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Dove vs Lux: A strong corporate brand or a strong product brand

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Abstract

The paper analyses the soap industry in the FMCG sector in Mumbai with a special emphasis on two brands Dove and Lux. The brands chosen for the purpose of this study are similar yet so different. For this primary data a survey was taken of around 50 respondents mainly between the age group of 18-30 years of age group.

Keywords: competition, soap, pricing, marketing.

1. Introduction

This research analyses the soap industry in the FMCG sector in Mumbai with a special emphasis on two brands Dove and Lux, which are among the trusted and leading soap brands from the same parent company "Hindustan Unilever". Hindustan Unilever is a multinational corporation that owns more than 400 brands in the FMCG sector. These brand chosen for the purpose of this study are similar yet so different.

The following is the analysis for the soap industry which was interpreted on the basis of primary market research in the form of a questionnaire. For this primary data a survey was taken of around 50 respondents mainly between the age group of 18-30 years of age group. Most of them were females. However, there were 15% of the respondents who were males who were surveyed.

Table 1: Profile of the respondents

Age Group	No. of Respondents	Percentage of Responses
12-17	2	4%
18-25	21	41%
26-30	12	24%
31-40	7	14%
40+	9	17%

Though the researcher tried to interview a cross section of the population across all age brackets, most of the respondents of Dove and Lux range from 18-30 years of age group. Thus we can interpret that most of the users of Dove and Lux fall into this category for youngsters. Thus these companies need to be innovative continuously to attract this market segment as they get attracted more towards those products.

However this also means that the company is not able to reach 40+ age group as well as the other age groups. Therefore, these companies need to launch special type of variants for 40+ years also.

Most of the respondents were females who took the survey. 85% were female respondents and 15% were male respondents. This means that majority of the users of Dove and Lux soap are female consumers.

The majority of the people could think of Dove over any other soaps, followed by Lux and then Pears. This means that soap and Dove brand name are linked to each other. In other words, Dove has conquered the minds of the audience so well that Dove has clearly won the war of promotions. This effect can only happen due to the advertisements and promotions. However, to continue to be the best known brand among the people, Dove should continue

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the marketing in the same manner. Also this response should not be interpreted to mean that people would actually buy the same soap that comes to their mind. This is due to different reasons. It could be because of the price since it is an expensive soap compared to the others. So if Dove wants to increase its sales, even a slight decrease in price can have a huge impact as it is already in the minds of people.

Table 2: The First Brand Name That Comes To Mind in Soaps

Brand Name	No. of Respondents	Percentage of Responses
Cinthol	3	6%
Pears	10	20%
Dove	25	49%
Lux	13	25%
Others	0	0%

Table 3: The soap brand people actually use

Brand Name	No. of Respondents	Percentage of Responses
Cinthol	7	14%
Lux	11	22%
Dove	21	41%
Pears	5	10%
Others	7	13%

The responses how that the brand people actually use may differ from the brand name they can actually think of first. This is due to availability, price and many other reasons. Although in percentage terms Dove and Lux yet win the match. However, in actual terms the number of audience who actually support these brands reduces. Mainly, both these products are not catering to the male population, and also because of the price being comparatively high.

Table 4: Frequency of purchase of soaps

Time Period	No. of Respondents	Percentage of Responses
Weekly	5	10%
Monthly	33	65%
Bi-Monthly	6	12%
Quarterly	3	6%
Semi-Annually	4	7%

The analysis shows that the consumers generally buy soap bars on a monthly basis. The companies should try to

Table 7: Frequency of change in brand of soap

Frequency	No. of Respondents	Percentage of Responses
Monthly	2	3%
Every 6 Months	8	16%
Yearly	11	22%
Never	30	59%

There is a lot of internal as well as external completion in the FMCG sector, including new entrants in the industry. The above analysis and interpretation indicates that usually people do not change their brand of soaps even if given a choice. A soap is a product used daily and each household consumes it on a regular basis. Thus consumers like to stick to one brand and not change a product like soap on which only a small part of the income is spent. At the maximum a

encourage the customers to buy soaps on a more frequent basis like twice or thrice a month. The company schemes should be changed in such a way that it encourages more sales thus increasing the profits. Smaller packets of soap bars should be produced so all types of classes can afford to purchase these cheaper and smaller packets.

Table 5: Primary factor influencing the brand of soap purchased

Sources	No. of Respondents	Percentage of Responses
Quality	24	47%
Price	12	24%
Availability	3	6%
Advertisements	10	20%
Other	2	3%

Almost half (47%) of the respondents chose quality as the primary factor influencing the brand of soap purchased. The second most significant factor was the price of the soap. 20% of customers are influenced due to the brand endorsements. So advertisements also should be given importance by the soap manufacturers. However, this research clearly shows that soap bars should be improvised on the quality front more than anything else and this would increase the customer base.

Table 6: Maximum price consumers are willing to pay for a bar of soap.

Price	No. of Respondents	Percentage of Responses
Rs. 15-20	11	22%
Rs. 20-25	20	39%
Rs. 25-30	16	31%
Above Rs. 30	4	8%

From the above table, we can clearly see that majority of the people are willing to buy soaps in the price range Rs.20 to Rs. 30. This proves that people in Mumbai are compatible with the fact that prices of a good soap may not be very low but they want good quality and a good brand of soap since they would want to take care of their skin. Hence they would not prefer to use cheap soaps in order to save money. Thus companies should focus on providing quality soaps even if it means the soaps are sold at a slightly higher price. This will attract more customers and help in increasing sales and market share.

person will change maybe yearly or semi-annually if the soap product quality is unsatisfactory or the price changes so much so that it becomes unaffordable for current consumption.

The researcher has done a qualitative comparison of the two products using various criteria:

Dove:

Product: A combination of moisturizer and softness so as to satisfy the particular need which was earlier not met thus touching the market which was untouched.

Dove products are clinically proven to be one of the mildest moisturizer soap bar which suits all types of skin type and does not irritate the skin. Thus many women with sensitive skin type can also use this soap bar. It is one of the highly recommended soap by dermatologists, especially in Mumbai as most of the people in Mumbai fall into the category of upper middle class, the target audience of Dove. Dove has diversified its product range from hair care to body care too.

Pricing: Initially, when Dove entered the Indian market it was priced extremely high at Rs. 50 per cream bar. Since it was not affordable to many people, Dove then decreased the prices to Rs. 28 per cream bar, and targeted the upper middle class consumers. Since people in Mumbai can easily afford that price and moreover, it is yet priced higher compared to its competitors but consumers perceive higher prices as an indicative to higher quality.

Packaging: Dove is a premium quality soap targeted on women. Therefore, the packaging of the Dove moisturizer bar keeps changing due to these variations the modified moisturizing bar sustains and boosts its sales, attracting more and more consumers. The packaging is quite different and more premium than any other competitive soaps in the market such as Lifebuoy and Dettol. Mumbai people think about the quality more than money beyond a point.

Promotion: Dove uses societal marketing concept where they educate girls and women on the true definition of beauty. It focuses on women especially non-models to portray that each one is beautiful in their own way and that beauty comes in all types of shapes, sizes and ages. Their main focus is on building up the self-esteem of women. Dove allows young teenage girls to play games and quizzes that not only entertain them but also educate them on the true definition of beauty.

Dove has created awareness among the women in the whole of society through social networking websites such as Facebook, twitter, Instagram and google hangouts. According to surveys conducted, people in India are most active on social networking sites more than any other country in the whole of globe. Dove launched a Real Beauty Sketches 3 minute promotional film on YouTube which was seen by over billion internet users globally.

Public Relations: The real aim of Dove is to bring the inner hidden beauty of women outside glamorously. Thus Dove first took a survey to understand how women define beauty, how they are satisfied with their beauty etc. The results they came to were very shocking. As a matter of fact only 2% of the women think they are beautiful. Therefore, Dove launched “The Real Beauty Campaign” where they created awareness among the women of what real beauty is and that, women of all shapes, sizes and ages can be beautiful. This campaign proved to be an excellent way of promoting and creating a good brand image in the eyes of the audience.

Since it boosted their self-confident and self-esteem and thus it resulted by a boost in the sales of the products of the company.

Locational strategies: Dove uses indirect channel of distribution:



Dove products are available in many places, right from super markets to hyper markets to fair price shops. Due to the recent changes in technology, Dove is available on e-commerce websites that include amazon, Walmart etc.

Lux

Lux was first launched in U.K in the year 1899, then it was launched in the USA in the year 1916 after the trademark was registered in the USA in the year 1900. In the year 1929 Lux was launched in the Indian markets.

The main target audience for Lux was always women and how to make them beautiful and glamorous. It is said to be the “Favourite beauty soap of Film stars”, which is the USP of Lux.

Product: The Company offers this product in a different attribute than what the competitors do. It offers improved quality of product at an affordable price with high branding, which ultimately helps to position the product in the buyer’s mind as the best quality beauty soap available in the market. Lux produces in India from imported raw material such as sodium soap, glycerol and many more from the Unilever plants situated in foreign countries.

Pricing: Prices have always been very affordable.

Different Product Ranges	Price (Rs.)
Lux Crystal Shine	17 per bar
Lux Festive Glow	15 per bar
Lux Purple lotus and Cream	18 per 110 gm
Lux Peach and Cream	18 per 90 gm
Lux Strawberry and Cream	18 per 110 gm
Mini Lux	5 per 45 gm

Packaging: Lux is a premium beauty soap which has a stylish packaging. Lux is presented in different colors and fragrance such as Saffron, Pink, Rose and many more. Lux is packaged in different sizes such as 100 gm, 120 gm, 150 gm. Sometimes it’s a promotional tactic to change only the cover or the packaging style and design of the product so as to give it a new feel and touch of an improvised product. Since customers can also get bored seeing the same packaging throughout the lifetime of a product. Hence to remove the monotony the packaging gets revised.

Marketing Strategies: The target market for Lux is the age group between 16-40 years women and the urban and semi-urban areas.

The brand has been positioned as the favourite soap for film stars. Therefore, Lux has always promoted its products in India through famous celebrities participating in their advertisements like Rekha, Aishwariya Rai, Kareena Kapoor, Katrina Kaif, Abhishek Bachhan. On completing 75 years of the company it launched an advertisement featuring Sharukh Khan and Katrina Kaif.

The best way to attract consumers from urban and semi-urban areas is through the celebrity brand ambassadors promoting in a glamorous way.

Lux has sponsored many television show events and award shows. Lux has also promoted its brand and products in a way by giving away gold coins to the special winners. Lux also launched “Lux Star bano, aishkaro Contest”, to meet the celebrities like Aishwariya.

Public Relations: The Company must not only keep its customers, suppliers and dealers happy but also keep the public in general also happy. For example, a legal department handles the legal issues regarding the company. For instance, if in a newspaper some article is published regarding the Lux brand that creates negative publicity then the legal department will make sure that there is an article published in the newspaper persuasive enough to encounter the negative rumors.

Locational Strategies: The Company does not have its own transport for distributing its products. Thus it has outsourced its distribution process to a third party which will carry on the process for them. These distributors then supply their product all over the country.



Conclusions of the Study

- The soap industry has recently seen a splurge in the demand due to the high awareness spread among people for maintaining hygiene levels. Unhygienic conditions

can harm the health of a person and cause an increase in the number of viruses and germs due to unkempt hands and uncleanliness.

- The demand for soap bars for looking good and glamorous is never going to decrease
- Firstly, high number of female consumers are loyal consumers of Dove and Lux.
- The male consumers mostly use soaps like Cinthol, Camay, Lifebuoy and Dettol.
- There is a sense of strong relationship that the brand and the customers share. Thus the company should always live up to and improve the quality of the soap, otherwise it is not much difficult for the consumers audience to change their decision.
- According to the respondents, Dove is one of the soaps which is mild on sensitive skin and also acts as a moisturizer. Thus a slightly higher price is worth paying.
- Today most of the youngsters are concerned about looking glamorous. But this is now spreading to all age groups. People of all age groups want to look young and are concerned about their skin.
- Lux is another brand which tops in this study the survey chart because it is one of the highest advertised soap bars thus creating awareness among the consumers of its existence.
- Lux is also cheaper compared to other soaps and thus affordable to the middle class which makes up a large part of the population of Mumbai.

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