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Marketing Research

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**Deliverable #2: Dove**

**Essay on the Questions**

The interview questions focused on deconstructing consumers' perspectives on a marketing campaign that went wrong. Dove had made an advertisement that dissected the consumer market concerning their opinions on whether they considered the message effective of not. In turn, this formed the core theme of these interviews to determine how people reacted to the campaign and how the ad shaped their opinion towards the brand. It is evident from the interviews that even after years of the campaign that tarnished Dove's image in the Middle East, people still hold strong opinions towards the brand and its products.

One of the key insights gained from the interviews is that advertisements play a significant role in shaping consumers' attitudes towards a company and its products. The prevailing theme is that the interpretation of the ad influenced each interviewee's perspective. People hold certain ideals, and when these are not met, the audience considers that a campaign was disrespectful. For example, interview one and three are conservatives regarding the culture of the region. This translates to the fact that they would have appreciated if Dove went the extra length to integrate the ideals of the culture into their advertisement. The two interviewees show that they are displeased with the campaign's content and thus consider the brand a failure in the region. On the contrary, the second interviewee, Amal, was more open-minded and focused on understanding the key message of the advertisement before speaking about it. It was from this perspective that Amal understood that the message was against the universal concept of beauty.

The other evident insight from the interviews is that people form their relationship with a brand based on the message that a company gives. It was apparent that three interviewees are not consumers of Dove products, but they were still affected by the message. The questions were very effective as they assessed underlying thoughts that the interviewees held despite not being active consumers. This shows that they would easily advocate for or against the product when someone was willing to purchase Dove products based on the message they saw. Therefore, it is crucial to recognize that advertisements are consumed by active customers and the passive audience who play a vital role in the promotion of products and services. In this light, the interviewees were very opinionated on the Dove's campaign in their region, hence affecting their future relationship.

The last insight from the interviews was that people often buy brands and not advertisements. Brands relate to the value that consumers gain from using a company's product or services hence determining the relationship. One the other hand, advertisements influence the attitudes and opinions of the public regarding a company. The interviewees revealed that Dove was still a brand consumed by many people in the Middle East despite the disastrous campaign. Many people are still using the products showing that active consumers purchase the value gained from using Dove's products, which was not influenced by the failed campaign. It then indicates that companies should always significantly invest in making quality products that will influence customer loyalty over making advertisements that push for specific agendas.

**Research Hypothesis**

* Given the power of advertisements on influencing the market attitude, are consumers buying the brand or the advertisements?

**Interviews**

**Interview 1:**

Name: Farah AlMatrouk

Relationship: Family Member

Date: September 1st, 2020

Location: Grandfather’s house, Jabriya, Kuwait

**Tell me why Dove is or isn't as popular in The Middle East?**

* + Dove is very well known in Kuwait. Although, the advertisements and campaigns are very different than the ones that are shown outside the Middle East. As we are a Muslim country, the advertisements that Dove air in the Middle East are more conservative. Altogether, Dove is well known and available in every grocery store in Kuwait.

**Tell me the ways the real beauty campaign was impactful in The Middle East:**

* + Dove’s real beauty campaign didn’t feature in Kuwait, due to the women that were on the original ad being in undergarments. I don’t know if it featured in the other Middle Eastern country. I remember seeing it trend on twitter in Kuwait, and thought that it was racist, therefor I stopped buying Dove’s products because I didn’t agree with how they portrayed their message.

**Do you think Dove can bounce back from their mistakes and how would they do it?**

* + Yes, I do believe Dove can bounce back, but their mistake will always come to haunt them, as once a mistake happens and is recognized in social media, it is hard for people to forget it. I believe by just moving forward and putting out more good campaigns with good messages, they can lessen the damage as time goes by.

**Why do you think women identify more with non-traditional models than traditional models in advertisements?**

* + I believe it is because most women aren’t the “stereotypical perfect model” type and seeing a non-traditional model can boost their confidence and change the stereotype once and for all, because I believe that all women are beautiful regardless of what the social standards are.

**What is the general consensus of Dove in The Middle East?**

* + Dove in the Middle East is a well-known brand that is available everywhere. Yet I think that it is not prioritized as many just grab anything that frankly smells good. Do I believe Dove is successful in Kuwait? Yes, but you don’t see people here going out of their way to get their products.

**What’s your perspective on Dove?**

* + Personally, it is not my favorite and I believe that it has been the same since my childhood. I don’t often use it as I think there are other brands, I prefer that achieve smoother and softer skin with a better smell.

**What are your thoughts on the controversial ad?**

* + They portrayed “paler skins” as a cleaner and more beautiful look which I despised. The world today doesn’t need silly mistakes as it is already dealing with a lot of racism as it is. Watching the ad, I was in shock as I couldn’t believe a brand that well known could air something like that.

**Tell me your thoughts on the real beauty campaign:**

* + The real beauty campaign is ideal, as women of all genders and sizes were equally portrayed as beautiful, which they are. I loved the banner I saw in a picture on Twitter, where all the women were smiling and happy. It made me wish that life was like that, we smile and are happy for everyone regardless of their physical appearances.

**Do you think dove portrays real beauty in their campaigns?**

* + I think Dove’s goal is to portray real beauty in their campaigns. Sure there were bumps on the road, but ultimately they are trying to better themselves and move on from their mistakes which I admire.

**Interview 2**

Name: Amal AlFulaij

Relationship: Friend

Date: September 2nd, 2020

Location: Kuwait City, Kuwait

**Tell me why Dove is or isn't as popular in The Middle East?**

* Dove is pretty familiar in Kuwait, and I have seen it in advertisements and even in various supermarkets whenever I go shopping. I believe that it is a big brand here in the Middle East. I think it is popular because beauty is becoming a big thing even in the Middle East, and their appreciation of the regional culture is a bonus for the brand.

**Tell me the ways the real beauty campaign was impactful in The Middle East:**

* The Real Beauty campaign was disastrous in the Middle East, though I believe that not many people managed to see it. The best idea of the failure of the campaign in the Middle East could be witnessed on social media platforms where many netizens voiced their anger towards the advertisement, saying that it disrespected what people would consider real beauty. Regardless, I was not so much offended by it as I tried to understand the real message, which I believe was equal beauty irrespective of skin color. Not many people could share the same perspective, making the ad very sensitive,

**Do you think Dove can bounce back from their mistakes, and how would they do it?**

* I believe that Dove would manage to bounce back from this mistake, but they have to be ethical and wise on how they do it. The best approach would be to make a public statement and focus on their social responsibilities in the Middle East. Maybe then people would absolve the company.

**Why do you think women identify more with non-traditional models than traditional models in advertisements?**

* I think it is because traditional models were very superficial and created standards that people had to strive to be like. But people are awake, and now recognize that non-traditional models show that someone does not have to look like a Hollywood star to be considered beautiful.

**What is the general consensus of Dove in the middle east?**

* The brand still has ground in the Middle East, but not as big as other beauty brands. Most of their existing clients must be those who have been well familiar with the products before the disaster.

**What's your perspective on Dove?**

* I do not hold a particular opinion on Dove because I have never tried their products, but without being biased, I believe that it is an excellent brand that made a mistake, which cost them dearly.

**What are your thoughts on the controversial ad?**

* As I said, the ad was about perspective, and instead of reacting to it, maybe people would have sought to understand the underlying message. I do not believe that the company would intentionally invest in a racial message in this age. The ad was controversial, and they did not think well through it.

**Tell me your thoughts on the real beauty campaign.**

* In my opinion, the campaign was thought-provoking, and it was seeking to create a sense of trust with the audience by focusing on the deeply held emotions many women hold regarding their appearance.

**Do you think Dove portrays real beauty in their campaigns?**

* Just like every other beauty campaign, I do not believe Dove portrays real beauty in their campaigns. Beauty is subjective and creating a mainstream idea of what beauty looks like is misguiding at its best.

**Interview #3:**

Name: Dalia AlBader

Relationship: Stranger

Date: September 9th, 2020

Location: The Avenues Mall, Kuwait

**Tell me why Dove is or isn't as popular in the middle east – Rawan**

* Dove is popular in the Middle East but for all the wrong reasons. It was disrespectful to the culture, so it is known as the brand struggling to gain relevance in the Middle East.

**Tell me the ways the real beauty campaign was impactful in The Middle East:**

* The real beauty campaign was never aired in Kuwait because of the culture, and its presentation of women is not something that many people would accept in this region. Regardless, I know many people stopped considering using Dove after that campaign that glorified certain types of women.

**Do you think Dove can bounce back from their mistakes, and how would they do it?**

* I am not sure, but well, it is business, and businesses must be smart after making a mistake. The best thing that the company can do is learn the culture of the consumers in the Middle East and make campaigns that appreciate what people respect here. Also, they should try and focus on building a better relationship with people.

**Why do you think women identify more with non-traditional models than traditional models in advertisements?**

* Traditional models always pushed for the message that for you to be considered to be beautiful, you had to be white, skinny, and with a 'perfect' body. On the other hand, non-traditional models embrace the fact that people are unique, and people are beautiful regardless of how they look.

**What is the general consensus of Dove in The Middle East?**

* I know that the brand is still famous in the Middle East because you will find the shelves stocked and restocked now and then, showing that regardless of that mistake, there are people who buy the product and not the campaign. Personally, I do not use it, but I have friends who always but the products.

**What's your perspective on Dove?**

* I once tried it, but I did not see the value from the products, so it is not a product that I endorse.

**What are your thoughts on the controversial ad?**

* I do not like the idea that the ad's main message was beauty is what defines women. Society today has evolved, and people need to focus more on what they add to society than being more beautiful than the other person. Besides, the women used in the ad were superficial, and you can tell there is too much editing to make people more white-like.

**Tell me your thoughts on the real beauty campaign**

* It is a good thing that the ad focused on diversity and included women from different backgrounds. This kills the idea of comparing oneself with women from other cultures who are always epitomized as the real definition of beauty. However, the message could have been made better.

**Do you think Dove portrays real beauty in their campaigns?**

* I have seen different ads by Dove, and I appreciate the fact that they are stepping aside from what many beauty ads do by identifying a certain type of people as beautiful. I recently saw an ad by Dove that I appreciate because it pushed for the message that people can be beautiful in their own terms.