

The Dove Case

Student's Name:

University Affiliation:

The Dove Case

Question 1

According to Deighton, J. (2008), over the years, the world, as a consumerist culture has relied heavily on the media to mould its perceptions. While this may not be done directly, it has become clear that people keep using media opinions as bars against which they perceive and measure themselves. Corporate bodies have taken advantage of the media's need for sponsors to shape these ideologies to suit their business interests. One of the most exploited subject in the media by corporate is self-image in which a specific definition of an ideal man or woman is extensively propagated such that it sticks. It causes those who do not conform to that definition to have low self-esteem and even seek for products that would make them 'ideal'.

As a brand, Dove is redefining beauty by moving away from the stereotype definitions to a more natural and realistic one which actually covers the ordinary people with weight issues, dry skin, freckles, among other 'defects' (Porter, 2008). The brand is basically solving the problem caused by other corporate organizations where they lead young men and women to question their worth, if they do not match the popularized definition of beauty in terms of masculinity or femininity.

The Dove brand takes on the subject of beauty and normalizes it to the point that the consumers can actually see it working for them. By using all kinds of 'normal' people in their commercials, the brand has managed to open itself up to a market in which the consumers are confident and exude more self-awareness and appreciation as opposed to those with low self-esteem and in need of a make-over to look 'perfect'. While managing to perform exceptionally well as a brand, Dove also managed to encourage its consumers to embrace individuality in

defining beauty and not to live by the standards of the models and celebrities as seen in the commercials.

Question 2

From the brand image built by Unilever for the Dove brand, it can be said that its position is in support of natural beauty whereby individuals are encouraged to embrace themselves as they are as opposed to trying to become like others. Consumers thus perceive the brand as one for real people as opposed to its competitors who often use models and celebrities to advertise their products (Kotler & Keller, 2006). The brand has been identified with an ordinary plus size woman, a young girl who hates her freckles, among other very ordinary people in day-to-day situations that easily appeal to the target market. It has given the brand a specific recognition among those who consider themselves 'normal', as well as parents who would like their daughters and sons to appreciate their bodies as they are without striving to alter their physique for the sake of societal ideals as perpetrated by the corporate world through the media.

By aligning themselves with normal people, the brand has consolidated its position as one that caters to the needs of the ordinary individual without assuming that they would like to be like the models and celebrities. The brand is perceived to respect individuality and appreciate people just as they are, only seeking to alleviate common problems like dry skin and cellulite which would otherwise make the individual feel uncomfortable (Keller, 1998). As opposed to encouraging the users to lose weight and look like models, the brand shows them that they can have great bodies even as plus size individuals simply by firming up. By building an image of realism, the brand has come to be seen as more than just an economic affair but also a social movement into empowerment, self-acceptance and thus confidence.

References

Deighton, J. (2008). *Dove: Evolution of a brand*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School.

Keller, K. L. (1998). *Strategic brand management: Building, measuring and managing brand equity*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2006). *Marketing management*. Sydney: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Porter, M. E. (2008). The five competitive forces that shape strategy. *Harvard Business Review*, 45(3), 86-104.