

:case study:

Analyse real-worlds examples of successful digital marketing campaigns. Extract lessons learned and apply them to your own strategies:

Title of case study:

Dove “The Campaign For Real Beauty”

The case study can not exceed 5 written pages in 11 point font. The case study should explain the business opportunity and objectives, the research story behind campaign development, a description of the campaign, and proof of business results (please see Entry Kit for more details). Proprietary data can be disguised. Winners are able to submit an alternate version of the case study excluding sensitive information for use in public communications.



Business Situation and Campaign Objectives:

1. Business Situation

Dove was launched in the USA in 1957 as a bar of soap. Over the next 40-odd years it grew steadily by expanding into other countries and other 'personal care' categories – including body wash, hair care, facial cleansing and moisturizing - until, by 2004, soap represented less than half its sales.

While the Dove product portfolio had fundamentally changed into that of a beauty brand, consumers still perceived Dove as a bar of soap. In addition, while Dove's associations of simplicity, whiteness and gentleness were appealing, the brand lacked energy, and it represented a submissive femininity that seemed dated. This outdated perception of the brand was an obstacle to its future growth potential.

If Dove sales were to continue growing, the brand would need to catch up to its product portfolio. Dove would need to radically reinvent itself as a beauty brand. But this wouldn't be easy – the beauty category was already overcrowded and highly competitive. In 2004, according to Mintel, there were 1,760 new product launches in facial skincare alone and most didn't survive. Unilever decided that the best entry point would be through a beauty brand message, segueing into the hand & body lotions segment (HBL), with a new product: Dove Firming Lotion.

2. Campaign objectives

The team set out to reinvent Dove as a beauty brand and established the following objectives for the campaign:

- To raise sales across the Dove product portfolio
- To increase salience and cultural relevance for the brand

3. Budget

The media budget for the Dove launch was \$13 million for 2005. This budget was roughly one-fifth that of a typical 'personal care' product launch.

The Research Story

Strategy Research

The challenge was to re-launch Dove as a beauty brand. The competitors in the beauty category didn't really seem that differentiated from one another. They were offering up beauty in a very narrowly-defined way – size 2, blond, flawless, superbly toned, young women that the team suspected felt and best unattainable and worst deeply depressing the most real women.

Campaign Description

In order to personify the notion that real beauty comes in all shapes, sizes and ages, ordinary, real women were used in the advertising rather than models, as the living embodiment of Dove's Beauty Theory. The campaign exhorted all women to love their own

bodies by featuring gorgeous curvy girls in their underwear. The general target for "The Campaign for Real Beauty" is women age 27-67.

"The Campaign for Real Beauty" included two tiers. A brand tier referred to as the 'Tickbox' work, launched in October/November 2004, showcased a range of beauty stereotypes, designed to encourage participation and provoke a national debate.

Conclusion:

There's been rapid growth in Dove which can be credited to the "Campaign for Real Beauty". However, what is clear, the campaign has touched the hearts of the public. Thousands of blogs and internet chat rooms demonstrate the rich diversity of public dialogue. There are mother-daughter seminars on themes such as self-esteem, and there is support for Dove's stance against beauty stereotypes. Parody ads abound on websites that allow people to post and share videos, such as YouTube, Google Video, and Grouper. Some parodies and internet postings raised questions about Unilever's sincerity, its objectivity, and its motives. Then there were the professional marketers and consultants, trying to make sense of the strategy of the brand that was building meaning by courting controversy.