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WE KNOW WOMEN ALL ABOUT EVE

Don't think pink! (Part 1) Overt vs Covert

Hot off the press from All About Eve, here's the latest to get you thinking like a girl:

Should we shout loudly that we're singling out women, or will that offend? How obvious or subtle is the right approach to women?

The answer: both can work but choose the one most appropriate for your offer. Let's look at each end of the spectrum:

Overt

Your aim here is to make it obvious you're targeting her because she is female, so use recognised, obvious gender cues such as the colour pink.

The tricky bit is judging when cues are acceptable to her, versus lazy or misinformed stereotype shortcuts e.g. all women love to be shown you care, versus showing you care = give flowers.

What started as a clever use of a coloured ribbon to show support for a female focused disease, has become the most successful marketing use of pink.

Covert

You focus on her needs, not her gender, eg she's busy and looking for ways to do more with less time. Often this approach means you hit a male need too, because it's about need, not gender. This is standard good marketing practice.

However, the covert part comes in the way you then communicate that need and link it to your brand. Think of it as talking her talk, as a friend would – right style, relevant content and language e.g. use a more invitational style to build trust with her and tell stories to bring a human factor into play which she will more easily relate to.



A great example of effective targeting to mums. Clarks has understood how to talk her language and make her care about fitting and quality in shoes that last only months thanks to those growing feet.

When does overt work well?

When there is a genuine value or benefit to be gained by her from purchasing the tailored female version of the product. This could be connected to functional delivery, safety, fit and so on. It is based on clear and apparently intuitive insight into her different needs because she is female.

When does covert work better?

On most occasions! Outside of where it's accepted that men and women want different things, most women won't thank you for singling them out for "special treatment". Why? Because often there's a subtle social history that has meant women were considered inferior consumers eg buying and owning cars, mechanical or technical gear, or operating in lower status categories... housework versus business.

Make the same "sell" as you would to a man but change how you sell it.

In the next issue we'll explore a few examples of both overt and covert work targeting women to give you a deeper understanding and awareness of these approaches. Until then, consider whether you're thinking smart when talking to your female audience or just thinking pink.

Thanks to: Breast Cancer Foundation, Clarks Shoes

For a full insight and application to your brand, contact linda.mcgregor@allabouteve.com.au

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All About Eve is a consultancy specialising in female understanding and strategic marketing. We offer smarter and more effective paths to connect with women and capture their purchasing power. If you think we might be able to help you or you're curious to know more about us please contact Linda McGregor on 0403 573 379 or Linda.McGregor@allabouteve.com.au