UnME Jeans: Branding in Web 2.0
- Midterm Exam -

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In general, Foley is in a problem which media plan she goes in a new environment called Web 2.0. Online media development results in new trends in customers' media habit and the new values. The case describes basic information about UnME Jeans, new trends and values in media and advertisement industry, then shows three possible media plan.

1. Which, if any, of the three social media plans should Foley pursue? Why?

In my opinion, Facebook is the best choice of among three suggested plans. The next table shows simply new media plans suggested by agency.

	Unique Visitor	Budget	Description
Zwinktopia	No Info	200,000+100/yr	Virtual Jeans ↔ Real Products
Facebook	14,196,000	350,000+600/yr	Brand profile page targeted banner ads through profile page Widget: design and share
YouTube	48,152,000	300,000 + 40CPM	User created contents → Contest In-Video Ads

Each plan has advantage in some parts and disadvantages in other parts. I make a table to compare three plans in the Foley's view. Left column is fulfilled the important factors for Foley regarding the new media plan and evaluation is done by myself.

	Zwinktopia	Facebook	YouTube
Talking with	△	O	X
Brand story	X	O	O
Constructive Dialogue	△	O	X
Existing media plan	△	△	O
Impact on sales	△	△	△
Unique Users	△	O	△
Score	**3.0**	**5.0**	**3.0**

(O: 1.0 △: 0.5 X: 0.0)

Zwinktopia is well targeted to the UnME's target customers. According to the plan, the agency will develop a line of virtual jeans which is same to jeans in real world, and the users can create a

jean in a new design. It is a good point, and because of the alliance between MySpace and Zwinktopia, users can bring their avatar (called Zwinky) to MySpace, which is the largest social networking site in US. However there are some cons. First, the company may be hard to have dialogue with users. User will buy jeans for her Zwinky, but they may not care what the brands says. It is a good way to announce new products, but not a good way to establish brand identity or to make brand loyalty in customer's mind. Second, it looks like good because of the connection to MySpace, but we can't sure how many users among MySpace users are using Zwinktopia. If the plan consider opening profile page in MySpace and connecting it to Zwinktopia, my answer should be different, but the plan concentrates on Zwinktopia. I think the general impacts of advertisements may be lower than the expectation.

Advertisements through YouTube is a very good way to deliver brand massage to the users. During the process initiating and implementing the user video contests, the company can deliver brand story and can talk with the potential customers. User generated video can be a hot issue on the Web, it means the additional advertisement through word-of-mouth. In addition, after the video contest, the videos can be shown in TV. It means the harmony between the legacy medium and the new medium. Also, the number of YouTube users are large which means potentiality of lots of reach to the customers and some impacts on sales. In other sides, through YouTube, it is very hard to have talks with customers. It is easy to make dialogue between customers, but the company may lose control the contents.

Each medium described upon has some pros and some cons. I think that the company can compensate those weak points in Facebook. Facebook has 2nd many users after MySpace. It means that the company has more chance to exposure the brand to the people than YouTube or Zwinktopia. The agency suggested the brand profile page and widget. Through its profile, the company can have lots of fans. For example, Coca Cola has 3,754,972 fans as of Oct. 23, 2009. (http://www.facebook.com/cocacola) The company can announce its new products, and can tell the brand story to the users. In addition, it is possible to have an one-to-one dialogue with customers. Widget and news feeds will be good for the users to share the information with other friends. Also, Facebook provides lots of applications. In the profile page of Coca Cola, provided contents includes wall (dialogue with cutomers), feeds, photos, videos, discussions and so on. The company starts its facebook in brief way, and can expand if needed. In these days, Facebook provides Facebook Connect. It means that the users and contents of Facebook may expand to the blog society. Also, with a boom-up of Twitter, there are many software client supporting Facebook as well as Twitter. In the case of TweetDeck, the user can access the contents in Twitter, MySpace and Facebook continuously. The users will increase and increase with the growth of Twitter and MySpace.

Overall, using Facebook provides more impacts in terms of reach, frequency, receptivity and presence. In addition, page views, unique visitors and the time spent on the site in Facebook is larger than others. Therefore I recommend Facebook rather than Zwinktopia and YouTube. Of course, if the budget allows, the company goes all of them and have to make synergy effect based

on Web 2.0 concept. It requires additional efforts, but it must be a good approach.

2. What benefits would Foley gain from each of the three social media plan? What risks does each entail? How can Foley better reap the benefits and mitigate the risks of each of the programs?

I think I described the gain from each medium in first answer, here, I'll talk about the other questions.

The most important risk is about the number of users. Although each sites has lots of users, the contents of the company can be ignored fully. For example, in Facebook, Coca Cola has 3,754,972 fans as mentioned before, but Apple iPod has 326,352 fans Microsoft has 74,933 fans at the same date. Social web sites provides lots of chances to advertise, but it is useless unless the user pay attention to the contents. As described in the article, the users ignore banner advertisement, because it isn't attractive. If any try is ignored, that means the waste of money. The company should concentrate on securing many users. To do that, the company should provide not only the the simple information about the company. It makes the contents be boring. The company should provide attractive entertainments and differentiated contents. In the profile page of Coca Cola in Facebook, the users can discuss with each other about any topics related to Coca Cola. It is a good example of differentiated contents.

Second risk is the attack from the spammer. In the social websites, any user can upload user generated contents and can write anything. Those space can be tainted easily. In Korea, government regulates with the verification of the real name, but there still exist spammers and hostile commentors. In US, the risk is much higher because there is no way to regulate or classify each individuals. There are some possible technical way, such as utilizing IP information, but it is hard and the effect is low. If the tainted contents are exposed to the users directly, the value of brand will decrease dramatically. To slove the problem, the answer is very simple. The only effective and simple way is continuous care and update by mannualy.

Another risk is mentioned in the article, the lack of control over the contents. Using the user generated contents is regarded the one of the best way in Web 2.0 era. However there is a risk because the company can't control the users' behavior, can't notice before the accident happens. All the contents and the flow of the contents depends on the user fully. The company can affect only at the low level. Among three suggested plans, YouTube is more exposed in this risk. People can make harmful video and then make a connection or a tag related to UnME. It is very risky because the result is a radical decline in the value of brand. Actually, it is out of control. If that situation happens, the company must inform YouTube. I emphasized YouTube here, but the other plans have also same problem. The best way to solve this problem is the protection, and that can be done a successful brand positioning. At the initial stage, the company should know there are potential risks.

Another issue is also described in the article, the measurement problem. It is very hard to measure the result. It is not a risk related to each plan, but a risk in terms of brand manager. Article mentioned some general tools including click through rates, page views, unique visitors and time spent. I think the most accurate method is the empirical test through the survey among users on the Web or the customers at the offline stores.

There are many risks when the company performs its branding activities on the Web. Some of them are controllable, but there also exist some intrinsic risks which can't be controlled by the company. The company should carefully analyze both of them.

3. What will you do for positioning this brand in the customer's mind? What are your effective branding strategies for UnME?

According to the article, the brand, UnMe, *was designed to encourage women to forge their own unique identities and to promote tolerance and appreciation for differences of options and tastes*(Case, page 1). It is sure that its position must be a mirror of it. Foley, the brand manager of UnMe, must want its customers to think UnMe as girl, uniqueness, tolerance. The brand need not be a luxury brand which is not available to young girls, usually. Also, the brand must not have a position as cheap, popular items of which customers can't be distinguished from her friends. The goal is clear, and the way to the goal must be answered.

UnME has delivered its brand story through the legacy media including television, magazine and radio. In addition, it uses online banner advertising and Google search advertisement which are the advertsiment in Web 1.0 concept. With the emergence of Web 2.0 opportunity, the company will add the new media on the Web among Facebook, YouTube and Zwinktopia. In my opinion, the branding strategy can be changed with the Web 2.0. The new brand strategy should utilize the Internet fully and then must make synergy effects between the new medium and the legacy medium.

As mentioned before, I recommend that Facebook is the best choice among three suggested plans. One of the reason is the openness of Facebook. With the development of the information technologies, Facebook also have changed. Current Facebook is not a simple social website, but a big platform. The company upload and maintain the various types of contents, people can access Facebook via many different ways, and the contents of Facebook can flow through the Web. Therefore, if the company has an appropriate plan, it is possible to make big synergy effects.

Original media plan gives the largest portion of its budget to television advertisement - $10,000,000. It is a larger than the sum of others. I think it is really unappropriated approach. The article says that the budget of television are used for *30 seconds television advertising spots on the most popular programs for teenage girls*. However it looks like that there is no cost-benefit advantage. First reason is the frequency of advertising exposure. Not all the girls don't watch every popular programs. And even the watcher of those programs don't care the advertisement before/after the

program. Media habit of the customers has changed. Second, Exhibit 3 in the article shows the disparity of advertising spending and household time spent with various media types. With the expansion of the Internet, people don't watch the television comparing to the previous ages. In these days, people loves a computer with the Internet, and even watch television programs through the computer. Third, the cost is too high. Usually, the cost of television advertisement for one exposure is more expensive comparing to others. If the related program is very popular, the cost is much more high. However the high cost doesn't guarantee the high frequency of the exposure to the customers. As mentioned in the article, the current age is the age of advertising clutter. It is almost impossible to expect the customers to remember the advertisement of the company without very frequent exposure supported by the huge budget.

I think the budget for television should be decreased and some of the reduced part should be used for the online advertising. Exhibit 3 shows that people are spending its time on the Web more than television. Also, exhibit 7 describes almost 60~80% of the people who are 12~21 age (UnME's target customer) has online profiles on the social website, and more than 60% among them visit the site daily or more frequently. That means exposures at some level are guaranteed. Although there still issues related to attract the people, but any advertisement can be exposed to the target customers relatively lower costs. In addition, according to the Exhibit 8 in the article, the young people are interested in social network profiles from marketer, retailer or service provider, and check those profiles often. Because it is a voluntary work, the effect is very different from the television advertisement. The legacy media, including television and radio, do not provide any option to the customers. The customers have to choose one of two - to accept or to avoid. Even the customers accept the advertisement from the old media, they easily forgot because of the clutter. However on the Web, the customers voluntarily search any information about the company, and absorb new information. It is the most attractive fact to any marketer.

I think Foley should focus on two points. One is the harmony between the legacy media and the new media - Web 2.0. The another is to notice her brand widely. Although the company prepare excellent contents in the profile page, that preparation is useless if there are no visitors. The company should call the potential customers to its profile page. I think the company don't have to care the method. Actually, there are so many methods in the marketing textbook. Even the noise marketing can be helpful only if the customers want to know about the brand and then visit profile page. The company should redistribute its budget, and spend as much as possible. It is like a bowling alley. The first pin is to call customers to the profile page, then the company can tell the brand story and maintain relationship with its customers actively using the various technology available in the Web 2.0. After the successful lucnch in Facebook, the company is able to expand its activities to others such as Twitter, MySpace or blog-sphere. Young people usually have lots of accounts and acts in various web places. Also, thanks to the development of technology and openness philosophy, there are many ways to connect them. I think the best strategy of the expansion of the platform is the contents differentiation. If the company provides same contents and similar menus in other place, the customers will not be attracted and they will be bored. Those impression result in the decline in the value of brand. Young people have a good impression to the

company if it does well in the Web, because those activity provides similarity to them, but the company fails, it is not better than no try. The IT company make and maintain the platform, but the brand must have and maintain another virtual user platform based on those platform. It is the way to success in the Internet era.