

BACK ON TRACK

A FRESH DIRECTION FOR THE REXONA BRAND

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INTRODUCTION

This paper describes how Rexona had lost its way in France and how research was used to create a new category language to show the way back to growth. A fusion of different approaches was used, including Semiotics, Extended Creativity Groups, In-depth QiQ QualiQuant interviews and Consumer Photo Diaries. The approach used, based on the RESC™ model, looked at Rexona in terms of the extent to which it fulfilled needs at the Rational, Emotional, Social and Cultural levels. Unilever management were at odds on why Rexona was losing share with debate in some circles about efficacy communication while others felt that the cultural portrayal of the Rexona woman was out of sync with how modern women feel about themselves. The research was needed to provide a definitive answer which went deep enough to understand how women feel about themselves while also providing robust numbers to ensure management would feel confident enough to take the decisions they needed to take to halt the decline of the brand.

THE PROJECT

Integration was the key to this project. The project objectives necessitated talking to all allied groups affiliated with this brand in Unilever, the amalgamation and fusion of different research techniques to crack the objectives, merging qualitative and quantitative research results, and finally creating a confederation of interested parties in workshops to unify Unilever thinking to solve the marketing problem.

The marketing problem was that in France both deodorant brands were under pressure. In the year prior to research Rexona had lost share points to a local L'Oreal brand, Narta. Rexona somehow seemed to have lost touch with consumers in France. The other problem was that marketing teams were dancing to different tunes without a common language. They couldn't agree which of the following factors were causing the problem, i.e. whether functional credentials were being communicated strongly enough or whether cultural factors were having a stronger influence? Was the portrayal of femininity for Rexona/Sure optimal? The challenging task for the research was to diagnose at what levels the problem was occurring, i.e. functional, emotional, social and/or cultural and to create a common language and agenda for marketing action to find a new road map for these brands that had lost their way in this market. Conventional qualitative research had brought some of the problems with Rexona to the attention of Unilever but wasn't robust and conclusive enough for them to develop a clear action plan. At the same time, conventional quantitative research was not deep enough to tackle the emotional, social and cultural dimension of the relationship between the consumers and the brand.

We realised that we needed to fuse and synthesise different sources of understanding including internal stakeholder interviews, semiotics, in-depth qualitative and sensitive online quantification.

We also needed a model to interpret the results, and choose the RESC™ model. The RESC™ model involves looking at consumer needs holistically by going beyond rational (R) and emotional (E) motivations, to also look at

motivations at the social (S) and cultural (C) levels. This model is a powerful management strategy tool since it segments needs into these four levels of what motivates people to buy brands and shows whether brands are working either in harmony or opposition. In this case we examined qualitatively, through semiotics and Extended Creativity Groups™, what these needs are and how they influence brand positioning. Then quantitatively we segmented brands and people in terms of how brands are positioned relative to these needs.

The RESC™ model is powerful enough to apply to a wide variety of categories and is particularly useful for cross cultural brand diagnosis across different markets in different cultures. The principle behind RESC™ is that human behaviour is heavily influenced by **E**motions, not solely by **R**ationality. As Jung put it, there is a 'thin layer of **R**ationality' surrounding our decision-making and behaviour, a view which is being increasingly supported by investigations into Neuroscience. Consumers often operate through the emotional centres of the brain, independent of conscious control. **S**ocial and **C**ultural needs and associations influence emotional brand connections and are key influencers of consumer's thoughts, feelings and behaviours, in their everyday lives and within their relationships with brands. There are the 'hot spots' of unconscious memories and associations, or somatic markers, which control 95% (more or less depending on the product area) of how we behave and the brands we choose. Antonio Damasio (1994 and 1999), who elaborates the 'somatic-marker' hypothesis, said that somatic markers are involved in emotional learning, help to reduce some options in decision-making and highlight others. Somatic markers represent the imprinting of emotions into long term memory that can later trigger behaviour such as brand purchase when recalled into working memory. Thus RESC™ is a way of understanding and measuring the implicit associations within somatic markers. **R**ationality is often used to justify what we do, and give us reasons to believe. Brand choice then needs to take into account all aspects of our lives, our experiences, feelings, dreams and fantasies, as well as **R**ationality. In this case study, we show how in-

depth qualitative psychology can be fused with sensitive online research to delve deeper into the minds – and brains – of consumers.

The RESC™ system originates in the search for holistic explanations or causes of behaviour. Much depends upon the theoretical or philosophical orientation of investigators, for example:

- Psychologists identify causes in terms of perceptual, sensory, cognitive, learning, thought, attention, and memory processes. We capture these under the term '**R**ational'.
- But psychology also focuses upon emotions, sensations, feelings, language, prejudice, beliefs, the unconscious, personality, and upbringing, now demonstrably active in neuro-science as well as classical psychology. These we describe as '**E**motional'.
- Social psychologists focus upon the influence of the social or group situation on perception and conformity to the implicit or explicit 'rules' of social behaviour. Sociologists explain behaviour in terms of wider social forces, like social stratification, that affect individual behaviour. This collection of influences we cover in our '**S**ocial' category.
- Cultural anthropologists look to cultural icons, symbols, narratives, stories, folklore and social history to identify which of these binds cultures together or sets them apart. These we categorize under '**C**ultural'.

The point, of course, is that these various influences interact and influence one another. Taken alone, they give rise to different and often conflicting interpretations, each with their own paradigm (Kuhn, 1970) but there is seldom a single cause of consumer behaviour, and in the vast majority there is multiple causality.

Hence in RESC™ we propose measures of four basic levels – the **R**ational, **E**motional, **S**ocial, and **C**ultural – in order to reach a holistic view. Out of this holistic data source we then identify which of these sources of influence are likely to be more important in two ways:

- First, by examining the qualitative outputs, including phenomenological analysis, to provide psycho-social-

cultural insights into how and why consumers behave as they do. By phenomenological analysis (which some psychologists describe as ‘sniffing’ the data!), we mean developing empathy with target markets through the language and symbolism they use in their stories and projectives.

- Second, by using statistical regression, correlations, and structural equation modelling to provide an analysis of statistical causality and segmentation of needs.

We can therefore bring to bear a sensitive combination of statistical and psycho-social-cultural approaches (Ragin et al, 2004). Out of this, it is possible to describe the rational, emotional, social and cultural factors driving behaviour. ‘QualiQuant™’ data is deliberately self-reported, using direct, indirect, and projective questioning. The RESC™ system is also designed to be versatile and modified to meet different areas of investigation. For example:

- Take the question of determinants of product formulation, and taste or smell. All of these are influenced by RESC™, but here we need amplify the **R** and the **E** to include physiological and sensory responses (Cooper and Branthwaite, 2002).
- Or, consider investigating Corporate Responsibility, we need to amplify the **S** and the **C** to include perceptions of moral and ethical issues.

Further academic support for the RESC™ system comes from contemporary texts. Virtually all modern texts in the social sciences cover the RESC™ system, from biopsychology, neuroscience, consciousness, development, sensation, perception, learning, remembering, forgetting, thought, language, motivation, emotion, personality, social processes, social perception, and abnormal or deviant behaviour. RESC™ integrates these into an overall working system.

Social scientists use various heuristic models and visual metaphors to capture the ways that these RESC-style systems interact:

- Helix visual forms to show the progressive development of societies, particularly at the **S** and **C** levels (Beck and Cowan, 1996);

- Concentric circles to show the progressive influence of **R-E-S-C**, and vice versa;
- Pyramidal models as in Maslow (1954);
- Or, more ‘geological’ models to show deeper influences of **E** on **R**, which is a common metaphor favoured in psycho-dynamic theory.

Social scientists often use the term ‘domains’ to describe the influences upon behaviour. For example, Averill and Moore (1993) suggest that three systematic domains are important in understanding happiness – the biological system, the psychological system, and the social system. Others, e.g. Power and Dalgeish (1997), show that information and influence can be grouped into similar domains: self, others, and the world. Still others will encapsulate these forces into: micro, meso, and macro, showing similar influences of rational, emotional, social, cultural.

The other key element in the RESC™ approach is determining how these motivation influence the consumer brand relationship. Implicit in the RESC™ approach is the notion that the source of value for the consumer is based on the relationship it has with the brand (Roberts, 2004; Gobé, 2001). This particular aspect of Emotional Branding has its conceptual roots in the paradigmatic shift from transactional exchange to relationship marketing (Berry, 1983).

Consumer-brand relationships are driven by emotion and feeling and understanding these relationships is an important input to emotional marketing. Fournier (1998) offers a comprehensive relationship-orientated view of interactions and a proposed working model for the field of consumer-brand relationships from her research:

“At the core of all strong brand relationships was a rich affective grounding reminiscent of concepts of love in the interpersonal domain. The affect supporting brand relationships endurance and depth was much greater than that implied in simple notions of brand preference. Informants in strong brand relationships felt that ‘something was missing’ when they had not used their brands for a while.”

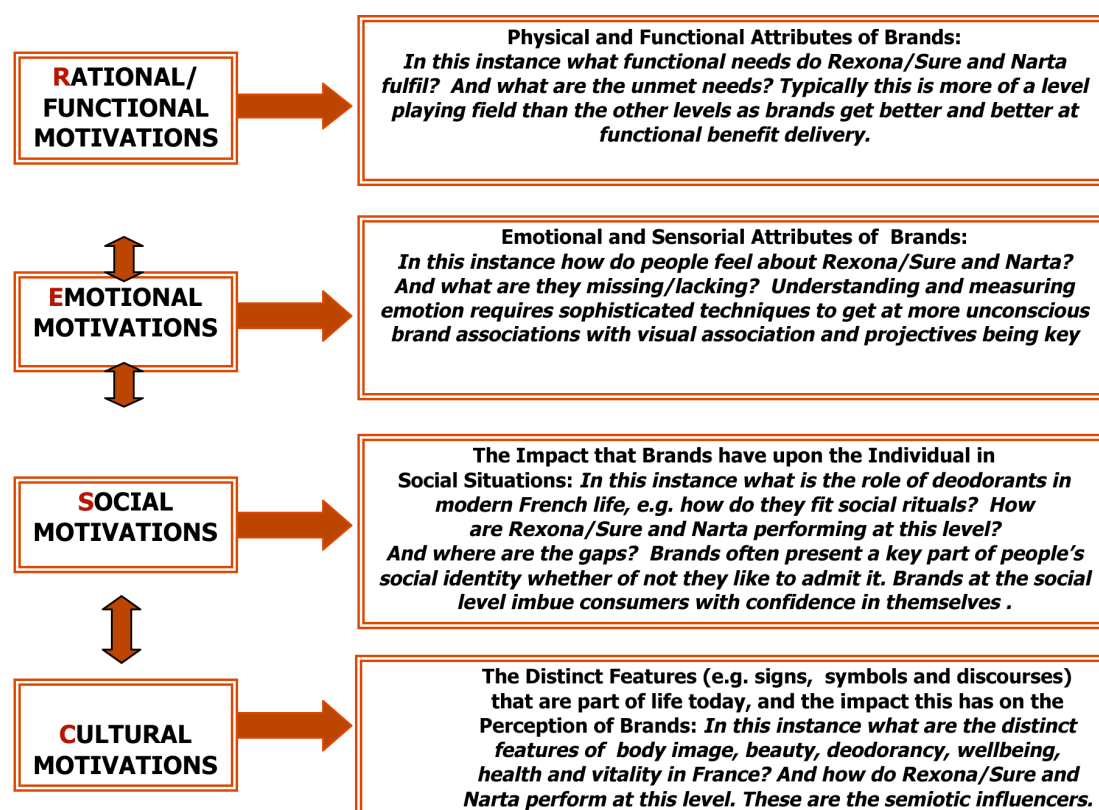
Specifically, Fournier identifies fifteen relationship forms spanning (i) 'arranged marriages', 'dependencies' and 'flings'; (ii) alternative brand relationship trajectories ('biological life cycle', 'growth-decline-plateau', 'approach-avoidance', 'cyclical resurgence', 'stable maturity'); and (iii) components of what she terms BRQ (Brand Relationship Quality) – a six-faceted brand relationship quality construct which includes 'love/passion', 'self-connection', 'commitment', 'inter-dependence', 'intimacy' and 'brand partner quality'. In Fournier's more recent work on consumer-brand relationships (Aaker, Fournier and Brasel 2004), she expands the scope of enquiry to embrace the interactive effects of brand personality and acts of transgression on the evolution of relationship strength over time.

Thus the basis of the RESC™ brand model in this case was as follows (see figure 1).

Through a series of stakeholder interviews it became evident that there were conflicting hypotheses internally about at what level the problems for Rexona really lay. Was it at a product level? Was it at an emotional level? Was it at a social level? Or even at the cultural level? These stakeholders included Global Brand Directors, the European Innovation Centre, the French Marketing Team, Technical Management and the Advertising Agency. With such an important brand operating in a complex market, the research needed to be both highly in-depth and sensitive plus being robust enough to give Senior Management the confidence to make the decisions that were necessary to turn the brand around in France and enhance its European share. A new common category language was needed.

After the stakeholder meetings the range of qualitative techniques employed in this project to uncover RESC™

FIGURE 1
RESC™ – A HOLISTIC SEGMENTATION OF CONSUMER NEEDS



associations for Rexona involved stakeholder interviews, a semiotic analysis, photo diaries, and Extended Creativity Groups™ (ECGs™) to explore key dimensions of the market. The qualitative stages were used to creatively generate the main verbal and visual associations, social influences and cultural factors to be quantified. In the final stage we conducted 1000 QiQ interviews in France and the UK using creative and interactive online interviews. The UK was done to provide a comparative context.

The online interviews used a variety of creative qualitative style questions to measure emotional, social and cultural factors. This included projective storytelling to describe the modern woman, visual associations to quantify semiotic discourses, examination of cultural icons including local female personalities associated with brands and also 'brand worlds'. The later task involved measuring the emotional associations and type of women who might live in each brand world. We used PC/Web based methodology because the interviewer is virtual. This gives the respondent a lot of freedom and encourages spontaneity and creativity. It allows emotions to emerge more fully and richly because there is not an interviewer present. The presence of an interviewer can force the respondent into a more rational mode, resulting in excessive cognitive processing of the material being tested (Pawle, Cooper 2002).

The PC/Web interface is ideal for measuring emotion, social and cultural brand associations because of its interactive and visual nature. Additionally, because this type of interview is quite involving and fun, it is possible to sustain a longer interview than is the case with most self completion computer and web interviews (Pawle, Cooper 2000). We use specially constructed scales which measure the **R**ational, **E**motional, **S**ocial and **C**ultural relationships between consumers and brands in verbal and visual terms. The results are analyzed both statistically and qualitatively to determine category motivations and consumer-brand relationships.

Moving onto the results it was critical to start by understanding the social and cultural context in which modern French women live and then move onto understanding

how closely or not these connect with brand image and communication. The semiotic analysis identified icons of femininity and then we took these forward into the Extended Creativity Groups™. The cultural model that emerged was of the evolution of the French Woman. They are rejecting the 1980s/90s ideal of 'Empowered Woman' which was the main cultural discourse with which Rexona was identified. They are re-assessing their Values. In their search for balance modern French women are redefining their idea of modern Womanhood. This involves looking to the past in order to define the future. As a result of finding this balance they are feeling more confident and comfortable with themselves, and are enjoying more overtly expressing their femininity again (see figure 2).

This understanding of the modern French woman was further enriched from the online interviews by using storytelling. We used story telling in the online context by asking respondents to tell the story of the typical modern French woman.

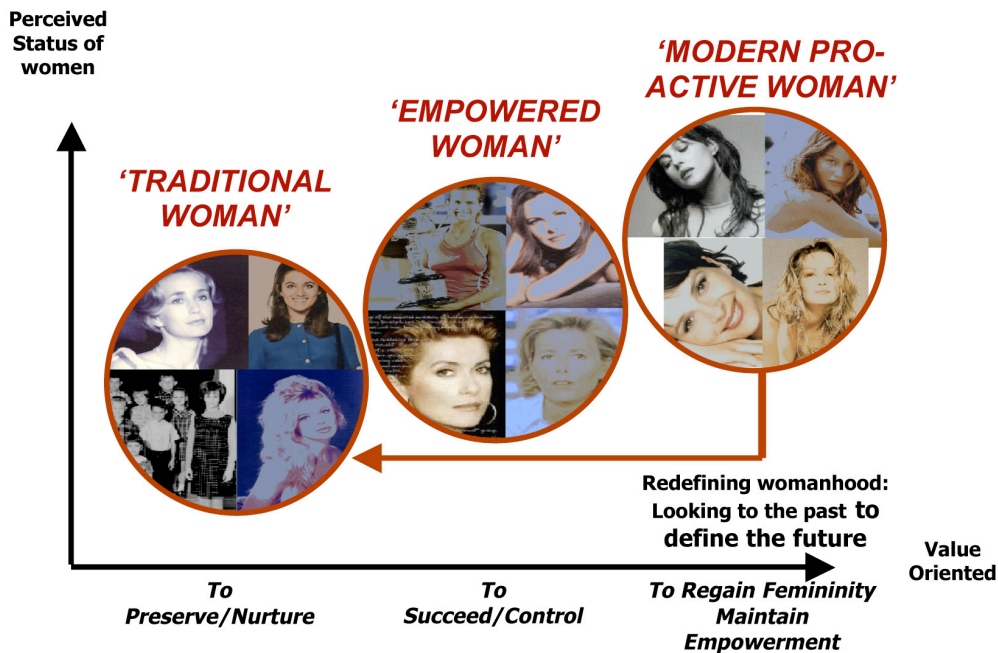
Storytelling is one of, if not the most powerful forms of human communication and a fundamental way by which we structure and make sense of our lives. Schiffrin (1996: p.167) expands on this point by noting how

"[t]he stories that we tell about our own and others' lives are a pervasive form of text through which we construct interpret and share experience: we dream in narrative, daydream in narrative, remember, anticipate, hope, despair, believe, doubt, plan, revise, criticise, gossip, learn, hate and love by narrative!"

As such it is both highly relevant to passing on ideas and persuasion, and from our perspective is a major tool for collecting information about consumer relationships with brands and the emotions involved. Some of the main benefits to be obtained from consumer storytelling are (Pawle, Cooper 2002):

- They contain meaningful experiences about the roles of brands in everyday life; often these are memorable events at which loyalty is fixed. We remember or 'fix' things by storytelling, similar to 'somatic markers'.

FIGURE 2
THE EVOLUTION OF FRENCH WOMEN



- They invariably engage and express emotions; emotions are expressed in 'safe' ways which are often censored in normal conversation or interviewing; storytelling gives the respondent 'permission' to say things which are otherwise suppressed.
- They tell who we are, what we want, our relationships to brands, and what we fear. Storytelling in its broader sense is the source of cultural ideas and values which are passed on from one generation to the next.
- They are actively introspective and autobiographical, and therefore oblige the respondents to reflect and call up very personal images, and structure them, usually in the sense of a beginning, middle, and end.
- In their classic form they are oral but we use the written form in quantification for ease of analysis. In qualitative terms, stories can be acted out as in psycho-drama and role-playing. In art of course, stories are told through pictures, music and song.
- Importantly stories also engage the analyst or listener, often as compelling 'truths' about a brand, which produce insights or direct applications to communication, or 'story-selling' as it has been called.

- At the same time, stories are shared both between consumers where word of mouth from influential or inspirational consumer pass virally. They are also shared between the brand and consumers. Brand and consumers are co-owners of brand stories.

Here are some examples from this study showing the richness of online story telling

First a quote from the QiQ QualiQuant™ study in France:

Il était une fois une femme française : raffinée dans ses vêtements dans son parfum les cheveux au vent le week end coiffure sensuelle le soir et légèrement strict e au travail. Personne dynamique en contact régulier avec des hommes qu'elle n'a aucun mal à diriger et qui la respectent en tant que personne accomplie. Mariée et mère tardivement car sa place dans le monde du travail n'a pas été aisée mais une fois aboutie ses vies professionnelles personnelles relationnelles sont en symbiose. Soutenue par un mari ou compagnon attentionné valorisé par celui ci sûre d'elle du haut de ses 30-35 ans. Voilà pour moi la vie de la femme française moderne typique idéale ! Je pense

que l'on essaye toutes de s'en approcher...avec plus ou moins de succès.

Translated into English this reads as:

There was a French woman: refined with her clothes, with her perfume, letting her hair float in the wind at week end and with a more strict hairdo at work. A dynamic person in regular contact with men who she doesn't have any problem to manage and respect her as an accomplished person. Married and a late mother because finding her place in the work life wasn't easy but once she managed that, her professional and personal relationship were in symbiosis. Sustained by an ever thoughtful husband/partner, her standing increased by him, confident now in that she is 30-35 years. This for me is the life of the ideal typical modern French woman! I think we all try to reach this life...with more or less success.

Here is a quote from the QiQ QualiQuant™ study in the UK:-

There was a successful woman named Taylor with her own home, a very good career and a brand new Z4. She has gorgeous chestnut brown hair and a perfect hourglass figure. She spent her spare time shopping, going to the gym, spending time with her family and friends and going out clubbing at weekends. She met her prince charming, Jackson, one Saturday night clubbing who had an equally great career and a very nice car and they enjoyed many years together going on fantastic holidays and partying at weekends. They then had a fairytale wedding and their first baby was conceived on their honeymoon in Jamaica at which point they then had to decide how they would spend their married life together. As an independent woman, Taylor married for a partnership but she is also a maternal woman who wants to spend time with her children, so after many months of discussion they came to an agreement where she would go back to work part time and he would help out with the chores in the home part time, and they lived happily forever.

The online QiQ QualiQuant™ research showed that French and British women at a superficial level are in fact very similar.

"European women are all much the same – we are modern, proactive, we cope with everything. We are dynamic, we move forward and we are interested in everything."

However there are subtle and highly significant differences. French women see themselves as more discreet, i.e. natural and simple appearance, holistic about health and wellbeing, dynamic – having energy and elegant. British women, on the other hand, see themselves as more sceptical of authority, i.e. independent from her partner, always concerned with her looks, status conscious and health conscious (going to the gym rather than the more holistic approach to wellbeing of the French women).

Having understood the emotional, social and cultural context in which modern French (and British) women live their everyday lives, we moved on to examine needs and motivations to buy Rexona and Narta. So our research looked both qualitatively and quantitatively at consumer's rational, emotional, social and cultural needs for each brand, the "Ideal" brand and competitors.

At a Rational/Functional level, Rexona scored well in terms of Functional credentials, but there was little difference compared to Narta. Although Rexona was regarded as one of "the" ultimate efficacy brands, there was still room for improvement as consumers do not believe that any brand offers the ideal protection. In addition Rexona, although not at a competitive disadvantage to Narta in terms of overall effectiveness, was perceived to have a harsh fragrance. Also qualitatively there were respondents who felt both Rexona and Narta are too aggressive and chemical, this opening up an avenue for Rexona to drive towards a less harsh positioning. Also the research indicated that the reassurance of efficacy needs to be broader than just based upon sportiness, particularly at the other RESC™ levels.

So at the Rational level Rexona was consistent with category norms. It was close to Narta and the Ideal. At this level Rexona was not at a competitive disadvantage. Based upon this in depth Qualitative and QiQ QualiQuant™

study, it was clear that Rexona and Narta were very close in terms of Deo Efficacy. Indeed, they dictate the norms for Deos in France. At the time of the research, Narta was actually closer to the Ideal than Rexona.

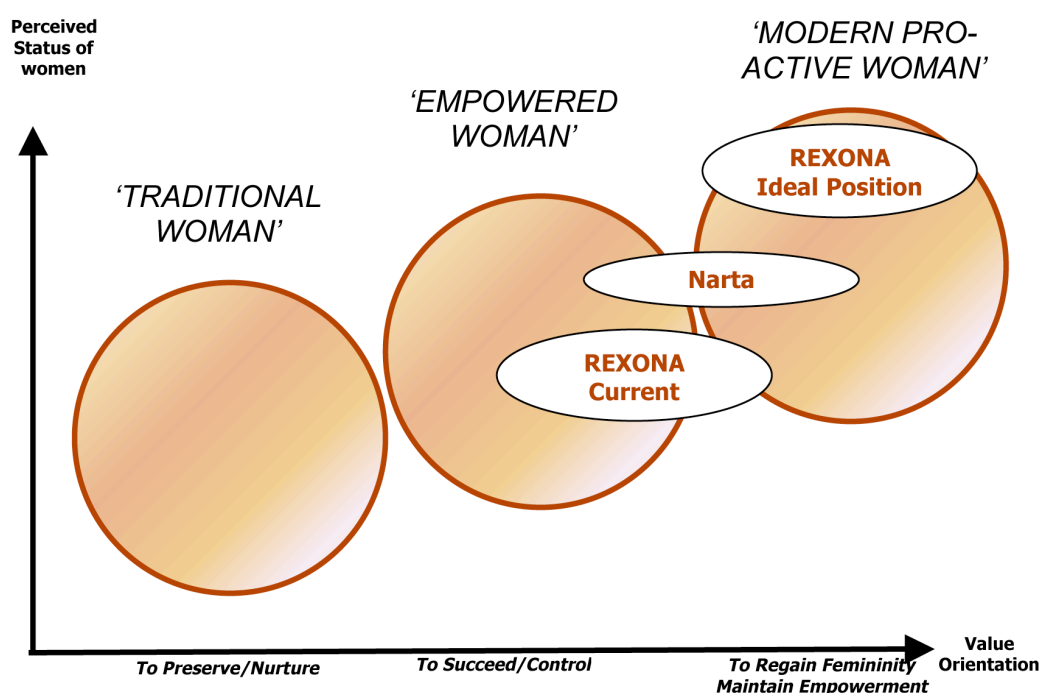
At an emotional level we start to see some separation between the brands although neither brand was particularly close to the ideal, indicating that at this level there was still no dramatic competitive advantage. However at the emotional level Narta tended to be perceived as more celebratory, happy, and cheerful. Rexona, on the other hand, at the Emotional Level, tended to be more Stressed, Determined and Focussed but stressed, more masculine and a bit more loud and brash than Narta.

At the Social Level, this difference between Rexona and Narta continued to be evident, and they were even further apart, with Narta being slightly closer to the Ideal. Whilst Narta was sociable, fun loving and optimistic, Rexona was more about Meeting Everyday Challenge and Survival.

However, it was at the Cultural Level that we really saw the stark contrast between Rexona and Narta. Narta was now far closer to the Ideal. Whilst Narta was Young, Independent and Ambitious, Empowered, Modern and Fun-Loving, Rexona was Tomboyish, Competitive, Sporty, Stressed and Playing Men at their own Game. These associations were strongly influenced by the Brand's past advertising. Importantly, as noted earlier, both Brand's Women are a personification of their Brand's Efficacy.

The combined conclusions of this fusion of methods were that Rexona had the opportunity to leapfrog Narta by becoming more in tune with modern pro-active women's attitudes. The cultural content of the brand's past advertising had made the brand more resonant with the 'Empowered Woman' reminiscent of the culture of the 1980s and 1990s than the woman of the start of the new millennium. (See figure 3.)

FIGURE 3
THE WAY FORWARD FOR REXONA IN FRANCE



The conclusions of the research became a clear call for action. Given the importance and clarity of the findings, Unilever felt that they needed more than a traditional research debrief and decided to hold an Insight Activation Workshop in Paris. The workshop was attended by a cross functional team of people: CMI, marketing people from within Unilever in France and the Innovation Centre in the UK, representatives from the Rexona global team, the CRAMQiQ team and the advertising agency.

It was not the first time that Unilever held a research debrief on the issues connected with Rexona in France. We had conducted several qualitative studies prior to the Cram/QiQ study, analysed quantitative tracking data and discussed the results. However, there was always a disconnect between the qualitative and quantitative data. The cross-functional Unilever team had entered the past qualitative debriefs with different hypotheses and then interpreted the open, qualitative findings in a way that best suited the individual interpretations of the problem. Hence some team members felt that Rexona suffered from lack of efficacy credentials, whereas others thought that Rexona's expression of femininity had become outdated and the qualitative findings couldn't reconcile the opposing views. On the other hand, the ongoing tracking study in France, with the limited number of attributes, provided shallow and inconclusive results that didn't clearly correspond with the qualitative findings.

The workshop held with CramQiQ in Paris last year was different. The fact that the research quantified the depths of qualitative understanding helped to define a common view of the problems that Rexona was facing. In this respect, the quantitative correspondence positioning maps were invaluable as they helped the marketing people visualize and grasp the space that Rexona occupied within each of the RESC dimensions. Unlike in the past, the debrief of the CramQiQ findings wasn't followed by a long discussion and conflicting interpretations of the findings. All of us understood the urgent need for reconnecting Rexona with the French consumers, mainly on the cultural and social level. We were able to define a concrete action plan at the end of the workshop, ranging from changes to ATL communication, to in-store

activation and introduction of new variant.

On top of that, the conclusions of the Cram/QiQ study, together with a global qualitative brand audit conducted earlier that year, helped Unilever to realize that the issues that Rexona was facing in France extended to other countries in the world. Fortunately, the CRAMQiQ study was conducted also in the UK and we saw that some of the problems that Rexona had on the cultural and social level were, on a smaller scale, similar to the issues in France.

Ultimately, the CRAMQiQ findings and the discussion and ideas contributed to the development of the overall brief for relaunch for Rexona for Women – not just for France but globally. Unilever needed to make Rexona more appealing to women in an ambitious re-launch of the brand.

So Unilever decided to relaunch Rexona for Women with a new concept, new pack design and graphics, new formulations and new communication. The goal of the re-launch was to create a step change in women's perception of Rexona; a brand that is different, works better, and unequivocally 'for me'. The relaunch consisted of three key building blocks: 1) provide a new story of Efficacy; 2) Create irresistible packaging; and 3) Break the mould in communication.

Rexona, as we have learned through the CRAMQiQ study, was perceived as an efficacious brand. However, it was perceived by some consumers to be too efficacious, too strong and harsh. Rexona was perceived to be working blindly and hard on "top of their bodies" rather than working intelligently with/in synch with their bodies. The Unilever R&D team addressed these issues and employed the technology of "micro-capsules" and significantly improved the formulation. Consequently, Unilever was able to communicate to consumers the news about "body responsive Rexona that offered intelligent protection that worked in sync with your body". (See figure 4.)

The "harshness" and "tomboyishness" that some consumers attributed to Rexona was also connected

with their perception of the packaging. We have learned through the research that Rexona's packs were perceived as unisex, unexciting and undifferentiated. Unilever needed to reinvent the female range, making it more modern and appealing to women. At the same time Unilever needed to clarify the range architecture and align the brand with one global visual identity. (See figure 5.)

Most importantly, Unilever needed to make the packaging more appealing to women through the use of the elegant curves on the pack. The new packaging was moving the brand closer to the attributes associated with the ideal brand of deodorant: feminine, modern and young.

The development of new communication was one of the most demanding parts of the relaunch. First,

FIGURE 4
NEW REXONA PRINT ADVERTISING

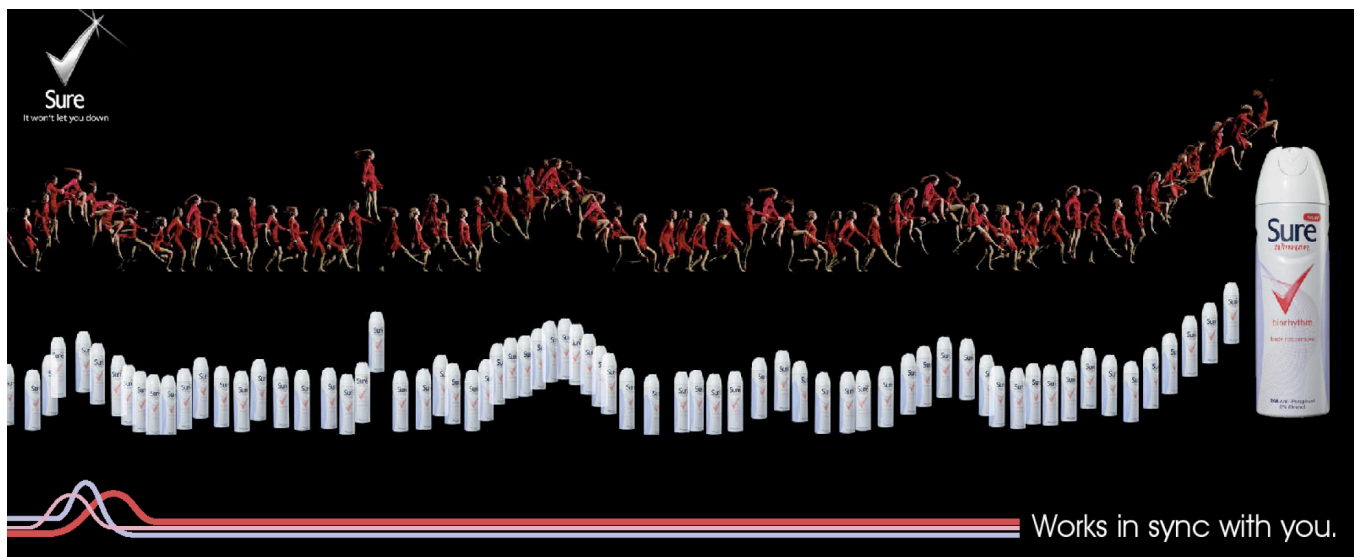


FIGURE 5
NEW REXONA PACKS



we had to bring the new Rexona woman alive and the CRAMQiQ study became one of the key sources for this. We realized that Rexona, as a global leader on the market of deodorants and a cornerstone brand, had to retain the associations with “strength” and “strong women”. However, being a “strong woman” has in the time of the “post-modern femininity” little to do with physical strength and everything to do with EMOTIONAL strength. The new strong woman is one who possesses passion, resourcefulness and intuition. The model drawn by CRAMQiQ and describing the journey from traditional to post-modern woman was a great inspiration for marketing at Unilever. Unilever visualized the new Rexona woman as the post-modern woman, who wants to succeed in life but at the same time goes back to the past to tap into the more traditional expressions of femininity and uses her femininity in a strategic way.

Portraying the new Rexona woman led to a development of the insight for the new campaign “I enjoy living life with intensity” and the discriminator ‘Living life with intensity doesn’t have to make you sweat’. The brand mission has thus become to equip and empower women to live their lives to the fullest.

The new expression of efficacy, “protection that works in sync with your body” has become an integral part of the new campaign. This claim has helped to differentiate Rexona from other brands of deodorant that offer undifferentiated expression of protection – long lasting or lasting 24 hours.

The development of the global relaunch for Rexona signifies the repositioning of the market research department within Unilever. While traditionally the research department was preoccupied with evaluation of concepts and execution in the middle or towards the end of the innovation funnel, the focus of the new CMI function is on the early stages of innovation and communication development. That shift is accompanied by a fundamental change in the research toolset. Instead of just using the repetitive and qualitative and quantitative research techniques that provide sets of numbers but isolates people and products from the context of their existence,

we must rely on techniques which portray consumers as real people, within the context of their environment and culture. The fusion of qualitative and quantitative research provided by CRAMQiQ has illuminated this very context and played a key role in the development of the new communication.

The lessons for excellence here lie in the fusion of qualitative and quantitative techniques, integrating a team of qualitative and quantitative researchers working extremely closely together with management and the communications agency. The discipline of a diagnostic model, like RESC™, helps significantly to reach fully integrated and seamless actions. The fusion of market research methodologies can enable clearer and more incisive actionable conclusions. This particular case is typical of many instances where successful brand equities risk losing their value, and where research can rescue brands that have lost their way.

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