

Strategic Communication Management



unrealistic beauty standards

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This assignment is made for the advanced course Strategic Communication Management. The goal of the assignment is to give a strategic communication advice on issue management for an organisation in the creative industries. This advice must be based on an issue and stakeholder analysis.

1.1 What is an issue?

According to Jaques (2007) is an issue a condition or event, either internal or external to the organization which, if it continues, will have a significant effect on the functioning or performance of the organization, or on its future interests.

1.2 What is issue management?

Issue management is a strategic management process that helps organizations detect and respond appropriately to emerging trends or changes in the socio-political environment. These trends or changes may then crystallize into an 'issue', which is a situation that evokes the attention and concern of influential organizational publics and stakeholders. At its best, issues management is stewardship for building, maintaining, and repairing relationships with stakeholders. In the context of corporate issues management, issues are controversial inconsistencies caused by gaps between the expectations of corporations and those of their publics.

Issue management is a strategic business-planning tool that helps organizations and NGOs gain legitimacy and credibility in their arguments on contentious, unsettled matters (Dalton, 2011). Issue management is very important for every organization. It can help you monitor what people are saying about your company and proper issue management. You can improve your image and reputation and maybe you can benefit from an issue if you respond to it in the wright way.

Chapter 2: The Organisation

I choose the lingerie company Victoria's Secret for this assignment. Every year I watch the Victoria's Secret Fashion Show. I am really curious how the company deals with the criticism about their models having unrealistic body's.

2.1 Victoria's Secret

Victoria's Secret is inspired by a love for lingerie, and the desire to bring beauty—and fantasy—into every woman's wardrobe. They believe little luxuries are of grand importance. And what's closest to your body is always closest to their heart (Facebook, 2018). Victoria's Secret (2018) is a world-class brand known around the globe for their amazing products and shopping experience. With more than 1,100 store locations worldwide, they dominate the lingerie marketplace with products for everyone.

The name is synonymous with all things feminine and sexy including their celebrated supermodels and world-famous runway show. Sexy and sophisticated, powerful and dominant, known and desired around the world (Victoria's Secret, 2018). Victoria's Secret want to make people feel sexy, sophisticated and forever young. The mission statement for Victoria's Secret retail chain is committed to building a family of the world's best fashion brands offering captivating customer experiences that drive long-term loyalty and deliver sustained growth for their shareholders (Comparably, 2018).

2.2 History

Victoria's Secret was not originally designed for women. In fact, it was quite the opposite. According to Business Insider (2015) the brand began when Roy Raymond wanted to buy lingerie as a gift for his wife. Raymond noted he had the ingenious idea to found a company that would facilitate shopping for underwear. He wanted it to be an exciting, sexy process that would make men feel comfortable, not perverted. Raymond imagined a Victorian boudoir, replete with dark wood, oriental rugs, and silk drapery. He chose the name "Victoria" to evoke the propriety and respectability associated with the Victorian era; outwardly refined, Victoria's "secrets" were hidden beneath. In 1977 Raymond and his wife leased a space in a shopping mall and Victoria's Secret was born.

According to Slate by Naomi Barr (2013) Victoria's Secret was on the brink of bankruptcy five year later. Leslie Wexner, founder of Limited Brands, quickly saw what was wrong with the Victoria's Secret business model: In focusing on a store and catalog that appealed to men, Raymond had failed to draw a large following among women. The women were about as uncomfortable in Victoria's Secret as Raymond had been in that fluorescent-lit department store. Nevertheless, Limited brands saw the company's potential, and in 1982, he bought the stores and the catalog (Slate & Barr, 2013).

It was at this time that the company set the wheels in motion for what it would ultimately become. Gearing the brand towards women could save the brand. After all, giving women an opportunity to purchase sexy underwear at a mass retailer was groundbreaking. The great thing that Victoria's Secret did was recognize the huge white space in the market that was unspoken for, and he brought in innovation. Victoria's Secret made sexy mainstream (Business Insider & Schlossberg, 2015).

2.3 Victoria's Secret Fashion Show

Yearly Victoria's Secret provides a sponsored show called: The Victoria's Secret Fashion Show. The show promotes its goods in high-profile settings. The fashion show is features some of the world's leading fashion models and current ambassadors as Victoria's Secret Angels (CBS, n.d.). VT and Detje (2017) say that the fashion show is an event for people who expect to see a high-energy show. This is all thanks to a lineup of intimidatingly gorgeous women flaunting some very showy lingerie. Detje continues "The casting of models to parade the luxury lingerie down the runway is highly selective, with models often feeling a kind of honour to be chosen. It's a dream for any model to become a Victoria's Secret model".

Chapter 3: Issue Analysis

The company is formulated clear in chapter 2, now it is time to check the issue for the company. The issue analysis is the most critical stage, as it requires the issue management team to dissect the arguments and link these with relevant stakeholder. Through the analysis, issues can be paced into clusters and priorities (Dalton, 2011). Victoria's Secret has to respond to issues that may harm the company. If they want to remain the biggest lingerie company of the world, they have to overthink all their actions very carefully. One of the things that could damage the retailer is the fact that the "Angels" give unrealistic beauty standards.

3.1 The issue

The fashion industry ran on a platform of exclusivity, granting entry to a select few by perpetuating an expectation of beauty that can be met by only a certain type of woman: tall, skinny, blond, white (Glamour, 2017). Women are constantly bombarded by the media to attain a standard of beauty that is comparable to perfection. This unrealistic standard of beauty is resulting in a number of mental and physical health problems for young girls and women (Storify, 2015). As reported by Odyssey (2017), the body standards that women have to live up to are, unrealistic. Companies like Victoria's Secret push images and ideals of women's bodies that are in no way healthy or close to what normal, everyday women look like. Now it is considered unattractive if a woman has extra curves, only the extremely skinny woman is considered attractive (Health Research Funding, 2013).

Continually reinforcing these standards can cause real harm to real girls. Sizes 00-2 are the standard sizes for Victoria's Secrets girls, however, the average sizes for women across the United States are 14-16. The World Health Organization has said that a BMI of 18.5 or under is considered malnourished. In fact, several countries have banned girls from modeling if their BMI is not high enough (Odysessy, 2017).

According to a report of Health Research Funding in 2013 nearly eighty percent of women say that watching the women on television make them feel bad about themselves. These women that are constantly looking at unrealistic versions of themselves are in danger of developing dangerous conditions such as anorexia. Another consideration is that we as a society need to work on helping these women develop a higher self-esteem (Health Research Funding, 2013). If you feel good about yourself then it does not matter what you see on television. The main problem is that most women that have this low self-esteem hide it very well, so that no one even knows about it. Also 42% of girls first through third grades want to be thinner (Health Research Funding, 2013). Body image is a very personal thing and the only way to fix the problem is to improve the way everyone sees themselves.

3.2 Social media monitoring

If you monitor social media, you can follow what is being said about your company. Everybody has an opinion and people love to spread it all about social media. I searched for what people had to say about the issue unrealistic beauty standards and Victoria's Secret, who says what and what are their roles in the issue.

Victoria's Secret came under fire in 2014 with a new campaign for a line of lingerie they called The Perfect Body, see image 1. After they were accused of body-shaming – due to the fact that all the models lined up in the campaign's imagery were slim, tall and toned, and then dubbed "perfect"– the brand changed the slogan to read "A body for every body". But still, people were not happy about the campaign, with women of all shapes and sizes feeling insulted and excluded by the images showing difficult-to-reach beauty standards. Victoria's Secret is known for projecting a very narrow ideal of beauty standards, which can clearly be seen in their advertising as well as their annual fashion show (VT, 2017).



Image 1, the Victoria's Secret perfect body campaign

Following the campaign, curvy model Brittany Cordts launched a petition on Change.org asking the company to actually show every type of body — or, at least, body types beyond the models that it displays in its fashion show (Business Insider & Schlossberg, 2016).

The company doesn't sell plus sizes, what doesn't help with a good image either (Business Insider & Schlossberg, 2016). But it's not just about showing a variety of body types. It's about catering to the consumer. In fact, earlier this year, a Victoria's Secret Facebook photo got heat for being so overtly sexual that some people thought it bordered on pornographic. Customers on Facebook were furious and called it "trashy." Was this underwear advertisement for women or for men? Sammis of Clever Girls tells: "There's this sense that the body-love influencers are really getting their own and doing it for each other and themselves, and that it's about ... making themselves feel more confident versus what Victoria's Secret tends to do, which makes it feel like it's for men." (Business Insider, 2016).

According to CNBC (2016) the shoppers' definition of beauty has evolved, their interest in the Victoria's Secret brand has also waned. Whereas 10 million viewers tuned into the brand's annual fashion show in 2011, that number has since fallen nearly 30 percent.



Image 2, posing on a foto and naturel

Another trend is going on as well. Some instagram models are making a point with the instagram vs reality. They show a before and after picture, one where they are posing in the right way and the other picture is just relaxing and naturel, see image 2. (Vanityfair, 2018).



Image 3, social media reactions on unrealistic beauty standards

People get insecure by seeing all the fake pictures on Instagram, see image 3. Also the prince of England, William, spoke about the mental health and societal stresses for the age group of 11-18-year-olds— “I worry for you girls,” he said—particularly discussing the challenges related to body image and the visuals that students see on social media (Vanityfair, 2018).

Victoria's Secret appears to be holding its ground, a fact that some of the brand's rivals and critics have seized upon as a marketing opportunity of their own, calling for boycotts and staging campaigns with pointed hashtags like #ImNoAngel (Lane Bryant) and #weareallangels (ThirdLove and curve model Robyn Lawley). Ashley Graham—perhaps the most obvious candidate for a spot on Victoria's Secret's roster, with her 7.5 million Instagram followers and ample runway experience—skewered the brand on social media last year, posting an image of herself in a lingerie set by plus-size brand Addition Elle and a photoshopped set of angel wings on the same day VS taped its show. The caption: "Got my wings! ... #thickthighssavelives." Graham's post racked up nearly 775,000 likes, putting it on par with some of the most popular images from the show itself, according to an analysis by Instagram marketing firm Dash Hudson (Glamour, 2018).

3.3 Other companies issue statements

Meanwhile, Victoria's Secret's competitors are taking steps to become more diverse and inclusive. While Victoria's Secret does not appear to have changed its image much in over two decades, other brands have filled the gaps that the store has left behind.

In particular, Aerie has made efforts to make the lingerie market more inclusive. Not only did the brand promise to stop airbrushing models, but Aerie also vowed to cast more people living with disabilities and illnesses in its advertisements. Aerie's #AerieREAL campaign, which introduced three body-positive programs to stores in August, was another driving force for its success. Aerie ads found in the store included messages of female empowerment (Business insider, 2018). Since abandoning Photoshop, Aerie's sales have skyrocketed; in its most recent quarter, the company saw comparable sales soar 32% (Businessinsider, 2016). Victoria's Secret lost market share to American Eagle's Aerie. While Aerie also omits stock for plus sizes, it has doubled down on its efforts to become more body-inclusive by ditching photoshopped images and partnering with female activists to promote women's empowerment (Businessinsider, 2018).

During the past few years, Victoria's Secret's competitors—including Aerie, ThirdLove, Rihanna's Savage x Fenty and Chromat (which notably has Beyoncé as a customer) —have built their brands on messages of self-acceptance and body positivity. The competitors are boasting a diverse lineup of sizes and models who vary in gender and body type. They have Photoshop-free campaigns, and (relatively) broad size ranges. And they've reaped rewards in the form of sales and social media accolades. Nearly every new start-up in the lingerie space has "inclusivity" baked into its mission statement. And at the mass level, retailers like Target and J.Crew now cast non-sample-size models in marketing materials as a matter of course (Glamour, 2018).

Adore Me has also used the issue for good and had seen profits skyrocket over the years. In fiscal 2015, it took in \$42.7 million in revenue — still, nothing on Victoria's Secret's nearly \$7.7 billion from fiscal 2015 — but it is rapid growth from 2014, when it took in \$16.2 million (Businessinsider, 2016).

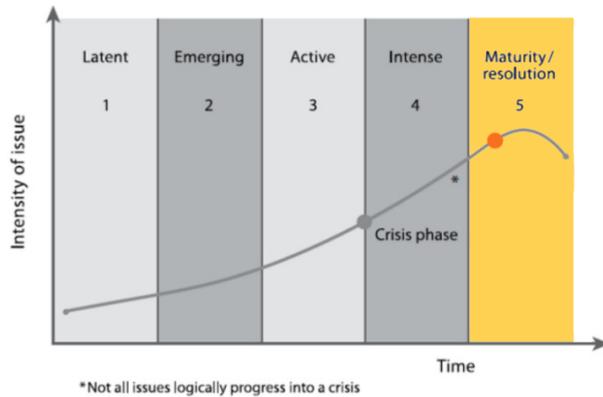
And while the Victoria's Secret Fashion Show appears to prefer models with one body type, Rihanna's 2018 Fenty X Savage fashion show in September included people of all different shapes, sizes, and skin colors, as well as pregnant women (Yahoo Lifestyle, 2018).

Body positivity, meanwhile, is "one of the key movements within the lingerie industry," says Jo Lynch, lingerie editor at trend forecaster WGSN. Take the acclaim of Savage x Fenty, which closed New York Fashion Week with a runway-show-performance-art hybrid starring an exceptionally diverse cast of models and dancers, as "a good example of a sexier brand sending out a clear message about who the lingerie is for and who should enjoy it: the women who wear it (Glamour, 2018)."

So a conclusion that can be made in this paragraph is that other companies are using the “trend” body positivity for a more diverse amount of bodies in there advertisements.

3.4 Issue life cycle

The issue of unrealistic beauty standards is now in the maturity stage. You hear of the issue because in the last few years a lot of brands decided to take a stand. People discuss the issue on social media



certain hashtags and models show pictures when they don't pose for pictures. Other big companies are taking action like Aerie, they show that every figure is perfect in its own way. In figure 1 the issue life cycle is shown. The orange dot stands for the current place of the issue. It is not on its top of the maturity stage, because the issue is still not resolved. According to Glamour (2017) diversity and inclusivity are buzzy casting terms now, but we'll know it's evolved from trend to norm when we see plus and racially diverse models everywhere, from national commercials to the runways to luxury fashion campaigns.

Figure 1, issue life cycle of unrealistic beauty standards

3.5 Victoria's Secret and the issue

The Victoria's Secret Fashion Show began in 1995. Despite being the most well-known lingerie showcase in the world, the Victoria's Secret Fashion Show is losing its grasp on its viewers. In 2017, five million people watched the Victoria's Secret Fashion Show, which was 32% less than in 2016. The show had the worst ratings in 22 years (This is insider, 2018).

Much like the brand, the Victoria's Secret Fashion Show doesn't seem to have changed much since the '90s. When the Victoria's Secret Fashion Show first began in the '90s, it was common for fashion brands to strictly cast thin, and often white, models. A photo from the 2017 Victoria's Secret Fashion Show is almost hard to differentiate from a photo taken in 1998. Victoria's Secret has cast more models of color in recent years, but the brand's entire cast still represents just one body type (This is insider, 2018).

In recent years, concerns over the beauty standards promoted by Victoria's Secret models have drastically increased. While some have stated that they feel there's a lack of diversity among the cast, others have called out the brand for its failure to cast models with a variety of body types. Even supermodels have begun to boycott the show (This is insider, 2018).

Victoria's Secret consumers

Victoria's secret wants to create a fantasy, but does this fantasy still resonate with today's shopper? According to YouGov, a market research and data analytics firm, 70 percent of U.S. consumers between the ages of 18 and 34—Victoria's Secret's prime demographic—say they like seeing "real-looking people" in ads (Glamour, 2018).

Multiple reports have shown that consumer interest in Victoria's Secret has decreased, with low sales and tough competition from the likes of Aerie. Consumers have criticized Victoria's Secret for what they feel is a lack of diversity among its cast of models and limited sizing (This is insider, 2018).

Some people are concerned that Victoria's Secret models are too thin. Recently, multiple people said Bella Hadid looked "unhealthy" and "too skinny" in photos from a Victoria's Secret fitting. After receiving the comments, the model reportedly edited the caption of her Instagram post to say that "all body types are different and react differently to a great workout routine and a healthy diet (This is insider, 2018)."

"Consumers more than ever connect to the product through those people presenting them, so if the models are not engaging the customer or they feel like they can't somehow relate, then the casting has failed," say Drew Dasent and Daniel Peddle, casting directors and cofounders of The Secret Gallery, who declined to comment on Victoria's Secret's casting choices (Glamour, 2018).

Victoria's Secret reaction on criticism

Victoria's Secret sat down with Vogue (2018) this year and, responded to some of the criticisms it has faced. "I think we address the way the market is shifting on a constant basis," L Brands' chief marketing officer Ed Razek' said. "If you're asking if we've considered putting a transgender model in the show or looked at putting a plus-size model in the show, we have. We invented the plus-size model show in what was our sister division, Lane Bryant. Lane Bryant still sells plus-size lingerie, but it sells a specific range, just like every specialty retailer in the world sells a range of clothing. As do we. We market to who we sell to, and we don't market to the whole world (Glamour, 2018)."

Razek continuous: "Do I think about diversity? Yes. Does the brand think about diversity? Yes. Do we offer larger sizes? Yes." 30A to 40DDD is the current range in sizes and Razek gets a lot of criticism about the sizes and the fashion show. Why don't you do 50? Why don't you do 60? Why don't you do 24? Why doesn't your show do this? Shouldn't you have transsexuals in the show? His answer on all of this is No and he explains: "No, I don't think we should. Well, why not? Because the show is a fantasy. It's a 42-minute entertainment special. That's what it is. It is the only one of it's kind in the world and any other fashion brand in the world would take it in a minute, including the competitors that are carping at us. And they carp at us because we're the leader. They don't talk about each other. I accept that. I actually respect it (Vogue, 2018)."

Also Victoria's Secret react on the criticism about people saying real women have curves and they call our models skinny. "They skinny shame the models. Yes, they are aggressively physically fit, but the operative word is fit. Should they apologize for being fit? This is their profession (Vogue, 2018)."

"The brand has a specific image, has a point of view," Razek told Vogue. "It has a history. It's hard to build a brand. It's hard to build Vogue, Ralph Lauren, Apple, Starbucks. You have a brand position and you have a brand point of view (Vogue, 2018)."

3.6 Stakeholder Analysis

Underneath you find a list of stakeholders of Victoria's Secret in relation to the issue unrealistic beauty standards. For every stakeholder there is defined their power, influence and authority in this issue. Also their interest, activity and visibility in the issue are discussed. When those variables are clear for Victoria's Secret, they can decide how they need to communicate with the stakeholder. Grunigs organizational linkage model is used to identify all Victoria's Secrets stakeholders. The stakeholders are described below. In Figure 2 on page 11 and 12, the stakeholders are further elaborated in a matrix on the basis of how important they are with regarding to the issue.

Enabling linkages

The enabling linkages identify stakeholders who have some control and authority over the organization. They enable an organization to have resources and autonomy to operate. When enabling relationships falter, the resources can be withdrawn and the autonomy of the organization restricted (Rawlins, 2006).

The **stockholders** such as people, companies or other institution that owns at least one share of a company's stock are a stakeholder. Victoria's Secret don't want to make a mistake and get a lot of negative reactions. If this happens stockholders don't want to get involved, because they will not risk losing their money. So communication should be first between them and Victoria's Secret. The retailer needs to keep the relationship clean and great between them and the stockholders. The moment when stockholders pull back from Victoria's Secret, people will immediately think something is bad. So stockholders are a *keyplayer* in this analysis. They have a lot of power and are super interested in the issue.

The **board of directors** of Victoria's Secret is also an important stakeholder. The board of directors is appointed to act on behalf of the shareholders to run the day to day affairs of the business. The board are directly accountable to the shareholders and each year the company will hold an annual general meeting at which the directors must provide a report to shareholders on the performance of the company, what its future plans and strategies are. The board is as important as the stockholders and are a *key player*. If Victoria's Secret gets a lot of negativity they will lose market share and the board is responsible.

Governmental regulators are also a stakeholder. Victoria's Secret needs to follow the rules, such as using models with a BMI above 18. If the government sees that you aren't following this law you could face up to six months of jail time and a fine of 75,000 euros. This is a rule that is made to protect models. The government has a bit of power, with one mayor law change they can make it difficult for VS. But at this moment the government is not interested in this issue, so VS shouldn't be afraid for a change in regulation. This stakeholder is *not so important* regarding this issue.

Functional linkages

Functional linkages are those that are essential to the function of the organization, and are divided between input functions that provide labor and resources to create products or services (such as employees and suppliers) and output functions that consume the products or services (such as consumers and retailers) (Rawlins, 2006).

The **employees** that work for Victoria's Secret, such as the photographers, the supermodels and the fashion designers are stakeholders. But also a lot of more people that are working for Victoria's Secret, like finances, HR, marketing and many others. In this issue Victoria's Secret should not spend too much power and interest in their employees they are the *least important*. They don't really care if Victoria's Secret makes a certain statement in the issue. Their say in this is very low.

Another stakeholder of Victoria's Secret are their **suppliers**. One of Victoria's Secret stakeholder and part of the supply chain is the cotton farms form where the lingerie brand gets their raw materials and the steel factory that is used for their lingerie. Another supplier is the maker of the bra package. All the suppliers don't have high power because the factories are easily traded for others. The suppliers interest in this issue is also low, they don't care what VS says in the issue they only want to do their job. It can be concluded that the suppliers are the *least important*.

The **consumer** is very powerful. The people of today can not relate to the brand anymore because of the high beauty perfections of Victoria's Secret. This is giving the consumers a feeling of distance. Victoria's Secret should listen carefully to their consumers because they are buying the products. If the customer is boycotting the brand because of this issue, sales will drop low. This is giving the consumer high power. The issue can create hatred among the brand for consumers. The consumers interest among this issue is rising a little, but for now Victoria's Secret should *meet the consumers needs*.

Retailers of Victoria's Secret are located around the world and they are also a stakeholder. The power of the stores isn't high in this issue. Also the interest in this issue is low because the store owners don't care so much what the image of Victoria's Secret is and therefore are they the *least important*. They can only hope for Victoria's Secret to increase the sales through the use of the issue.

Normative linkages

Normative linkages are associations or groups with which the organization has a common interest. Stakeholders in the normative linkage share similar values, goals or problems (Rawlins, 2006). These stakeholders are competitors (Aerie, Gilly Hicks), professional associations (world model association) and peer institutions (Limited brands companies).

Competitors are also stakeholder of Victoria's Secret, such as Aerie (American Eagle) and Gilly Hicks (Abercrombie and Fitch). Gilly Hicks and Aerie both specialize in loungewear, lotions, body products, lingerie, and undergarments. Aerie and Gilly Hicks are both very active in social media as well. Other competitive companies are Savage x Fenty, Adore me, Chromat and ThirdLove. Most of those lingerie brands already made a statement about body positivity. They all say the same message. Our lingerie is for all women and not only the skinny ones. It is important to watch the competitors closely because otherwise Victoria's Secret can lose market share. The power of the competitors is not high because they don't have much influence on the sales of Victoria's Secret. The brand should *show consideration* towards their competitors.

Another stakeholder are the **associations** that are connected with modeling. For example the World Model Association that is the first worldwide lobby for model agencies, model agents, models, scouts and photographer. Model management is also an association, they connect new faces and models with scouts, international modeling agencies and model photographers. The associations are the *least important* regarding this issue. They don't have a lot of power nor interest in this issue for now.

The **peer institutions** of Victoria's Secret are also stakeholders. Victoria's Secret falls under the wing of Limited brands. L Brands is a family of different brands that all want to inspire, empower and indulge. L brands consist out of Victoria's Secret (lingerie), Bath & Body Works (beauty products), PINK (lingerie), La Senza (lingerie) and Boutique chic. (accessories). In this issue the sister brands don't have much influence. They are the *least important* regarding this issue.

Diffused linkages

Diffused linkages are the most difficult to identify because they include stakeholders who do not have frequent interaction with the organization, but become involved based on the actions of the organization. These are the publics that often arise in times of a crisis (Rawlins, 2006).

This linkage includes the **media**. The media can be divided into social media (Facebook, Instagram, twitter etc.) and classic media (Tv, newspapers, radio). Both types of media can either make you or break you. They are very powerful and you need to keep them close. Reporters will respond as soon something about the issue related to the organisation comes in the news. It's very important to tread everybody from the media with respect. You don't want to risk the opportunity to give your own statement about the issue. Also it is important to check social media on a regular basis. VS doesn't want negative talking about the brand by others. This can bring the sales down and will make the brand look self-praised. The media is a *key player* because of the high visibility, interest and power.

In the media world body positivity influencers are making their way. These models, bloggers, activists, celebrities and designers have started an important conversation about the issue positive body. They're taking action to disrupt the status quo in magazines, clothing ads, and beauty campaigns. Whether they are advocating for fashion for women of all sizes or just stepping out of traditional norms, they are putting their curves in the spotlight. Some of those important influencers are Denise Bidot, Alicia Keys, Bo Stanley and Iskra Lawrence. The social influencers have high power, interest and visibility in this issue. Victoria's Secret should see them as a *key player*.

The last stakeholder are the Non-Governmental Organizations also known as **NGO's**. This are Welfare Organisation such as ANAD, Eating Recovery center and many other organisations that want to spread awareness about eating disorders among human. The missions of those organisations are to alleviate suffering and provide support for those afflicted with eating disorders. They can write bad stuff about the company influences on people. VS should *show consideration* towards NGO's.

Another stakeholder are the **special interest groups**. Those communities are about body positivity movement. Different non profit organisations want to spread awareness about feeling okay in your own body. Some important examples are 'The body positive', 'Plus positive', 'Beauty redefined', 'Movemeant

foundation' and 'The body is not an apology'. They want to spread body positivity. All the special interest groups have low power but a high interest in the issue because they want to create awareness. The best way for VS is to *show consideration*.

		Power	Interest	Visability	Total	
Stockholders		10	10	7	27	<i>key player</i>
Board of directors		10	10	7	27	<i>key player</i>
Governmental regulators		4	2	2	8	<i>least important</i>
Employees	Photographers	1	1	1	3	<i>least important</i>
	Models	3	6	1	10	<i>least important</i>
	Fashionshow designers	3	3	1	7	<i>least important</i>
	Other employees	1	1	1	3	<i>least important</i>
Suppliers	Steel	1	1	1	3	<i>least important</i>
	Fabric	1	1	1	3	<i>least important</i>
	Packaging	1	1	1	3	<i>least important</i>
Consumers		10	5	5	20	<i>meet their needs</i>
Retailers	Victoria's Secret stores	2	1	1	4	<i>least important</i>
Competitions	Savage x Fenty	2	7	8	17	<i>show consideration</i>
	Aerie	2	10	8	20	<i>show consideration</i>
	Gilly Hicks	2	10	8	20	<i>show consideration</i>
	Adore me	2	9	8	19	<i>show consideration</i>
	Chromat	2	9	8	19	<i>show consideration</i>
	ThirdLove	2	9	8	19	<i>show consideration</i>
Associations	Model management	2	3	3	8	<i>least important</i>
	World Model Association	2	3	3	8	<i>least important</i>
Peer institutions	Pink	3	7	1	11	<i>least important</i>
	Bath & Body Works	1	1	1	3	<i>least important</i>
	Boutique chic.	1	1	1	3	<i>least important</i>
	La senza	3	7	1	11	<i>least important</i>
Media	Classic media	10	8	10	28	<i>key player</i>
	Social media	10	8	10	28	<i>key player</i>
	Social Influencers	10	10	10	30	<i>key player</i>
NGO's	ANAD	3	8	7	18	<i>show consideration</i>
	Eating Recovery center	3	8	7	18	<i>show consideration</i>
Special interest groups	The body positive	3	8	7	18	<i>show consideration</i>
	Plus positive	3	8	7	18	<i>show consideration</i>
	Beauty redefined	3	8	7	18	<i>show consideration</i>
	Movemeant foundation	3	7	7	17	<i>show consideration</i>
	The body is not an apology	3	9	8	20	<i>show consideration</i>

Figure 2. number matrix power vs interest

As a conclusion of the stakeholder analysis shareholders, board of directors and the media, such as social media are the key players. They have the highest involvement in this issue and they should always be in the back of Victoria's Secrets mind.

Classic media, social media and social influencers have a lot of power regarding the issue of body positivity. Reporters will watch every move Victoria's Secret will make and they want to see what the company is doing regarding the issue. The opinion of Victoria's Secret will be shown online, in papers or on television. If the media writes criticism about VS it will give consumers negative thoughts.

The stockholders invest money in the company and they have high power and high interest. The stockholders don't want a lot of risks and they need to be updated about the issue frequently. This is the same for the board of directions. They are the face of the company and are a big key player.

Victoria's Secret needs to keep the consumer always satisfied, because of the sales. Currently they are not all satisfied about Victoria's Secret according to the social media monitoring, the people talk negative about the company.

Figure 3 shows a visual of the stakeholders influence in the issue. The visual is based of the numbers from the numbermatrix in figure 2.

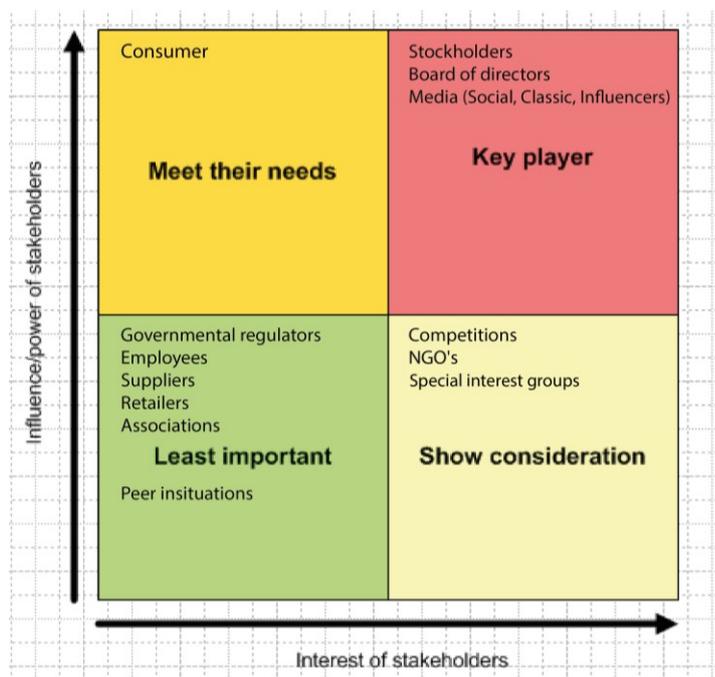


Figure 3, matrix interest power

Chapter 4: Advice

In this chapter the advice for Victoria's Secret will be discussed. The advice is based on the analysis in chapter three.

4.1 Why use this advice

There's no question that the definition of beauty has evolved since Victoria's Secret's heyday. Despite the industry change, VS has kept to its branding that promotes thin, long-haired, cis-gendered, European-featured females. This marketing gaze was confirmed by Victoria's Secret's controversial comments in a Vogue Magazine interview. Marketing officer Razek defended the brand's decision to not work with plus-sized or transgender models, which drew criticism from a lot of people.

The fashion show may be a "fantasy" but we live in reality. The reality is that women wear bras in real life as they go to work, breastfeed their children, play sports and care for ailing parents. The consumer is moved beyond outdated ideas of femininity and gender roles. It's time that Victoria's Secret stops telling women what makes them sexy — let the consumer decide. Women are done with pretending certain sizes don't exist or aren't important enough to serve. On Facebook VS says that their products are for everybody, well apparently they are not. Victoria's Secret should build a future with a brand for every woman, regardless of her shape, size, age, ethnicity, gender identity, or sexual orientation. This shouldn't be seen as groundbreaking, it should be the norm. Let's listen to Victoria's Secret consumers, let these women define themselves.

The mission of Victoria's Secret is to have a family of the world's best fashion brands offering captivating customer experiences that drive long-term loyalty and deliver sustained growth for their shareholders. In order to achieve this mission, it is important that changes take place

Victoria's Secret want to be a brand synonymous with all things feminine and sexy. It tries to make people feel sexy, sophisticated, powerful and dominant. At this point people feel insecure because of Victoria's Secret. The brand needs to protect the reputation of Victoria's Secret and show corporate social responsibility. The world is changing and people like more what is real and less what is fake. If Victoria's Secret is not doing something the gap between the company and their consumers will continue to grow. Because all the brand shows is perfect pictures with perfect girls, unrealistic beauty standards and nothing like everyday people. Victoria's Secret is easily replaced with a new lingerie store like Aerie, which on who VS already lost market share.

4.2 Strategy Victoria's Secret Plus

In the strategy 'Victoria's Secret Plus' I will discuss different things that need to be changed to show interest in the issue unrealistic beauty standards. The goal is to improve the image of Victoria's Secret regarding this issue for customers by 20% by January 2020 compared with January 2019. In January 2019 Victoria's Secret should start with a research survey on Victoria's Secret image at this moment. This survey is repeated at the end of the campaign in January 2020, to see if the image is grown. To increase the image of Victoria's Secret consumers this strategy is needed.

The first important thing is that Victoria's Secret needs to admit that this issue is creating lack of self confidence to girls and women. The strategy is that Victoria's Secret should start a body positivity campaign called Victoria's Secret Plus.

I would like to recommend to update and change certain things: the model cast, the Victoria's Secret Fashion Show, lingerie sizes, store advertisements, branding, hire body positive influencers, do interviews with social/classic media, tell the consumers about the issue and arrange a board meeting with stockholders. This strategy is further explained in the next few paragraphs.

A moodboard is made for this strategie, see image 4. It shows that beauty comes in different shapes. The campaign is called Victoria's Secret Plus because they are going to grow in sizes but also will include plus size models.



Image 4, Moodboard Victoria's Secret Plus

Update the model cast

Instead of keeping with tradition, it's time for Victoria's Secret to step up to the expectations set by its competitors and cast women of all shapes, sizes, and races as models. This will be something that people can relate to more. At this moment Victoria's Secret is pinning women against each other and saying this is more beautiful than that. But Victoria's Secret should be showing that beauty comes in many shapes and sizes. The models in the show are absolutely stunning, but so are many other body types. A show based on a "fantasy" should showcase exactly that, because each of our body types are considered a "fantasy" to someone. How can one body type only be considered "good enough" with a million different tastes and eyes for beauty? We are all goddesses worthy of representation. It's not the 90's anymore Victoria's Secret, time to evolve and give the world and your consumers what they want: diversity.

Update the Fashion Show

Overall, Victoria's Secret seems to have lost its touch, but it might regain popularity if it overhauled its fashion show. New models are one big major things. They should different women let walk the show. By doing so, the brand might be able to save itself from declining altogether.

Update lingerie sizes

Rather than focusing on a fashion show, Victoria's Secret should devote its full attention to progressing its brand. Consumers no longer accept the unattainable beauty standards that Victoria's Secret appears to promote. Starting with a line of updated lingerie sizes, the brand could make a serious step forward in the right direction. Victoria's Secret should update the lingerie for all sizes.

Update store advertisements & branding

The same would need to be reflected in the store's advertisements. It's no longer good enough to sell a wide array of sizes but only cast models who wear a size XS. Also the VS plus campaign needs a branding style. The company should only make honest advertising statements.

Hire body positive influencers

The media has a lot of impact regarding this issue and on the VS brand. I would like to recommend to Victoria's Secret to do collaboration with a body positivity influencer like Iskra Lawrence with 156k followers, see image 5. Another beautiful example is Denise Bidot with 589k followers, see image 6.

Body influencers are everything that Victoria Secret stands for sexy, sophisticated, powerful and dominant. They should bring influencers in the spotlight and post on instagram with diverse sizes of women. It's not only about size 0 Victoria's Secret should be for all sizes. The influencers could bring Victoria's Secret back to the top. Let the influencers be the head of the campaign.

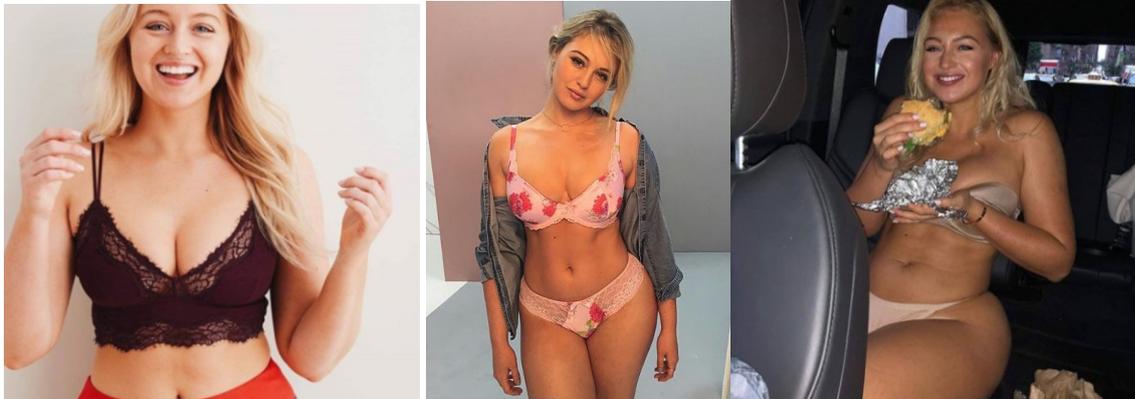


Image 5, Iskra Lawrence body positive influencer



Image 6, Denise Bidot body positive influencer

Do interviews with social/classic media

The influencers can do some interviews within social media but it is also important that Victoria's Secret talks to the classic media. The brand should report to the radio, newspapers, magazines and the television about this new campaign. It is also mentionable to tell the media the new way the brand is heading.

Tell the consumers

The loyal consumers should be talked to first with a mailing about the campaign. Of course next up are all the other people. Victoria's Secret could mention the campaign with flyers and poster. But also on their own social media and website. It is important to do a big marketing campaign about this issue and let the consumers fall in love again with your brand.

Arrange a board meeting

At the start of the campaign the key players will be informed as first including the board and the stockholders.

Time schedule for the campaign

To pull everything off the coming year a schedule is made. The stakeholder key players are included and also the consumers that VS has to satisfy. The schedule is starting in January 2019 and is done by January 2020.

	Jan'19	Feb'19	Mar'19	Apr '19	May'19	Jun'19	Jul '19	Aug'19	Sep'19	Okt'19	Nov'19	Dec'19	Jan'20
Classic/ social Media		Press con- ference	interview news	post diversity	post body positivity		Inter- view news	Inter- view news					
Influencers	Search influencer	Photosh oot	post pictures	interview with	post pictures	post pictures	post pictures						
Consumers		Mail loyal consumer	Market VS plus	Market VS plus	Market VS plus	Market VS plus	Market VS plus	Market VS plus			Market new show	Market new show	
Branding	Brainsto rm new style	show new style	in store branding					Show branding	Show branding	Show branding			
Retail changes	Create different sizes	Photosh oot new collection	update website				idea's new VSshow	Make VSshow	Make VSshow	Cast models	Shoot the show	Show on tv	
Board of directors	Board meeting					Board meeting							Board meeting
Stockholders	Board meeting					Board meeting							Board meeting
Image Research	Survey before												survey after

Image 7, schedule of key moments in the issue, starting from January 2019 till January 2020

6 STEPS TO SOLVE UNREALISTIC BEAUTY STANDARDS



1. Recasting models

It's time to step up to the expectations set by its competitors and cast women of all shapes, sizes, and races as models. This is something that people can relate to more

2. New Fashion Show

Regain popularity and overhaul the fashion show. New models are one big major things. They should different women let walk the show.

3. Update lingerie sizes

Starting with a line of updated lingerie sizes, the brand could make a serious step forward in the right direction.

4. Change branding

The same would need to be reflected in the store's advertisements, models of all sizes.. Also the VS plus campaign needs a branding style. The company should only make honest advertising statements, photoshopfree.

5. Tell the consumers

The consumers should be talked to about the campaign. Of course next up are all the other people. Victoria's Secret could mention the campaign with flyers and poster. But also on their own social media and website.

6. Hire Influencers

Victoria's Secret should to do a collaboration with a body positivity influencer like Iskra Lawrence with 156k followers or. Denise Bidot

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