

The Body Shop's Preparedness for Post-Pandemic Survivability: The Participation in Society and Environmental Issues

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Abstract

The existence of the Covid-19 pandemic has dramatically changed the conditions of the beauty industry. The beauty industry is a very interactive process with people trying, testing, and smelling the product. After the lockdown is enforced, like it or not, beauty products have to change direction into online selling. Online experience, sending out free samples, re-writing product descriptions, and improving images to encourage people to buy online. Additionally, the products offered should also be products that are safe to use, naturally-derived ingredients. Theory of Social Exchange Theory is used in this research to support the value chain of The Body Shop as a corporate campaign in society and environmental issues in pandemic. This research will emphasize one of the world's beauty products with the tagline "Enrich our Planet," The Body Shop. The method is qualitative research, where the researchers evaluate the Values Chain of The Body Shop. This study proves The Body Shop's readiness to face the post-pandemic survivability as posted strong revenue growth though during the Covid-19 pandemic. It can ensure that it survives because it pays great attention to society and its products' environmental issues.

Keywords: Beauty industry; natural; pandemic; survivability; social exchange theory; values chain

Introduction

In the process of purchasing cosmetic products, the process is interactive. Regular consumers see the product directly, try and interact directly with the product with the seller. However, during the pandemic period due to Coronavirus disease (Covid-19), the movement was limited by changing the sales process to online. In addition, several cosmetic manufacturers have implemented innovative ways, such as sending free samples, and

moving aggressively to market their products on social media. One way to actively rewrite product descriptions is to also post product images as attractive as possible. This is expected to keep consumers buying back cosmetic products and increasing the number of new consumers. Therefore, a close relationship with consumers is very important in today's times.

Social media has grown in importance as a platform for brands to showcase their

products. Social media posts have the potential to reach a large number of potential customers from all over the world and generate buzz, especially in the cosmetics industry (Binwani and Ho, 2019). Social media channels need to be an extension of the customer's buying experience, which can drive a smooth transaction journey from 'likes' to 'cart' (Handley, 2020).

Promoting a cosmetic brand on social media seems to have more prospects and a greater chance of reaching a large number of cosmetic brand users. The use of social media has enabled us to vividly portray the brand image in the minds of consumers while also maintaining their interest in the brand. A variety of social media marketing campaigns keep them reminded of cosmetic brands (Parmar, 2019).

Furthermore, with the help of beauty bloggers, companies are now actively analyzing social networks. It is difficult to predict which product will be in demand, but quickly respond to the posts of popular beauty bloggers. By rough calculations, this approach allows to save two to three times as much money on contextual advertising and manage transactions more efficient way (Likhareva, & Kulpin, 2018).

The crisis has profoundly accelerated digital transformation in travel retail, no exception for beauty product. Retail experience need to be re-imagined, as innovations such as virtual try-ons and click-and-collect will continue to be in demand. More than half of people in Japan have a new habit in staying home have decreased their needs to buy cosmetics especially make up. Further, because of the lockdown, in about two months the brick-mortar stores need to temporarily closed caused the loss to global slump. However, because many people think that cosmetic products are associated with well-being and personal care, it can be said that these products are considered resilient, especially for Skincare products. Product safety and greater transparency and safe ingredients will be essential (Lim, 2020a)

Personal care products increase in demand when consumer is concern much on health, safety and efficacy. More need for immunity boosting products such as Vitamin C from fruits that connected to immunity boosting. Another thing is, customer now demand for more natural ingredients (Lim, 2020b).

Thus, this study will explore one of cosmetic company that has the "Enrich Our Planet" logo, where the cosmetic products sold are made of natural ingredients and the production process through non-animal testing. Many companies now communicate more strongly on their values; hence The Body Shop was pioneered this path, setting the highest standards for natural and ethical beauty brand. Natura & Co the owner of The Body Shop, Aesop and Avon. The Body Shop was one of the world's first ethical businesses, as a company puts its values into practice, every day.

The Body Shop positioned as an environmentally responsible firm from its very beginning and has a long, committed history in pro-environmental activities (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2017). When 'The Values Chain' reflects how the company work as a business, with Values fully integrated into everyday life, these Values Remain as Integral to The Company as When the Business Started (The Body Shop International PLC Values Report, 2011). The Values Chain analysis will be used to explain how the products sold by The Body Shop can survive during the pandemic.

Theoretical Framework

There are numerous previous researches as a literature review in this research. According to Wella (2020), implementation sustainability could be one of the marketing tools in this pandemic era. This statement supports this research, which shows that The Body Shop value chain is currently able to become one of the company's marketing tools in this pandemic era.

Social Exchange Theory

Furthermore, this communication theory supports the literature review in this research. As cited in Littlejohn and Foss (2009, p. 207), social exchange theory (SET) is one of the corporate campaign theories that focuses on how a certain organization communicates their campaign to their stakeholders, while involving them in the process. It suggests how the organization exchanges value with the stakeholders that could mutually benefit the parties involved. It is also implemented to build trust upon the responsible act conducted, building intangible goodwill, and maintaining a long-term relationship with the stakeholders. Griffin (2012, p. 474) defines social exchange

as the relationship and status that is set by the parties involved by keeping in mind the costs and benefits of the interaction established. It was also argued on how the parties tend to see the needs and wants that drive them to establish the relationship, predicting the potential rewards and costs, and the depth of knowledge and skills to be contributed.

The Social exchange theory suggested in this article provides a strong significance to the results of the study, especially on the relationship that The Body Shop built with the stakeholders related to their campaign. Furthermore, the concept of value chain mentioned also adds into the strength of this article, in relation to the value building activities done by companies which were supported socially. Based on the literature previously described, the value chain has become one of the company's campaigns for the body shop as a marketing tool carried out by the company in this pandemic era.

Value Chain

Value defines as the amount buyers are willing to pay for a product which a firm provide them and measured by total revenue. In other hand, competitive position of a company, hence, measured by its ability to provide value which is exceed the cost or offering premium price to to buyer via differentiation. Thus, value chain displays a total value from a collection of activities that a firm performed to design, produce, market, deliver, and support its product in order to create a competitive advantage (Porter, 1998). The crucial factor in creating competitive advantage of a firm by the exploitation of linkages between various activities in the chain.

Other definition comes from Kaplinsky & Morris, (2000) which describes value chain as a range of activities to bring product or service from conception over various phases of production, deliver final product to consumers and final disposal after use by providing value added within each activities in the chain.

Sorenson et al., (2011) define value chain as a sequence activity which add values to the final product or service, whereby every activity is interdependent and crucial in the form of coordination for the ability to deliver competitive value to consumer. Howieson et al., (2016) highlighted that value chain done by

collaboration, open communication, and sharing of resources, risks and rewards, reduces transaction costs, better information for control, and less costly on the operations.

The importance of value chain used to understand the distribution returns arising from the activities along the chain (Kaplinsky and Morris, 2000) or to create value (Véronneau & Roy, 2009) and leads to building a competitive strength of the organization (Howieson et al., 2016) which arises from the possession of scarce attributes and involves barriers to entry (Kaplinsky and Morris, 2000).

Therefore, it is necessary to define a firms' value chain for competing in a particular industry gains competitive advantage by performing strategically essential activities more cheaply or better than its competitors (Kaplinsky & Morris, 2000; Sachitra, 2016; Smit, 2010). Further, it ends up being able to protect them from the competition, which arises from the possession of scarce attributes and involves barriers to entry (Kaplinsky & Morris, 2000; Martel & Klibi, 2016; Zich, 2009).

Material and Methodology

The method in this study is conducted by qualitative research design with descriptive research. Descriptive research aims to produce an accurate representation of persons, events or situations (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2015). Added, descriptive research seeks to provide an accurate description of observations of a phenomenon (Weerakoon, 2016).

The method used by conducting direct research at the cosmetics company The Body Shop. Research was also carried out by analyzing documents while conducting the research (Handjaja, 2013). These analyzes present a descriptive assessment of values chain of The Body Shop investigated how the values chain can enhance the values and become the world's first ethical business. According to the main topics covered in this study, they were done by firstly explaining the value chain analysis explanation. Later, the discussion is followed by looking at the evaluation of values chain in The Body Shop and proves the body shop's readiness to face the post-pandemic survivability.



Figure 1. Michael Porter's Value Chain
Source: Porter (1998)

Result and Discussion

Values Chain of The Body Shop

In the Body Shop, the company not only create a value chain, instead, values chain which reflects how the company works as a business. It is not a shared responsibility, but a shared commitment to being a business that is a force for good, a business with ethics.

The creation of brands whose values reflect respect for corporate responsibility, as well as an increase in the number of brands that

support cruelty-free product creation can indicate that consumers expect beauty as a result of their products and have the ability to observe the company they are buying from in support of products. to the less fortunate and protect the environment (Blomenberg, 2019). To conclude, The Body Shop in conducting daily business concerns on employees, distributors, consumers, and even the local community (Hardhiyanti & Rasyid, 2018).



Figure 2. The Body Shop Values Chain
Source: Crognolletti (2014)

Defending human rights

In promoting the protection of human rights and freedoms, a declaration of rights and responsibilities is recognized globally in a fair and equitable manner (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2004).

The business of The Body Shop puts a high value on people, which has campaign for human rights across the world, and equally concerned to treat the people who work in a fair, considerate and supportive way. The Body Shop's commitment to realizing human rights enforcement has been demonstrated since 1993. The Body Shop has created campaigned and conducted fundraising for grassroots organizations engaged in HIV/AIDS education, namely the Staying Alive Foundation (Mila Sari, 2015).

Another, the Body Shop's actions in fighting for human rights is by conducting a petition and this has received a positive and constructive response from the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth and from the Office of the Minister of Justice and we sincerely hope this will result in the ratification of Ireland from the UN convention. The Children's Rights Alliance calls this "a positive development it has emerging from The Body Shop's' Stop Sex Trafficking of Petitions for Children and Youth." (The Body Shop International PLC Values Report, 2011). Training programs were also administered to employees globally enabling them to become active campaigners rather than passively promoting the issue. In total, more than 375 million of children are affected positively and the markets participating in the campaign raise both funds and awareness to protect the children from further harm (UKEssays, 2018).

As a large multinational company, The Body Shop will assess all of their business activities, both within the company and in community trade, to determine where they have a direct or indirect impact and ensure compliance with human rights (Mila Sari, 2015).

Supporting community fair trade

Community Fair Trade established in The Body Shop since 1987, in order to support small-scale farmers, especially in developing countries. The Body Shop teaches community fair trades how to trade fairly and can determine prices independently. At least one Community Fair Trade ingredient is included in each one of their products. Community Fair Trade the Body Shop consists of various groups of small-scale farmers in worldwide, such as Mexico, Brazil, Peru, Mauritius, Ghana, Zambia, UK, Italy, India, Samoa, and many more, being the main suppliers of raw materials for products The Body Shop (Mila Sari, 2015).

In 1990, the firm established the “The Body Shop Foundation”, which seeks to support NGOs. Later on, in 1997, it was the first cosmetic company to oblige to the Humane Cosmetics Standards. Furthermore, The Body Shop uses packaging from recycled or sustainable resources and sets clear targets to reduce environmental impacts (Brücher, 2015). The Body Shop is a best practice example for fair trade because of its big effort put into the topic, its long-term relationships with the suppliers, its specific and divers approaches and forms of support and the desire for ongoing improvement.

The Body Shop work with more than 20 artisans, farmers and producer groups, exporting high quality products in more than 20 countries, impacting more than 300,000 marginalized people worldwide as well as small and medium-scale farmers or business groups also make it possible to have a sustainable decent life (Mila Sari, 2015). Each of our relationships is unique, providing different benefits to communities, such as a more stable future, or access to basic needs such as education, clean water and health care. In addition, The Body Shop has an ongoing commitment to animal welfare. Belief in treating people well, trading fairly, and protecting the planet. The basic goal of The Body Shop company is to get as much as possible from small groups, local communities

and communities, especially in developing countries. By paying a fair price for work done in fair conditions, which is also accompanied by a commitment to community development and to providing a predictable source of demand in the medium to long term, so that people in the community can plan and build their own future and sustainably benefit their communities through development in the fields they need. (The Body Shop International PLC Values Report, 2011).

The Body Shop is now a large international business, and as development has developed a detailed framework for how this collaboration within the Community FairTrade - manages relationships from conception to closure. The program is independently verified by the 'Institut fur Marktologie' and now includes relationships with 25 producers in 21 countries, some of which span nearly 25 years.

Protecting our planet

The body shop committed to against climate change due to global warming. Unlike other companies, The Body Shop prioritizes ethical products using natural and environmentally friendly ingredients. In order to reduce the impact of global warming on the company's environment include: saving energy use in outlets and offices around the world, using recycled plastic bottles that made from PET (polyethylene terephthalate), replacing shopping bags with recycled and soil-degradable materials and creating a “Bring Back Our Bottle” program (The Body Shop, 2014). The program is a campaign initiated by The Body Shop to encourage consumers to return empty bottles of The Body Shop products for recycling (Mila Sari, 2015). Even when sourcing for natural raw materials, the Body Shop obtains supply only from those sustainable plantations and rainforests, ensuring no deforestation or destruction of fragile ecosystems associated (UKEssays, 2018). In addition, for example shampoo products, the residue that is left behind is based on these ingredients do not leave any residue in the water system that may be present dangerous to aquatic life (The Body Shop International PLC Values Report, 2011).

Against animal testing

The Body Shop's 2017 campaign on the topic Cruelty Free International calls for an international ban on testing animals in

cosmetics, both for products and raw materials. Even where animal-derived ingredients are used, the Body Shop commits that these ingredients do not cause or derived from the death of animals and they are suitable for vegetarians' use. Common animal-derived ingredients include bees wax, honey, wool wax (lanolin) and shellac (resin secreted by lac bug) (UKEssays, 2018). That way, clearly showing that The Body Shop is free from experimental animals, The Body Shop believes in the concept of "beauty without cruelty" that researchers understand, namely consumers consume products that are safe from experimental animals. Previously, The Body Shop had launched a campaign against animal action. testing in 1989, where this campaign was recorded as the first campaign conducted by a cosmetics company (Sabami, 2018).

Therefore, The Body Shop is committed not to conduct animal testing for their cosmetic product raw materials. In fact, The Body Shop became the first international cosmetics company that meet the Humane Cosmetic Standard supported by an international animal protection group (Kusumawati, 2009) The Body Shop obtained ISO 9002 certificate as a guarantee for the quality standards of The Body Shop which is committed to against animal testing of monitoring system their raw material suppliers. Subsequently, in 2006, PETA (People for the Ethical Treatments of Animals) Europe awarded The Body Shop an award as "Best Cruelty-free Cosmetics" (The Body Shop International, 2007).

Campaign against Animal testing begins by "Save the Whale" with Greenpeace. The Body Shop signed the Humane Cosmetics Standard in 1997, and make it a company the first international cosmetics sign it (Wahyu Mila Sari, Sushanti, & Wiranata, 2015).

Activating self-esteem

The Body shop conducts marketing in a responsible manner, which always informs the product as is. The vision of The Body Shop is that every woman can accept, appreciate, and explore their potential (Mila Sari, 2015). In order to actualize their vision, The Body Shop doesn't make any promises to provide a timeless, youthful look but focuses more on providing products that provide refinement and comfort (Kusumawati, 2009). It can be seen when The Body Shop promoted their products, it doesn't use too thin or too young models to

respect expectations society's and avoid society's perspective that age and size is matter for beauty definition.

The market is different when considering buying beauty products because the products sold are also designed for certain age groups or skin type, the model is adjusted to the product. Likewise, The Body Shop put their key messages into their products wisely, support and avoid words that might play around with customer feel insecurities because the product has the power of positive self-esteem, not fear of failure.

The Body Shop was conducted the global volunteering policy implemented in 2008, offering all employees at least 3 paid volunteering days yearly and maximum to 6 different locations. Individual self-development is highly embraced as the firm provides leadership training and management development programs for its employees worldwide, providing opportunities for learning, self-improvement and skills upgrading (UKEssays, 2018).

Conclusion

This paper focuses on The Readiness of The Body Shop on the Post-Pandemic Survivability. The study evaluates the Values Chain of The Body Shop comprises of defending human rights, supporting community fair trade, protecting our planet, against animal testing, and activating self-esteem. Measuring the Values Chain is meaningful work for sustainable development. As it was proved that the company who owned The Body Shop, Natura & Co has posted strong revenue growth for the third quarter of the financial year, significantly outperforming the wider cosmetics, fragrances and toiletries market. The Body Shop, specifically, delivering 'solid' growth by continued digitalization in an environment that has remained challenging throughout the world as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic (Caldwell, 2020).

This study also proved that The Body Shop survive as it focuses on social and environmental issues because The Body Shop's goal is to be the most ethical cosmetic brand in the world and a truly sustainable global business. In addition, The Body Shop is a CSR pioneer as well as the first global business to practice fair trade and conduct social and environmental campaigns. This is what makes The Body Shop focus on issues that raise social

and environmental issues. More comparative studies, besides producing an ethical product, do not rule out innovation in its products, therefore should be carried out to test and improve the new products, in future research. Not a few similar companies are doing the same in order to survive in this Pandemic era, so they still have to follow the market's will by not ignoring social and environmental issues.

To keep survive in Pandemic situation, marketing campaign of a cosmetic products also need to be adjusted. Cosmetics companies should prioritize the creation of more relevant, participatory, appealing, and engaging content on a variety of social media apps and platforms. In today's competitive market, such social media-based marketing can significantly improve brand loyalty (Man & Rahman, 2019). In doing a marketing campaign, to entice beauty enthusiasts, a campaign with unique features must be launched on special occasions such as Mother's Day, International Women's Day, days of National and International Significance, Wedding Season, Festive Season, and so on.

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