



## Classic Shave Line Hits U.S.

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Truefitt & Hill always did appeal to the upper crust, what with a client list that boasts King George III, Winston Churchill, and Frank Sinatra. And it seems the 200-year-old luxury grooming line hasn't lost its touch.

Last June the London-based upscale shave company caught the eye of two Harvard Business School graduates, Guy Cartwright and Heath Flock, both of whom saw so much potential in the brand that they bought the licensing and marketing rights for Truefitt & Hill in North America.

The deal, which has been in negotiations since last June, was signed off in January for an undisclosed amount.

Now, Cartwright, the company's president and chief executive, and Flock, its vice president and chief operating officer, are visiting high-end retailers to see how Truefitt & Hill's array of cologne, aftershave, shaving cream, bath and shower gel, shampoo and accessories will fit into the product mix. Stores on their hit list include Saks Fifth Avenue, Barneys New York, Bergdorf Goodman and Bloomingdale's. Products will retail between \$15 for shampoo and \$60 for cologne.

Truefitt & Hill North America, based in Chicago, generates less than \$1 million in sales here, with a nationwide distribution base that includes five Nordstrom stores and nearly 40 boutiques. Two Truefitt & Hill barber shops, in Chicago and in Toronto, also receive products. Each shop comes equipped with antique barber chairs and a service list that includes a Royal Shave (\$45), a hair cut (\$45), manicures, pedicures and stream facials.

Cartwright and Flock do not own the North America stores, nor the London-based barber shop flagship, which was established in 1805. But their purchase agreement gives them the right to own and operate future stores in North America.

Cartwright believes he can grow the Truefitt & Hill business at least 30 percent in 2004.

The U.S. men's toiletries market, according to London-based data tracker DataMonitor, is estimated to reach 4.4 billion by 2004 with an annual rate of growth at 3.4 percent. Cartwright, however, is focused on the prestige market, a fraction of that number, but one with a 10 to 20 percent growth rate, according to his data estimates.

Cartwright is well aware of the competition he faces, especially by the growing number of prestige shave brands surfacing such as Jack Black, E Shave, and most notably, The Art of Shaving, a company that generates nearly \$8 million in sales and operates in four stores - each of which perform shave services and offers a large array of upscale shave accessories and products.

But a recent meeting with Art of Shaving executives yielded an agreement: The market is growing in products and shops and there is room for a number of prestige players.