

Vaseline Clinical Therapy

Prescribe the Nation

See what she started.



INTRODUCTION

Who would have thought you could create a social movement around a moisturizer? This is a story about how we used the power of word of mouth to help Vaseline command a premium and become the #1 moisturizer in the US.

With this launch we took a stigma, problem skin, and turned it on its head. Not only did we provide a platform for our consumers to spread the word about a proven solution, but we brought a gravely lacking sense of normalcy to the dialogue.

By harnessing and trusting the power of our consumer and connecting that to a truth about our product we made WOM our idea, not just a vehicle to amplify it. We put a small town in Alaska on the map and showed how its influence could spread across a nation, mapping it as it spread. We created a social movement built around real people, real connections and a resolute belief that our product worked.

THE EFFICACY BATTLE

We were looking to launch a product that could beat the likes of Eucerin, Curel and Gold Bond at the more medicinal end of the skincare market. The category was saturated with incremental innovation claims around moisturizing ingredients. At this problem/solution end of skincare, brands tend to either categorize people's skin (dry, extra dry, etc.) or leverage moisturizing agents as reasons to believe for higher efficacy mixes.



AD CCDE: EUCERIN-4082 SOURCE: MidwestLiving-SEP 1 07



The key to winning was to change the game.

A GAME-CHANGING PRODUCT

Unilever's R&D created a product that blew everyone out of the water, a moisturizer that delivers 60% more hydration than prescription moisturizers.

A recent trend towards over-engineered proposals (Secret Clinical Strength, Crest PRO Health, Coke Plus, etc.) showed us that we should proudly embrace our efficacy. We could actually claim 'prescription strength' and sell off the shelf.

This was a game-changing proposal for the marketplace, raising the efficacy bar to a new height and allowing Vaseline to command a new premium. We had a powerful product concept:

Vaseline Clinical Therapy is clinically proven to provide prescription strength moisturization.

CLEAR TASKS

So where to go from there? We had a genuine point of difference from any other lotion on the shelf. We now needed to make people care enough to use it:

- 1) Create evangelists with both experts and consumers
- 2) Drive product trial
- 3) Continue establishing Vaseline's skin expertise using our product as a hero

UNDERSTANDING OUR CONSUMER

So who exactly has dry skin?

Other brands tend to categorize them as "dry skin sufferers." We discovered that these are not people who wallow in suffering. They tend to be women who acknowledge they have a problem and actually do something practical about it.

What was really discriminating was not just her behavior as related to products, it was her behavior within her community.

She is a warm, optimistic and generous woman who thrives on relationships. She seeks advice from others but is also a repository of information for everyone around her. She's a connector who cares about helping out her friends and family with practical solutions. She actively looks for and disseminates information about health (her and her family's), nutrition, etc. She tends to be a leader in her community.

As such, we realized we needed to make her our partner, not just the "consumer." We needed to collaborate with her, helping us spread the word on Vaseline Clinical Therapy.



THE BRAND SHIFT

Our brand is about authority. Vaseline “keeps skin amazing” because we understand how skin works. To make our consumer a collaborator we needed to change the way we spoke to her, to get off our pedestal.

We recognized that sources of trust had changed. Brands and institutions no longer hold sway. The power has swung to the consumer:

- 76% don't believe that companies tell the truth in ads*

- 68% trust other people 'like themselves' up from 22% in 2003**

We could easily have gone down the dermatologist endorsement path to build trust in a prescription strength product. And while outreach to dermatologists did give us undeniable credibility, we did not use that in our consumer facing communications.

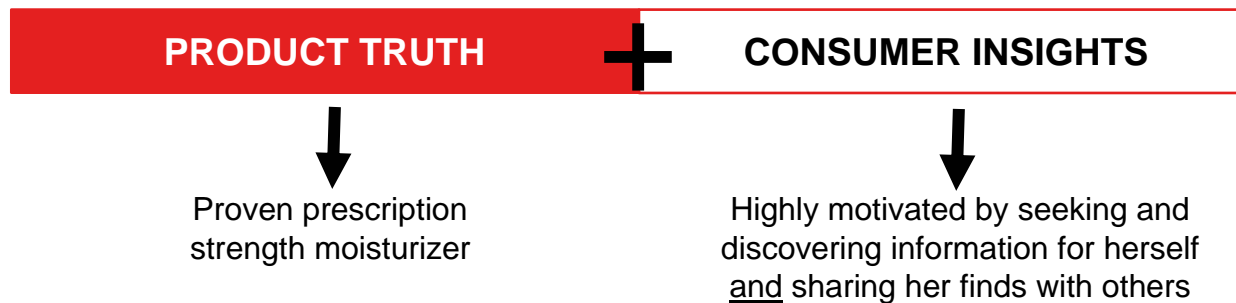
The answer lay in our consumers' behavior itself.

**Source: (Yankelovich 2005)*

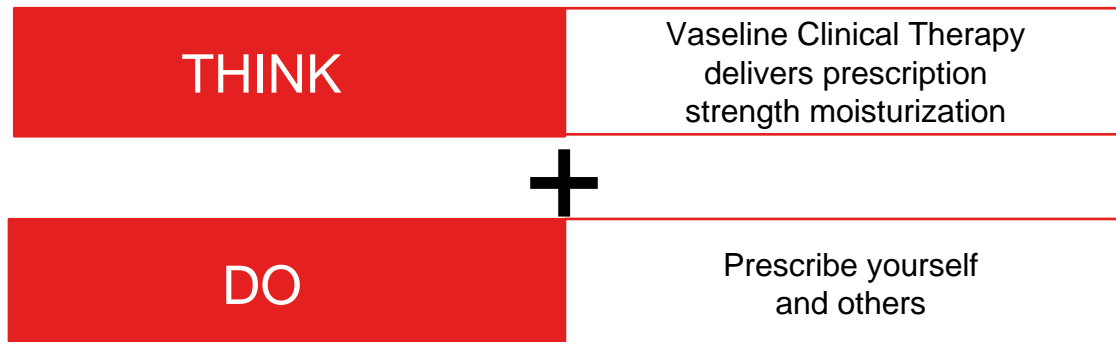
***Source: (Edelman Trust Barometer)*

THE POWER OF TWO TRUTHS COMBINED

The story was right there in the claim, but it would have been easy to overlook it. Our leap was simple. It came when we recognized that 'prescribe' was a verb. 'Prescription' was a product truth. 'Prescribing' was a natural behavior for our target audience. Simple. True. Differentiating.



This led us to a two-part strategy. Get consumers to:



And led us to shift the role of the brand. From a brand that *says* to a brand that *does*.

ENCOURAGING HER TO TELL OUR STORY

'Web 1.0 was commerce. Web 2.0 is people' - Ross Mayfield*

Prescribing is an action, something people can engage in. It is about passing something on to someone else. It provides a benchmark of trust.

WOM is trusted and is a great source for new product information:

*-92% see WOM as the best source for product ideas up from 67% in 1977***

*-87% of US consumers believe info they get from WOM more than they believe info they get from ads****

Thus our engagement strategy was based around encouraging people to pass it on. We created access points to allow our sociable consumer to communicate in sociable media. We empowered her with the information and tools to prescribe Vaseline Clinical Therapy for herself and her friends.

**Source: "Are you ready for Web 2.0?" – Wired magazine*

***Source: GFK/NOP Roper*

****Source: (Edelman Trust Barometer 2007)*

THE BIG IDEA: PRESCRIBE THE NATION

Vaseline Clinical Therapy works so well that people are inspired to prescribe it. It's a prescription strength moisturizer without a prescription. Which meant that for the first time you could prescribe the most effective skincare to those you care for – without the need for a doctor.

Our creative idea allowed the product to speak for itself. We documented people as they got prescribed and prescribed it on because we truly believed they would love it. The truth was there was only one way to do this with any integrity. To do it for real and involve an entire community.



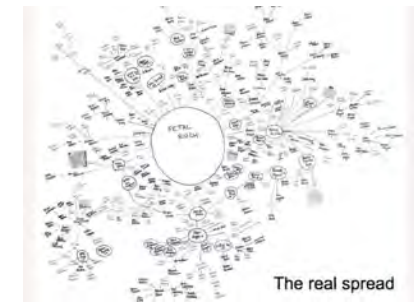
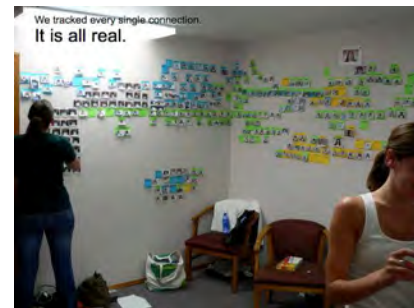
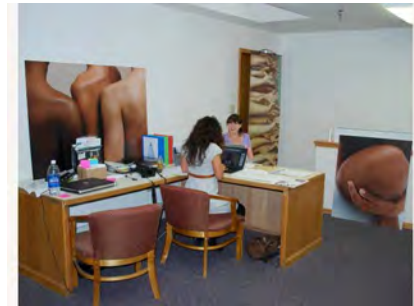
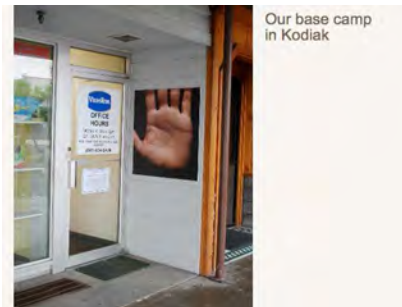
PHASE 1: THE SOCIAL EXPERIMENT

We needed to find a small community where we could document our social experiment. What better place than Alaska?

It's a globally iconic location and immediately connotes harsh skin conditions. If it works in Alaska it will work anywhere.

So our team of 15 people decamped to Kodiak for 3 weeks, set up a Vaseline store and shot over 150 hours of footage and 3000 photographs capturing people's personal stories.

We discovered Petal Ruch - the local singing coach. She was a pivotal member of the community. We asked her to try it and tracked every time she and her friends prescribed it on. For real. What happened was beyond our wildest expectations. Through Petal, we had managed to prescribe over a 1,000 residents in Kodiak, but it didn't stop there.



PHASE 2: PRESCRIBE THE NATION

We had succeeded in creating, documenting and mapping the real spread in Kodiak. Our next challenge was re-creating that spread in a natural way across the nation to effectively launch the product. We set about using the amazing content we'd amassed in Kodiak and turned resident's skin stories into our communication.

We drove awareness through TV, print and online with content partnerships (eg EverydayHealth.com) and blogger outreach. We also created prescribethenation.com, and used i-TV and email to allow people to explore Kodiak and product stories, as well as prescribe their loved ones.

TV



PRINT



DIGITAL



THE LAUNCH WAS A MILESTONE

Petal prescribed over 1000 residents in Kodiak and now has 10,000+ “friends” on everydayhealth.com

In 34 weeks over 3 million people across the US have been prescribed from prescribetheation.com

Vaseline was the first in its category to launch a prescription strength claim. It drove 38% increase in sales and allowed us to command a significant price premiums

75% of Vaseline Clinical Therapy purchasers are new to the Vaseline brand (58% from competitors; 12% new to the category)

Vaseline Clinical Therapy was key to driving Vaseline growth in the North American drug channel, reaching 1.2% share and helping reclaim the #1 position for the brand

CONCLUSION

So, who would have thought you could create a social movement around a moisturizer? We proved it was not only possible, but that it could be successful.

Our social experiment demonstrated that the power of WOM, in its simplest form, is greater than the power of brands alone.

We dared to be different in a category of conformity. And most importantly we let go of the reins and trusted our consumers to do right by our brand. They didn't disappoint.