

MARKETING

Social media users cannot get enough of empowerment ads

June 9, 2016



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By **Brielle Jaekel** of **Mobile Marketer**

Empowerment campaigns on social media have grown exponentially in recent years and while a slew of brands have adopted the idea in their own manner, the strategy still provides benefits if the authenticity is there.

Brands such as Dove, Nike and Always have taken to social media in attempts to make a difference for women's issues, and now with so many other brands getting on board, the subject matter is not slowing down, although this will not be a problem for marketers that create authentic material that can prompt a real conversation. According to YouTube, the ten best-performing empowerment ads were two and a half times less likely to be skipped than traditional ads, meaning these campaigns are making an impression on viewers and enticing them to keep watching.

"A best practice is to make sure your message is a natural fit for your brand, exudes authenticity and resonates with your audience," said Carrie McIlveen, U.S. director of marketing at **Metia**. "It is important to understand the purpose of your campaign and for marketers to stand for something larger than their products.

"There is no denying, empowerment campaigns can create a ripple effect of change and stir up debate around social issues," she said. "A worst practice would be just doing a campaign for the sake of doing one, not understanding your audiences passions or worse yet, not making it relatable.

"Consumers are not looking for perfection; they are looking for relevance in their own lives, to see themselves, their daughters, their mothers, and their friends. They want to break down stereotypes, accept imperfections, be challenged, burst through barriers, be inspired to live better lives and play a significant role in society."

Women on social media

Susan Wojcicki, CEO of YouTube, revealed in a recent article in Adweek's Women's Issue that 18-34 aged females are two times more likely to feel positive sentiment towards a brand after viewing an empowering campaign, with 80 percent more likely to like, share, comment, and subscribe after watching.

This is important as women make up the largest audience on social media, with 80 percent of females using social sites compared to only 73 percent of men, according to Resolution Media.

Dove's empowerment campaign

"Despite the glut of content, well crafted empowerment campaigns can, and should, amplify their message through participatory marketing on social media," said Deb Boyda, central region president at **Razorfish**. "These campaigns often resonate with such a vast audience because they go hard at subverting deep and universally experienced prejudices.

"As long as the prejudice exists, the message will stand out and be sticky, and social media amplifies their power by getting the message to a wider and wider audience," she said. "That is a good thing.

"So is it worth it? Hell yeah!"

Breaking boundaries

As social boundaries begin to break down over time and consumers' values change, it is important that marketers evolve as well. Involving social media within campaigns is key for brands nowadays, but pairing these platforms with subject matters that center on women's rights and issues can create a real, lasting bond with the consumer.

Brands need to think about the exact audience they are attempting to corner and target them through a series of techniques with technology and content. Leveraging targeting tools on various platforms such as Facebook's custom audience is important to gain access to the correct audience.

But when leveraging these targeting tools, it also has to be paired with the correct audience. Viewers want to be able to connect with the ad, so sharing something that is important to them and that they can relate to is key.

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Lane Bryant's empowerment campaign

"Since there is so much social adoption, targeting is key," said Viji Davis, chief marketing officer at **Resolution Media**. "Once audiences have been identified, you can think about the type of creative messaging, ad types, and platforms to run the campaigns.

"Also, leveraging better targeting techniques, like custom audiences on Facebook, can make your campaign more effective," she said. "Another thing to consider is reach and frequency how much of your audience are you reaching and how often are they seeing your ad?

"There will come a point where ad fatigue can happen if they see an ad too often and start ignoring the ad."