



KNOWLEDGE BITES - BROUGHT TO YOU BY D&M RESEARCH

Welcome to Knowledge Bites, periodic bite sized pieces of knowledge exchange, designed to be consumed immediately without ruining your appetite for the rest of the day.

Who? Me-trosexual? Not me mate!!

ENTRÉE

The concept of the metrosexual male has garnered considerable attention over the last few years. The term is commonly used to describe "straight urban men who enjoy such things as shopping and using beauty products".*

Marketers and Advertisers are cashing in on this trend, with the popularity of this concept reflected in the increase of men's fashion stores / range, skin and hair care products, style magazines etc. But are they hitting the mark?



At the 2004 AMSRS conference, Anna Box of the Open Mind Research Group presented her findings on "Boy will be boys?: Metrosexuality and adapting to the 'new' male consumer"**. The paper investigated issues surrounding metrosexuality in Australia and the impact of this new breed of males on businesses. It also looked into the level of attention that should be placed on this concept**. The topic captured our interest, and working in collaboration with the Open Mind Research Group, D&M sought to quantify these findings^.

So what is the perception of the metrosexual in Australia ? How do Australian men define a metrosexual, and who, if anyone, do they identify as metrosexual? What do women think about this trend? For a start, our survey showed that nearly half of Australian men were not even familiar with the term, begging the question – is it worthwhile for marketers and advertisers to use or focus on the term "metrosexual"? These are just some of the questions D&M sought to answer!

MAINS

Do Aussie men think and behave like metrosexuals?

Many Australian men agree overall that possessing a sense of style is no longer the exclusive domain of women (57%). They also claim to be more confident in their personal style and fashion (53%), and enjoy shopping for clothing (43%).



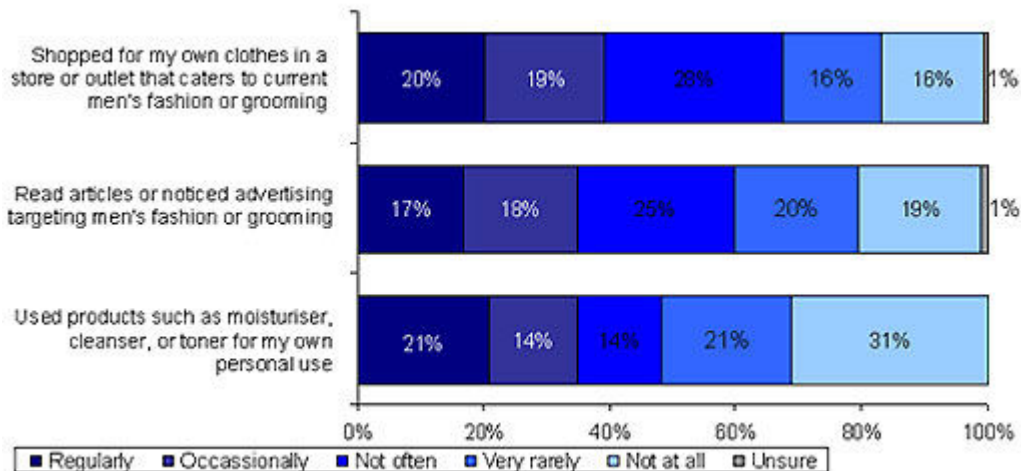


Additionally, many men display metrosexual behaviours - 39% of the men surveyed shop for clothes in specialised men's fashion outlets either on a regular or occasional basis. Similar proportions use skin products such as moisturisers, cleansers and toners, and read men's fashion / grooming articles either regularly or occasionally (35% each). But whilst Aussie men will treat themselves to a little personal pampering, you're not likely to find them searching for fashion information and advice per se (28%)!

But what do Aussie men think about metrosexuality?

Despite Aussie men clearly showing some metrosexual behaviours and attitudes, nearly 1 in 2 (48%) are unfamiliar with the term. Amongst those with a clue, 2 in 10 (22%) depicted metrosexuality as having an interest in fashion, style, and clothing. Other descriptions include an interest in appearance (11%), and an interest in grooming, hair, and skin care (10%). Given the lack of familiarity with the expression, it's not surprising then, that 58% of men were unable to nominate a male they would consider to be a metrosexual! Of those that did nominate, Ian Thorpe (12%) and David Beckham (8%) were most likely cited.

"Which of these have you personally done in the past 6 months"



What is remarkable however, is that amongst Aussie males familiar with the term, over 7 in 10 (77%) **would not** use the term to describe themselves. Whilst 2 in 10 (23%) would either consider themselves a metrosexual or definitely describe themselves as one. Yet, the behaviours that Australian men are displaying actually characterise metrosexuality! It appears that the Aussie male could unknowingly be defying traditional manly expectations.





The chicks love it mate!

It appears that women are also noticing the change in the traditional male, and liking it! The survey found that overall, Australian women agree that it is appealing when a man cares about his appearance (88%), that men should feel comfortable purchasing grooming products (86%), and that men are becoming more interested in fashion and grooming (79%). In addition, they indicated that men who spend time on personal fashion or style are **not of questionable sexuality**. Perhaps this point needs to be reiterated if Aussie men are to identify themselves as metrosexuals!



When compared to the male perspective, similar results are also noted – 19% defined metrosexuality as an interest in grooming, hair, and skin care, followed by an interest in fashion, style, and clothing (17%). A majority (57%) were also unable to nominate a metrosexual.

The Metrosexual Impact

Marketers and Advertisers have largely recognised the emergent metrosexual target market, and are tailoring products and services to meet their needs. Men are displaying a heightened interest in their appearance and well-being, and have at their disposal a myriad of products that are just for men. Australian men may not classify or identify themselves as metrosexuals, but their behaviour suggests that metrosexuality is indeed present in Australia. They are taking a more active role in personal pampering and styling, and savvy retailers and advertisers who understand their mindset will reap the benefits of this new breed by becoming a vital part of their daily routines. Ultimately, Aussie men enjoy a little self indulgence, but don't label them as metrosexuals just yet!

SECOND HELPINGS!

Want to know more?

We are happy to provide more information on any of the information in Knowledge Bites. To get dessert please forward your requests to Annabelle at: annabelle@dandmresearch.com.au or call us on 02 9565 2655.

You can also purchase this or any previous full reports on Knowledge Bites for \$250 plus GST.

In the next issue, we look at what Australians are currently thinking and concerned about...





SAUCES

* "Real Men Get Waxed", The Economist, 2003.

** "Boys will be boys?: Metrosexuality and adapting to the 'new' male consumer", Anna Box, Open Mind Research Group, AMSRS Conference 2004.

^ The Australian Metrosexual Survey, D&M Research 2004, Online Survey, n=272.

