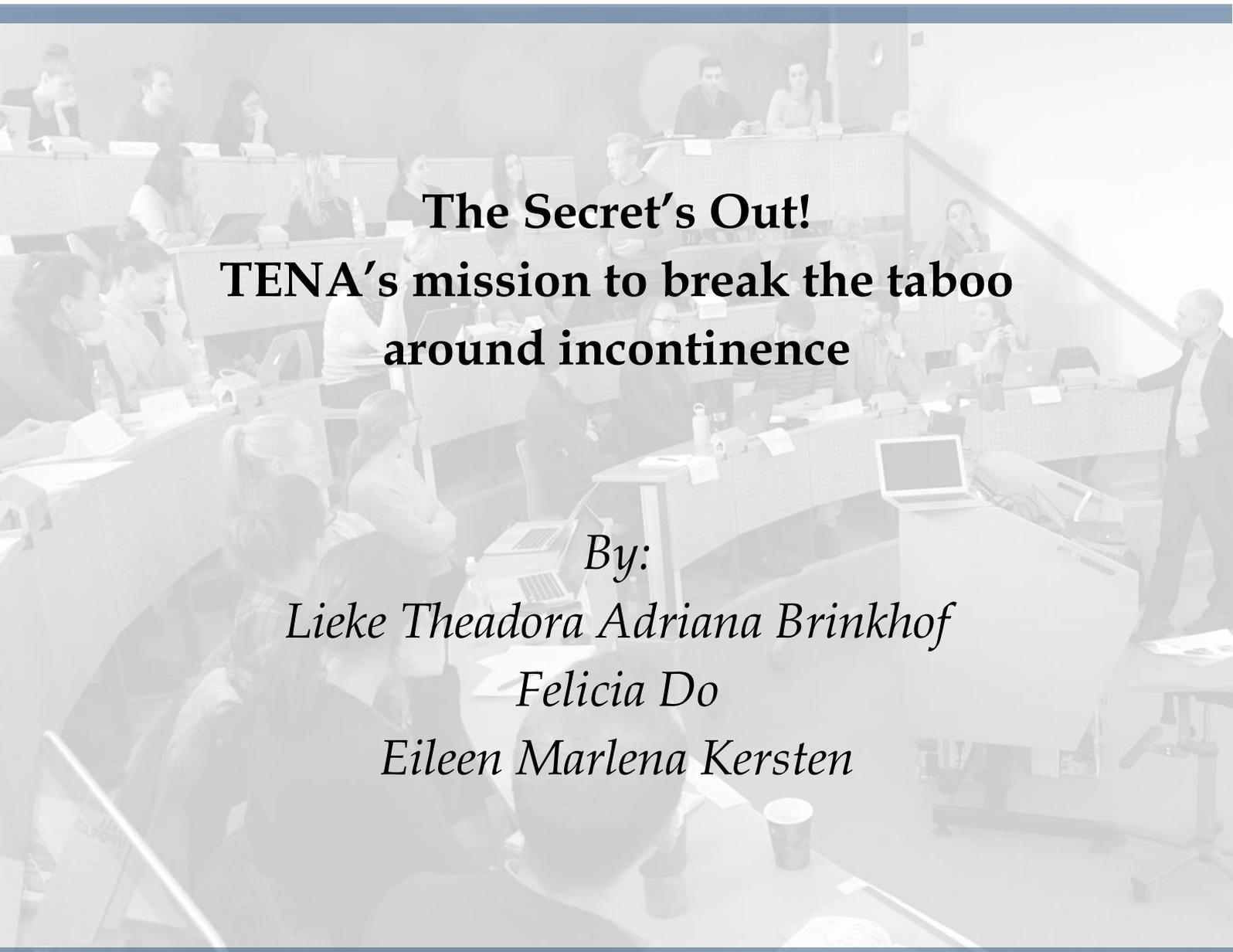


CORPORATE BRAND MANAGEMENT AND REPUTATION

MASTER CASES



The Secret's Out!
**TENA's mission to break the taboo
around incontinence**

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Corporate Brand Management and Reputation: Master's Cases

The "Corporate Brand Management and Reputation: Master's cases" is a case series for applying the case method of teaching and learning in higher education. The cases are relevant to brand strategists in private and public sector organizations, as well as academics and students at universities, business schools, and executive education.

The cases are written by groups of master's students as a course project. The specially developed case format is defined as: *"A management decision case describes a real business situation leading up to a question(s) that requires assessment, analysis, and a decision reached by discussion in class. The alternative approaches and recommendations from the class discussion are followed by a description of the choices made by the case company. This description is then discussed by the class."*

The student groups select the topics of their case providing updated and relevant insights into the corporate brand management. The cases can be used as "written cases" (handed out and read in advance, later to be discussed in class) and/or as "live case" (presented by the teacher following a discussion in class). Each case includes teaching notes, visuals with speaker's notes, learning objectives, board plans, and references.

The mission of the series is *"to develop cases for discussion providing insights into the theory and practice of corporate brand management and reputation, with the intent of bridging the gap between academic teaching and managerial practice."*

The series is a result of co-creation between students and teachers at the elective course Corporate Brand Management (BUSN35 – five-credit course/eight-week half-time studies), part of the master's program International Marketing and Brand Management at Lund School of Economics and Management, Sweden. The cases represent the result of the intellectual work of students under the supervision of the head of course.

Although based on real events and despite references to actual companies, the cases are solely intended to be a basis for class discussion, not as an endorsement, a source of primary data, or an illustration of effective or ineffective management. The cases are free to be used and are to be cited following international conventions.

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WRITTEN CASE

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The Secret's Out!

It is Tuesday, the 23rd of April 2019, the usual fashion billboards in central London are filled with images of half-naked women, posing in a Victoria Secret's inspired campaign. However, these women are not the typical supermodels wearing the usual lingerie but instead are over the age of 40, dressed in elegant black adult diapers. This controversial campaign marked the start of TENA's active approach towards their public battle against the taboo of incontinence.

Background and history

Essity is a global leading hygiene and health company that was previously operating as a part of the Swedish SCA Group and only formed as an independent firm in 2017. SCA's background, however, already reaches back to 1929 when the company was founded (**Exhibit 1**). With the acquisition of the Swedish company Mölnlycke in 1975, Essity can claim to have a hygiene expertise of 46 years today. The name Essity emerged from the words 'essentials' and 'necessities' which also serve the core and vision of the company to deliver well-being through their products and services. Operating in 150 countries, Essity owns a total of 33 brands with TENA being one of the leading ones driving sales.

With more than 60 years of experience, TENA develops and offers products that help with urinary incontinency and bladder weakness such as absorbent products (e.g. incontinency underwear, pads, pants), skincare (e.g. creams, cleansing wipes) and digital health solutions which are aimed at professionals (e.g. nursery homes, hospitals). By supporting people to stay secure, dry and odour free, the brand improves the quality of people's lives across all ages and genders. Globally, TENA is the leading brand in this field and can position itself well ahead of its competitors with the second largest player only achieving a market share that is half the size of TENA. In 2019, the brand was worth £127.9 million.

Incontinence is a widespread disease amongst more than 400 million people worldwide. Still being perceived as a social taboo and that only elderly people suffer from it, TENA wants to empower its customers and maintain their dignity as the issue can greatly affect a person's confidence negatively and increase anxiety. Addressing this taboo is also deeply rooted in the origins of TENA. The acquisition of Mölnlycke also contributed to the brand's expertise as it was the first to develop and advertise incontinence diapers openly and by that, raising awareness and acceptance of this common condition.

Going back to the year 2018, TENA is perceived as a clinical, medical and not feminine brand that targets the older population. In terms of marketing, the company focuses on a private and discreet one-to-one approach to not discomfort their customers in regard to this sensitive topic. In 2009, the brand went through a superficial rebranding process to take a step to disconnect incontinence from the stigma and tackle the social taboo. The assigned agency Dragon subsequently adjusted the logo of TENA by keeping the logo itself but adding the colour green to the, up until then, only 'cold and clinical' blue (**Exhibit 2**). Furthermore, they changed the strategy for the brand's marketing campaigns by focusing on showing people being outdoors with the connection to the colours in the logo (blue as the sky and green as the grass). The aim was to demonstrate to consumers that they should not hide in their houses when suffering from bladder weakness as well as make them feel comfortable in their skin.

The game-changing Silhouette Noir

In 2019, TENA extended its product line by introducing a game-changing adult diaper that looks and feels like elegant black underwear, named TENA Silhouette Noir. This product is the first of its kind on the market as it combines the look and feel of normal black underwear but is designed for women suffering from incontinence. Silhouette Noir is created with TENA's famous triple protection, helping women with bladder weakness to stay fresh. Furthermore, it features a low waist, giving it a stylish and elegant look that resembles real underwear. In contrast to the standard white adult diapers, this product is designed to complement women's preferences in style as research shows that their favourite underwear colour is black. Silhouette Noir is produced with TRU Colour technology, meaning that it is black on both, the inside and outside. Moreover, it is made out of a unique and soft microstretch fabric which makes it seem invisible underneath clothes, providing incredible discretion. Therefore, with Silhouette Noir women can rediscover their confidence as well as match their underwear to their bras to feel stylish and feminine again in contrast to the regular white diaper. The product positions incontinence underwear in a fashion context and hence challenges the taboo subject.

With this innovative product, TENA faced a considerable challenge: how could and should they market this new product? The opinions amongst the executive board were split as on the one hand some wanted to stick to the traditional and more discreet way that had been proven profitable up until then. This traditional strategy addressed customers in a private and discreet manner with a one-to-one marketing approach. However, the other side wanted to make use of the revolutionary product innovation and accompany the Silhouette Noir with a striking marketing campaign. Hence, TENA's product stirred conflicting opinions within the organisation on whether to take the risk and step out of its comfort zone.

TENA's Secret Angels

Although being hesitant on which approach to follow for the launch of Silhouette Noir, TENA decided to take the risk and create a controversial marketing campaign to take a stance and publicly tackle the taboo of incontinence. In the campaign for its product launch, TENA's plan was crafted to reveal a secret to the public which entails that one out of three women in the United Kingdom (UK) experiences incontinence. However, they should not feel ashamed or be held back by that. In this way, the brand wanted to challenge the common misconceptions of women with bladder weakness struggling to feel 'sexy' and not finding matching underwear. Therefore, with the revolutionary campaign TENA wanted to inspire women suffering from the condition to feel good about themselves. The ad aimed at women in two life stages where incontinence is most common: post-pregnancy and menopause.

On the 23rd of April 2019, TENA launched its campaign in the UK and thereby challenged the status quo by executing a bold one-off stunt to normalise incontinence. The brand reimagined the Victoria's Secret Angels catwalk image, using models over the age of 40, wearing the TENA Silhouette Noir all-black pants (**Exhibit 3**). The women in the campaign are far from the usual stereotypical models used in the fashion industry. Instead, they chose a diverse set of women to represent all of those who suffer from incontinence while sharing the same desire to wear underwear they can feel feminine in. TENA's campaign images were spread across central London locations that are renowned for their fashion credentials, including Oxford Street (**Exhibit 4**) and Tottenham Court Road (**Exhibit 5**), taking over a 48-sheet billboard and digital 6-sheet displays by replacing other fashion ads. TENA's stunt across the UK's capital was accompanied with marketing activities on social media such as Facebook and YouTube as well as a nationwide PR programme. For this product launch, TENA was advised by the PR agency Finn while AMV BBDO led the creative development for the billboards. Furthermore, Finn delivered all media relations for the campaign and collaborated with the ROI agency Zenith for the media strategy and all key media partnerships. Regarding social media, it was AmazeRealise who was in charge for social and eCRM elements. Lastly, the company

Performics provided SEO support for the product launch with Vicky Lawton being the fashion photographer that captured the Victoria's Secret Angels inspired catwalk images. With this campaign and the slogan 'Secret's Out' the company created a disruptive out-of-home ad and showcased a very different side of the brand. In doing so, TENA brought the taboo subject out to the public and engaged in a form of social brand activism. By doing this, the company faced the risks of potential public backlash. Another general challenge for companies pursuing brand activism is to ensure that the brand is being perceived as authentic in its activity and not as a hypocrite. This is because consumers today are expecting them to take meaningful actions that support their cause.

Case question

As demonstrated in the above, TENA chose the daring approach of launching Silhouette Noir in a revolutionary and direct manner, creating controversy within the company. The internal discussions about the campaign were justified as the discreet marketing strategy had proven to be successful insofar. Moreover, TENA has already been positioned as the market leader for years. Hence, the sudden drastic change in their marketing strategy might not be worth taking the risk.

Based on this information, it is up for debate if the company should use the campaign as a starting point for a new brand identity, keep following this bold approach as well as risk failure or if they should treat the campaign as a one-off stunt and return to the traditional discreet strategy, taking the safe road. Hence, this leads to the following case question:

Which strategy should Tena follow? Should they stick to the discreet, traditional way that has been successful so far or take the risk and act as a social brand activist to express a new brand identity? Or would you suggest a completely different strategy?

Appendix

Exhibit 1 Timeline of Essity and TENA

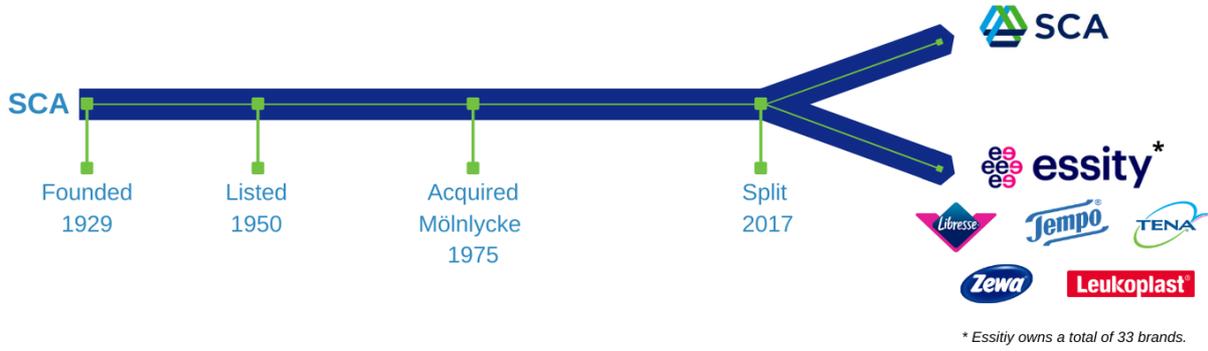


Exhibit 2 TENA's new logo from 2009 on



Exhibit 3 TENA's 'Secret's Out' catwalk campaign



Exhibit 4 TENA's 'Secret's Out' campaign by Oxford Street, London



Exhibit 5 TENA's 'Secret's Out' campaign by Tottenham Court Road, London

