

Dove



**PRELIMINARY REPORT
ANALYSIS OF THE DOVE BEAUTY CAMPAIGN
October 12, 2023**

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**Prepared for Elisabeth Pfeiffer
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September 26, 2023

Elisabeth Pfeiffer
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Dear Ms. Pfeiffer:

Re: Exploring the transformative influence of the Dove Beauty Campaign on brand association

My name is Claudia Nosseir. My professional background is in public relations and strategic communications, I also have a background in psychology with experience in studying the Psychology of Women. Both my studies in public relations and psychology equip me with the expertise that your organization needs for analysis in this breakthrough campaign.

Dove's beauty campaign not only changed the landscape of how beauty is perceived but also broke down deep barriers in various other genres, resulting in a spillover effect that redefined perceptions. It was received globally and had worldwide effects, even leading to modifications in legislation.

Through my in-depth analysis of this impactful campaign, I will be able to examine the positive impact this ahead-of-its-time campaign had on brands and perceptions around the world. Dove led by example, and I will follow an approach that can be just as successful for your brand. I have prepared a preliminary research proposal for your review if you would like to discuss this further.

Dove's strategy was simple. The brand associated itself with the cause of women's body positivity and empowerment. Dove positioned itself as more than just a soap or skincare company; it became a brand of self-confidence and inclusivity by using women of all different body types and skin colours. The association was brilliant and it worked.

If you would like to discuss Dove's influential impacts and how other brands can tailor their campaigns to have a similar successful brand association, please contact me at 647-273-6793 or Claudia.nosseir@dcmail.ca

Looking forward to hearing from you,

Sincerely
Claudia Nosseir



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Executive Summary

This report summarizes and explores the transformative influence of the Dove Beauty Campaign on brand association and its effects that ended up becoming a global conversation. Dove, a Unilever brand of soap launched its first-ever beauty campaign with a focus on promoting body positivity and raising self-esteem among women of all sorts of shapes, sizes, ages and colours. The success of this campaign had a spill-over effect on redefining masculinity as well. Stereotypes were shattered and a new way of thinking was borne. The brand association created by this campaign was used as a branding model by countless organizations around the world. A new generation of positive impact was being woven within mission statements in organizations around the world.

As consumers increasingly prioritize brands that align with their values, businesses are recognizing the opportunity to create a positive legacy, drive change, and foster long-term brand loyalty. This trend is poised to continue shaping the marketing landscape, reinforcing the notion that companies can be agents of social and environmental change while simultaneously building successful and purposeful brands.

Introduction

In 1855 Lord LeverHulme co-founded a soap manufacturing company called Lever Brothers in England. In 1927, he merged with a Dutch margarine company named Unie and thus Unilever was born.

Unilever expanded rapidly and diversified its portfolio into more consumer goods. It became a global powerhouse with a unique dual-headed corporate structure with two parent companies, one in the United Kingdom and the other in the Netherlands.

A revolutionary new beauty soap was created in 1955. It was different from traditional soaps, which were often harsh and drying to the skin. This product was named Dove. Its unique formulation included a combination of moisturizing cream and mild cleansers making it more gentle and moisturizing for the skin.

Our Mission

"The Dove Self-Esteem Project was created from a vision where beauty is a source of confidence, not anxiety. We've reached over 82 million young people with self-esteem education, and by 2030, we're aiming to have helped ¼ billion build their positive body image." ("<https://www.dove.com/us/en/dove-self-esteem-project/our-mission.html>")



The Real Truth About Beauty

Unilever, Dove's parent company, decided to undergo market research and conducted a global study called the "Real Truth About Beauty" in the early 2000s. This extensive research involved interviews with women of various ages, backgrounds, and cultures. The findings revealed a staggering result: only 2 per cent of women considered themselves beautiful, and many felt pressure to conform to unrealistic beauty standards, which at the time consisted of being 'waif' thin. Industry standards defined beauty as being a size zero. Supermodels gracing magazines and high-paid actresses had only one body type: extremely thin.

Dove hired StrategyOne, a research firm in New York who managed the study in collaboration with Dr. Nancy Etcoff and Massachusetts General Hospital, Harvard University, and with the expert consultation of Dr. Susie Orbach of the London School of Economics. ("https://clubofamsterdam.com/content/articles/52%20Beauty/Dove_white_paper_final.pdf")

They interviewed thousands of women across the globe to achieve a well-rounded analysis.

With all this data whirling in the minds of the executive team, the ingenious campaign was born.

Campaign success

They decided to feature women who were short, tall, of different sizes, and of different ethnicities all in bras and panties to showcase the real differences. It was a big hit. Below is the poster from their *Real Beauty Campaign*

Figure 1: Real Beauty Campaign Poster



The images resonated with everyone who saw them. It celebrated difference and beauty in shapes rarely captured on commercials before. For the first time, beauty did not have a definition. Their soap took on a new meaning. When you looked at Dove's



logo, you saw women, you saw beauty. Dove products were flying off the shelves, brand association had cemented itself.

Body washes, soap, and any beauty products associated with the campaign had seen increased sales and brand loyalty.

Unilever was committed to continuing with this healthy beauty rebranding and continued over the years with several other campaigns that had the same type of positive social association. This brings us to the next social crisis that they tackled; toxic masculinity.

Real Strength

In 2015, Dove partnered with Dr. Michael Kimmel to conduct a study that collected data to “uncover how men across the globe view masculinity and what truly makes them feel strong”. In line with what was happening in society, they decided to launch the “*Real Strength*” campaign.

Figure 2: Real Strength poster



In another ingenious move, Unilever decided to launch a campaign on a medium that could reach as many men as possible. The sports arena. They used a renowned sports broadcaster and all-around quintessential definition of a ‘man’, Mike Greenberg as their voice in their commercial. ("Www.Prnewswire.Com, Wwww.Prnewswire.Com/News-releases/Dove-mencare-launches-real-strength-campaign-on-sports-biggest-stage-to-celebrate-the-caring-side-of-modern-men-300022814.Html#:~:Text=Dove%20Men%2BCare%2C%20a%20global%20Unilever%20men%27s%20personal%20care")

Real men are caring

This campaign was determined to spread awareness to attempt to redefine traditional concepts of masculinity. Encouraging men and boys to embrace a healthier version of themselves, a caring version. They extended their commitment beyond women's issues to address a real crisis among men. Shattering the narrative that controlling and abusive



men were not strong and were not real men. Caring men became the new stereotype, the new norm.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the way organizations engage with their customers has undergone a massive facelift with the rise of positive messaging embedded in brand associations. This strategy involves businesses aligning their values with social and environmental causes to not only promote their products but also create a positive impact on the world. Companies like Patagonia, Ben & Jerry's, and Starbucks, to name a few, followed suit and in turn, they established a more meaningful relationship with their client base. Not only established relationships but also grew their customer base.

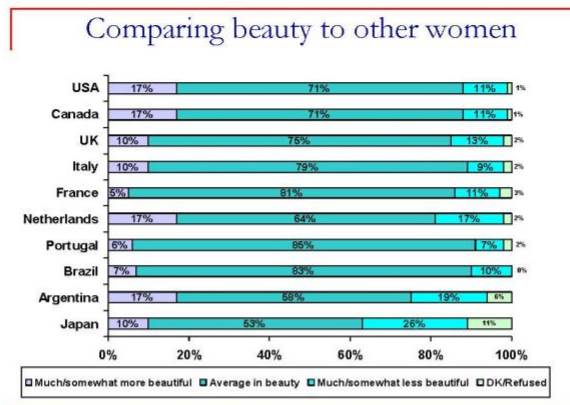
Recommendations

Patagonia's strong commitment to sustainability and environmental conservation resonated with environmentally conscious consumers, aiding to the company's success. Ben & Jerry's uses its ice-cream tubs to advocate for social justice issues, cultivating a passionate and engaged customer base. Companies around the world have now embraced this type of brand association. The result? Positive impact = brand association. Patagonia, TOMs, The Body Shop, and Nike jumped on the positive-impact bandwagon and grew the same success.

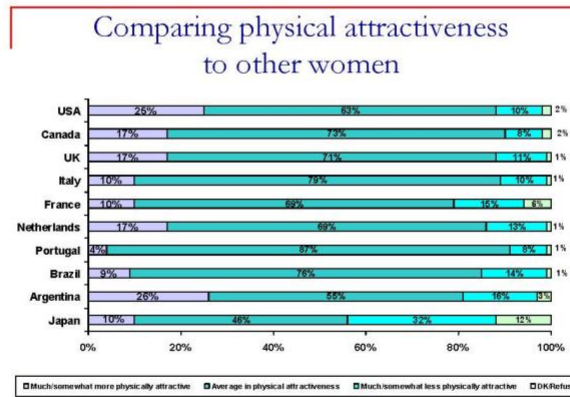


Charts

Chart 1 & 2: Comparing beauty and physical attractiveness



C4—Compared to other women, do you think you are...?



C39—Compared to other women, do you think you are...?

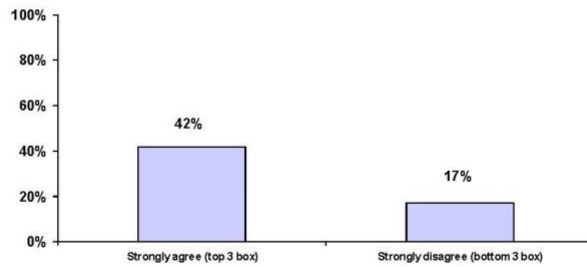


Chart 3 & 4: Discomfort in women

Discomfort in describing self as beautiful

Total Respondents

"I do not feel comfortable describing myself as beautiful"

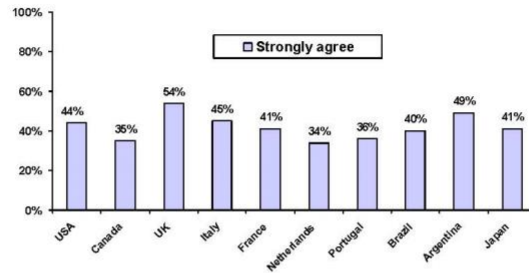


C57 - Now, I am going to read you a list of statements, and I'd like you to tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with each. Please use a 10-point scale where 1 means you "Completely disagree" and 10 means you "Completely agree".

10 pt. scale

Discomfort in describing self as beautiful

"I do not feel comfortable describing myself as beautiful"



C57 - Now, I am going to read you a list of statements, and I'd like you to tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with each. Please use a 10-point scale where 1 means you "Completely disagree" and 10 means you "Completely agree".

Top 3 box of 10 pt. scale



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