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Selling Cosmetics

"Look at her skin it's so perfect", are the thoughts that go through young woman's heads as they compare themselves to the "flawless" model. What they don't realize is that she isn't real; but cosmetic companies such as L'Oreal, Shiseido, Revlon, and Lancôme want you to believe she is perfect because she uses their product. Evidence shows these advertisers successfully use the characteristic of exaggeration of image to sell makeup to young women. Anyone familiar with selling cosmetics would also agree that messaging value is the most significant way to increase sales. However, featuring a picture of the product is arguably the most significant factor in selling cosmetics.

Exaggeration of images is known by advertisers to be very successful in selling cosmetics to young women. In the Lancôme 2009 Mascara ad, the model is looking right into the camera, and you can't help but notice her long eyelashes that we can assume are cleverly unreal. Even though this image was exaggerated, it is still successful in selling mascara because it makes young girls wonder if this specific Lancôme Mascara will give them results as stunning as the model. Another great example is in the Shiseido 2010 eyeshadow ad featuring Raquel Zimmermann, which uses dramatic and exaggerated

images to display the effects of their makeup. This is an effective technique to sell products to young women because when they are looking to purchase makeup they clearly remember the desired effects Shiseido cosmetics will give them. The hook of exaggerated image is also used in Revlon 2013 foundation ad featuring Emma Stone in which the smoothness of her skin is exaggerated. This hook works well for them by making the consumer realize their skin is nowhere as smooth as Emma's, which leads them to purchase the product in order to look as flawless as the model.

Professionals familiar with selling cosmetics could agree messaging value has always been the most successful way to increase sales. The 1970's Revlon mascara and eye shadow ad used a model with large gorgeous eyes and the text that says, "Big eyes". This simple advertisement layout makes the viewer self-conscious about their eyes which increases the selling of the product. This increases selling by giving viewers the perceived value that buying this product will make them feel less insecure about their own eyes after using the product and this is a perfect example of how messaging value works. In a more recent L'Oreal foundation advertisement, there is a model with flawless skin and a caption that simply says, "Fight the signs of a makeup meltdown". This shows messaging value by making the reader feel that without this makeup they are physically and mentally not able to face any type of meltdown. It gives off the perceived value through messaging that with the purchase of this product, they could face anything and their skin will look like the models instead of a makeup meltdown.

Another advertisement for Lancôme's foundation shows a clear, vivid picture of the bottle of liquid foundation. This advertisement is extremely successful in selling products because young women, their largest consumers, have a tendency to buy and pay attention to what they can see. So, cosmetic ads that include a picture of the product are successful by showing women what they are purchasing. Therefore, using the characteristic of an image of the product is arguably the most successful way to sell cosmetics.

Exaggerating images works effectively to sell cosmetics to young women, but the characteristic of messaging is arguably just as successful. However, showing an image of the product in a makeup advertisement is also a notable characteristic. When women are looking to buy any type of cosmetics they look at the images. When the images that catch their eyes have been exaggerated; they feel inferior which means they are being affected by messaging value. Companies like L'Oreal, Shiseido, Revlon, and Lancôme are all very successful in the cosmetics world because they display images of the product, along with the hook of messaging value using exaggerated images.