prior to product launch. By studying groups of eighty subjects a day and recording how many strokes they used, which directions they shaved and other similar details, Gillette was able to better understand male shaving functionality and comfort.

The Gillette Fusion ProGlide has incorporated seven major innovations, which focus on the interaction with hair and skin as well as the many variable factors and shaving habits that together impact on a man's shaving experience. All of these

advances are focused on producing less “tug and pull” so as to achieve an overall enhanced shaving performance and comfort. These include:

- **Low Cutting Force Blades:** These are 15% thinner, have finer edges and display an advanced, patented low-resistance coating. All of which enable the blades to cut effortlessly through hair with less tug and pull.
- **A Blade Stabilizer:** This helps to maintain the finest blade spacing for comfort while allowing the blades to adjust to the contours of a man's face.
- **A streamlined Snowplow Comfort Guard:** This channels excess shave prep to help maintain optimal blade contact, stretching the skin for a close and comfortable shave.
- **An enhanced lubrastrip:** 25% larger than before and is infused with mineral oils and lubricating polymers. This enables the razor to move smoothly over the skin even on repeat strokes. The strip fades from blue to white when you are no longer getting your most optimal shave.
- **An improved precision trimmer:** Including an enhanced blade, a comb guard to better align long hairs and new rinse through slots.
- **A redesigned handle:** With bigger, more ergonomic grips for better control and improved transition between front and back shaving surfaces. Also provides a secure grip when wet.
- **An innovative Microcomb:** exclusively on Gillette Fusion ProGlide Power, that helps guide hair to the blade.

Figure 3: The Gillette Fusion ProGlide boasts seven technological advances that work together to achieve a more effective and comfortable shave



Source: Datamonitor, www.amazon.com

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These seven exciting technological advances illustrate how Gillette has used breakthrough innovation to respond to the basic needs of men and in doing so has successfully defined a new standard of shaving. The reengineering carried out by Gillette very quickly paid off, with more than 2.5 million Fusion ProGlide razors being sold in the first 10 weeks after its launch in the US. In Q3 2010, Gillette sales rose 43% due to Fusion ProGlide's introduction, causing Gillette's overall share to increase by 3.4 points to 67.7 (according to Symphony IRI data from Deutsche Bank). These sales figures exceeded those set by Gillette Fusion in 2006, which until 2010 was the world's best-selling razor.

"The overwhelming consumer interest in these new technologies illustrates strong, continued demand for meaningful innovation in the male grooming category and for breakthrough products that really deliver on their promise"

Thom Lachman, Vice President, P&G Male Grooming North America

The Gillette Fusion ProSeries, an accompanying male skincare range, has helped to leverage P&G's skincare expertise

In addition to the Fusion ProGlide razor, Gillette also introduced the Fusion ProSeries – an advanced line of male skincare products – that aims to promote incredible comfort before, during and after the shave. This skincare range, which is supported by P&G's breadth and depth of skincare science, hopes to perfectly compliment Gillette Fusion ProGlide so as to maximize shaving comfort and deliver the closest shave possible. The four skincare products include:

- **Gillette Fusion ProSeries Thermal Scrub:** The first mass-market thermal facial scrub. A warming, soap-free scrub which helps to clean and clear dirt away, while the oil helps to soften facial hair before shaving, making it easier to cut. This innovative technology ensures that the heating technology is activated on contact with water to provide warming comfort. Small particles within the scrub help to exfoliate dead, dry skin cells – creating a clear path for the razor.
- **Gillette Fusion ProSeries Sensitive Face Wash:** Designed for everyday use on sensitive skin and uses a mild soap-free system formulated with aloe to effectively clean without over drying.
- **Gillette Fusion ProSeries Intense Cooling Lotion:** Cools and hydrates just shaved skin to achieve an incredibly comfortable end to your shave. It boasts a dual-cooling complex, which hydrates and help to soothe men's skin by sealing in the moisture.
- **Gillette Fusion ProSeries Instant Hydration UV Moisturizer +SPF15:** A lightweight, non-greasy moisturizer with Vitamin E, Vitamin B3 and Pro-Vitamin B5 and SPF 15 UV Protection. The formula instantly hydrates the skin and provides hydration throughout the day to help reduce dryness and tightness.

Figure 4: Gillette Fusion ProSeries compliments Gillette's ProGlide razor to maximize shaving comfort before, during and after the shave



Source: Datamonitor, <http://popsop.com>

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Gillette's new strategy of consumer driven marketing has served to overcome male skepticism

With the launch of Fusion ProGlide, Gillette's most expensive razor to date, the brand has made a determined effort to change its marketing strategy. With all of its previous razors, Gillette has failed to directly acknowledge the growing male consumer skepticism that has surrounded each of its product launches. However in 2010, Gillette took on a fresh approach, using consumers to build the brand and reduce male skepticism. Rather than using overt claims of superiority to sell its shaving products, Gillette placed the Fusion ProGlide marketing campaign into the hands of its consumers, asking customers to try the product and also leveraging the social-media space.

At the core of the brands marketing strategy has been the concept of "turning skeptics into believers and shaving into gliding", with many of its pre and post-launch marketing programs attempting to communicate this message to consumers. This unique strategy of consumer focused marketing has enabled the Gillette Fusion ProGlide to achieve strong market sales despite the still somewhat fragile economy and strong competition from the rival Energizer Schick Hydro (a shaving system priced below Fusion ProGlide).

A unique pre-launch trial campaign helped Gillette to install confidence in its consumers

In order to convince men that the Gillette Fusion ProGlide technology could make a meaningful difference to shaving comfort and that the brand had not just innovated for the sake of innovating, Gillette carried out several pre-launch programs to prep the market prior to the launch of Fusion ProGlide razor. In contrast to its usual highly secretive pre-launch approach, Gillette made a conscious decision not to guard the product details of the Fusion ProGlide prior to the launch. Instead, the brand decided to be as transparent as possible with its consumers in an attempt to create a more favorable perception of the brand.

Gillette's consumer focused pre-launch marketing programme included:

- **Consumer use testing:** Gillette tested the Fusion ProGlide razor on over 30,000 men prior to launch, which confirms that the Fusion ProGlide was preferred by consumers at a 2-to-1 ratio over the Gillette fusion range. This enabled the brand to measure the success of the Fusion ProGlide razor in the 'real world' prior to launch.

"Our innovation process starts by listening carefully to men to understand what they want from their shaving and skincare experience and combining those insights with world class technology."

Carl. P. Haney, Vice President, Research and Development, P&G Beauty and Grooming

- **A unique pre-launch trial programme:** Called the 'Gillette Fusion ProGlide Challenge', this pre-launch campaign mirrored P&G consumer tests and offered consumers the opportunity to trail the Fusion ProGlide razor in the months leading up to its broad retail availability. More than 130,000 product samples were distributed to consumers via social media outreach as well as websites, blogs and male-orientated sites. All consumers had to do was register at <http://Gillette.com>. This challenge prompted a tidal wave of viral videos

by urging consumers to talk about their ProGlide experience and share their opinions with others via online social media reviews. As a result, positive comments about the ProGlide razor were read by millions of consumers online. Gillette believed that consumers would be more responsive to online communication and engagement, rather than more obvious advertising that bluntly tells them to buy the ProGlide product.

To persuade males to take the ProGlide Challenge and thereby convince consumers of the credibility of the Fusion ProGlide razor, Gillette teamed up with NASCAR (National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing) to create the Gillette Young Guns ProGlide Challenge. The Gillette Young Guns are said to be among NASCAR's biggest stars, taking racing to the next level. By watching the videos and voting for their 'favorite' Young Gun, consumers were in charge of determining a winner, who received \$10,000 to donate to the charity of their choice. Gillette used this TV and online advertising, featuring the NASCAR Young Guns, to help transform skeptics into consumers who believe that the Fusion ProGlide can transform "shaving into gliding". Both the Young Guns and Fusion ProGlide Challenge were made easily accessible through Gillette's very own YouTube Channel.

Figure 5: The NASCAR young guns have been used by Gillette to promote the 'Fusion ProGlide Challenge' and transform skeptical consumers into believers of the Fusion ProGlide razor



Source: Datamonitor, www.mediapost.com

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- The launch of sneak preview packs:** Prior to the launch of the Fusion ProGlide, consumers were able to get hold of sneak preview packs for free using Gillette coupons. All that consumers had to do was to log onto Gillette.com and register for their latest samples, sweepstakes and coupons. Alternatively, preview packs could also be accessed through retailers and e-tailer sites. Each sneak preview set provided consumers with a ProGlide razor as well as cartridges, shaving gel and two ProSeries products.

Figure 6: Gillette's Sneak Preview Sets, made available prior to launch, helped to convince consumers of the credibility of the ProGlide Razor



Source: Datamonitor

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Gillette's experiential marketing efforts has let the brand speak for itself

As part of its consumer-focused marketing approach, Gillette also invested in a series of pre-launch marketing campaigns, which used consumer-specific experiences instead of more traditional mass communication efforts in order to directly appeal to consumers rational and emotional sides. By using experiential marketing to establish a more personalized brand experience, Gillette has managed to expose consumers directly to the benefits of the ProGlide razor using one-to-one memorable experiences. These include:

- The Gillette Fusion ProGlide Shave Studio:** In advance of ProGlide's official launch, P&G set up a "shave studio", which started off in New York's Times Square for four days during April. Men were encouraged to visit the studio to try out the brand new Gillette Fusion ProGlide razor. During their ProGlide experience, visitors were also asked several questions in an interview. The answers to these questions and the general

reaction of the males who were shaved with a ProGlide at the shave studio were recorded and then made available as an online webcast at both YouTube.com/gillette and ProGlideChallenge.com. After New York, the “shave studio” went on tour across North America to maximize its consumer engagements.

- The ‘Ultimate Summer Job’:** In an attempt to win over a younger audience, Gillette created the ‘Ultimate Summer Job’, which saw two enthusiastic individuals act as Gillette Fusion ProGlide Ambassadors. These men had the job of travelling across North America from July 1 to August 15, 2010 in a custom Fusion ProGlide van. Their job was to turn guys who are skeptical about the Fusion ProGlide razor and the Gillette Fusion ProSeries skin products into “believers”. As part of the marketing campaign, the two shaving ambassadors were asked to appear at major sporting and entertainment events such as ESPN's ESPY sports awards, NASCAR car races and Major League Baseball games. At all of these events and more, the two guys were asked to set up a mobile sink and let consumers try out the new Fusion ProGlide. Consumer reactions were then posted on the promotion's website and the activities of the men were recorded and posted on a live video blog as well as Twitter. By using two regular, young guys as brand ambassadors instead of celebrities, Gillette hopes to more successfully engage with their target audience and encourage consumer usage.

Figure 7: By using two young and ordinary men as brand ambassadors, Gillette managed to raise the profile of the ProGlide razor among its target US audience



Source: Datamonitor

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- **National TV spot features:** In the build up to the launch of the fusion ProGlide, Gillette used a host and camera crew to storm American locker rooms and encourage guys to try out the Fusion ProGlide razor there and then. These events were used to produce testimonial spot commercials that capture real consumer reactions on camera when unsuspecting men tried the Gillette Fusion ProGlide product for the first time. The actual quotes from this consumer testing, were also used by Gillette in print and digital advertising shows. These consumer testimonials have been very valuable in providing genuine consumer insight to skeptical males.

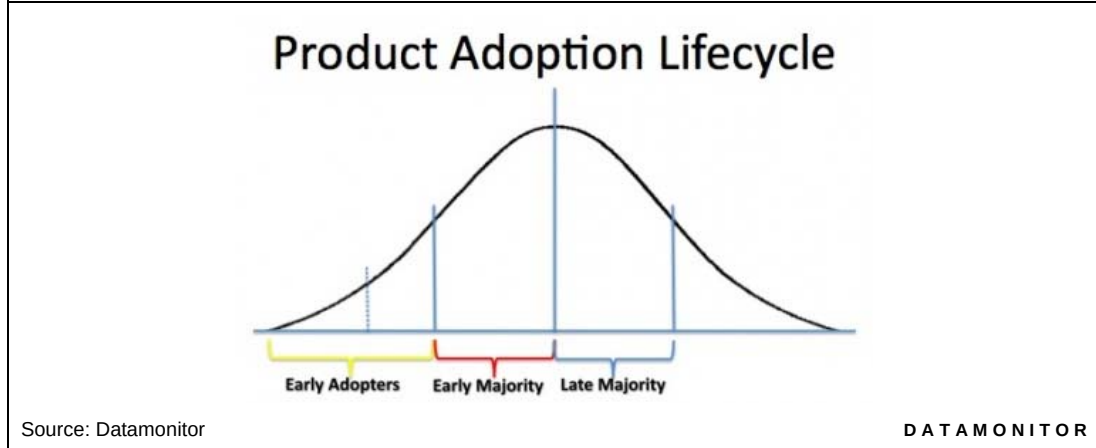
Consumer-focused marketing has enabled the Gillette Fusion ProGlide to position itself for growth across the product adoption lifecycle

The well known product adoption lifecycle, often illustrated by a characteristic bell curve, best describes the adoption of an innovative new product by consumers based on the demographic and psychological characteristics of specific adopter groups. The majority of the lifecycle is made up of three main consumer groups, which include:

- **Early Adopters:** This group represents around 13% of consumers. They are the innovative enthusiasts, who are keen to exploit new and innovative products. These consumers are not price-sensitive and are instead more concerned with buying the latest products straight away. They display educated opinions and serve as leaders for other consumers.
- **Early Majority:** This group represents around 24% of consumers and makes up the bulk of consumer purchases. Although this group does not love innovation and is more cost-conscious than the Early adopters, they will look to adopt new innovations once it has established a reputation. They therefore rely heavily on recommendations from other that have experienced the product in order to be convinced of its worth.
- **Late Majority:** This is the last sizable segment of the population to adopt an innovative product, accounting for 34% of consumers. These are the most skeptical of buyers that will only adopt a product when the majority of the population has done so. These consumers are typically less affluent and hence most cost-conscious. They are also less educated than other segments that are more ready to adopt innovative products.

The success of Gillette's Fusion ProGlide stems, in part, from the brands ability to position the razor across the three main aforementioned consumer groups that dominate the product adoption lifecycle. Gillette's new consumer-driven marketing strategy has specifically tried to communicate product innovation, consumer recommendations and a product value message to its Early Adopters, Early Majority and Late Majority respectively.

Figure 8: The Product adoption lifecycle is a key model that best describes the adoption of an innovative new product by consumers. Gillette has positioned the ProGlide razor so as to appeal to consumers across the scope of this adoption lifecycle



A strong focus on innovation has allowed Gillette to successfully target 'Early Adopters'

Although the Fusion ProGlide marketing campaign has featured a degree of celebrity endorsement (such as the Young Guns and sporting figures), Gillette have noticeably shifted its brand focus to product innovation. This forms part of Gillette's overall product strategy to "build brands through innovation", which has seen Gillette place a greater emphasis on the communication product innovation to consumers and the benefits that they offer. As a result, the use of high profile sports men (such as Tiger Woods, Thierry Henry and Rodger Federer) to raise brand awareness has played a less noticeable role with the launch of Fusion ProGlide. For this product, the initial focus has been very much on innovation. This is not all that surprising given the shock revelations surrounding Thierry Henry and Tiger Woods' private lives in 2010.

Figure 9: Gillette has placed less emphasis on using high-profile celebrity brand ambassadors for the launch of Fusion ProGlide and instead has focused on communicating product innovations



Source: Datamonitor, www.google.com

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By emphasizing the innovative features of the Fusion ProGlide razor in its marketing campaign, Gillette has successfully positioned the new product to appeal to the 'Early Adopter' consumer segment. From Gillette's perspective, these are males that are keen to try out new products that boast innovative new features. Rather than being price-sensitive, this consumers segment is more concerned with owning the latest and greatest product technology and trying out new ideas.

To effectively communicate the breakthrough technology of the Fusion ProGlide to this innovation-sensitive consumer base, Gillette has made significant investments in high-tech interactive retail displays and very visual in-store vehicles to catch the eye of Early Adopters. These have included displays that incorporate illumination, motion sensors and often enable consumers to touch sample razors. One of Gillette's most innovative points of purchase in-store displays for the Fusion ProGlide has been the 'power ring', which uses augmented reality technology and a blue-lit spinning glorifier to visually communicate the ways in which the Fusion ProGlide is superior to Gillette's older fusion products.

"We know in the hyper-competitive in-store environment, we need to do everything we possibly can to get the shopper's attention. So all of the displays were built with that in mind, to communicate new, premium, breakthrough, and to stop shoppers in their tracks."

Matthew Smith, brand manager, P&G Male Grooming

Gillette has given the 'early majority' a compelling reason to buy Fusion ProGlide

In contrast to the 'Early Adopters', who are very much focused on product innovations, the 'Early Majority' consumer segment is not so easily convinced by the latest innovative investments and more concerned with overall brand status and the specific benefits that the product can provide for them. With Gillette already being the market leader in the male grooming category, brand awareness among consumers is already in place. Therefore, with the launch of Fusion ProGlide,

Gillette focused on communicating its key message: "Gillette's most comfortable shave ever. Guaranteed." to consumers. In doing so, Gillette has given the Early Majority buyer a more compelling reason, beyond innovation, to buy its Fusion ProGlide razor.

To further drive this consumer segment towards purchasing the Fusion ProGlide, Gillette has used social media and viral video campaigns to endorse Fusion ProGlide and serve as an additional influencing factor in convincing Early Adopters to buy into the 'Fusion ProGlide experience'. A noteworthy viral campaign used by Gillette in 2010 to raise the status of the Fusion ProGlide has been the humorous "A Mayne and His razor", featuring ESPN analyst Kenny Mayne. During the video clip, Kenny Mayne discovers a Gillette ProGlide razor in his dressing room and decides to "give it a go". After shaving, Kenny Mayne is pleased to discover he is "more handsome", which he "didn't think was possible". The video was made available through Gillette's YouTube site as well as male-orientated sites including Daily Motion's Mag.ma and Break.com. This enabled consumers to engage with both Kenny Mayne as well as fellow Gillette customers and is likely to have proved important in heightening brand awareness among 'Early Adopter' consumers. The "Mayne and His Razor" video reached number one in the AdAge viral video chart and received 2.5 million views in its first week, confirming the importance of video content in promoting the core values of a product to more skeptical consumers.

By leveraging the social media and digital space, Gillette Fusion ProGlide has managed to establish itself as an acknowledged product among consumers (achieving 76% brand awareness in August 2010, 11 points ahead of the original 2006 Fusion launch). Also, by using viral campaigns Gillette has been able to establish "peer recommendation" among consumers, helping to promote product purchases among the recommendation-reliant Early Majority.

Gillette has promised a money back guarantee to convince the 'Late Majority' to trade up to Fusion ProGlide

In launching the Fusion ProGlide razor, Gillette has once again made use of its trade-up model, raising product margins to drive profitability. With Gillette commanding such a large market share it makes more sense for the brand to practice positive cannibalization than it is to try and target the relatively small segment of non-Gillette consumers. By increasing profit margins and convincing consumers to trade up to the ProGlide razor, Gillette will achieve an overall better Return of Investment (ROI). The Gillette Fusion ProGlide is asking for a 10-15% price hike over the previous Fusion range, with a pack of four blades now costing around \$17 compared to \$15 for the Fusion razor.

With the Fusion ProGlide being launched amid an economically fragile landscape, Gillette was faced with the challenge of convincing a more cost-conscious consumer base of the reasons to trade-up. To do this, Gillette has made use of a money back guarantee to engage with the Late Majority consumer and convince them of the limited risk in trading up.

This money-back marketing message will resonate particularly well with the late majority consumer segment, that are characteristically risk-adverse shoppers that have less money to spend on products and as a result are more likely to shop around in hope of seeking out the latest and greatest deals. Gillette's money-back guarantee will have helped to demonstrate brand value to more cautious buyers, persuading them of the value to be gained in trading up and also helping to install confidence in its most cost-conscious consumers. With the late majority being the last consumers to adopt a new product, initiatives taken to raise brand confidence among this segment will prove key in extending the Fusion ProGlide lifecycle.

Gillette Fusion ProGlide looks set to build on its success moving into 2011**Fusion ProGlide will be launched in the UK during the first half of 2011**

In September 2010, Gillette announced that it would be launching its Fusion ProGlide razor in the UK, with the launch likely to take place some time during the first half of 2011. Between 1999 and 2009, the UK blades and razor category has grown 25% to a total value of £317 million. With more than £70 million of this being commanded by Gillette razor launches and \$20 million of this market value being attributed by the Gillette Fusion razor, Gillette has recognized the market potential with the UK launch of Gillette Fusion ProGlide.

Gillette looks set to make the UK launch of the Fusion ProGlide its biggest ever marketing investment to date in the hope of topping the launch of its predecessor range, Gillette Fusion, which has been the second largest FMCG launch in UK history. To achieve this Gillette will be launching an integrated multiplatform marketing campaign, which will combine TV, press, outdoor, experiential, and digital activity in order to raise product awareness.

Through this marketing platform, Gillette looks set to successfully build on its strategy of "turning skeptics into believers and shaving into gliding" and begin to establish a more global consumer awareness for its Fusion ProGlide razor.

"We've seen amazing results in the US since launch despite significant competitive pressures and we're fully committed to making Fusion ProGlide even more successful in the UK"

P&G's UK Vice President & General Manager, Irwin Lee

Conclusions and recommendations

The issues explored in this case study bear some important points for consideration:

- **Big brands must continue to innovate in order to retain consumer engagement:** Gillette's 2010 market success has shown that meaningful innovation is what consumers demand from big brands. However it is important that brands recognize the difference between meaningful innovation, which gives consumers a genuine benefit and innovation just for the sake of innovating. Gillette's success with the Fusion ProGlide razor falls down to its ability to understand its consumer needs. Through extensive consumer research prior to launch, Gillette identified shaving comfort as a core male consumer need. It then used innovation to deliver a genuine improvement to men's shaving comfort with the launch of Gillette Fusion ProGlide. Gillette has also shown that successful innovation does not have to be pioneering. Instead, the Gillette Fusion Product line has shown that smaller incremental improvements that are made to be relevant to consumers' lives can yield comparable levels of success. Ultimately, brands that create genuine innovations can expect their products to be well received by consumers.
- **Consumer-driven marketing can install brand confidence in a skeptical consumer base:** One of the most important lessons that Gillette can take from the success of Fusion ProGlide in 2010, is the value of consumer-focused marketing in effectively engaging with skeptical males and raising brand awareness across its consumer base. For any brand that has heavily invested in achieving product innovation, it is important that it can then successfully communicate the relevance of these improvements to consumers and the impact that they will have on their everyday lives. Both Gillette's experiential marketing efforts and its unique pre-launch sampling campaign enabled consumers to experience first-hand the benefits and credibility of Fusion ProGlide claims. In doing so, Gillette has recognized the role that consumers themselves play in determining a brand's reputation and has illustrated the power of social networking sites and digital space as an effective means of quenching consumer skepticism.
- **Manufacturers should position a product with the 'product adoption lifecycle' in mind:** The market success of the Fusion ProGlide in 2010, has proven that benefits can arise when a brand considers the 'product adoption lifecycle' in its marketing approach. At the most basic level, manufacturers need to recognize the tendency for consumers to self-segregate along a gradient of risk aversion, when responding to new product innovations, and tailor their marketing accordingly. Gillette has shown that during the early launch period of an innovative product, it is important to target those consumers that are most receptive to innovation. By resonating with the Early Adopters - who relate to innovation and act as the influential opinion leaders of the consumer base - a brand will increase its chances of raising product status among the successive groups of the consumer adoption lifecycle (the Early and Late Majority). However, with the Early and Late Majority together making up the bulk of consumer purchases, it is also important that manufacturers use targeted marketing to position their innovative product in such a way that makes it relevant to these consumer groups as well.

APPENDIX

Case study series

This report forms part of Datamonitor's case studies series, which explores business practices across a variety of disciplines and business sectors. The series covers a range of markets including food and drink, retail, banking and insurance, pharmaceuticals, and software.

Each case study provides a concise evaluation of a company that stands out in some area of its strategic operations, highlighting the ways in which the company has become one of the best in its field, or how it deals with different problems encountered within that sector.

Methodology

This case study draws upon a mix of primary and secondary research, including Datamonitor's Market Data Analytics (MDA) database and Product Launch Analytics (PLA) database, alongside an extensive review of secondary literature and other in-house sources of information. Data have also been selectively extracted from the findings of the consumer fieldwork conducted for the purpose of Datamonitor's New Consumer Insight (NCI) research.

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