



Dove's Beauty Bottles: Insulting or Inspiring?

By Olivia Atkins and Samuel Spencer on 12th May 2017

Why was there a backlash against Dove's different shaped Real Beauty Bottles campaign? Four ad insiders weigh in.

Earlier this week, Ogilvy faced the wrath of social media following its latest campaign for Dove, *Real Beauty Bottles*.

After releasing a series of six limited edition bottles of different shapes, to mimic the variety of real women's bodies, the Unilever brand was met with online criticism after consumers were left insulted, not inspired, by Dove's message.



We've been listening. The custom bottles were never intended for sale, but as a celebration of beauty diversity. However, we realize that not everyone has related to them in the way we intended. For more than a decade, Dove has been committed to inspiring women to feel confident and beautiful, and we will continue to do so.



@Dove

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About the recent custom bottles...

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Dove responded to the digital eruption last night by posting the above tweet. But here at *shots*, we wondered who was in the wrong... Are consumers becoming too sensitive and over-reacting or is the agency (and client) at fault for not fully understanding the brand's core values or what the consumers are after?

We caught up with some industry insiders to see what they thought on the matter and to find out how others can avoid this problem in future.

Ross Neil, WCRS ECD

They say form follows function but I'm not quite sure of the function here? I wonder how many people drink from the iconic Marilyn Monroe Coke bottle and ponder its curves, or even know its Marilyn.

How many consumers will relate these bottles to body types? You use it for a purpose and this feels like the marketing has spilt over into the real world in quite a clumsy way here. I think the Dove bottom drawer of ideas is finally empty.



Dave Henderson, ATOMIC creative partner

I thought this was quite cool when I first saw it, a nice twist in an established campaign. But then I would think it was cool because ultimately I'm the target audience, a creative ad professional who knows all about this campaign, who also might just be a juror on one of the many award shows over the next year.

The claimed target audience, 'real women', seem to have had a very different reaction though, judging by the social media backlash it seems to have had over the last few days. Unfortunately for the agency and client, everyone has now read about this, so jurors won't touch it with a shitty stick now, which on balance is the right thing to do.



Anna Carpen, 18 Feet & Rising ECD

This is the least inspiring thing I have ever seen from Dove.

The only product I want in the shape of a body is a bottle of matey bubble bath.

Just because I am a short, wide female doesn't mean I can relate to a short, wide bottle of body wash.



Sara Bamossy, CSO Pitch

This execution of the (usually on-point) *Real Beauty* campaign almost seems like a parody, or if someone was trolling Dove.

As marketers and advertisers, it's important to remember that we can get caught up in our own bubble of ideas and no one is *waiting* for our brands to provide social commentary.

Losing sight of our customer and what they are looking for leads to marketing for marketing's sake and is the biggest trap any of us can fall into.

No woman is looking for body wash packaging to be a literal reflection of body shape. This offers no utility, no meaningful connection, no new conversation. In this case, the perfect shape for my body wash packaging is the one that fits best in my hand.



Creative connections

- Agency **Pitch, 18 Feet & Rising, Atomic**
- Post Production **WCRS**
- Creative Partner **Dave Henderson**
- Executive Creative Director **Anna Carpen, Ross Neil**
- Chief Strategy Officer **Sara Bamossy**