

Razor blade suppliers world-wide

The following is a brief description of the major razor blade suppliers in the world other than Gillette and Wilkinson Sword. These descriptions represent best estimates of the size and business of these companies. We are also aware of a number of other smaller manufacturers which supply their own local markets.

Schick

A division of Warner-Lambert, with headquarters in the United States, which sells a full range of razors and razor blades including twin and pivoting cartridges, double edge blades, injector blades and razors, and twin disposable razors. It has blade manufacturing plants in Milford in CT (USA), Amsterdam, Brazil, Venezuela and Mexico City and also has assembling plants in Hong Kong. Estimated capacity is about 1,000 million units per year. 1989 sales volume estimated at US \$300 million, with \$107 million (46 per cent) in the USA and \$193 million in the rest of the world. Outside the USA, Schick's two largest markets are Japan (estimated 1989 sales volume \$95 million) and France (estimated volume \$20 million).

Bic

Bic's headquarters are in France. It sells primarily single blade disposable razors and a small volume of twin blade disposables and double edge blades. It has blade manufacturing plants in Milford, CT (USA), Greece, France and Brazil, with an estimated world-wide capacity of 1,100 million units annually. Estimated 1989 sales volume for shaving products is \$113 million, with \$67 million in the USA, Canada and Mexico combined. Outside these markets, Bic's largest markets are Italy (\$13 million), and the United Kingdom, Greece and France (about \$10 million each).

Malhotra

Malhotra's headquarters are in India. It sells mostly double edge blades, and a small volume of twin blade cartridges. It has five factories in India (Jammu, Calcutta, Bombay, Aurangabad and Hyderabad), together with a steel mill and tool room facility in Bangalore. The five manufacturing plants have a capacity of 2,600 million units per year. Currently, Malhotra sells about 2,000 million blades domestically and exports about 500 million annually. Sales value is estimated at \$80 million for 1989. In the United Kingdom it supplies the Supermax brand through Sterling Four Blades.

Prago Union

A Czechoslovakian company which manufactures double edge blades and twin blade systems sold under the Astra and Tiger brand names. Its estimated capacity is 1,200 million units, a majority of which are produced for export. Rough estimate of 1989 sales: \$30 million.

Leninets

Leninets mostly manufactures double edge blades, and with some systems blades, in its Leningrad factory. Estimated capacity 730 million blades per year. Total shipments are about 700 million units, all sold domestically in the Soviet Union. 1989 sales are estimated at \$25 million.

Mostoglamesh

Another large manufacturer in the Soviet Union with an estimated capacity of about 700 million blades, all double edge for the domestic market.

Permatik

Permatik's headquarters are in Turkey where it manufactures double edge blades, single and twin disposable razors. Estimated capacity is 550 million units annually, and its 1989 sales are estimated at 500 million units, about half of which were sold in Turkey and the remainder exported. Its major export market is the Soviet Union. Its 1989 sales volume is estimated at \$30 million. It markets the Permasharp brand.

Alexandria Blade Co

An Egyptian company with an estimated capacity of 500 million blades per annum of double edge and disposable types. 90 per cent are sold in the domestic market and 10 per cent exported to Middle Eastern countries.

Kai Company Ltd (Kaijuriishi)/Feather

Kai is the leading Japanese manufacturer of wet-shaving products supplying approximately 50 per cent by volume of the domestic retail market. 250 million blades per annum are produced for this market plus another 100 million per annum for institutional customers. Feather is a much smaller company specialising in supplying hospitals and was until recently under the same chairman as Kai although operating autonomously.

American Safety Razor

A division of the Jordan Company with headquarters in the USA. It manufactures a full range of products including twin and pivoting cartridges, single and double edge blades, injector blades, twin disposable razors and Flicker disposable shavers. A majority of American Safety Razor's sales are as private-label products in the USA and they account for a large proportion of that business. In addition it markets a full line under the Personna brand name, and it uses its blade technology as a base for marketing hospital products and supplies. It has recently begun to market shaving products in Mexico and Europe. American Safety Razor has a blade and razor manufacturing plant in Staunton, VA (USA), with estimated capacity of 400 million units. Estimated 1989 sales \$40 million to \$50 million.

Bond-America-Israeli Blade

A sizeable Israeli producer, but smaller than Permatik, Prago Union and Leninet. Its headquarters are in Israel and it supplies mainly own-label products.

Source: MMC from information provided by Gillette, Wilkinson Sword and others.