

Integrated marketing communication of dove company



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In the early 40s Dove shaped the formula for the future Dove bar, the brand's first mild soap. It is then refined into the Dove Beauty Bar. In 1957, the product is launched onto the market. The latter meets a quick success and is rapidly recommended by skin specialist. Thanks to its inner qualities, the soap sales helped Dove to become a leading brand on the cosmetics market.

In 1990, Dove launches its Beauty Wash Cream.

Since then, Dove has not stopped in extending the range of its products, including for men.

Traditional Target Market:

Broadly target segment is women between 16 and 50 years old. Core target is working women between 25 and 40 years old. They generally come from middle and upper-class. What is very important is that they should be from "all shapes and sizes". We will go through this point further in this document (cf. Real Beauty Campaign).

Competition:

Although Dove is a leader on its niche market, the brand faces direct (Olay, Palmolive, Safeguard, Garnier, Belo, Likas, Silka) and indirect competition (Body wash, 3 in 1 soaps and so on). A very important strength related to Dove is that the brand benefits from Unilever huge distribution network.

Dove outsells all other skin care bars. For instance, over one billion showers are taken using Dove products in the US each year. As a consequence, Dove has become number one in beauty soap niche.

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Main Channels of Communication:

Website

Video (You Tube, ...)

TV commercials

Social networks (Facebook, Twitter)

Billboards

Dove Global Strategy Evolution: An Overview

Before:

World's largest producer but no unified global identity

Brands managed in a decentralized fashion

Years of slow performance

Lack of sound corporate strategy

Numerous low-volume brands

Small global presence compared to competition

Mediocre performance in emerging markets

NOW & FUTURE PLANS:

Reduce portfolio to 400 " core" brands

“ Path to Growth” initiative

Concentrate on product innovation to fuel internal growth

An initiative to create an overall umbrella across all Unilever’s brands

“ Path to Growth” Initiative: a five-year strategic program

Go from 1600 to 400 brands

Select “ Masterbrands”, mandated to serve as umbrella identities over a range of product forms

Develop a global brand unit for each “ Masterbrand”.

Simply put, marketing strategy’s main objective is based on the following: “

Bring top of mind awareness through every adapted channel.”

“ In a world of hype and stereotypes, Dove provides a refreshingly real alternative for women who recognise that beauty comes in all shapes and sizes”

.... UNILEVER website

Marketing Strategy Plans: A focus

Continuously evolving the campaign

Effective advertising

Cross-selling possibilities

Strong emotional touch

Unconventional communication strategy

Risks In The Future:

A brand for “ fat girls”

Undermining the aspiration of consumers

The objectification of women and the risk of being rejected by feminists

Copy by the competitors

Sustainability of campaigns in the long term

Risk of exposure in social medias

DOVE – “ Brand Positioning, Brand Concept & Brand Extension”

Dove Soap

Brand Positioning

Soft, caring ‘ mild soap’

Brand Concept

Makes women realize the beauty in themselves

Brand/ Line and Category Extension

Brand Extension in multiple categories like Shampoos, Deodorants, lotions etc

Dove Shampoo

Brand Positioning

A mild shampoo which repairs hair damage

Brand Concept

Focus on Repairing damage hair

Brand/ Line and Category Extension

No brand extension; though various variants available

Dove Body Wash

Brand Positioning

A Body Wash that makes you feel hydrated and fresh after a bath

Brand Concept

A Moisturizing Body wash to avoid the dryness of skin occurring due to use of conventional soaps

Brand/ Line and Category Extension

None

Dove Anti-Perspiring Deodorant

Brand Positioning

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Deodorant for women to help skin recover from underarm shaving

Brand Concept

Mild Deodorant having good fragrance and good for skin

Brand/ Line and Category Extension

No Brand extensions, though variants available in Market

Dove Body Lotion

Brand Positioning

Body Lotion for dry skin

Brand Concept

Moisturizing body lotion

Brand/ Line and Category Extension

No Brand extensions, though variants available in Market

KEY MARKETING ISSUES

PERSONAL CARE CATEGORY

Multiple categories & too many products: As mentioned earlier, personal care category itself is divided into multiple sub categories. It is increasingly getting difficult for the customers to choose the right product due to too many options available in the market. It has been observed during the

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testing stage (Consumers are given the samples to use and give feedback) that the consumers do not even able to make out by using the product if they are using hair conditioner or skin conditioner (Source: Lecture delivered by an HUL business head in IIM C).

Intense competition: Personal care category has grown at a very rapid rate in the past few years with increasing competition. Major players consist of HUL, P&G, J&J, Emami, Gillette, Fama Di wills, L'Oreal, Revlon, Benckiser, Avon, Amway, Oriflame, Cavinkare and so on. A category that has such a large number of players operating at the same market place makes it difficult for the brands to sustain in the market and in the minds of the customers.

Complex product composition: Product composition is getting complex and complex with every other product innovation. Customers in this category are very sensitive towards the fact if the product is good for their body or not, if it is made of natural ingredients or harmful chemicals. They are also not able to decide as to which product fits for which requirement. Companies are facing a challenge as to how can they best educate the customers about the product and its usage.

“ Word of Mouth” effect: Products recommended by friends and family members (word of mouth advertisement) has great impact on the consumption pattern of the consumers. They find it easy and trouble-free to switch from one product/brand to other if someone has used it earlier and is suggesting the same for them.

Shift in the target group: Personal care category is divided into two

segments – Premium segment & Popular segment. Premium segment caters
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to the need of mainly the urban target group whereas Popular segment mainly addresses the need of the rural target group. Till 2002-2003, Personal care products, except those in oral care category, were regarded as luxury items, and attracted a high excise duty of 120%. But the taxation reforms in India after 1991 have lowered the excise duty rates that make these products more affordable. The impact of this is that there has been a drastic shift in the consumption pattern in personal care category with a major shift from urban to rural markets. One more reason that strengthens the above stated fact is that the research shows that the urban markets for personal care products is getting saturated and all the future opportunities lies in the rural markets only.

Wide price range: Price range in this category is too wide and so it causes the problem of “ Value for Money” for the customers. It becomes more crucial for the companies to position its brand carefully so that the perceived value of the brand matches the customers’ (targeted) willingness to spend the stated money.

Distribution problems: With competition shifting from urban markets (reachable) to rural markets, companies having better distribution system have an advantage over its competitors.

BRAND “ DOVE”

Any brand in the personal care category would face the above stated marketing issues but may be to a different extent depending on the fact whether it lies in the premium or the popular segment (explained above).

Some of the major marketing issues faced by the brand “ DOVE” are mentioned here as:

Threat of Brand Erosion: With lot of sales promotions happening with the brand like 1+1 free, there is a possibility of brand value erosion. With the brand now priced at Rs 28 (Lower end), the price has somewhat become reasonable. This might erode the premium nature of the brand and might obscure Dove’s brand positioning as well.

Dove/Axe Case: Brand conflict arising due to portrayal of women differently for its two brands by Unilever had created some doubts in the minds of the customers. Axe’s portrayal of women as thin, young and often suggestively dressed, along with its use of text and slogans utilizing sexual innuendo, made Dove’s real beauty message seem untrue.

“ Value for Money” problem (Indian context): It has been observed that Indian customers take into consideration the notion of “ value for money” even while purchasing the premium products. Dove (soaps mainly) has been seen as the least lasting soap amongst all the soap varieties available in the market. As such it usually does not last enough (partly because of typical Indian bathroom habits). All this has reduced the value proposition for the brand.

Multiple products under one Umbrella Brand: Originally Dove was launched in the soap category and later the brand covered a variety of other products including hair care, skin care, deodorants etc. Dove might find it difficult in the long run to adhere to its brand promise for all the products. Any one

product under the umbrella brand Dove if goes wrong in the market, might greatly affect the overall brand image as well.

ANALYSIS OF MARKETING COMMUNICATION

Dove's Campaign for Real Beauty has been one of the most talked about campaigns, earning praise from people in the advertising world, as well as from real consumers for representing something different to the typical fashion advertising. The Dove Campaign for Real Beauty is a worldwide marketing campaign launched in 2004 that includes advertisements, video, workshops, sleepover events and even the publication of a book and the production of a play. The principle behind the campaign is to celebrate the natural physical variation embodied by all women and inspire them to have the confidence to be comfortable with them. This campaign featured regular women (non-models) who were beautiful in their own way and did not fit in with the idealized images of models, super-models, and celebrities. Dove is a classic case of consistency especially in a country like India where people have come of age in terms of affluence.

The campaign, also, focused on highlighting the functional benefit of the product. The process is two-pronged, comprising “ conviction and proof”. Thus, the campaigns showed the performance of the product on the face, which was quickly followed up by testimonials from ‘ real people’.

CFRB was a multi-faceted campaign that sought to challenge the stereotypes set by the beauty industry. The CFRB is currently focused on how girls are today bombarded with unrealistic, unattainable messages and images of beauty that impact their self-esteem.

The campaign launched in September 2004 with a much talked about ad campaign featuring real women whose appearances are outside the stereotypical norms of beauty. The ads asked viewers to judge the women's looks. The second phase kicked off in June 2005, with a advertisement featuring six real women with real bodies and real curves (that's what the ad mentioned). Continuing its ongoing commitment to widen the narrow definition of beauty, Dove launched the third phase in February 2007. The campaign "Beauty Comes of Age" celebrates the essence of women 50+ wrinkles, age spots, grey hair and all.

The campaign returned \$3 for every \$1 spent.

Advertisements:

The early part of the campaign was mainly driven by TV ads, and billboard ads. All the TV commercials resonated with the brand message that "Real beauty comes in all shapes, sizes, and colours". The Dove ads are creative and get the consumer's attention. It uses a softer communication style. It's tells women that it's time to "be comfortable in your own skin". It has even been running roadblocks across channels like Star and Zee, where it bought out all the commercial advertising time on an exclusive basis. The soap's advertisements are very timely. The Real Beauty models have also received

their share of the spotlight appearing on numerous television programs including “ Oprah”, “ The Today Show”, “ The View” and “ CNN”.

Videos/Films:

Dove started the Dove Self-Esteem Fund that claims to change the Western concept of beauty from ultra-thin models with perfect features to making every girl (and woman) feel positive about her looks, no matter what they are. In an effort to promote the Fund, Dove ordered a series of highly-successful online-based short films promoting the self-esteem concept, which to date includes Daughters (which also aired as a 75-second television spot during the Super Bowl XL), Evolution (which went on to win a number of honours, including two Cannes Lions Grand Prix awards), Onslaught, and Amy. For e. g. Onslaught is a new viral film that depicts the constant barrage of beauty images that girl absorb every day. Both visually and emotionally powerful, the film is a wake-up call for anyone concerned about the factors that impact self -esteem in young girls.

Workshops:

Dove conducted a series of self esteem workshops and provided new online self esteem tools for mom and girls. This was done to help girls, moms and mentors realize what they see in movies and magazines represent an unrealistic standard of beauty, not an everyday achievable look.

Internet Media:

The CFRB site, [www. Campaignforrealbeauty. ca](http://www.Campaignforrealbeauty.ca), houses a variety of tools for improving self-esteem in girls. Visitors can access new self-esteem building tools, take part in interactive self-esteem activities and join self-esteem

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discussion boards. They can also learn how to lead in self-esteem workshops and read articles by leading self-esteem experts. Since the website's launch, nearly 4 million people have logged onto the website.

Dove is getting smart about social media, using it to drive even more interest online in the central theme behind the entire campaign. One of the most popular videos on YouTube right now is Dove's Evolution of Beauty, a video also posted on their website. About 12, 077, 157 have watched this ad on YouTube till date. This is the new wave of advertising – one where ad agencies maintain their niche for developing creative video advertising, but media buying groups are the ones left out.

Sales Promotion:

Dove's initial price was around Rs50 that put off even the premium customers. With lot of sales promotions happening with the brand like 1+1 free , the price has somewhat become reasonable.

CRITICISM OF THE MARKETING COMMUNICATION

No doubt the Dove campaign has been one of the most successful one in recent times. However, lot of criticism does surround the campaign.

As part of this campaign, in 2006, the campaign has been criticized on the grounds that Unilever also produces Fair and Lovely, a skin-lightening product marketed at dark-skinned women in several countries. It should be noted that Fair and Lovely's advertising campaign would seemingly contradict the sentiment of the Campaign for Real Beauty.

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Another argument can be made concerning the models themselves. While Dove chose to stay away from “ professional” models, they also clearly chose models that are still pretty. If one looks closely at all of these women, their hair is perfect, their teeth are white and they have relatively flawless skin (no visible scars, bruises, pimples, etc). These women are as over-processed as any other model, in fact many believe that they are subject to digital retouching and airbrushing in order for them to appear this way. Their advertising campaign fails because they are not being direct, clear and concise with their message.

While sales promotions are necessary to increase sales, there is a possibility of brand value erosion. The critics state that the brand does not fit into the “ value for money” proposition for the Indian consumer. It is a truth that Indian consumers look for “ Value” even in premium products. Dove has a negative point in that the soap usually does not last enough (partly because of our bathroom habits). This has reduced the value proposition for this brand.

The campaign had created a Self Esteem Fund and was showcasing real beauty as opposed to airbrushed images, but still they are selling firming cream in some of the ads using the same brand name (brand extension). They are now playing on the insecurities of the target group. This was not what the brand initially believed in. Hence, this portrays a negative image of the brand and creates a perception that Dove is now not committed to Real Beauty cause.

DOVE: Brand Perception “ Connect with the Market”

Brand perception gives what a consumer feels and expects from a brand.

The perception of a brand by a customer can be understood as the positioning that product has in the consumer’s mind. The positioning that Dove has is that of being mild on the skin. It basically protects your skin and hair.

To understand the brand perception, primary and secondary data were used to derive the positioning of Dove with respect to its competitors. This has been done for 4 major categories of products of Dove: Shampoos, Soaps, Deodorants and Body Lotion.

Shampoos:

The positioning of Dove with respect to competitors on features of Protection offered to the hair and Style Quotient of the product was mapped.

Here we can see that Dove is clearly positioned as a safe shampoo for hair care. The mildness of the shampoo is given more stress than the style quotient. This also matches with the concept of ‘ Real Beauty’ that they pursue. It is more important to have a natural look stylish at the cost of health of hair.

Soaps:

The positioning of Dove with respect to competitors on features of mildness of the product on skin and Style Quotient of the product were mapped.

Even with soaps the image of Dove is persistent as being very mild and hence good for the skin. The moisturising nature of the soap is given more emphasis than the cleansing or glamour property of the soap.

Deodorants:

In the category of deodorants, Dove has been compared to the other brands on Fragrance and Price. A feature not discussed is the moisturising effect of the deodorant, which is one of the differentiating features for Dove.

Here we can see that Dove doesn't have that clear a positioning with respect to other competition brands in terms of Fragrance and Price. But Dove uses a positioning similar to that of the category soap in deodorants too. The moisturising aspect of the Dove deodorant is the differentiating feature that Dove offers. This again is in line with the overall perception of Dove being mild on the skin.

Body Lotion:

The positioning of Dove with respect to competitors on features of moisturising effect and price were mapped.

The consistent image and characteristic which Dove maintains in other categories, naturally held on in this category. Dove Body Lotion is perceived as a brand with very good moisturising effect. It is also perceived to be on the higher price side compared to a competitor who provides similar quality of product.

The overall brand perception which Dove maintains in all its categories is that of a mild and gentle product which keeps you naturally clean and fresh.

DOVE: A Comparison with Its Competitors

SHAMPOO

DOVE

Garnier

L’Oreal Paris

Positioning Strategy

Lifestyle product mainly targeted at teenagers and young girls- middle and upper socio economic class- nature based innovative personal care

Focused towards young working women who earn their own money Entered with hair dresser industry- rely more on International campaigns

Brand Image

Long and Strong hair- 5 Times stronger Hair which takes care of the hair

Total repair therapy- Premium brand

Brand/ Line and category extension

Garnier hair color shampoo- for middle aged women (Daughter advising her mom to use it), Garnier Shampoo + Oil blend

L’Oreal kids shampoo

SOAP

DOVE

Johnsons Baby Soap

Camay

Handmade soaps- Like Lush

PositioningStrategy

Focused Baby, and then also included small kids. Recently to kids mothers as well

Positioned as white, pure soap for women initially. Later moved from just beauty to beautiful complexion at every age.

Latest: Camay Bar- face wash in a bar

Positioned as healthy and environmental friendly soaps.

Use sensory marketing strategy along with funky names to create the buzz

Brand Image

Medically tested soap for young skin

Rich creamy affordable soap

Natural and relaxing but highly expensive

Brand/ Line and category extension

Various variants available

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Chocolate, glitter and menthol variants

Into various other products in skin and hair care

BODY WASH

DOVE

Lux

Palmolive

Neutrogena

Positioning Strategy

Focuses on silky soft skin

Focus on giving Natural Spa like experience

Focuses on refreshing and gentle formula to fight breakouts in your skin

BrandImage

Nice fragrance and smooth body wash in an affordable range

Scented and refreshing body wash- for upper socio economic segment

Alternative to medicated prescriptions; works for minor acnes as well

Brand/ Line and category extension

7 Variants available; recently Friday night Fever

Natural moisturizing, thermal Spa, Aroma

Deep clean sport body wash; Men body wash

BODY LOTION

DOVE

Nivea

Vaseline

Ponds

Positioning Strategy

Focused as body lotion present to suit different needs for different weather

Initially focused as lotion for rough skin during winters with natural oils- now positioned as one for each season lotion

Positioned as deep moisturizing winter lotion

Brand Image

Long lasting moisturizer lotion

Natural glowing and moisturizing lotion

An affordable non greasy lotion

Brand/ Line and category extension

Sun kissed firming lotion, body lotion for men

Aloe Vera and healthy white

Ponds dream flower lotion

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ANTI PERSPIRANTS

DOVE

Nike

Fa

Rexona

Positioning Strategy

Sporty deodorant for both the sexes

Towards young women- Feel good freshness

First anti Per spirant to be launched; Round the clock protection; Indian values with International feel- positioned at both the sexes.

Brand Image

Highly premium brand: more of a style icon

Dry and clear ; Mild but efficient deo giving 24 hour protection

Deodorant for controlling excessive perspiration

Brand/ Line and category extension

Various variants available

FaXtreme for men

From contact Stick to aerosol sprays; 5 variants for women and 2 for men

Digital Space

Considering the wider target group, Dove would need to change its communication strategy as well. The fact that Dove should be looking to tap into the urban and youthful segment – a segment extremely active on the digital media (especially the social media) – the entire digital campaign gains centre stage. This becomes all the more important as even the housewives are becoming increasingly internet friendly. With this in mind, and the new youthful edginess of the brand, the website would need to be redesigned and the brand's entire communication online would need to be made more youthful – by incorporating online tests (which can help women identify their body type, or hair type, or better still, with customised suggestions based on the answers provided) and tips for women (in the various stages of their lifecycle). Coming up with a forum with the theme of “ Real women, to express Real problems” where women can get together and discuss their issues bodily issues (acne problems, hair fall etc.), with professional tips coming in at times as well. Women, especially in India, would be reluctant to talk openly about most cosmetic issues. This forum would act as a support group, where they could post anonymously if they chose to, and give and receive help from other women. This would boost Dove's image as a trusted brand that genuinely cares for the everyday concerns of real women.

Packaging

Currently, the packaging of Dove is such that the different variants of the brand – be it in the category of shampoos or soaps, but notably less so in the category of anti-perspirants – are not very clearly distinguishable. This means that a ‘ Dove Crème’ is hardly distinguishable from ‘ Dove Fresh

Moisture’ and it, in turn, seems hardly different from ‘ Dove Gentle Exfoliating’. The uniformity in colour – a large portion with cream background, under a subtle Greyish or Light Blueish logo and text – makes the different variants hardly attract the eye. Changing the packaging by changing the colour or the shape, would further add to the change in positioning from ‘ mild’ to one of elegant and edgy youthfulness. Also, in a retail store, the plain colours of Dove easily camouflage with the background and whenever it does catch the eye, it looks like a product fit more at a chemist’s store. To change this, Dove can make the bottles transparent or, as is the case internationally, choose colours which are visible yet elegant – like Royal Blue or feminine Lavender.

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