



## SAVVY TRAVELERS—A NIFTY SOLUTION FOR TRAVELING LIGHT



*Nearly 52% of global business travelers are women.*

In this report, the latest in our series of company profiles, we look at Savvy Travelers, a company that sells individually-wrapped hygiene and beauty wipes that are travel-friendly. We recently spoke with Tina Aldatz and Margarita Floris, founders of the California-based business, which was established in 2014.

### COMPANY BACKGROUND

In their previous roles, Floris and Aldatz had busy and demanding schedules that involved extensive business travel to various cities. Client-facing corporate meetings meant that they had to look and feel their best while traveling light, which meant packing the essentials in their carry-on bags. The challenge they faced was carrying the inconvenient, but necessary, clunky bottles of nail-polish remover, cotton wads and 25-pack makeup removal towelettes. This led to the development of simple, single-use, purpose-specific wipes that fulfilled the basic requirements for both hygiene and cosmetics purposes.

Floris remarked that as nearly 52% of global business travelers are women, it made sense to create an air-travel-compliant product that women who wear makeup would consider using. Savvy Travelers recently introduced iterations of some of its products for men as well.

The company went through two years of intense R&D and has enjoyed a positive growth trajectory so far, Aldatz noted. The firm was established with startup capital of \$700,000 and is now valued at \$7.2 million. It is in the process of raising \$2 million more.

**FOUNDERS' BACKGROUND**



**Tina Aldatz, CEO:** Aldatz looks after the formulation, manufacturing, finance and legal side of the business. Along with Floris, she previously co-founded Foot Petals, a successful line of designer insole cushions for high-heeled shoes, which was recognized by *Inc. 500* as one of the “500 fastest growing companies in America.” She is also the recipient of several industry awards and has written an autobiography titled *From Stilettos to the Stock Exchange: Inside the Life of a Serial Entrepreneur*, in which she shares her values and practices for success.



**Margarita Floris, President:** Floris is the key negotiator and sales expert. Previously, she led international sales and marketing at fashion brand BCBG Max Azria and spearheaded that brand’s launch across the UK, and parts of Asia and the Americas. Floris also serves as a mentor for the Hispanic 100 Foundation and is a founding board member of online and print magazine and media company, Apparel Insiders.

*Savvy Travelers’s current product portfolio consists of eight products with specific functions.*

**THE PRODUCT**

The current product portfolio consists of eight products with specific functions. These include “Take Offz” all-in-one facial wipes, “No Sweat” antiperspirant and deodorant wipes, and “Lift Offz” nail-polish remover wipes.



Source: Savvy Travelers

The products are manufactured in China and the US, and packaged entirely in California, Aldatz noted. While the towelette and packaging are outsourced to a third-party manufacturer, Aldatz herself works with seven labs in California to test and develop the fragrances and formula used in the product.

Once the different components of the product are ready, they are assembled by members of the California branch of Elwyn—an organization that provides work programs for people with disabilities. This helps the company contribute to the local community, Floris and Aldatz said.

**Unique Design Provides Competitive Advantage Over Existing Brands**

Most wipes brands in the market sell their products in packets containing ten or more wipes, and these packs can be susceptible to dripping, drying out, or worse, contamination, the founders told us. Besides, similar products from competing brands, such as the “Speak Eazy” teeth-, lip- and mouth-cleansing wipes are not commonly available in stores, which gives Savvy Travelers an edge, as they are a one-stop shop for complete body hygiene.

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**Mouth Cleansing Wipes**

Source: Savvy Travelers

Moreover, the Transport Security Administration—a federal agency that is responsible for public travel in the US—even held a press conference to put its stamp of approval on these wipes, as being appropriately sized for carry-on flight bags and to help get through security checks faster.

**“Masstige” Positioning Allows Selling Across a Wider Range of Retailers**

Select stores of well-known US retailer Nordstrom, stationery stores such as Hallmark, drug stores, airport stores and TV-channel Home Shopping Network sell Savvy Travelers’s products. Floris and Aldatz believe that the availability of the product across this broad range of retailers makes it more of a “masstige” product that delivers a luxurious experience.

The products are sold on Savvy Travelers’s website in individual packs, in kits offering an assortment of wipes and through a subscription program (dubbed “Wipeaholics”) at \$20 a month for an assortment of 30 wipes. Not placing the brand into solely a “mass” or a “premium” category allows it to broaden its growth prospects, Aldatz and Floris said.

Other differentiators are that demand is not seasonal and the product has a two-year shelf life. While incubating the idea, Floris and Aldatz aimed to create a product with a longer lifespan than those with early expiry dates or those reliant on cyclical needs, they remarked.

*The availability of Savvy Travelers’s products across a broad range of retailers makes it more of a “masstige” product that delivers a luxurious experience.*

**EXPANSION PLANS**

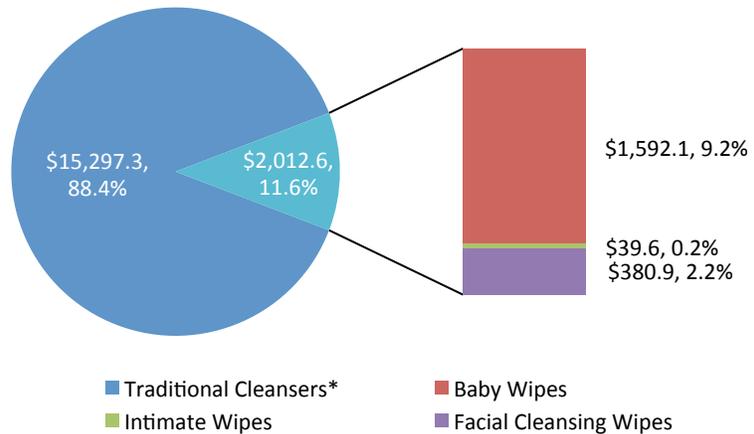
While much of the initial focus was building the brand domestically, the founders do have plans to expand overseas. Currently, the company is close to confirming a distribution deal in Australia and is in talks with companies in Qatar, Aldatz said.

**WHAT WE THINK**

The market for beauty and wellness cleansers in the US stood at \$32.7 billion in 2015, of which towelettes formed a small fraction of 11.6% (including baby wipes, which many adults use as a substitute for body-cleansing wipes).

**Figure 1. US: Market for Personal-Care Cleansing Products, 2015**

*The market for beauty and wellness cleansers in the US stood at \$32.7 billion in 2015, of which towelettes formed a small fraction of 11.6%.*



*\*Traditional cleansers include: bar soap, body wash/shower gel, intimate washes, liquid soap, mouth fresheners, mouthwashes/dental rinses, toothbrushes, toothpaste, and liquid/cream/gel/bar cleansers.*

*Source: Euromonitor International/Fung Global Retail & Technology*

Considering that the market for niche-purpose towelettes, such as deodorant wipes or teeth- and mouth-cleansing wipes, is currently small or non-existent in the US, Savvy Travelers has a first-mover advantage to gain share. Furthermore, we think its stylish design, smart single-use packaging, which reduces contamination and increases shelf life, and its affordability and marketability across classes of users, give it a robust position from which to grow sales in an untapped wellness category.



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