

Marketing Research And Digital Analytics Of Dove

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Concise Overview Of Business Problem

Dove is owned by Unilever and is one of their personal care brands (Holt 2017). The Company has the responsibility of ensuring that it remains sensitive to racism. Being a global company, it has the role of ensuring fair treatment for all the customers as well as other viewers. Therefore, Dove is required to ensure that all the adverts it does are not offending or discriminatory. The company ought to have the face of all types of people across the world. Dove sells its products all over the world and thus is not a representation of one race or two. Therefore, its actions and the decisions it makes in marketing its products are sensitive to many people and not just one race. The problem arises when some of the ads made by Dove seem to be quite racist. Some of the adverts made by Dove illustrate some of the races as being better than others. Such has received great criticism from the world, and especially from the offended races. There is, therefore, a need to relook into digital analytics so as to eliminate the racist label on the company.

The company's latest controversy began in October 2017, merging from a three (3) second GIF (Graphics Interchange Format) ad (Parker 2014). The company launched the three (3) second campaign for its Dove body wash product line. Some viewers were offended by the ad because it displayed a model of color removing her brown shirt and then turning into a Caucasian model with a lighter shirt, and the Caucasian turned into another model from a different ethnicity (O'Leary 2015). Some Dove consumers and viewers of the ad interpreted the video as saying people of color are dirty, but if they use the body wash, they would be clean, and the Caucasian model represented cleanliness (Parker 2014).

After the backlash from the campaign, Dove had a representative from the company release an apology on Facebook: "Dove is committed to representing the beauty of diversity. In an image we posted this week, we missed the mark in thoughtfully representing women of color, and we deeply regret the offense that it has caused (Holt 2017)." After Dove publicly apologized, viewers expressed their opinions on Facebook, Twitter, and other social media sites to explain why they believe Dove is a racist company and mentioned other campaigns that are thought to have racial content. The apology given by the company was therefore not a conclusive solution to the angered customers. Many of them continue to state that it is the culture of the company to discriminate against some races when making their ads. This is an indication that a better solution to the problem is necessary. A solution would only serve best if it eliminates the probability of the company repeating the mistake in the future. An apology act is a short-term solution but may not erase the bad reputation the company has

earned in the past.

Research Question

Is Dove a racist company, and does Dove support racism of any kind?

The question results from the controversy arising in the past, whereby some of Dove's adverts were criticized for racial discrimination. Based on the criticism, some of the customers and other stakeholders held that the advert was really offensive to people of color. On the other hand, others expressed satisfaction with the advert, saying that it had nothing to do with racial discrimination. For this reason, it becomes hard to draw a conclusion about whether Dove is racist or not. This calls for deeper research to confirm the allegations or to refute them.

Hypothesis

Dove is quite careless about the feelings of the people across the world.

Dove is, therefore, quite racist, considering the past adverts. The company has been in the spotlight in the past for possible racist aspects in the advertisements. In many cases, the company seemed to be illustrating that the people of color were inferior to the rest of the people. After all the adverts, many people took to social media to complain about the adverts and the content. Dove used the usual procedures to apologize to the people. This has, therefore, turned into a routine, indicating that Dove may not stop using such ads soon. This is an indication that the company is racist, and a permanent solution ought to be found in the near future.

Key Results

Mixed reactions were collected from the research. Many of the results indicated complaints from different people across the world. Many of the people who took to social media indicated that Dove's ad was abusive to people of color by portraying them as unclean as compared to the whites. For this reason, many expressed their dissatisfaction with the way the company did and aired its ads (Parker 2014). On the other hand, others felt that they were not offended by the ad and that it represented the beauty of people of color. The majority, therefore, have their say. The ad is found to have been discriminatory among the different races across the world.

Business Recommendations

Business recommendations are drawn from the results drawn from the research. In this case, the research indicates that the company has had commotions with many of its customers and the rest of the world due to racial discrimination allegations (O'Leary 2015). Therefore, various business recommendations are useful in enhancing the betterment of the relationship between the company and all races across the world.

Before making an advert, the company ought to engage in a form of marketing research to determine the possible reception by the people. Such offers an insight of what people feel about the advert in terms of being racial or not. In addition, it is important that the major decisions regarding marketing call for the engagement of experts (O'Leary 2015). Having many people abroad provides a chance to determine the possible problems in advance rather than waiting until the end. Also, the company ought to have the ad ethics that ought to be followed each time a new ad is to be released to the market. This provides a chance for the organization to be guided on the way to remain on the safe side regarding racial discrimination. A benchmark is also useful for the organization to correct the mistake in the future. In this case, Dove could benchmark with another company that is said to be racial neutral so as to learn from their techniques. Integrating all the stated recommendations would ensure that Dove plays safe and avoids engaging in racism either knowingly or unknowingly.

Methods

Various methods could be suitable for the collection of data in this case. However, the most suitable is an online interview. This was conducted due to the various advantages that it has over the rest of the methods. Being an online interview, it was easy to conduct at the researcher's and the respondent's convenience. It was easy to convince the respondents to provide the relevant information as this only took a short time. Online interviews are less interruptive to the respondent's schedule and thus were suitable and convenient. In addition, the online interview provided a chance for the researcher to collect information from respondents across the globe and ensure a balance between people of color and whites. This was useful in ensuring that the process was objective and not biased.

The research involved asking questions to 10 respondents, five being white and five being people of color. A question was posed to them asking if they felt that Dove Company was a racist. An explanation was given in relation to the recent advert made by the company showing a black woman changing into a white woman after using Dove soap. The use of the recent advert was done to draw the respondents close to the essence of the study so as to receive a definite answer (Parker 2014). In addition, the advert was famous among all the respondents and thus was a good basis for the sourcing of more and deeper information.

The interviews were conducted using online questionnaires, thus requiring the respondents to indicate if they believed that Dove was a racist company in regard to the adverts done in the past.

The use of the questionnaires served to have the respondents give feedback on their own time and will. This was a strategy to have the respondents give an answer that was quite objective and far from subjectivity. A follow-up was done via the social media platform and phone calls. This was to ensure that the respondents would still give their feedback on time, and this assisted in the drawing of the conclusion.

Results

Among all the respondents, four indicated that they felt that Dove Company is a racist and offended them with the recent “racial” labeled advert three. However, felt that the advert was okay and not racial in any form. They, therefore, felt that the company was not racial and all its adverts were okay. The rest did not indicate that they were not sure if Dove was a racial company or not. Of the four who said that Dove was racial, 3 were people of color and one was white. On the other hand, one of the three who defended Dove from engaging in racism was a person of color.

Tables/Charts

Is Dove a Racist Company? Can you draw your response to the recent controversial ad?

Yes	No	Not sure
4	3	3
40%	30%	30%

Limitations

Various limitations curbed the effectiveness of the research, thus affecting the possibility of getting the most suitable results. First, the sample size used to carry out the research was so small compared to the number of customers served by the company. Thus, the results could not have been as accurate as expected. In addition, the time allocated for the research was short, thus minimizing the ability to research in detail the possibility of racism in Dove Company. Some of the respondents requested to be compensated for the information given. This was, however, not possible as it had not been planned in the budget. The respondents, however, went on to give their take on the research, posing a question on their level of honesty and the reliability of the information.

Conclusions And Recommendations

Dove has been in the spotlight on several occasions on the allegations of racism in its advertisements. This is an indication of the consistency of the same issue from time to time. From the results attained, it seems that many people feel that the company has been racist for as long as they can recall. The majority of the respondents stated that they had been offended by the recent post by the company, arousing the feelings of people of color.

Dove, therefore, needs to take various precautions before releasing an advert to the public. First, it is necessary to induce the advice of racism analysts so as to determine if the adverts they intend to have are offensive. It is also necessary to carry out market research to determine if the ad would be offensive to the people or not. Having ethical practices regarding marketing adverts would also work well in enhancing an effective guide for objective ads.

References

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