

# Research on the History and Innovation Path of the Dove Brand

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**Abstract.** Dove is a classic brand with a long history, thus to depict its features, it is necessary that we should conduct some analysis on the purpose of its advertising. This paper revealed that Dove is expected to teach women to find their beautiful parts, with it using many of methods to build innovation path. This paper found that promotional films are seemingly unrelated with products, which have unintentionally won the favor of more women consumers.

**Keywords:** History; Innovation; Brand; Quantitative Research.

## 1. Introduction

The purpose of advertising is to disseminate information so that advertised people can naturally, happily and impressively accept the information and take corresponding actions, for example, purchasing. Women's purchasing power is recognized by everyone. In addition to going younger, most brands also have a top priority in the woman's market. "Marketing to Women" covers a wide range, besides cosmetics and jewelry specifically targeted at women, even car, game and sports brands are gradually turning to exploring the women's market now. Although the impression that women like shopping has led many brands to reach out to the women's market, "Marketing to Women" can easily go astray.

Among the advertisement, branding is one of the powerful tools to show its features on advertising (Wei, 2022). For a long time, women were regarded as "vulnerable groups" in society. However, as women's minds become more and more liberated and their lives become more and more independent, their values are constantly changing. Therefore, it doesn't resonate by just standing up for women, talking about equality and speaking for women. Just like many girls actually don't like pink, the focus of "Marketing to Women" is to understand the true inner thoughts of women firstly. When it comes to "Marketing to Women", it's necessary to mention a brand - Dove.

## 2. Study on the History of Dove Brand

Dove is a classic brand with a history of 62 years. In 1957, Dove Beauty Fragrance Block was launched in the US market. At that time, Dove innovatively introduced gentle products with moisturizing functions in a market dominated by alkaline washing and care products, and like all skin care advertisements, it promised women that "It won't dry out your skin like ordinary soap", so that users could gradually establish a trust relationship. If the first stage of the Dove brand benefited from its insights into user pain points from the product side, then, with a brand life cycle of nearly 50 years, Dove successfully continued the brand life cycle by relying on in-depth psychological insights into users.

In the field of consumer goods, the unified action of brands is to conduct research on user behavior habits and life pain points, and promote them in combination with product characteristics. However, the advertisement for Dove's "Real Beauty Action" completely avoided the promotion of product features and functions. This "unique behavior" successively made Dove stand out from the stereotype of beauty care advertisements at that time, evoking a deep resonance between global woman users and brand concepts, and even promoting a 40% increase in product sales at that time.

## 3. Case Study on Innovation Path of the Dove Brand

For example, since 2004, Dove has done a different thing in marketing in North America and Europe. It no longer promotes products to people, but attempts to arouse women's values. Unbeliever,

Harvard University and London School of Economics conducted a survey of more than 3200 women from more than 10 countries around the world, and formed the “Dove Beauty White Paper”. Through psychological surveys and research analysis of women, the conflict between “real individual beauty” and “socially standardized beauty” was extracted. At that time, almost all advertisements for beauty care brands chose perfect and even sexy woman images for aspiring marketing, but Dove fully reversed the trend and launched the “Real Beauty Action” to seek out those who represented diversity, who had never worked as models and who had never undergone plastic surgery to become models in Dove's advertisement (diversity of age, size, body shape, culture, race, hairstyle, etc.), and in the following years, insights into women's psychology and social culture was successfully turned into a campaign-like offensive in the form of “all-in”.

Childs & Jin (2020) analyzed growth strategies to know more about co-branding, as concept of brand distinguishes central brand associations with others (Michel & Donthu, 2014).. To some extent, Dove's “Real Beauty Action” looks more like a public service advertisement. Different topics launched every year have a common purpose - to tell all women that “you are born to be beautiful”. In 2013, the promotional film “Real Beauty Action” - “Real Beauty Sketches” even became a famous short film. In the short film, Dove asked Gill Zamora, an FBI portrait sketcher, to draw the women in the test either her own description or someone else's, only to find that the latter looked more beautiful. In this difference, Dove wanted to tell women that “you are more beautiful than you think”. This advertisement and related creative activities helped Dove win a total of 23 awards at the “Cannes Creative Festival” that year, including the integrated marketing class, media class, film and television creation class, public relation class, design class, etc. It ranked fourth among the “Most Popular Video Advertisements” selected by the video website YouTube to celebrate its 10th anniversary, with more than 165 million viewing records worldwide.

In 2015, Dove continued to promote brand activities with the theme of real beauty in “Saying Bad Things”, focusing on the beauty of women. However, instead of directly encouraging women to face up to their beauty, Dove (France) expressed the advertising appeal in reverse - “Stop Saying Bad Things To Yourself”. Dove invited several women to write down their views on themselves in a notebook. Next, the women's self-evaluation was adapted into a dialogue for two extras to rehearse. Subsequently, these women were invited to a coffee shop to sit next to the extras. The extras “performed” according to the adapted dialogue, pretending to quarrel and using malicious language, and the coffee shop began to take on a different tone. Those thoughts of inferiority hidden in the heart formed verbal violence when they were spoken from another person's mouth, while both the perpetrators and victims were themselves. Why do you say things that are hard to say to anyone else to yourself? Since when do you think you are not beautiful? To discover your own beauty, start by stopping saying bad things to yourself.

An important reason for the success of a series of advertisements of Dove is insight, which resonates through insight into the values of women's groups. Behind these advertisements, the word “psychology” is closely linked. Before producing an advertisement, Dove often uses psychological interviews or tests to seek the insight. For example, before the idea of the last advertisement “Choose Beautiful” is put forward, Dove interviewed 6400 women aged from 18 to 64 from more than 20 countries. This unique and in-depth insight is also one reason why Dove is different from other nursing brands. These promotional films seemingly unrelated to products have unintentionally won the favor of more women consumers for Dove. Such marketing methods are also being adopted by more women consumer brands, for example, P&G's Always sanitary napkin also launched advertising films with the theme of “enhancing women's self-identification” for many years in a row, even in the same way as Dove in shooting content and techniques. Thus, to conclude the strategies for brand construction of Dove, brand skill is related to brand connection, while it could always increase overall brand evaluations (Mohan et al, 2017; Sirianni et al, 2013).

#### 4. Conclusion

However, for a brand, early accumulation is necessary. You must tell consumers “who I am” and “what I can do”, so that consumers can recognize and remember you. On the contrary, if a brand starts by promoting its own concepts and values, and consumers do not even know who you are, how can you generate sales conversion? Especially when multiple women brands start to convey the same values, after all, they are all around the keywords of “beauty, self-confidence, courage”.

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