

Dove goes beyond skin-deep beauty with No Digital Distortion Mark

 By Leigh Andrews

12 Jul 2018

We've seen a marked rise in returning to real values and letting a brand's humanity and true beauty shine through its messaging in 2018. With #MandelaMonth placing focus on brand sustainability in a way that makes the world a better place, enter the Dove 'No Digital Distortion Mark' - part of the brand's global Self-Esteem Project.



Dove global women.

Underneath 2018's selfie culture, where adding filters and enhancing features in photos becomes second nature, there's a yearning to get back to basics, to what's natural and real and true.



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Bronwyn Williams 11 Apr 2018



That's why there's been a rise of celebrities themselves getting upset at the way they've been photoshopped on magazine covers and in advertising for beauty and skincare brands.

It's more than just a surface-level beauty and identity problem. It goes beyond skin-deep across the media and advertising industry and doesn't do the brands any favours.

Beauty by numbers

Luckily, that's now coming to a stop, one brand at a time. Launching in July, Dove's 'No Digital Distortion Mark' is part of its promise to keep its beauty imagery filter-free.



Dove Real Beauty Pledge includes South African in world campaign

6 Mar 2017



This forms part of the brand's 14-year-old self-esteem project and three-part [Real Beauty Pledge](#) of last year, where they vow to:

1. always feature real women of different ages, sizes, ethnicities, and hair colours, types or styles – never models – and to
2. portray them as they are in real-life, as approved by the women and not retouched or digitally distorted, thereby
3. helping the next generation of girls build body confidence and self-esteem.

Retouching real beauty ideals

[Design Taxi](#) explains that the new watermark is the result of a study that revealed that 77% of women believe all media photos they come across have been retouched.

Here, Sphelele Mjadu, senior public relations manager at Unilever Beauty and Personal Care for Africa, explains how the launch of the Dove 'No Digital Distortion Mark' is yet another step to ensure beauty is a source of confidence and not anxiety, as well as how this ties in with findings from the 2016 Dove Global Beauty and Confidence Report

■ ***Talk us through the context of launching the Dove No Digital Distortion Mark – what's going on in the media today that made the initiative a necessity?***

Dove is taking another step to ensure beauty is a source of confidence and not anxiety with the launch of a 'No Digital Distortion Mark'.

By 2 January 2019, the Mark will be incorporated into all static imagery showcasing women, across print, digital and social media and will represent that the image is not distorted. Dove will be held accountable to only show accurate and genuine portrayals of women, showing them as they are in real life.

The ambition of the Mark is to help women and girls navigate the media landscape, letting them know that the image they see has not been digitally distorted to fit beauty ideals and stereotypes.

The Dove Self-Esteem Project curriculum provides young people with the tools to help build confidence. One element of this is education on how to counter the negative influence of media and become more aware and critical of what they see. The Mark will take this further and provide an identifier that will take the guesswork out of consuming media, while also encouraging other brands to take action.



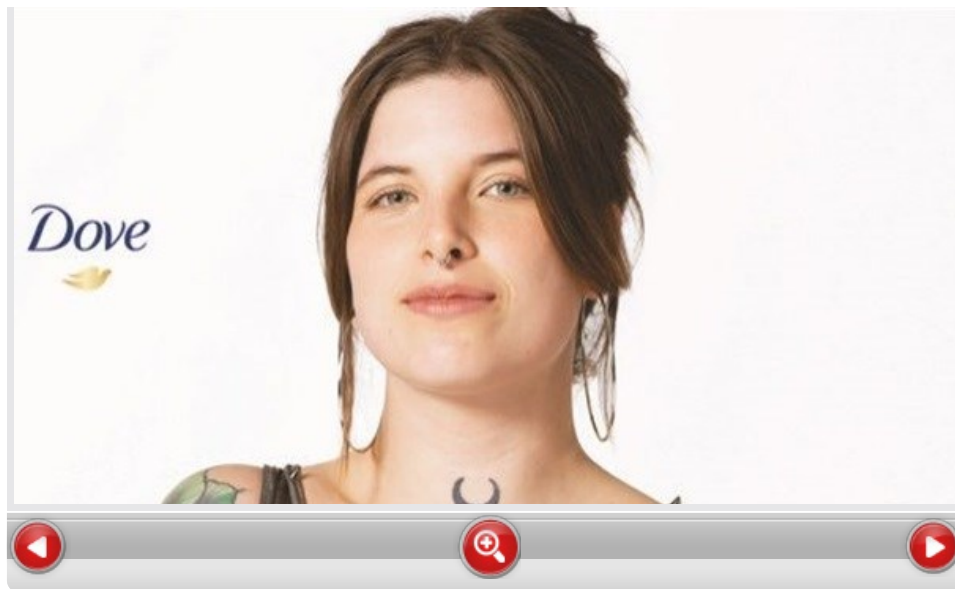
Sphelele Mjadu, senior public relations manager at Unilever Beauty and Personal Care for Africa

■ ***Excellent, How do the global findings of the Dove Global Beauty and Confidence Report of 2016 resonate locally in SA?***

Research from the report shows that women globally have lost faith in what they are viewing, and 77% believe all images in the media have been digitally altered. Brands need to take note of this, as 69% of women cite increasing pressures from advertising and media to reach an unrealistic standard of beauty as a key force in driving appearance anxiety.

In South Africa specifically, 65% of women and 72% of girls wish the media did a better job of portraying women with diverse physical appearance, and of varying age, race, shape and size.





The Dove 'No Digital Distortion Mark' joins the Self-Esteem Project tools and is a stamp to let everyone know that Dove is firmly committed to *not* digitally distorting images.

“ The Mark means we do not misrepresent skin, hair or eye colour, fill in gaps in hair, remove wrinkles, whiten teeth, remove moles, freckles, scars, tattoos and stretch marks, to name a few. So the women included are 100% as you would see them in real life, and 100% beautiful just as they are. ”

The Dove Self-Esteem Project curriculum provides young people with the tools to help build confidence. For over 10 years, it has reached more than 29 million young people around the world with body confidence and self-esteem education, with the goal to reach 40 million young people around the world by 2020.

■ **Fantastic. How does this tie into what Dove and indeed Unilever stands for in terms of the [Unstereotype Alliance](#) and the current focus on meeting Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of 'good health and wellbeing' and 'partnership for the goals'?**

The Unstereotype Alliance aims to tackle how the industry can affect positive cultural change by using the power of advertising to help shape perceptions that reflect realistic, non-biased portrayals of women and men.



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This is very closely tied to Dove's mission is to make beauty a source of confidence, not anxiety, but all our brands fit with Unilever's social mission: **to meet every day needs for hygiene and personal care that help people feel good, look good and get more out of life.**

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Leigh Andrews 25 Jun 2018





So, there are indeed synergies across all initiatives in terms of what Unilever and Dove stand for, and the recent launch of the no digital Distortion Mark is further reinforcement.

■ **How does that, in turn, tie in with the focus on sustainability, CSI and community in July as we celebrate #MandelaMonth?**

The Unilever Sustainable Living Plan (USLP) is a blueprint for achieving their vision to grow their business, whilst decoupling their environmental footprint from their growth and increasing their positive social impact.

It is driving growth through brands with purpose, taking out costs from their business, reducing risks and helping them build trust.

“ Seven years ago, Unilever launched the USLP to demonstrate to the world that a corporate can create value with human values at its core. Economic development, through responsible business, is the best way to bring people out of poverty and address social issues. ”

The company has expanded its range of 'Sustainable Living' products, increasing the number of brands that have been awarded the designation from 18 to 26 last year.



Unilever says 'so long, old world, hello Bright Future'

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USLP is made up of three big goals, supported by targets that span across Unilever's social, economic and environmental performance across the value chain. These three goals are:

1. Improve the health and well-being of more than one billion people
2. Decouple their environmental footprint from their growth
3. Enhance the livelihoods of millions of people

As a responsible corporate citizen, Unilever believes in making a positive difference, not only to those who use its products but also to the communities in which it operates. The company ensures that its sustainability programmes extend further than what's good for the company and always considers what's good for all involved.

Exactly the type of corporate mindset the world needs right now. Visit dove.com/self-esteem for more on the Dove Self-Esteem Project.

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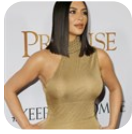
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ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

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