



The Dove Ad Makeover

Jay Chiat Planning Awards



Unlocking the social power of the Dove brand

10 years ago, Dove's Campaign for Real Beauty (CFRB) called out the fashion and beauty industries for the way that their unrealistic stereotypes made women feel about how they looked.

By 2012, women know a photo-shopped ad as soon as they see one, major luxury brands are publicly challenged for retouching famous actresses beyond recognition in their advertising, and 17-year-old girls are demanding that the glossy magazines they read feature more real girls in their pages. CFRB worked.

This paper tells how Dove applied the same brand insight in social media to address a new, digital form of beauty anxiety. Along the way, it started a debate that ended up in national newspapers, empowered legions of women to make other women feel good, and challenged the status quo of what's acceptable advertising on Facebook.

Welcome to the tale of the Dove AdMakeover.





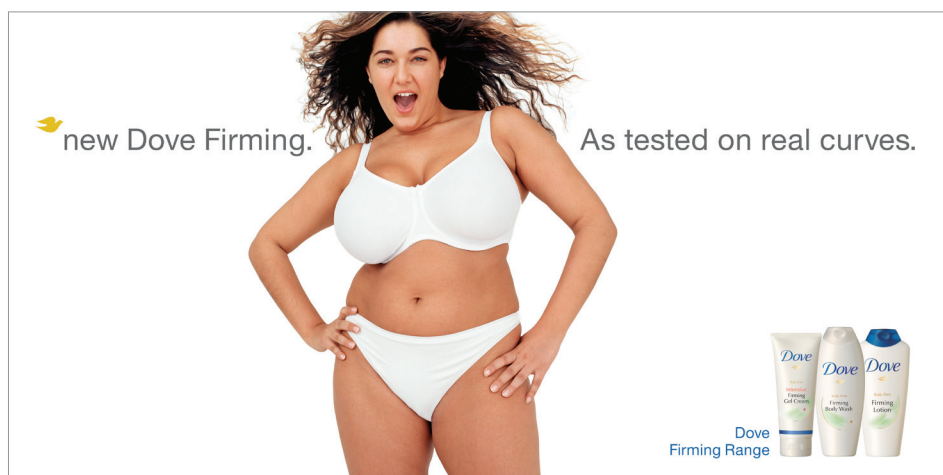
Full Paper


The Campaign for Real Beauty (CFRB) is one of the best-loved and most talked-about communication ideas ever, and it made women feel good.


By showing how the unrealistic beauty stereotypes of the beauty and fashion industries damaged self-esteem, Dove empowered women across the world, and made a cultural impact that was felt far outside the realms of advertising.

It was founded on one central insight, which has continued to drive the brand ever since – that too often beauty is a source of anxiety for women, not confidence. Dove's mission was to make women feel beautiful, not for its own sake, but because feeling beautiful makes you happy.

Dove had called out the the magazine, broadcast and beauty industries for how they made women feel, but the times had changed. By 2012, new sources of beauty anxiety were cropping up in places that hadn't even existed when the original Campaign for Real Beauty launched.



 new Dove Firming. As tested on real curves.



Dove Firming Range

The advertisement features a woman with a confident, joyful expression, wearing a white bikini. She is standing with her hands on her hips. To the right of the woman are three products from the Dove Firming Range: a tube of Firming Gel Cream, a bottle of Firming Body Wash, and a bottle of Firming Lotion. The text 'Dove Firming Range' is written below the products.



The Insight: A new front in the battle for self-esteem

By 2012, social media accounted for a huge share of women's media usage, with Facebook the dominant platform. Women are 60% of Facebook's users, they are more active than men, access it more regularly, and spend more of their time there¹. For women, social media is an integral part of their life, a forum for self-expression, and a way of sharing personal thoughts, content, and information about themselves with other members of their friendship group. However, this also makes them vulnerable.


Particularly when advertisers use the information that they give up to serve them advertising like this:

What does it do to your self-esteem to have your recent break-up prompt a targeted ad that asks you why you're "32 and still single?" Should women have to put up with being told that they need to lose weight when they post about the cake they're baking for their children? Or be served ads offering them breast enlargements and liposuction when they upload holiday photos of them wearing a bikini on the beach? These were the latest media expression of a time-honoured method of selling products to women – making them feel bad about the way that they looked. This time, however, it was personal.

We had identified a new source of beauty anxiety for women – the same API that serves diaper ads to new mothers was also being used to target their insecurities. In fact, many advertisers were misusing the rich personal data from women's social profiles to negatively target them, in a place where they should be free to share their personal lives without having the details used against them.

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Need a bigger bust? ×



This miracle cream will enhance what you want.

Sponsored [Create an Ad](#)


Muffin Top? ×



It could get worse! Lose it with these spa tips.

Sponsored [Create an Ad](#)

Jelly Rolls? ×



Reduce your belly fat with this one old trick.



The Strategy: Social Media resistance

It wasn't enough for us to just identify and point out the problem. We wanted to lift the lid on the issue, and then empower the global sisterhood to tackle negative advertising.

Social had given us the problem, but it had to be an integral part of the solution too. We needed the campaign to launch, grow and finish in social media for it to make sense in the correct context.

To fulfil Dove's brand promise, "Real Beauty by Real Women" we needed to allow women to address the issue for themselves.

The challenge for communications was to design a campaign that women would participate in.

The screenshot shows a Facebook interface with a search bar and a 'Name' dropdown. Below the navigation bar, there's a 'Dove' logo and a 'Dove Hair' dropdown menu. A 'Liked' button is visible. The main content area features a post titled 'The Ad Makeover' with a 'Like' button and '137k' likes. The post displays three examples of negative beauty ads: 'Jelly Rolls?' (a woman pinching her belly), 'Muffin Top?' (a woman's waist), and 'NEED A BIGGER BUST?' (a woman's chest). Each ad is accompanied by a text overlay that is part of the campaign's message. Below these examples, the text reads: 'Give these ads a makeover. These kinds of ads prey on your insecurities and make you feel bad. Together we can do something about this. This application gives you the power to replace feel-bad ads with messages that help women feel beautiful instead.' A 'WATCH VIDEO' button is also present. At the bottom right, there is a 'START' button.



The Creative Idea: Giving Facebook advertising a makeover

The Ad Makeover displaced negative advertising that preyed on women's insecurities, by adapting a technology intended for technically savvy marketers so that anyone could create positive advertising for women to see on Facebook. Women made the ads, Dove picked up the bill.

Dove outbid other advertisers on key terms that could be used to target women negatively, ensuring a potentially negative ad was replaced with a positive one.

Facebook was the natural place to start the movement, both because of the size and frequency of female usage of the platform, and because Dove had a highly-engaged, passionate community of 8.6 million Facebook fans.





This social by design campaign began by discussing with our fans how they felt about these negative ads. We followed this with a film to point out the issue, show what we were proposing to do about it, and invite women to take part by using our app.

The app put a simple and user-friendly interface on Facebook's ad buying system, putting the power in women's hands. Women could select from a list of messages and simple designs and then choose the audience for it – women who were thinking about love, family, health, etc.

We bought media by 'thinking like the enemy'. This involved generating a list of hundreds of targeting keywords that advertisers would use to target women negatively: 'pregnant'/'boob job'/'lonely'/'single'/'bikini diet' etc.

A system of double bidding against these keywords using Facebook's Marketplace API ensured that ads developed by real women would always take the place of ads from negative advertisers.

Women's support was not only posted on their wall, or advertised to other women in their friendship network, but to all other women using Facebook in their country.



Nudging along the customer journey

As architects of the user experience, we built behavioural economic nudges into the consumer journey.

We harnessed relativity with the campaign video, by offering women a simple choice: would you like other women to see negative advertising that makes them feel bad, or positive beauty messages?

We built commitment and status quo bias into the UX design. Women weren't asked for any Facebook permissions until after they'd built the positive message that others would see.

We fed herding by using Facebook's sponsored stories ad format that notified women when other members of their friendship group had interacted with the campaign.

We structured the user journey so that, much like a charitable transaction, it made them feel good in a number of ways: firstly, they got the warm glow of altruism for helping out other women; secondly, it posted a notification about their participation to their profile for others to see; thirdly, it notified their friends when several people in their friendship network interacted with it, feeding a digital movement.





The results

The campaign launched first in Australia and Brazil, our two markets with the most active and engaged Facebook users.

In just two weeks, in just these two countries, advertising by real women displaced 171 million potentially negative pieces of advertising². Along the way, the campaign earned 253 million free media impressions³ on news websites like the Huffington Post, Mashable, and Perez Hilton's blog, giving the campaign a total reach of 29 million women and ensuring that the debate travelled outside Facebook and into broadcast media, without any additional media spend.

The campaign upped Dove's viral reach on Facebook by 87%⁴, so that women were hearing about the brand through their friends, rather than through paid advertising.

Most importantly, 71%⁵ of the women who interacted with the app said that it made them feel more beautiful. This suggests that in addition to the impact of the positive ads, being part of a global movement to seize control of their social media environment and remove negative advertising also made women feel beautiful.

The campaign has subsequently launched in the UK and is being rolled out globally by Dove.

The AdMakeover challenged the status quo of what's acceptable advertising on Facebook, a platform that serves 1.3 trillion ads a year⁶. The social change our campaign affected with the help of real women will have positive consequences long beyond its lifespan, and has made sure that there is one less source of beauty anxiety to get in the way of women feeling beautiful.

2.Source: Facebook AdTracker. 3.Source: Unilever PR & Media Tracking, May 2012. 4.Source: Facebook AdTracker, vs Dove FB weekly average viral reach. 5.Source: Facebook Opinion Poll. 6.Source: Comscore US Display Advertising Market Report, May 2011

