



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on August 6, 2019

Gillette Bleeds Billions Following “Toxic Masculinity” Ad Campaign

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Gillette’s now infamous ad campaign shaming American men for their supposed “toxic masculinity” has come back to haunt the shaving-products company. Months after using an ill-advised [television ad](#) to stereotype the American male as an insensitive cad blind to sexual harassment, bullying, and his own dull-witted machismo, Gillette’s parent company, Procter & Gamble, recorded an astounding \$8 billion “writedown” on the company.



The ad, which aired back in January of this year, opened with audio about the #MeToo movement and the ominous phrase “toxic masculinity,” with the narrator issuing the challenge: “Is this the best a man can get? Is it? We can’t hide from it. It has been going on far too long. We can’t laugh it off, making the same old excuses.”

While Gillette no doubt assumed it would be praised for its courage in adding its voice to the #MeToo chorus, the opposite occurred as millions of men across the nation registered their resentment to the ad by switching to other brands of blades and shave cream.

The *Washington Times* noted that the negative response on social media to the ad when it first ran included the following comments Twitter from men:

- “Get woke, go broke. Stick to selling razors.”
- “When did shaving have to get political?”
- “Do we really need ‘woke razors?’”
- “How to irreparably damage a brand in under 120 seconds: A Documentary.”
- “Cringe shaving commercial. See, this is actually genius. What Gillette is doing here is trying to lower our testosterone to the point we won’t have to shave anymore.”

And Dean Crutchfield of the branding firm Crutchfield & Partners predicted to the *Wall Street Journal* that Gillette would face backlash for its misguided campaign. “Does the customer want to be told they’re a naughty boy?” asked Crutchfield. “Are you asking too much of your consumer to be having this conversation with them? It’s about execution. Sometimes brands stretch themselves too fine, and they snap.”

In response to the news that it had lost billions in the wake of the ad campaign, Gillette blamed



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competitors such as Dollar Shave Club and Harry's, and postulated that men may just be shaving less, with P&G Chief Financial Officer Jon Moeller claiming that "lower shaving-frequency has reduced the size of the developed blades and razors market."

Commenting on the damage done to Gillette's market share, conservative writer [Brandon Morse](#) noted that the ad, which "blanketed the male gender with the accusation of 'toxic masculinity' while using feminist buzzwords and clips of hard-left news organizations, was one of the most hated commercials of the past decade."

He added that the company appears unwilling to face the fact "that they made a monumental error in assuming men would take the 'toxic masculinity' commercial well, but they should soon. The brand is damaged enough to lose billions, and men aren't coming back, especially with cheaper alternatives embracing men for who they are and not assuming the worst about them."

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