

Dove campaign for real beauty media essay



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VIDEO: The video ' Evolution' starts with an ordinary fair girl sitting against a camera. Now the movement starts with some professionals (make-up artists) start applying make-up on her step by step and finally it shows how this ordinary looking girl is converted to a beautiful model. Not only this, the further step involved the digital alteration of a picture of her to make her even better looking. Afterwards, this final picture is used at a billboard and the line below it captures this: ' No wonder our perception of beauty is distorted'. To move further, this final picture is used to advertise an unreal beauty product on a billboard. This whole make-up video was posted on Youtube and it was viewed 40, 000 times on the first day of its release and 1, 700, 000 times within a month of the upload .

<http://fashionrules.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/10/dove-campaign-for-real-beauty.jpg>

Message: This viral message was aimed to raise awareness about the Dove Self-Esteem Fund. The objective of the fund was to help women and girls from Canada trying to build a stronger self-esteem and a better positive self-image than the negative one which had been running them anxious. This campaign was created by Ogilvy & Mather Toronto for the Canadian market only but it soon became a rage and had a huge impact not only in Canada but all over the world.

Effect: The video had a strong effect and it gradually spread much beyond the Canadian Market- the initial target market for this message, thanks to the advent of social media especially the use of YouTube here. The audience got to know that the advertisement in magazines and on the television is not

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the real thing. The model girls are made better looking than they actually are; but the problem once that women tend to take it as true and thus develop a with low self-esteem as they are not able to understand the true side of it. But this video helped them understand this and thus had a positive impact on their psyche as far as they perceive the beauty as shown to them.

Reasons for impact:

It becomes an interesting study to find out what were the reasons that made this video so popular. Some major reasons that can be thought off are:

Emotional connection: For any viral message to be successful, it should be able to connect to the audience on an emotional level. If anyone feels emotional by watching a video, it is bound to encourage the person to share it with like-minded people and feel good about it and this is the way a viral grows making it infectious. This video directly hit the identity and the self-image of girls and women by exposing to them the reality behind the beauty industry and increasing their confidence in their own inner beauty with less emphasis on the external beauty thus helping them create a positive and optimistic self-image and staying away from fake beauties shown by the media.

A Sticky and memorable message: In addition to being emotional, the message should be substantial in itself and should be strong enough to directly reach the memory of the audience. In this video, a message was created telling people that the way they see the beauty is not the real one, it's just make up and not the real natural stuff, the reality being something else. Most people did or do not know how 'fake' the beauty industry really is.

This is why the message made such a big impact on people's perception and resulted in remembering who sent the message. For Dove, it helped in creating a brand loyalty where audience would remember not only the message but develop a strong brand recall and reputation for Dove.

A Novel idea: With this video, Dove did something different and extraordinary wherein it not only tried to promote its brand but tried to show the audience that I actually cared for them and wanted to show them the real picture. Audience liked the idea in which the perception about the beautiful ad models was changed and the reality was exposed by this video. This novelty in the idea played a huge role in the spread of this video through online media at such a rapid pace.

The Indirect and subtle approach

One of the best things that happen with this video was the trust that it developed among the audience and it happened because of the subtle manner in which the brand was conveyed along with the message. There was no direct and over-the-face mention of the products or the company or its name. But at the same time, the message behind the message, from Dove's perspective, was that the female segment should get the real picture, should aim to be supermodels, instead just try to enjoy their normal beauty and for that they don't need cosmetics or surgeries, all they need a bar of soap, one which cares for them.

The continuity in approach

One of the major problems with a viral message is that the enthusiasm generated by the message can easily fall down and thus there should be a

disciplined way to counter this. After the fast spread of this videos and the message, the company realized fast that it needs to keep the fire up and thus it released few other videos with same message fast along with behind the scene coverings and also did everything through other ways like interviews, surveys etc. to keep the buzz alive.

The likeability

The video was very much likeable and it generated a feel good factor among the audience by negating the negative self-image resulting from the wrong perception portrayed by the beauty industry. This was huge and had a big impact on the appeal and attraction of the video.

Power of social media: Today, Online internet media is a very powerful tool to spread your message across at a very high speed and across very wide reach. There was a lot of talk about this video on different blogs or through comments and responses in the form of more videos on YouTube that were not only serious ones but were spoofs too like ' Slob Evolution'. Through all this, the power of the video viral grew manifolds and bigger and bigger which created a buzz and thus reached a large audience across the globe.

Talking about the other side of this viral, the audience which was exposed to this video viral reported a positive change in their attitude and perception towards the brand, and not only those, this was also among the people that had only heard about it and yet not seen it. Thus through this campaign, Dove proved that viral marketing through social media is a very powerful tool if used it the right manner. It can go a long way in changing the

attitudes of people towards a brand with good viral marketing, which results in more sales.

Not only this, Even without having appeared anywhere through offline means, the video and its effects were discussed by a good number of TV programs, which includes Good Morning America, The View, The Ellen DeGeneres Show, and news channels such as CNN, NBC, and News, showing support for the message with an overwhelming majority. It produced double-figure growth in product sales for Dove, and also Unilever reported that its overall sales rose by 5.8%, up from 3.9% the previous year in the duration following the release of Evolution.

Also now, Dove has a page on Facebook which mentions their mission as being committed towards helping all women to realize their real beauty potential by creating products that would deliver genuine improvement to their skin and hair. It believes that beauty must be for everyone, the reason that when one looks and feels the best, one feels better about self". To get an idea about how successful this campaign has been, the count on the fans of this page is 283,808 people.

Major characteristics of a viral that enhance its ability to spread

Outstanding story like the success of an underdog in some competition etc.

Latest on Facebook is the video of interview of a student from a very poor family who went on to become the topper of the IAS exam this year 2010.

Stickiness : Sticky content refers to content published on a website, which has the purpose of getting a user to return to that particular website or hold

their attention and get them to spend longer periods of time at that site. Uploaded links or tagging pictures are such examples as consumers tend to come back to same messages to post some comment

Relevance – A viral tends to spread fast through online media if it is relevant to the target friends. E. g. messages related to Business may be more relevant for a MBA student and so have higher chances of getting forwarded through e-mails, blogs or commented high on Facebook.

Portability

Share ability

Timing and actuality

Seeding hook

Natures of viral

Today use of social media is almost indispensable especially for the current generation. This can be seen with the ever-increasing users of blogs, Facebook, twitter etc. With the tremendous amount of information easily available on internet today, there is a huge emphasis on “ sharing” today and everyone wants to be more and more aware about various things. But that does not mean that everything on this earth is shared. Rather there has to be some value, some relevance in the message for it to be important enough to be forwarded and propagated. To know about these characteristics, 47 internet users were interviewed(28 from IIM K personally and 19 through online survey) and they were asked about the top 3 types of

messages they are more inclined to share and were given 9 options to choose from. Following were the results:-

The results showed that the major types of the viral messages that are likely to be propagated fast through social media are Comic content, socially relevant stuff or some inspirational/motivational information. Further, these users were asked about their medium of their sharing and following were the results:-

Around 48% use social networking sites like Facebook, Orkut etc. to share the messages whereas forwarding of e-mails was a distant second and seems to be losing its charm with the advent of other better means of sharing like networking sites etc.

But then if looked closely, use of a particular medium for sharing by a user depends on his location and access to various media. To have a better understanding of this, the 47 respondents were then divided into 2 separate sections - Students and Working users - and the data were collated separately as shown:-

The results show the changes in preference of the medium used due to the constained access. For instance figure 1 which has all IIM K students as the respondentd show that majority of them use Facebook or other networking sites as their most preferred medium of message propagation and here e-mail forwards form a very small(only 7%) of their media usage for information sharing.

On the contrary, the working respondents who generally have a constrained access to social networking sites instead use more of e-mail forwards.