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**FIRST SUCH PARTNERSHIP FOR UNILEVER GLOBALLY**

## **Amazon, HUL Launch Product Line**



HUL and Amazon have co-developed a line of hair and male grooming products that will be sold exclusively on the Web marketplace, reports **Sagar Malviya**. >> 5

# HUL and Amazon Co-Develop Male Grooming Products

In a first for Unilever partnership globally, the new products will be sold exclusively on Web marketplace



**New Offers on the Table**

New products include beard oil, beard wash and balm along with hair cream and gels under Brylcreem

This will mark Unilever's first attempt to enter the hair and beard grooming category

Unilever bought Brylcreem from Sara Lee Corp in 2009

It is the first time Unilever is entering the beard grooming range and the first time we are creating a product with insights provided by Amazon India

**SANDEEP KOHLI** | executive director of personal care at HUL

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**Mumbai:** Hindustan Unilever (HUL), India's largest consumer products company, and Amazon have co-developed a line of hair and male grooming products that will be sold exclusively on the Web marketplace, marking the first such partnership for Unilever globally.

The new products, including beard oil, beard wash and balm, and hair cream and gels under the Brylcreem brand, will also be Unilever's first attempt to enter the nascent yet fast-growing category that has seen Marico and Emami buying beard grooming companies in India last year.

"It is the first time Unilever is entering the beard grooming range and the first time we are creating a product with insights provided by Amazon India. The male grooming segment is seeing a lot of impetus – not only in metros but also in smaller towns," said Sandeep Kohli, executive director of personal care at HUL.

Beard care is one of the fastest-growing segments within the male grooming market worth ₹8,600 crore, thanks to the rise of a new male archetype, which has also triggered several startup companies crafting the rugged looks.

The current trend among Indian pogonophiles – the fancy term for beard lovers – is linked to increasing popula-

rity of the beard in the West and is amplified by social media through Instagram and Twitter. Also, India has always had steady demand for such products, given the religious association of beards with Sikhs, Muslims and even a section of the Hindus.

Marico acquired a 45% in Zed Lifestyle, which owns Beardo. Emami invested in The Man Company that sells premium men's grooming products. And one of the biggest drivers for male grooming categories has been ecommerce in India: just last month, Marico launched a premium male grooming brand Studio X exclusively on Amazon.

"Brylcreem's entire range speaks to young, digitally-savvy Indians who are seeking products that define them," said Manish Tiwary, vice-president – category management at Amazon India.

For HUL, personal care business accounts for about half its overall sales, but is largely skewed toward women's grooming products. Analysts say this is gradually changing, and the shift is potentially negative for Emami and Marico.

"HUL is investing disproportionately in online and operating with the nimbleness of a small company, but using analytics, AI and robotics like a global company. This reflects the highest level of freedom that any MNC gets in India," said Abneesh Roy, senior V-P, institutional equities, Edelweiss Securities.