

Individual Work Project Final Report submitted as part of the requirements for the Award of a  
Master Degree in Management at Nova School of Business and Economics

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## Branding Lab

“How can digital help Biotherm growing in the Portuguese selective  
skincare channel?”



By

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**BIOThERM**  


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**1. List of Abbreviations**

BA	beauty advisor
e.g.	for example
i.e.	that is
POS	point-of-sale
SKC	skincare

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### 3. Introduction

This individual report is a subsequent part of a final report of a Master in Management conclusive work project at Nova School of Business and Economics, more precisely the 'Biotherm' Branding Lab. This project was elaborated by a group of four members, all in their last semester of the master program in management, in cooperation with the management team of the SKC brand 'Biotherm'.

Biotherm is a French brand created in 1952 when Jeanine Marissal, its founder, discovered the healing benefits of Life Plankton™. Nowadays, all Biotherm products still contain thermal plankton on their composition. The name "Biotherm" is a combination of "Biology" and "Thermal", representing the fusion of life science with natural ingredients which is the root of this brand. The slogan "*From the depths of living waters to the depths of your skin*" shows Biotherm's dedication in exploring and extracting aquatic active ingredients, using them on its advanced SKC products' formulas, being the most iconic the 'Aquasource' (moisturizer), 'Blue Therapy' (anti-aging), 'Lait Corporel' (body lotion) and 'Biomains' (hand cream). L'Oréal group acquired Biotherm in 1970 and 15 years later launched its male SKC line 'Biotherm Homme', which nowadays is number one worldwide in men's SKC (Euromonitor, 2012). In Portugal, this brand belongs to the L'Oréal Luxe division and is selling in the selective channel<sup>1</sup>. Contrary to what is happening with 'Biotherm Homme', the female SKC segment is facing some problems in the Portuguese selective SKC channel, being this last segment the scope of this project.

Internationally, the SKC female segment of Biotherm is currently having a profound shift on its positioning: moving from the previous biological approach described above to a modern lifestyle approach. Along with the new position as a modern lifestyle brand, a new

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<sup>1</sup> In the following 'selective SKC channel' refers to multi-brand selective distribution, i.e. products are sold at wholesale to dealers and retailers, including specialty stores, which in turn offer them to the end consumer in their own way.

target for this segment emerged - the “winning hedonist”- that can be defined as an active, energetic and joyful woman, living intensively her life, who is also smart woman and takes care of her health, body, mind and soul. Given the new global positioning of the female SKC segment, some questions arose for the Biotherm Portugal’s management team, for instance “*who is buying Biotherm nowadays in Portugal?*”, “*are they ‘winning hedonists’?*” and “*how can we reach them?*”. The objective of this branding lab was precisely to help them obtaining answers for these questions. Besides, Biotherm is experiencing a decrease in sales in Portugal for several years<sup>2</sup> which makes even more urgent to find answers for those questions in order to be able to come up with a solid plan to improve the situation of this brand in Portugal and assure it a successful future.

The project was organized in two main chapters: Chapter one was conducted by the four members together as a group and the objective was to make a brand diagnostic, in other words, to understand exactly what are the challenges that Biotherm is currently facing in the Portuguese selective SKC channel. Chapter two aimed at giving subsequent recommendations on how to overcome the challenges that were previously identified. The latter chapter was divided in four main topics and each member of the group developed one of those individually, being this individual report the elaboration of one of these topics.

**Chapter one** started with a secondary research that was composed by an overview of the overall SKC market in Portugal in order to have a better understanding of the context where Biotherm operates. Then, the group elaborated a primary research aiming at studying the current Biotherm Portuguese consumer. To do that, the group used two qualitative research’s methods: in-store observations and in-depth consumer interviews (see the project timetable in Appendix 1).

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<sup>2</sup> As the Biotherm brand management team changed frequently in Portugal over the last years, we were not able to obtain concrete data on this decrease.

**In-store observations** were conducted in four of the “principal doors”<sup>3</sup> of Biotherm: El Corte Inglés Lisbon, and Perfumes & Companhia of Cascaishopping, Vasco da Gama, Colombo and Norte Shopping. The members of the group were divided between those stores spending three days (eight hours per day) in each of them (see more details about the observations in Appendix 2). During the observations, all the women who approached the SKC area were observed (not only Biotherm consumers, but all the SKC selective consumers given their increasingly multi-brand consumer behavior) and their behavior was register in the Observation Grid presented in Appendix 3.

In order to prepare the **in-depth consumers interviews**, the group elaborated first a pre-recruiting questionnaire (see Appendix 4) with the objective of selecting an adequate sample that had to match the following criteria: 100% of the interviewees must be female, lived in Portugal for at least ten years and must have used (not necessarily purchased) at least one Biotherm product in the last three years. 30 in-depth interviews were conducted and the interviewees answered several questions (not only related with Biotherm but also about other SKC brands) regarding the following topics: consumer behavior, purchasing behavior and brand image (see the Interview Guide in Appendix 5).

The information gathered through the previous explained research, allowed the group to make a brand diagnostic and identified the **main challenges/ problems that Biotherm is currently facing in the Portuguese selective SKC channel**. The first issue identified is the fact that Biotherm operates in a very **challenging environment**, first of all because mass-market is becoming more and more competitive (offering quality products at affordable prices); the Portuguese SKC selective channel is very narrow; and the sales of premium SKC have experienced a decline compared to 2014 and are forecasted to further decline until 2019 (Euromonitor, 2015). Additionally, the selective SKC channel is mostly visited by a niche of

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<sup>3</sup> ‘Principal doors’ is a term used by Biotherm management team to define the stores that sell more Biotherm products

affluent consumers (mainly older) that do not match Biotherm's orientation towards a younger target.

Besides the challenging environment, Biotherm also faces some **problems concerning its service at POS**. From the information gathered through in-store observations we were able to conclude that L'Oréal Luxe's BAs (that are responsible for a portfolio of three SKC brands: Biotherm, Lancôme and Yves Saint Lauren) seem to not positively influence Biotherm purchases as they deviate consumers to other brands. L'Oréal Luxe's BAs prefer to sell more expensive brands which allow them to reach their monthly sales objectives<sup>4</sup> easier and this lack of motivation to sell Biotherm results in a poor consumer experience at POS.

The other major issue that Biotherm is facing is the fact that **consumers have little to no knowledge about this brand**. In-depth interviews showed that the majority of consumers do not know anything about the brand and Biotherm's brand image, i.e. its associations, are blurred and disconnected from its brand identity. Also the Biotherm's product offering is broadly unknown by consumers. This lack of knowledge represents significant problems for the brand: First of all because consumers do not know what the brand offers which can negatively influence future purchase decisions. Secondly, the fact that consumers do not know anything about this brand makes impossible for them to relate with Biotherm and therefore this brand is not able to have more than a few loyal consumers. Additionally, even if consumers want to learn more about the brand, they do not find the brand's support and presence as they would need, first of all because of the previously explained the poor POS experience, and second because Biotherm has very limited presence both in traditional and new media (such as digital).

Additionally, the insights from our research also allowed us to suggest a positioning for Biotherm Portugal<sup>5</sup>, that is: "To every active and health minded woman, living intensively her

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<sup>4</sup> One third of L'Oréal Luxe BAs' salary comes from the monthly sales objective

<sup>5</sup> The complete Segmentation, Target and Positioning is presented in the group report

life while taking care of her body, mind and soul. She values natural ingredients, protecting her skin and leaving it pure and radiant (*target*). Biotherm is a premium skin and face care brand (*frame of reference*) with a focus on natural efficacy, pleasurable textures, pursuing a holistic approach to beauty, i.e. a combination of physical health, inner calm, and an attractive external appearance (*point-of-difference*). With more than 60 years of expertise, Biotherm is a pioneer in skin biology, providing advanced skincare solutions that use the force of aquatic ingredients, working deep in the skin (*reason to believe*).” (Tybout & Sternthall, 2010).

**Chapter two** aimed at giving solutions to Biotherm on how to overcome the previously identified issues. This part was divided in four main topics that were developed individually by each member of the group: branding strategy was under the responsibility Anja Oboril, student number 1983, POS service strategy was developed by Sofia Fernandes, student number 2100, sampling strategy was written by Leonor Brigas, student number 2103, and **Digital Strategy** was elaborated by me, resulting on this individual report.

#### **4. Objectives and Organization of this Individual Report**

The main objective of this individual report is to give recommendations to Biotherm on how this brand can use the available digital tools to overcome some of the challenges that is currently facing in Portugal. Recommendations on digital strategy would be mainly focused on increasing and improving the consumer’s knowledge about the brand and, consequently, generate conditions to create a relationship between the consumers and Biotherm.

The present report starts with an academic and business oriented literature review aiming at understanding the importance of having an online present that must be interlinked with all the other offline marketing activities. Then, the focus is explaining what Biotherm is currently doing in Portugal regarding digital before moving on to the presentation of the



recommendations (first the overall recommended digital strategy and then some operational recommendations) with the objective of developing and enforcing Biotherm's online presence in order to bond with existing consumers and also acquire new ones. To finalize, the recommendations are prioritized according to the urgency of establishing Biotherm as a brand in consumers' minds and also taking into consideration Biotherm's budget restrictions.

## **5. Further Insights to address digital strategy**

### **5.1 Academic and business oriented literature review**

In the current digital age, brands have been challenged with the growing multi-channel consumer behavior characterized by a constant and fast movement between online and offline. To be successful, brands cannot focus on only one of these channels anymore, since consumers are going from online, to offline, to online again looking for information, engagement and to influence behaviors and decision processes (Mirchevska and Markova, 2011). Biotherm is not an exception and it is not difficult to imagine several scenarios where a consumer interconnects both channels to purchase a Biotherm product, for example: consumer sees an outdoor advertisement about the new Acquasource (offline), goes to the brand website and visit some blogs to have more information about it (online), decides to go to a store to buy it (offline) and finally, after trying the product and enjoying it, goes to the brand Facebook page to make a positive review about his/her experience (online). Therefore, the following recommendations for the future Biotherm's digital strategy take into account that it is imperative to have strong and meaningful links between online and offline channels. These links must ensure that the consumers have coherent experiences either they contact with the brand through online or offline touch-points (Edelman, 2010), and that the perception they have regarding Biotherm (i.e. brand image) is consistent no matter each channel they are using.

The consumer decision journey, presented in the previous section, emphasizes that online/offline necessary interlink between any brand's marketing activities. When applying this journey to Biotherm consumers<sup>6</sup>, it is easy to recognize that digital has a crucial role on some of the stages that this brand has to leverage: stage 2, 'evaluation' and stage 4, 'post purchase' (experience and advocate). On stage 2, Biotherm's digital strategy should take advantage of the fact that it is the stage where consumers look for information mainly online (see Appendix 6), and directing its digital tools on storytelling would make consumers know, trust and create an emotional bond with the brand. At stage 4, it is important to create a relationship with the consumer that goes beyond the moment of the purchase, therefore, digital would be useful to create 'territories' where people can go after the purchase in order to: first, have more information about the products they bought (more than 60% consumers of facial skincare products go online to conduct further research after the purchase (McKinsey Quarterly, 2009) ), then to make online reviews about their experiences and, ultimately, to engage and bond with the brand.

## **5.2 Biotherm current digital activities in Portugal**

Before starting the recommendations on the future Biotherm's digital strategy, it is important to first understand what Biotherm Portugal is currently doing in terms of digital marketing. After a deep search and with the information gathered during a meeting with Biotherm's product manager, Sara Abreu<sup>7</sup>, it was possible to compile the main current digital activities in Portugal:

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<sup>6</sup> The application of the CDJ to Biotherm consumers is presented in the individual report regarding Branding Strategy elaborated by Anja Oboril (student number 1903).

<sup>7</sup> This meeting was done before the members of the group start working on Chapter two, i.e. recommendations to Biotherm (see the project timetable in Appendix 1), in order to gathered information about Biotherm's plans for 2016

*Table 1: Biotherm’s current digital activities*

<p><b>Website</b></p>	<p>Regarding the <b>brand website</b>, only exists the Portuguese website for Biotherm Homme. According to Biotherm management team, the creation and the maintenance of a website for the female SKC segment represents high costs that Biotherm’s budget could not support. However, in the words of Biotherm management team, Portuguese women can still consult the general Biotherm website which, despite being in English, has all the information that they need about the products and the brand.</p>
<p><b>Social networks</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Global <b>Instagram</b> and <b>Youtube</b> account (that according to headquarters’ rules, it cannot be changed).</li> <li>• Each country where Biotherm is present has its own official Facebook page. Therefore, <b>Biotherm Facebook page</b> is the main digital tool that Biotherm Portugal uses to communicate with consumers, currently having the following characteristics/ content:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Focus on healthy lifestyle and on the idea of ‘Biotherm Woman’ (i.e. fit, healthy, free, wild, intense, “life to the full or nothing”, “nothing by half”, “winning hedonist” woman).</li> <li>o Use of the global ambassadors – Candice Swanepoel and Christy Turlington – on several posts and videos.</li> <li>o Presentation of current promotions discounts and announce sampling giveaways through digital platforms.</li> <li>o Information and curiosities about the products.</li> <li>o ‘1 minute challenge’<sup>8</sup> and “#CANCANDICE challenge”<sup>9</sup>.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

*Source: Branding Lab Group, based on data from the meeting with Biotherm’s product manager*

## 6 Recommendations to Biotherm addressing digital strategy

### 6.1 Overall recommended digital strategy

*“(…) with the advent of the Internet, social media and the dispersal of knowledge in every direction, corporations are in the unique position to distribute the information they’ve gathered in exchange for audience, readership and brand loyalty.” (Jutkowitz, 2014, p.5)*

<sup>8</sup> Biotherm’s trainer Lucile Woodward teaches how to do simple exercises that can be done at home without going to the gym and spending a lot of time.

<sup>9</sup> Participants reproduce some of the challenges done by the ambassador Candice and post a photo on Biotherm Facebook page to win a certain product.

With the current CDJ, **consumer-driven marketing** is gaining significance since consumer is having more control throughout all the purchasing process and he/she is actively ‘pulling’ information that is useful for his/her purchase (McKinsey Quarterly, 2009). Appendix 6 shows the importance that consumer-driven marketing’s touch-points have through the first three CDJ’s stages. For that reason, the overall Biotherm’s future digital strategy should be focused on **content marketing** - *“Strategic approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly-defined audience – and, ultimately to generate loyalty and to drive profitable customer action”* (N.N. (URL1)). According to Content Marketing Institute, this approach differs from traditional marketing since it is focused on owning media (channels that the brand controls such as website and social networks’ accounts), not renting it (i.e. paid media, such as display ads and paid search). Brands that follow the content marketing approach must have the ability to communicate with consumers without trying to sell: instead of pitching its products, the brand must deliver information that increases consumer’s knowledge. Studies prove that 80% of people would rather get information about a company through an article (brand publishing<sup>10</sup>) than through an advertisement ((N.N. (URL1)).

If it is done in the right way, good content marketing will make consumers stop, read and then behave and think differently. Jutkowitz (2014) said that a content marketing strategy will help brands being closer to the consumer by responding to his/her preferences; it will also allow the brand to react in real time (through brand publishing) while it creates, facilitates and lever brand own ideas; furthermore, it will increase transparency and strengthen brand’s image; and, lastly, content marketing strategy will help building brand’s legacy and give it a greater purpose (not being only economically important for society but also intellectually significant).

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<sup>10</sup> Brand publishing is a marketing strategy where brands treat themselves not as advertisers, but as content publishers (N.N. (URL2), 2013)

### ***Why content marketing is the best approach for Biotherm's digital strategy?***

As it was previously mentioned, in order to overcome the issues that were previously identified, one of the main focus of Biotherm Portugal should be the creation of a **strong and meaningful relationship with consumers**. Using content marketing, Biotherm will be able to deliver information that truly matters for its consumers, because it will be interesting and useful for them, and therefore it will have a positive impact on their lives. Subsequently, Biotherm consumers will feel that the brand is doing something 'good' for them and, consequently, they would be more 'receptive' to engage and bond with it.

Additionally, we are witnessing a growing interest and concern about health and fitness among Portuguese population. According to 1<sup>st</sup> edition of the *Observatório da Nutrição e da Alimentação em Portugal* (N.N. (URL3)), almost 67% of the Portuguese population said that they are having a healthier diet (having started that diet for more than six months). Also the increasingly number of websites and social networks' accounts focusing on fitness, healthy recipes, etc., proves the growing preoccupation of Portuguesees on taking good care of their health and bodies. For that reason, the new positioning of Biotherm as a lifestyle brand<sup>11</sup> represents an excellent opportunity to create the valuable and useful content the brand should distribute to its consumers.

Finally, as 'ultimate rewards' of using content marketing, the consumer's knowledge about Biotherm would increase and, lately, it would motivate brand loyalty.

## **6.2 Operational recommendations**

The next topics will develop three main operational recommendations for Biotherm in terms of digital:

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<sup>11</sup> The new positioning of Biotherm as a lifestyle brand is explained on page 3 and 4.

### 6.2.1 Website

As it was previously mentioned, Biotherm does not have a Portuguese version of its website for the female segment. However, having a website is very important for any brand that wants to be seen 'as a brand' since it is still a primary resource for consumers who seek for information regarding products and companies (N.N. (URL4), 2013). Moreover, the brand website is also the 'place' where people most rely to understand the full story of the brand (Connor, 2013).

According to Connor (2013) having digital presence only through social networks is not enough for consumers to get to know deeply the brand. First of all, most people do not look for a brand on social networks (such as Facebook), they may 'stumble upon it' but they are very unlikely to repeat the visit. Additionally, consumers normally start their 'search' through a searching engine (e.g. Google), so it is important to own that 'digital shelf space'. Connor (2013) also said that websites and social networks' pages have different mind-sets: consumers go to social networks when they want to 'have fun' and share their opinion/ experiences with others, while they go to a brand website when they want to solve a problem/ need and are looking for adequate information.

Furthermore, one of the major investments of Biotherm for next year will be sampling giveaways, as it is developed in the next section, and therefore it is very important to have an online 'territory' where people can go after trying the sample in order to know more about the product and about the brand they just tried.

Considering this, the first operational recommendation for Biotherm is the creation of a Portuguese website for women. When creating a website, it is very important to understand and to choose which would be the role(s) of that brand website. Connor (2013) presented four possible roles of a brand website:

*Table 2: Roles of a brand website*

<b>Informer</b>	<b>Seller</b>
A rational informative resource	A specialized transactional environment
<b>Expresser</b>	<b>Engager</b>
An emotional brand expression	An interactive and socialized brand experience

*Source: Connor (2013)*

These roles are not mutually exclusive: the ultimate objective of any brand website is to have the four roles working at the same time in a natural and effective way. However, when a brand website is created, it is important to decide on which role(s) to focus on and to prioritize them. For Biotherm women’s website, this should be the order regarding its roles’ priorities:

*Table 3: Prioritization of Biotherm’s website roles*

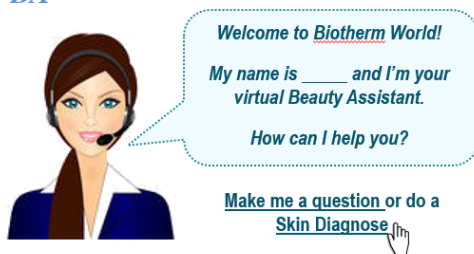
<b>1. Engager</b>
Taking into account that one of the main priorities of the brand is to build a relationship with consumers, it is important to focus on creating an experience through Biotherm website that would allow consumer to interact with the brand and therefore engage with it.
<b>2. Expresser</b>
Since current consumer’s knowledge about the brand is very limited or none, it is also important to use Biotherm website to express the emotional aspects of the brand and to communicate the full story of the brand.
<b>3. Informer</b>
As it was previously mentioned, brands websites are the main resource for consumers who search for information about the product, so, it is important to keep the information about each Biotherm products and also the story behind them on the website. Besides, the website should also give information about the physical stores where consumers can purchase Biotherm products.
<b>4. Seller</b>
Although e-commerce is gaining a lot of importance in the beauty market (A.T. Kearny, 2012), being an online shop should be the last priority of Biotherm website for now. Still, Biotherm should not ignore this trend and should support online purchases on P&C website (which nowadays is the only retailer selling Biotherm products online).

*Source: Branding Lab Group, based on Connor (2013)*

Typically, consumer visits the brand website to get information about some products or about the brand itself and in fact the Biotherm general website has all the information about

the Biotherm products and about the brand. Nevertheless, it is still important to have a Portuguese Biotherm website for the female SKC segment for two main reasons. First, according to Eurostat (2011), 42,6% of Portuguese women between 25 and 65 years-old do not speak any foreign language and once Biotherm general website's language is English, many Portuguese women are not be able to get any information from there. Second, and most important, the general Biotherm website is mainly focus on the 'informer' role and Biotherm Portugal needs 'something more' than that: it needs a website that, besides informing consumers, engage and bond with them.

*Figure 1: Example of a virtual Biotherm BA*



Source: Branding Lab Group

To achieve that (i.e. to have an 'engager' website), Biotherm must find a way to interact with consumers and make their experience on the website memorable. This could be achieved through the creation of a virtual Beauty Assistant. The virtual BA should have a name and would follow

the consumer throughout the visit on the website. Carrera (2009) suggests that the virtual assistant should also: react to some visitor's movement and actions (e.g. make certain comments, such "Do you know that this product is composed by pure thermal plankton that contains 35 nutrients?" when the visitant clicks in a certain product); inform visitants about current promotions/ actions of the bran; and the virtual BA should also show that she knows that the consumer visited the site previously.

### **6.2.2 Facebook Page**

As it was said, Biotherm Portuguese Facebook page is the main digital tool used by the brand and it is also the main channel of communication with consumers. However, this page is not being able to educate and engage with the consumer making very difficult for them to learn about the brand. This influences their future purchase decision and does not allow them



to relate with Biotherm. Given that, it is extremely important to improve and ‘boost’ Biotherm’s presence on Facebook.

In order to be consistent through all the digital channels, the Biotherm Facebook page must have the same roles previously defined for the website (i.e. 1. Engager, 2. Expresser, 3. Informer, 4. Seller). Therefore, it is also important to find ways to be dynamic and to interact with consumers within the Facebook page. An example of an interactive and appealing initiative could be the creation of a skin diagnose on the page that people could do and receive the results automatically as well as suggestions for adequate products and where they can acquire them. Moreover, the Facebook page should also be used to increase consumers’ knowledge about the brand, which, once again, should be done interactively and allowing consumers to ‘have fun’ while doing it (e.g. creation of a challenge where the first people answering correctly to a question about the brand win a certain product as prize). Finally, Biotherm Portugal should follow the example of Biotherm US and share on its Facebook page inspiring/motivational images and quotes (see Appendix 7) that would make people identifying with the brand, share the images on their own pages. This would make other people notice the brand (increase the awareness about it) and strength brand image.

### 6.2.3 Brand Community

For a brand that is trying to bond with consumers and have a strong relationship with them as Biotherm is trying to, creating an **online brand community**<sup>12</sup> could be a very clever and useful move since it would encourage build loyalty and engagement around this brand (see examples of successful branded communities that exist for at least five years and are still growing in Appendix 8). Additionally, a study conducted by Manchanda, Packard and Pattabhiramaiah (2015) proves that online brand communities can also increase sales by as

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<sup>12</sup> A brand community is “a specialized, non-geographically bound community, based on structured set of social relationships among admirers of the brand. (...) Like other communities, it is marked by a shared consciousness, rituals and traditions, and a sense of moral responsibility” (Muniz and O’Guinn, 2001, p.2)

much as 20%. However, in order to be successful (i.e. to engage with consumers and build loyalty), the brand community should not be driven by sales but by helping its members meeting their needs (Fournier and Lee, 2009). The increase in sales would come as a ‘reward’ for doing it right.

### 6.2.3.1 Biotherm c’Womanity

The Portuguese Biotherm online community would be named Biotherm c’Womanity and it will be focused on the lifestyle the brand wants to represent and to inspire. The name came from a merge between ‘community’ and ‘woman’ once it will be directed only to the female segment. The Biotherm c’Womanity will be basically ‘put together’ fit, healthy, free, wild, intense, ‘life to the full’, ‘nothing by half’, ‘winning hedonist’ women – **Biotherm Women** – and women who aspire to be like this.

This community would spread and ‘materialize’ the idea of what is to be a ‘Biotherm Woman’. In fact, the idea of being a fit, healthy and active woman is gaining a lot of importance and ‘followers’ in Portugal: some women are adopting this lifestyle and some others aim to do it. In other words, the idea of a ‘Biotherm Woman’ is already present in Portugueses’ mind, however, people do not identify this idea with the term ‘Biotherm Woman’. One of the main objectives of the c’Womanity is to make women understand that being fit, healthy and active means precisely the same as being a ‘Biotherm Woman’.

In other hand, the rise of such lifestyle is leading people to search for information and support mainly on internet (websites and social networks). This represents a great opportunity for the c’Womanity once it will be based on creating and delivering content that will help and motivate women who want to have a healthier and a more active life.

Furthermore, this community would make people connect with the brand and identified with its ideals. Basically, this branded community will work as a ‘bridge’ between Biotherm and its consumers (and also with potential future consumers) making them closer and giving

them an opportunity to know each other (i.e. consumers would increase their knowledge about the brand, and the brand would also be able to gathered information about its consumers and potential consumers) which would likely result in a long-term relationship.

### *c'Womanity features*

The Biotherm c'Womanity would be materialized through a Facebook page that would have free access to everyone. To receive the c'Womanity updates directly on their own *newsfeed*, people just have to 'like' and 'follow' the page. However, any woman who wants to become an 'official member' of this community must fill a registration questionnaire (see Appendix 9) which would allow her to receive at home a 'Welcome Kit' that would be mainly composed by a complete products routine in a sampling format (see Appendix 10 to know more details about the 'Welcome Kit'). This questionnaire would be connected to a database that would allow the brand to **reap information about consumers and potential consumers** that might be useful, not only for the c'Womanity, but also for some other marketing activities, such as sampling.

Moreover, in order to increase the visibility and the 'power' of the c'Womanity, it would be 'mentored' by **three Portuguese ambassadors**. Once this would be a community exclusively for women, the group of ambassadors should also be composed only by female celebrities. These women must: personify the 'Biotherm Woman'; be someone that is able to connect and engage with Biotherm's target (i.e. the 'winning hedonists'); and should also have a solid, well-established online presence with a wide network (Hayzlett, 2015). The ambassadors must be also already seen as reference for people who wants to have and active and healthy lifestyle. Given that criteria, the suggested ambassadors are (see a more complete profile of the ambassadors in Appendix 11):

*Table 4: c'Womanity ambassadors*

<b>Carolina Patrocínio</b>	TV presenter   203.000 followers on Instagram   131.641 likes on Facebook
<b>Isabel Silva</b>	TV presenter   191.000 followers on Instagram   109.174 likes on Facebook
<b>Sara Matos</b>	Actress   181.000 followers on Instagram   868.250 likes on Facebook

Source: Branding Lab Group, based on official pages (Facebook and Instagram) of Carolina Patrocínio, Isabel Silva and Sara Matos

The fact that the ambassadors are famous and they would be together would cause a lot of 'buzz' which would allow the brand capture the attention and, eventually, recruit new consumers.

### ***How the c'Womanity would work?***

The ambassadors and the brand itself would make several **posts** during the week within the c'Womanity with the objective of **helping the members to have the healthy, fit and active lifestyle** that Biotherm wants to transmit. The topics of the posts could be: fitness (e.g. exercises, training routines, motivation tips), healthy dieting (e.g. recipes, "*what to eat before and after training*", "*benefits of drinking water*") and skincare advices (e.g. skincare routines, "*food that is good for your skin*", "*what products to use this season?*"). The format of the posts could be: text, photo or video. The three ambassadors should have a rotation between the three topics: each week an ambassador would be responsible for one of the topics and she would have to make two to three posts about it. The subject and the format of the post should be decided by the ambassador. However, the members would be invited to make suggestions about topics or to expose some doubts they might have and would like to be elaborated/clarified by the ambassadors as well to comment and to discuss some of the subjects.

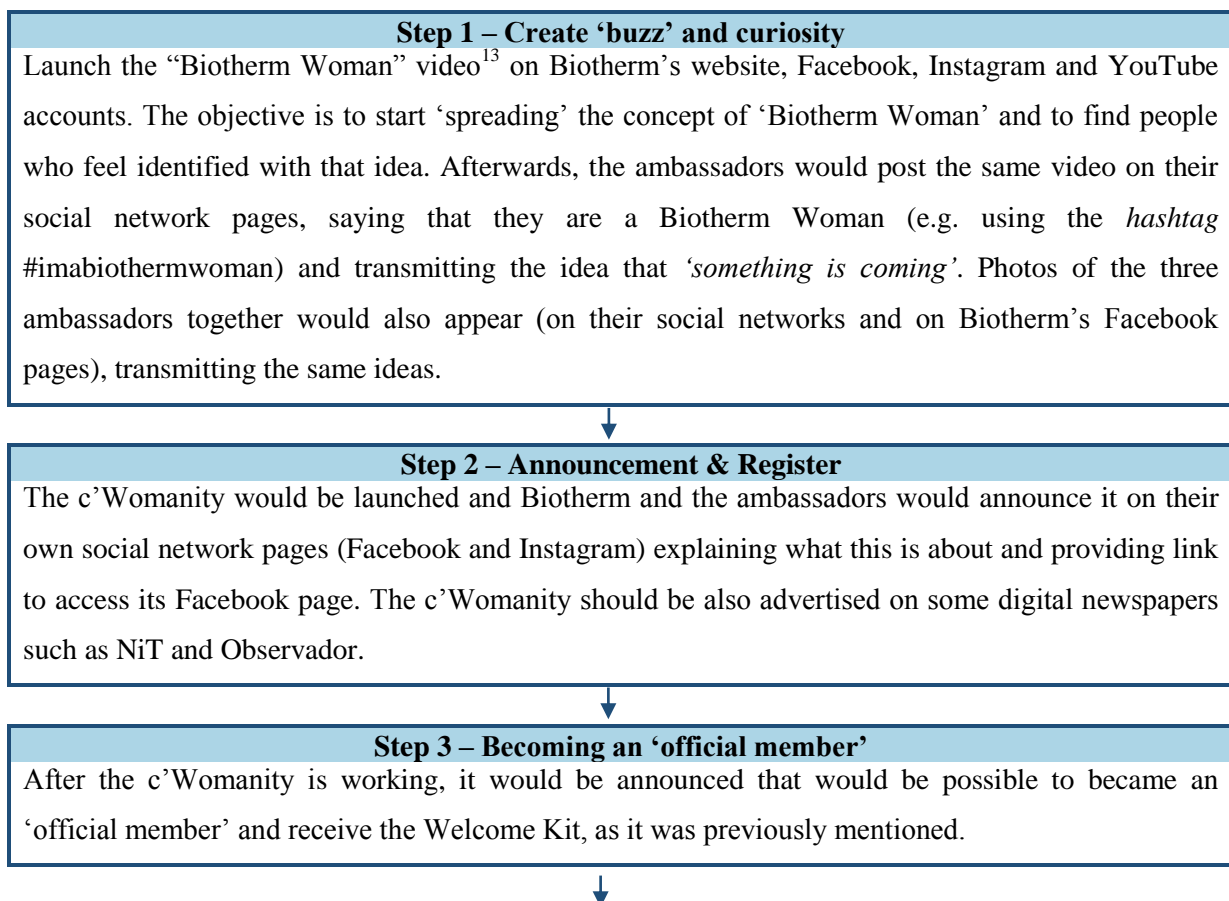
Every time the ambassadors post something on the community, they would announce it on their own social network accounts (Facebook and Instagram). This would capture a lot of attention to the c'Womanity (and consequently to the brand itself) since they have a large number of followers. The 'announcements' should be done in a way that people understand

what is the subject but it should not reveal all the content in order to create the desire to visit the c’Womanity, e.g. if it is a video, show just a few seconds of it, or if it is a written post, show some sentences only. The ambassadors should transmit the idea that “*if you want to see my complete post, visit the Biotherm c’Womanity*” and provide the link to that.

### **Implementation Steps**

In order to be successful, it is crucial to have a good plan to implement the c’Womanity. This plan must be done in a way that makes sure that most of the potential members (i.e. women who identified with Biotherm’s lifestyle) get to know that this community exist and most important, that they clearly understand what this is about.

*Table 5: c’Womanity Implementation Steps*



<sup>13</sup> Video that was already created by Biotherm’s headquarters that explains exactly what is the idea of being a Biotherm Woman

#### **Step 4 – Track satisfaction**

Two to three weeks after receiving the ‘Welcome Kit’, the ‘official members’ would receive on the given e-mail a brief questionnaire in order to track their satisfaction regarding the c’Womanity and the samples they received at home (see Appendix 12). This step would also help to understand the impact the c’Womanity is having on consumers’ life and to find space for improvement.

*Source: Branding Lab Group*

#### ***Beyond Digital ...***

According to Fournier and Lee (2009) being ‘just digital’ is not enough to build a true brand community. Putting the members of the community physically together plays an important role in fostering community’s connections. Therefore, it is important to create some events within the c’Womanity that would put members together on a physical place, sharing experiences.

The events must be aligned with the ‘philosophy’ of this community, focusing on healthy lifestyle (exercise) and being exclusive for women. Members of the c’Womanity could invite friends and family to participate which would represent an opportunity to promote the c’Womanity and to encourage more women to be part of it.

Taking advantage of each ambassador characteristics, three types of event would be created (each event would be led by one of the ambassadors): Carolina Patrocínio will be responsible for a ‘Fitness Bootcamp’; Isabel Silva would lead and organize a run (once she already organizes ‘women who run’ by Women’s Health<sup>14</sup>, Biotherm can take advantage of that); Sara Matos would be responsible for a ‘stretching session’ (in order to diversify the type of events since not all the women like to run or do high intensity workout). Every event will charge a fee and provide participants will a thematic t-shirt (see Appendix 13).

The three events should be held outdoors and the chosen place must have enough space to realize the activities and it should also have high visibility to create curiosity to the

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<sup>14</sup> Biotherm is planning to start a partnership with this magazine in 2016

outsiders (e.g. use Biotherm's flags to decorate the space of the event). This would be, one more way to promote the c'Womanity through its events.

## **7 Final Remarks**

The research that preceded this individual report, proved that Biotherm is a brand that, despite the undisputed quality of its products and the success in other countries, is facing serious problems in the Portuguese selective SKC channel. One of these problems is the fact that consumer's knowledge about the brand is very limited to none. This has many consequences for the brand: the consumers only know some products of the brand, making this brand perceived a group of isolated products and not as a 'brand' as it should be. Moreover, consumers cannot feel engage or related with a brand that they do not know and do not understand.

When analysing the origin of the previously explained issue, the group was able to understand that it starts at the POS where the L'Oréal Luxe's BA does not give to the consumer the adequate experience<sup>15</sup>. Additionally, the post purchase experience that Biotherm is providing to its consumers, that is done mainly through digital, is also failing to educate and to engage them. Given that, the improvement of Biotherm's digital strategy reveals to be extremely important and urgent.

As it is deeply explained in the individual report of Anja Oboril concerning branding strategy, in order to Biotherm be perceive as a "brand" it needs first to bond with the current consumers before acquiring new one. This came from the fact that this brand needs to first create an "engagement structure" , i.e. creation of "mechanisms" to engage the current consumer that currently seem to be only related with Biotherm because of the quality of the products and they are also too "lazy" to look for an alternative. After this engagement

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<sup>15</sup> This problem and the recommendations to overcome it are explained in the individual report regarding POS service strategy elaborated by Teresa Fernandes (student number 2100).

structure is created, Biotherm can start attracting new consumers always with the objective of leading them to enter in the previous explained structure. Therefore, in an idealistic scenario (i.e. not taking into account any budgeting constraints), this would be the prioritization of the digital recommendations:

1. In order to **retain the current consumers**, the group consider the improvement of Biotherm's current Facebook page as absolutely crucial and strongly recommends the creation of a Portuguese 'engager' website for the female segment.
2. To **attract new consumers**, the creation of the 'c'Womanity', using celebrities as ambassadors, is the suggestion of the group. This would increase Biotherm's visibility and (potential) consumers' interest. Furthermore, the country-specific Biotherm website is likely to support the acquisition of new consumers while they are in the second stage of the CDJ, i.e. 'evaluation' gathering to make their purchase decision.

However, taking into account that Biotherm as significant budgeting constrains<sup>16</sup>, it is important to also prioritize within a **realistic scenario**:

1. To **retain the current consumers**, improvements on Biotherm's current Facebook page should be applied (which does not represents high costs for the brand). The creation of the website cannot be pursued since, according to Biotherm's management team, it exceeds Biotherm's current annual budget.
2. In order to **acquire new consumers**, the creation of the Biotherm c'Womanity should still be part of Biotherm's plans. However, as Biotherm's budget might not be enough to take all three ambassadors into contract, we recommend the following ranking: #1 Isabel Silva, #2 Carolina Patrocínio and #3 Sara Matos. Our decision is based on the resemblance of the ambassador profile with the aspirational "Biotherm woman".

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<sup>16</sup> According to Biotherm's management team, since Biotherm's sale have been the decreasing for the last years, also the budget available for this brand have been also decreasing



Moreover, other advantages, such as current partnerships that certain ambassadors already possess, were taken into account.

Overall, digital recommendations, together with all topics elaborated through the individual reports (i.e. branding strategy, POS service strategy and sampling strategy), aimed at providing Biotherm with a pragmatic plan in order to achieve the shift in consumers' minds to be perceived as a brand in its entity and ultimately to grow in the Portuguese selective SKC channel.

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