

**TITLE OF CASE STUDY:**

Dove “Soap Scum”

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- **Business Situation and Marketing Objectives**

*The War between Dove and soap*

In developed markets, the bar category was declining. Consumers had begun migrating from bars to body wash, leaving behind only true bar loyalists. Luckily for Dove, many of these people were die-hard Dove Bar users, who will buy the product loyally for as long as it exists. Unluckily for Dove, the rest of these people were die-hard soap users; creatures of habit that saw no reason to pay a premium for a Dove bar.

The only way to win this war would be to somehow persuade soap fans to ***switch to Dove***.

- **Marketing Objectives:**

**Drive for share within the soap bar category.**

- **Research and Consumer Insights**

*Tell us why you don't like us*

Capturing the soap fan seemed like an impossible task. We recruited some of Dove's most passionate rejecters to enlighten us about the supposed virtues of soap. Through a series of workshops and heart-to-heart sessions between consumers and Unilever scientists, we uncovered some of the mistaken beliefs soap users had about their product and ours, and began to put this knowledge to use.

*Only my bar cleans...*

Since its launch in 1957 we had been telling people that Dove is a mild cleanser with ¼ moisturizing cream. This had been a hugely successful strategy for positioning the bar as a beauty product, and so commanding a price premium. But we quickly learned that ordinary soap users don't want the moisturized feel that Dove gives them, they only want to feel squeaky clean. They don't want a mild (or as they hear it, “weak”) cleanser, they want an effective one. And they certainly don't want a bar that leaves their skin covered in a layer of what they believe is a creamy residue.

## Turning the residue tables

Contrary to the soap fan's adamant conviction, it's not Dove that leaves behind a residue: it's soap. Soap leaves behind insoluble Calcium soap – bits of soap that react chemically with hard water and stick to your skin. Our research showed that this fact, if properly conveyed, had the power to win her over to Dove. But after years of talking about mildness and moisture, could we get her to reappraise Dove?

## The 'S' word

There's a common household term for Insoluble Calcium soap that's already in everyday use. We use it for that nasty ring of soap that's left behind in the bath tub. It's a powerful word that evokes a strong reaction. It's SCUM.

Could we go that far? Could we say that word? After all, this was Dove. Nice, gentle, friendly Dove. But nice, gentle and friendly was working *against* us with this particular target. We found in research that when we used the word "scum" with hard core soap fans, the shock value that it gave made our story exponentially more powerful. Operation Scum was on.

## Making the Invisible Visible

To truly shock her into questioning her beliefs about clean, it wouldn't be enough just to TELL her about soap scum. We'd have to SHOW her. We developed a campaign designed to make the invisible **visible**.

With an artistic dramatization, 30sec and 15sec commercials emphasized that soap leaves soap scum behind and Dove doesn't. Online, the TV ran in pre-roll banners and rich media units. An altered version resembling a horror movie trailer ran in cinema, warning users about soap scum left behind on skin.

Side-by-side comparisons in print executions followed a similar strategy. The tagline, "If you could see the difference: Soap leaves soap scum. Dove doesn't." reinforced the visual comparison between soap and Dove.

Homepage takeovers took the scum story online and made it newsworthy. Pre-roll spots, rich media units, and an interactive online game supported online messaging and engaged our target even further.

An interactive pamphlet and a video from R&D were featured on dove.com to demonstrate the difference between ordinary soap and Dove, along with testimonials from "former ordinary soap users" who had made the switch to Dove.

By making the invisible visible, Dove found a new way to position itself against ordinary soap. With this powerful story about Scum, Dove was able to convince even the most die-hard user to make the switch to Dove.

- The Big Idea

## **Soap leaves scum – Dove doesn't.**

- The 360 Campaign- Bringing the Idea to Life

TV: Branded Content

Print: Magazine Print

Cinema

Interactive: Online Ads, Website

Retail: Point of Purchase

- **The Campaign Results**

**We exceeded our share target in both the US and Canada.**

The campaign was extremely effective at driving home the message that Dove is different than ordinary bar soaps because it leaves you feeling soft, smooth and soap scum-free.

After 2 years of decline in the US, Dove bar was restored to growth and achieved record share. Canada achieved its highest shares during the period when Scum was on-air.