WORK PROJECT
MARKETING LABS
- BRANDING PLAN

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Acknowledgements

We would like to thank L'Oréal, specifically the Vichy team and Drª. Manuela Correia for the great opportunity that was granted to us, by allowing to develop the project on their brand, and supporting us through the process.

Moreover, we are very grateful for the trust placed on our team, by giving us access to undisclosed information. Instead of just a purely theoretical project, with the close contact with Vichy it was possible to develop a meaningful project with real-world results, and more importantly, a singular and valuable work experience.

We would like to thank our mentor, Prof. Dr. Catherine da Silveira for all the support and orientation that was given to the team, that was valuable for the success of the project.

Additionally, we would like to thank all the people that contributed in a way or another for the success of this Work Project.

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Introductory Note

This report is a consulting project developed for the Vichy brand of the L'Oréal Group. As such, the main structure of this report is constructed in that regard, following mostly the frame of the final report presented to the client company, focusing on the market research, its results and recommendations, rather than the structure of a direct research work project. However, even though not being the main focus of the report, the research done is also analyzed in light of existing literature, further on, in the Discussion section.

Due to the fact that Vichy belongs to a multinational company, there are certain guidelines that are not in the power of local teams to manage. Therefore, our recommendations do not focus much on communication or brand elements, but mostly on the point of sale and relationship with pharmacists, since these aspects can be defined nationally. For instance, we did not made any suggestions to the content of the advertisement as this is defined at an international level.

Additionally, it is important to mention that even though the whole report is presented in English, the research itself was conducted in Portuguese, since it pertained to the Brand image in Portugal. Thus, to support the main findings raised from the marketing research conducted, the quotes added to the report will be in Portuguese.

This Report contains confidential information regarding the future branding of Vichy still undisclosed to the public. This sensitive information was granted to the group for the purpose of this research, under an agreement of confidentiality. As such, this report is strictly confidential, and its information is solely for the purpose of evaluation of the Master Work Project.

Context

Vichy is a dermocosmetic brand sold in Portuguese pharmacies and parapharmacies, with 80 years of experience in this market. Even though parapharmacies represented a step towards a more modern distribution channel, most pharmacies in Portugal are still very traditional in what concerns to the elements of the point of sale. Contrary to other countries, most pharmacies still have a workforce (pharmacist, technical director, dermoadvisor) to help and guide consumers through their purchase process.

It is possible to identify two different territories where dermocosmetic brands operate in. The first one is the treatment territory, where brands offer specific functional benefits. Avène, Uriage, La Roche-Posay, among others older brands fit this territory. The second is the beauty territory, where brands offer more emotional benefits, by communicating dreams and emotions. This territory seems to be growing in the last years with the launch of beauty emerging brands such as Lierac.

Vichy had always been able to position itself in-between the treatment and beauty territories, achieving an equilibrium between the two that allowed it to maintain a good position in the market. However, in recent years, it has been losing this position of preference among consumers. Vichy market-share has been decreasing, because it is being crushed by brands allocated in the extremes of each territory. On one hand, it has been losing ground for more emotional beauty brands. On the other, it has been surpassed by treatment brands that have the dermatologist support.

In order to reposition itself as a market leader, Vichy decided to progressively implement across its operating markets a new brand concept, redesigning its brand elements; and a new communication strategy, in 2012.

In the next page are presented some images to better understand the proposed improvements for Vichy's current concept.

Challenge

VICHY TODAY

VICHY PROPOSED CONCEPT

OUR CHALLENGE

Our main challenge was to help Vichy to construct its implementation plan for this new concept, in the Portuguese market. In collaboration with our mentor and Vichy, we decided to divide our challenge in four different stages.

1. **Brand Inventory**[1], to develop a deep knowledge about the brand and its different product lines
2. **First Marketing Research:** Marketing research aiming to understand **Consumer and Purchase Behavior** regarding the dermocosmetic industry, as well as **Vichy's current Brand Image**.
3. **Second Marketing Research:** Test the **Proposed Concept** among consumers and pharmacies' staff. In order to explore four topics that proved to be of great importance for Vichy, additional interviews were conducted.
4. Recommendations aiming to improve the proposed concept; and to help Vichy on how to implement this new concept in the Portuguese market, namely the best commercial strategy.

[1] For further information regarding the Brand Inventory, please refer to Appendix I

Introductory Note | PART I

This section of our project aims to present all the information related with both marketing researches conducted. Therefore, we will start by presenting the methodology and later we will focus on the insights gathered during interviews. Below is a brief agenda to clarify the organization of this part.

Methodology

Data Analysis and Representation

Main Findings

A. Consumer and Purchase Behavior

The decision making process, from the moment when consumers search for information until the final purchase. All the insights gathered respect consumers' behavior towards all dermocosmetic brands sold in pharmacies.

- Decision Making Process
- Consumer Orientation
- Possible Influencers of the Purchase decision

B. Current Concept

How consumers perceive Vichy brand currently, mainly based on the first phase of interviews and posteriorly confirmed on the second phase. These insights are exclusively about Vichy Brand. Avène will be mentioned but merely for comparative insights.

- Current Brand Image
- Vichy Current Strategy

C. Proposed Concept

How consumers and pharmacies' staff perceive the proposed concept. Once again, these insights are exclusively about Vichy Brand. Lierac will be mentioned but merely for comparative insights.

- Proposed Concept Image

Methodology: First Marketing Research | PART I

In order to assess **Vichy's Brand Image**, a **Qualitative Research** was conducted to **final consumers** of dermocosmetics. 22 women users of Vichy were interviewed in total, and subdivided as shown bellow. We have considered a Vichy user someone who complied with the filters used in the pre-questionnaire(1).

Table I: Consumers Sample divided by age

	Women		
Age	**15-25**	**26-40**	**41-65**
# People	8	7	7
Total	**22**		

Table II: Consumers Sample divided by usage

Currently using Vichy	**Women**
High Users (2)	14
Medium/Low Users	8
Total	**22**

In-depth interviews were conducted, starting with an initial question to open up the conversation:

- Firstly, the interviews focused on the **Purchase Behavior** in the pharmacy, as well as consumer's **Consumption Behavior** and opinion regarding the **point of sale**.
- Secondly, we assessed the **Vichy Brand Image**, using visual stimuli to gather consumers' associations towards the brand. Visual stimuli of Vichy, Avène and Uriage were used in order to disguise the brand in study and avoid biased responses.
- Moreover, a **Projective Technique** was used by asking interviewees to describe Vichy, Avène, and a third competitor brand as if they were real people, in terms of personality and physical appearance.

Finally, the interview ended and the **Consumer Profile** of the interviewee was registered.

(1) For further information regarding the pre questionnaire and the interview guide, please refer to Appendix II

(2) **High-User:** Interviewees that bought 3 or more products from Vichy in the last 3 months

Methodology: Second Marketing Research | PART I

In the second phase of interviews, both the **Current Image of Vichy and its Proposed Concept** were assessed among **final consumers**, as well as **Pharmacy Staff**.

Consumers

A **Mixed Research (Qualitative and Quantitative)** was conducted to a different sample from the previous one. A total of 31 women, both users and non-users of the brand Vichy were interviewed after being selected through a pre-questionnaire (2). The sample was subdivided as follows:

Table III: Consumers Sample divided by age and brands used

Age	15-35	35-60	Total
High-Users(1) Vichy	**12**	**6**	**18**
High-Users La Roche Posay	1	4	5
High-Users Uriage	2	4	6
High-Users Avène	1	1	2
Total High-Users Other Brands	**4**	**9**	**13**
Total	**16**	**15**	**31**

(1) **High-User:** Currently using or recently used at least 2 products of one brand and have bought at least one product from that brand.

A mix of **In-depth Interview** with a **quantitative questionnaire** was conducted, in order to have more significant results.

Topics of interview and questionnaire:

- The first steps of the interview focused on **Consumer and Purchase Behavior ,** namely on the impact of the Packaging, Sales Promotion, Price/Quality, and the sources of information(3)
- **Current Brand Image of Vichy** and the competitor **Lierac,** as the main emerging brand
- **Image of the Proposed Concept**
- For each step, visual stimuli of Vichy, Avène, Lierac and Nuxe were shown when adequate.
- Also, **Projective Techniques** were conducted to gather more insights on the Brand Image of both Vichy Concepts and of Lierac.

(2) For further information regarding the pre-questionnaire and the interview guide, please refer to Appendix III

(3) The part about the Sources of Information was introduced between the presentation of Lierac and Vichy Proposed Concept in order to avoid influencing the results.

Methodology: Second Marketing Research | PART I

Pharmacy Staff

A total of 8 qualitative interviews were conducted to **Pharmacy Staff** to confirm the previous findings on consumer behavior and to assess their opinion on the proposed concept[(1)].

Table IV: Pharmacists sample divided by function

Pharmacists	4
Technical Directors	2
Technical Advisors	1
Dermoadvisors	1
Total	8

The topics covered were:

- Pharmacists' **drivers of recommendation** of a brand (price margins, quantities sold, consumer loyalty);
- **Consumer Behavior** in the point of sale;
- Consumers **switching circuits** (from perfumeries to the pharmacy, and from pharmacy to supermarket);
- The role of **Dermoadvisors** and their impact on sales (of both the brands and the pharmacy);
- The role of the **Dermatologist**;
- Impact of **Advertising**, **Packaging**, and **Sales Promotions** on sales and consumers' preferences;
- Opinion about the **Proposed Vichy Concept**

Additional Consumer Interviews

10 qualitative additional interviews were conducted to gather further information to understand the 4 behavior drivers that were pointed as crucial for Vichy: **Packaging**, **Sales Promotion**, **Price/Quality Ratio**, and **Sources of information (for women above 35 years old)**. These were conducted similarly to the previous interviews to final consumers of the second phase.

[(1)]For further information regarding the interview guide, please refer to appendix IV

VICHY
LABORATOIRES

Data Analysis and Representation

The presented Table V and Table VI illustrate the visual representation of the frequency of references in each marketing research conducted. **Table V** refers to Current Brand Image, gathered in the first marketing research. **Table VI** refers to the Proposed Concept Image, thus with the test of the new concept.

It is important to note that this frequencies only account for one reference per person. If the person mentions the same topic more than once, it is only counted as one reference.

Table V: Frequency of references of the First Marketing Research

Frequency of references	Representation
17 or more references	****
11 < references < 16	***
5 < references < 10	**
3 to 4 less references	*
Less than 3	Not representative

Table VI: Frequency of references of the Second Marketing Research to Consumers

Frequency of references	Representation
26 or more references	****
20 < references < 25	***
14 < references < 19	**
8 < references < 14	*
Less than 8	Not representative

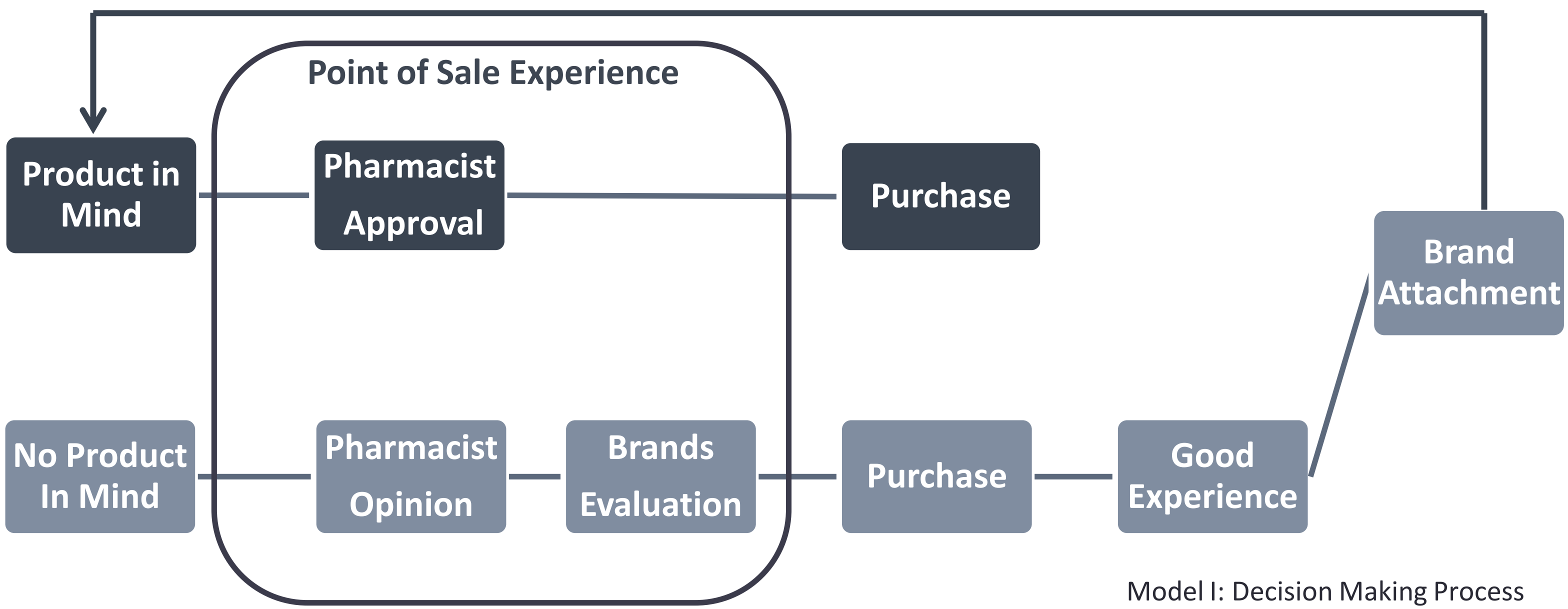
Moreover, throughout the report, parapharmacies and pharmacies are only referred to as pharmacies. The same happens to the different functions of the pharmacy staff (pharmacists, technical directors, technical advisors and dermoadvisors) which are only referred to as pharmacists.

Decision Making Process

Through both researches, it was possible to understand the possible paths consumers commonly follow when looking for a dermocosmetic product in the pharmacy.

In both situations, either consumers have a product in mind or not, **pharmacists proved to have a major role**.
Additionally the **point of sale experience** seemed to also have an important impact on consumers' decision.

The Model I illustrates the consumer decision making process:



Model I: Decision Making Process

Consumer Orientation

PART I

During the analysis of the research that had been conducted, due to the preferences presented by the consumers and by their speech, it was possible to identify **two distinct behaviors** among them:

Treatment Oriented

- Seek for problem-solving dermocosmetic products
- Follow strictly the pharmacist advice
- Prefer products sold in pharmacies rather than in perfumeries or supermarket

Beauty Oriented

- Concerned with aesthetics and seeking for beauty products
- Do not value as much the pharmacist advice
- Prefer beauty brands sold in pharmacies or in perfumeries

A third group of consumers was also identified. These consumers might behave like the **beauty oriented** or the **treatment oriented** ones, depending on their needs.

Switching Consumers

- Tend to switch between Brands (Treatment / Beauty Oriented)
- Tend to switch between Circuits (mainly between mass market/ pharmacy)
- Behave like **Treatment Oriented** Consumers when looking for specific treatment products;
- Behave like **Beauty Oriented** Consumers in all other situations

Possible Influencers of the Purchase Decision | PART I

In order to deeply study the **possible impact of four different elements** in the **purchase decision**, individual assignments were assigned to each member of the group:

a) Media and other sources of information (for women above 35 years old): Under this topic, we tried to understand which are the main sources of information for women above 35 years old regarding dermocosmetic products, namely the impact of traditional and digital media. Moreover, it was analyzed how each source of information influences the purchase decision and the brand image.

b) Packaging: Understand the impact of packaging as a purchase driver, and the respective importance of each of its elements in consumers' point of view.

c) Price-Quality Ratio: In this topic, we analyzed our research results in order to understand what was the impact of Price-Quality Ratio on purchase decision of consumers, and on selling decision of pharmacies. In order to do this, we investigated where they would gather the perception of price and quality from, and how they would balance the two. Additionally, we studied the viability of a Luxury status for dermocosmetic products.

d) Sales Promotions: Finally, we tried to study at what extent the several types of sales promotion impact not only the consumer purchase decision but also how it affects a dermocosmetic brand image. Furthermore, it was possible to understand how exactly do sales promotion serve as a selling driver for the pharmacist at the point of purchase.

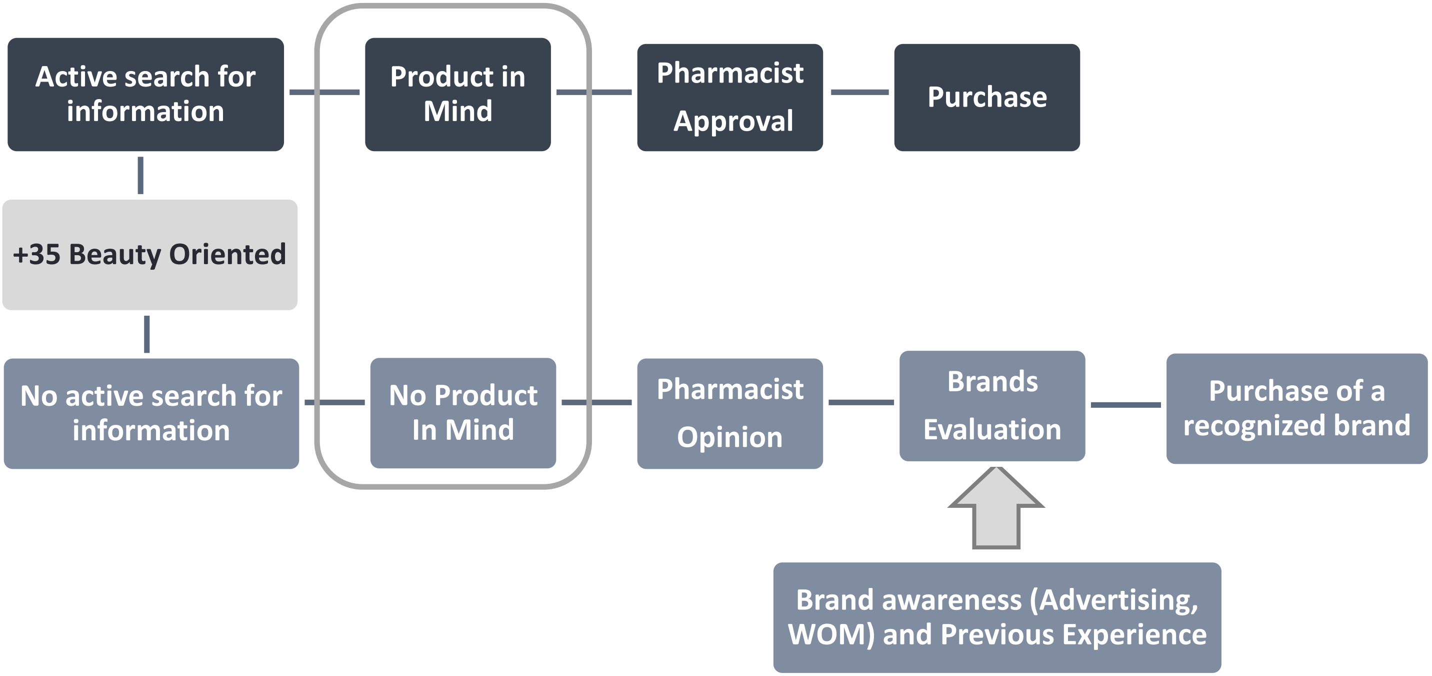
The study of these aspects was done taking into consideration the insights gathered from the two phases of research, with final consumers and pharmacists.

a) Media and Other Sources of Information

PART I

Regarding the influence of the sources of information, it was possible to divide consumers above 35 years old according to the two main behaviors mentioned previously. For the **Beauty Oriented Consumers**, the main findings are described below:

- Although some beauty oriented consumers might actively search for information before going to the point-of-sale, most of them do not do it. The **pharmacist** is their **main source of information**.
- For those who actively search for information, **PR articles** are the **most common source** while **Internet** is **very rarely used**.
- The **pharmacist approval** is **important** for these consumers before making the purchase decision.



a) Media and Other Sources of Information | PART I

For the case of the **Treatment Oriented Consumers**, the behavior can be defined as follows:

- Treatment oriented consumers above 35 years old, never actively search for information.
- Rely totally on the pharmacist to make their purchase decision and always buy the recommended and most adequate product.

+35 Treatment Oriented — No active search for information — No Product In Mind — Pharmacist Opinion — Purchase of the most adequate product

Main Conclusions:

Most consumers above 35 years old, beauty or treatment oriented, rely on the pharmacist. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that the **pharmacist** plays a key role as **INFLUENCER**.

Advertising in any kind of media, **very rarely leads to the immediate purchase**.

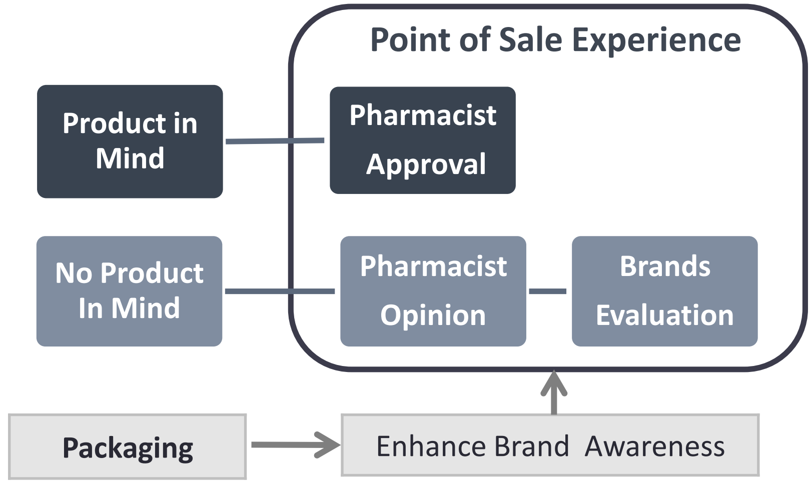
However, it is important to generate **BRAND AWARENESS** since beauty-oriented consumers are more likely to purchase a **recognized brand**.

b) Packaging

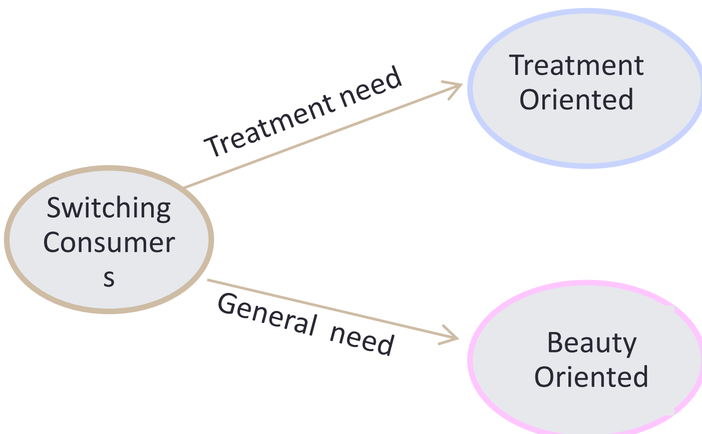
PART I

Packaging is one of the first elements consumers face when enter the point of sale. Thus, it represents the first point of sale contact consumers have with dermocosmetic brands.

Packaging proved to influence the entire point of sale Experience, by having an impact on both pharmacists and consumers.



Packaging as a Purchase Driver

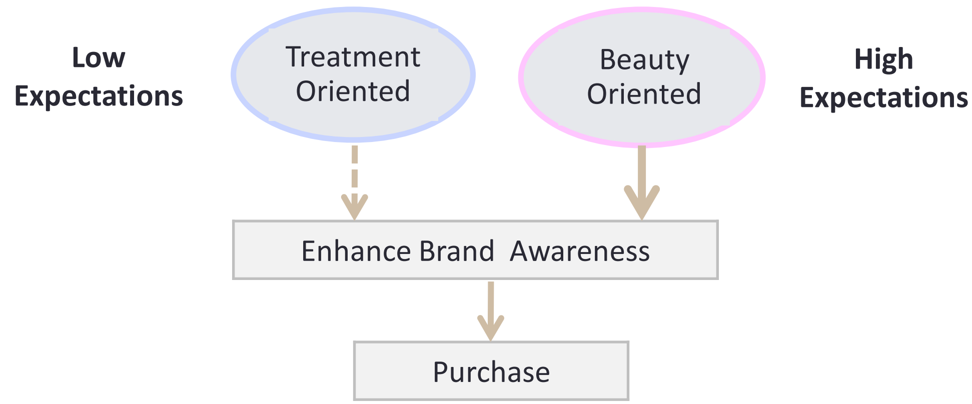


- Packaging has an **informational function;**
- The **Brand element** is the one that **captures their attention the most**;
- Value **the information** over the design;
- Prefer **neutral colors**

- Packaging has an **informational function**, allied with an **emotional value;**
- The **Brand element** is the one that **captures their attention the most;**
- Value the **design** over the information;
- Prefer **warm colors**

b) Packaging

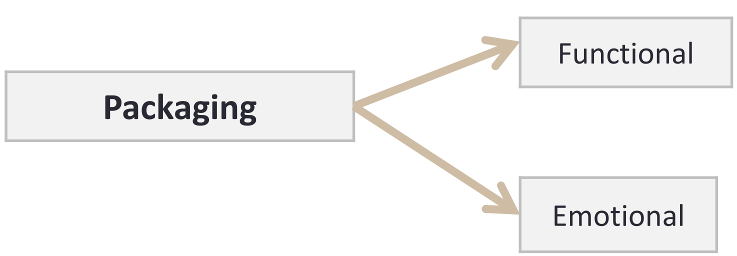
Treatment Oriented Consumers seem to have **different expectations** for the packaging than the **Beauty Oriented Ones**.



Packaging **does not seem to be a direct purchase driver**, but it may **influence the decision process by enhancing brand awareness**.

Packaging as a Selling Driver

Packaging proved to influence pharmacists **in two different dimensions**.



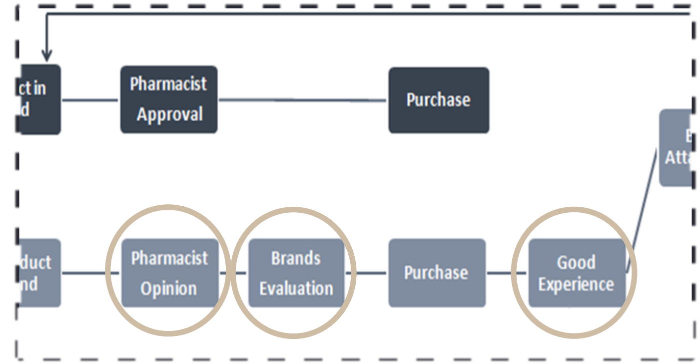
- Packaging Design seems to help pharmacists to **identify and distinguish among different product lines.** Therefore, it makes them more **comfortable in advising** the brand.
- Packaging seems to be one driver for creating a **emotional relational** and **attachment** with a brand. Thus, it seems to **increase pharmacists' willing** to advise it.

c) Price-Quality Ratio

PART I

Impact on Purchase

To obtain their perception, consumers were asked **how they defined Quality**. The aspects mentioned, in order of importance, were:



1st

- **Efficacy –** Most consumers said that, above all else, the dermocosmetic should be efficacious. Naturally, the product should fulfill properly what it was meant to.
- **Hypoallergenic –** Since it is a product for the skin, their greatest concern was if it would not cause any adverse effects on it.

Perception obtained from: **Pharmacist Opinion**

2nd

- **Texture and Scent –** Many consumers referred it is necessary to feel good when applying the product on the skin. It is a sensorial experience, need to feel good when using the product, and not just with the results obtained in the end.

Perception obtained from: **Experience**

3rd

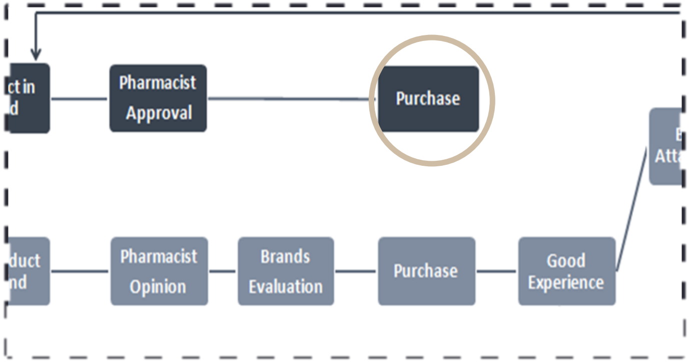
- **Brand or price –** Some consumers also mentioned to look at brand or price as a proxy for quality. Recognition of the brand, as well as trust were important factors. Some tended to associate higher prices with higher quality products.

Perception obtained from: **Brand Evaluation**

c) Price-Quality Ratio

PART I

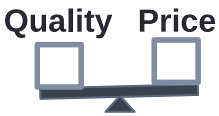
In terms of their actual Purchase, Consumers were asked **how they balanced Price and Quality**, when choosing a product:



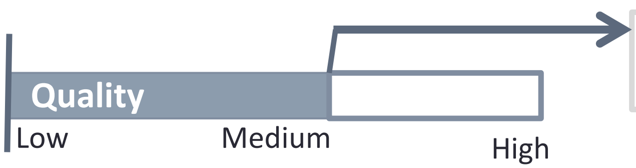
1. Quality **2. Price**	Most consumers – said they choose first a range of products with good Quality, and then chose on their Price.
1. Price **2. Quality**	A few others – reported to choose first on Price among the more affordable ones, and then chose the one with best Quality.

The difference was that while the first were willing to pay a little bit more for more quality, the second ones were brand switchers looking for promotions. However,…

…both choose an even balance between good quality and average price.



Why? Because, for consumers:

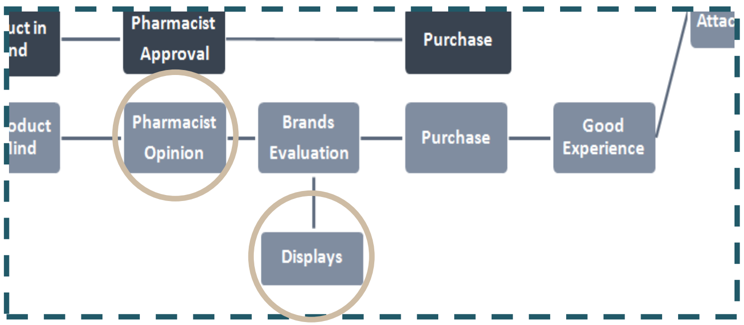


- After a certain amount of quality, its increase will no longer be valued.
- So from this point, only emotional value can justify higher price.

c) Price-Quality Ratio

Impact on Selling

Pharmacy staff was asked which factors, in terms of Price or Quality, drove them to recommend or sell more of a brand. These were, in order of importance:



1st — **PRICE**: Margins → No info obtained due to topic sensitivity, but suspected to affect **Pharmacist Opinion**

2nd — **PRICE**: Price Discounts → Pharmacies tend to promote, on **Displays,** brands that agree to support part of discounts

3rd — **QUALITY**:
- Consumer perception of Quality → explained previously
- Pharmacist perception of Quality → pharmacists tend to recommended brands know well from training sessions

both affect **Pharmacist Opinion** given in store

Luxury Status for Dermocosmetics?

Consumer is favorable	- Shift towards brands with more "passion" - Emotional benefits valued further than functional ones
Selective Channel is unfavorable	- Easy to cross barrier between luxury and premium - Difficult to maintain a high price due to presence of lower-priced competition - Difficult to maintain exclusivity, due to anti-trust European laws

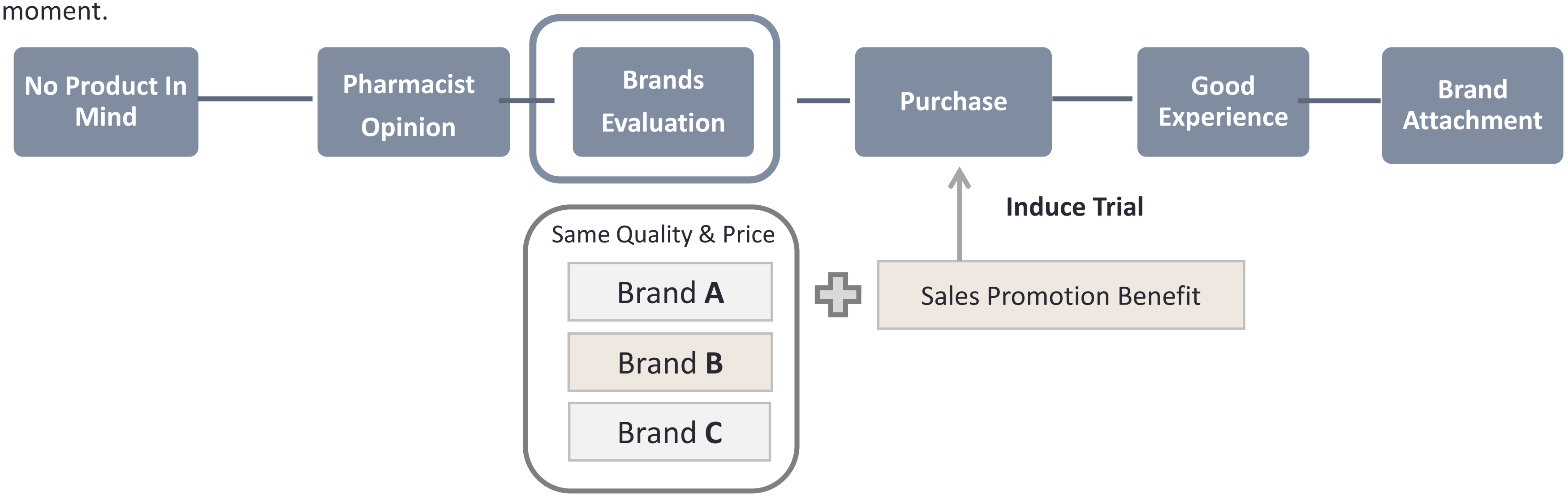
Conclusion:
Although luxury status is possible to these products, the selective channel makes it very difficult to create the exclusive image.

d) Sales Promotion

Impact as a Purchase Driver

As well as the packaging, sales promotions is also one of the elements that may capture consumers' attention at the point of sale. It influences the point of sale experience and its impact as a purchase driver comes from how consumers explore it.
We may define sales promotions as any price reduction, quantity offer or bonus such as price-offs, bonus packs, gifts and offers of complementary products. (the ones studied among our sample are shown on Appendix II)

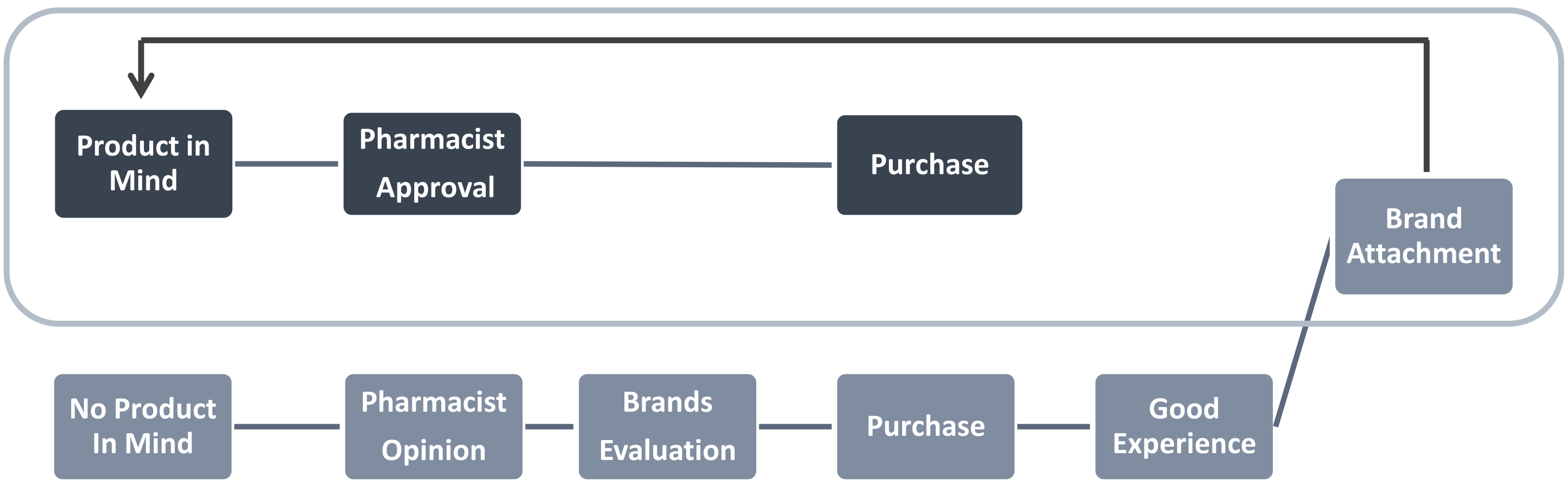
From the purchase decision model, we understood that the effect of sales promotions was felt mostly at the brands evaluation moment.



As it was understood that the pharmacist advice had the main impact on the purchase decision. When he presents the consumer with several brands with the same perceived quality and price, sales promotion make a difference when evaluating the brands. Whether it leads to the final decision or not will depend on how consumers weight the **final benefit** of the sales promotion. This will vary according to the preferred benefits of each consumer. However, most commonly it serves as a strong trial inducer as it can lead to impulse buying .

d) Sales Promotion

On the other hand, when consumers do have a product in mind when they arrive at the point of sale, another element enters the equation when evaluating the sales promotion benefit – the **level of attachment to the current brand** in use or thought previously.



From the research it was verified that **Loyal brand users** tend not to change their buying patterns as a result of competitive promotion

In the situation when **consumers are already using a product** that is benefitting from a sales promotion, most consumers affirm that they **may anticipate the purchase** and/or **may buy more quantity** of that product.

d) Sales Promotion

PART I

The Sales Promotions that consumers seem to value the most are the ones that involve a **price** reduction or a **quantity** increase. These were the ones that both from the pharmacists and consumers point of view more effectively lead to purchase.

Price-Offs

More Quantity

Impact as a Selling Driver

Selling incentives in the pharmacy channel seem to be a sensitive subject for pharmacists, however in terms of sales promotions they appear to have an impact on their advice following the verified receptiveness of a certain promotion on the consumers. When the pharmacist feels that consumers respond well to it, they tend to advise it.
Moreover, all pharmacies interviewed practice their own sales promotion for their own advantage, mostly to fight excess of stock . Thus having a significant weight on their advice to the final consumer.

Impact on Brand Image

After a certain point, when the sales promotion benefit is too high (either a high discount or a high quantity offered), the product's perceived **quality** is damaged. The same may occur with the **frequency** of the sales promotions practiced by a brand. On the long run, its brand image can be damaged as the consumer starts to distrust the brand. As a result, it discourages the purchase consequently decreasing sales.

Current Concept

PART I

Introductory note: In the following stage, we have gathered the main findings regarding specifically the brand in study. Our results are mostly based on the first phase of interviews with consumers. These results where posteriorly verified by the second phase of interviews with consumers despite the sample differences between the two.

Current Brand Image

Most consumers had **difficulty to talk about associations towards Vichy.** Most of the associations made were either **facts or characteristics** of the brand or the products and not feelings or emotions.

	Freq. [1]
Consumers associate Vichy more as a cosmetic/beauty Brand than a treatment/healthy one.	****

"A Vichy é mais uma questão de beleza, não sei se é por causa dos anúncios que vejo ou não." (21, student, frequent user)

"São produtos mais de estética do que de saúde, mais ligados ao exterior." (23, student, non-frequent user)

Consumers between 15-30, tend to associate Vichy with an older person.	****

"A ideia que passa seria de uma pessoa dos quarentas, cinquentas." (24, financial administrative assistant, non-frequent user)

"Relativamente à Vichy, seria uma pessoa dentro dos quarenta, entre os quarenta e os cinquenta." (23, student, frequent user)

n=22

[1]Frequencies based on table V on slide 11

VICHY LABORATOIRES

Current Concept

PART I

	Freq. [1]
Vichy is seen as a Brand that has been in the market for a long time	**

"(…) porque é uma marca que uma pessoa já ouve à muito muito tempo. Que é antiga“ (50, bank manager, non-frequent user)

“O factor antiguidade(relativo à Vichy) é uma coisa importante, uma coisa que eu valorizo.” (21, student, frequent user)

Consumers associate Vichy as a Brand with a good quality/price ratio	**

“É um produto de qualidade e mais económico.” (50, kindergarten teacher, frequent user)

”O preço é muito aceitável, e para a qualidade que tem é perfeito.” (23, student, frequent user)

Consumers consider Vichy’s products as effective	**

“(…) Mesmo na altura do Verão quando tenho que comprar protectores solares tento procurar sempre dentro dessas linhas porque a ideia que eu tenho é que são linhas boas e conceituadas.” (50, bank manager, non-frequent user)

“Em principio, se a pessoa usar essa marca há resultados.” (31, clerk, frequent user)

n=22

. [1]Frequencies based on table V on slide 11

Current Concept

PART I

Packaging as an element of Brand Image

Regarding the packaging, most consumers made the comparison between the two brands contrasting in terms of design and product line consistency.

VICHY LABORATOIRES

- Its design is usually preferred
- Helps to identify the **different products**

However:

- It **might hurt the brand image** as a consistent brand.

"Acho que o facto de eles terem um design para cada linha, ajuda o consumidor a identificar as diferenças." (23, student, frequent user)

"Eu olho para isto e sei que é para o cabelo. Nem sequer li. (…) Consigo ver hidratantes, protector solar. A imagem centraliza-te para onde queres ir." (24, financial administrative assistant, non-frequent user)

EAU THERMALE Avène

- Might have more **simple packages**
- Consumers don't think it is so attractive and easy to identify

But:

- They like the fact it is **more consistent** and gives a **stronger brand image.**

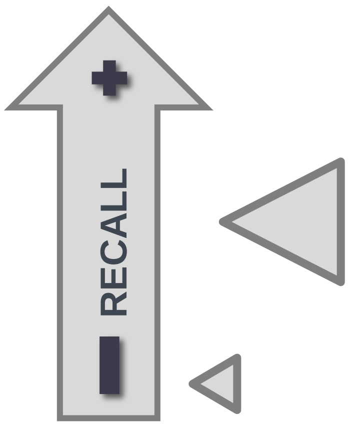
"Tem maior coerência (Avène), uma imagem mais forte do que a Vichy. São mais consistente na sua imagem. Há uma diversificação de embalagens." (23, student, non-frequent user)

"A Vichy muda muito consoante a gama que é. A imagem está sempre a trocar." (21, student, frequent user)

Current Concept | PART I

Advertising as an element of Brand Image

Taking into consideration that the first group of interviews were conducted during a period when Vichy was highly investing in advertising, the interviewees did not seem to remember the ads as it was initially expected.



"Não me lembro como era a publicidade. Sei que na altura vi, pensei que fazia efeito e comprei." (24, financial administrative assistant, non-frequent user)

"Talvez já tenha visto alguma publicidade da Vichy." (23, student, non-frequent user)

"Da Vichy, lembro-me de ver aqueles cremes que eles têm para a cara daquela linha verde." (23, student, frequent-user)

"Principalmente em revistas, daquelas femininas, publicidade de televisão … sei que sim, mas para estar a especificar não estou a ver." (54, hotel manager, frequent user)

Face element in the Advertising

Most consumers like the **characteristic face,** shown in Vichy's advertising, because it **shows a beautiful and well-cared face and represents the ideal image they would like to have.**

However, there are **some** people that consider it is **unrealistic and fake.**

Advertising as an element of Brand Image

From the second stage of interviews among consumers, it was possible to verify the importance of the ads as a brand element. From the sample, the younger segment seemed to identify with the model shown, since her age is more approximate to this segment, however most consumers realize the product advertised is not for their age range. On the other hand, the older segment may be the actual target for the product in the ad but as they do not identify with the model, consumers state that they do not look at the ad.

Consumers' perceptions about the ads

Younger segment
(15 – 35 years old)

Identify themselves with the model

Realize the product is not for them

Older segment
(36 – 60 years old)

Consider the model shown too young

Do not even look to the product

"Aqui tem a ver com o envelhecimento mas com esta imagem tão jovem ninguém aos 50/60 anos se identifica com esta imagem." (51, radiology technician, high-user Vichy)

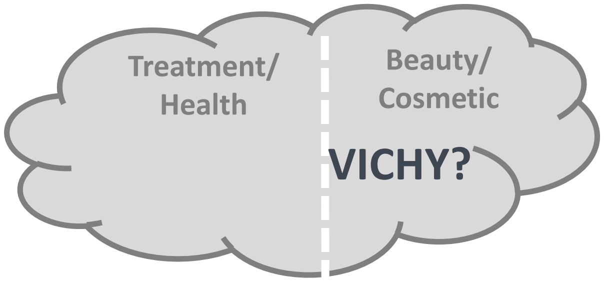
"Eu até reparo na publicidade porque a modelo parece da minha idade mas depois de ver o produto que está a publicitar não é de todo destinado para mim." (26, operations managament student ,high-user Vichy)

In general, consumers do not identify themselves with the ads

Current Concept

From the marketing research conducted on Consumer and Purchase Behavior and Vichy Current Brand Image aligned with our perception as mystery shoppers we came to the conclusion that Vichy currently faces two main concerns that need to be addressed in the future:

CURRENT CONCEPT TERRITORY



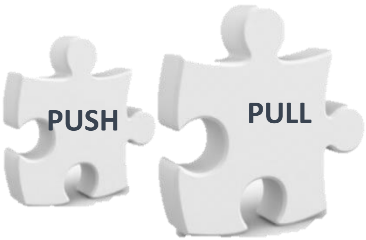
From the previous findings regarding brand image, Vichy seems to be situated closer to the **Beauty/Cosmetic territory.**

Although, it appears that Vichy tries to be a desired brand, it has a very medical image.

To be in the beauty territory, a brand should be associated to **dreams** and **emotions**. However, consumers don't seem to be very **enchanted by the Brand.**

Once again, this territory uncertainty may be one of the causes behind Vichy's decrease in market share as the new emerging brands are clearly entering in the Beauty/Cosmetic territory whereas established brands such as Avène are strongly positioned in the treatment territory. By trying to be in both territories, Vichy may not be accomplishing neither of the ambitioned territories.

VICHY STRATEGY



Currently, Vichy is mainly investing in a **Pull Strategy** as it invests highly both in traditional and digital media, as we understood by exploring all the communication channels of the brand.

However, as previously mentioned the pharmacist is the main influencer in the purchase decision.

As we were informed, Vichy do not invest as much on trade promotions and training workshops aimed at the pharmacists, in comparison to their pull efforts.

The question of whether this strategy is adequate to the Portuguese market conditions and consumers' behavior arises.

The Pull strategy is achieving its goal in generating a high awareness to the brand, as consumers immediately recognize the brand and recall it when talking about the category of dermocosmetic products sold in the pharmacy.

However, when it comes to the Push techniques embraced by the brand, it seems like Vichy is not investing as much as its competitors and this may be one of the main reasons why it is currently losing ground in the market. By embracing the roles of Mystery shoppers we have understood that Vichy is not the main brand referred on the pharmacist advice leading the consumers to other brands.

Proposed Concept

Introductory note: to be able to face the new tendencies and emerging competitors, Vichy decided to redesign its brand elements. Thus, to better study the consumers' reaction to these changes and the possible effects on the Portuguese market we sought to capture if the new associations made to the brand were aligned with the desired ones from Vichy.

Proposed Concept Image

When presented to the proposed concept, **consumers seemed more engaged** while talking about it. There were some associations that were commonly repeated among consumers. **Moisturizing** and **Water** were the most frequent ones.

"As coisas com água as pessoas associam a frescura, a suavidade e a leveza."(60,data base operator,high-user Vichy)

"Para mim é o que salta mais à vista, é mais pela cor, pelo elemento água." (45,accountant,high-user Vichy)

"Acho que está com uma imagem mais jovem. Tem um ar mais dinâmico, mais giro." (22, management student, high-user Vichy)

"A água tem sentido porque é a base de tudo. É a base da hidratação, é a base da beleza."(51,radiology technician,high-user Vichy)

Proposed Concept

PART I

It seems the new concept **will be allocated closer to the new emergent beauty brands**, **without losing the idea of a pharmaceutical brand**.

"Eu acho que as novas embalagens transmitem frescura, jovialidade, modernismo e acesso às massas sem cair no vulgar." (22,economic student,high-user Vichy)

"A Vichy é um pouco tratamento e beleza (…)e nesta imagem, conseguimos ver mais isso." (22,cashier,high-user Vichy)

	Freq. [1]
Consumers associate the **new concept** more with **beauty** than the **current** one.	****

"Agora está mais ligado à beleza e por isso apela mais a jovens" (22, management student, high-user Vichy)

Consumers consider **the overall image transmitted by the ads and the packing more coherent** and **aligned.**	****

"A ideia do V dá uma maior associação com a marca, cria uma maior identificação da marca. Transmite melhor uma ideia da marca mesmo." (26,operations manager student,high-user Vichy)

"Gosto mais destas embalagens. Acho que para além do nome, ficas com um nome visual de um logótipo, que no fundo seria o V. Acho que o V é uma coisa muito básica, dá um ar mais bonito. Acho que se torna coerente." (22,operations manager student,high-user Vichy)

n=31

. [1]Frequencies based on table VI on slide 11

Proposed Concept | PART I

From the stimuli given to the interviewees, the ads had a generally good response in comparison to the current ones. However, some brand elements seemed to be unnoticed.

	Freq. [1]
Consumers seem to consider that the new ads target more the **younger segment** compared to the current ones.	***

"Acho o conceito interessante, principalmente porque se desvia um pouco da ideia de que a Vichy é para pessoas mais velhas. (…) A meu ver e como pessoa mais nova, seria mais atraída por estes anúncios, dado que sempre tive em mente que a Vichy era um segmento para pessoas mais velhas." (23, nurse, high user Vichy)

Some consumers consider that the **woman in the Aqualia thermal ad has a more natural/casual look.**	***

"Nessa ela está mais descontraída, os cabelos ao vento, a água remete para uma coisa mais descontraída, mais jovial, mais fresca." (45, accountant, high-user Vichy)

Consumers **did not notice there was a "V"** in the add.	***

"Nesta é mais difícil perceber que é um "v". Só agora que disseste é que percebi. Por causa aqui dos contornos da água. Deu-me mais a ideia de ser água do que ser um "v"."
(51,radiology technician,high-user Vichy)

n=31

. [1]Frequencies based on table VI on slide 11

Proposed Concept

PART I

As previously stated, we also tried to measure Lierac's brand image in order to better understand how consumers perceive the new main new emergent competitor in the dermocosmetic market.

Consumers seem to have a much more clear idea of Lierac's positioning than Vichy.

They instantly have an opinion either positive or negative about the brand. It was found a pattern concerning consumers' orientation. It seems that Lierac is loved by the Beauty oriented consumers and hated by the Treatment oriented.

Lierac' Brand Image

	Freq. [1]
Consumers **associate Lierac** more as **beauty** brand.	****
Lierac **has an immediate strong impact** on consumers.	****

Olhando para estes displays, sem dúvida que o da Lierac me chamaria mais a atenção! Gosto imenso dos cor-de-rosa, acho super feminino. As próprias embalagens transmitem-me qualidade. (…) Quando exposto assim num display acho que transmite uma ideia coerente… uma pessoa pensa logo "um produto de beleza". (22,operations management trainee, high-user Vichy)

A Lierac transmite-me uma ideia mais de beleza. Como já referi, talvez por causa dos tons quentes .. dá uma ideia mais de beleza, mais feminina. Acho que se torna mais atractivo. (26,student,high-user Vichy)

"Os cor-de-rosa tem um grande impacto. Gosto bastante destas embalagens cor-de-rosa clara, acho muito femininas e modernas." (49,housewife,high-user Vichy)

We believe that **the emotions and engagement that are missing in Vichy are being accomplished by Lierac.**

n=31

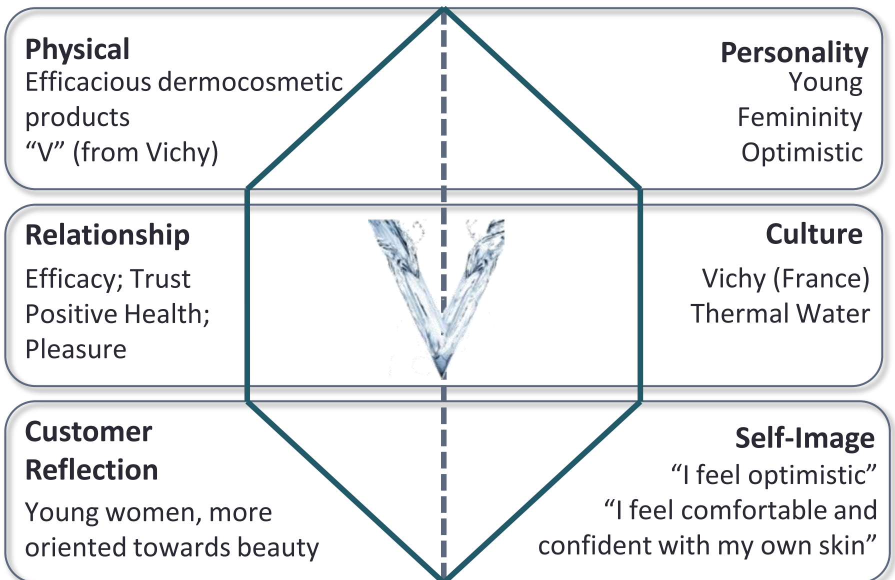
. [1]Frequencies based on table VI on slide 11

Proposed Concept

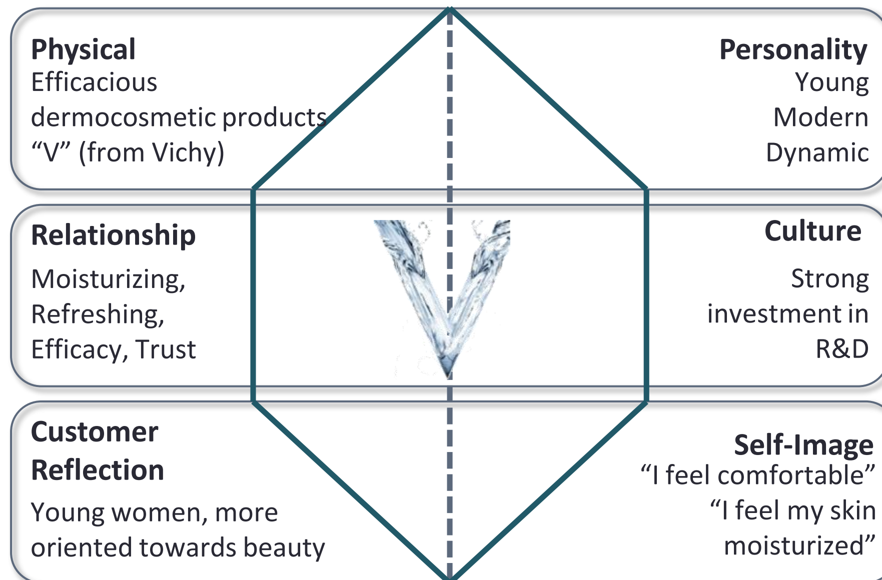
PART I

Although the **Kapferer Identity Prism** (2008, Kapferer) is used to represent the identity of a brand, in order to better analyze the insights gathered, it was used to represent below both the **identity** and the **image of the proposed concept**. This allowed us to make a gap analysis and understand which aspects of the identity are not being perceived by the consumers.

Proposed Concept Identity



Proposed Concept Image



Proposed Concept

PART I

Gap Analysis

Relationship:

- According to Vichy, the relationship offered to the consumers should include four aspects: efficacy, trust, positive health and pleasure.
- From the four, only **Trust** and **Efficacy** are being perceived by consumers. However this is likely to come from **Vichy's heritage** and not from the new concept.

Personality:

- Regarding personality, consumers consider it would be someone with a **young** spirit, as it is wished by the brand.
- However, **feminine** and **optimist** are not characteristics included in the personality described by consumers. The reason may lie on the fact that optimism is mainly transmitted by the slogan, which was not noticed by consumers in the ad.
- Nevertheless, it is important to mention that the associations to a **modern** and **dynamic** personality, represent an improvement when comparing to the current brand image.

Self-Image:

- From Vichy point of view, consumers should feel positive emotions when using the products, such as **optimism** and **self-confidence**.
- It is important to note, that consumers consider that the sensations felt would be more related to **physical feelings**, such as **comfort** and **moisturized skin**, rather than emotions.

Culture:

- The culture of the brand relies heavily on the **mineral spring in Vichy** (France) and on the **thermal water**. Nevertheless, consumers are **not aware of these facts** and associate more Vichy to a brand that **strongly invests in R&D** and is **constantly innovating**.
- Due to the "V" made of water present in the ads and packaging of the new concept, consumers do **associate it to water**, which is translated in associations such as **refreshing**, **moisturizing** and **natural**, but **not to thermal water** as it was desired.

Proposed Concept

PART I

PROPOSED CONCEPT TERRITORY

- The studied proposed concept would be able to maintain its position in the treatment territory at the same time it would gain a stronger place in the beauty territory.
  - It seems it **will be allocated closer to the new emergent beauty brands**, **without losing the idea of a pharmaceutical brand**.

- Regarding consumers:
  - It seems the consumers **were more engaged** when talking about the **proposed concept.**
  - It seems to work for **beauty oriented consumers** that are currently using **treatment oriented brands**.
  - However it seems to not be enough to capture the **super beauty oriented consumers**.

This concept might represent a good first step for a gradual process towards beauty territory.
However, it was not enough to create the desired level of emotion and attachment to the brand

Introductory Note

Our main recommendations will be divided in two sections, **Recommended Concept** and **Recommendations for the Implementation**.

The **first section** is conducted in an international level as it is composed by some adjustments made to the concept elaborated by Vichy as a global brand. We are aware of the constraints in this section since the modifications made by the brand are already established. This section is divided in three subtopics:

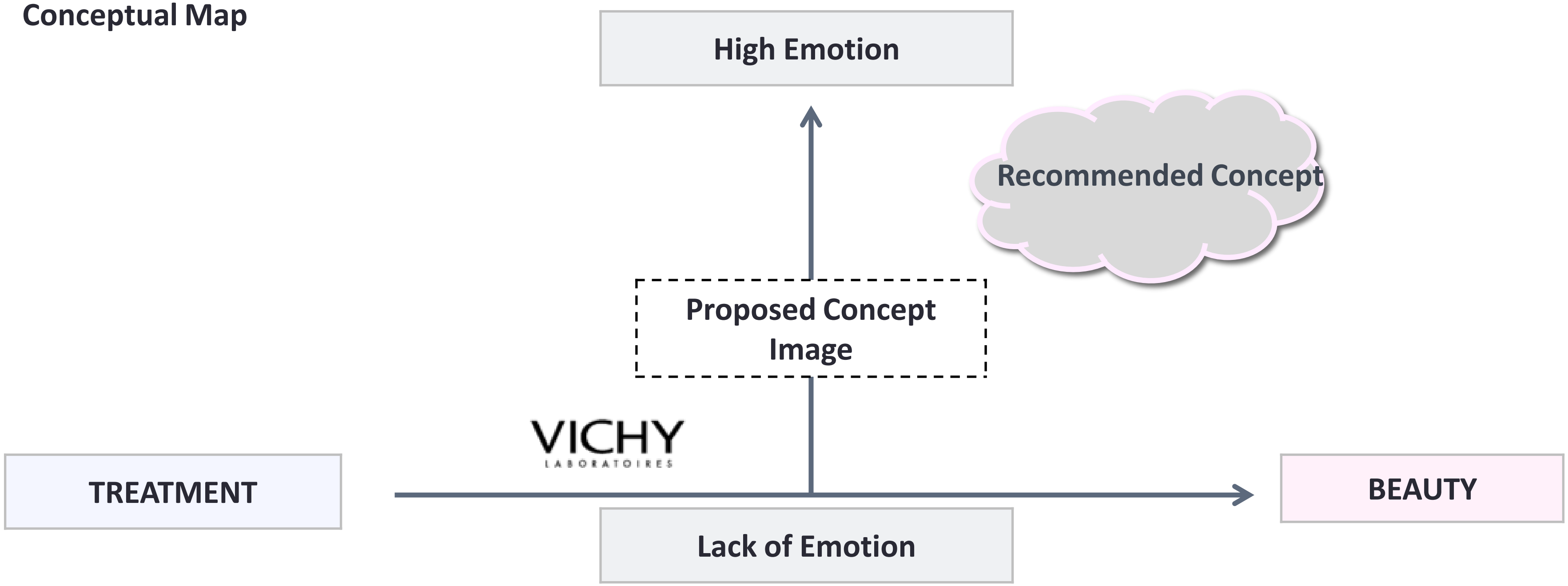
- Conceptual Map
- Recommended Brand Identity
- Recommended Positioning Statement

On the **second section**, we will be focusing in a local approach, our goal will be to construct an implementation strategy applicable to the Portuguese market reality. This will be the stage where we are mainly focusing our attention as it acts at a more local level where our insights can be more useful to aid Vichy in its implementation to the particularities of the Portuguese consumers. With the gathered findings, we were able to find the key points where our recommendations need to emphasize. This section is also divided in three main subtopics:

- Recommended Strategy
- Recommendations for the Launching Period
- Recommendations for the Long Term

Recommended Concept | PART II

Conceptual Map



As the new concept is not proving to be sufficient to attain the desired emotional impact on consumers, some changes can be undertaken to be able to take advantage of the possibilities that this concept already represents.

In order to achieve a higher level of emotion and increase the engagement with both consumers and pharmacists, the recommended concept would add several elements that promise to boost this relationship with the brand.

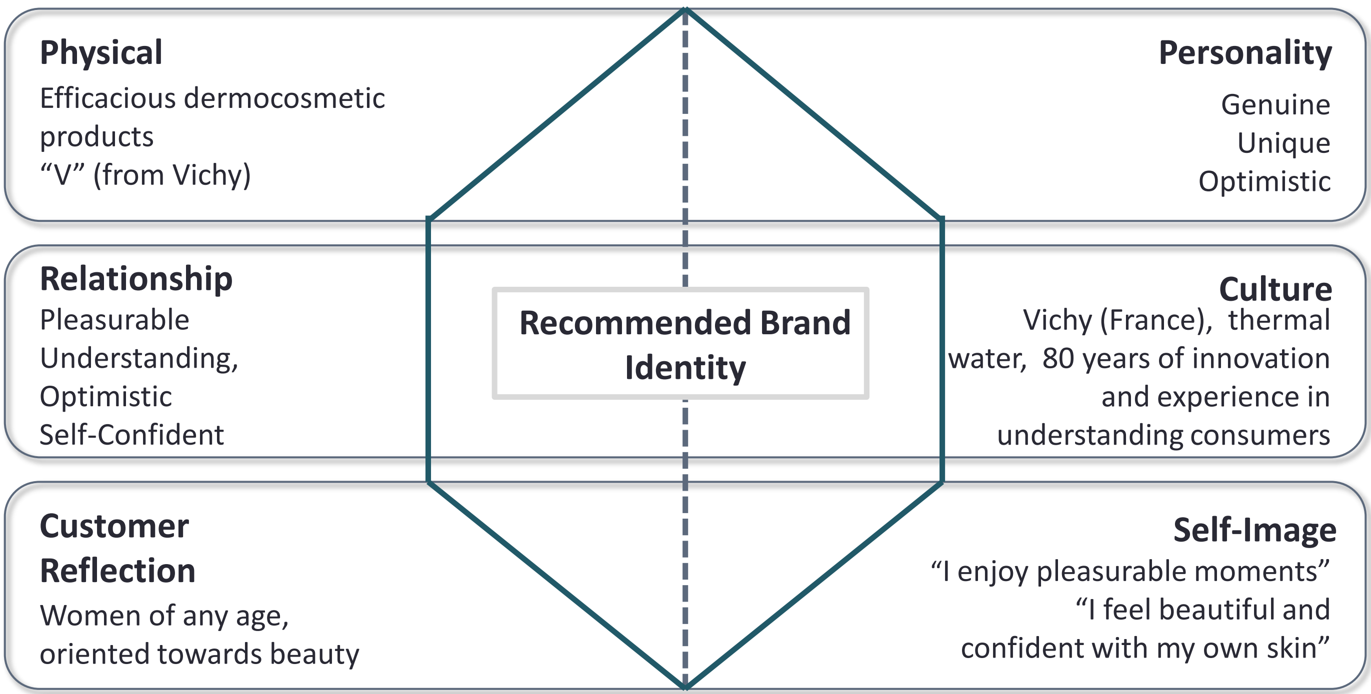
Recommended Concept

Recommended Brand Identity

This proposed Brand Identity is based on optimism and happiness, that despite being **positive emotional elements,** that might be regarded as important in a time of crisis, are easily replicated by any Brand in any industry.

Moreover, if Vichy wants to capture the consumers extremely oriented towards beauty, these concepts seem to be too broad and not enough to create the level of desired needed.

Therefore, the following prism represents **our recommended brand identity** to overcome the identified issues and gaps.



Recommended Concept

PART II

Why Understanding?

Vichy has **80 years of experience** in the market and constant investment in **innovation**. Thus it has the opportunity to use its knowledge and expertise to establish a **mutual understanding** relationship with consumers that allows them to adequate the products to the consumers' needs and preferences.

Why Pleasure?

Consumers do not only seek results but also value the experience with the product. Through this closer relationship, Vichy would be able to create a **ritual** around its products that would provide the consumers with **pleasurable moments**.

Why Genuine Beauty?

As mentioned before, consumers did not identify themselves with the **artificial** and **unattainable beauty** portrayed in the ads. They prefer a more **natural** and **casual** look.
Vichy can take advantage of this by making women feel **beautiful** by enhancing their **unique** and **genuine beauty**.

Why Self-Confident?

"No woman feel secure about herself". By providing **pleasurable moments** to women rather than making them feel they are treating a skin concern and by making women believe they are **genuinely beautiful**, Vichy can boost a woman's **self-esteem** and **confidence**.

Recommended Concept

PART II

Recommended Positioning Statement

For **women of any age** that **look for pleasurable products** and that want to **reveal their genuine beauty**…

… Vichy is a brand of **beauty dermocosmetic products** …

… that provides the most **pleasurable moments**, making women **feel beautiful** and **confident** in their own skin…

… due to its **80 years of experience** in **innovation** and in **understanding consumers.**

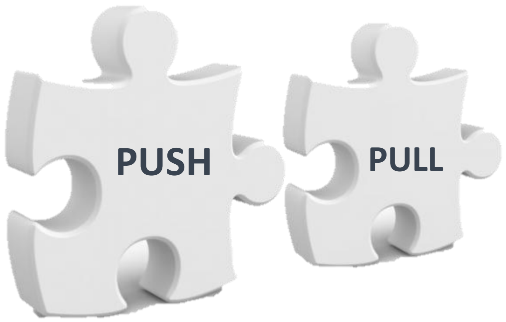
With the recommended positioning, Vichy would be able to differentiate itself from…

Emerging Beauty Brands	A **renowned** Brand with 80 years of **experience** and investment in **innovation**
Established Treatment Brands	By being a more **Emotional** and **Enchanted** Brand

Recommendations for Implementation | PART II

Recommended Strategy

The Vichy re-branding is an **unique opportunity** to engage pharmacists and increase their willing to advise the Brand.



As the pharmacists proved to be the main purchase driver and Vichy seems to be mainly investing in a Pull Strategy, it should rebalance its marketing strategy, by **investing more in a Push Strategy**.

Increase the investment on commercial relation with Pharmacies and in the point of sale Experience

The previously presented insights gathered through our researches revealed that the **Pharmacist** and the **point of sale Experience** are the **main purchase drivers**. Therefore, it is needed to engage pharmacists and offer them better conditions in order to increase their willing to advise the brand. Additionally it proved to be important to enrich consumers' experience in the point of sale in order to increase their preference over other brands.

Invest the sufficient amount in Advertising to maintain Brand Awareness

Advertising rarely leads to purchase but **Brand Awareness** is relevant for consumers when choosing between brands. Therefore, the optimal level of investment is the one that is enough to generate Brand Awareness.

Our recommendations target different moments of time, as some of them are strictly directed with the launch of the new concept, and others target the long term. We will start by presenting the ones respecting the launching moment, and later on we will develop the long term ones.

Recommendations for the Launching Period

To clarify the following calendar, it is important to understand the two different launching moments involved in this project. First, Vichy will launch this new concept among pharmacies and parapharmacies' staff. After concluding this stage, the proposed concept will be progressively launched to the final consumers. To simplify we will assume the official launch as the one targeting retail members.

Table VII: Calendar for the launching events

		Official Launch	After Official Launch
Pharmacists	Launching		
	Brainstorm Event		
	Pharmacists' Intranet		
Point Of Sale	Show window at night		
	Improve In-Store experience		

Rationale: Before any implementation in the point of sale, it is important to engage pharmacists with this new concept. This will allow Vichy to have their support by the time it is presented to the final consumers. To maximize the opportunity of creating a great impact among final consumers, the point of sale must be prepared and redesigned to receive Vichy's new packaging.

Recommendations for Implementation | PART II

PHARMACISTS

Launching Event

- Organize **an event** that would take place in several main cities of the country.
- This event could include different experiences such as a spa, make-up sessions and 4D experiences
- Pharmacists would have the opportunity to apply for being a **Vichy Ambassador,** and become a voice of the brand.

Brainstorm Event

- In this event, pharmacist could **meet the sales force in an informal occasion, discuss** their worries about the brand and **make suggestions** on what could be done to improve the implementation of the new concept. This aims to make pharmacists feel that they are involved in Vichy rebranding.

Pharmacists' Intranet

- On the Pharmacists' **Intranet**, provided on the brand website, pharmacists that do not go to the training workshops, would be able to **obtain information about the products**.
- It would also enable to engage them more with the brand by u**pdating** them about the **new products, invite** them to the exclusive **events of the brand and g**ive **feedback** to the brand

Recommendations for Implementation | PART II

POINT OF SALE

Show window at night

- During the night, **project the “V” floating in water**, in the **show window** of strategic located pharmacies. This would create curiosity among consumers and generate some buzz before they are presented with the new concept.

Improve In-Store Experience

- Redesign the display by creating “boxes” for the packages. Each box should be aligned with the product line design.
- The screens in the pharmacies or digital frames could also be used to display photos or videos of the events organized by the brand as well as advertising.
- A digital tablet where consumers could look for information about Vichy’s Product, using the QR codes (or bar code) present in the packaging. This tablet could emit water sounds whenever someone gets close to the shelves.
- Alternatively, the information could be provided whenever a consumer picks a product on the shelve, using augmented reality technologies (possible partnership with Ydreams).

(1) For a visual representation, please refer to Appendix V

Recommendations for Implementation | PART II

Recommendations for the Long Term

1. Sales Education

- Invest in seminars and close relationship with the best **Pharmacy Universities.** This would allow Vichy to have a special place in future pharmacists' mind and maximize the probability of having an emotional and professional relationship with them when these students start their careers. On the long run, it would influence their advice to final consumers.
- Include trying experiences during the workshops.

2. Contests

- Contest that would reward pharmacists that work in the pharmacies that sell more Vichy products each 3 months.
- As the group is aware it could be unfair to not consider pharmacies' differences, it is suggested to organize them in groups according to size, location and sales volume.

3. Trade Promotions

- Continue investing in trade promotions, such as price offs and returns. As this sensitive topic could not be deeply developed during our research, it is not possible to give more specific recommendations.

4. Packaging: 10 Days Kit

- Introduce kits with complementary products, with smaller sizes and a lower price to induce trial and allow consumers to experience the effects of products.

Recommendations for Implementation | PART II

5. Packaging: Information

- As consumers proved to value having the **information printed in Portuguese**, more attention should be given to this Packaging element.
- **Visual information** on how to use the product (either printed or include a leaflet inside the package) would make the package more consumer-oriented
- **QR codes** printed in the packaging that could be linked with videos related with the products, and would be a connection point with the point of sale digital tablets.

6. Buzz Marketing

The communication with the younger segment was one of the problems presented by Vichy to our group. Therefore, this specific recommendation aims to overcome it, by recruiting buzzers in Universities.

- Create an **event ,** where students should **record a 1minute video** saying why they should be selected. Students should be challenged **to distribute 20 samples** in their University and explain to their friends – **Why should they use Vichy**?
- A **final promotional video** should be made to be shared on digital media, as this is more probable to reach young consumers.
- Recruited buzzers would be given free samples and guidelines on what to talk about and would be asked to write reports and share on Vichy's Facebook profile and webpage their experience (with pictures, videos, …)

Recommendations for Implementation | PART II

7. Redesign its Traditional Media Strategy

a) TV: Under the re-branding project, Vichy should present the new brand identity with a story, thus it should invest in **advertising the brand instead of only the product**.

- Therefore, it would be interesting to create a specific TV ad **communicating only the new brand identity**.

b) Magazines: During the first months after the launch, a **leaflet** could be included inside some **magazines**. It could include:

- Information about the **story** and **new concept of the brand**
- **Photos** of the previously organized events
- A **coupon** with a code that would allow consumers to obtain a **discount**, after registering on the website.

The coupon would contribute to increase the number of consumers registered in the website, and therefore, have a larger number of newsletters subscribers.

Recommendations for Implementation

8. Redesign its Digital Media Strategy

a) Facebook

- **Daily posts** with several types of contents such as beauty tips, promotions, contests, videos on how to use the products and applications to help consumers know the adequate products for them.
- We believe that the Facebook and the website should have a stronger interconnection and that both should have a **more engaging "voice"** that could relate with the consumers to create a closer and more friendly relationship with them, rather than creating a strictly business-consumer relationship.

b) Blogs

- Vichy should invest in partnerships/contest with some bloggers, in order to attract more fans to the Facebook Page, gather information about them and generate more interest and attachment to the brand.

c) E-mail

- After gathering information about the Vichy consumers that are **registered on the website**, send them **periodical e-mails**, with adequate information about new products, special campaigns, contests and beauty tips or trends. This information should be matched with the consumer profile.

Discussion

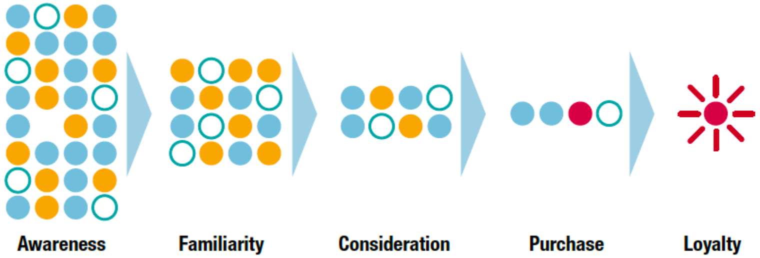
Introductory Note: From this point until the end of this section we will analyze the obtained results presented to Vichy under the new theories about consumer behavior, namely according to McKinsey Quarterly Article *"The consumer decision journey."* As this topic is strictly related with a Push/Pull Strategy, a brief discussing about the right balance will also be covered.

Finally, as many of our recommendations targeted the communication strategy, we tried to relate and support them with literature about Integrated Marketing Communications, namely with *"The Strategic advertising management"* book by Percy and Elliot.

Consumer and Purchase Behavior

McKinsey starts its article by presenting the traditional funnel, that has been valid for years, where consumers start with a number of potential brands in mind and while moving through the funnel reduce that number, and at the end they emerge with the one brand they chose to purchase. However, the funnel concept fails to capture all the touch points and key buying factors that have been gaining an increased importance in the last years. As research insights showed, by having the power to influence or even change consumers' mind, pharmacists enjoy the power to influence which brands consumers take into consideration. Therefore, even if there is a group of brands that already achieved awareness among consumers, it does not mean that those who do not possess it will not be in the further steps. For instance, consumers may be aware of Vichy, Avène and Uriage, but if the pharmacists advise them Lierac, they may end up by deciding for this brand.

A more sophisticated approach seems to be required to help marketers to understand consumers' behavior.



Discussion

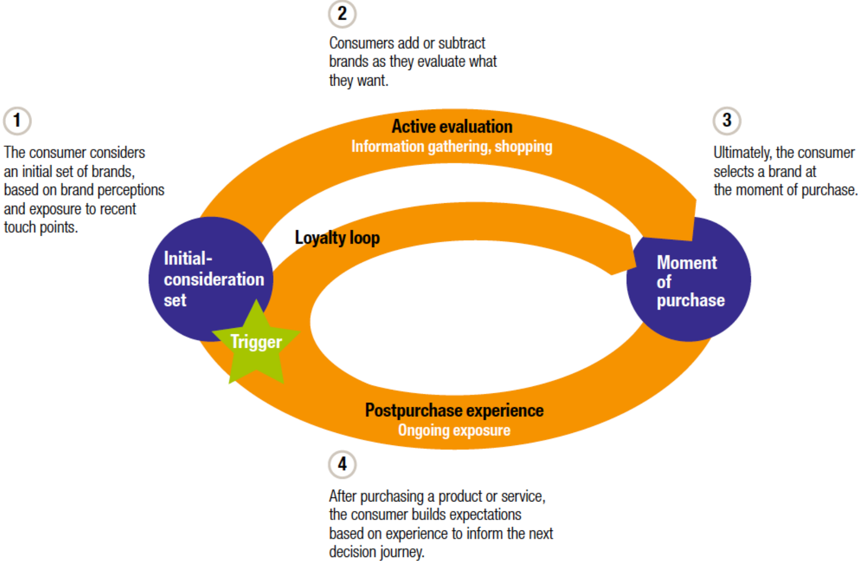
PART III

The consumer decision journey presented by McKinsey is considered to be the evolution of the traditional funnel due to the global tendencies from the explosion of product choices and digital channels, as well as from a increasingly well informed consumer.

Even though this seems to represent an important tendency, it seems to only be valid for a small group of Portuguese consumers. Most consumers do not start their path in the initial consideration set. As this particular point of sale is very traditional, consumers still follow a traditional approach for their decision process. Most of them do not search for information before arriving to the point of sale, relying mainly on the pharmacists' opinion – starting their journey on the second stage.

The small group of consumers that search for information start their journey on the initial consideration set. However, when this group is at point of sale, the pharmacists have the power to add or subtract brands to the initial set.

The previously presented Decision Making Process Model is aligned with McKinsey's findings, but deeply exploring the behavior of the most significant group. Therefore, it is possible to state that our findings confirm the theory.



By understanding the decision journey and directing the investment and messaging to the moments of maximum influence, marketers stand a much greater chance of reaching consumers in the right place at the right time with the right message (2009, McKinsey Quarterly). As results showed that the point of sale experience, mainly the pharmacists' advice, is the main influencer of the purchase decision, marketers in the dermocosmetic industry should mainly invest in these elements.

The Right Balance between Push/Pull Strategy

According to the literature, a brand can use either a push or a pull strategy to manage the relationship with its intermediaries.

Under a push strategy, a brand uses its sales force and trade promotions to influence the intermediaries to promote and sell the product to the final consumers. This strategy seems to be more adequate when there is low brand loyalty in the category, the choice is made at the point of sale, the product is usually bought under an impulse or the benefits are well understood.

When pursuing a pull strategy, the brand uses advertising and promotion to persuade consumers to ask directly and actively for the products, and therefore, convincing the intermediaries to acquire them. Contrary to the push strategy, the pull strategy is more suitable for categories with high brand loyalty and high involvement, when the difference between the brands is clearly perceived and when the brand choice is made before going to the point of sale. However, it is possible to pursue both strategies. (2006, Kotler and Keller).

As it was previously presented, Vichy is currently following a Pull Strategy, by investing mainly in advertising. However, for most consumers, the brand choice is made at the point of sale. Therefore, if the point of sale experience is the moment of maximum influence, a Push Strategy seems to maximize the opportunity of influencing consumers. Nevertheless, as Vichy products are included in an high-involvement category, a pull strategy could also be adequate. Therefore, the ideal strategy is the right balance between push and pull. Pull must enhance Brand Awareness to the optimal point, in which consumers are able to not only recognize, but also recall the brand and include it in the initial consideration set. "Brand awareness matters: brands in the initial-consideration set can be up to three times more likely to be purchased eventually than brands that aren't in it." (2009, McKinsey Quartely) Push should ensure that the brand is kept on the consideration set, or added if not there initially.

Discussion

PART III

Communication Strategy

Rossiter and Percy discussed four communication objectives: category need, brand awareness, brand attitude and brand purchase intention. ***Category need***, being an objective only necessary to remind the target of that need, is not an issue for Vichy because the its perceived need is already well established. ***Brand Awareness*** is defined by Percy and Elliot as the target audience's ability to identify a brand within a category in sufficient detail to purchase or use it, thus it proved to neither be an issue. ***Brand Attitude*** is related with a reason to select one brand over another. As results showed this objective is currently a problem faced by Vichy. Even though consumers have a positive attitude towards the brand, it does not seem to be strong enough to make them prefer it over competitors. As brand attitude is already positive but a reason to buy is required, ***Brand Purchase Intention*** is an important communication objective for Vichy. It is important to mention that it does not refer to the actual behavior of buying the brand, but only to the intention. According to the consumer decision journey, this communication objective must lead consumer to include Vichy in their consideration set.

A. Brand Attitude Strategy

To understand the adequate strategy it is important to explore deeper the concept of Brand Attitude. Percy and Elliot define it as how someone evaluates a brand with respect to its perceived ability to satisfy what consumers are looking for in the product. It has two components – cognitive and affective – related to this perceived ability to satisfy and the underlying motivation to behave.
The ***cognitive component*** represents the perceived ability of the brand to satisfy the motivation. According to the researches conducted, this component does not seem to be a problem for Vichy as most consumer consider its products effective and trustful.
The ***affective component*** is related with the emotional motivation. This feeling energizes the target audience to select a brand. As Vichy has been losing market-share for its main competitors, this seems to be the component failing in its current strategy.

Involvement and motivation are critical elements affecting purchase and usage behavior, thus should be taken into account when creating advertising and other marketing communication. Theory defines high involvement purchases as those having a great level of risk associated. Although the purchase of a dermocosmetic product can not be associated with a high level of risk, as it is not an impulsive purchase and most consumers feel the need to have pharmacists' advice or approval, it can be considered as an high involvement decision.

In what concerns the motivation, results presented that most consumers currently allocate Vichy between the treatment and beauty territory. Therefore, with a mixed motivation between problem removal and sensory of pleasure. From the information provided by Vichy team, one of the main objectives with the rebranding is to turn this motivation into a more positive one. Vichy aims to engage consumers to buy their products to feel a certain sensory of gratification, moreover than buying only them to solve a problem. This intended positive motivation are associated with transforming consumers mood, thus are commonly referred as transformational.

		Motivation	
		Informational	Transformational
Involvement	Low		
	High		**VICHY**

Table VII : Brand Attitude Strategy Quadrants from the Rossiter-Percy Grid

Implementing High-Involvement Transformational Strategy

High-involvement transformational strategies deal with purchase decisions that involve a certain physiological relation, and that are made to satisfy an underlying positive motivation. The critical concern is emotional authenticity and the target audience must personally identify with the brand. Simply liking the advertising is no longer enough, consumers really need to believe that the brand, as portrayed in the advertising, is the one that will satisfy the sensory of gratification underlying its need. The brand must communicate the feelings the target audience wants to experience in using the product.

This type of strategy is actually aligned with our results and further recommendations, as the current concept proved not be enough by lacking these emotional feelings that should be associated with Vichy. The insights obtained by testing the new concept make it reasonable to believe that the rebranding will be more aligned with a high-involvement transformational strategy.

Limitations

Main limitations:

- Being mainly based on qualitative research, our project faced the typical limitation of this kind of research:
  - Due to the lack of structure, it is possible for the interviewer to influence the results by leading the responses if he is not skilled enough.
  - The length of the interviews, leads to the use of small samples which are not representative of the population and might result in low accuracy in the data.
  - Difficulty in analyzing and interpreting the obtained data, due to the subjectivity of the speech and hidden messages in how interviewers express themselves.

Additional limitations:

- Although initially intended, it was not possible to gather many insights from male consumers on the topic, since most of them do not buy and use this kind of products and for those who do, they do not seem very engaged when talking about the subject. Therefore, the collected information was disregarded throughout the project.
- The results have also been influenced by the fact that the provided material was still unfinished and might lack some accuracy.
- During this second phase of research, which included both quantitative and qualitative techniques, the obtained results were contradictory. Moreover, due to the complexity of the industry and the existence of two type of behaviors among consumers, some quantitative questions proved to have some level of subjectivity. For example, while for treatment oriented consumers having a simple packaging was a positive aspect, for beauty oriented consumers, it was regarded has negative. Due to this, our insights are based on the qualitative techniques rather than in the quantitative techniques.
- It also proved to be difficult to approach some more sensitive and confidential topics with pharmacists, such as commercial conditions.

Final Address

The conducted project made it possible to understand the complexity of the dermocosmetic market. Its complexity and specificities make it challenging for a brand to thrive within it. With the emergence of beauty brands, we expect to assist to a modernization process of the more traditional brands, as well as the point of sale itself. Vichy had clearly find a segment of market where it can succeed by investing in a more emotional relationship with the consumers, but maintaining its treatment heritance and their more affordable prices (when compared to most of the emergent beauty brands). It is believed that this new concept will be able to reposition Vichy in a position of preference, with its respective gradual changes.

On a final note, we would like to state the usefulness of such a practical project for our future professional life. With all the barriers we had to overcome, from personal questions to practical issues, we believe we end this work project much more prepared to deal with the professional reality. Additionally to all the theoretical content we were able to learn, namely in what concerns to Marketing Research knowledge; it was possible to develop our soft skills, specially the communications ones with our frequent presentations.

It is a pleasure to be able to say that all the group members are glad of their choice in what concerns the work project, and that all of us end this chapter of our life much more wise than we began.

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