

DOVE : Using Social Media for Social Viral Campaign - A Case Study

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Case Introduction

Social Media burst big time, on the marketing scene some four years ago with Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, various weblogs etc starting their platforms for online communities. The times changed and it became vital for companies to join the social media bandwagon. The benefits of a company going online with its marketing activities has been demonstrated and established with ROI data in many cases. Many enterprises – small and large – have gained in various fronts having their presence on the Web. Every corporate brand has a Facebook Page and a twitter account. Dove – a brand under the Unilever umbrella launched their social media sites starting in June 2010 with the creation of their Facebook page in order to promote Dove's Campaign for *Real Beauty*. The campaign is unique in the sense that it did not generate the kind of sales revenues for the company, rather garnered a 'social responsibility' cause platform. The case illustrates the "success" of the social campaign started by Dove – the beauty care brand. Dove used the social media for a social commentary where it projects that it cares for women. While the ultimate motive for Dove to run the campaigns on social media platforms was to promote their products and urge women to buy them, the campaign generated a lot of interest because of its nature. This case is illustrative and demonstrates the successful use of social media for the brand campaign and let one peek into the flipside of it too.



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About Social Media

Social media uses Internet service to instantly collaborate, share information, and have a conversation about ideas, causes, and organizations we care about, powered by social media tools. One of the biggest benefits of social media is that it enables everyone to make them heard. The power of expressing their views and influence their customers online is immense on the social media platform. One of the most persuasive things about new kind of social media is that it lets an organization to begin a direct and straight dialogue with its end-customers.

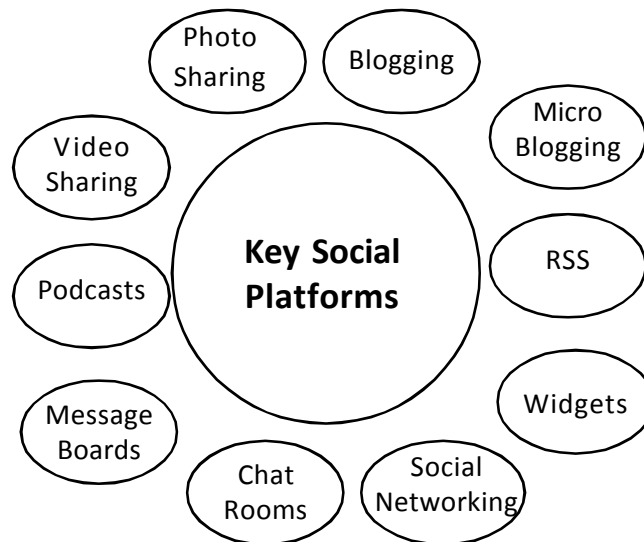


Figure 1: Social Media Platforms

Social Media is for marketing campaigns are strategically used for the purpose of increasing the customer reach & base and also effectively handling the customers concerns. The marketing campaigns of companies especially need to be handled in line with the organization goals. Using social media as part of a marketing strategy can be exceedingly effective, but it's essential to hear out your customers and join the dialogue.

It would be most inappropriate for a company to pretend that they know who their audiences are for their social media marketing, make assumptions, and then posts a mismatched content on their social media platform, or jumps in and starts trying to sell in a forum where people are communicating and collaborating on a particular theme. It is like a post office having twitter posts for their marketing messages and then a customer asks about their packages. While the post office opened an avenue for communication, the person handling it had no way of knowing the status of the customers' packages. This just goes to prove, this then can be the outcome when a business plunges into social media marketing without formulating a strategy

Why Use Social Media?

One of the important and primary questions to ask is how the social media marketing would be relevant or why would it be necessary for the campaign and how it could add value. What is that extra that social media could achieve that advertising, PR, experiential cannot?

Some Advantages of Using Social Media are:

- The younger generation and tech-savvy new audiences are more open to engagement on social channels, hence this may prove to be advantageous.
- Differentiating from the competition in the industry.
- Grow influence and authority across a range of social channels.
- Benefit from the growing impact of social search by sharing campaign content socially.
- Utilize the existing online communities across multiple social networks.

Create

Creating a professional-looking page on Facebook, with a great offer to entice new followers and fans. The company decides to offer a Discount Coupon, some Downloadable Content, or a Lottery.

Promote

Publishing the campaign on Facebook or creating a Hashtag on Twitter, can easily lead to its promotion on the other social networks and existing email lists.

Track

Somebody rightly said “You cannot manage what you can’t measure”! Without measuring and tracking the campaign’s social media reach, it is futile to pile too much on the social platform. Many tools are available that has easy-to-read reports and statistics. Campaigns may be measured on the basis of the number of new fans, email contacts, campaign visitors, conversions, and shares.

Case Background

Dove is a beauty product brand under Unilever Ltd, (Hindustan Lever in India). Dove sales nose-dived as consequence of it being lost in an over-crowded beauty products market. Thus began the Dove’s *Campaign for Real Beauty* (CFRB) in England in 2004. Dove’s parent company, Unilever, went to Edelman, its PR agency, for a solution. What was subsequently, conceived together by them was a campaign that focused not on the product, but was a way to make women feel beautiful regardless of their age, colour and size. The campaign includes advertisements, video, workshops, sleepover events and the publication of a book and the production of a play.

Says the CFRB website, “The Dove Campaign for Real Beauty is a global effort that is intended to serve as a starting point for societal change and act as a catalyst for widening the definition and discussion of beauty. The campaign supports the Dove mission: to make women

feel more beautiful every day by challenging today's stereotypical view of beauty and inspiring women to take great care of themselves."

To begin with, Dove created an awareness ploy by posting uplifting status', inspirational photos, tweets and the motivating videos. In this case, Facebook and Twitter were used for the campaign. The successful campaign that went viral was the Dove "Real Beauty" campaign. Dove focused on showing media images of women with bodies of all sizes and shapes, and exposing media body image distortion in its ad campaign. That was followed up by the one, called "Onslaught". This went viral with over 2 million views on YouTube.

Many a women from different walks of life were engaged in one of the online (YouTube) campaign. The select women were asked to describe themselves using neutral terms. A retired FBI sketch artist was asked to sketch these ladies on the basis of the description communicated. The catch was the FBI artist could not see these ladies while they describing themselves. The whole process was captured on video. The video was uploaded on YouTube that went viral with a large number of hits.

Watching these women come face to face with the version of themselves in their mind and the version everyone else sees was extraordinary

Dove by use of its campaign, actually is empowering individual women to appreciate their inherent beauty, and in turn, allowing all of them to wonder if they have been judging themselves too harshly.

The campaign is one of the most original and emotive experiments to come from the Campaign for Real Beauty in many years, because it hits the audience realistically rather than making graphically morphing the women to look good. The use of graphic designers with filters and airbrushes is not done at all.

The Unilever-owned brand refreshed its long-running "Dove Campaign for Real Beauty" for 2013 International Women's Day in March with a social media-promoted Photoshop Action that works like a Trojan

Horse, leveraging the element of surprise on those responsible for “unreal beauty” images in advertising.

The brand added a twist in Australia with its “Ad Makeover by Dove” which, via a Facebook app, invited women to replace ads that prey on women’s insecurities with feel-good messages.

Analysis

The CFRB campaigns were created as part of Dove brand’s commitment to create a world where beauty is a source of confidence, not anxiety. As part of this Ogilvy & Mather developed a Facebook application that empowered women (and men) to take on negative ads, enabling individuals to choose positive messages to run in the Facebook ad space bought by Dove. This was a first-of-its-kind Facebook app that gave women (and men) in an indirect way, a distinctive opportunity to control advertising in Australia and Brazil, reaching many millions of women.

Eight positive beauty messages were put on the social media platform from which one could be selected by women and men, to appear in the ad space in Facebook. Dove overpaid to incessantly try and outdo other advertisers during the campaign so that these positive ads were shown. Some of the positive beauty messages, that appeared in the ad space on Facebook included, “Your birthday suit suits you,” “Every body is beautiful” and “The perfect b_m is the one you’re sitting on.”

Gerry Human, Executive Creative Director, Ogilvy & Mather London commented:

“Ad makeover shows just how effective creative ideas can be in the digital/social arena. We were thrilled to see how quickly millions of women embraced this idea and how much positive feedback was heaped on the brand.”

Fernando Machado, Global Vice President, DOVE ® Brand Development for Unilever:

“Women are exposed to negative advertising everyday that preys on their insecurities and can impact their self-esteem. This campaign encouraged women to say goodbye to ads about muffin tops and belly bulges, and hello to positive beauty messaging. We chose to use Facebook because of its power and reach in social media, to propel these positive beauty messages to as many women as possible.”

Accolades

When did you stop thinking you are beautiful? And Real Beauty is not retouched were the two among the many taglines used by Dove for the campaigns they had online.

In June 2012 Ogilvy & Mather London’s ‘Ad Makeover’ campaign for the DOVE® beauty brand picked up a Silver in PR and Bronze in Cyber Lions at the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity 2012.

Since the YouTube video release April 14, 2013, it rapidly went viral on the social media platform. Many millions of people downloaded the video within a week. On YouTube, the shorter 3-minute version was viewed 30.6 million times. It garnered 660,000 shares on Facebook during its first ten days.

What did Unilever do Right for the Successful Social Media?

Social strategy and social media are very different concepts. Anyone can utilize social media, but in order for social media to be used at its full potential, there must be a social strategy involved. There are a few aspects to developing a social strategy that are crucial in order to use social media efficiently. Unilever used the right strategy by appealing to the basic natural need of women to be accepted as they are, physically, attitude-wise and nature-wise.

Unilever Knew Its Audience

When putting together any kind of content for the internet or the media, it is important to know who the target audience is. Social media is no different. It would be like shooting in the dark unless one knows who the target audience is and how best can one their get

attention, otherwise social media can be useless. It is important to remember that in order to have a successful social media campaign, people need to be engaged in the social conversation and that's impossible unless one knows exactly what audience one wants to engage. Unilever targeted the social media campaigns especially on the YouTube platform towards the fairer gender, which were very effective.

Unilever had a Unified Voice

It is important for social media and all other aspects of the marketing communications efforts to have a unified voice. To use social media to its full potential, many companies tie it into their marketing and advertising campaigns, which is a good way to bring together social media and marketing efforts. For instance, Unilever for its Dove campaign included a hashtag to help engage their followers in their campaign on Twitter.

Unilever was Relevant

It's no surprise that relevance is another of the aspects of social media strategy. In order for social media to produce the intended results, it must be relevant to the audience and to the real world. First of all, it is important for social media to be relevant and interesting to the intended audience in order to keep the content engaging. In addition, the content should also be relevant to the issues going on in the real world. For instance, if there is some sort of tragedy going on, it is important that social media does not make the company look out-of-touch or unsympathetic.

Social media is an excellent form of public relations because it reaches a large amount of people in a short period of time. People today are all about getting the information they want fast and easy, which is something social media websites can provide. Public relations is defined as management of communication between an organization and its publics, which is exactly what Facebook and Twitter are doing for the Dove Campaign for Real Beauty.

Flipside

The products being bought by the women who are made to feel naturally beautiful as they are serves an opposite purpose since they end up buying beauty products that will beautify them in a way. So it is paradoxical that Dove runs a campaign urging women that they are beautiful as they are, but still insisting on using their brand of personal care products! The origins of the Dove campaign are not all that different from predictable and orthodox ads. There of course seems to be a subtle exploitation of the women's beauty-related self-assessment and esteem the Dove campaign uses for its own purposes. May be to put it starkly, the Dove campaign is doing the same thing as the other ads that tell women what they lack in the beauty department! Though critical, the very discussion of this campaign shows how effective the campaign has been—and how ready women are for a new conversation about beauty, one that doesn't rest on the conviction that women don't like the way they look.

Having talked about the societal changes that the campaign being in that was first promoted by Dove, it is interesting to note that Dove owned by Unilever, is one of the largest buyers of palm oil, an industry which is quickly destroying the rainforests. Greenpeace took the chance to create a similar video called "Dove Onslaught(er)".

This video garnered huge amounts of public support for Greenpeace's movement to slow deforestation by promoting sustainable palm oil. Even Greenpeace was amazed as their video took off faster than anything they'd ever done before. In two weeks, Greenpeace was able to meet with Unilever and help Unilever develop a plan to use their corporate muscle to slow the destruction of the rainforest buy certified sustainable palm oil. Not bad! This was a victory for Greenpeace, Dove, and Unilever; raising the profiles of all three organizations and fixed an issue that could have damaged the positive image Dove had built up for itself with such a great social campaign.

And that is the power of social media!

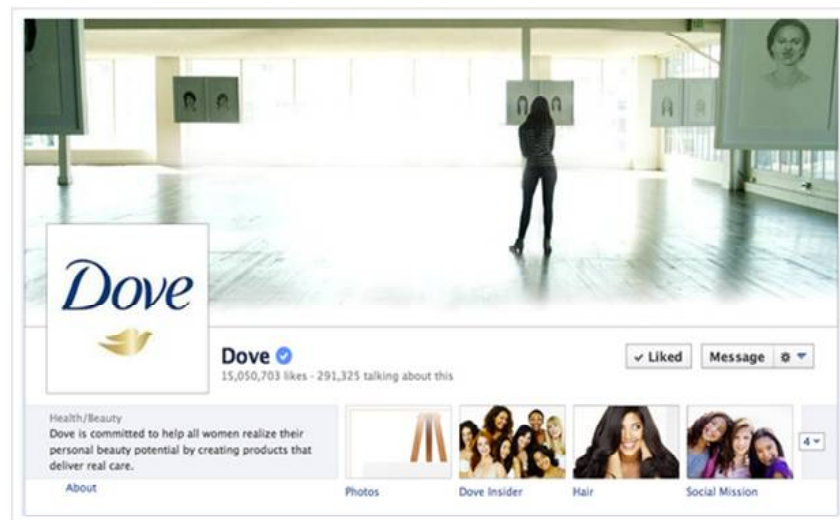


Exhibit 1 : Dove - Facebook Page



Dove hairfall secret diaries on Facebook

Exhibit 2 :Dove - Facebook Page



Exhibit 3 : Dove - Facebook Page

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