

Dove: evolution of a brand essay sample

Literature, Russian Literature



1. In February 2000 Unilever embraced a five year strategy to downsize (re-organize) the 1, 600 brand to 400. The elected brands were defined as ‘ Master brands’, and were meant to serve as umbrella identities over a range of products. The company took the decision to reduce the number of brands to gain control over its products. In the case of Dove, the brand served as umbrella brand for a wide range of health and beauty products. To gain control, the company shifted from a decentralized branding strategy, led by brand managers, to a more centralized strategy. The company developed two major groups. One was responsible for brand development (idea behind the brand) which was centralized while another team was developed, responsible for brand building around the major regions in which Unilever operated.

2. The first product developed by Dove was called a beauty bar, launched in 1957. The message claimed by the company was “ Dove soap doesn’t dry your skin because it’s one-quarter cleansing cream”. Later they changed the slogan from “ cleansing cream” to “ moisturizing cream”. By the 2000, the brand depended on the claims of functional superiority. In February 2000 the brand was tapped to become a Masterbrand. The brand had to endorse a different image to cap the whole range of products (personal care products) that were to fall under the Dove brand. The notion of communicating functional superiority had to change. Unilever decided that Dove should stand for a point of view. They conducted an exploratory market research and came up with the idea to market the Brand as “ The Real Beauty” focusing on women. The Mission statement changed into a challenge to make more women aware of their beauty.

3. The campaign for real beauty meant that the company had to understand needs and desires of women. The company made use of market research by spreading 3000 surveys across 10 countries. The outcome of this research showed that only 2% valued themselves as beautiful. The company decided that the campaign for real beauty had to focus on transmitting the message that the 'average woman' is beautiful. This creative campaign had one major aim, i. e. to inform women that beauty is reachable. For the first time these customers were receiving positive message about these looks. Instead of depicting the typical "young, white, blonde and thin" model they decided to expose their products using normal people you would encounter in the streets. The idea was revolutionary, making beauty attainable. IMC is not all about sales and in this case Unilever/Dove advertised to make their customers aware of their position.

4. I would argue that their campaign for real beauty is a successful move. The company managed to overcome the typical stereotypes of beauty in offering something which is reachable. They managed affective to transmit a new message of beauty. The company made use of Dove reputation (quality soap) to launch a whole range of personal care products. Their most important tool was to depict women to a realistic picture. They did not make false promises simply to attract clients to buy.

I am of their opinion that the company should go a step further and market their range of products to men. Their successful image can also be transferred to men. The only disadvantage of this strategy is that it leaves the customer without any hope to dream into becoming something bigger.

The media is continuously depicting fashion beauty as the perfect beauty. From this perspective, Dove will have to face the challenge to show that their products are not ‘average products’ for ‘average women’. Customers might think that more expensive products are more effective.