A picture containing person, clothing, underpants

Description automatically generated

Image source: (Victoria’s Secret & Co., n.d.)

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Table of Contents

[**Market Information** 1](#_Toc109574578)

[**Brand profile** 1](#_Toc109574579)

[**Competitor profile** 1](#_Toc109574580)

[**Target market profile** 1](#_Toc109574581)

[**Budget** 2](#_Toc109574582)

[**Problem** 2](#_Toc109574583)

[**IMC Objectives** 2](#_Toc109574584)

[**Positioning Statement** 2](#_Toc109574585)

[**Creative Objectives** 2](#_Toc109574586)

[**Creative Strategy** 2](#_Toc109574587)

[**The big idea** 2](#_Toc109574588)

[**Tone and style** 2](#_Toc109574589)

[**Appeal techniques** 3](#_Toc109574590)

[**Creative Execution** 3](#_Toc109574591)

[**Media objectives** 4](#_Toc109574592)

[**Who** 4](#_Toc109574593)

[**What** 4](#_Toc109574594)

[**Where** 4](#_Toc109574595)

[**When** 4](#_Toc109574596)

[**How** 4](#_Toc109574597)

[**Media Strategy** 4](#_Toc109574598)

[**Nature of the Message** 5](#_Toc109574599)

[**Geographic Market Priorities** 5](#_Toc109574600)

[**Timing of Advertising** 5](#_Toc109574601)

[**Reach/Frequency/Continuity** 5](#_Toc109574602)

[**Engagement** 6](#_Toc109574603)

[**Media Selection Rationale** 6](#_Toc109574604)

[**Out-of-home** 6](#_Toc109574605)

[**Print** 6](#_Toc109574606)

[**Online** 7](#_Toc109574607)

[**Experiential** 7](#_Toc109574608)

[**Media Rejection Rationale** 7](#_Toc109574609)

[**Media Execution** 7](#_Toc109574610)

[**Out-Of-Home Advertising** 7](#_Toc109574611)

[**Print Magazines** 8](#_Toc109574612)

[**Display and Video Ads** 8](#_Toc109574613)

[**The Event – Victoria’s Secret Fashion Show** 8](#_Toc109574614)

[**Interactive In-store Mirror** 8](#_Toc109574615)

[**TikTok Trend** 8](#_Toc109574616)

[**Blocking Chart** 9](#_Toc109574617)

[**Budget Allocation** 9](#_Toc109574618)

[**References** 10](#_Toc109574619)

# **Market Information**

* The Lingerie, Swimwear & Bridal Stores industry is segmented into the following categories (market share %): lingerie and sleepwear (43.4%) and swimwear (22.8%), bridal gowns and accessories (14%), fur apparel (3.3%), and other (16.5%). (McGrath, 2021).
* Victoria’s Secret (VS) is the market leader in the industry that is characterized by high competition and low market share concentration.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Brand** | **Share %** |
| L Brands (Victoria’s Secret, Bath & Body Works, Pink) | 10.4 |
| La Vie en Rose Inc. | 4.1 |
| Other | 85.5 |

* North American stores generate 53% of total sales, while digital and international sales constitute 40% and 7%, respectively.
* Since 2016, market share has declined, from about 21% to 10.4%, due to a loss in consumer interest.
* The brand is perceived to be non-inclusive and portrays limited aspects of femininity and what is considered sexy.

# **Brand profile**

* VS differentiates itself by offering a wide assortment of modern, fashion-inspired collections that provide superior quality, fit, function, and feminine feel. (Victoria’s Secret & Co., n.d.)
* VS provides the best-in-class store services, including its signature bra fit experience that is provided by experts.

**Brand insight from a loyal customer**” Their stuff is so well designed, meanwhile you could find the underwear you need for all occasions, in all color or fabrics. So, when I get a super tight dress or nude color dress or low cut dress that I can't wear regular underwear or bra, VS is the go to store because I know I will be able to find what I need.” (Zhu, 2017).

# **Competitor profile**

VS faces competition from a wide variety of retailers operating in the same domain including individual and chain specialty stores, department stores, and discount retailers (MarketLine, 2022). However, they lack product diversity and the distinctive brand recognition that VS has in the market.

# **Target market profile**

Demographics: Urban; Women, 16-60 years old; Men, 22-70 years old; income $25,000 and above; primary age group: Gen Y (millennials) and Gen Z.

Psychographics: Experiencers, liberal, vivacious, and expressive.

Behavior: Seek quality, good fit, function and product variety for various needs and occasions; will be loyal if they feel represented by the brand.

Media habits: Digital and social media, and fashion magazines.

# **Budget**

$5 million.

# **Problem**

Amidst growing trend towards the empowerment of women and following backlash for promoting an unhealthy and over sexualized body image for women, VS is attempting to reposition itself as a more inclusive lingerie retailer that caters to the needs of all women. The challenge for the company is to change consumer perception of the brand, from being a provider for a certain class of women, to one that genuinely embraces diversity**.**

# **IMC Objectives**

* Alter the current consumer perceptions and bad reputation associated with the old image of VS.
* Create interest amongst consumers of various ages as the brand offers goods for every kind of woman.
* To reposition the brand as representative, diverse and inclusive.
* To achieve an awareness level of 75% for the new image.

# **Positioning Statement**

“Victoria's Secret is a specialty retailer of women's intimates, apparels, and beauty products. The brand represents a wide assortment of fashion-inspired collections that provide superior quality, fit, function, and feminine feel to inspire, uplift, and empower every woman.”

# **Creative Objectives**

* To depict a brand image that is perceived to be inclusive: represents all women. Portray that women from all different backgrounds, shapes and sizes can be “sexy” and “confident”. Consumers need to feel that they are represented by the brand again.
* To show an emotional association with the brand that inspires a feeling of empowerment in every woman.

# **Creative Strategy**

## **The big idea**

Central theme: Inclusivity, inspiration, and empowerment.

## **Tone and style**

The message will be presented in a vivacious manner.

## **Appeal techniques**

Positive and emotional appeals: Associate brand with positive feelings of happiness and empowerment.

Lifestyle appeal: Associate the brand with a modern, trendy lifestyle.

# **Creative Execution**

* Bring back the iconic Victoria Secret Fashion Show which lastly took place in 2018 (Thomas, 2021)
* Make it available exclusively on a platform such as Netflix or Crave.
* Make the brand stand out again by having the “classic” Victoria’s Secret angels walk with women who represent women from all different shapes, sizes, and backgrounds.
* Show that the brand wants to represent all women by having an open casting for the show. Use the slogan, “You can be an angel”, to attract women to the casting and engage them with the brand. We want to stick to the authentic Victoria’s Secret angel theme but also communicate that any and every woman can be part of the fantasy.
* The show should be seen as a celebration of all women, making it a positive, and emotionally appealing.
* Use testimonials from show participants and engage target on social media in order to create more buzz and hype about the show and the brand.
* In addition, communicate via online banner/video ads, outdoor signage, and ads in fashion magazines.

Our idea to bring back the Victoria’s Secret fashion show is simply related to how iconic it used to be. Models used to wear wings and bras that were worth millions of dollars, while some of our favorite artists performed on the walkway with them. The brand has finally made changes to make sure they serve consumer’s needs/wants while also adapting to the changes in the market. Unfortunately, their reputation is still stained, and it is time to make Victoria’s Secret the brand that every woman feels represented by.

# **Media objectives**

## **Who**

As described in the creative brief, the primary target is women, 16-60 years old residing in urban areas. Secondary target is men, 22-70 years old residing in urban markets.

## **What**

The message will focus on empowerment of women, happiness, and modern lifestyle with the aim to depict the brand as representative, diverse and inclusive.

## **Where**

Online and nationwide campaign prioritizing large urban centers.

## **When**

The initial phase will receive more support (budget). More engagement is expected outside of working hours, i.e., early morning hours, evening hours and weekends.

## **How**

Reach and frequency will be the top priorities during the first three months. Continuity will take precedence in the second three months. An interactive campaign will be vital for successful audience engagement.

# **Media Strategy**

Given that we are trying to reach a large variety of people, we would describe the campaign as a mix of shotgun and profile-matching strategy. Shotgun is implemented when the target market’s profile “has a broad scope” (Tuckwell, 2017, p. 134). The main target market for our campaign is urban women between the ages of 16-60. The brand offers a large line of products that cater to all ages, needs, and budgets. We also need to keep in mind that people may purchase products from the brand for their loved ones, as gifts (such as men between the ages of 22-70). This means we need to reach those who may not shop the brand for themselves. Profile matching is used for targeted forms of advertising such as magazines and internet ads (Tuckwell, 2017, p. 135), which the campaign will include.

These strategies are ideal when the main goal is to reach as many people as possible (Tuckwell, 2017, p. 134). We want to raise awareness about the new Victoria’s Secret to anyone and everyone. The brand now offers maternity and mastectomy bras, displays curvier mannequins in stores (Jeunesse, 2021). It also has started a new initiative called “VS Collective” which features role models from different industries such as the tennis player, Naomi Osaka (Jeunesse, 2021). That’s what we want the public to see. Given that we also have a set budget, the shotgun strategy is the most cost-effective way to reach many (Tuckwell, 2017).

## **Nature of the Message**

Given that the main appeals identified for this message are positive, emotional and lifestyle, one of our biggest goals is to make sure this campaign is interactive. This is also important due to the message we are delivering. Since we are trying to reposition the brand as one that represents all women, we want people to be able to interact with the campaign and give their input. We want people to look at the different vehicles of the campaign and put the brand back on their minds. The vehicles that were chosen for this message are the fashion show, interactive mirrors in stores, a TikTok, magazines, online ads, as well as outdoor billboards.

## **Geographic Market Priorities**

The geographic focus for this campaign will be national.  There will be an emphasis on the online world, as well as large urban areas such as Toronto and Vancouver. The outdoor advertising will be placed in popular places such as Dundas Square and the interactive mirrors will be placed in stores, located at shopping malls, such as Square One and Eaton Centre. The event will take place in Canada, but it will be broadcasted internationally. The TikTok trend will also be created within Canada, but the platform will allow for anyone around the world to interact with it. By using online vehicles, it will allow the campaign to reach people beyond Canada.

## **Timing of Advertising**

Given that a major part of the campaign is to be as interactive as possible, the timing of our campaign will take place during people’s leisure time. The standard working hours for most people tend to be 9am-5pm. The event will take time during the evening, around 8 pm, as this is a time where most people have reached home and have eaten dinner. The campaign will also follow a blitz schedule. We are trying to raise awareness as much as we can in a short period of time (6 months). There will be anticipation built towards the fashion show, but the campaign in its entirety will focus on being interactive and reaching as many people as we can.

The TikTok trend will be shared/published first thing in the morning. This is because we know that the first thing people do when they wake up is check their phone/ social media accounts. It will further be shared during lunch time (between noon and 1:30pm). The most publishing, however, will take place after 5pm.

Since we are targeting women of all different ages, the timing of the interactive mirror will run all day long. We are still aware that most people will go to shopping malls during their lunch break, after work and on the weekends. Nonetheless, we still need to keep in mind women who are stay at home mom’s, retired women and those who may be on maternity leave. Therefore, the focus will not be entirely on those who work the standard 9-5, as many women are not part of this group.

## **Reach/Frequency/Continuity**

With this six-month campaign, the goal is to raise awareness about the new brand image. Therefore, reach and frequency is very important throughout the campaign, especially during the initial phase. This is why there are several media outlets implemented. We want to make sure we reach a large number of people as quickly as possible. Continuity will become a priority towards the end of the campaign, closer to the date of the fashion show, as we’d like to build anticipation for it.

## **Engagement**

As it has been previously stated, a big objective for this campaign is to be very interactive. It has been stated by media planners that if engagement is a “strategic priority” then online and mobile advertising messages must be entertaining (Tuckwell, 2017, p. 141). This is why we chose vehicles that will allow people to engage with them however they please. For instance, people may choose to recreate the TikTok trend, they may take a selfie on one of the interactive mirrors and post it online, and they may choose to watch the fashion show and “react live” via Twitter or on the platform itself. There is an emphasis on online activity, as it has been stated that browsing on social media and the web accounts for 60% of Canadians leisure activities (Hirchberg, 2019).  We want people to feel like they are a part of the campaign. We don’t want the brand to be seen as the fantasy that real women will never be able to achieve. We want them to feel like Victoria’s Secret is their brand.

Despite all the different vehicles being used, they will all feature the hashtag #WeAreVS, in order for people to tag us on whatever they are sharing about the campaign. This could include a selfie with the interactive mirror, a repost on our TikTok, a live comment during the show, or simply an honest reaction to the campaign. The main objective is to start a conversation about the campaign. This way, even if people are not too familiar with it, they can simply click on the hashtag on their favorite social media platform and get insights on what the campaign is about. It may even lead them to engage themselves.

# **Media Selection Rationale**

A multimedia campaign featuring out-of-home advertising, print, online media, and event marketing is recommended to communicate the message to the target audience.

## **Out-of-home**

Through eye-catching billboards, digital video boards and digital LED canvas walls in key urban markets, the message will catch the attention of a large general audience on a daily basis. It will increase public awareness of the message. Subsequently, continued exposure will reinforce the message. It will remind the target customer of the brand when they are out shopping and making purchase decisions.

## **Print**

Print ads in leading fashion magazines with circulation in main urban centers will reach an audience whose profile closely matches that of the target market. Association with prominent fashion magazines will help portray a top-of-the-line trendy brand image that will create desire and preference amongst the image-conscious target consumer, who may refer back to the ad and share it with other members of the target market.

## **Online**

Amongst the target market, digital media consumption is the highest of all mediums of communication. Therefore, interactive and internet-based advertising will be emphasized during the campaign. A combination of display and video ads on third-party websites/apps, including interactive communication via social media, such as Youtube and TikTok, will engage the target audience with the brand message in a personal way that will have the desired impact in a cost-effective manner. In addition, the ease of online content sharing will enhance reach and awareness. The focus will be on creating engaging trends via storytelling in order to prompt the public to produce consumer generated content that will facilitate the brand message to go viral.

## **Experiential**

The iconic VS fashion show will return. It will be organized in a major urban city. The show will feature an inclusive theme: participants will be selected from different ethnicities, shapes, sizes and ages. This will engage the target market in a very personal way. It will serve as evidence of VS’s brand transformation: the commitment towards diversity and empowerment of all women. Simultaneously, the event will be live streamed on VS’s YouTube channel. This will show the world the new image of VS and how it contrasts with the old image. It is anticipated that positive word-of-mouth from show participants and viewers will persuade the target market to see VS as a brand that is the voice of all women.

In addition to the show, VS stores will feature special mirrors that will have light up angel wings. This awe-inspiring experience will enhance customer engagement and encourage store visits.

# **Media Rejection Rationale**

TV advertising is not recommended due to high costs and waning popularity among the target market that prefers online mediums. TV offers lesser value for advertising dollars spent as compared to online alternatives.

# **Media Execution**

## **Out-Of-Home Advertising**

Out-of-home media will reach a broad segment of the population in 27 major urban markets of Canada. The top five markets include Toronto/Mississauga/Hamilton, Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, and Montreal. Outdoor posters, including digital billboards, will feature accomplished women, empowering messages, and linking hashtags. The posters will be installed at high-traffic business intersections. Digital LED Canvas Walls will reach a broad spectrum of pedestrians in transit stations and underground walkways of Toronto and Vancouver. During the second phase of the campaign, outdoor media will also include ads for the in-store mirror and the fashion show.

## **Print Magazines**

Full-page print ads will be featured in Chatelaine and Fashion magazines. Chatelaine’s is a women’s magazine that has 69% women and 31% men readers (SJC, n.d.1), while readers of Fashion magazine are 60% women and 40% men (SJC, n.d.2). These magazines will reach both primary (women) and secondary (men) target markets in an appropriate proportion (more emphasis on reaching women).

## **Display and Video Ads**

A mix of banner, rich media and video ads will be featured on Instagram, Facebook, Youtube websites and apps. These social platforms are the most popular ones among all age groups in the target market.

## **The Event – Victoria’s Secret Fashion Show**

The biggest factor of this campaign will be the relaunched Victoria’s Secret fashion show. It will feature the traits which have made it so iconic throughout the years, such as the million-dollar bras and everyone’s current favorite artist performing along the models. This time however, women of all shapes and sizes will get to walk the runway. An open casting will be held in order to truly solidify that Victoria’s Secret is now inclusive. We want ordinary women to walk the runaway, in order to communicate to the world that anyone can be a Victoria’s Secret angel.

The original plan was to host the show on a streaming platform such as Netflix, but it has been decided that YouTube will be a better platform as it is completely free, meaning the campaign will reach more people. Furthermore, by hosting the show live on YouTube, it will allow viewers to leave live comments and reactions, therefore, creating more engagement. The show will be roughly 45 min long.

## **Interactive In-store Mirror**

The goal with this vehicle is for women all around the country who did not participate in the open casting to still feel like they are an angel. This mirror will have the silhouette of the iconic model wing with lights. There will be a designated space between the wings so that women can look in the mirror and feel like they are a part of the fantasy. This will also solidify engagement, as we hope that many will take selfies and upload them online, spreading even more awareness. The mirror will also feature a hashtag on the corner #WeAreVS, which will allow people to tag us on their social media platforms.

## **TikTok Trend**

The campaign will feature TikTok specifically due to how interactive the app is. One of the things users do is recreate a trend or video idea that another user has made, and everyone puts their own personal twist to it. The videos are then compiled together into one big list as long as users use the sound of the original video. We want to start a TikTok video/trend that anyone can recreate or “stitch” which allows users to react to a video side by side.

A TikTok will be published from the company’s verified account, and it will feature one of the Victoria’s Secret angels. “Hey TikTok! My name is \_ and I want you to show me your runway walk.” This is what the model will start the video with, she will show her runway walk and then the hashtag will appear. The TikTok will be shared in different social media platforms in order to reach many and hope that they will engage with the TikTok by showing their runway walk.

# **Blocking Chart**

A picture containing timeline

Description automatically generated

# **Budget Allocation**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Media Vehicle | Expenditure | % of total | Rationale |
| Outdoor | $ 1,500,000 | 30% | Second highest budget allocation as this media will be instrumental for creating awareness early on in the campaign. |
| Print magazines | $ 250,000 | 5% | Only 5% allocated because of declining popularity of this media. |
| Display and Video ads | $ 1,750,000 | 35% | Highest budget has been allocated to this as it is the most preferred media of the target market. |
| Fashion show | $ 1,000,000 | 20% | The show is key for engaging the target consumer and establishing the repositioned image in their minds. Therefore, a significant portion of the budget has been allocated for this purpose. |
| In-store mirrors | $ 250,000 | 5% | A small portion of the budget has been allocated for mirrors, which will be an economical yet effective tool for engaging the customer. |
| TikTok campaign | $ 250,000 | 5% | Starting TikTok trends does not require significant expenditure. So, a small portion of the budget has been allocated to this media. |
| Total | **$ 5,000,000** | **100%** |  |

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