

# Marketing of European Natural Cosmetics Brands in Social Media

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<p>Natural cosmetics have grown in popularity over the last years. In the same way that vegan food started out as “a hippie product” but has now become a trend, natural cosmetics have become every day products for many and the demand for them is growing. Therefore, the marketing of these products has also evolved immensely.</p> <p>Social networks have also grown in the past decade and now, it is strange for people or companies not to be involved in the most popular social media platforms, such as Facebook. It is vital to be part of them to stay relevant.</p> <p>The objective of this thesis is to study how European natural cosmetics brands (Weleda and Dr. Hauschka) market themselves on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. In this thesis, it is studied how much the brands gain audience engagement, how they try to engage their audience and what kind of imagery they use on the previously mentioned social networks. Finally, their imagery is compared to the imagery of Lumene and Lancôme, two traditional cosmetics brands, on Instagram.</p> <p>This thesis study was conducted as a desktop study. The research methods consisted mostly of qualitative methods such as observing but some quantitative methods were used as well. The material used to study this subject consisted of literature, articles and the companies’ respective social media pages.</p> <p>The results show that in each of the channels of both Weleda and Dr. Hauschka audience engagement is quite low even though both companies are relatively active on their social media platforms. However, it was good to note that their marketing was quite similar when it comes to audience engagement but their imagery was very different from each other even though they are of the same field of industry. When compared to the traditional cosmetics brands, the differences in the imagery were even larger.</p>	
<b>Keywords</b> Natural Cosmetics, Social Media, Branding, Content Marketing	

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# 1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the reader to the background and the general concepts of this thesis. First, it is elaborated why this thesis topic is relevant nowadays and why this topic was chosen. The research and investigative questions of the thesis are explained thoroughly in the following sub-chapter. Followed by that the reader can find the demarcation where the scope of the thesis is reasoned and the elaboration for why certain things are excluded from this thesis is provided. After that it will be explained how this topic will meet the required international aspect and the key concepts are defined. Finally, the companies that are studied in this thesis are shortly introduced.

## 1.1 Background

How many social networks are you registered to? Probably at least one. How many of your friends are using social networks? Chances are that most of them. Indeed, no wonder companies find social media in general as an attractive platform to market products. Smart phones and Wi-Fi make it easy for consumers to log in to their favorite social networks wherever they are and with social media companies can reach millions of people each day with relative ease and with relatively low cost.

Natural cosmetics are also becoming more and more popular on today's markets and nowadays whole shelves dedicated to them can be found in the cosmetics sections of the largest department stores. Sustainability and ethicality are becoming more prevalent in today's businesses and consumer buying behavior. People have continuously become more aware of environmental problems and effects of chemicals. This growing consumer awareness has made people switch from chemicals to natural cosmetics and the market for natural cosmetics is growing steadily. (Tribune 2015.) It is estimated that the demand for organic beauty care will grow over \$13 billion by 2018 (Global Cosmetic Industry 2013).

I did my work placement in a PR agency where I got to familiarize myself with digital marketing and ethical lifestyle products. Natural cosmetics was one of these product groups that the PR agency specialized in. During my internship, I grew an interest towards natural cosmetics and when I was deciding on a thesis subject I thought that studying two growing trends that interest me could be a fascinating topic when put together. Therefore, I decided to examine how natural cosmetics companies are practicing their marketing in social media.

## 1.2 Research Question

The objectives of this thesis are to examine social media marketing of natural cosmetics brands. In this thesis, the social media marketing that is touched upon are audience engagement, measurement of that engagement, branding in social media and content marketing.

The main research question studies how natural cosmetics brands do their marketing in social network platforms such as Facebook and Instagram. In this question, it is studied what kind of pictures and text they use and then compared how imagery of natural cosmetics differs from traditional cosmetics. In addition to that the current audience engagement that the brands have is also examined and some recommendations are given based on that.

RQ. How are European natural cosmetics brands marketed in social media?

The investigative questions are as follows:

IQ 1. What are the most effective channels to market natural cosmetics based on the audience engagement?

IQ 2. How is the audience engaged and what elements are used in the social media posts?

IQ 3. What are the differences in the social media marketing of natural cosmetics as opposed to the traditional cosmetics?

Dr. Hauschka and Weleda will be used as case companies from the natural cosmetics side. They will be compared to Lancôme and Lumene from the traditional cosmetics side. These companies are introduced more thoroughly in chapter 1.5.

Table 1 below presents the theoretical framework, research methods and results chapters for each of the three investigative questions. From the results column, the separate chapters for Dr. Hauschka and Weleda can be found.

Table 1. Overlay matrix

Investigative question	Theoretical Framework	Research Methods	Results (chapter)
IQ 1. What are the most effective channels to market natural cosmetics based on the audience engagement?	Measuring the social media Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), social media strategies	Benchmarking, desktop study, observing	3.2.1 for Dr. Hauschka and 3.3.1 for Weleda
IQ 2. How is the audience engaged and what elements are used in the social media posts?	Social media strategies, branding, content marketing	Benchmarking, desktop study, observing	3.2.2 for Dr. Hauschka and 3.3.2 for Weleda
IQ 3. What are the differences in the imagery of the social media marketing of natural cosmetics as opposed to the traditional cosmetics?	Branding, content marketing	Benchmarking the traditional cosmetics and then comparing them to natural cosmetics, desktop study, observing	3.4

### 1.3 Demarcation

The channels that I will mainly focus on are Facebook and Instagram. However, I will mention Twitter as well as it is very relevant channel in today's marketing although it will not be studied as extensively because then the thesis would become too large. YouTube and other channels are left out for the same reason. When it comes to the natural cosmetics (Weleda and Dr. Hauschka) I will study mostly the social media pages of the UK market and therefore the customer group is also mostly from the UK. The reason for this is that it is a large European market where English is the official language and I can therefore understand the content of the posts. For traditional cosmetics (Lumene and Lancôme) their official and global Instagram pages are studied.

I will study two European companies from the natural cosmetics side and compare them to two European "traditional" cosmetics brand. Traditional cosmetics are touched upon only when shortly observing their social media marketing on Instagram and then comparing their marketing to natural cosmetics marketing. Therefore, the final investigative question is narrowed a bit down as one could make an entire research out of it. Studying only European companies was chosen to further narrow down the research question.

## 1.4 Key Concepts

**Natural cosmetics** have many requirements for them to be considered natural. The products need mostly to be made of natural ingredients and organic ingredients should be used whenever possible. The ingredients used should be as little processed as possible and in no part of manufacturing process, ingredients included, can animal-testing be used. Natural cosmetics should take into account the effects of the whole life cycle of the product on human health and nature. Certification is surveyed by independent organizations that specialize in this field of industry. (Pro luonnonkosmetiikka ry 2016.)

**Social media** is according to Safko (2010, 3-5.) simply “the media we use to be social.” It is a set of tools that helps us to connect with other people, such as customers and prospects and does the same what e.g. direct mail and radio has done before it but social media is exponentially more effective.

**Brand** is when a name is attached to a service or a product. Practically brands are “merely” trademarks and products that have some sort of identification attached to them. Therefore, every product we use is a potential brand. (Johansson & Carlson 2015, 3.)

**Content marketing** is according to the Content Marketing Institute “a marketing technique of creating and distributing relevant and valuable content to attract, acquire, and engage a clearly defined and understood target audience – with the objective of driving profitable customer action.” (Weber & Henderson 2014, 180.)

## 1.5 Case Companies

This thesis studies four companies: two are natural cosmetics companies and two traditional cosmetics companies. In this case, what is meant by traditional cosmetics is everything else that is not considered natural cosmetics.

I chose the natural cosmetics companies based on their reputation and market share in the industry. From the traditional cosmetics side the companies were chosen because I am relatively familiar with them and I am specifically interested in their marketing.

### 1.5.1 Companies studied from the natural cosmetics side

Dr. Hauschka is a natural cosmetics brand manufactured by a German company called WALA Heilmittel and was established in 1972. Their product line-up consists of almost anything from skin care to teeth and hair care, even make-up products, and has more than 130 items. Their products can be bought from all over the world and they also have an

online store where their products can be ordered. (Dr. Hauschka 2016.) The manufacturing company WALA was established already in 1935 and employs more than 800 people nowadays. They ship products to 30 countries and to all continents. (WALA 2016.)

Weleda is a natural cosmetics company that was established as early as 1921 in Switzerland. Their product line-up consists of over 120 skin care products for both adults and children. These products can be bought from 50 different countries in all continents and on top of that they have an online store. In 2015 their net sales exceeded over 380 million euros. They employ about 2000 people all over the world. (Weleda 2016.)

### **1.5.2 Companies studied from the traditional cosmetics side**

Lancôme is a cosmetics brand manufactured by L'Oréal Luxe. The brand itself was founded in 1935. It is considered #1 brand in women cosmetics and their success can be seen in the fact that Lancôme skin care, make-up, and perfume products can be bought in 130 different countries. (L'Oréal 2016.) The manufacturing company L'Oréal had around 25.26 billion of euros of consolidated sales in 2015 and in that year, they employed almost 83 000 people (L'Oréal 2016).

Lumene is a Finnish cosmetics company that was founded in 1970 and quickly became the market leader in Finland. Lumene was the first company in the world to use hand-picked arctic berries in cosmetics products. In 2013 its net sales amounted to 90 million euros. The company generates its sales in its home market Finland but over 50% come elsewhere: Russia, USA and Scandinavia. The company employs over 530 persons. Their product line-up consists of e.g. skin care and make-up products. (Lumene 2016.)

## **2 Brands in Social Media**

We are surrounded by brands wherever we go physically or virtually. Products, services, places and even persons can be brands. Sometimes we do our purchases based on them without even realizing it. In this chapter, it is examined what a brand is exactly, how they are made and shortly discuss different brand strategies. Then social networks and strategies that come into play are studied when branding in social media is discussed and finally, it is studied how cosmetics are branded in social media.

### **2.1 What is a Brand?**

A brand is “a label designating ownership by a firm, which we experience, evaluate, have feeling towards, and build associations with to perceive value.” (Bracus et al, 2009 in Rosenbaum-Elliott, Percy & Pervan 2015, 4). Practically brand consists of the name, logo and colors and then of the actual services and products. As already mentioned, anything that has a name can be made a brand. (Johansson & Carlson 2015, 4.) Brands are, in a way, living entities. They change every day although it might not be quite visible. They are a company’s most valuable assets. (Pringle & Field 2008, 23.)

In addition to name, logo and color palette, visible brand elements also include tagline, typeface and graphics style. Invisible brand elements are attributes, personality, singular idea, brand story and positive and negative perceptions. These elements can be used singularly but the more these are put together and are well refined, the stronger the brand most likely is. (Miles 2014, 105-108.)

What makes brands attractive to the consumers then? According to Johansson and Carlson (2015, 4.) it is simply because consumers rely on them when purchasing because they have learned to trust them. To put it simply, brands reduce risks and make the decision-making process easier for consumers. Sometimes they also help the consumers to express themselves. These benefits make brands desirable and as the customers buy them, so grows their trust in them.

Figure 1 below illustrates the things that were previously mentioned. It shows that a brand is built of three elements of identity, image and personality which will be further discussed in the following subchapter and the benefits they provide for consumers and companies alike.

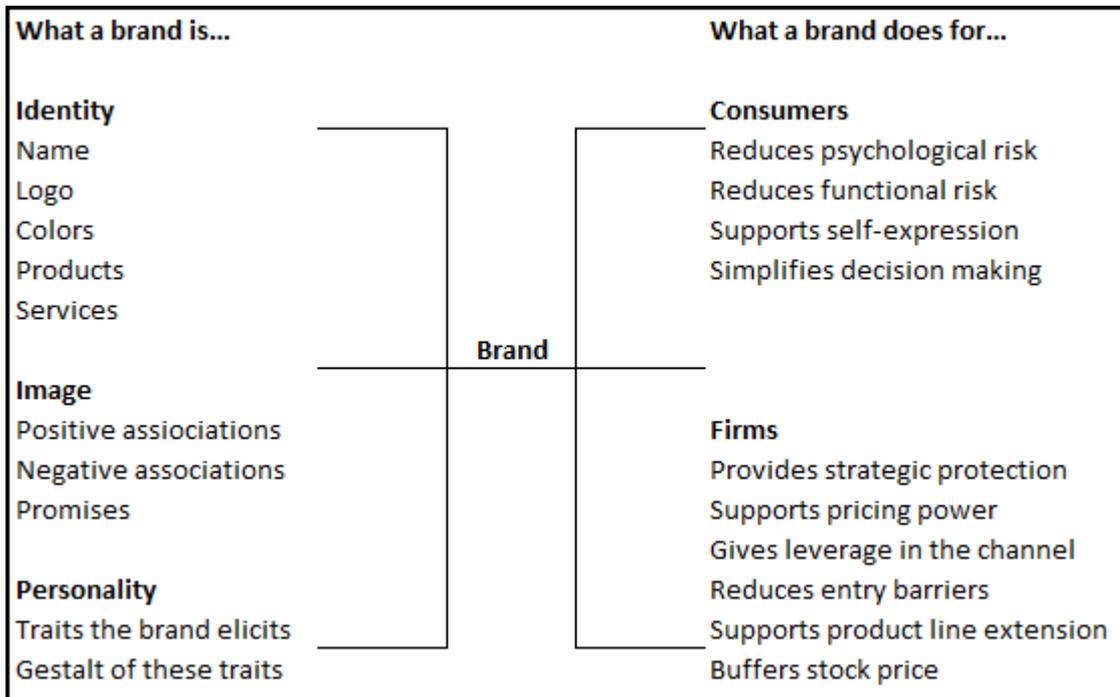


Figure 1. How Brands Work (Johansson & Carlson 2015, 4)

### 2.1.1 Brand Image, Brand Identity, and Brand Personality

Brand management is in fact management of perceptions as brands exist only in the minds of the consumers (Rosenbaum-Elliott & al. 2015, 4). These perceptions are also known as “brand image.” However, it is not the only thing that dictates a strong brand. Other elements are brand identity and brand personality.

Brand identity in practice is what the brand is. The identity can be seen e.g. in logos and colors and in the age and nationality of the brand. For a brand to be strong, this identity should be distinguishable and one-of-a-kind. This way the consumers also know what the brand promises and what the company’s philosophy is. The brand is more credible the closer the identity and the expectations it creates are. (Johansson & Carlson 2015, 3-5.)

Whereas brand identity is what the brand is, brand image, however, is how customers view the brand. Brands’ competitive advantages stem exactly from the positive associations that consumers have. These advantages can be unique, temporary or based on perception rather than reality. However, the coin has two sides and the negative associations are definite competitive disadvantages. If the brand fails to deliver what it promises, one can be sure that the customer will be dissatisfied. (Johansson & Carlson, 2015, 5.)

Brand personality is not as easily defined. It is built little by little by the customers from the interactions they have with the brand: e.g. they see commercials of the brand, they see the brand in stores and see other people using the brand. The brand personality is closely linked to brand image and brand identity but it goes deeper than that in two ways. As Johansson & Carlson puts it, firstly it is “the personification elements of the image.” Secondly, it is “strongly influenced by the personality traits of the ‘typical’ user’s personality.” For example, there are Pepsi persons and then there are Coca-Cola persons. However, not all brands, mainly utilitarian products, have distinctive personality. Many times, this is a consciously chosen strategy. (Johansson & Carlson 2015, 9-10.)

To summarize, brand identity answers the question: “Who is Lumene?”, brand image: “What comes to your mind when you think of Lumene?” and brand personality: “What kind of personality is Lumene?” (Johansson & Carlson 2015, 9.)

### 2.1.2 Brand Promise

The assurance of making the “right choice” for purchasing a certain brand is called brand promise (Johansson & Carlson 2015, 4).

Companies should carefully plan what they are promising, how they will deliver that promise to the customers and how this promise will be kept. The companies should “manage its relationship with its customers by analyzing its performance in terms of the rational, emotional and ethical dimensions of the promise.” This approach is called “brand promise system.” (Pringle & Field 2008, 103.)

Table 2. Brand Promise System (Pringle & Field 2008, 103.)

<b>Creating the brand promise</b>	<b>Conveying the brand promise</b>	<b>Keeping the brand promise</b>
<b>Rational or functional benefits</b>	Product or service demonstration	Performance ratings against competition
<b>Emotional or psychological benefits</b>	User imagery created by tone and style	Tracking studies and qualitative research
<b>Ethical or higher-order benefits</b>	Corporate social responsibility	Measures of customers trust and employee morale

Table 2 above illustrates Hamish Pringle's idea of Brand Promise System which is a modified version of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. The first column shows the type of brand benefit that is promised, the second column shows how that benefit is conveyed to the customer and the final column indicates how that promise can be kept.

In today's world, brand promises have become more and more complex and most of them are a mixture of the three aspects (rational, emotional, ethical) that were mentioned earlier. However, different brands emphasize different things in their brand promises. For example, functional brands deliver their brand promise through a demonstration. Personal products such as clothing or cars make promises of emotional and psychological benefits. (Pringle & Field 2008, 103-104.)

Companies need to be able to rethink their brand promises and possibly change them. It is crucial to be adaptable. For example, many brands have chosen to add ethical values to their brand promise and have started to pay more attention to their corporate social responsibility in order to add another dimension to their brand promise. (Pringle & Field 2008, 104-105.)

### **2.1.3 Brand Equity and Brand Value**

Brand equity is according to Johansson & Carlson (2015, 30) "a measure of allegiance to the brand from its target segment." If the equity of the brand is high, it can be expected that the brand has a deep relationship with its customer-base. These customers will favor that brand while making their purchase decisions.

When talking about brand equity sometimes the term "brand value" is used. That said there is a slight difference. Brand equity takes into account e.g. all the emotional affections and loyalty towards the brand whereas brand value is practically how much brand is "worth" in financial terms. (Johansson & Carlson 2015, 30-31.) Measuring that value or worth however is difficult as there is no universally accepted way to do it (Pringle & Field 2008, 23).

Growing brand equity is a crucial part of managing a brand. However, several stages of consumer acceptance have to pass through in order to grow brand equity and it starts with consumer recognition. (Johansson & Carlson 2015, 30.)

Usually consumers are aware that a certain brand exists. However, this is not enough as at this point customers will not consider the brand as a solution to the problem that they have and thus, will not buy it. There needs to be a deeper level of recognition in order for it to happen. Ideally, companies want to make their customers realize that their product is a

solution to the problems the customer has. To achieve this higher level of recognition, companies need to promote their brand to gain attention and interest and indicate that their product is a viable solution. (Johansson & Carlson 2015, 30-31.)

Consumer recognition is followed by consumer perception. On this level of recognition, the consumer starts to build an image of the brand and they have more in-depth knowledge about brand's products or services. The consumers also begin to recognize the benefits of the product and start to believe that when they select this specific brand over other brands in the same category, they will remove some psychological risks ("Did I make a right choice by choosing this product?"). Companies can build consumer perception e.g. with product trials. However, on this level the aim is to present the value proposition of the brand. The messages conveyed to the consumer should highlight the superiority of this brand's attributes compared to other brands. (Johansson & Carlson 2015, 31.)

The next step is consumer response. On this level, the consumers should have a positive response and attitude towards the brand and in fact Rosenbaum-Elliott et al. (2015, 107) argue that brand attitude is the most important thing when growing brand equity. This is based on the argument that the stronger the brand is in the qualities that are thought to be important, the more positive the customer's attitude towards the brand will be and thus, the more positive the attitude, the stronger the brand equity is. On this level, brand management should therefore focus on creating the right associations to the brand. If the brand has personality associations, the consumers should start recognizing them at this level. When it comes to consumer response, segmentation is crucial when thinking about brand management. The company should decide whether a brand is a niche brand or a mainstream brand. (Johansson & Carlson 2015, 33.)

The final step is consumer bonding. A brand should provide functional risk reduction, psychological risk reduction and opportunities for self-expression. When these elements are met, a brand should be able to develop a deep relationship with its customers. This is especially true if the brand has a personality as it then provides a unique value proposition. (Johansson & Carlson 2015, 33.)

#### **2.1.4 Building a Brand, and Brand Strategies**

Figure 2 represents an idea of how brands are built in mindscape. This idea was presented by Rosenbaum-Elliott and al. The figure is explained thoroughly in this chapter.

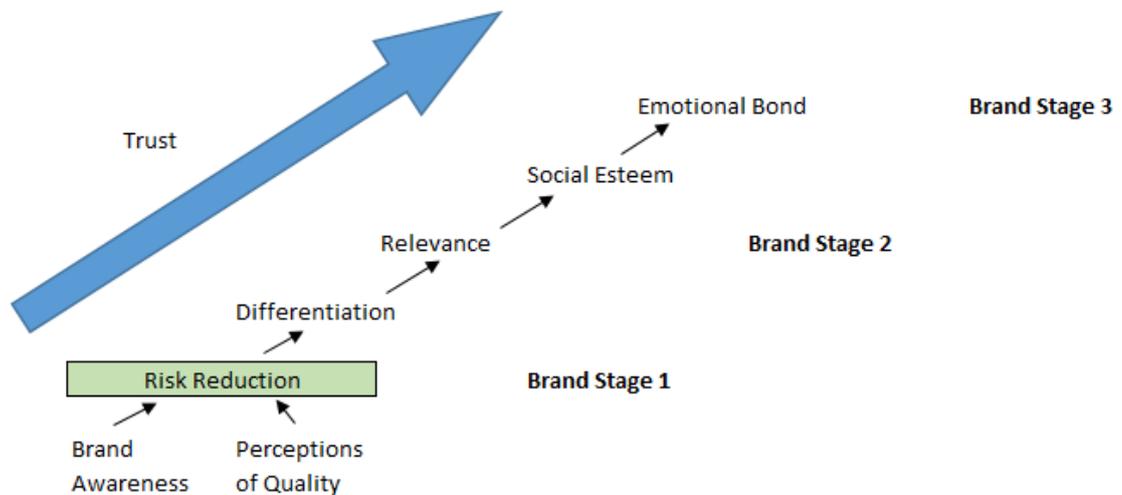


Figure 2. Building a Brand in Mindspace (Rosenbaum-Elliott & al. 2015, 195.)

The first building block for all brands is gaining brand awareness. Awareness is necessary because it reduces purchase risk for consumers but also might be the sole reason why the product is purchased in the first place. A brand also needs its possible customers to develop perceptions of the brand's quality. These perceptions depend on the product category and competition. Brand awareness and perceptions of quality together reduce the customer's risk of purchase. If these are met, the brand reaches Brand Stage 1. (Rosenbaum-Elliott & al. 2015, 195.)

To reach Brand Stage 2, the brand needs to succeed in perceptions of differentiation and of personal relevance. To differentiate in the minds of a customer, three beliefs must be created: the brand is different to other brands (positively or negatively), that this difference is unique and finally, that it is distinctive so that a consumer is willing to pay more for it. This differentiation is crucial to maintain throughout the brand's life as it is one of the most important factors in success. When a brand starts to lose the perceived differentiation, it also starts to decline. When a brand is starting out it needs to make itself stand out somehow. This difference needs to be turned into a benefit that fits with the customer's lifestyle and therefore, is relevant to them. Relevance is the key to the size of the brand but also to household penetration. When the brand reaches both of these elements, it reaches Brand Stage 2. A brand can be considered sustainable and profitable when this happens. It is also possible for a brand to stay in Brand Stage 2 and not progress to Stage 3. (Rosenbaum-Elliott & al. 2015, 195-196.)

To reach the final stage, the brand needs to develop perceptions of social esteem and emotional bond. Social esteem practically means how other people see the brand and is also a sociocultural factor. Emotional bonding is the development of relationship between

the consumer and the brand. This relationship is based on consumer's personal experience with the brand. Consumers progressively develop confidence and trust in a brand over time. For this trust to be built, consumers need to have experiences with the brand quite frequently so that they start perceiving the brand as credible and trustworthy. Therefore, consistency is extremely important in brand strategies. (Rosenbaum-Elliott & al. 2015, 196.)

It is good to bear in mind that a brand has customers in each of these stages at the same time. Some customers are only aware of the brand whereas some are very dedicated to it and have strong emotional bonds with it. The task is to try to move as many customers as possible to the highest stage but sometimes, the customers may move down, for example, in case there are some negative news about the company. (Rosenbaum-Elliott & al. 2015, 197.)

There are many types of branding strategies that depend on the type of product that is being sold. Low-involvement brands have different types of strategies than symbolic brands. The choice of strategy also depends on the strategies that the brand's competitors are using. Brand strategies will most of the time involve advertising but in some cases, for example, word-of-mouth techniques can be used. (Rosenbaum-Elliott & al. 2015, 197.)

Symbolic brand strategies can be divided into three categories: personal meaning strategies, social differentiation strategies and finally social integration strategies. Personal meaning strategies rely on determining or reinforcing our purpose in life. Brands that can excel on signifying feelings such as security, trust and optimism will thrive among consumers. Personal meaning strategies can be expressed, for example, making a brand a person or a friend or appeal on nostalgia or romance. (Rosenbaum-Elliott & al. 2015, 197-200.)

Social differentiation strategies help us to separate ourselves from others through, for example, fashionization and gender identity. Social integration strategies on the other hand help us belong to a group. Social integration strategies include for example creating brand communities, neo-tribes or focusing on a certain sub-culture. (Rosenbaum-Elliott & al. 2015, 204-209.)

Low-involvement or functional brands rely a lot on brand salience which is actually according to Rosenbaum-Elliott & al. (2015, 217), "the most important characteristic" of brands of this kind. Brand salience in practice means "top-of-mind awareness." If a brand is salient, it is the first brand that comes to mind when thinking about a certain product category (e.g. when one thinks about make-up products and Lumene comes first in mind). This salience

is what makes the difference between big and small brands. Saliency also grows exponentially in relation to awareness.

Brand saliency is a result and a cause at the same time when it comes to brand strategies and it is critical for a brand to succeed. However, brand saliency also needs a strong and positive brand attitude to support it so that they develop to a strong brand equity. (Rosenbaum-Elliott & al. 2015, 218.)

Low-involvement brands have many different types of strategies which can be as simple as plainly having more exposure than other brands. Consumers might not even remember where they have seen the brand before but they still prefer it to other brands. Other strategies include for example building brand associations with colors, music or celebrities. (Rosenbaum-Elliott & al. 2015, 219-222.)

With low-involvement brands, companies should manage consumer perceptions. It is important to remind customers of the benefits of the brand whether there is an announcement for a new product or a reinforcement of a current brand. One of the ways to affect consumer perception is cause-related marketing. In this branch of marketing, a brand is associated with "a good cause." Such causes could be e.g. environmental protection or helping civilians in war-torn countries. (Rosenbaum-Elliott & al. 2015, 228-229.)

## **2.2 Branding in Social Media**

How relevant is social media for companies in the first place? According to recent studies, it is estimated that 3.5 billion word-of-mouth conversations happen around the world every day. Of these conversations in 2.3 billion a brand, a product or a service is mentioned (and thus, a brand). Nowadays most of the word-of-mouth conversations are done in social media where everything spreads faster and reaches more people. (Evans 2008, 41.) Needless to say, this makes social media very appealing for companies and brands.

There is a misunderstanding that social media marketing is just a continuum for "doing" traditional media. Traditional media strategies can be applied but they need to be adapted to social media. (Barker, Barker, Bormann & Neher 2013, 15.)

The first difference between social and traditional media is that in traditional media, the content that the readers see can be controlled. Social media, on the other hand, emphasizes contribution from its audience. Therefore, the first difference could be called: control vs contributions. The second important difference is trust building. Because companies cannot control the content that is created by their audience, they should develop good and

trusting relationship with their customers. (Barker & al. 2013, 15-16.) Social media is indeed about conversation between persons that have a mutual interest and the power of social media is based on sharing and consensus. Therefore, companies need to be transparent and genuine while trying to influence that conversation. (Evans 2008, 38.)

When creating a social media plan, it is crucial to set up goals. Arguably the most important goal is building a brand. To build a brand one should increase brand awareness, improve brand perception, position a brand and expand brand loyalty. Other social media marketing goals include increasing customer satisfaction, driving word-of-mouth recommendations, producing new product ideas, generating leads, handling crisis reputation management, integrating social media marketing with public relations and advertising and finally, search engine optimization. It is good to keep in mind that these goals change according to a social media plan that a company has chosen to follow. Nevertheless, the goals should be clear when executing the social media plan. (Barker & al. 2013, 32-33.)

It is also good to understand what social media can and cannot do. If something is wrong in a brand, e.g. the product is bad, social media cannot make up for it. Quite the contrary, as it, in fact, will hurt the brand as the word spreads much quicker in social media than it does outside of it. However, if the company is using the social media well, they can fix these problems before they cause serious damage. Another thing that social media cannot do is to lead overnight sales success. Social media is not about “an instant win” but rather developing relationships with your potential customers and other people. It is also good to note that social media is not actually free although registering to many social network sites is. Developing a good and viable social media plan might not cost a lot of money but it still takes a lot of time and effort and in that sense, cannot be considered “free.” (Kerpen 2011, 9-10.)

The main problems with social media marketing are to do with control and effectiveness. Only a handful of people can make it seem like there is more people involved than there truly is, and of course, hackers and other cyber criminals can damage a company's image by creating false messages in the name of the company. It is also still quite unclear how effective social media marketing truly is. (Rosenbaum-Elliott & al. 2015, 149.) In addition to that, social media is obviously also very crowded so it is difficult to get noticed. A Facebook user might see 1000 updates on his Facebook feed every day so it is challenging for companies to attract attention. (Neher 2014, 16).

### **2.2.1 Facebook**

Facebook is one of the most popular social network sites. In December 2011 Facebook attracted about 700 million monthly visitors. (Barker & al. 2013, 180.) It is also the largest and most influential social network platform currently (Brennan & Schafer 2010, 19).

With Facebook, the users can connect with their friends, family and other acquaintances quickly. It is deeply customizable so the users can personalize their experience according to their liking. (Safko 2010, 449-450.) It is a great platform for interacting with current and potential customers alike (Barker & al 2013, 362).

Facebook is versatile in what a post can include. The posts can consist of images, videos, articles or only of mere text. Other social network platforms, such as Instagram can also be linked to a Facebook account. This means that when a picture is posted on Instagram, it will also be posted on Facebook. (Kawasaki & Fitzpatrick 2014, 140.)

For companies, it is a good idea to personalize their page so that it follows the values and style of the brand. However, the page should not entirely mimic the official website. Content is an important focus as well. It should be share-worthy so that it will create discussions that will contribute making the brand more memorable. It is also important to let through the personality of the company while making posts on Facebook. This way the brand can create emotional connections to its customers and emotional connections in turn build brand loyalty. (Barker & al. 2013, 331.)

### **2.2.2 Instagram**

Instagram is an application with which people can post and edit pictures of their lives from their mobile phone (Neher 2014, 9). Established in 2010, Instagram has since then made itself very popular among the Internet users. As of September 2012, it had 100 million registered users of which 57% are female and 43% male. 49% of the users belong to an age group of 25-34. Nowadays Instagram is owned by Facebook. (Diamond 2013, 245.)

Instagram is a great tool in social media marketing. As with Facebook and Twitter, the user can create their own profile where they can post photos. The user can then follow other people or brands and can be followed by other users. When posting photos, the user can create hashtags which helps other people to find the photo and connect with people with similar interests. (Diamond 2013, 248-249.)

Another way Instagram is a great tool is that it helps to leverage a brand. When the brand's attributes are identified, pictures can be used to represent those attributes. For example, if nature is one of the most important attributes of the brand, then nature imagery would be beneficial when making images on the Instagram profile. Sometimes even visual metaphors can be used. These are images that stand symbolically for something. (Miles 2014, 109.)

As mentioned previously, there are invisible attributes attached to a brand. The expertise that the brand has on a certain field of industry should be shown. This can be done for example in the caption of the image. (Miles 2014, 111.) Obviously, these tips can also be applied on other social network platforms that support images.

### **2.2.3 Twitter**

According to Safko, and as of 2010, Twitter is the most popular site for microblogging. What are known as 'tweets' are short (maximum 140 characters) messages that users can send and receive. These messages are delivered to anyone who has registered on Twitter and decided to follow your messages. In turn the user receives tweets from users he or she has decided to follow. (Safko 2010, 258-259).

According to Brennan and Schafer (2010, 21) Twitter is considered to be the most transparent of social network sites. In 2013 it was the fourth most popular social network and had over 200 million unique monthly visitors (Barker & al. 2013, 332).

How Twitter can be used is to either start a discussion or participate in an existing one but these should be the kinds of discussions or tweets that will interest the target customers. In addition to that it is crucial to know the correct time to post messages as companies obviously want their customers to see them. With Twitter, companies can connect with their customers and provide customer support. It is also a great tool for building brand awareness. (Barker & al. 2013, 332-333.)

### **2.2.4 Measuring the Success of Social Media Marketing**

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are social media metrics that show how the strategies have progressed when it comes to achieving the social media goals. These KPIs can be divided to two: quantitative and qualitative of which quantitative focuses on Return on Investment (ROI) and qualitative on things that can be considered "soft" goals such as building brand awareness and audience engagement. There are hundreds of KPIs and therefore, choosing the right KPIs to follow depends on the goals that the company has set for itself. (Barker & al 2013, 283.)

For example, audience engagement which can be one of the qualitative KPIs can be calculated as follows:

$$\text{Audience engagement} = \frac{\text{Comments} + \text{Shares} + \text{Trackbacks}}{\text{Total Views}}$$

This KPI should be followed to track possible improvements or declines. Companies that have a strong following and audience engagement are able to affect customer expectations that are based on, for example, advertising. Audience engagement should be followed over time in order to get an understanding of the amount of discussions in a certain channel. (Barker & al 2013, 289).

However, it is important to note that measuring performance that is based on qualitative KPIs, such as audience engagement, is subjective as it is largely based on the marketer's judgment. For example, a word "awareness" can be interpreted differently by different marketers. (Barker & al. 2013, 295.)

ROI is calculated as follows:

$$\text{ROI} = \frac{\text{Sales} - \text{Expenses}}{\text{Expenses}}$$

Calculating sales and sales force with this formula is quite simple. PR campaigns or advertising, for example, are not. It is very challenging to link sales gained to a campaign that has required a lot of money on mass media. This makes measuring social media success quite tricky and thus, it is a very debated topic nowadays. However, measuring quantitative ROI is agreed to be the forth-right process most of the time. (Barker & al 2013, 296.)

It is good to bear in mind however that there is no standard way to calculate e.g. fan value. The true value is a variable. In addition to that, the value of a Facebook fan can be calculated a bit differently than the value of a Twitter follower. Fans on different pages also behave differently. For example, Twitter fans are more engaged with brands than fans on Facebook. What should be done is to stick with one method of calculation so that the data is consistent. (Sponder 2012, 81-89.)

### **2.3 Content Marketing**

The power of visuals cannot be underestimated. People generally do not recognize how much visuals affect them but the brain actually processes language visually and because of this people do not think about a word, they think of the visual representation of that said word. According to an infographic by KISSmetrics, 93% of the shoppers are affected by

visual appearance. When these visuals are put together with text, it creates a powerful combination for communication. (Diamond 2013, 7-10.)

When it comes to businesses, content is one of the foundations of them. There needs to be information of the product provided to the customer in one way or another which is what is meant by content in this context. Companies also need to be able to show that their product is worth buying and the price in their content. What kind of content is great, then? The content should be able to educate the reader. It should tell what kind of product it is and how to use it. The content should also be able to entertain and persuade. Persuasion should help the potential customer to remove the obstacles that she might have regarding the purchasing of the product. The content should tell a story of some kind so that the potential customers can relate to it and personalize it. The content also needs to be shareable and easily findable. However, when creating visual content, it is important to keep it simple but it should support the ideas of the company. (Diamond 2013, 41-44.)

When making posts on social media channels, it is crucial to be valuable and interesting. It is important to provide value for customers. However, merely offering potential value is not enough to get customers to engage in digital environments. There needs to be a reason for a customer to engage, generate discussions and to leave feedback. (Rowles 2014, 13.)

It is also important to be brief because the post is competing with millions and millions of other posts. Nowadays people make decisions and judgements quickly and if they do not find the post valuable or it is too long for them to read, they will move on. In addition to those, every single post should have a picture or a video attached to it. (Kawasaki & Fitzpatrick 2014, 42-47.) This is because visuals are processed far more quickly in the brain than text. A reader chooses content that he is interested in more likely based on images than text. (Neher 2014, 13.)

## **2.4 Social Media and Cosmetics**

Social media is great for cosmetics brands because it helps to create direct contact with customers. As cosmetics are usually sold through retailers, it is very challenging to build relationships with consumers or customer databases. Social networks such as Facebook have become very important in managing customer relations. The network visitors are as interested in other people's experiences as they are in what the brand says about themselves. According to a research, 20% of the consumers have confidence in a product that has been advertised but 80% have confidence in a product that another consumer has recommended online. (Tungate 2011, 198.)

Social media has allowed beauty brands to tackle some other problems. For example, ethnicity and skin color have caused some troubles in traditional media as it costs a lot of money to try to depict them. With the Internet, it is easier for cosmetics brands to portray these different skin colors. In addition to that, apps like Instagram are great for cosmetics as people like to post make-up tutorials or pictures of themselves when they have tried on some new make-up. (Tungate 2011, 201-203.)

### **3 European Natural Cosmetics Brands and Social Media**

In this chapter, it is looked into how Dr. Hauschka and Weleda market their products and brand on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. It is examined where they gain most engagement of these social media pages and which, therefore, are the most effective channels. Then it is studied what kind of elements these companies use in their social network pages, posts and imagery and finally, the imagery of these two companies is compared to the imagery of two traditional cosmetics brands: Lancôme and Lumene.

The companies were chosen mainly because of their marketing, reputation and market share. I am also relatively familiar with most of these brands and therefore interested in their marketing. The companies were also chosen based on their price categories. Lumene and Weleda represent consumer products whereas Dr. Hauschka and Lancôme represent the luxury side.

#### **3.1 Research methods**

This thesis was done as a desktop study. I have studied only already existing data for this thesis and did not conduct e.g. interviews.

IQ 1. What are the most effective channels to market natural cosmetics based on the audience engagement?

My research methods for the first investigative question was to benchmark likes, shares, follows etc. and analyze based on those which channels seem to be most effective. Therefore, the mixed methods were used: quantitative measures were used to measure likes and follows but qualitative methods were used to observe other possible variables. The source for this data was the social media sites of the companies. I also used a little bit of Socialbakers which is a social media analytics site to check some of the follower numbers. The example of how the data was collected can be seen in Appendix 1. Mixed methods were used because the question can be partly answered with statistical analysis. As other issues regarding this question cannot be measured or answered with figures simply using quantitative methods would not have been reasonable. (Matthews & Ross, 2010)

IQ 2. How is the audience engaged and what elements are used in the social media posts?

My second investigative question was research through benchmarking. In this question, I observed images and texts that the brands used and observed and tried to analyze if they

followed any marketing strategies or psychology that I discussed in my theoretical framework. Qualitative methods for this question were chosen because there are no tools for collecting this type of data. In addition to that, the data is not in a numerical form. (Matthews & Ross, 2010.)

IQ 3. What are the differences in the imagery of the social media marketing of natural cosmetics as opposed to the traditional cosmetics?

In my third investigative question, I did benchmarking, observing and analyzing. I analyzed similar things for traditional cosmetics brands as I had analyzed for natural cosmetics brands but I then compared them to see what kind of differences there are between the imagery of the two. Qualitative methods were chosen for this question for the same reasons as for the previous question.

As this was a desktop study, I therefore did not have access to “official” data and could only study data available to me. Therefore, receiving exact numbers was impossible and the results gained from this study should be considered as directional rather than exhaustive.

## **3.2 Dr. Hauschka**

In the following subchapters, it is studied how much Dr. Hauschka has audience engagement in its social network pages. It is also studied how Dr. Hauschka uses social networks to brand itself.

### **3.2.1 Dr. Hauschka and Follower Activity in Social Networks**

Dr. Hauschka has divided its social network pages to different markets. For example, Dr. Hauschka Finland has its own Facebook, Instagram and Twitter and so does USA, Sweden etc. I chose to examine the social network pages of the United Kingdom (UK) as I am studying European natural cosmetics brands and it is one of the largest markets in the EU. I also understand the language so I know what is talked about in their posts.

Note that the following figures represent the activity of Facebook, Instagram and Twitter on a certain market area to give idea of the differences in audience engagement of the channels in that market. The objective is not to compare Weleda and Dr. Hauschka’s audience engagement numbers.

Table 3. Dr. Hauschka Social Media Statistics (Facebook, Twitter & Instagram 2016)

Channel	Number of followers on the channel (as of 19.11.2016)	Number of posts in the last 30 days (14.10.-14.11.2016)	Number of comments, likes, etc. in the posts	The engagement / followers ratio
Facebook (UK)	10 816	30	1 109	0.10
Instagram (UK)	2 127	31	2 490	1.17
Twitter (UK)	7 102	53*	798	0.11

\*retweets included

In the first column of the table, the figure represents the number of followers on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter on the UK market. On the following column, it is shown how many posts the company has posted during 30 days. This timeline was chosen because it was reasonable for me to calculate but also a long enough period to be somewhat relevant. In the last column, the figure represents the sum of all the likes, shares, retweets and comments that the company has received for those posts that were calculated. The last column is a number that has been calculated from the following formula:

$$\text{Audience engagement} = \frac{\text{Likes} + \text{comments} + \text{shares}}{\text{Followers}}$$

The figures seen above are by no means exhaustive but rather directional. The numbers have been calculated by manually checking the social media posts and marking and listing the numbers on Excel where they are summed together. As I did not have access to see the actual view numbers and traffic on the web page, I could only compare the engagement to people that already have given some following to the channel and the brand. In this sense, I could measure how active the current followers are on the channels.

Based on the previously mentioned formula, the audience engagement ratio on Facebook is 0.10, on Instagram 1.17 and on Twitter 0.11. Therefore, it seems that Dr. Hauschka UK receives most of its engagement on Instagram and they did have constantly around 80 likes per post during the 30 days. Spikes on audience engagement in all platforms appeared when Dr. Hauschka had announced a competition where people had to comment an answer to a question to participate. Other than that, their posts mostly consisted of likes in all platforms which is easy to understand as it requires less time and therefore dedication. A like can be clicked in less than a second whereas writing a comment takes actual effort and time to write, even if it is just a single word.

It is interesting to note that Dr. Hauschka has fewer followers on Instagram than Twitter. My personal hypothesis was that Twitter is going to be the least followed platform among natural cosmetics brands but apparently in Dr. Hauschka's case it is not so. Facebook is as expected the platform with the largest following. Therefore, maybe Facebook as a platform has the most potential out of the three but they could engage their audience there a bit more.

As can be seen from the number of social media posts during a 30-day span, they seem to update their social network pages at least once a day, Twitter being more active in that regard than other social network pages. This is good as there is consistency.

### 3.2.2 Dr. Hauschka Branding in Social Media

When looking at Dr. Hauschka's Facebook page the Dr. Hauschka logo is clearly visible in the profile picture and tagline "Nature, the Artist" is easily observable on the cover image. These help a customer to identify the brand and the brand to establish its identity. Clicking the cover photo gives additional information of the seasonal products that are portrayed in the image in case a customer is interested in them.

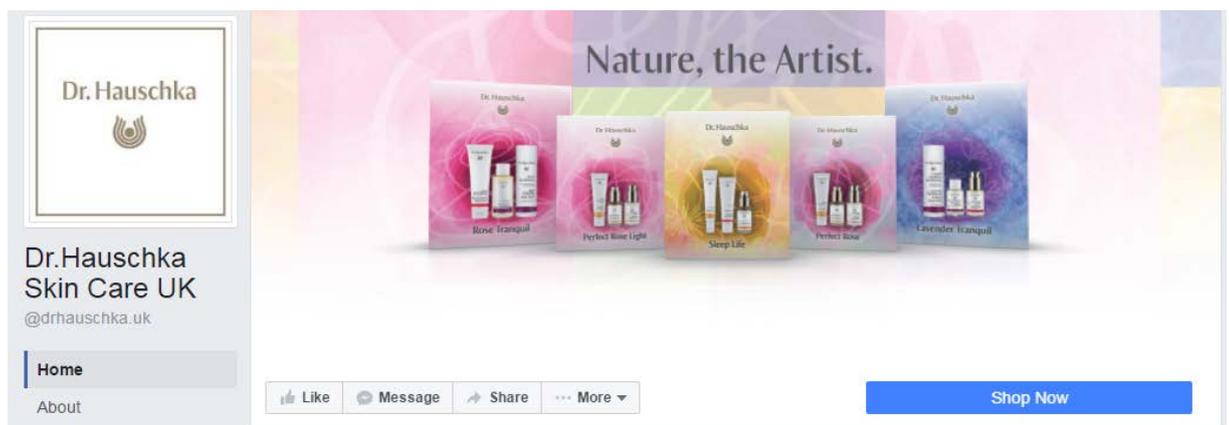


Image 1. Dr. Hauschka Cover Image (Facebook 2016)

Additional information, such as age and nationality, of the company is hidden behind "About" but this is more of a "fault" of Facebook layout than Dr. Hauschka. On other social networks a short introduction is immediately visible but this will be discussed further later. "Shop Now" button on the sub right takes the customer to Dr. Hauschka's official website and their online store so that the customer can quickly suppress the possible need for new cosmetics products she or he might have.

The messages that Dr. Hauschka posts on Facebook are versatile. There are posts telling customers about upcoming events, product promotions, articles telling about the ingredients

used in the products, promoting seasonal products (e.g. Christmas bundles), product information and private blog posts. The posts are always accompanied with a picture which makes them more appealing for visitors.

The pictures of the products are very clean and simple which seems to follow the packaging which is also very minimalistic. A lot of white is used which is one of the main colors of the brand. Usually the color scheme in the images follows the colors of the product packaging and quite surprisingly for a natural cosmetics brand lacks natural elements or has very little of it. For example, the picture promoting Almond Soothing Body Cream has only six almonds on a white background and that is the only natural element in it. It seems almost clinical which is definitely a chosen strategy which helps Dr. Hauschka to differentiate itself from other brands.



Image 2. An Example of Dr. Hauschka Imagery (Facebook 2016)

The text in the posts is usually informative. They give customer information about the product, what it includes and for what purpose it is used and thus provides value for a visitor. The audience is engaged by asking questions, such as 'did you know...' or 'is your skin dry?' Obviously, these types of questions do not require customers to answer but they might start thinking in their minds that 'yes, I have been suffering of dry skin lately' and might start considering buying Dr. Hauschka hand cream to fix that problem. These posts usually also give promises and bring up the benefits of the products.

Dr. Hauschka does not receive many comments or questions through Facebook comments so it is quite difficult to comment on the consumer response. However, when the customers have commented on the posts, e.g. 'Amazing' Dr. Hauschka UK has liked that comment so they do follow what is being said about them on their social media pages. It is important to

follow what is being said and commenting and answering possible customer comments or questions brings the company and that specific customer a bit closer.



Image 3. Dr. Hauschka Instagram Header (Instagram 2016)

The Instagram header of Dr. Hauschka shows the logo which helps the customer to identify the brand. The short description describes the company, their product and their values which gives a customer an idea of the company. A link to the official website is easily visible in case a visitor wants more information of the company or wants to possibly purchase products.

The images used on Instagram are actually for the most part the same that are used on Facebook. However, there are more of them which is perhaps obvious considering the nature of this social network. The images mostly promote products (both seasonal and continuous) and ingredients that are used in the products. Some of the images posted on Instagram are taken by bloggers or are taken in an event. There are also inspirational quotes that support the company image. More of the feed can be viewed in Appendix 2.

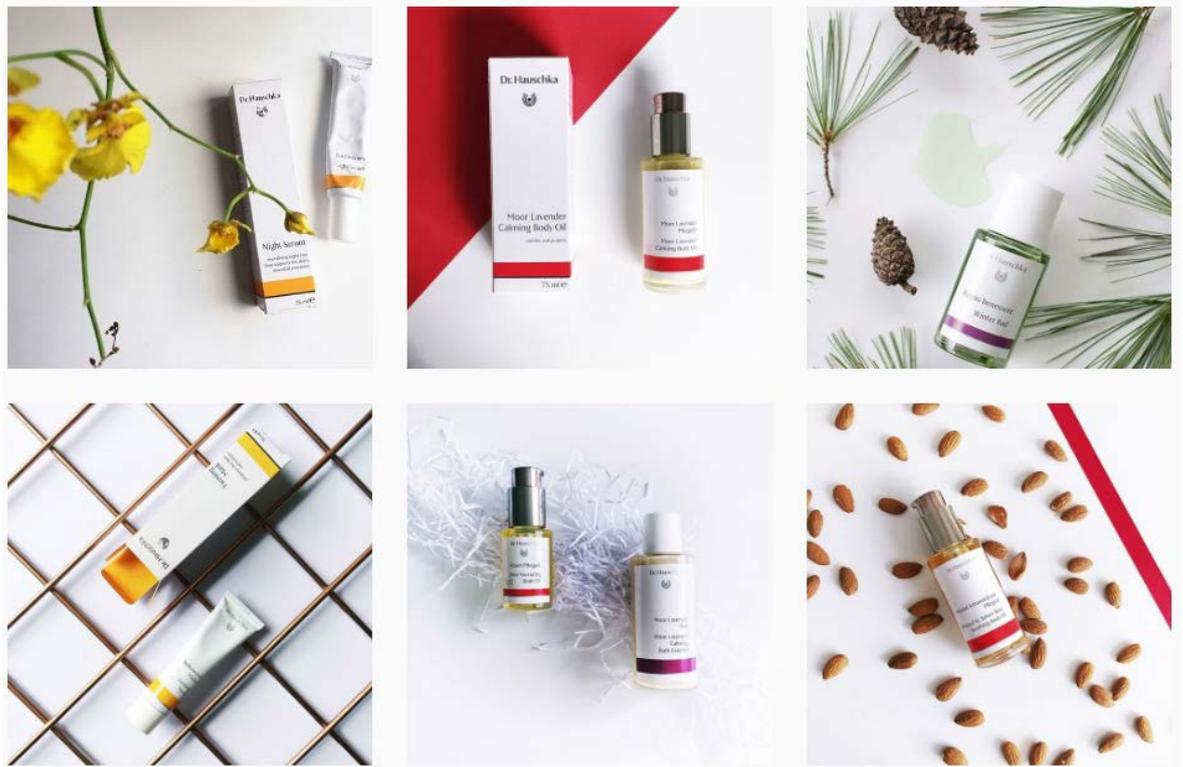


Image 4. Dr. Hauschka UK Instagram Feed (Instagram 2016)

As can be seen from the images above, the images have a mostly white background with some simple colors. The elements that support the naturalness of the company are quite simple, e.g. in the upper right picture, the spruce leaves accompany the color of the bottle. A pair of spruce cones are added to emphasize the main ingredient used in the product.



Image 5. Dr. Hauschka Instagram Post (Instagram 2016)

Dr. Hauschka UK does answer customer comments on their Instagram (e.g. “Thank you for your kind words”) so they follow what is being said about them on Instagram. They also give good and informative answers for customers that are asking about certain products. Things like these help to develop relationships with customers and help customers to build trust towards the brand. It also helps a brand to develop a friendly personality in a customer’s mind.

When it comes to Twitter, Dr. Hauschka has the same cover photo there as it has on Facebook. The same logo is also visible in the profile picture. As before, these help a customer to identify the brand and it also brings consistency to the brand. The logo and the tagline become more familiar, the more they are repeated throughout different channels.



Image 6. Dr. Hauschka Twitter Page (Twitter 2016)

The description is the same as it is on Instagram. A link to the official website can easily be found under the location. Most of the tweets follow a similar formula to Facebook. They tell about products and product ingredients and have links to articles that customers might find beneficial and interesting to them. They also retweet tweets by their retailers that promote their brand.

### 3.3 Weleda

In the following subchapters Weleda’s audience engagement in its social network pages is studied. It is also studied how Weleda uses social networks to brand itself.

### 3.3.1 Weleda and Follower Activity in Social Networks

Note that the activity on these channels is compared to each other. E.g. the activity on Dr.Hauschka Facebook is not compared to Weleda Facebook.

On Facebook, Weleda has 820 559 likes (as of 14<sup>th</sup> of November 2016). They have combined the web page so that it shows the updates based on where you access the page. For example, I have set my Facebook in English but despite that, the updates on Weleda page appear to me in Finnish. I needed to log out and go to the Weleda main page in order to get the updates in English and even then, it did not fully work.

It is interesting to note that Weleda has separate Instagram pages for certain markets. For example, USA, United Kingdom, German speaking countries and Sweden have all their own Instagram pages in their respective native languages. This, of course, makes the brand more accessible for people who, for example, do not speak English that well.

Table 4. Weleda Social Media Statistics (Facebook, Twitter & Instagram 2016)

Channel	Number of followers on the channel (as of 21.11.2016)	Number of posts in the last 30 days (14.10.-14.11.2016)	Number of comments, likes, etc.	The engagement / followers ratio
Facebook (UK)	13 510*	28	4 526	0.34
Instagram (UK)	4 398	10	608	0.14
Twitter (UK)	10 820	31**	952	0.09

\*through Socialbakers

\*\*retweets included

Similarly to Dr. Hauschka's statistics, the figure in the first column of the table represents the number of followers on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. I chose the UK pages of the channels so that they are comparable with each other but also comparable to Dr. Hauschka although comparing the two is not the objective. On the following column, it is shown how many posts the company has posted during 30 days. This timeline was chosen because it was reasonable for me to calculate but also a long enough period to be somewhat relevant. In the third column, the figure represents the sum of all the likes, shares, retweets and comments that the company has received for those posts that were calculated. The last column shows the audience engagement ratio.

The audience engagement ratio for Weleda was calculated as follows:

$$\text{Audience engagement} = \frac{\text{Likes} + \text{comments} + \text{shares}}{\text{Followers}}$$

Audience engagement ratio for Weleda Facebook UK is 0.34, for Instagram 0.14 and for Twitter 0.09. Surprisingly Weleda gets most engagement on Facebook and surprisingly little on Instagram. However, as can be seen on Table 4 Weleda UK did not have many updates on Instagram compared to other platforms which can explain this. They have considerably smaller number of followers there to begin with whereas they have their largest following on Facebook.

On Facebook and Twitter Weleda got most of its engagements in posts or tweets that had a possibility to win a prize (“Comment on this post and you have a chance to win”). This is probably because a follower or a reader thinks he or she gets more value when commenting or liking that kind of a post because there is a chance to win something and thus gain more value, compared to a regular post that promotes a product or an event. In general, a consumer does not get anything of special value when liking “regular” updates. He or she is merely informed of products or their usage. This can be seen in Appendix 3 which is a comparison of “an average post” and a competition post.

The figures seen above are by no means exhaustive but rather directional. They are supposed to give an idea about the engagement level of Weleda’s audience.

### **3.3.2 Weleda Branding in Social Media**

When a visitor comes by Weleda’s Facebook page, they can immediately see the logo on the profile picture. As with Dr. Hauschka the additional information of the company is hidden behind “About.”

A customer can see from the Facebook page that Weleda is very responsive with customers’ messages. This can be seen by observing as well as e.g. Weleda Finland is very eager to answer customer questions, to recommend products and to like comments made by customers.

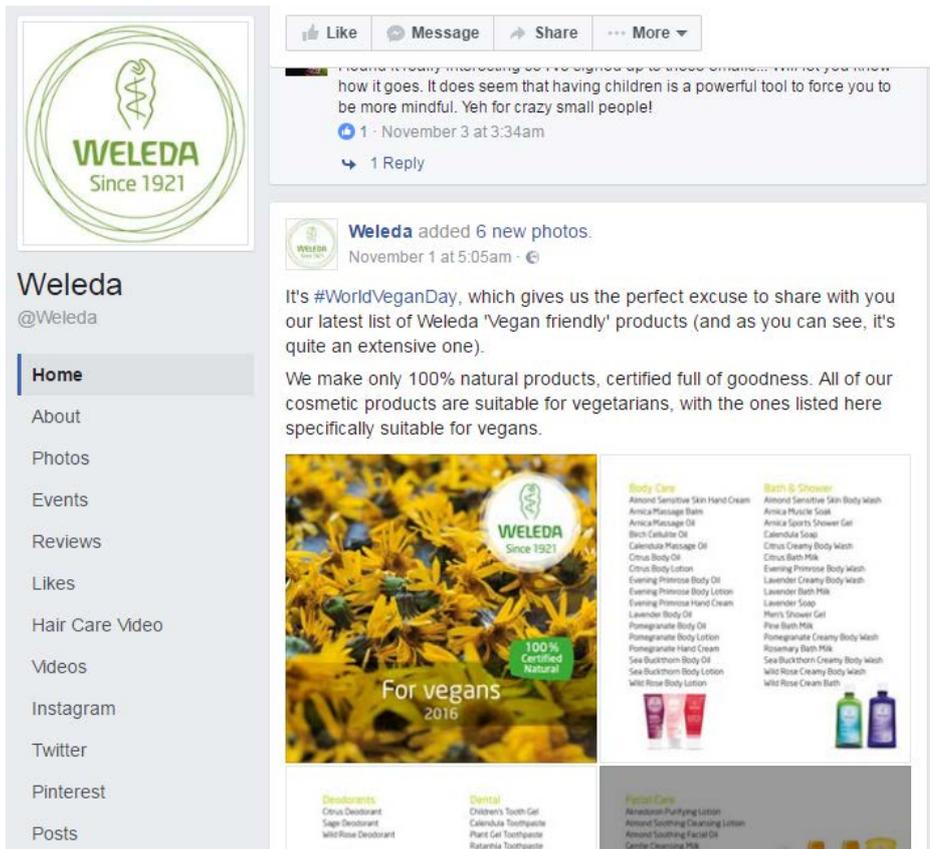


Image 7. Weleda Instagram UK on Facebook. (Weleda Facebook 2016)

Weleda has linked their Instagram account on Facebook as can be seen from the image above. This way a certain post gains more visibility than it normally would because it practically has two audiences. It also gives signals to Facebook followers to go follow their page on Instagram and potentially gain more visibility that way.

From the side-bar it can be seen, that Twitter is also easily accessible from Facebook. The content that Weleda posts on Facebook is versatile as they post images, videos and articles and all the updates are accompanied with a photo. The posts tell about benefits of the products.

Obviously different Weleda Instagram pages look a bit different but for this one, we examine the header of the UK page. There is a short description of the company and the logo is easily visible. The establishment year of the company is present in the logo which gives an idea of a traditional company that is proud of its heritage and has experience of this field of industry. The link actually takes a visitor to a page that tells more about biodynamic beauty brands and not, quite surprisingly, to the official website of Weleda.



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WeledaUK 100% Natural Care. Health and beauty products in harmony with nature and the human being. [www.wellandgood.com/good-looks/biodynamic-beauty-product-certification-beyond-organic-seal-is-coming/slide/6](http://www.wellandgood.com/good-looks/biodynamic-beauty-product-certification-beyond-organic-seal-is-coming/slide/6)

Image 8. Weleda UK Instagram Header (Instagram 2016)

Weleda posts photos that are colorful and earthy on their Instagram. There are fruits, flowers or nature included in every picture. This gives a sense of freshness and naturality which are attributes that the brand perhaps wants to be attached to them.

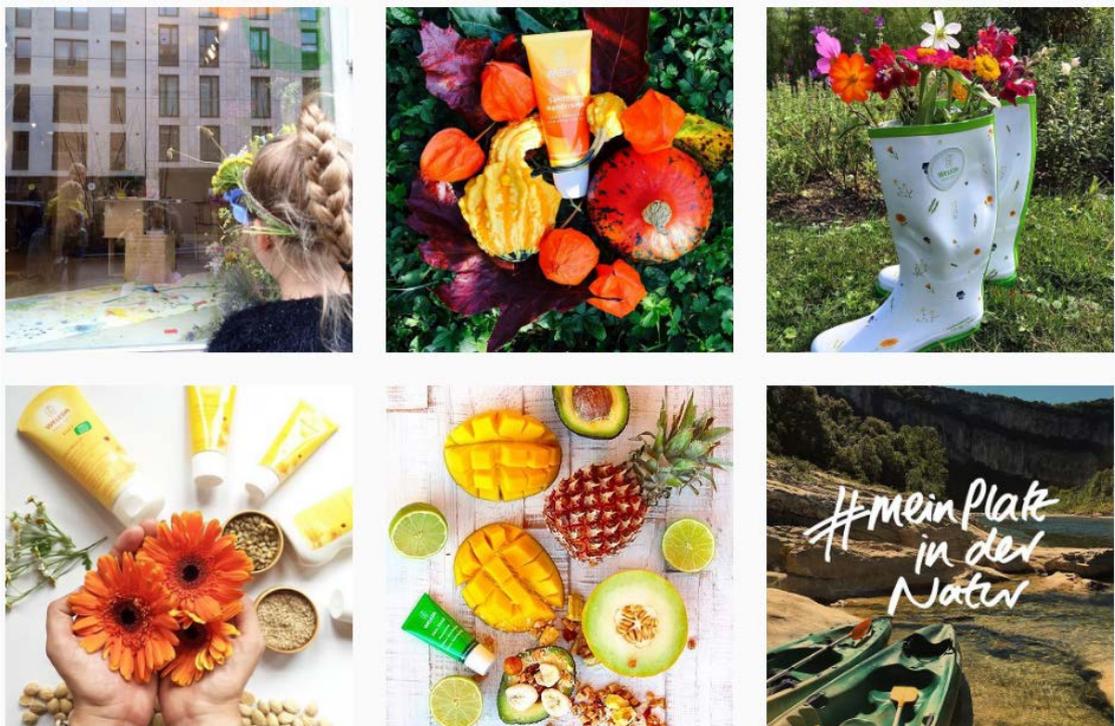


Image 9. A Part of Instagram Feed of Weleda AG. (Weleda AG Instagram 2016)

The first image on the upper left is a picture of a girl with flowers on her hair that looks into a Weleda store. The next picture is a composition consisting of a Weleda product and nature, and flowers and vegetables surrounding it. The third picture is not a picture of an actual Weleda product but of a pair of rubber shoes that has the Weleda logo on them. In the fourth picture, a pair of hands is holding flowers and on the background, can Weleda products be seen. On the fifth picture, there are cut fruits such as mango, avocado and pineapple accompanying a Weleda product. In the final picture, there's a landscape and text in German with a hashtag: "#mein Platz in der Natur" which translates in English as follows: "#my place

in the nature.” As can be noted, each of these pictures have a similar theme of nature and naturality.

Noticeably, not every picture is directly of their products and they do not need to be. A company can post photos that are inspiring or emotive but are in line with their values as these are still attributes that are linked to the brand’s imagery. A brand can also show their personality through this.

Sometimes, companies make their values and brand promises very clear to the customer as one can see in the image below:

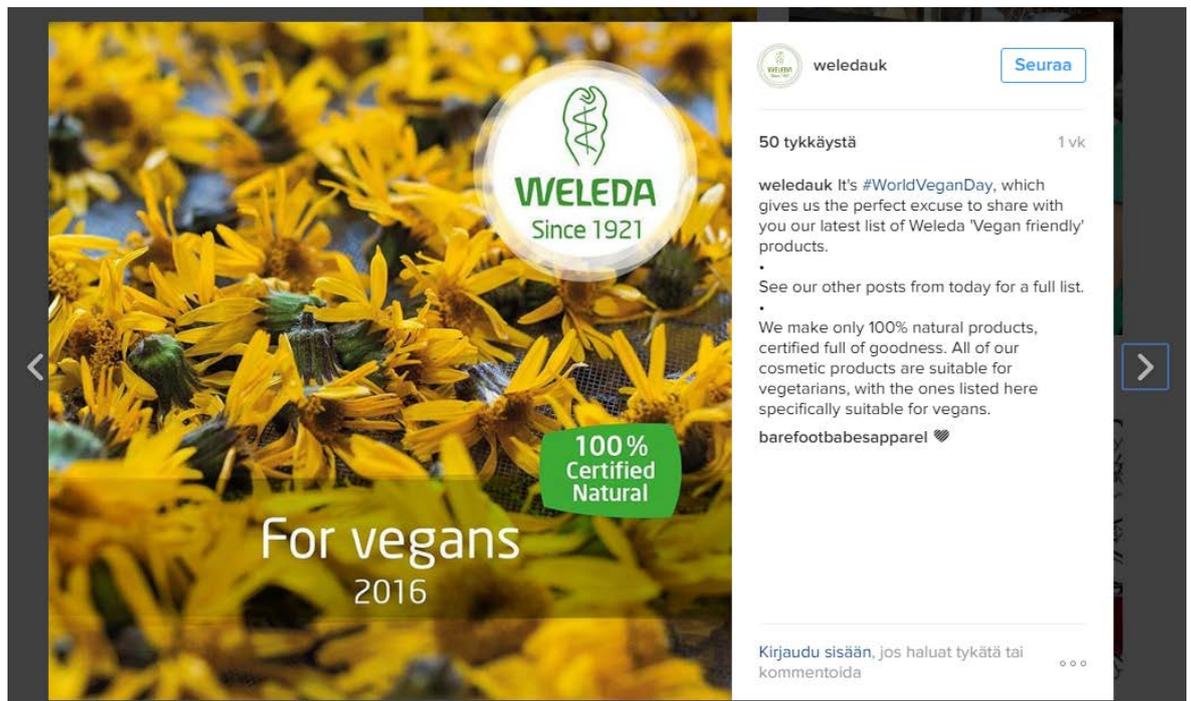


Image 10. An Instagram Picture of Weleda. (Weleda UK Instagram, 2016)

As nature and naturality are probably the most important attributes that the Weleda brand has, they make use of it. The background image is full of yellow flowers to support the idea of naturality. In the description of the image, hashtag #WorldVeganDay is used which helps vegans and people interested in vegan products find their brand easier. In the description, the company makes clear that their products are fully natural and suitable for vegetarians and some of the products are suitable for vegans as well. This is one of their brand promises. Things like these raise brand awareness and reinforce the idea that the brand is indeed what they are which also helps to build trust towards the brand.



Image 11. Weleda Twitter Header (Twitter 2016)

Weleda's cover photo is a field of sunflowers which brings the attribute of naturality immediately to mind. The logo is the same that is used on the other social network pages, showing the establishment year. There is a short introduction of the company under the logo which gives an idea for a visitor of the company. A link to their official website (which cannot be seen in the picture above however) is located right under the location.

The tweets are mostly product promotions but some retweets with competitions on them are also promoted. There are also links to articles. Hashtags are used to make Twitter users find these products easier.

### 3.4 Differences in the Imagery of Natural Cosmetics and Traditional Cosmetics

In this subchapter, it is viewed, observed and analyzed what kind of images Lumene and Lancôme post on their Instagram.

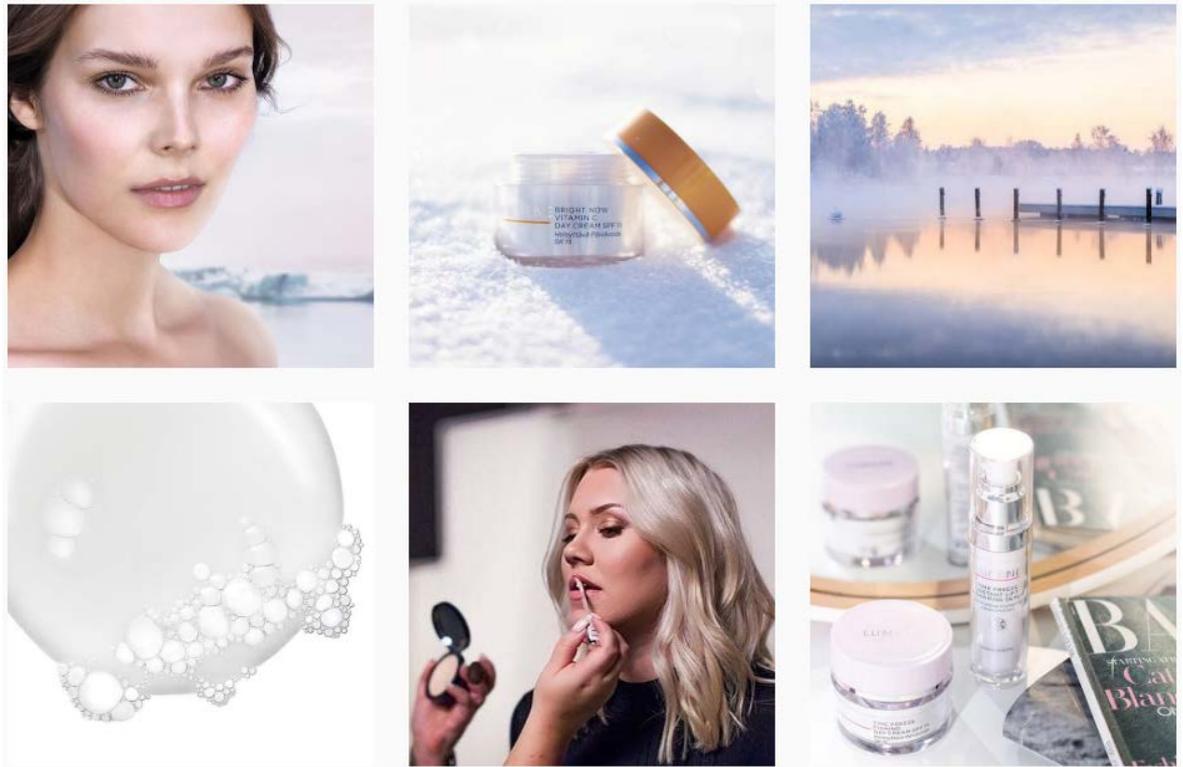


Image 12. Lumene Instagram Feed (Instagram 2016)

Lumene is not considered a natural cosmetics brand although it has naturalness in its products (e.g. arctic berries) and this Lumene also uses in its marketing. As can be seen, Lumene has a bright, fresh and relatively simple look in its pictures. They also utilize naturality in their imagery as well by having a product presented on a field of snow. There are also pictures of nature scenery as can be seen in the above image as nature is one of Lumene's attributes. Products, in some of the photos, are also placed in their "natural habitat" next to mirrors and fashion magazines. However, they also have more "traditional" imagery that is associated with cosmetics than Dr. Hauschka or Weleda as they have pictures of women with make-up.

Lumene differentiates itself from other traditional cosmetics brands by utilizing nature and bringing out the naturalness in their imagery and brand promise. Their tagline "Beauty Born of Light" is also apparent in their Instagram images as they seem to use bright photos to reinforce this idea. I think their imagery on Instagram reinforces their brand identity quite well. Pictures of snowy nature, make-up, products and arctic berries are all building blocks of their brand image and identity. For myself, Lumene's imagery gives me an idea of a fresh, Nordic brand. However, this idea might obviously be totally different for someone else who is not familiar with the brand at all.

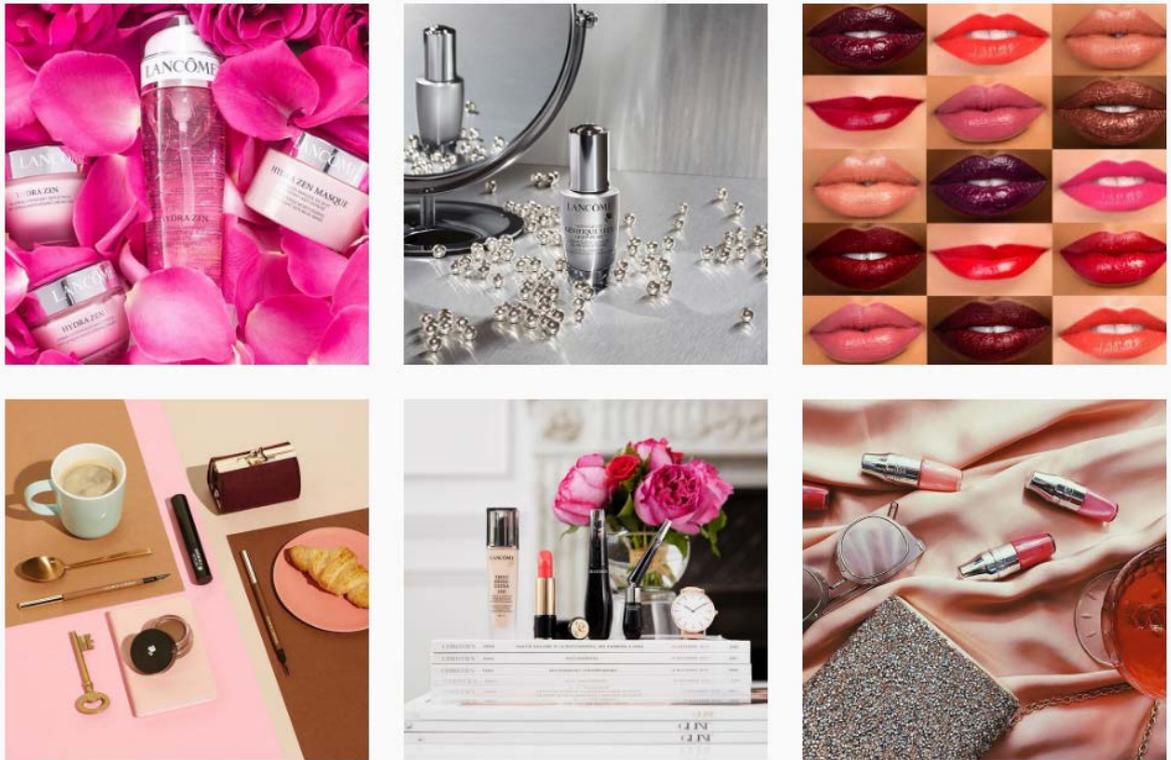


Image 13. Lancôme Instagram Feed (Instagram 2016)

Lancôme seems to have a certain color scheme in its pictures as there is a lot of different shades of red. Then again, a rose is one of the icons of Lancôme which can be seen in some of the product packaging and they build a brand association with these. Therefore, if there are some natural elements in Lancôme's imagery, it is usually a rose or rose petals. In these selected pictures, two of them include roses or its petals. The image on the upper right touches a bit on the problem that Tungate (2011) discussed and shows how easily different ethnicities can be depicted on social media.

Lancôme products are presented in some sort of setting and they do seem quite luxurious which would support the brand's image as a luxury brand. Compared to, for example Weleda and its playfulness with colors, Lancôme seems more serious, sophisticated and mature and there is a quite strict color palette. Lipsticks are also arguably Lancôme's most famous products and three of the images above include a lipstick in one way or another. If Lancôme Instagram feed is scrolled down further, pictures of celebrities such as Kate Winslet and Penelope Cruz can be seen. As discussed in the theoretical framework, this is one of the brand strategies to build brand associations. An example of this can be seen in Appendix 4.

### 3.5 Summary of the Results and Recommendations

Both natural cosmetics brands had relatively little audience engagement in their respective social network sites. Both brands saw more activity in their posts when there was a chance for their customers to win the brand's products. In order to get more engagement, the posts should provide more value and be a bit more interesting. Posting, e.g. videos more is a good way to do that but a video cannot be too long as the attention span of a regular viewer is immensely short nowadays due to lack of time. As mentioned previously, the posts are competing with thousands of other social media posts and to make themselves stand out is a difficult feat.

However, for brands like Weleda that are arguably, more or less consumer products, it might not even be meaningful to invest a lot of money on social media. Maybe their goal is to merely raise top of the mind awareness. They might not invest a lot on their social media although this does not mean it would not be important to them as it would be detrimental to be totally absent of social networks. As mentioned previously, social media is a vital tool to build brand awareness and brand loyalty and this way to grow a brand and build brand equity.

Both natural cosmetics brands were eager to share their knowledge of products. They wanted to be transparent about their products and the ingredients that they use and help customers eagerly. Based on my previous experiences with natural cosmetics brands, I have seen most of the brands as "friendly" and this type of behavior reinforces that idea to me. Social media is indeed about building relationships and this behavior should help the companies to do so as it is good customer service.

Both natural cosmetics brands had imagery that supported the idea of them being natural and organic. They also brought this up by posting pictures of being, e.g. vegan friendly or animal cruelty free. They also made this clear in their company descriptions on their social media pages. Both brands posted also inspirational images that were in line with the brand attributes.

Some brands built brand associations with colors as could be seen with Dr. Hauschka's white and Lancôme's red. However, for example Weleda used a differently colored logo on different social networks so for them, colors are not that meaningful. Their products are also of different colors unlike Dr. Hauschka's which main color was white. Each brand used pictures of people on their Instagram. However, for natural cosmetics brands these people

were quite “ordinary”: old people, children etc. whereas Lumene and Lancôme for the most part had popular bloggers or beautiful celebrities promoting their products.

Maybe natural cosmetics brands build their brand associations more through social integration strategies as it requires for a person to be interested specifically in natural and organic products to be aware of them. This way it is more about the community that is interested in these types of products, although, this might not be as clear as when it comes to, e.g. social integration strategies that popular culture brands use.

I felt that neither of the natural cosmetics brands had distinctive personalities. As I mentioned previously, both seem friendly in a way how they handle their followers but other than that, it is quite difficult to say. Dr. Hauschka strikes to me minimalistic but high quality. Weleda, to me, is about enjoying life to the fullest. Maybe when it comes to Lancôme one could say that it seems like a sophisticated, fashionable and mature brand. Lumene could be seen as a fresh and maybe a bit, in a natural way unrefined brand that embraces the wilderness of the north.

Creating strong brand images and brand identities build stronger brands. Personally, I got the idea that each of these brands know quite well what they are as a company and what products they are selling as they had very distinctive imagery even though they are in the same field of industry. Even when the similar imagery (e.g nature) was used, the end results were very different as could be seen, e.g. with Weleda and Lumene.

## **4 Discussion**

In this chapter I evaluate the results gained from this study. I contemplate the trustworthiness of my own work and what needs to be taken into account when reading the results. I also give suggestions on how to research this topic further. Finally, I evaluate my own learning regarding this thesis.

### **4.1 Consideration of results**

When talking about numbers, it is good to remember the context that they are discussed in. There are also possibilities for human error, such as marking a wrong number when collecting the data. The calculations themselves have been done in Excel which should reduce the margin of error.

The sample sizes used in this thesis are quite small because I did not have proper tools to collect large amounts of data. As this is also social media that we are discussing, it is possible that the results can change quite quickly. The results might also be a bit general as the thesis topic could be a bit more specific. Obviously, the elements that the companies use in their social media posts depend on the company and their strategy. Therefore, what might be true for one company might not apply to another.

As this is also mostly a qualitative study and the results are interpreted by a single person, the results therefore are based on interpretations and quite possibly even on opinions. Someone else might interpret or observe issues studied in this thesis differently.

All in all, I think that I reached the objectives of this thesis for the most part. However, I feel that I merely scratched the surface and that this subject could be studied so much more and especially, more deeply and that I could have used more material when studying the subject.

### **4.2 Further research and suggestions**

The whole study of natural cosmetics branding in social media could be done in a larger scale. Comparing two natural cosmetics brands to two traditional brands can be considered narrow and there are many variables that come into play. To gain consistency to the study, more brands should be studied than merely two.

A proper study of audience engagement of any of these companies from a longer period of time (e.g. a year or six months) could also be made. However, this would require access to

data that only the companies themselves hold and would therefore require a permission or a commission from the companies. Studying more precisely e.g. Dr. Hauschka's Facebook strategy could also be another possibility for further research.

### **4.3 Evaluation of self-learning**

When writing this thesis, I realized how important it is to plan well beforehand what it is that you are going to write about. It is much easier to start writing when you know exactly what it is that you need. Although I do think it is impossible to make an exhaustive plan as things tend to change, it would be beneficial to make as detailed plan as possible.

Time management is also another crucial thing that reminded me of its importance while writing. I had approximately three months to plan and finish the thesis, so I learned following the timeline that you have given yourself is very important. I somewhat wish I had had more time to write my thesis so that the end work could have been a bit better and detailed but I had set the timeline for myself to graduate by the end of 2016 so that did not give me any room in that regard.

I also learned to be more critical in my thinking. 'What are good things to include', 'what should I exclude', 'would it be too much if I wrote about this', 'is this part understandable without this', were some of the questions I had in mind when writing the theoretical framework.

I also had some problems when trying to calculate the audience engagement. At first the data that I had was impossible to compare to anything and therefore, making any kind of calculations out of it would have been irrelevant and illegitimate. I was already contemplating changing one of my case companies but I did not find a good company to replace it with despite searching for one. Luckily, I found a way to get the data that I needed to make the calculations. However, I also had some problems accessing certain social network pages because they seemed to be somewhat "region locked." Although that did not disrupt my study, it was still quite irritating. I learned that it is a good idea to have back-up plans and for example, in my case, I probably should have had a third company in mind from both sides in case I could not study some company properly.

In the end, I think I learned quite a lot during this process, mostly probably from a theoretical and practical point of view, such as how to organize research and more about branding in general.

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# Appendices

## Appendix 1. An Example of Weleda Statistics Calculations

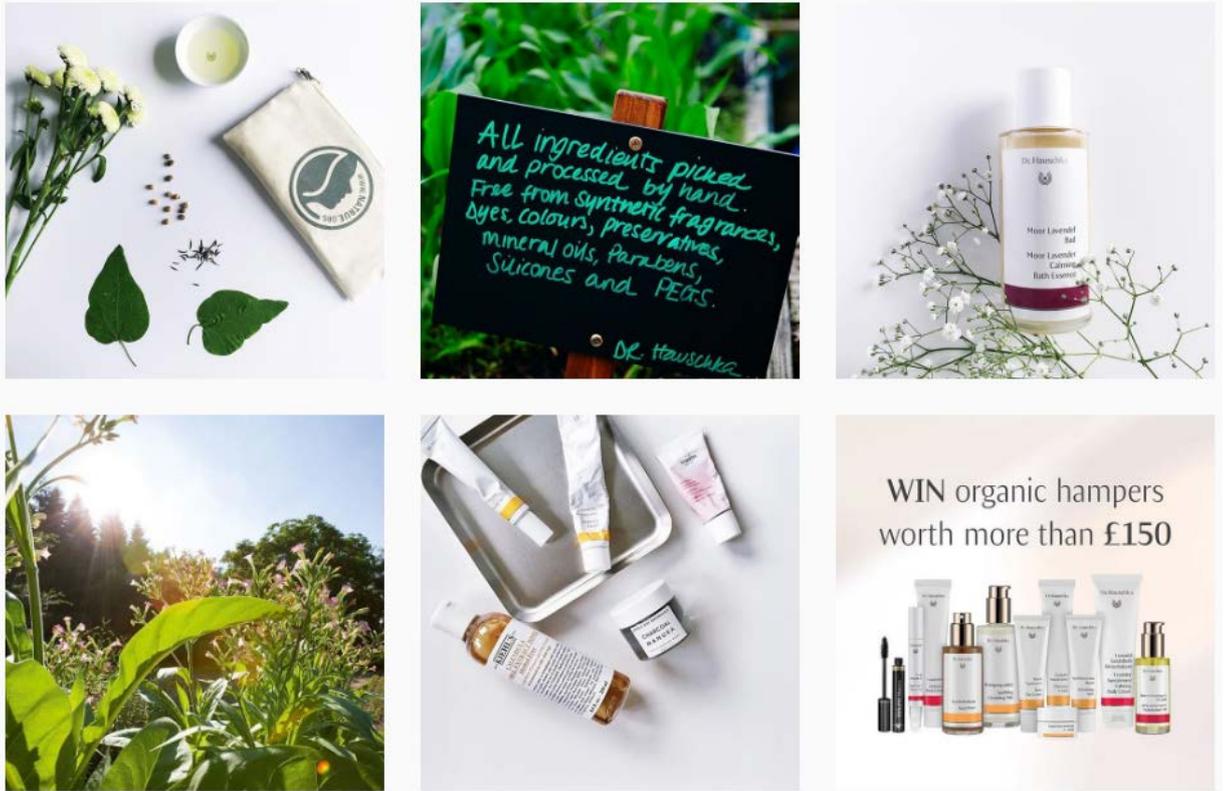
	A	B	C	D	E
1	82				
2	87				
3	43				
4	55				
5	45				
6	58				
7	35				
8	57				
9	56				
10	90				
11	<b>608</b>				
12					
13					
14					
15					



- Deodorants**
  - Citrus Deodorant
  - Sage Deodorant
  - Wild Rose Deodorant
- Hair Care**
  - Millet Nourishing Shampoo
  - Nourishing Hair Oil
  - Oat Replenishing Shampoo
  - Oat Replenishing Treatment
  - Oat Replenishing Conditioner
  - Bewitalisches Hair Tonic
- Dental**
  - Children's Tooth Gel
  - Calendula Toothpaste
  - Plant Gel Toothpaste
  - Ratanhia Toothpaste
- Juices/Elixirs**
  - Birch Juice
  - Blackthorn Elixir
  - Nursing Tea\*
  - Organic Baby Tea\*
  - Chia-Burkholdern-Sirup

- Facial Care**
    - Alkredoron Purifying Lotion
    - Almond Soothing Cleansing Lotion
    - Almond Soothing Facial Oil
    - Gentle Cleansing Milk
    - Evening Primrose Day Cream
    - Evening Primrose Concentrate
    - Pomegranate Day Cream
    - Pomegranate Eye Cream
    - Pomegranate Face Serum
    - Pomegranate Night Cream
- 

## Appendix 2. Additional Screenshot of the Feed of Dr. Hauschka Instagram UK



## Appendix 3. Comparison with Weleda's Two Facebook Updates

**Weleda**  
October 26 at 2:15am · 🌐

Ooh look! We're celebrating the launch of our gorgeous and oh-so-colourful Christmas gift range with a fabulous giveaway.

~

We've got 3 of our Wash Bags to give away, most contain a body wash, body lotion and eco-friendly scrunchie - simply let us know if you'd like to be entered into our draw to win one.

~

Choose from Sea Buckthorn, Pomegranate, Wild Rose, Mum To Be, Calendula Baby, Almond and Mens.... [See More](#)



**Win A Weleda Christmas Wash Bag Of Your Choice | Introducing Our Christmas Gifts At Weleda**

Weleda guarantees 100% natural ingredients. Organically, biodynamically grown plants. No synthetic colours or fragrances. No mineral oils. Recyclable...

WELEDA.CO.UK

👍 Like    💬 Comment    ➔ Share

Jayne Caroline Birkett, Tressa Lapham-Green, Pete Cleasby and 813 others like this.

248 shares

**Weleda added 3 new photos.**  
November 9 at 8:54am · 🌐

**Fabulous news!**

Women's Running Magazine and Men's Running magazine have awarded our Arnica Bodycare range with a bronze and silver accolade in their 'Injury Prevention' category, which we couldn't be more delighted about.

Their testers found that using these products, before and after a workout, soothed tired legs and helped them to aid recovery. ... [See More](#)



👍 Like    💬 Comment

Wendy Lowe, Amy Quarton, Lizzie Brereton and 22 others like this.

35 shares

Appendix 4. More of Lancôme's Instagram Feed

