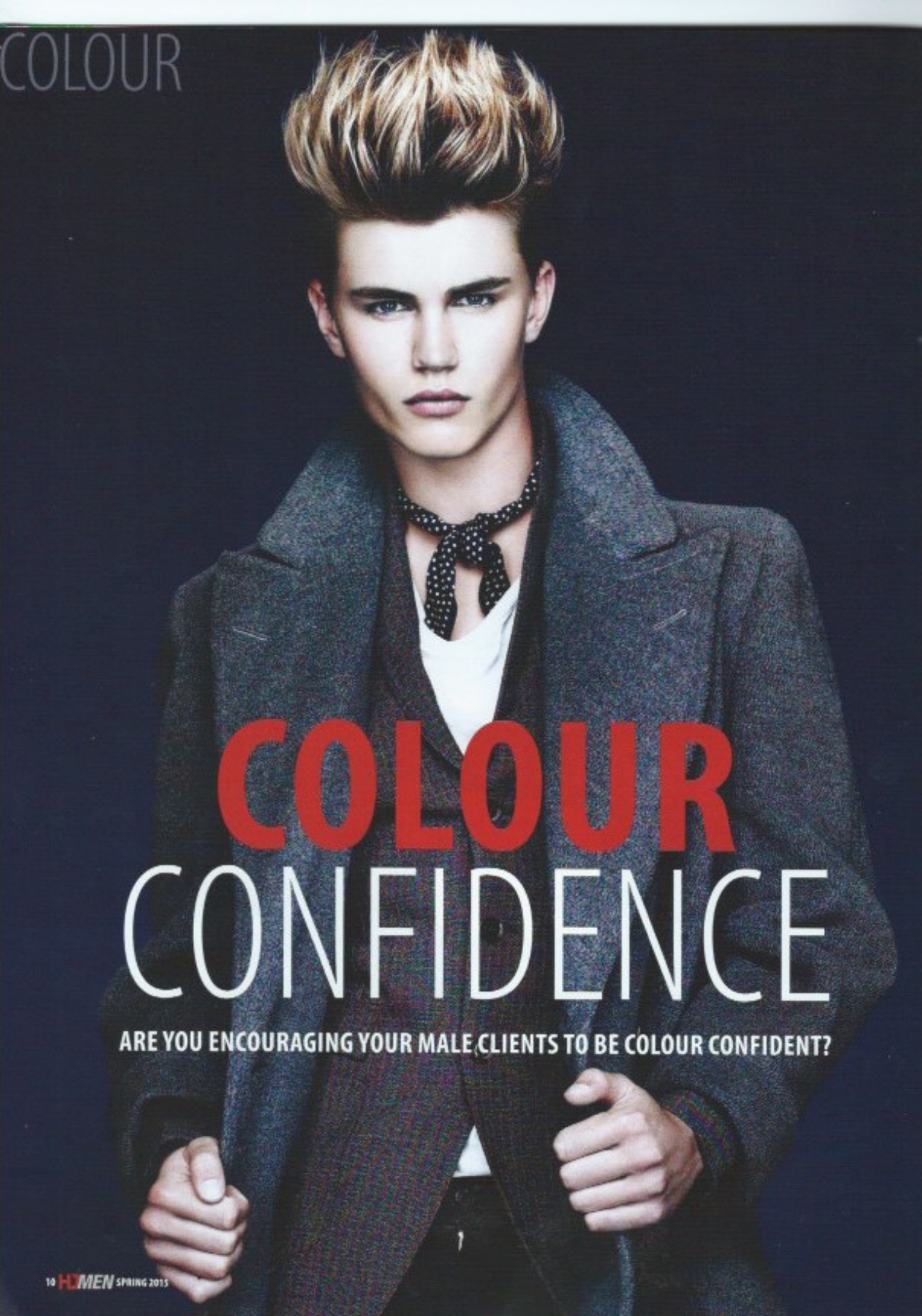


COLOUR



**COLOUR**  
CONFIDENCE

ARE YOU ENCOURAGING YOUR MALE CLIENTS TO BE COLOUR CONFIDENT?



**C**olour for men – “my clients never ask for it,” you might say, “so why should I offer it?” The answer – if you suggested it, they just might go for it! It’s a fact, men often need a bit of coaxing to try something new – that’s why they are usually loyal clients.

Men tend to be more resistant to change than women, so if you never suggest something new, they might well not mention it. Get your older clients talking about grey hair or your younger male guests chatting about the latest male celebrities and you never know where it could go – if it leads to a regular colour service then your client will be happy and your bottom line will definitely benefit.

Many feel that a barbershop is not the place for colour – that it’s the domain of a hairdressing salon only. This could be a big mistake. For starters, if you’re a barber who doesn’t offer colour and a client wants it, you could lose them to the nearest unisex salon. Also, if you market colour in the right way for your specific client base, there’s no reason why it can’t fit in to any environment.

#### HIGHLIGHTING OPPORTUNITY

Matt Stark has seen colour work in both a unisex and a barbershop environment. At his Stark Style concession at the Refinery in Harrods and his unisex salon, Stark, in Chalkwell, Essex, Matt offers colour services for covering grey hair, together with highlights and lowlights. Matt says: “We aim for natural soft looks by combing through the colour. We use semi-permanent colour that avoids the warm undertones created when using a permanent. This also means a quicker development time, making it more appealing for our male clients.

“We have definitely seen an uptake with our colour services as techniques and products are being developed to ensure a much more natural colour look, meaning our gents have more confidence with the service.”

Male clients often need reassurance about taking up a colour service, says Matt, but normally it is just a case of clarifying what is involved and what the end results will be. “We constantly explain the techniques and products – for example, that combing colour

through avoids the block colour that looks so unnatural,” says Matt. “I also encourage the team to use colour on their own hair so the explanation really comes to life and the client can understand and appreciate the effects.”

#### INCREASING INTEREST

Colour for men is definitely on the rise within the unisex environment, according to Chris Williams, international colour director for Rush Hair. “We have seen a growing trend over the last few years in male clients exploring colour. There has been an increase in colour products and services targeting male consumers, so their knowledge and interest in colour has grown,” says Chris. “More subtle colour services are proving popular in our salons – five minute services that subtly blend with the natural colour of the hair.

“Some guys are more experimental with their colour choices. These clients tend to opt for classic shapes partnered with soft, freehand colour to create interest. This colour tends to enhance the style, such as a quiff or parting.”

Unisex salon chain Westrow has always offered colour for men as part of its service options, and the teams are aware of the necessity of meeting the specific needs of a male clientele. Steve Rowbottom, creative director, says: “Each of our eight salons has a more discreet area for men, who like to be more private when it comes to grooming. Referencing celebrities such as David Beckham is a



JOSH HIGDON, MAN MADE, LONDON

great icebreaker when discussing bespoke services and products for men’s hair colour.

“Consider holding a gents-only evening where you can showcase what you offer and encourage them to try new colour treatments. Men these days want the complete package. They want a salon environment they feel comfortable in, to be recognised and treated as a friend, to receive an efficient and professional service that is classic or on-trend and time efficient, as well as value for money. Most of our eight salons offer liquid refreshments in the form of beer for an after-work or weekend de-stress, which also helps. Once you’ve enticed them into having colour, men can be a valued and loyal client – often for life.”

**“ONCE YOU’VE ENTICED THEM INTO HAVING COLOUR, MEN CAN BE A VALUED AND LOYAL CLIENT FOR LIFE”**

Daniel Gregory of Man Made Barbers offers a wide range of colour services for his exclusively male client base. “We offer permanent, semi-permanent, highlighting, colour matching and 5-10 minute white blending colour services. The most popular colour service is grey/white coverage either using our 5-10 minute white blending service or our permanent colour service.”

Daniel employs a colour specialist, Josh Higdon, in order to ensure high standards are maintained. Says Daniel: “Josh has worked in unisex salons for around seven years and knows all aspects of colour.”

Around 15% of Man Made’s clients opt for some form of colour service, and it is an area that has seen growth over time, as the trust between client and barber has been established.

Says Daniel: “We try and use masculine words and terms such as “white blending”, “grey coverage”, “added texture and definition” when promoting colour services. Also, when speaking to clients we aim to understand what they want from the service and use similar words to those they are using in the consultation to make it feel like a normal process in a guy’s lifestyle.”

So, is it time to add a little colour to your business? **TF**