

# Non Gender Specific and waks? aim to open new beauty segments in travel retail

The first fully gender-neutral beauty house Non Gender Specific (NGS) and related waxing brand waks? have been making waves in the US beauty market and on social media. So much so that they have been picked up by duty free specialist McG Consultants for the travel retail channel.



The NGS Everything Serum is the hero product from the company

Atlanta-based NGS – with 42,200 followers on Instagram – is a gender-neutral skincare brand created by Andrew Glass who has more than 15 years experience in the beauty, luxury and retail spheres. He told The Moodie Davitt Report: “Traditionally beauty has been segregated between men and women, but mostly women. With Non Gender Specific, we wanted to bring inclusivity into beauty.”



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This was done by developing a brand with no obvious gender boundaries: the design is minimalist, the colours and scents are neutral, and the name “takes the guesswork out for the consumer” noted Glass. The company has also adopted the tagline: ‘the brand for all humans’.

NGS debuted with the Everything Serum (retail US\$65, travel retail US\$59 for 50ml). “It contains 22 natural extracts and we sold 40,000 bottles in the first year. This was much more than we had expected,” admitted Glass.

“It was the height of the #MeToo movement so gender equality and neutrality were hot topics. There wasn’t really a brand like ours in the market and the Everything Serum put us on the map. We are paving the way for a new segment in beauty.”



Floodid comes in a box infused with wild flower seeds that can be planted

NGS has followed with the Everything Cleanser (US\$36 retail), Everything Mask (US\$48) and the first NGS fragrance called Floodid, launched in September 2019. Described as “deliciously seductive, sweet and warm” it has an environmental twist. The extrait de parfum retails for US\$125 (for 100ml) and comes in a box infused with wild flower seeds. It is plantable, making it a talking point and a dual-purpose gift.

The ‘Everything’ prefix refers to the skincare lines’ multi-functionality in tackling seven skin concerns: wrinkles, skin fatigue, elasticity, dark spots, pore size, brightness, and cellular rejuvenation.

On the back of the early launches, NGS was chosen by Mintel as an on-trend player to watch in 2018 and in 2019 Vogue selected the company as one of their top ten emerging indie beauty brands.

In the US market NGS is in about 150 doors, mainly department stores such as Bloomingdales, Macy’s, Neiman Marcus and Nordstrom. It has a bigger distribution in Australia with 300 doors through the health and beauty retailer Priceline.

NGS gained its first travel retail listing of the Everything Serum on Cathay Pacific Airways in the summer. According to Glass, the product is selling about 200 units per month. He added: “In travel retail we are looking at markets where we have seen domestic development. That means Australia, Israel and Dubai for now. We’ve also had an amazing response to the fragrance. We think it could be our bestseller.”



Travel retail shelf merchandising for NGS skincare

**‘Made by two hairy guys’ – Novelty factor drives waks?**

As well as NGS, Glass has co-founded the waxing brand [waks?](#) with Shayan Sadrolashrafi. It mainly targets women and uses the trademarked strapline: ‘Made by two hairy guys’ and has attracted 58,200 followers on Instagram. According to the co-founders, waks? can turn the unpleasant experience of waxing into an enjoyable one.



Hair today, gone tomorrow: Can waks? tempt buyers into bringing the waxing segment into travel retail beauty?

A tall order perhaps, but an idea that many women – and men – will want to believe works. “There’s been no innovation in the category for 30 years until now. We are reinventing it with a sensorial experience, pleasing colours, metallic finishes, and scents,” explained Glass.

Hard wax beans, made using a custom formula that is synthetic-free, are placed in a rubber ‘melting pot’, heated in a microwave, applied to the body or face and then peeled off when cool. Thanks to this innovation, waks? has entered about 6,000 doors in its first year including 1,100 Ulta (beauty) stores in the US, 4,300 CVS (pharmacy) doors, and Neiman Marcus.

The brand – which has developed a travel retail-specific kit consisting of a box of hard wax beans and a melting pot for US\$19.99 (135ml) – was shown to buyers last month at the TFWA show in Cannes.

Glass said initial plans would be to target pharmacy-style operators such as Boots in the UK as well as mainstream travel retailers. “Locations with warm climates and airports where there are lots of flights to sunny destinations are a target for us. We expect Australia will be a big market,” he predicted.