News Release

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MAJORITY OF AMERICANS BELIEVE PRESSURE TO LOOK GOOD ESCALATING

Nielsen Study Shows Global Acceptance of the Metrosexual Male

September 12, 2007, Schaumburg, IL: In a society where beauty and celebrity is an obsession, two-thirds of U.S. consumers agree that the pressure to look good is much greater now than ever before, according to a global beauty survey by The Nielsen Company. Nielsen’s research also indicates global approval of the “metrosexual” male, with the majority of consumers worldwide agreeing that it is acceptable for men to spend time and money enhancing their appearance.

Although Americans - - and global consumers - - agree the pressure to look good is greater today than it was in our parents’ generation, less than a quarter of U.S. consumers (23 percent) agree they *spend more* on beauty products and treatments. On a global scale, 30 percent of consumers agreed they spend more than they used to.

[Chart showing the percentage of consumers who agree the pressure to look good is greater than in their parents' generation by region and globally.]

Base: All respondents
“While cultural differences abound, the pressure to look good is felt worldwide,” said Shuchi Sethi, vice president, consumer products, Nielsen Customized Research. “That doesn’t necessarily mean that consumers are compelled to spend more on beauty products and treatments. It seems the older you get, the less you spend, as teens and consumers in their 20s spend more in this category.”

When consumers do invest their personal grooming dollars, U.S. respondents reported spending the most on hair care (81 percent), skincare regimes (61 percent) and facial treatments (47 percent). The fewest U.S. dollars go to hair removal (21 percent), tanning (23 percent) and eyebrow/eyelash tinting and shaping (29 percent). And if money was no object? U.S. consumers would spend the most on body massages, teeth whitening, hair care, facial treatments and manicures/pedicures.

The Metrosexual Male

Global acceptance of the metrosexual male is undeniable, according to Nielsen’s research. Seventy-eight percent of consumers worldwide agree that it is “ok” for men to spend time and money on their appearance, including 84 percent of Americans. Furthermore, more than three-quarters (78 percent) of Americans believe men are more interested in personal grooming than they used to be.

“Global consumers overwhelmingly welcome the metrosexual male, with consumers in the U.S. leading this trend of unanimous acceptance,” said Bruce Paul, vice president, client service, Nielsen Customized Research. “People recognize that men want to look good too.”
Eye of the Beholder?

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, but whose eye matters more? Sixty-four percent of U.S consumers say they invest in personal grooming because it makes them feel better about themselves, nearly mirroring the global average. Latin American consumers (84 percent) lead the world in this area, followed by consumers in Asia-Pacific (62 percent), North America (62 percent) and EMEA (60 percent).

Fewer Americans (34 percent) say they invest in beauty products and treatments to attract a partner, while 62 percent spend money on beauty items to look good for their current partner.

"Interestingly, our research shows that U.S. consumers are more likely to blow their beauty budget when they are in a relationship rather than when they are single – but more important for advertisers and marketers is that many consumers say they invest in beauty products simply because it makes them feel good," said Sethi. "In recent years beauty and health care products have become closely associated with consumers' lifestyles and identity. Successful marketers realize there is an essential emotional component involved in the beauty purchase decisions and are tapping into consumers' emotions to differentiate their product in a crowded marketplace."

What's In a Name?

The upscale price of upscale products isn't always worth it, according to many U.S. consumers. Eighty percent “very much” or “somewhat” agreed that mass market health and beauty products are just as good as premium or expensive alternatives for hair care, skin care and cosmetics.

Price (63 percent) and brand (47 percent) are the two most important considerations for U.S consumers’ health and beauty product purchases, followed by a product’s “promise” (31 percent), recommendations of friends (30 percent) and free product samples (30 percent).

“While price and brand continue to be major purchase decision factors, prior experience is also a key driver,” said Sethi. “Whether it’s a free product sample or the recommendation from a friend, prior experience plays a critical role in the health and beauty product category. More and more companies are realizing this, with sample giveaways and a greater focus on word of mouth marketing efforts.”
Where Are We Buying?
Closely following the global averages, U.S. consumers purchase health and beauty products mainly from supermarkets (53 percent), department stores (47 percent) and pharmacy/drugstores (40 percent), and to a lesser extent at beauty salons/spa (20 percent) or via the Internet (18 percent).

About the Survey
The Nielsen Company polled 26,486 Internet users in 46 markets\(^1\) from Europe, Asia Pacific, the Americas and the Middle East to gauge their attitudes towards and buying habits of health and beauty products.

About Nielsen Customized Research
Nielsen Customized Research, operating in more than 100 countries, provides clients with survey research, analytical and consulting services, including measures of consumers’ attitudes and purchasing behavior, segmentation, brand equity, pricing, packaging, advertising effectiveness, customer satisfaction & loyalty and other marketing issues.

\(^1\) 46 Markets Covered: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Thailand, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Turkey, UAE, United Kingdom, United States and Vietnam.
About The Nielsen Company

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