

# MASTER'S THESIS

## Leveraging positive eWOM to enhance customer-based brand equity

### *A study of L'Oréal Paris*

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## ABSTRACT

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In online research, it is acknowledged that online communication empowers consumers. As one result, consumers tend to share eWOM, especially on social media, when they have had either a very positive or negative experience with a brand. But there is still no general recommendation on how companies can benefit from insights on their customer's brand-related online behaviour to build strong customer-based brand equity. The literature presents various motives for sharing eWOM on different platforms. However, previous work has failed to build the bridge between consumer behavioural research and the practice of brand management. In this thesis, we investigate consumers' brand-related online behaviour and their underlying motivation for sharing positive eWOM on different platforms. Simultaneously, we focus on customer-based brand equity and its different elements to set findings from consumer research into the perspective of brand management. We conducted a qualitative study, whereby the data collection is based on an in-depth investigation of customers of the corporate beauty brand L'Oréal Paris. Throughout our study, we found a variety of combined motives linked to the altruistic concern for other consumers. Moreover, we revealed the desire of customers of L'Oréal Paris to not only interact with the brand, but also with like-minded others. This reveals certain elements of a brand community. Based on the findings of this study, we expect brand managers to foster interactivity with and among its customers and to reserve it the necessary space on the brand's social media platform. By triggering consumers' motivations, brand managers can elicit more positive eWOM and foster active brand engagement and a sense of community among consumers. This will provide them with the right toolkit of knowledge to build strong customer-based brand equity.

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## Index of abbreviations

CBBE	Customer-based brand equity
CBBE model	Customer-Based Brand Equity Model
CBIM	Corporate Brand Identity Matrix
CGBS	Consumer-generated brand stories
e.g.	For example
eWOM	Electronic word-of-mouth
OCRs	Online consumer reviews
U&G	Uses and gratifications
UGC	User-generated content

# 1. INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1 Background of the study

*"It takes six years to build a plane. It takes ten years to make a bar of soap"* quoting Eugène Schueller (L'Oréal, 2015b), the founder of L'Oréal, from his journey of creating the perfect and very first bar of soap with superior fragrance and appearance. Today, the beauty industry keeps on growing, where the revenue is forecasted to reach \$265 billion in 2017 (Lucintel, 2012). L'Oréal Group is the market leader in this industry with a \$28 billion sales in 2016, eight billion more than their closest competitor, Unilever. The annual report of L'Oréal group really shows how makeup has become a trend as it is the most dynamic category within the beauty sector. This booming makeup trend is according to the report *"driven by the selfie generation, and the fast-growing use of social media, which focuses on appearance, self-expression and presentation"* (L'Oréal, 2017a, Cosmetics market, 4.1). This is reflected in the growing online beauty community on Facebook in Denmark, with two enormous beauty groups of 32.000 and 40.000 members, where the former had to increase the limit of members due to 6.000 new requests (Appendix A). The trend of joining beauty communities on Facebook addresses the shift of power to the consumer, where the consumer is no longer solely consuming, but rather acting as a co-creator, who socially constructs brand meaning by producing own UGC and consuming those of other members (Heding, Knudtzen & Bjerre, 2009). A survey with 28.000 internet users by Nielsen (Chaney, 2012) shows how 70% of internet users rely on online consumer reviews in their search for recommendations. We especially see how review portals, such as Tripadvisor and Yelp, are well-known and therefore included in a lot of research (O'Connor, 2008; Miguéns, Baggio & Costa, 2008; Jeacle & Carter, 2011; Wang, 2010). However we argue that the high number of Facebook group members shows that there is not only a tendency towards co-creation for experience goods such as services, but also in the beauty industry. We have chosen to focus on L'Oréal Paris in the mass consumer market as it is the top beauty brand in the world (L'Oréal, 2017f), sharing the same values and brand ambitions in all countries, and especially because it is the leading beauty brand in Denmark (Euromonitor, 2016).

## **1.2 Problem statement**

Considering brand management, the question remains: how can insights on customers' brand-related online behaviour be utilized in building customer-based brand equity?

While lots of research has been devoted to consumers' motivation for creating UGC (Daugherty, Eastin & Bright, 2008; Muntinga, Moorman & Smit, 2011) and eWOM via different platforms (Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh & Gremmler, 2004; Wang, Keng-Jung Yeh, Chen & Tsydypov, 2016), other researchers focused on the management of brands in the social media environment (Gensler, Völckner, Liu-Thompkins & Wiertz, 2013; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Furthermore, extensive research has been conducted on the consequences of eWOM (Hennig-Thurau & Walsh, 2004), especially on product judgement (Lee & Youn, 2009) or product attitudes and purchase intention (Wang, Yu & Wei, 2012; Erkan & Evans, 2016). However, research on customer-based brand equity (Keller, 1993, 2001, 2008; Aaker, 1996; Martensen & Grønholdt, 2003, 2010) has shown that there are other important components that need to be addressed besides product judgement or purchase intention. Thus, current research lacks to take customer-based brand equity as an overall construct into account. Even though Muntinga et al. (2011) have focused on online activities in relation to brands, most existing qualitative research further keeps to the consumer behaviour perspective without going one step further by building a bridge to branding. Thus, little attention has been paid to explore motivation-driven online activities as an integrative part of customer-based brand equity. However, by taking insights on subjective and deeply rooted consumer motives for sharing positive eWOM to the brand level, companies could leverage this knowledge to enhance their brand building activities (Keller, 2001, 2008). In order to remain focused and be able to give concrete recommendations, it is further necessary to be specific in the choice of the industry context and the researched brand. When observing marketing efforts online, we discovered that many consumer reviews about L'Oréal Paris, such as on the website of the Danish retailer Matas, are positive, whereas consumers' comments on the brand's social media platforms, in particular Facebook, are rather negative and complaint-driven. Thus, L'Oréal Paris is an interesting research case as they are confronted with contradictory consumer opinions and would hence benefit from eliciting more positive eWOM.

## **1.3 Purpose of study**

The purpose of this study is to discover how L'Oréal Paris can build strong customer-based brand equity by benefiting from insights on consumers' brand-related online behaviour and their perceptions of the brand. First, we need to understand how L'Oréal Paris wants consumers to perceive their brand by applying a corporate brand identity matrix. Secondly, we want to explore consumers' motivations to share their positive opinion about L'Oréal Paris' products by investigating their brand-

related online behaviour. Finally, we want to strengthen L'Oréal Paris' customer-based brand equity by understanding how their customers truly perceive the brand. Thereby we can provide recommendations to brand managers of L'Oréal Paris regarding how to use knowledge from the field of consumer behaviour research in their daily business of brand management.

#### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

This study is of high significance as it sets research findings on the motivation to share positive brand-related eWOM in the context of building customer-based brand equity. Thereby, the study is the next logical step in the line of consumer research on the aforementioned phenomenon, because it builds the bridge from the perspective of consumer research to the perspective of brand management. The contribution of the study is thus two-fold. First, it extends consumer research by shedding light on the motivation to share positive eWOM, specifically about the beauty brand L'Oréal Paris, and hence aims to reveal new facets of already depicted motives. Second, it enhances the understanding of brand managers of the researched phenomenon. This is done by answering the overarching research question of how to leverage the derived insights to enhance customer-based brand equity. Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) pointed out that, *"(...) the empirical results allow conclusions at an aggregate level, but make it difficult to detect differences between different kinds of goods and services."* (p. 51). Thus, we consider it as a significant to complement findings on an aggregate level with specific findings; in this case on the beauty brand L'Oréal Paris. With regard to the perspective of brand management, Wang, et al. (2016) stated that, *"Managing eWOM as a marketing tool and influencing consumer-to-consumer communication (...) are difficult tasks."* (p. 1035). Furthermore, it is inevitable for L'Oréal Paris' brand managers to utilize knowledge about their customers' motivation to share positive eWOM when looking at the shift of power towards consumers facilitated by online communication. Due to this study, brand managers might get aware of the positive impact that consumers can have on their brand and further receive recommendations on how to use motivation-related insights in their daily business when managing the brand online. The insights on motivations to share positive eWOM, if entirely considered, will force L'Oréal Paris to rethink their current brand management approach in favour of their customers, meaning that customers will be considered more actively.

## 1.5 Research Question

In alignment with the purpose and significance of this study, our thesis is set out to answer the following explorative research question:

*How can L'Oréal Paris leverage insights on consumers' brand-related online behaviour and their perceptions of the brand to enhance customer-based brand equity?*

We have further developed three supplementary sub-questions to answer our overall research question:

1. How do L'Oréal Paris want their customers to perceive their brand identity?
  - How are the core values of L'Oréal Paris expressed through different elements of the Corporate Brand Identity Matrix (Urde, 2013)?
  - How are the different brand identity elements aligned with each other?
2. What motivates customers of L'Oréal Paris to consume, contribute to and create positive brand-related eWOM:
  - What are customers' motives for sharing brand-related eWOM on retailer websites and opinion platforms as opposed to Facebook?
3. How do customers of L'Oreal Paris perceive the brand and engage with it?
  - How do they think and feel about the brand in terms of the six elements of the Customer-Based Brand Equity Model (Keller, 2001)?

## 1.6 Definition of terms

In the following section, brief definitions are provided to clarify the key terms of this study. Moreover, theoretical explanations and more detailed definitions of these themes are provided later in the theoretical framework.

There are two aspects of **brand equity**; the first aspect is financial-based brand equity, where the value of a brand is estimated for accounting purposes. The second one is customer-based brand equity (CBBE), which is the aspect we will refer to in this study. We stick to the definition provided by Keller (1993) who defines CBBE as: “*the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer responses to the marketing of the brand*”, which occurs when the consumer is familiar with the brand “*and holds some favourable, strong and unique brand associations in memory*” (p. 1).

**Brand identity** is the concept of how a company seeks to identify itself and more importantly how it wants to be perceived by the consumers. The concept of brand identity is built on the assumption that the brand should express one unified and coherent identity through its products, design and communication. Hence, a brand manager should assure that the company's brand identity expresses an explicit and consistent set of values, capabilities and unique sales proposition as these, taken together, contribute to the consumer's overall experience of the brand, which builds the basis for the company image (Heding et al., 2009).

**Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM)** refers to *"any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the Internet."* (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004, p. 39).

## 1.7 Limitations

The study has certain limitations arising from the methodology and data. Due to the specific focus on the case of L'Oréal Paris, the derived findings cannot be generalized to an entire population. In particular, the data derived from a study on selected customers of L'Oréal Paris may not be representative of all customer of L'Oréal Paris who articulate themselves positively about the brand online. Additionally, the data might not be representative for customers of other brands owned by L'Oréal Group besides the chosen corporate brand L'Oréal Paris or for customers of other beauty brands in general.

## 1.8 Delimitations

In this study, we have utilized certain delimitations to ensure the quality of our findings. Firstly, the study is restricted by the timely framework of our thesis, which makes us unable to carry out a longitudinal study. Furthermore, we have chosen to delimitate our thesis geographically to Denmark to ensure compatibility in the findings of our thesis, as it will be based on consumers with similar cultural backgrounds, who are active on social media. Moreover, we focus on female consumers as we have evaluated that L'Oréal Paris mainly focus on products for women in Denmark due to their marketing efforts so far. We make the claim based on that all marketing efforts on Facebook only involve products for women. We have also discovered that the product brand for men, Men Expert, is very limited in Denmark. Additionally, we delimited our study to a certain online media environment: the social networking site Facebook, retailer websites and opinion platforms. This means that we did not focus on blogs, microblogging platforms such as Twitter or other social media platforms. This decision is made to remain focused on those platforms that are the most frequently used channels for the distribution of eWOM by customers of L'Oréal Paris in Denmark. Lastly, during our data collection,



we adapted to the language used by our participants to establish a common narrative style and use of names as well as terms. Thus, whenever we use the word 'review', we mean all kinds of eWOM that have an evaluative trait, such as online consumer reviews or consumer-generated brand stories. Moreover, we sometimes referred to L'Oréal Paris solely by talking about L'Oréal to adopt the name used by the participants.

## **1.9 Assumptions**

This study included the following assumptions: a) the selected participants for this study fulfil the chosen segmentation variables and gave honest information regarding these variables; b) they understood the specific focus on L'Oréal Paris as a corporate brand; c) they responded accurately when revealing their perceptions of L'Oréal Paris and their personal motivation for sharing positive eWOM about the brand; and d) the interpretation of the data by the researchers accurately reflected the perceptions and motivations of the respondents.

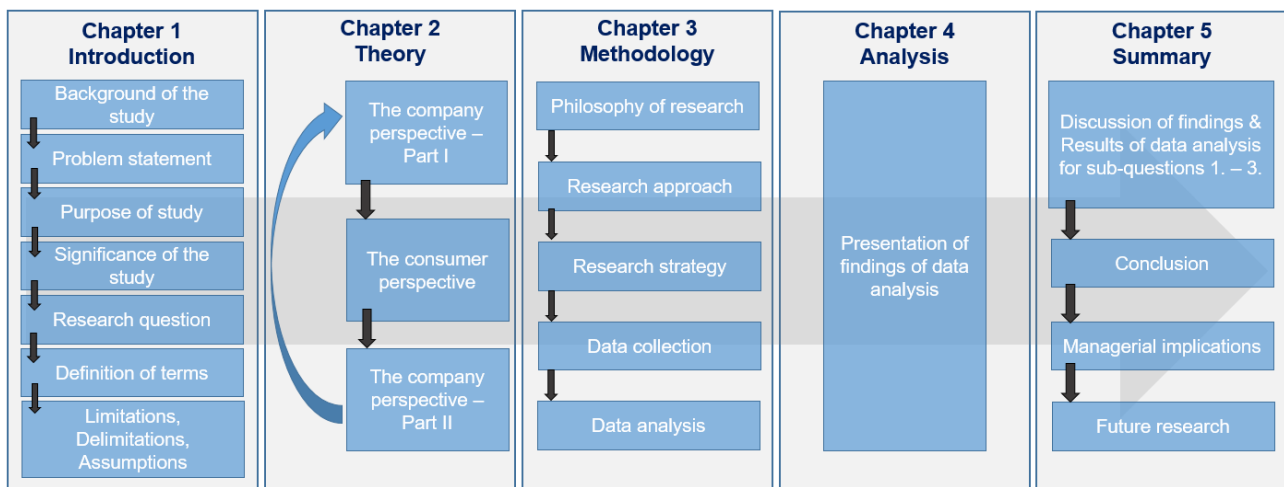
## **1.10 Organization of the Study**

This research study is presented in five chapters. Chapter 1 includes the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study, research questions, definition of terms, limitations, delimitations, and the assumptions of the study. Chapter 2 presents a review of the literature, which is further divided into three parts setting the overall structure of the thesis:

- a) The company perspective - Part I, including theory on brand identity and the Corporate Brand Identity Matrix (CBIM) (Urde, 2013) to set the theoretical frame for answering the first sub-question.
- b) The consumer perspective, incorporating theory on online communication, various online behavioural phenomena, consumers' motivation to share eWOM on different platforms, and brand communities to set the theoretical frame for answering the second sub-question.
- c) The company perspective - Part II, providing theory on customer-based brand equity with particular focus on the Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) model by Keller (2001, 2008) to set the theoretical frame for answering the third sub-question.

The order of the selected theories can be explained as follows. While the application of the CBIM sheds light on the chosen research case, theory on consumer's motivation and the aforementioned corresponding theories have to be presented next in order to be considered when referring to CBBE in the last step. Moreover, the theory on CBBE rounds up the theory chapter as it allows us to detect

(mis)alignments between L'Oréal Paris' intended brand identity according to the CBIM and customers' perceptions of the brand as revealed by the CBBE model (see Figure 1). Furthermore, Chapter 3 presents the methodology used for this study, including philosophy of research, research approach, research strategy, data collection and data analysis procedures. Subsequently, Chapter 4 presents the findings of the data analysis, which already answer inherent aspects of our research sub-questions along the way. Meanwhile Chapter 5 provides the discussion of findings & results of the data analysis for the three subquestions and a conclusion. Finally, the implications for brand managers are given, followed by an outlook for future research.



**Figure 1:** Structure of thesis

## 2. THEORY

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The following section provides a review of the literature and is split into three parts, according to the company and consumer perspective, which set the structure for this chapter.

### 2.1 The Company Perspective – Part I

#### 2.1.1 Brand identity

Brands are considered to be at the heart of marketing (Doyle, 1998) and the creation of brand equity is among the key drivers of business success (Prasad & Dev, 2000). Heding et al. (2009) describe seven approaches to strategically create and manage brand equity. This section introduces one of them, the brand identity approach. This approach implies that the brand resembles a *“lifeless artefact”* (Hanby, 1999, p. 12) that is managed, controlled and owned by the marketer who finally creates brand equity. Even though it is the second oldest of the seven brand management approaches, it is still influential and under constant theoretical development (Heding et al., 2009). For the purpose of our study, we apply this company-oriented approach to shed light on L’Oréal Paris’ intended brand identity before addressing consumers’ perceptions of and interactions with the brand in subsequent sections.

According to the brand identity approach, for a firm to succeed it is crucial that the brand expresses one unified and coherent identity (Heding et al., 2009). To find a firm’s brand identity, questions as ‘who are we?’, ‘what do we stand for?’ and ‘what do we want to become?’ need to be answered (Heding et al., 2009). Originally, it was assumed that brand identity should be solely controlled by the corporation and initiated from inside the company, so that the communication between brand and consumers is linear. In the linear communication model (Shannon, 1948), the sender encodes the message and sends it through a medium to the receiver who decodes it. Later on, Shannon & Weaver (1949) introduced the concept of feedback to the model. Feedback is the information generated by the receiver as a response to the message from the sender (Liu, Volcic & Gallois, 2011). However the communication model still remains a linear communication model, as the interaction is not dynamic. Thereby, it fits the positivistic paradigm with a strong focus on the company as the sender of the message (Heding et al., 2009). In recent research, brand identity has evolved to a more dynamic approach, which considers identity from a social constructivist perspective. In this regard, identity is not enduring but dependent on the context, which means that it is socially constructed and impacted both internally and externally (Heding et al., 2009). A hypothetical example for this would be that customers of L’Oréal Paris share pictures of themselves celebrating carnival with colourful hair

created with L'Oréal Colorista. Thereby, they would give the brand the meaning of a party and festival brand as opposed to the intended meaning of creating diversity in daily life, indicated by the slogan “#DOITYOURWAY” (L'Oréal Paris, 2017e). Thus, in the dynamic approach, brand identity is co-created by consumers (Heding et al., 2009).

### **2.1.2 Corporate brands**

Brand identity is a powerful and complex concept with the ability to strengthen a firm's competitive power significantly (Heding et al., 2009). The focus here lies on the corporate brand, because opposed to product branding; corporate branding pursues the purpose of creating one unified strong corporate identity (Heding et al., 2009). Hatch and Schultz (2001) refer to a corporate brand as “*a single umbrella image that casts one glow over a panoply of products*” (p. 3), while Aaker (2004) believes that “*the corporate brand defines the firm that will deliver and stand behind the offering that the customer will buy and use*” (p. 6). The ‘corporate brand’ term signals that an organization is standing behind the brand, which differentiates it from a product brand (Alvesson & Berg, 1992). For this reason, corporate brands often refer to themselves as ‘we’ and stakeholders refer to them as ‘they’, whereas product brands are referred to as ‘it’ by everyone (Urde, 2013).

Corporate branding is a rather new approach that integrates all of the firm's stakeholders and benefits a firm by the opportunity to reduce costs, give customers a sense of brand community, provide a seal of approval and create common ground (Hatch & Schultz, 2001). In some cases, the corporate brand can play the endorser role that provides credibility, e.g. Elvital by L'Oréal Paris. It can also influence on a more emotional level by creating valued relationship with a respected organization (Aaker, 2004). In our case, L'Oréal Paris has been supporting the Ovarian Cancer Research Fund since 1997 with turnovers from sales of limited edition cosmetics collections and sponsoring fundraising galas. While L'Oréal Paris is determined to support and give back on a more emotional level, they also influence others to give back and support a good cause (L'Oréal Paris, 2017d). A corporate brand is primarily defined by organizational associations and the number, power and credibility of organizational associations will be more preeminent for a brand that clearly represents the corporation (Aaker, 2004). Moreover, a corporate brand usually has a heritage that often leads to the perception of having assets and capabilities to create innovative and valuable products to customers. Also people at the organization, especially spokesperson, are adding value to the corporate brand since the personalities of these spokespersons also represent the corporation. Research on attitude shows that when a spokesperson is perceived as trustworthy and expertly and is well-liked by the customer, it enhances the credibility and persuasive power of a corporate brand (Aaker, 2004). However, according to Aaker (2004), “*Innovation, quality, and customer concern are three values and priorities worth highlighting*

*because they are so frequently seen as drivers of corporate brands”* (p. 8). Another characteristic of an organization that often affects the customer relationship is its local or global orientation. Being local means connecting tangibly or intangibly to the local environment and customers, whereas being global means having global visibility, aspirations and larger reach and prestige since the brand made it globally (Aaker, 2004).

We argue that L'Oréal Paris are a corporate brand as their logo is visible on all products and marketing materials regardless of which sub-brands the products belong to. More importantly, L'Oréal Paris' logo on products provides a seal of approval for consumers, letting them know that they can expect the same quality and innovativeness throughout all of their products (Hatch & Schultz, 2001). L'Oréal Paris act as a global brand with a strong global image and a long heritage since the company's foundation in 1907 (De Mooij, 2014). Innovation is an extensive part of the DNA and heritage of L'Oréal Paris as the founder Eugène Schueller developed innovative hair coloration as the initial product of L'Oréal Paris (L'Oréal, 2017b). Furthermore, L'Oréal Paris have a large number of international and local celebrities as spokespersons (De Mooij, 2014) representing their brand and values, who are incredibly important to their corporate brand as they give it a consistent recognition value across borders. With that said, L'Oréal Paris function as a master brand to all of their product brands by endorsing and providing credibility to the offering, for example with Elnett by L'Oréal Paris. As we have provided argumentation for why L'Oréal Paris is a corporate brand, we will refer to them as 'they' throughout the thesis.

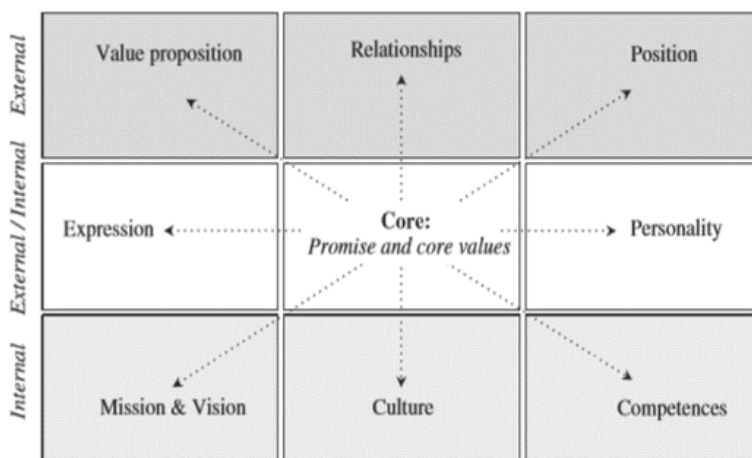
Creating a corporate brand identity is not easy; it typically starts with an image and then moves towards brand identity by forming organizational associations to its brand (Aaker, 2004). Moreover the firm needs to decide on which aspirational associations are most important in the short- and long-term (Aaker, 2004).

### **2.1.3 The Corporate Brand Identity Matrix**

Over the years, various scholars in marketing and branding have developed frameworks that aim to conceptualize brand identity (Kapferer, 1986; Upshaw, 1995; Aaker, 1996; de Chernatony, 1999) but vary in terms of their brand identity dimensions. When comparing the different frameworks, none of them seems to be all-encompassing. Instead, each framework partly includes managers' and consumers' inputs, so that they complement each other. Even though Kapferer's (1986) Brand Identity Prism includes the self-image of the receiver and five additional aspirational dimensions, we considered it as unsuitable for answering the first research sub-question of our study. Aaker (2004) explained that creating a corporate brand is not easy as many aspects need to be considered. Thus, we argue that a framework consisting of five aspirational dimensions is not extensive enough to shed light

on all elements of L'Oréal Paris' intended brand identity. In addition, the framework's emphasis on 'self-image' and 'reflection' makes it more suitable for product brands than corporate brands (Urde, 2013).

In accordance with this, Urde (2013) introduced the Corporate Brand Identity Matrix (hereafter: CBIM) as he believes that *"the corporate brand management can avoid the risk of misunderstandings, clashes of models and taken-for-granted best practice"* (p. 758). Therefore, the CBIM framework clarifies, defines and explains the different roles and functions of its nine corporate brand identity elements. Moreover, the core values and promise are located in the middle of the matrix as a beacon to guide the internal and external components (see Figure 2).



**Figure 2:** CBIM; Source: Urde (2013)

While the CBIM was originally developed in a B2B context, it was further applied to B2C companies, so that we consider it as equally applicable to L'Oréal Paris as a corporate B2C beauty brand. However, it has to be considered that the CBIM explores both internal and external factors of brand identity solely from a company's perspective with focus on its core values (Urde, 2013). The internal elements consist of mission & vision, culture and competences, whereas the external elements are value proposition, relationships and position. Finally the core component incorporates both external and internal elements. These are expression, promise & core values and personality (Urde, 2013). The CBIM is characterized by the interrelatedness of all matrix elements, which form a structured entity as indicated by the arrows pointing from the matrix' core toward all of its nine elements. In addition, the pointing arrows show how each internal element 'echoes' in the opposite external element as the two elements have to specifically correspond to each other (Urde, 2013). Thereby, the CBIM helps brand managers to align the different elements of their corporate brand identity.



As indicated in Figure 2 above, the company's *mission and vision* are vital for the internal component of the corporate brand identity since the mission states the purpose, focus and motivation for the corporation's existence and the vision indicates what the corporation is seeking to accomplish. The second internal element in the framework is the *culture*, which reflects the attitudes, values and beliefs of the corporation. The culture is usually distinct in each corporation and may therefore act as a competitive advantage (Urde 2013). The *competences* element adds value to the strategic relevance in relation to the creation and maintenance of continuous competitive advantage and is special to the CBIM framework. The corporation's core competences are therefore particularly important in the definition of corporate brand identity. In conclusion, the corporation needs to know what kind of special knowledge it has and what it does better than its competitors in order to maintain a high level of competitiveness (Urde 2013).

The two elements in the middle row, personality and expression, work as a bridge between the internal and external components of the corporate brand identity. The *personality* element is the combination of characteristics and qualities that define the corporate character. A corporate brand personality is less related to user imagery for a specific product brand, but more related to the personality of employees representing the corporation (Urde, 2013). *Expression* represents the special way, in which the corporation communicates and expresses itself. Here the verbal, visual and other forms of identification act as a part of the corporate brand identity. The *promise and core values* element is at the heart of the matrix indicating their importance and pivotal role to the corporate brand identity. The brand core can be defined by the coherence between promise and core values as the entity of core values supports and leads up to a promise. The important role of the brand core is to give guidance, focus and coordination in the management of brands. The key aspect of this framework is the emphasis placed on the brand core that has the role to integrate corporate brand identity. Therefore it is ideally that the brand core is coherent with the rest of the elements in the matrix and vice versa (Urde, 2013).

According to Urde (2013), "*A defined corporate brand identity represents the way in which the corporation wants its brand to be perceived externally*" (p. 752). Therefore, the three elements in the external component need to be consistent with the brand core and other elements in the framework since these three elements - value proposition, relationships and position - affect the image and reputation to a significant extent (Urde, 2013). The *value proposition* mainly concerns the relationship between the corporation and its customers in terms of the appealing arguments directed towards them to create a favorable relationship that will result with positive purchase decisions. The *relationship* element describes the type of relationship and how they are built between the

corporation, its customers and other stakeholders. The last external element, *position*, defines how the corporation wants the brand to be positioned in the market and in the mind of the customers and other stakeholders. However, it must not be confused with a brand's final positioning since *position* in the CBIM framework serves as the point of reference for the process of positioning.

Regarding our research study, we will apply the CBIM framework to the case of L'Oréal Paris in order to *identify the intended brand identity of L'Oréal Paris to understand how **the company** wants its customers to perceive the brand*, as expressed in our first sub-question. However, we argue that the CBIM fails to consider the social interaction among brand consumers, which is the foundation of the more recent community approach (Heding et al., 2009). Furthermore, the CBIM fails to show how customers interact with the company as the relationship element is entirely explored from the company's perspective. Recent researchers (Da Silveira, Lages & Simões, 2013) propose a dynamic approach to brand identity that is no longer only marketer-driven, but influenced by consumers who act as co-contributors. Even though the CBIM (Urde, 2013) misses this new perspective on brand identity, we still choose to apply the matrix as our intention regarding research sub-question one is to show the company's perspective first. Afterwards we will apply another theoretical framework that emphasizes on the consumer's perspective. However, we question whether the matrix is appropriate for researchers who want the company's and its stakeholders' perspectives of brand identity to be unified in one framework.

## **2.2 The Consumer Perspective**

As previously outlined, the overall objective of brand management is the creation of brand equity. Besides the brand identity approach, there are also other 'schools of thought'. While the brand identity approach considers the brand as linked to corporate identity, the community approach sees the brand as the pivotal point of social interaction (Heding et al., 2009). Even though both approaches are equally suitable to our research case, they make a distinct contribution by looking at L'Oréal Paris from two contrasting perspectives. Being a global corporate brand (De Mooij, 2014), we can assume L'Oréal Paris to constantly manage the expression of their corporate identity. However, with regard to our underlying research problem, L'Oréal Paris' brand management seems to struggle with eliciting positive consumer responses in the new media landscape, e.g. on Facebook. Thus, it is necessary to supplement findings from the company perspective of the identity approach with findings from the perspective of the community approach. In contrast to the identity approach, the community approach has an interpretive stance, pointing out how much influence is also exerted through social interaction

among “*dedicated brand consumers*” (Heding et al., 2009, p. 182). According to Østergaard & Jantzen (2000) and within the scope of our thesis, it is important to look at consumers in two different ways to get a holistic understanding of their online behaviour: as individual ‘tourists’ from the perspective of consumer research (section 2.2.4) and as ‘tribe members’ from the perspective of consumption studies (section 2.2.5).

### **2.2.1 Online communication - a shift of power & control**

Since the advent of the Internet, online communication complemented traditional offline communication and thereby changed its basic notion. In this regard, Gulbrandsen & Just (2011) point to five distinct features of online communication, which differentiate it from more traditional modes such as interpersonal communication. As determined by our research scope, we analyze consumers’ communication about L’Oréal Paris in an online context. In light of this, we will consider the following five features of online communication as underlying characteristics throughout this thesis: (1) *negotiable and uncontrolled*, (2) *time-space free*, (3) *hypertextual*, (4) *hyper-public* and (5) *two-way mass communication*.

The first feature, *negotiable and uncontrolled*, refers to the possibility of constant editing, storing, replicating, deleting or retrieving of online communication (Cherny, 1999; Walther, 1996). Therefore, online communication cannot be controlled by a single producer or receiver and is further enhanced by its easy access (Gulbrandsen & Just, 2011). The second feature, *time-space free*, indicates that once consumers have gained access to online communication they can communicate at any time and across borders so that there are no temporal and spatial limits. Thus, in the case of L’Oréal Paris, customers can publish their brand-related opinion from anywhere at any time; even on-the-go via their smartphones. Feature number three, *hypertextual*, allows online communicators to write a text that incorporates links to other contributions, so that different text modules can lead the receiver to a wider network of information (Gaggi, 1997). Feature number four refers to the *hyper-public* character of online communication, which allows Internet users to put private topics to public debate (Gulbrandsen & Just, 2011). In the case of L’Oréal Paris, customers share their brand opinions and experiences with others online and thereby turn into “*prosumers*”, who create own content (Tapscott & Williams, 2006, p. 126). The last feature, *two-way mass communication*, is often considered as the most important one (Napoli, 2010) and implies that “*one interacts directly with the few, and indirectly with the many*” (Gulbrandsen & Just, 2011, p. 1100).

The ideological and technical foundation for online communication is built by Web 2.0, which serves as a platform where users can continuously modify and contribute content in “*a participatory and collaborative fashion*” (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 61). While companies had the power and control to

strategically place brand information in earlier times, they are no longer the sole providers and creators of brand-related information but now share this role with consumers (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). The following quote by Scott Cook, the co-founder of Intuit, emphasizes the consequences of online communication from a company's perspective: "*A brand is no longer what we tell the consumer it is - it is what consumers tell each other it is.*" (In: Gensler et al., 2013, p. 242). The notion of linear company-to-stakeholder communication became outdated as consumers increasingly share information with each other. Thereby, they become less dependent on the company for brand-related information (Muntinga et al., 2011). Due to this development, we are especially interested in the shift of power and control towards the consumer.

### **2.2.2 User-generated content, eWOM, online consumer reviews & social media**

Until now, lots of consumer research has been devoted to the different types of brand-related online interactions and the platforms where these interactions take place. Based on the shift of power and control towards the consumer, *user-generated content* (hereafter: UGC) becomes more prominent and plays an increasingly important role. (Daugherty et al., 2008). In order to differentiate it from other forms of media content, UGC has to fulfil the following three basic requirements. First, it is published to a selected group of people on websites and social networking sites that are publicly accessible. Second, it is created by users without professional routines and practices and third, it shows creative effort (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). One example of creative content that does not count as UGC is adverts or social media posts made by a company. These posts are usually created by a professional media agency, so if a user simply shares this post among its social network, it is not considered as UGC according to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010). However, if the user would share this post and complement it with a personal anecdote, it can be considered as UGC as the user reveals his own creative thoughts and feelings on the topic.

Another type of online communication is *electronic word-of-mouth* (hereafter: eWOM), which refers to any statement - either positive or negative - given by a former, actual or potential customer about a product or company distributed to a multitude of people and institutions on the Internet (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). Analogous to UGC, the exchange of eWOM is characterised by three distinct criteria: 1) anonymity (typically), 2) accessibility from anywhere at any time by multiple customers and 3) higher persistency and measurability compared to traditional word-of-mouth (Wang et al., 2016, p. 1034). Compared to traditional word-of-mouth, we argue that the accessibility of eWOM from anywhere at any time makes it easier to exchange a personal opinion with other customers or friends who live far away. Moreover, the visibility of most eWOM contributions on the Internet makes it more measurable compared to a face-to-face exchange. However, we consider the first criteria of anonymity

as inapplicable in many contexts, as many online platforms require its users to create a personal account, which partly reveals their identity to other users of the platform. One type of eWOM are *online consumer reviews* (hereafter: OCRs), which are consumer evaluations of product or service experiences and can be helpful for other potential consumers in their decision-making process (Park, Lee & Han, 2007). An OCR can thereby play two roles: an informant or a recommender role. In its informant role, the review provides various user-oriented information, whereas, in its recommender role, it gives personal recommendations based on user experiences (Park & Lee, 2008). For the purpose of our study, we adopt the general differentiation between informant and recommender roles for all kinds of brand-related UGC, dependent on the rather informative or recommendation-based character of content.

The rise of Web 2.0 technologies has further led to multiple social media websites (Muntinga et al., 2011). The current trend towards social media traces back to the initial purpose of the Internet to facilitate information exchange among users (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Moreover, social media websites can serve as platforms where users can share and create special brand-related content (Muntinga et al., 2011). Due to their ubiquity, mobility and interactivity, social media allow their users to communicate and connect with each other on a closer and more frequent basis compared with other communication channels (Wang et al., 2016). Kaplan & Haenlein (2010) present six classifications of social media. However, for the purpose of our study we focus on the social networking site Facebook as this is where many of L'Oréal Paris' customers are present and active (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

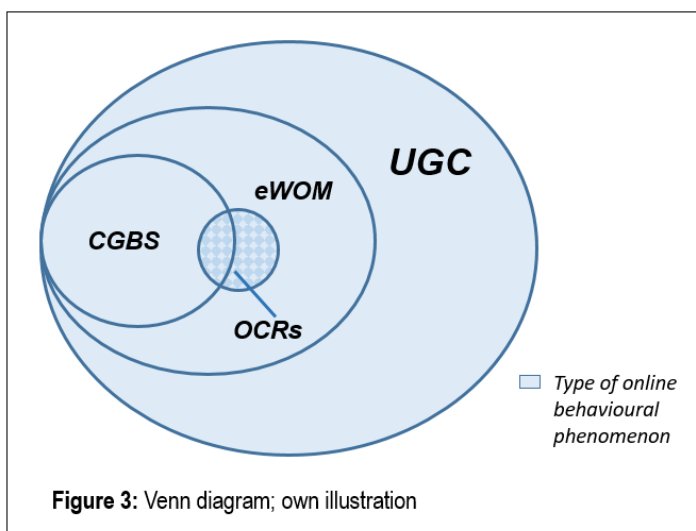
Regarding consumers' impact on brands in the social media environment, Gensler et al. (2013) focus on the interplay between firm- and *consumer-generated brand stories* (hereafter: CGBS). Originally, firms reached out to consumers through narrative storytelling to persuade them of their brands (Gensler et al., 2013). However, due to the interactivity of social media, firms remain no longer the sole storytellers as "*consumers are becoming pivotal authors of brand stories.*" (Gensler et al., 2013, p. 243). CGBS evolve around past or anticipated experiences with the brand, which influence whether they complement or change the company's intended brand meaning. CGBS do not have to be consistent and are therefore likely to change over time (Gensler et al., 2013). Online reviews (OCRs), also defined as consumer evaluations, are only a part of CGBS and shared through different platforms (Gensler et al., 2013).

Overall, CGBS on social media can have a high impact on the brand for two reasons. First, consumers have a tendency to either share very positive or negative experiences with a brand on social media (Gensler et al., 2013), which can hence benefit or harm the brand image. Second social media has a high reach. Thus, consumers' positive or negative brand stories get accessible to the social network in

real-time and remain ubiquitous in the social media environment (Hennig-Thurau, Malthouse, Friege, Gensler, Lobschat, Rangaswamy & Skiera, 2010). Thus, social media users are no longer dependent on their own brand experiences but can build their brand image on a multitude of brand stories. Based on the connection between consumers, Gensler et al. (2013) further argue that CGBS shared on social media lead to the establishment of consumer-brand networks.

### 2.2.3 Relationship between online behavioural phenomena

Due to the fact that different authors make reference to different online behavioural phenomena, Figure 3 provides a visual illustration to clarify the relationship between these various phenomena based on the aforementioned definitions.



UGC refers to any kind of online content that has a certain creative appeal and is created by private individuals without professional routines. Thus it is a broad phenomenon taking place on publicly available websites, such as discussion fora and opinion platforms, or social media sites that are accessible to a selected group of people (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). A narrower focus reveals that the broad phenomenon of UGC includes further phenomena. One of these is eWOM, which distributes an either positive or negative brand experience from one user to a larger network. The second phenomenon is CGBS. Comparable with eWOM, CGBS interpret past or anticipated brand experiences, which can either be positive (e.g. stories by brand enthusiasts) or negative (e.g. consumer complaints). These brand stories can appear in an offline or online setting just as word-of-mouth communication (Gensler et al., 2013). However, in contrast to eWOM, CGBS are more commonly shared through social media (Gensler et al., 2013) and often have a narrative appeal. Thus, CGBS contain a plot, a climax and an outcome that causes empathy in listeners and helps them to remember the story (Gensler et al., 2013). Since CGBS are more memorable, they become more influential than other types of UGC (Gensler et al., 2013). Consequently, the more specific CGBS can be generally considered as part of



eWOM communication, but not vice-versa, as not all eWOM contributions necessarily have the special narrative appeal that would characterise them as CGBS.

Common ground for the three aforementioned phenomena builds the private consumer as the creator and sender of the message and social media as one prominent communication channel. As shown by the dotted zone in Figure 3, eWOM and CGBS can both include OCRs, which are mainly information- or recommendation-driven and thereby frequently transport a positive or negative product or brand experience from one consumer to another. Therefore, OCRs share enough similarities with eWOM and CGBS to be considered as a specific part of these two broader phenomena. Irrespective of the differences with regards to content, all four types of online behavioural phenomena originate from the consumer's mind and take place between end-users on the Internet. Thus, the theories presented in the following are united by their focus on consumers' motivations to articulate themselves on the Internet, irrespective of the underlying behavioural phenomena.

#### **2.2.4 Consumers' motivation to communicate about brands online**

Based on previous research, the motivation of consumers to positively articulate themselves about brands online can be multifaceted, depending on the context and the choice of platform. In a quantitative study, Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) found evidence for eight motives for consumer engagement in eWOM on opinion platforms. However, the special focus on static opinion platforms does not consider consumer-consumer interactivity characteristic for more dynamic social media activities. In order to counterbalance the inherent limitations, we will further consider findings by Muntinga et al. (2011) regarding consumers' motivation for online brand-related activities (shortly known as COBRA) on social media. With regard to the special characteristics of social networking sites such as Facebook, we make further reference to Wang et al. (2016), who built on social capital and self-determination theory to depict consumers' motivations to articulate themselves on social networking sites. Overall, previous research findings will solely serve as an indication for the detection of similar or additional motives when interpreting the data through a theoretical lens.

##### ***2.2.4.1 Motivation to engage in eWOM on opinion platforms***

Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) built their research on a conceptual framework that distinguishes three types of social interaction utilities (Balasubramanian & Mahajan, 2001). This distinction stems from research on virtual communities, where each individual derives different kinds of utilities from active communication with other community members. As shown in Table 1, Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) differentiate between five utility types and their corresponding motives.

<b>Utility type</b>	<b>Motivation</b>
<b>Focus-related utility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Concern for other consumers</li> <li>- Helping the company</li> <li>- Social benefit</li> <li>- Exertion of (collective) power over companies</li> </ul>
<b>Consumption utility</b>	- Post-purchase advice-seeking
<b>Approval utility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Self-enhancement</li> <li>- Economic incentives</li> </ul>
<b>Moderator utility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Convenience</li> <li>- Problem-solving support</li> </ul>
<b>Homeostase utility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expressing positive emotions</li> <li>- Venting negative feelings</li> </ul>

**Table 1:** Utilities and corresponding motives; based on: Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004)

*Focus-related utility* is based on the assumption that each individual intends to add value to the community through own contributions. While altruistic consumers are driven by the *concern for other consumers*, satisfied customers share their product satisfaction in order to *help the company*. Further reasons for the pursuit of focus-related utility are the *social benefit* of affiliation with a virtual community or the *exertion of (collective) power over companies* by spreading eWOM accessible to potential customers and the company for a long period of time (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004).

The second type, *consumption utility*, is tied to consumers who describe their product-experience online to encourage other people to submit problem-solving information. Moreover, consumption utility includes *post-purchase advice-seeking*, which drives consumers who wish to “*better understand, use, operate, modify, and/or repair a product.*” (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004, p. 43).

Consumers who strive for *approval utility* search for approval of their own contributions by others and can be driven by two motives. The first motivation is *self-enhancement* and the desire to be recognized as “*a consumption expert or intelligent shopper*” (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004, p. 43), whereas the second motivation is an *economic reward* that is sometimes provided by platform operators.

In addition to the three previous types depicted by Balasubramanian & Mahajan (2001), Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) have added moderator- and homeostase utility, which are both linked to the special characteristics of opinion platforms. *Moderator utility* sets in when a third party, such as the operator of an opinion platform, paves the way for product complaints. When previous attempts to get in touch with the company remained unsuccessful, the choice of an opinion platform can generate *convenience* to articulate oneself or it might happen that platform operators actively provide *problem-solving support* to consumers who bought an unsatisfactory product. As moderator utility solely addresses negative consumer experiences, the corresponding motives can be neglected regarding our focus on positive eWOM in this thesis. Finally, *homeostase utility* relates to an individual’s desire to

outbalance very positive and negative consumption experiences. In this regard, inner balance can be either achieved by *expressing positive emotions* and sharing the joy of consuming a satisfactory product with others or *venting negative feelings* caused by a dissatisfying product choice.

Through quantitative research, Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) found evidence for eight motivations: 1) *Platform assistance*, combining the previously described motives of problem-solving support, convenience of articulation and exertion of (collective) power over companies; 2) *Venting negative feelings*; 3) *Concern for other consumers*; 4) *Extraversion/ positive self-enhancement*, combining the motives of expressing positive emotions and self-enhancement; 5) *Social benefits*; 6) *Economic incentives*; 7) *Helping the company*; and 8) *Advice seeking*. Out of these eight motives, social benefits, economic incentives, concern for others and extraversion/ positive self-enhancement are the main drivers of eWOM communication on Web-based opinion platforms. The strong influence of social benefits has also been outlined by other researchers. Figallo (1998) is driven by the belief that people are the focal point of communities and therefore considers social benefits as a strong driver for participation in web communities. In a more recent study, Wiertz & de Ruyter (2007) further determine commitment to the community as one of the strongest drivers of knowledge contribution.

Even though Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) have built their study on a conceptual framework (Balasubramanian & Mahajan, 2001) rooting in community research, which might have left its marks on the eight motives, we want to point out potential weaknesses of their research contribution. They have conducted their study more than a decade ago during the earliest founding days of the social networking site Facebook, which can be assumed to have shaped the distribution of eWOM significantly. Due to the early publication date and the limited focus on static opinion platforms, the research findings by Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) miss more recent insights on interactive eWOM communication on social media. In this regard, Kozinets, de Valck, Wojnicki & Wilner (2010) supplement the previously identified motives of *economic incentives* and *social interaction* (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004), with findings from the blogging-community and developed a new understanding of how marketers should interact with interactive consumers. This understanding is aligned with the insight that consumers actively co-create brand meaning and value within brand communities (Muñiz & O'Guinn 2001). Within communities, consumer relationships are personal and members share a distinct narrative style, also for eWOM communication (Kozinets et al., 2010). As these community insights are not incorporated in the eight motives detected by Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004), we will pay close attention to the community behaviour among participants in a separate section (see 2.2.5).

With regard to our research case, we expect four out of the aforementioned eight motives to be applicable to L'Oréal Paris. It can be assumed that satisfied consumers, who share positive eWOM, are driven by the desire to support or *help the company* and their *concern for other consumers*, in particular potential customers. Moreover, we expect that review creators see a *social benefit* in their contribution to other people's consumption behavior. Lastly, the company's satisfied customers might strive for inner equilibrium by *expressing positive emotions* through eWOM to balance out their strongly positive consumption experience or want to be recognized as "*a consumption expert or intelligent shopper*" (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004, p. 43) incorporated in the *self-enhancement* motive.

#### **2.2.4.2 COBRA framework**

The COBRA framework investigates consumers' brand-related activities on social media and thereby differentiates itself from general social media research due to its specific brand-related consumer focus (Muntinga et al., 2011). In order to understand consumers' deeply-rooted motivations for brand-related social media use, the authors built upon the uses and gratifications (hereafter: U&G) approach to communication research, which aims at examining why and how media is used from the viewpoint of the individual consumer (Katz, 1959; Katz, Blumler & Gurevitch, 1974). The COBRA framework incorporates the motivations of consumers who engage with a wide variety of brands on a broad spectrum of social media applications and displays the activeness of social media through a three-type continuum. This continuum proceeds from low brand-related activities within the consumption type to higher and more engaging activities in the contribution and creation types. By categorising COBRAs into three types, the framework builds upon the classification of behaviour into usage typologies. This kind of classification assumes that people engage in multiple behavioural actions rather than a single one (Muntinga et al., 2011). As a result, the COBRA framework incorporates the full spectrum of brand-related activities on social media. Its main value for our study lies in its ability to conjoin distinct online behavioural phenomena such as eWOM and UGC. Thus, by applying the COBRA framework, we can collectively explore the motivation for generally distinct behavioural phenomena (Muntinga et al., 2011). Due to the aforementioned specifications, it will serve as an organizing framework throughout our study.

While *consuming* represents activities that do not require own active contribution or creation of content, *contributing* goes one step further and requires consumers to actively engage on social media and contribute to the content that has been published by other users. The highest activeness level is reached in the *creation* type, indicating that consumers are willing to create own content, which then triggers the consumption and contribution through other users. The pivotal difference between contributing and creating is again the increase in the activeness level when moving from the second to

the third type. While contributing incorporates activities such as rating a product or commenting on brand-related content published by other users, creating implies that a user e.g. actively publishes self-created content or writes a product review (Muntinga et al., 2011). When looking at the motivations that drive consumers' behaviour within the different types, Muntinga et al. (2011) generally distinguish between six COBRA motives with different sub-motivations. This distinction is based on a four-category classification by previous research (McQuail, 1983), supplemented by two additional motives from the social media context.

The first motive - *entertainment* - serves as an overall motivation for social media use (Muntinga et al., 2011). In particular, entertaining content is an important factor for consumers' usage of social networking sites (Dholakia, Bagozzi & Pearo, 2004; Park, Kee & Valenzuela, 2009), while the entertaining value further determines the We-intention, i.e. consumers' intention to make a personal contribution in order to perform a joint action together (Cheung, Chiu & Lee, 2011). The second motive of *integration & social interaction* covers the consumer's desire for relations to other people (Muntinga et al., 2011). In particular, individuals who participate in Facebook groups strive for meeting and talking with others, a sense of community, and peer support (Park et al., 2009). Moreover, social interaction triggers the creation of UGC (Daugherty et al., 2008). Motive number three - *personal identity* - relates to the consumer's self and includes various sub-motivations such as to gain insight to one's self, to reinforce personal values and to identify with and be recognized by peers. *Information*, which represents the fourth motive, drives individuals to participate in a virtual community (Dholakia et al., 2004) and to use social networking sites (Lin & Lu, 2011). Moreover, the information motive includes further sub-motivations such as keeping up-to-date with ongoing events and conditions in the personal environment, reducing risk or seeking advice and opinions. The fifth motive is *remuneration*, which drives consumers' contribution to online communities and represents their expectation to gain some kind of future reward. Lastly, *empowerment* drives those social media users who want to exert influence or power over other users or companies (Muntinga et al., 2011).

<b>COBRA type</b>	<b>Motivation</b>	<b>Sub-motivation</b>
<b>Consumption</b>	Information	
	Entertainment	
	Remuneration	
<b>Contribution</b>	Personal identity	- Self-expression - Self-presentation - Self-assurance
	Integration & social interaction	- Social interaction - Social identity - <i>Helping</i>
	Entertainment	
<b>Creation</b>	Personal identity	- Self-expression - Self-presentation - Self-assurance
	Integration & social interaction	- Social interaction - Social identity - <i>Social pressure</i>
	Entertainment	
	Empowerment	

**Table 2:** Research findings COBRA framework; based on: Muntinga et al. (2011)

As the research findings reveal, some of the six motives act as behavioural drivers for more than one COBRA type, such as entertainment in all three types (Muntinga et al., 2011) as illustrated in Table 2. Another special contribution of the COBRA framework is the distinction between self-expression, self-presentation and self-assurance as the three sub-motivations of personal identity within the contribution type. Some consumers draw parallels between brands and their own personality for the purpose of self-expression toward other social media users, while consumer driven by the *self-presentation motivation* create brand-related content in order to provide others with an image of their personality (Muntinga et al., 2011). The third sub-motivation of *self-assurance* refers to consumers who create brand-related content in order to be recognized by other people and thereby gain self-assurance (Lampel & Bhalla 2007). When it comes to the *information* motive, the COBRA framework solely incorporates it in the consumption type although it can also motivate consumers to make contributions to Facebook groups (Park et al., 2009).

When comparing the detected motivations in the contribution type with those in the creation type, it becomes apparent that personal identity, integration & social interaction and entertainment are motivational drivers in both COBRA types. However, within these two types, the composing sub-motivations of integration & social interaction differ from each other insofar as social pressure drives consumers in the creation type whereas the same accounts for helping in the contributing type. *Helping* incorporates the contribution to brand-related content in order to help and get help from each other, e.g. by answering brand-related questions of other users, whereas the *social pressure* motivation in the creation COBRA type refers to people uploading brand-related content because other people have already done the same. The other two sub-motivations of integration & social interaction within



the contribution and creation type are social interaction and social identity. *Social interaction* encourages consumers to contribute to or create own brand-related content on social media platforms in order to meet like-minded others with whom they can talk and interact about a particular brand. The last sub-motivation refers to generating a sense of shared *social identity*, when consumers confirm that they have a common passion for the brand. They feel a strong connection to each other that creates a special bond between them. Moreover, creation is further driven by the motivation of empowerment, which is a special motivation derived from the COBRA context and only occurs due to the high level of brand-related activeness (Muntinga et al., 2011).

Overall, the application of the COBRA framework provides value to our own research contribution as it acts as a 'theoretical hub' that offers an overview of motivations for the full spectrum of brand-related activities. In order to be able to clearly differentiate between consumption, contribution and creation motives, we also apply the COBRA typology to all kinds of UGC on other platforms besides social media.

When applying the COBRA motives to the case of L'Oréal Paris, we expect entertainment to be a strong driver of brand-related Facebook activities within the consumption and contribution type. Due to the fact that our research scope only incorporates positive opinions and experiences, we further expect self-assurance to drive consumers. We expect that other users will give those, who seek for self-assurance, the feeling that they are role models of consumption or 'consumption experts' as expressed in the *positive self-enhancement* motive described by Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004). However, we assume that customers of L'Oréal Paris solely follow their free will when interacting with the brand on Facebook and are not driven by any kind of social pressure. Consequently, we argue that they create brand-related content in order to help other users by sharing their positive experience, which resembles the *concern for other consumers* motive (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). Finally, less altruistic consumers might be driven by the *empowerment* motive and enjoy to impact the buying decision of others.

#### **2.2.4.3 Drivers of eWOM on social networking sites**

Even though the COBRA framework offers an overview of the full spectrum of brand-related activities and their underlying motivations on social media in general, it does not differentiate between the different classifications of social media (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Thus, it is valuable to pay closer attention to the special characteristics of social networking sites when investigating the motives of L'Oréal Paris' customers who are active on Facebook.

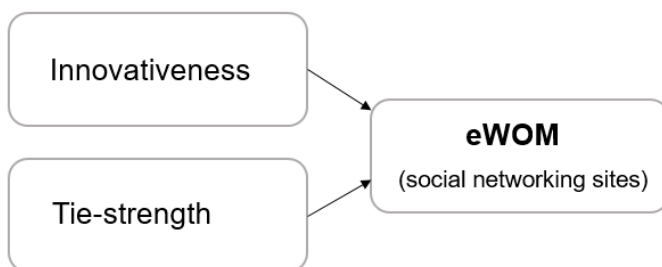
Wang et al. (2016) built on social capital and self-determination theory to reveal the drivers of eWOM on social networking sites. According to the authors, it still remains challenging for brand managers to use social networks to effectively promote eWOM as they are usually unfamiliar with the key factors that encourage members of online social networks to share their evaluations with others. In a quantitative study, Wang et al. (2016) referred to social capital theory to examine the influence of the connections and linkages among members of a social group on the distribution of eWOM by an individual. Social capital is generally defined as the *“sum of actual and potential resources embedded within, available through and derived from the network of relationships”* (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998, p. 243) and consists of structural, relational and cognitive resources helping group members achieve common goals and gain personal benefits. Thereby, social capital operates on multiple levels as it benefits individual members and affects the social functioning of the entire network (Constant, Sproull, & Kiesler 1996). With regard to resources, the research framework of Wang et al. (2016) includes (social network) tie-strength as a structural, trust as a relational and shared language as a cognitive resource. Shared language provides a collective representation and interpretation among network members (Wang et al., 2016) and further creates a distinct narrative style within a community as mentioned by Kozinets et al. (2010). Social network ties affect how members obtain and exchange information among the network to benefit each other, while relational resources, like trust, encourage members to achieve group goals by helping each other (Coleman, 1990). Moreover, network members make a *“commitment of time and effort that is given freely to benefit another person, group, or organization”* (Wilson 2000, p. 216). Mathwick, Wiertz & Ruyter (2008) refer to this behaviour as the *norms of community voluntarism*, which foster social capital due to the free choice of contribution by each member. In addition to this, the authors further point to the *norm of reciprocity* that first appeared in an online context during the early days of the Internet culture which builds on a sense of collaboration and cooperation shared by individuals who are willing to contribute resources requested by other users (Rheingold 1993). This aspect of sharing has evolved into the governing norm of reciprocity among virtual communities (Mathwick et al., 2008), indicating that individual members make a contribution as they expect to benefit from the community as a whole. The act of reciprocity is thereby undefined and can simply appear in form of helping another social network member (Wellman & Gulia 1999).

Complementary to social capital theory, Wang et al. (2016) further examined the impact of two intrinsic motives, self-disclosure and innovativeness, on a person's ability to exchange eWOM with others. Self-disclosure can be understood as an autonomous act of revealing personal information to other people that fosters the development of relationships (Altman & Taylor, 1973), whereas innovativeness can be understood as 'personal innovativeness' in form of novelty seeking. This means

that people with a high level of personal innovativeness are more likely to remain up-to-date with the latest developments and search for new product information (Dabholkar & Bagozzi, 2002).

The focus on intrinsic motives is generally based on self-determination theory, which says that intrinsic motives are more effective in promoting positive consumer behavior than extrinsic motives, e.g. economic rewards (Moller, Ryan & Deci, 2006).

As indicated in Figure 4, Wang et al. (2016) revealed that tie-strength drives eWOM distribution while innovativeness motivates consumers to engage in eWOM communication on social networking sites. This means that innovative people are more likely to share brand-related information with close friends than with acquaintances or unknown members of a social networking site.



**Figure 4:** Drivers of eWOM on social networking sites; based on: Wang et al. (2016)

Regarding our research case, it is important to know the key drivers of eWOM on social networking sites. Only when these drivers are identified, we will be able to advise L'Oréal Paris' brand management on how to elicit more positive brand-related eWOM on Facebook. For this reason we will pay attention to the drivers of eWOM communication identified by Wang et al. (2016) during our data analysis but discuss their impact in the discussion chapter of this thesis.

When looking at the case of L'Oréal Paris, we have to consider the research findings of Wang et al. (2016) in two ways. On the one hand, we have to investigate which of these potential drivers might hinder consumers, who write positive OCRs on retailer websites or opinion platforms, to further share their positive product experience on Facebook. In this regard, we expect social network ties and tie-strength as well as self-disclosure to have a deterring effect. We assume that the creators of OCRs have chosen to publish their product experience on a platform that is specialized on product evaluations instead of sharing it on a social networking site like Facebook with both strong-tie network friends and weak-tie acquaintances. By sharing it on Facebook, other members of one's social network would see the post in their newsfeed independent of their interest in the topic. Thus, even though it might appear logical that people want to share a positive product experience with good friends or prospective buyers, it is also likely that they do not want to share this personal opinion with former colleagues, bosses or other weak-ties among their Facebook network. Moreover, we assume that the

creators of positive OCRs prefer rather anonymous platforms over Facebook where review posts would be directly linked to their personal profile. Moreover, according to Gensler et al. (2013), we have to figure out how strongly positive the consumer considers the brand experience, as a brand experience has to be either very positive or very negative if a consumer is willing to share it on social media.

On the other hand, we have to find out which of the aforementioned divers of eWOM on social networking sites especially motivate consumers who already share positive eWOM about L'Oréal Paris on the brand's Facebook page or in Facebook groups. Finally, by combining both insights, we can advise L'Oréal Paris on how to elicit more positive brand-related eWOM on Facebook.

### **2.2.5 Brand communities**

Complementary to consumer research focusing on individual consumers acting as 'tourists', the metaphorical consideration of consumers as 'tribe members' implies that certain individual behaviour takes place in order to be recognized by other members of the tribe (Østergaard & Jantzen, 2000). As online communication has a hyper-public character that allows Internet users to put private topics to public debate (Gulbrandsen & Just, 2011), we argue that the focus of our thesis should be on both the individual consumer and the interaction among consumers in an online environment. From a brand management point of view, the aspect of tribe member interaction is incorporated in the community approach by explaining how brand communities evolve through social consumer interaction (Heding et al., 2009).

Generally, brand communities are characterized as, *"(...) a specialized, non-geographically bound community, based on a structured set of social relationships among admirers of a brand (...)"* (Muñiz & O'Guinn, 2001, p. 412). With regard to our research scope on online communication, the aspect of no geographic boundaries is significant as it implies that brand communities can also exist in a virtual environment besides the traditional face-to-face context. Thus, we will shed light on the consumer-consumer interactivity among customers of L'Oréal Paris by investigating whether they share the three markers of a brand community. These three markers are 'consciousness of kind', 'shared rituals and traditions' and a 'sense of moral responsibility'. The first marker, consciousness of kind, incorporates that members of a brand community feel attached to the brand but even more connected to each other. Thereby, *"Members feel that they 'sort of know each other' at some level, even if they have never met."* (Muñiz & O'Guinn, 2001, p. 418). This feeling of belonging can be underpinned by 'oppositional brand loyalty', meaning that members share a certain dislike for competitive brands. The second marker of a brand community, shared rituals and traditions, implies that consumers establish the ritual of storytelling, so that they frequently share stories revolving around the brand (Muñiz &

O'Guinn, 2001). As a third marker, members of a brand community feel a sense of moral responsibility to individual members as well as to the community as a whole. This sense of duty can manifest itself in the readiness to assist other members in the use of the brand, which also fosters group cohesion (Muñiz & O'Guinn, 2001).

## **2.3 The Company Perspective – Part II**

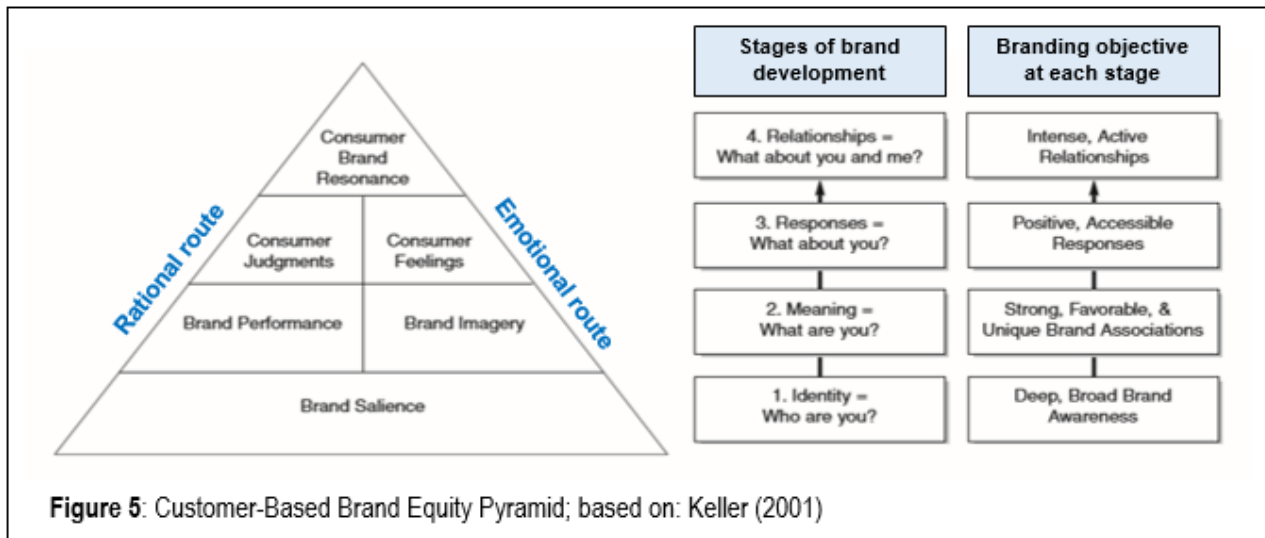
With regard to two-way mass communication and the different types of online behavioral phenomena, we illustrated that a brand is not a separate entity solely created by the company but also influenced by consumers. Therefore, it is necessary to look at the contributions of both the company and its customers to the creation of brand equity.

### **2.3.1 Building customer-based brand equity**

When talking about brand equity in this thesis, we refer to customer-based brand equity (hereafter: CBBE), which is defined as *“the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand”* that occurs when a consumer *“is familiar with the brand and holds some favorable, strong and unique brand associations in memory”* (Keller, 1993, p. 1). The first part of Keller's (1993) definition is in line with Aaker (1991), who considers brand equity as *“a set of brand assets and liabilities linked to a brand, its name and symbol that add to or subtract from the value provided by a product or service to a firm and/or to that firm's customers”* (p. 15). Dyson, Farr & Hollis (1996) further highlight the importance of the CBBE approach by arguing that, *“(...) brands exist in the minds of their potential consumers. (...) A brand's foundations are, therefore, composed of people's intangible mental associations about it.”* (p. 6). However, in addition to brand associations, Martensen & Grønholdt (2004) also consider CBBE to occur when consumers have evaluations and relationships towards the brand.

In the following, we will present the Customer-Based Brand Equity model (hereafter: CBBE model) (Keller, 2001, 2008). We have chosen to apply this model to L'Oréal Paris as it is applicable to all possible kinds of brands and industry settings while going into details to assist brand management in their brand-building efforts. Additionally, the basic premise of the CBBE model is aligned with our overall structure of the thesis as it incorporates the consumers' perspective of the brand in a brand management model. As *“the power of the brand lies in what consumers have learnt, felt, seen, and heard about the brand over time”* (Keller, 2001, p. 3) brand management needs to know a consumer's brand experiences to continuously build a strong brand. According to the model, building a strong brand consists of four consecutive steps: establishing the proper brand identity, creating the appropriate

brand meaning through strong, favorable and unique brand associations, eliciting positive and accessible brand responses and finally forging brand-customer relationships that incorporate intense and active loyalty with the brand (Keller, 2001, 2008). As seen in Figure 5, brand management has to establish six brand-building blocks in order to achieve the four steps. The left side of the pyramid represents the rational route to brand building, whereas the emotional route is on the right site (Kotler & Keller, 2016).



These building-blocks are brand salience, brand performance, brand imagery, brand judgments, brand feelings, and brand resonance. Out of these blocks, brand resonance is the last and most valuable building-block and solely occurs when all other blocks have already been established. Consequently, the creation of significant brand equity sets in when reaching the top of the brand-building pyramid (Keller, 2001, 2008).

### **Brand Identity**

The first step of the CBBE framework is to achieve the right brand identity by creating brand salience. Brand salience relates to consumers' deep and broad awareness of the brand, where it links brand name, logo and symbol to certain associations in their mind (Keller, 2001, 2008). In the case of L'Oréal Paris, brand awareness may link their brand name and slogan 'Because You're Worth it' to associations, such as beauty and empowerment. The role of brand awareness further *"involves making sure that customers understand the product or service category in which the brand competes"* and to a more abstract level, it provides answers to the question *"what basic functions does the brand provide for customers?"* (Keller, 2001, p. 8). The depth of brand awareness relates to the ease of brand recall or recognition for a consumer, while the breadth refers to the variety of settings in which the brand could be employed or consumed. Moreover, brand awareness can also act as *"an antecedent in encouraging*

*positive consumers' perception of brand quality*" (Jung, Lee, Kim & Yang, 2014. p. 197). Accordingly, brand salience *"forms the foundational building block in developing brand equity"* (Keller, 2001, p. 8), where it involves three important functions. First, to form and build the strength of brand associations to create a brand image that will provide meaning to the brand. Second, high brand salience within category identification and need satisfaction will make the consumer consider the brand, among only a few others, in a purchase situation. Third, if the product category is seen as low involvement for the consumer, the choice will solely be based on brand salience (Keller, 2001, 2008).

### **Brand Meaning**

After expressing a brand's identity, brand meaning creation comes into play. In order to create brand meaning, brand management has to establish a brand image and pay attention to a customer's brand associations. In general, brand associations are defined as, *"Anything linked in memory to a brand"* (Aaker, 1996) and can either be based on a customer's own experience with the brand or arise through an indirect depiction of it, e.g. through word-of-mouth (Keller, 2001, 2008). The two categories of brand associations are brand performance and brand imagery (Keller, 2001, 2008). *Brand performance* relates to the ways in which the product or corresponding service meets customers' functional needs and can be compared to satisfaction acting as the consumer's fulfilment response (Oliver, 1997). Thus, brand performance deals with the intrinsic properties of the brand, such as its 1) primary characteristics & secondary features, 2) product reliability & durability 3) service effectiveness, efficiency & empathy, 4) style & design and 5) price. Price is often considered as an important factor for customer satisfaction and loyalty (Johnson & Gustafsson, 2000).

In contrast to this, *brand imagery* refers to the extrinsic properties of the brand and its attempts to meet a customer's psychological or social needs. The following four categories of intangible brand aspects strongly build a brand's imagery: 1) user profiles of actual or idealized users, 2) purchase & usage situations, 3) brand personality & values and 4) brand history, heritage & experiences. The focus on personality and values is supported by Dart (2002), who claims that a brand should have charisma, attitude and personality based on unique values. The five dimensions of brand personality presented by Keller (2001, 2008) correspond to the 'Big Five' brand personality framework presented by Aaker (1997): 1. Sincerity, 2. Excitement, 3. Competence, 4. Sophistication and 5. Ruggedness. Overall, the key criteria of brand meaning are the strength, favorability and uniqueness of the brand associations linked to brand performance and imagery. Thus, in order to create brand equity, a brand should be strongly identified with a brand association that is important to the customer and distinct from associations with other brands. The order of strength, favorability and uniqueness is thereby important (Keller, 2001, 2008).

## **Brand Responses**

Once brand meaning is created, brand management should focus on customers' brand responses and their thoughts and feelings about the marketed brand. The distinction between a customer's thoughts arising from the head and the feelings arising from the heart is mirrored in the two categories that build brand responses: brand judgments and brand feelings (Keller, 2001, 2008). Martensen & Grønholdt (2010) have similarly included brand responses as the second last step in their conceptual CBBE model, mainly influenced by Keller's (2001) CBBE model, but refer to them as rational and emotional brand responses. According to Keller (2001, 2008) *brand judgments* incorporate a customer's personal opinions and evaluations of the brand. In this regard, four types of brand judgments are particularly important. The first type is the perceived quality of the brand, which is seen from the consumer's perspective and is thereby based on a subjective evaluation of product quality (Martensen & Grønholdt, 2003), whereas the second type is the brand's credibility. The consideration of brand credibility is in line with De Chernatony (2001), who defines a brand as "*a cluster of functional and emotional values that promises stakeholders a particular experience*" (p. 116). In this regard it is necessary that the promises are credible, so that the brand can fulfil them (De Chernatony, 2001). Furthermore, credibility is often linked to trust; in a way that a consumer believes in the brand to live up to personal expectations (Kapferer, 1997). Within the CBBE model (Keller, 2001, 2008), credibility and trust are incorporated by the aspect of trustworthiness, meaning that consumers perceive the brand as consumer-oriented. Additional aspects are the perception of the brand as competent, innovative, and leading in the market (brand expertise) as well as enriching (brand likeability). According to the CBBE model, the third type of brand judgements is brand consideration, which implies that customers have to define how personally relevant they consider the brand. Keller (2001, 2008) argues that brand consideration is especially relevant in the creation of brand equity and highly depends on the extent of previously created strong and favorable brand associations as part of the brand image. The last type of brand judgements is brand superiority, which reflects as how unique and well the brand is viewed in comparison to other brands (Keller, 2001, 2008).

In addition to brand judgments, Martensen and Grønholdt (2004) also discuss that high-quality products are no longer enough for the consumers. Today, companies have to differentiate themselves by adding extra value in form of emotional benefits, which occur when the consumer chooses brands with the heart (Martensen & Grønholdt, 2004). When choosing with the heart, *brand feelings* occur and appear in form of emotional responses and reactions to the brand (Keller, 2001, 2008). The focus on the heart as a -building feelings - warmth, fun, and excitement - are immediate in nature and can increase in their intensity, whereas the subsequent three types - security, social approval, and self-respect - are enduring decision-maker hence indicates that, "*the emotional brain [is] thus just as*



*involved in our decision-making process as the rational brain.*" (Franzen & Bouwman, 2001, p. 33). According to Keller (2001, 2008) the first three types of brand and can hence increase in gravity. Overall and despite the distinction between brand judgments and feelings, it is key how positive the interplay between a customer's brand responses from both head and heart is (Keller, 2001, 2008).

### **Brand Relationship**

Finally brand relationships serve as the last and fourth step of the CBBE model, where the customer's relationship and level of identification with the brand will be explored. Authors in the brand equity literature agree that the final step of building brand equity is the customer-brand relationship or bonding (Martensen & Grønholdt, 2004, 2010; Dyson et al., 1996; Franzen, 1999). Brand research has proved that, in addition to human relationships, consumers also experience relationships with brands (Fournier, 1998). Moreover, Fournier (1998) points out that brand relationships are not solely determined by what managers intend them to be, but rather by consumers' interactions with the brand in order to add meaning to their lives. In the CBBE model, Keller (2001, 2008) refers to the nature of the consumer-brand relationship as brand resonance. Brand resonance characterizes the intensity of the psychological bond between the customer and brand as well as the level of activity, such as repeat purchase rates generated by loyalty (Keller, 2001, 2008). Furthermore, brand resonance can be divided into four categories: 1) Behavioral loyalty, 2) Attitudinal attachment, 3) Sense of community and 4) Active engagement.

In general, brand loyalty is defined as a result of a favourable attitude towards a brand and repurchase over time (Jacoby & Chestnut, 1978), whereas in the first dimension of brand resonance, Keller (2001, 2008) defines *behavioral loyalty* as how much and often the customer purchases from a specific brand. Even though it is necessary for a brand to have behavioral loyalty, it is not enough by itself for resonance to occur Keller (2001, 2008). The customer should feel personal attachment to the brand - something beyond just having a positive attitude towards it. *Attitudinal attachment* is necessary for resonance to occur as it indicates how much the customer loves and is attached to the brand or describes the branded product as a favorite possession. Research further shows that attitudinal attachment has a big impact on behavioral loyalty (Huang, Fang, Huang, Chang & Fang, 2014). This means that if customers love L'Oréal Paris and are strongly attached to the brand, they would also buy more products from the brand and more often than in the absence of brand attachment. The third category of brand resonance, the *sense of community*, indicates if customers of a brand will identify themselves with a brand community, meaning that they feel affiliation with fellow brand users, employees or representatives of the company (Keller, 2001, 2008). In the case of L'Oréal Paris, their customers may feel affiliated with other consumers of the brand or can identify themselves with the

brand's spokespersons and their characteristics. Regarding affiliation between users of the same brand, Keller's (2001, 2008) definition of a *sense of community* is in line with Muñiz & O'Guinn (2001), who characterise 'consciousness of kind' as one marker of a brand community (see section 2.2.5). The last category of brand resonance is *active engagement*. According to Keller (2001), "*perhaps the strongest affirmation of brand loyalty occurs when customers are willing to invest time, energy, money, or other resources into the brand beyond those expended during purchase or consumption of the brand*" (p. 15). In this dimension of the CBBE model, customers become brand ambassadors, participate in brand-related events and communicate about the brand while strengthening brand ties with others (Keller, 2001, 2008). With regard to the new media landscape, Hennig-Thurau et al. (2010) further point to the highly active engagement of consumers with brands and a network of other consumers. According to Keller (2001, 2008), the key criteria in brand relationship are intensity and activity. Intensity includes the strength of attitudinal attachment and sense of community, whereas activity includes behavioral loyalty and active engagement. Brand resonance is the most valuable brand building block as it reflects "*a completely harmonious relationship between customers and the brand*" (Keller, 2008, p. 57) since core values have to be in sync with customers' needs, wants and desires to achieve resonance (Keller, 2008).

Regarding the case of L'Oréal Paris, we assume that customers, who share their positive brand experiences in form of OCRs or Facebook posts with other consumers, have built brand resonance as they invest additional time and energy into the brand. However, as brand resonance builds the top of the CBBE pyramid, all prior building blocks have to be investigated as well. In this regard, we also expect brand imagery to play an important role as L'Oréal Paris frequently use spokespersons as idealized users and often highlight their brand history, heritage and experiences to portray their brand. Overall, applying the CBBE model to our research study will enable us to answer the third research sub-question of *how customers of L'Oréal Paris perceive the brand and engage with it?*

With reference to our problem statement and the critical insight that most existing research does not consider consumer behavioral findings from a company perspective, we will apply the CBBE model to answer our overall research question. The first step functions as the foundational building block and will shed light on the specific situations where the consumer recognises or recalls the brand. In the second step, we will take a look into what customers of L'Oréal Paris think of the brand and what the brand means to them - especially what they associate the brand with. In the third step, we will look further into the brand responses in terms of positive eWOM: what do customers think (head) about L'Oréal Paris and how do they feel (heart) about the brand? In the last step and building block, we will investigate how attached and loyal they are to the brand, supplementing our findings on a brand

community and the insights into the different motives that drive the distribution of positive brand-related eWOM.

Regarding the structure of our thesis and the differentiation between individual and social consumer behaviour, we consider the compilation of the CBBE model in form of a pyramid with four distinct layers as suitable to our case. While the first three layers look at the individual consumer as a 'tourist', the last layer (Brand relationships) includes community elements and brand engagement, indicating that consumers further act as 'tribe members', who engage in online communication with like-minded others (Østergaard & Jantzen, 2000). Thus, the CBBE model combines the perspectives of consumer research and consumption studies in one model that allows researchers to finally set consumer insights into the perspective of brand managers. After analysing all building blocks, we will determine how L'Oréal Paris can enhance customer-based brand equity.

However, it should be realized that the CBBE model also has some weaknesses. Even though it serves as inspiration for another Brand Equity model (Martensen & Grønholdt, 2003, 2010), it misses to indicate the strength of each element's impact within the six building blocks on CBBE. Therefore, the model is criticised to lack managerial usefulness (Martensen & Grønholdt, 2010). In order to counterbalance these weaknesses, Martensen & Grønholdt (2003, 2010) developed a cause-effect brand equity model that measures individual brand equity components considers the relationships between them. As a result, their conceptual Brand Equity Model is built as a structural equation model consisting of latent variables, which are described and discussed. Additionally, Jung et al. (2014) developed a Brand Resonance model building on Keller's (2001) CBBE model and its components. Just as Martensen & Grønholdt (2003), their brand resonance model considers the relationship between the different components in how one component affects the next component. However, we argue that the qualitative nature of our overarching research question does not require any measurable variables, so that we will apply Keller's (2001, 2008) CBBE model due to the aforementioned fit between the compilation of the model and the thesis structure.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

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In the following sections, we outline the methodological choices and fundamentals for our research. Firstly, we state our own ontological and epistemological positions that set the framework for the chosen research design. Further, we explain the implications of the chosen research design for data collection and elaborate on our applied methods. Finally, the methods of data analysis will be described.

#### 3.1 Philosophy of research

The overarching philosophy of research relates to the development of knowledge and its nature (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012). Consequently, philosophy of research sets the frame for the research design and influences the way in which we think about the research process. Therefore, we have to consciously reflect upon the philosophical commitments we make throughout our study and their impact on the way we investigate our research question and understand our findings (Johnson & Clark, 2006). It is hence mostly important to be aware of the reasons for the choice of research philosophy and the alternatives that could have been adopted (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). In the following we will present ontology and epistemology as the two basic perspectives on the philosophy of research and argue for the most suitable aspects of both perspectives for our research question.

##### 3.1.1 Ontology

Ontology is concerned with the nature of reality and how reality is perceived (Quinlan, 2011), meaning that it relates to the assumptions we make about the way the world operates. There are two aspects of ontology that both have their supporters among researchers and are accepted to produce valid knowledge (Saunders et al., 2009).

The first aspect of ontology is **objectivism**, which represents the position that *“social entities exist in reality external to social actors concerned with their existence”* (Saunders et al., 2009, p. 110). Thus, from this perspective, the objective aspects of social phenomena and entities are in focus. Aligned with this, researchers, who adopt this perspective, perceive reality as independent from personal interpretations and attached meaning.

In contrast to this is the second ontological aspect, **subjectivism**, which is aligned with the assumption that social actors create social phenomena through their own perceptions of reality. Moreover, subjectivism assumes that social phenomena are not static but rather constantly revisioned through the social interaction among individuals. In order to understand reality, it is therefore necessary to

study “*the details of the situation to understand the reality or perhaps a reality working behind them*” (Remenyi, Williams, Money & Swartz, 1998, p. 35). Moreover, this research perspective is often associated with social constructivism, which investigates how reality “*is socially constructed and given meaning by people*” (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2012, p. 23). As reality is socially constructed, it is subject to constant change as agreements are established, renewed, reviewed, forgotten and dismissed on an ongoing basis (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Furthermore, individual actors will perceive situations differently according to their own view of the world. Therefore, marketing researchers have to gain an understanding of the subjective reality hold by their researched consumers in order to make sense of their personal motives, actions and intentions in a meaningful way (Saunders et al., 2009). Emphasis is on the different meanings people place on their experience and on how they create their individual and group realities in a social context (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012; Quinlan, 2011). Yet, social constructivism is linked to time-intensive data collection. Furthermore, the analysis and interpretation of the obtained data requires interpretation by the researcher, which is dependent on his knowledge (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012). However, before we discuss the potential bias through the researcher in a later section, we lead over to the epistemological position of research.

### 3.1.2 Epistemology

While ontology is concerned with the nature of reality and how reality is perceived (Quinlan, 2011), a key question of epistemology is what is regarded as acceptable knowledge in a particular field of study (Bryman, 2016). In order to distinguish between positivism and interpretivism, we stick to the illustrative example of the ‘resources’ researcher opposed to the ‘feelings’ researcher that is used by Saunders et al. (2009). While the ‘resources’ researcher leans more towards the position of the natural scientist, who strives for the collection of measurable facts frequently presented in form of statistical data, the ‘feelings’ researcher is concerned with the attitudes and feelings of people. Thus, the ‘resources’ researcher considers data from an objectivist view and follows a positivist research philosophy when developing knowledge (Saunders et al., 2012). **Positivism** deals with an observable social reality and positivist research is carried out to make “*law-like generalisations*” comparable with those of natural scientists (Remenyi et al. 1998, p. 32; Saunders et al., 2012, p. 134). In order to generate credible data, existing theory is used to develop hypotheses, which are then tested to be either confirmed or refuted (Saunders et al., 2009). Another important characteristic of positivism is that researchers act value-free; meaning that “*the researcher is independent of and neither affects nor is affected by the subject of the research*” (Remenyi et al. 1998, p. 33).

Getting back to our example, the ‘feelings’ researcher acts differently by viewing social phenomena as unmeasurable, not modifiable and with no external reality (Saunders et al., 2012). Instead, the

'feelings' researcher presents data in a narrative way and adopts the interpretivist philosophy. **Interpretivism** deals with understanding differences between humans as social actors (Saunders et al., 2012) and follows the philosophy that all knowledge is a matter of interpretation (Quinlan, 2011). The term 'social actors' is emphasized and illustrates that each individual plays a part in life and acts according to its own interpretations. This also means that each actor interprets the social roles of others based on personal sets of meanings. In order to get insights into the social world of the human research subjects, the researcher has to accept the challenge to always remain empathetic in order to understand their world from their viewpoint (Saunders et al., 2009).

Our research is positioned within a social constructivist frame and we will perceive reality from a subjectivist view with regard to our underlying research question and its sub-questions. This is aligned with our overall research aim to find out how L'Oréal Paris can leverage insights on consumers' brand-related online behaviour and their perceptions of the brand to enhance customer-based brand equity. In order to answer this research question, we have to conduct our research on two levels. On the one hand, we operate on the level of the individual consumer to investigate personal motivations to share a positive product experience. This corresponds to the pursued understanding of the subjective reality as expressed by Saunders et al. (2009). On the other hand, we operate on the group level of consumers, who socially interact with each other on different platforms and thereby construct their reality. While collecting the data, we act like the 'feelings' researcher, who strives for individual motivations and feelings of social actors presented in a narrative way. In accordance with the qualitative nature of our research question, we adopt the interpretivist philosophy and consider the derived insights as acceptable knowledge. We are critically aware that these insights require interpretation through the researcher and do not lead to generalisable results. However, in order to pursue generalisation, it would be further possible to take an objectivistic and positivistic research approach to studying the phenomena. This approach could either replace or complement our pursued interpretivist approach. Replacing would imply that hypotheses have to be derived from already existing research on consumer motives to spread positive eWOM. Afterwards, these hypotheses would be tested regarding their applicability to customers of L'Oréal Paris. However, sole testing of hypotheses would not allow us to shed light on new facets of consumer motives. Therefore, we consider the combination of an interpretivist and positivist research approach as a valuable approach for a more extensive study compared to this thesis. A combined approach would imply that interpretivist insights shed light on the individual and social behaviour of our human research subjects and hence serve as a basis for subsequent hypotheses testing. As a result, new insights to the phenomenon could be considered and generalised for a larger population.

## 3.2 Research approach

Philosophers of science generally distinguish between three research approaches: deduction, induction and abduction (Woo, O'Boyle & Spector, 2017). Even though Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2016) question whether it is valuable and correct to link the research approaches to the different research philosophies, some researchers tend to attribute deduction to positivism and induction to interpretivism. However, in the following section, we will start to elaborate on the three different approaches independent of the research philosophies. Afterwards, we will link to our own research contribution and argue how our adopted interpretivist research philosophy is reflected in the chosen research approach.

### 3.2.1 Deduction

The deductive approach is *"concerned with developing propositions from current theory and make them testable in the real world"* (Dubois & Gadde, 2002, p. 559). As a result, existing theory is tested by the use of hypotheses, which are either confirmed or rejected (Saunders et al., 2016) and a logical conclusion is reached based on true premises (Woo et al., 2017). Thereby, deduction serves as the dominant research approach in the natural sciences, where laws present the basis of explanation (Collis & Hussey, 2003). The deductive approach incorporates certain characteristics, among which is the search for explanation of causal relationships between variables (Gill & Johnson, 2002). Another characteristic of deduction is that concepts need to be operationalised in a way that facts can be measured quantitatively and finally generalised. However, in order to be able to make statistical generalisations about regularities in social behaviour, sample size has to be sufficiently large (Gill & Johnson, 2002). Overall, the exemplary 'resources' researcher would tend to apply a deductive approach when striving for measurable and generalizable facts.

### 3.2.2 Induction

While the overall aim of deduction is to test theory, induction by contrast is an approach concerned with building theory generated from data, e.g. in grounded theory (Saunders et al., 2016). As such, induction can also be described as a bottom-up approach. Furthermore, inductive reasoning is applied in order to better understand the nature of a problem and get a feeling of what is going on. Thus the main focus is on gaining an understanding of the meanings humans attach to events and the context in which these events take place (Saunders et al., 2012). Thereby, researchers following an inductive approach are more akin to the exemplary 'feelings' researcher. In order to get the pursued understanding, researchers in this tradition are likely to work with qualitative data collected by the application of a variety of methods in order to establish different views of phenomena (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012). By the use of qualitative data, the researcher is part of the research process, while a more

flexible research structure allows to change the research emphasis during the research progress (Saunders et al., 2012).

Yet, both approaches display limitations. Deductive reasoning does not allow for the development of theory and alternative explanations besides the confirmation or rejection of a hypothesis, whereas induction is at risk regarding the validity of the obtained theory due to uncertainty (Saunders et al., 2012). Aligned with that, it can be questionable to conduct research without 'preconditions' (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

### **3.2.3 Abduction**

Besides deduction and induction, a third form has been emerging: abductive reasoning. It can be argued that abduction takes things one step farther than induction in that it not only draws an inference based on observation, but derives "*a feasible (and by some accounts most feasible or best) explanation for a phenomenon*" (Woo et al., 2017, p. 257). While deduction leads to generalizable and certain conclusions, induction uses evidence as support. As opposed to this, abductive researchers propose speculative, but still plausible, conjectures about the nature of a phenomenon. Thus, they are also able to point out what kinds of evidence might provide further insights into the particular phenomenon (Folger & Stein, 2016). When talking about speculative conjectures, it has to be mentioned that abductive reasoning does not lead to the generation of completely new theory. Instead, abduction can cause the development of already established theory or give alternative explanations of known phenomena. In this regard, the emphasis is on theory development over theory generation, meaning that systematically combined insights refine existing theory rather than inventing new one (Dubois & Gadde, 2002).

For the purpose of our study, we follow an abductive research approach by striving for the "*most feasible or best explanation*" (Woo et al., 2017, p. 257) for the motivation of consumers to share a positive opinion about L'Oréal Paris online. By proposing plausible conjectures, we will then be able to give recommendations to both brand managers and future researchers who could then build on our insights. Following an abductive approach means that we set the theoretical frame and basis for our research by referring to existing theory before moving further and supplementing this theory with our own findings (Dubois & Gadde, 2002). Even though we will interpret our insights on different social actors through the lens of existing theory, we still intend to understand their world from their viewpoint. Thus, the chosen abductive research approach reflects our interpretivist research philosophy in the empathy with which we investigate our human research subjects.



### 3.3 Research strategy

The data collection of this thesis is based on an in-depth investigation of customers of L'Oréal Paris, so that it can be argued that our research strategy has certain case study elements. In the following, we will elaborate on these elements and their purpose in the context of our study. Robson (2002) generally defines a case study as *"a strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence"* (p. 178). One reason for choosing this strategy is that the case study strategy has considerable ability to generate answers to the question 'why?' as well as the 'what?' and 'how?' questions (Saunders et al., 2009). Stake (2000) considers case studies as a common way of doing qualitative inquiries. Moreover he does not consider a case study as a methodological choice but rather as a choice of the subject that is going to be studied (Stake, 2000). Thus, independent of the methods that we use, we constantly shed light on the same case, namely L'Oréal Paris.

Stake (2000) has identified three different kinds of case studies: intrinsic, instrumental, and collective case study. While the intrinsic case is studied because the case itself is of particular interest, a collective or multiple case study, consisting of multiple instrumental cases, is chosen when the aim is to theorize about a large collection of cases. For the purpose of our study, we have chosen an instrumental case where the case *"plays a supportive role, and it facilitates our understanding of something else"* (Stake, 2000; In: Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 123). This means that the case is still looked at in depth. Therefore, we look at L'Oréal Paris from the company's perspective and at their customers in order to shed light on our external interests. These external interests are to make sense of consumers and their motivation to positively articulate themselves online about a brand, and to understand how L'Oréal Paris can leverage insights on their customers' brand-related online behaviour to enhance its customer-based brand equity. Overall, the supplement of theory is pursued under consideration of the new media landscape and is determined by the study's abductive research approach. As it is of great importance to understand the case and its contextual conditions in order to draw well-grounded inferences, we will begin our analysis with portraying L'Oréal Paris' intended brand identity. We consider the choice of this theoretical framework as generally applicable to case study research, independent of the chosen case. Therefore, we argue that the understanding of a brand's intended identity can generally serve as a 'backbone' or means of comparison for the researcher. As such, it allows the researcher to set insights on consumers' brand perceptions in relation to the company's intended brand identity in order to draw well-founded conclusions based on a holistic understanding.

Another case study element is triangulation (Stake, 2000), meaning that we use multiple perceptions by applying different methods to ensure breadth and depth of understanding with regard to the case of L'Oréal Paris (King & Horrocks, 2010). This means that we shed light on our research question and related sub-questions by using different methods of data collection. These methods will be described in the subsequent section on data collection in detail. However, we argue that we do not make use of the case study as a method. If this would have been our intention, we would have rather used multiple cases than one case only *"to corroborate research findings within a study"* by two or more independent sources of data collection (Saunders et al., 2009, p. 154). Instead, we are applying the previously presented theory to L'Oréal Paris as the case is timely and affects many Danish consumers. The case is timely, because L'Oréal Paris are currently confronted with both good and bad eWOM, especially on Facebook. Thus, in order to counterbalance the negative opinions, L'Oréal Paris would benefit from eliciting more positive eWOM. Moreover, L'Oréal Paris is the leading beauty brand in Denmark (Euromonitor, 2016) and present in different product categories - makeup, skin care, hair care, hair colour and hair styling (L'Oréal, 2017f). Thus, as they provide a wide range of beauty products in retail it can be assumed that they reach a large consumer base, consisting of many potential participants for our study.

Incorporating elements of a case study in our thesis portrays both difficulties as well as opportunities. Their strengths lie within the likelihood to supplement or further develop on existing theory on consumers' motivation to share positive eWOM. However, the main points of criticism are that the general case study approach is viewed as being predominantly descriptive and only provides partial support of theories (Easton, 1995). To counterbalance the weakness of remaining too descriptive, we stick to the philosophy of hermeneutics (Kvale 1997; Silverman, 2010). This means that we focus on the interpretation of the object's meaning. In the context of our study, the objects of interpretation are written online contributions, consumer interaction and transcripts of participants' verbal statements. Moreover, researchers have to be careful to not generalize from a single case study and a small sample of participants even though this is sufficient (McCracken, 1988). Stake (2000 In: Denzin & Lincoln, 2008) further agrees that *"the purpose of a case report is not to represent the world, but to represent the case"* (p. 142). Aligned with this, we refrain from generalising our findings. However, over the years, the attitude on the case study approach has shifted. Situation-specific conclusions are now viewed as an opportunity rather than a weakness, as case studies offer insights into phenomena and their context (Dubois & Gadde, 2002).

### 3.4 Data Collection

In order to answer our research question, we have chosen to collect a combination of primary and secondary data by using online research, netnography and qualitative methods. The qualitative method, in-depth interview, helped us to explore consumers' motivations for sharing positive eWOM on beauty products, whereas the focus group method had the purpose to shed light on the behaviour of those consumers who prefer to share their opinions differently. Meanwhile online research and netnography had the purpose of providing overall information about L'Oréal Paris and their customers.

#### 3.4.1 Online research & netnography

The first research sub-question aims to identify the intended brand identity of L'Oréal Paris to understand how the company wants its customers to perceive the brand. This is answered by collecting data from online research and netnography. The data from online research can be categorized as document secondary data, which are often used in research projects that also collect primary data (Saunders et al., 2016). We collected data from the social networking site Facebook, and official L'Oréal Paris web pages with the purpose of being able to describe the nine elements of the CBIM for L'Oréal Paris.

We continued with netnographic research by observing the different environments on Facebook, where we used web-based materials generated by users on Facebook pages and in groups. Even though this user-generated data was never intended to be used in this way when created, it can still act as secondary data for research projects (Saunders et al., 2016). Moreover, we consider the analysis of the interaction between L'Oréal Paris and their customers through Facebook posts and comments as netnographic research, as we could thereby observe their social interaction with each other in an online environment. Kozinets (2010) defines netnography as a *"participant-observational research based in online fieldwork"* (p. 60). We used Facebook as *"a source of data to arrive at the ethnographic understanding"* (Kozinets, 2010, p. 60) of the brand-to-consumer interaction as well as the consumer-to-consumer interaction.

In contrast to traditional face-to-face methods, e.g. personal interviews, netnography uses information that is not given specifically and in confidence to the marketing researcher (Kozinets, 2010). This usually requires the researchers to disclose their presence when reading through user contributions, as they are obliged to consider and follow ethical guidelines when using netnography as a method. However, we decided to act as covert researchers and outsiders of the community (Uldam & McCurdy, 2013). While considering the ethical guidelines of netnographic research (Kozinets, 2002), we had to weigh up how to proceed. Even though we could assume that users of Facebook groups and brand

page followers are aware of the large potential audience of their posts, they have chosen to communicate with an audience that is interested in the same topics. Thus, it might have happened that they act biased or differently from their usual behaviour when knowing that they are observed by researchers. This 'observer effect' in ethnographic and netnographic research is frequently criticised to bias and therefore invalidate research findings (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982). One way to disclose your presence as a researcher and still ensure less biased findings would be to become a member of the studied group and establish trust and natural human interaction. However, due to our limited time frame, we were not able to interact with our research subjects for an extended period of time of more than a year. Therefore we did not reveal our presence as researchers in the different Facebook groups and brand pages. Nevertheless, we are critically aware of this ethical trade-off and would act as overt researchers if we would be able to repeat our study over a longer period of time.

Moreover, netnography gave us a rather etic understanding (Morris, Leung, Ames, & Lickel, 1999) due to the fact that we did not interact with other users of the group and thereby did not get closely involved with the community. Instead, we mainly conducted our netnographic research to understand how L'Oréal Paris interacts with customers, how customers interact with each other and to discover what they feel about the brand from a more objective position.

### **3.4.2 In-depth interviews**

In our research, in-depth interviews are used to explore consumers' individual motivation for sharing positive eWOM about L'Oréal Paris as the method provides in-depth and holistic insights that gave us an emic understanding from the consumer's perspective (Morris et al., 1999). In-depth interviews established a more personal contact with each participant and therefore lead to a more thorough and deeper discussion and understanding of the topic (Saunders et al., 2016). Online research allowed us to gain a more objective knowledge of the L'Oréal Paris brand and netnography gave insights into consumers' communicated brand perceptions and motives for sharing positive eWOM. Complementary, in-depth interviews revealed consumers' subjective feelings, impressions and perceptions of L'Oréal Paris and their intrinsic motives. The latter is especially important when it comes to the detection of deeply rooted motives for sharing eWOM, such as self-enhancement. Even though it is possible to observe positive consumer reactions to a certain review or Facebook comment (e.g. in form of likes or comments) through netnographic research, it is impossible, without getting too interpretive and speculative, to determine whether this gives the reviewer a feeling of self-enhancement. Furthermore, it cannot be analysed whether a potential feeling of self-enhancement serves as a motive for subsequent reviews. Therefore, the use of in-depth interviews and the laddering technique for deeper probing is a valuable method in complementing our netnographic findings.

When it comes to the selection of participants, the sample size is dependent on the research question and sub-questions, whereas the validity, understanding and insights gained from the data are more related to the data collection and analysis skills than the size of the sample (Patton, 2002). Researchers recommend to continue the qualitative data collection until data saturation is reached; meaning that additional interviews only provide little or no new information (Saunders et al., 2016). By applying the saturation approach, we have reached data saturation after collecting data from a total of nine in-depth interviews, lasting between 30 and 45 minutes. Even though the last two interviews justified the findings from the previous interviews, they did not provide any new themes or information; in other words the data saturation was reached.

Applying behavioural segmentation (Kotler & Keller, 2016), we have chosen participants based on their response to L'Oréal Paris. Therefore, the main segmentation variable was 1) the distribution of positive eWOM about L'Oréal Paris, meaning that each participant has already reviewed products of the brand online. In addition to this, we have selected participants who 2) are female and interested in beauty, 3) have an active Facebook account and 4) have used or are currently using L'Oréal Paris products.

The interview setting was chosen carefully as the physical space can have a strong influence on how the interview proceeds (King & Horrocks, 2010). We found different settings in Copenhagen that provided comfort, privacy and were quiet, so that each participant could decide on the preferred setting. The decision was handed over to the participants to ensure a feeling of comfort, as - on the contrary - stress and unsettledness would reflect in the ability to answer interview questions (King & Horrocks, 2010). Moreover, the choice of Copenhagen as the overall research location served as a segmentation criteria ensuring that all interview participants are living in a similar urban environment. In advance of the interview process, all interviewees were asked for their consent with audio-recording the interview for the purpose of subsequent transcription. Furthermore, the first seven interviews were conducted together in English, determined by the different native languages of the researchers. While the choice of a common research language should decrease the researcher bias during the data collection and analysis, the last two interviews had to be conducted in Danish by the native Danish researcher. Even though we are aware of the fact that the dynamics within the interviews are influenced by the choice of interview language (Welch & Piekkari, 2006), we switched the language for two interviews as the interviewees mentioned difficulties in fully expressing themselves in English. With regard to the seven English interviews, we will critically consider that the interviewees might have produced more authentic answers in their native language (Welch & Piekkari, 2006), even though they did not show any difficulties in expressing their thoughts and feelings in English.

A semi-structured interview guide was designed to have the possibility of adapting to the interviewees' answers while conducting the interviews and to still ensure some level of consistency throughout all of the nine interviews (Saunders et al., 2016). The previously presented theory served as initial guidance to the design of the interview guide to ensure the relevancy of questions for this study. The interview guide (Appendix B) includes opening questions to break the ice between the interviewer and interviewees, so that they felt comfortable to then answer open-ended questions in the course of the interview (King & Horrocks, 2010). Throughout the interview process, we experienced a learning curve as we developed more empathy for the participants in form of a more accurate feeling for their comfort zones and difficulties related to the interview guide. The semi-structured nature of the interview guide hence gave us the opportunity to further clarify the meaning of our questions and to be responsive to their answers. Exemplary for this, we spontaneously added questions to the social media related section of our interview guide if the respondents mentioned activities on other social media platforms besides Facebook.

Moreover, we applied the laddering technique (Christensen & Olson, 2002) to gain a deeper understanding of the interviewees' mind-sets and feelings, especially their subjective motives for sharing positive eWOM about L'Oréal Paris. We were critically aware that the laddering technique can cause some discomfort by the interviewees through the use of multiple 'why' questions, so that there is the general risk that they simply invent answers to satisfy the interviewer. However, to avoid this, we periodically used floating prompts (McCracken, 1988) to encourage the interviewees to clarify or further elaborate upon their answers and showed empathy, whenever we had the impression that the respondents are out of their comfort zone. Overall, we experienced that the combination of the semi-structured approach with the laddering technique helped us to collect all relevant data without causing any observable discomfort by the interviewees through too excessive probing. Furthermore, we paid close attention during the interview to not ask leading questions, over-complex and multiple questions or give judgemental responses to the interviewees (King & Horrocks, 2010).

### **3.4.3 Focus group**

The focus group method enabled the understanding of how "*individuals collectively make sense of a phenomenon and construct meanings around it*" (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 512) by discussing their attitude towards a subject in a group environment. Moreover, the focus group interview allowed to distinguish a recurrence of specific thematic paths and to shed light on further topics deemed important by the participants (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

The purpose of our focus group interview was to complement findings from in-depth interviews by figuring out why some consumers are not motivated to write positive reviews about L’Oreal Paris or any beauty reviews, whereas other consumers are. As the focus group participants have never reviewed a beauty product online, we considered a group discussion as more suitable than further in-depth interviews to reveal their lack of motivation. Thereby, we assumed that it is in general more difficult to reflect upon missing motivation than upon existing motivation for certain behaviour, in this case to share positive eWOM about L’Oréal Paris. Consequently, the focus group participants might have perceived the use of probing ‘why’ questions in a one-on-one interview as too intimidating and hence generate invalid results. Instead, a focus group setting gave them the opportunity to collectively make sense of general recommendation behaviour in a discussion with like-minded others. Exemplary for this is the collective sense-making of online reviews and the corresponding discussion of the high visibility aspect of online activities to a wider social network, which encouraged more and more participants to share their own thoughts triggered by the previous statement of a group member (Appendix F, p. 111). Moreover, the participants had the opportunity to express their personal preferences in terms of communication channels.

However, we remain critical regarding the final compilation of our focus group so that we consider it necessary to further elaborate on our chosen segmentation variables, the resultant participant selection and the overall impression of the group discussion. According to behavioural segmentation, we searched for participants, who 1) have never distributed positive eWOM about L’Oréal Paris, 2) are female and interested in beauty, 3) have an active Facebook account and 4) have used or are currently using L’Oréal Paris products. Even though the ideal number of participants in a focus group is eight, we assumed the underlying topic to be rather complex so that less participants are required (Saunders et al., 2016). Therefore, we consider the final number of six participants as adequate. However, we see a potential problem in the focus group compilation stemming from the academic backgrounds of the individual participants. In order to ensure the composition of a homogenous group (Carey, 1994), we were searching for students with a common level of self-expression skills to ensure a balanced discussion. In relation to the aforementioned segmentation variables, solely students from Copenhagen Business School replied to our focus group invitation. Among them were five graduate students and one undergraduate student from different programs: M.Sc. International Business, M.Sc. Service Management, B.Sc. Business, Asian language and Culture and M.A. Intercultural Marketing (Appendix F). We are aware of the general practice to not choose experts of the researched subject matter as participants but people who have something to say about the discussion topic and feel comfortable with it (Morgan, 1997). Thus, we carefully considered the individual levels of expertise of our participants before and during the data collection. Therefore, we consulted the course catalogues

of the different study programs and asked each participant in advance about practical experiences in the field of marketing and branding. Due to the minor extent of marketing-related courses in their study programs and no professional experiences in marketing and branding, we critically considered the academic backgrounds of our participants as acceptable. This decision has been further supported by our very specific research interest in the perception of L'Oréal Paris and the missing motivation to share positive eWOM about the brand, which we assume to be out of the scope of general marketing knowledge. In order to further counterbalance the inherent weaknesses of the focus group compilation, we formulated each question in a personal way to address the private consumers and not the potential expert in each participant. Furthermore, we paid careful attention to opinion leaders who might have biased the answers of other participants (King & Horrocks, 2010) but experienced a balanced group discussion with no noticeable problems. With regard to data analysis, we will remain critical towards the validity of our findings and rather consider them as additional on-top knowledge that allows us to understand those consumers, who are motivated to share positive eWOM about L'Oréal Paris, in a more nuanced way.

Throughout the focus group discussion, one researcher acted as the moderator and the other as the note-taker. The focus group started with each participant introducing themselves to the rest of the group to break the ice and establish a certain level of trust. The funnel design of the questionnaire (King & Horrocks, 2010) enabled us to get a first understanding of the participants' beauty routines, before slowly moving over to case-related questions about L'Oréal Paris and the corresponding beauty recommendation behaviour of our participants. In context with L'Oréal Paris, we made use of a free association task (Appendix G, p. 113) to reveal different brand associations, whereby the chronological arrangement of 'association boxes' can give some indication of the strength of each association (Keller, 2008). Moreover, in the second half of the discussion, we elicited different thoughts and feelings attached to the exchange of beauty product recommendations by the use of a bubble exercise (Appendix G, p. 119). In this task, the participants were asked to note down a personal beauty product recommendation in a speaking bubble. Even though this exercise can be useful for assessing user and usage imagery for a brand (Keller, 2008), we used it to encourage the participants to talk about their general recommendation behaviour and their preferred channels. As the use of a speaking bubble is associated with oral communication, we first talked about recommendation behaviour in a face-to-face context before moving over to the discussion of online recommendation behaviour. Overall, the focus group interview lasted for 1 hour and 27 minutes and was audio-recorded in order to be transcribed subsequently.



### 3.5 Data analysis

Generally speaking, data analysis can be considered as “*a search for patterns in data*” (Neuman, 1997, p. 426). In order to be able to detect these patterns more easily, the audio recordings of the focus group and in-depth interviews were transcribed verbatim (King & Horrocks, 2010). Even though the verbatim method to transcribe audio records was the most time-consuming one, it can be seen as the first step in our analysis as it inevitably helped us becoming closely familiar with our data (Langdridge, 2004). In order to avoid that we miss out important aspects of (nonverbal) communication (Saunders et al., 2016), we also noted down the way and tone in which our interviewees made their statements as well as their body language.

#### 3.5.1 Coding and organizing data

In the next step, we followed a thematic analysis approach to analyse the transcripts as well as the findings from netnographic research, where a theme is defined by being “*recurrent and distinctive features of participants’ accounts, characterising particular perceptions and/or experiences, which the researcher sees as relevant to the research question*” (King & Horrocks, 2010, p. 150). Additionally, Braun & Clarke (2006) refer to the thematic analysis as a “*foundational method for qualitative analysis*” (p. 78) since it offers the research a systematic, but flexible and accessible approach to analyse qualitative data.

Within this thematic analysis, we firstly identified which parts of our data were addressing our research question and subquestions. In this stage we defined descriptive codes by highlighting relevant materials and attached brief comments when reading through the transcripts and online conversations. We continued and refined descriptive codes as we progressed each set of data. In the second stage, we tried to interpret the meaning of these descriptive codes. This was done by clustering the descriptives codes and then interpret the meaning of these clusters in relation to our research question and theory. Afterwards, we applied interpretive codes to the data. In Table 3, we present a number of exemplary quotes that were difficult to interpret through the lens of theory. In order to provide transparency into our coding procedure, the table has been extended by one additional column that gives the links between the presented codes and the corresponding meanings and line of argumentation. Finally, in the third stage of this thematic analysis system, we identified overarching themes that characterise the key concepts in our analysis (King & Horrocks, 2010) by the use of self-defined colour codes. The meaning of each colour is presented in more detail in Appendix D. This system of descriptive and interpretive coding allowed us to analyse the findings through the lens of the theory while detecting recurring themes, each characterized by the recurrence of a certain colour.

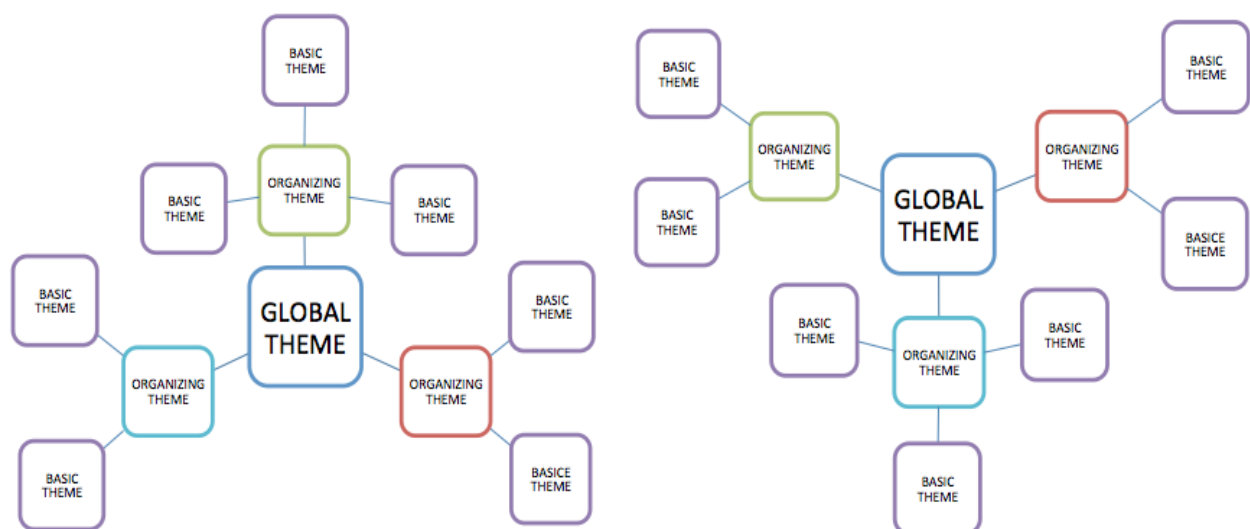
Verbatim transcript	Descriptive code	Interpretive code	Argumentation
<p>S: Yes, there is. Because the group is closed so you have to be a member to see its posts. On some level, it's also embarrassing that I care so much about my skin and makeup. I would probably be more careful; I would still do it, but moderated, because I don't want others to see me as someone who only cares about makeup and my looks. So that's the difference.</p> <p>[Simone, In-depth interview, 2017].</p>	<p><i>Clearly differentiates between closed Facebook groups and 'public' posts, her posts seem to be less "embarrassing" in a closed group; cares about her image</i></p>	<p><i>Community elements: closed Facebook groups = "Consciousness of kind" (hidden but otherwise she would be "more careful"</i></p>	<p>In the first example, the interviewee expresses how she is more careful with public posts than with those she posts in closed Facebook groups. We interpreted it as she feels more connected to these group members as she feels less embarrassed in the group. In the group she is able to express how much she truly cares about makeup and her own looks, which led us to the interpretive code of - <b>Community elements: consciousness of kind.</b></p>
<p>S: Yeah, some of my friends don't care this much about it and therefore don't need a detailed analyze or review, so I can easily cut it down a bit. I geek myself down a bit (laughing). If I have to be honest, I have research it a lot! So I know a lot, but not everyone needs to know that. So for my friends, it can be enough that I just say "use this".</p> <p>[Simone, In-depth interview, 2017].</p>	<p><i>More detailed to Facebook group members when reviewing products compared with friends; knows a lot but only wants to reveal that in front of strangers who are interested in the details</i></p>	<p><i>Content-wise differentiation between weak and strong ties; COBRA: Creation: Motive: Self-enhancement (weak ties) (consumption expert = "geek" language)</i></p>	<p>The same interviewee points out that she "geeks" herself down when talking with friends about makeup. We interpreted the phrase as she uses this "geek" language with other group members, which makes her appear as an expert. This is related to the <b>self-enhancement motive</b> of the desire to be recognised as a consumption expert.</p>
<p>I: Why is that your favorite? T: I don't know, it's just a small palette with maybe 10 different colors and they are all neutrals and it's really handy for everyday use and it's more suitable for travel as well. It just suits me at the moment.</p> <p>[Tatevik, In-depth interview, 2017].</p> <p>I: Do you otherwise feel that they understand your needs when it comes to their many different products? W: Yes, I feel that. I really think that they do.</p> <p>[Willow, In-depth interview, 2017].</p>	<p><i>Her favourite LP product suits her needs</i></p> <p><i>Feels like LP understand her needs</i></p>	<p><i>Brand meaning: Brand performance (meets functional needs)</i></p> <p><i>Brand responses: Brand judgements – credibility (consumer - oriented)</i></p>	<p>The two interviewees here, Tatevik and Willow, both talk about their needs in relation to L'Oréal Paris. However the two statements are coded differently. Tatevik's statement of how the product suits her is coded as <b>brand performance</b>, as the L'Oréal Paris product meets her functional needs. Willow feels like they understand her needs and considers L'Oréal Paris as a credible and consumer-oriented brand, so that we coded this as <b>brand judgements</b>.</p>

<p>I: You'll just share what you know?</p> <p>J: Yes, there are some young people who don't have as much experience with anything. If, for example, they just began to use makeup, then surely they'll think it's smart how these products work, right?</p> <p>[Jeanette, In-depth interview, 2017].</p>	<p><i>Satisfaction of helping other people, especially younger and <u>less experienced</u> women</i></p>	<p><i>Motive: concern for other consumers combined with self-enhancement (expert role) &amp; empowerment (encouragement)</i></p>	<p>This example shows how the interviewee wants to share her experiences with other less-experienced consumers. We interpreted her saying of "less-experienced" as if she is the experienced one. Even though she wants to help others, she also wants to be perceived as an expert within beauty. This led us to the interpretive code of <b>concern for other consumers combined with self-enhancement and encouragement</b> as she wants to encourage others to also buy "smart" products.</p>
<p>K: Ehm, for make-up products very often, because the different products give you a different style. They have a lot of different colours, so I change regularly. Summer, winter, autumn, spring. Or if I buy a new jacket or get new glasses or whatsoever, then you need a new lipstick.</p> <p>[Katrin, In-depth interview, 2017].</p>	<p><i>Being up-to-date (self-driven): only for make-up and not for hair care products</i></p>	<p><i>Self-driven) personal Innovativeness regarding one product category (make-up)</i></p>	<p>With this example, we want to explain our interpretive code - <b>personal innovativeness</b>. The interviewee's makeup consumption is related to how often she changes her style especially between the different seasons. Everytime she renews her style, she also has to change her makeup to fit the new style. We interpreted this as she wants to keep innovating herself and this affects her consumption of makeup as well.</p>
<p>I: It makes perfect sense that you read reviews first before you purchase a specialised product such as the one you talked about.</p> <p>L: (...) If you look at the L'Oréal series with the three different colours – green, black and red – which come in this glass box, but also cost 80 Kroner, you ask yourself, "Is it really worth buying such an expensive face mask, which you should use two to three times a week so that one box is not even long-lasting, even though there are the cheap ones in the little plastic bags?"</p> <p>[Lisa, In-depth interview, 2017].</p>	<p><i>Writes reviews for specialized and non-specialized beauty products; considers certain LP beauty products as expensive compared to other products in the same category</i></p>	<p><i>Beauty products as (personally) high-involvement products</i></p>	<p>The interpretive code that we want to clarify is: <b>beauty products as high-involvement</b>. Her specific description of the product's details led us to interpret it as a high-involvement product. She considers the price of 80 kr. as expensive and expresses how many thoughts she puts behind it.</p>

V: Uhm, that's a good question. First of all, the package is the biggest and I have a lot of hair, so I always think that there it's containing more product. But actually, it's not really the case. I just think that it's because I know L'Oréal. [Vyvy, In-depth interview, 2017].	<i>Chooses LP because the package size looks promising and she feels familiar with LP</i>	<i>Brand resonance: Brand relationship ("I know L'Oréal")</i>	In this last example, the interviewee states that she knows L'Oréal Paris. We interpreted it as she feels close to the brand and have a strong attachment to the brand, almost like if it was her friend. The interpretation led us to <b>brand resonance</b> .
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**Table 3:** Interpretation of codes; own table

When using a thematic analysis approach, the researcher is required to produce a list of themes and organise them in a way that reflects how they are conceptualised to relate to each other (King & Horrocks, 2010). If the researcher fails to organise the themes or do an over-complex thematic structure, it will be difficult for the reader to get an overview of the analysis and also to understand how the different aspect relate to each other (King & Horrocks, 2010). The conventional way of presenting findings from a thematic analysis is to describe and discuss them one by one. However for our research, we have also chosen to present our themes and findings with a thematic network (Attride-Stirling, 2001). The thematic network approach categories themes on three different levels. The basic themes are grouped together to summarize the organizing theme and then we link all organizing themes to determine the global theme (Figure 6).



**Figure 6:** Thematic Networks;; based on: Attride-Stirling, 2001

The basic theme resembles the descriptive code as it is derived from the textual data. Then the organizing theme is comparable to interpretive coding as it organises the basic themes into clusters and interprets a meaning of each cluster. The global theme summarizes and makes sense of the different clusters (Attride-Stirling, 2001). We found more than one global theme, which is still

consistent with the thematic network approach as the literature says: “*Each Global Theme is the core of a thematic network; therefore, an analysis may result in more than one thematic network*” (Attride-Stirling 2001, p. 389). We make use of the thematic network approach due to its network characteristics, which make it easier for the reader to understand how the themes are related. Thus, in order to give the reader a holistic understanding we have chosen this approach of presenting the themes.

### **3.5.2 Validity and reliability in qualitative research**

As opposed to quantitative research, the testing of validity and reliability in qualitative research does not rely on standardised methods but is rather defined by a set of quality criteria. In this regard, Guba & Lincoln (1994) have established a framework of criteria for judging qualitative research by its trustworthiness and authenticity. The trustworthiness of qualitative research can be further determined by four indicators that can be related to validity and reliability in quantitative research: 1) *credibility*, resembling internal validity in quantitative research, 2) *transferability*, resembling external validity, 3) *dependability*, resembling reliability and 4) *confirmability*, resembling objectivity (Trochim & Donnelly, 2007).

The first indicator, *credibility*, aims to ensure that the qualitative research results “*are credible or believable from the perspective of the participant in the research*” (Trochim & Donnelly, 2007, p. 149). In order to assure that we, as ‘feelings’ researchers, gain credible insights in people’s personal feelings, experiences and perceptions with a brand, we have handed over a draft version of our findings and data analysis to both interview and focus group participants, who then critically judged whether we understood them correctly. Overall, we had a high approval quota and only needed to rephrase some sentences, so that we assume a high validity of our research findings.

The second indicator, *transferability*, determines the degree to which the qualitative research results can be generalised as well as transferred to other settings (Trochim & Donnelly, 2007). In this regard, we already argued for our choice to avoid generalisation from our case study of L’Oréal Paris. Therefore, we mainly focused on a detailed and complete description of our methodological choices as well as their application to our chosen case, so that future researchers are enabled to transfer our results to other settings if valuable.

Indicator number three, *dependability*, resembles reliability in quantitative research and is hence concerned with the question “*whether we would obtain the same results if we could observe the same thing twice.*” (Trochim & Donnelly, 2007, p. 149). For the purpose of our research, we tried to ensure a high degree of consistency within our results by conducting in-depth interviews until data saturation was reached (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006), meaning that no new results were found, and by applying methodological triangulation (Denzin, 1978; Patton, 1999). This type of triangulation uses

*“different methods to address the same research problem”* (King & Horrocks, 2010, p. 164). Complementary to our in-depth interviews, we use netnographic research to explore consumers’ feelings towards L’Oréal Paris as well as brand-consumer and consumer-consumer interaction on Facebook. Netnographic observations of these kinds of interactions might further reveal consumers’ motivation to articulate themselves about L’Oréal Paris and thereby also triangulate our motivational findings from the in-depth interviews. As a result, the triangulation enhances the reliability of our research findings (King & Horrocks., 2010).

Lastly, the fourth indicator, *confirmability*, aims to ensure that *“the results could be confirmed or corroborated by others”* (Trochim & Donnelly, 2007, p. 149). To make our results comparable, we reduced the researcher bias as much as possible as explained in the subsequent section.

While the previous four indicators determine the trustworthiness of qualitative research, fairness in research impacts its authenticity (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In this context, fairness means to *“fairly represent different viewpoints”* (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 398) of the social actors that are researched. In order to ensure this kind of fairness, we neither informed our respondents about our particular subject matter in advance nor asked them about their viewpoints. Thus our findings represent a diverse mix of perceptions of L’Oréal Paris as well as motivations to communicate or not communicate about the brand online. In addition to motivated customers acting as online reviewers, we also conducted a focus group with participants who preferred to recommend beauty products in a different way than through positive eWOM, so that we present two opposing viewpoints. However, in light of authenticity, we will critically discuss whether or not the focus group participants are a valid and reliable representation of young Danish consumers in Chapter 5 of this thesis. All verbatim transcripts are attached to this thesis in the appendix, giving a holistic and in-context overview of extracted quotes.

### **3.5.3 Researcher bias**

The management of researcher bias is considered as a major challenge for qualitative research, especially when interviews are employed as a data collection method (Chenail, 2011). According to the example of the ‘feelings’ researcher, a personal in-depth interview consists of two parties: the interviewee and the interviewer. While the former answers to the questions, the latter is in charge of formulating the questions and interpreting the interviewee’s answers. However, over the course of the data collection period, it is unlikely that the ‘feelings’ researcher will always ask the exact same questions in the exact same manner, as he acts as a human being and not as a computer (Saunders et al., 2009). Consequently, the researcher is a central research instrument to conducting qualitative research by creating the interview contexts through personal interaction with the research subjects

and thereby determining the flow of communication (Poggenpoel & Myburgh, 2003). Due to the use of a semi-structured interview guide, we are critically aware that we might have asked different questions and that we, ourselves, became the instruments through which data were collected or generated (Poggenpoel & Myburgh, 2003).

To counterbalance the bias through an individual researcher, teamwork is often referred to as a valuable method so that peer evaluation can take place (Poggenpoel & Myburgh, 2003). Even though we worked in a team of two, we consider this situation as two-fold. On the one hand, teamwork allowed us to formulate the interview and focus group questions together, so that we ensured a common understanding of the content and aim of each question. Moreover, we were able to run through two rounds of data coding. In the first round, we coded the data independent of each other to then compare our detected themes to see whether our interpretations are similar. In the second round, we paid closer attention to the diverging themes stemming from our adopted hermeneutic philosophy (Kvale 1997; Silverman, 2010) and interpreted them again through the lens of existing theory until we reached a common interpretation. Thus, by choosing an abductive over an inductive approach and building on an existing theoretical frame, we reduced the risk of arbitrary interpretation.

On the other hand, we are critically aware that conducting interviews and a focus group by two researchers also bears challenges as two different researcher styles and mind-sets might lead to inconsistent results. In order to compensate for this weakness, we took several actions. First, when discussing our research interests for the first time, we made sure that none of us has a highly developed affinity with customers of L'Oréal Paris. This means that both of us are neither insiders to the researched communities (Chenail, 2011) and groups on social media nor researchers with a professional business interest as we have no employment history with the L'Oréal Group. Therefore, we stayed as open-minded and interested in all potential insights as possible. Second, we tested the consistency of our interview style and the quality of our interview guide in two steps. In the first step, we followed the approach of interviewing the interviewer (Chenail, 2011), which helped us to identify potential biases and moments of impatience of our research colleague. We finally stopped this procedure when we reached a certain point of saturation (Guest et al., 2006), meaning that no new potential biases have been identified, moments of impatience have been consciously pointed out and no questions needed further modification. However, this approach has also limitations. As we developed our interview guide together, we might have been both blind to biases in the questions itself, which might be misleading or hard to understand for respondents with no academic background in brand management. Therefore, we did a small version of a pilot study, in which we tested our questions during two test interviews. However, the focus of our critical investigation was on the

reaction of our test participants on the formulation and understanding of our questions rather than the academic quality of their test-answers. This can be explained by the fact that we did not do the test run with real research participants as the number of available participants was limited and we did not want to lose valuable insights for the sake of a pilot study.

Overall, we conducted all in-depth interviews and the focus group discussion as a team, meaning that one of us acted as the interviewer and the other one as the silent observer, who could interrupt if necessary. However, two interviews held in Danish built an exception as those participants felt more secure and comfortable when speaking their mother tongue instead of English. To ensure that these interviews remain consistent with the others, we conducted the seven English interviews first and the two Danish interviews last. In order to secure the exact meaning of the statements made by our Danish participants, we used a double translation (McGorry, 2010) of the Danish verbatim transcript into our target language English and back into Danish, before coding the final English transcripts.



## 4. RESEARCH FINDINGS & ANALYSIS

In the following, we will present our findings from data analysis analogous to the three-step structure that has already been applied in the theory chapter.

### 4.1 Company perspective: The Corporate Brand Identity Matrix

In the company's perspective part, we take a closer look at the nine different CBIM elements that build the intended corporate brand identity of L'Oréal Paris (Table 4). Besides online research we included insights from netnographic research for the relationships element as it gave us a chance to explore the brand-consumer relationship more intensely.

EXTERNAL	<b>Value Proposition</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biggest beauty brand in the world - focusing on hair colour, cosmetics, hair care &amp; skin care. (L'Oréal Paris, 2017b)</li> <li>• Best in beauty available for everyone (L'Oréal, 2017c)</li> <li>• Helping women embrace their unique beauty and reinforce her self-worth (L'Oréal Paris, 2017b)</li> <li>• Making scientific innovations accessible for everyone (L'Oréal, 2013b)</li> <li>• Dedicated to celebrate the diversity of beauty (L'Oréal Paris, 2017b)</li> </ul>	<b>Relationships</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Customers</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Interacting with customers</li> <li>○ Do the best to help customers</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Distribution channels (<i>innovative with products, trust &amp; long-term partnership</i>)</li> <li>• NGOs (<i>CSR &amp; ethical principles</i>)</li> <li>• Spokespersons (<i>inspirational &amp; glamorous</i>)</li> <li>• Employees (<i>responsible, passionate, aspirational &amp; innovative</i>)</li> <li>• Investors/shareholders (<i>CSR, trust &amp; market leader</i>)</li> </ul>	<b>Position</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Global leader in the world of beauty trends (L'Oréal Paris, 2013c)</li> <li>• Being "a total beauty care company combines the latest in technology with the highest in quality for the ultimate in luxury beauty at mass" (L'Oréal Paris, 2017b)</li> </ul>
	<b>Expression</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Global beauty brand</li> <li>• The name L'Oréal Paris and its France heritage</li> <li>• Slogan: Because You're Worth It (L'Oréal Paris, 2017c)</li> <li>• Well-known and glamorous spokespersons (L'Oréal Paris, 2017b; L'Oréal Paris, 2013a)</li> <li>• CSR: Commitment to female empowerment (L'Oréal Paris, 2017a)</li> </ul>	<b>L'Oréal Paris' Core</b> <p>"L'Oréal Paris is sculpting the future of beauty" (L'Oréal Paris, 2013c)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovativeness (L'Oréal, 2017c)</li> <li>• Diversity</li> <li>• A better world</li> <li>• Self-confidence:</li> </ul> <p>"Because You're Worth It" (L'Oréal Paris, 2013c)</p>	<b>Personality</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diversity</li> <li>• Self-confidence</li> <li>• Innovative</li> <li>• Experienced</li> <li>• Aspirational</li> <li>• Responsible</li> <li>• Passionate</li> <li>• Glamorous</li> <li>• Empowering</li> </ul>
	<b>Mission &amp; Vision</b> <p><u>Mission</u>  <i>"Beauty for All: Offering all women and men worldwide the best of cosmetics innovation in terms of quality, efficacy and safety to satisfy all their desires and all their beauty needs in their infinite diversity."</i>  (L'Oréal, 2015a)</p> <p><u>Vision</u>  <i>"Our vision, is the idea that beauty is accessible to all, a real way to affirm and accept ourselves as we are, to allow us the opportunity to really be ourselves."</i>  (L'Oréal Paris, 2013a)</p>	<b>Culture</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Six founding values: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Passion for beauty</li> <li>○ Innovation</li> <li>○ Entrepreneurial spirit</li> <li>○ Open-mindedness</li> <li>○ Quest for excellence</li> <li>○ Responsibility</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Ethical principles: Integrity, Respect, Courage and Transparency (L'Oréal, 2017d)</li> </ul>	<b>Competences</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focused on beauty in more than one century</li> <li>• Expertise within infinite diversity of women's beauty desires (L'Oréal, 2017e)</li> <li>• Provide accessible luxury for those who demands excellence in beauty</li> <li>• Teams of researchers using latest scientific innovation to develop unique and visionary products (L'Oréal Paris, 2013b)</li> </ul>

**Table 4:** L'Oréal Paris Corporate Brand Identity Matrix; based on Urde, 2013

The internal elements mission & vision, culture and competences relate to the realities of L'Oréal Paris and their values. According to their **mission** statement L'Oréal Paris strive to provide the best innovative beauty products for all women and men to satisfy their beauty needs and desires. Meanwhile their **vision** is the idea of making beauty accessible for everyone to affirm and accept themselves as they are. Regarding L'Oréal Paris's **culture**, the six founding values and ethical principles reflect their attitudes, values and beliefs. Starting with the six founding values, L'Oréal Paris have a *passion* for creating beauty products for their customers that make them feel more confident and open towards others. Being *innovative* is essential for L'Oréal Paris as "*beauty is an endless quest that constantly requires a higher level of performance*" (L'Oréal, 2017d). Moreover, there is no innovation without *entrepreneurial spirit* as L'Oréal Paris challenges and encourages employees to take initiatives. *Open-mindedness* is another important value to the organisation as they endeavour to listen to customers and understand their culture in order to "*respond to the infinite diversity of beauty aspirations around the world*" (L'Oréal, 2017d). The four aforementioned values are inextricably related to the fifth value, *quest for excellence*, as L'Oréal Paris is in a constant pursuit for perfection to provide the best for their customers. Finally, *responsibility* describes their concern for developing safe and effective products while preserving the planet and being able to contribute to the well-being of their employees. Lastly the ethical principles of integrity, respect, courage and transparency must be recognised by all employees as part of the culture of L'Oréal Paris (L'Oréal, 2017d). However, we have to point out that the mission statement, founding values and ethical principles are found for the overall L'Oréal Group (S.A). We argue that these elements are equivalent for L'Oréal Paris as L'Oréal claims that these elements "*(...) of the group are expressed in the daily operations of all our teams around the world*" (L'Oréal, 2017d). Highlighting the major **competences** of L'Oréal Paris, they act as experts within diversified beauty due to their industry knowledge, while providing innovative and accessible luxury products for those who demand excellence in beauty.

In order to **express** themselves, L'Oréal Paris use their slogan "*Because You're Worth It*" since 1973, which is recognised and positively responded to by 80% of women (L'Oréal Paris, 2017c). This slogan is associated with every product and advertising that L'Oréal Paris produces, where it is often expressed by well-known and glamorous spokespersons (L'Oréal Paris, 2017b; L'Oréal Paris, 2013a). L'Oréal Paris is known for using glamorous celebrities as spokespersons for their brand (L'Oréal Paris, 2017b; L'Oréal Paris, 2013a) to be perceived as more trustworthy and well-liked by their customers. Lastly, L'Oréal Paris express their commitment to female empowerment as the slogan "*Because You're Worth It*" speaks to all women and by having many CSR programs in place that support women (L'Oréal Paris, 2017a).

On the other side of the brand core, the characteristics shown in Table 4 form the personality of L'Oréal Paris. L'Oréal Paris' brand **personality** is located in the middle row of the matrix as it is both inside and outside-oriented. While L'Oréal Paris defines their characteristics and shapes their personality from inside-out, the resulting personality also leaves an outside impression. This means that the personality of L'Oréal Paris tells the company's stakeholders 'This is who we are as a corporate brand'. To reveal the brand's personality, we analysed the data from our online research and extracted different characteristics to the personality element, whereby the focus is on the three recurring themes of 'diversity', 'innovativeness' and 'self-confidence'. The statement, "*These women and men (spokespersons) of all ages, looks and origins, are sources of inspiration for our generation*" (L'Oréal Paris, 2013c) highlights the different personalities and backgrounds of the brand's spokespersons, which represent the 'diverse' personality of L'Oréal Paris. The next characteristic, self-confidence, is derived from the brand philosophy, saying that, "*(...) whatever your age, gender, ethnicity or look, 'you're worth it'*" (L'Oréal Paris, 2013c). We thereby put emphasis on the 'you're worth it' aspect, which directly appeals to the self-confidence of the receiver, who is worth using beauty products. As a third personality element, we extracted the 'innovative' characteristic from L'Oréal Paris' statement, "*our teams of researchers use the latest technological discoveries to develop unique and visionary products*" (L'Oréal Paris, 2013b), as using the latest technology in products also means being innovative as a company.

The most important element of the matrix, the **brand core** of L'Oréal Paris, sums up the most important core values: innovativeness, diversity, self-confidence and creating a better world. *Innovativeness* is a core value as it has been in their DNA from day one and today L'Oréal Paris strives to make the most innovative products accessible to everyone (L'Oréal, 2017b). The second core value, *diversity*, is linked to their dedication of celebrating the diversity of beauty (L'Oréal Paris, 2017b). *Self-confidence* as a core value relates to their slogan "*Because You're Worth It*" (L'Oréal Paris, 2013c) and the ambition of helping every woman embrace her unique beauty to reinforce her innate sense of self-worth (L'Oréal Paris, 2017b). The fourth and last core value of creating *a better world* aims at making a positive contribution of supporting research and humanitarian causes (L'Oréal Paris, 2013c). All four core values support and lead up to L'Oréal Paris' promise of *sculpting the future of beauty* (L'Oréal Paris, 2013c). L'Oréal Paris' core has the important role of giving guidance, focus and coordination in the management of all corresponding product brands.

The final three elements, value proposition, relationship and position, represent how L'Oréal Paris want to be perceived externally as these elements affect the reputation and image of the brand. The **value proposition** represents how L'Oréal Paris appeal with their key offerings to customers and other stakeholders. The key offerings seen in Table 4 describe L'Oréal Paris as the biggest beauty

brand in the world with the best and most innovative beauty products accessible for everyone. They are dedicated to embrace the diversity of beauty and uniqueness in every woman to reinforce her self-worth. These appealing arguments are meant to create a favorable relationship between L'Oréal Paris and their customers and generate ultimately positive purchase decisions. Regarding the scope of our thesis, we solely focus on the brand-consumer **relationship**. As further determined by the CBIM, this relationship is looked at from the company's perspective. Our netnographic research findings reveal how L'Oréal Paris manage their relationship with customers on their official Facebook page. Exemplary for this is the reaction to a complaint of a customer who has an issue with the ingredients in a product. In response to this, L'Oréal Paris show interest in the issue by replying, *"Thank you for your feedback. We will always like to hear both praise and criticism from our consumers, and of course it is a shame that you are not happy with the product"* (Appendix H, Netnographic research: Post 6). Moreover, L'Oréal Paris transfer the customer to their consumer care center to handle the issue. Another Facebook post reveals a customer's disappointment about the discontinuity of a specific product. In this regard, L'Oréal Paris show interest in helping the customer by suggesting, *"maybe 235 Nude or 235 Organza could be alternatives. Or we can also recommend you to take a look into our lip palette, Color Riche... we hope you find an alternative"* (Appendix H, Netnographic research: Post 7). Overall, the aforementioned examples are representative of how L'Oréal Paris deliver service and care for their customers as reflected in their corporate brand identity.

With regard to the final element of the matrix, L'Oréal Paris want to be **positioned** as a global leader of beauty trends and as a beauty company that combines innovativeness and quality for the ultimate affordable luxury product.

However, as the arrows in Figure 2 indicate, the different identity elements further have to be aligned. The first alignment has to take place between the position and mission & vision. Based on the insights derived from the CBIM, we argue that L'Oréal Paris remain up-to-date with technological developments by discovering new formulas and new beauty insights to use in their products, and thereby bring innovativeness to the market. Therefore, their position of being a beauty care company that combines technology and quality is aligned with their mission of being innovative. Furthermore, L'Oréal Paris offer their luxury and innovative products to a mass instead of a potential high-end niche market, as they want their products to be accessible for everyone. This aligns their vision of being accessible with their position of creating luxury beauty products at mass.

The next matrix elements that are aligned are their culture and relationship. L'Oréal Paris' six founding values and ethical principles act as a competitive advantage as culture is distinct in each corporation. Regarding the customer relationship, we argue that the three values of open-mindedness, quest for excellence and responsibility are incorporated. L'Oréal Paris show responsibility for consumer issues

with product ingredients as they strive to develop safe and effective products (Appendix H, Netnographic research: Post 6). Quest for excellence is reflected e.g. as L'Oréal Paris suggests similar lipsticks as substitutes for a discontinued product, having the best for the consumer in mind (Appendix H, Netnographic research: Post 7). Finally, open-mindedness is reflected in both examples where L'Oréal Paris try to listen to and understand the needs or requests of their customers.

Moreover, the brand's competences and value proposition are aligned. It can be assumed that the competences of being experts within diversified beauty and providing innovative and accessible luxury products acts as competitive advantages. These competitive advantages influence the favourable relationship between L'Oréal Paris' and their customers in the value proposition and ultimately the positive purchase decisions. This is how the two elements of competences and value proposition are aligned and influenced by each other. Finally, alignment sets in between the elements of expression and personality, where the character of L'Oréal Paris is shaped by the way it is expressed. The diversity is expressed by L'Oréal Paris being a global beauty brand, as being global means that they relate and appeal to multiple countries and cultures. Next, their expression of *"Because You're Worth It"* reflects the characteristics of self-confidence and aspirational. Moreover, the aspect of being innovative and experienced is expressed through their long heritage, where innovation has been in their DNA from day one (L'Oréal, 2017b) and the many years in the beauty business make them experienced. L'Oréal Paris have carefully chosen glamorous and passionate spokespersons that expresses their personality. Finally, the characteristics of empowering and responsible are expressed through their CSR programs. Lastly, the brand core of L'Oréal Paris is coherent with all the other elements in the matrix, which express innovation, diversity, a better world and self-confidence to a certain degree and sum up to what L'Oréal Paris stand for.

As this analysis has solely considered the company's perspective, we will discuss how the elements of the CBIM are aligned or misaligned with the consumer's perception of L'Oréal Paris in the discussion chapter of this thesis (section 5.1.4), based on our findings from consumer research. This discussion will finally allow us to discover whether consumers perceive the brand as L'Oréal Paris intend them to do.

## 4.2 Consumer perspective: Brand-related online behaviour

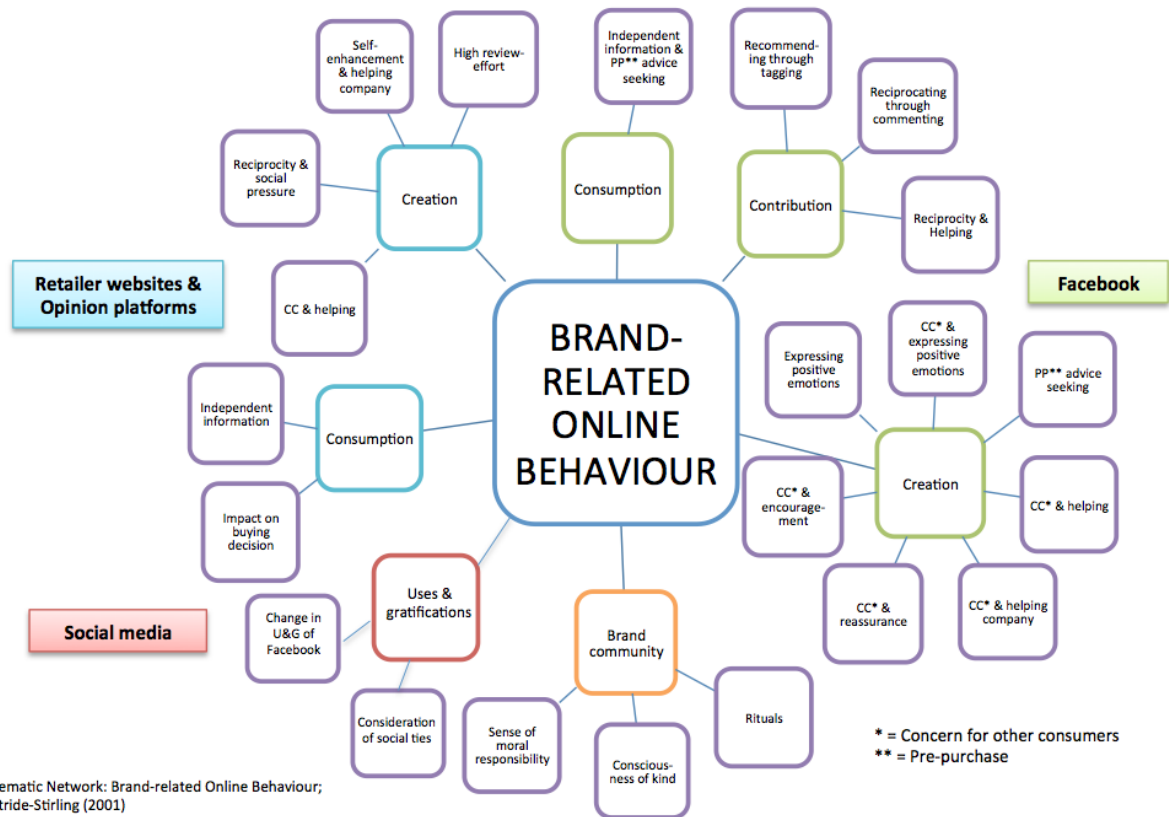


Figure 7: Thematic Network: Brand-related Online Behaviour; based on Attride-Stirling (2001)

Online activities can occur in many different ways, depending on the individual choice of platform and the activeness level of each online activity. In order to shed light on the brand-related online behaviour of customers of L'Oréal Paris as represented by one of our global themes, we organized our findings according to a thematic network. In Figure 7, our basic themes resemble the interpretive instead of descriptive codes in the interview transcripts. As we could not detect any recurring basic themes within the descriptive codes due to a multitude of very distinct statements, we clustered them by the allocated interpretive codes. Thus, the organizing themes are linked to recurring interpretive codes. One overall distinction is made by the choice of platform, so that we differentiate between rather static retailer websites and opinion platforms on the one hand and more interactive social media platforms, in particular Facebook, on the other hand. First, we have defined an organizing theme of 'uses and gratifications' (U&G) for social media. The U&G approach has been chosen as it allows us to examine how and why different social media platforms are used by individual consumers. While these findings provide a better understanding of the mind-sets of the respondents but are not necessarily brand-related, we further organize our findings according to the three-type activeness continuum stemming from the COBRA framework. Even though the COBRA framework originally investigates consumers' brand-related activities particularly on social media, we consider the three-type continuum as equally

suitable for retailer websites and opinion platforms. However, we expect a lack of contribution on retailer websites and opinion platforms due to their rather static nature in comparison with more dynamic social media interactions. Therefore, we argue that consumers can proceed from low brand-related activities in the consumption type to high-level activities in the creation type on all kinds of platforms, whereas contribution is expected to solely take place on dynamic platforms. Within the final organizing theme 'brand community', we will analyse consumers' perception of the relationship and interaction with other customers of L'Oréal Paris, which lights up their motivation to share positive brand-related eWOM with others.

#### **4.2.1 Retailer websites and opinion platforms**

##### **4.2.1.1 Consumption of OCRs**

###### **Impact on the buying decision**

When looking at the consumption behaviour of OCRs on retailer websites and opinion platforms, the 'Impact on the buying decision' builds a recurring basic theme. In this regard, one interview participant reveals that she considers extreme star ratings in form of "*either very good or very bad ratings*" (Interview, Julia; Appendix E: p. 13) and the corresponding OCRs as an indicator for her buying decision. In addition to this, other participants either prefer to consult personal opinions of current customers "*independent of the company's product description*" (Interview, Mara; Appendix E: p. 39) or to test previously given expert recommendations before making a final purchase (Appendix E: Interview, Katrin, p. 29). However, when it comes to the consultancy of experts, the respondents reveal different viewpoints as the consumption of OCRs might also serve as a substitute to expert recommendations. Regarding the consumption of OCRs, one respondent explains, "*There [opinion platforms] can be other users who have tried the product and then will be able to answer your questions*" (Interview, Vyvy; Appendix E: p. 73), whereas another respondent concludes, "*So you can skip the step of going to a shop (...)*" (Interview, Mara; Appendix E: p. 40).

###### **Independent information**

Even though the individual consumption behaviour differs, it has a consistent impact on the buying decision of potential customers and is driven by the common motive of searching for product information. As such, the present motive corresponds to the COBRA motive of *information*. However, the participants further highlight the significance of the information-independency from company and expert opinions so that the term 'Independent information' motive can be used to emphasise the reasoning behind this prevalent driver for the consumption of OCRs. With regard to the social media origin of the COBRA motives it is important to remember that the information motive has already been

observed in previous research on general media use, so that it can also drive the consumption of OCRs on retailer websites and opinion platforms. Moreover, different arguments shed further light on the eligibility of the 'Independent information' motive. On the one hand beauty products are considered as *"equal to all other products from other categories"* (Interview, Julia; Appendix E: p. 13), whereas on the other hand they are attributed with higher weight:

"And especially with beauty products that cause a result visible for other people, (...) it makes much sense to me to check them in advance. And to read some reviews because I use them on a daily basis, even though they are less expensive" (Interview, Mara; Appendix E: p. 40).

Complementary to the cost aspect, another customer of L'Oréal Paris adds that she also consumes reviews for products that are less specialized or expensive on a general level, *"(...) but compared with other products in the same category, they are"* (Interview, Lisa; Appendix E: p. 31). Consequently, the physical visibility through their application and their daily usage can turn beauty products into personally high-involvement products, whereas the higher pricing compared with competitive products seems to be especially applicable to the product range of L'Oréal Paris.

#### **4.2.1.2 Creation of OCRs**

When it comes to the creation of OCRs, the respondents go to retailer websites and opinion platforms when they want to review a product on an *"all-in-one"* platform (Interview, Julia; Appendix E: p. 17). On retailer websites, other potential customers can read the review and directly purchase the product (Appendix E: Interview, Julia, p. 17; Mara, p. 45), whereas on opinion platforms, *"They can read all of the reviews in one place"* (Interview, Vyvy; Appendix E: p. 76).

#### **High review-effort**

Regarding the creation of an OCR, one interview participant clearly highlights the higher review effort compared to a Facebook comment:

"You have to create an account [on Amazon] (...) rather than spontaneously make a quick comment on Facebook. I think that criteria can make the difference between bullshit and no bullshit" (Interview, Mara; Appendix E: p. 47).

The choice of the words *"bullshit and no bullshit"* implies that the higher effort put into an OCR is seen as a means to generate a more valuable review. The underlying reasoning behind this statement is that the creation of an OCR on a retailer's website results from a predetermined decision to actively write a review. As opposed to this, a positive comment about a product on Facebook might be spontaneously caused by a trigger. With regard to this, another interview participant explains:

"(...) on Facebook, I'm always logged in on my phone and when I scroll down my feeds, then these groups always appear. Then it's very easy if someone asks about a foundation, because I



can immediately answer it. But on Matas – even though it’s not difficult, but in my head it is – then I have to log in and find the right product, remember what I want to say and give it some stars as well.” (Interview, Simone; Appendix E: p. 56).

Although this quote further emphasises the higher effort put into an OCR on a retailer’s website compared to a Facebook comment, the viewpoints of the two consumers fall apart. While one respondent criticises the lower effort put into Facebook comments, the other appreciates the ease of use on Facebook as well as the overall convenience of social media. Without judging the two opposing viewpoints, we interpret the distinction with reference to the three-type continuum of the COBRA framework. Thereby, we argue that OCRs on retailer websites, such as Matas or Amazon, are high-level brand activities within the creation type, whereas Facebook comments can be considered as medium-level contribution activities. However, the latter classification only applies to comments triggered on Facebook and not for active review posts in Facebook groups or on brand pages, which we classify as brand-related creation activities.

### **Concern for other consumers & Helping**

The creation of OCRs on retailer websites and opinion platforms is driven by various motives that either appear on their own or in combination with other motives. Customers of L’Oréal Paris act as altruistic consumers as they write OCRs due to their *concern for other consumers*. However, insights into the subjective feelings of our interview participants reveal that the concern for other consumers often intermingles with further motives. One detected combination is the ‘Concern for other consumers & Helping’ motive. Being asked about encouraging situations for writing an OCR, one consumer states:

“Whenever I liked a product a lot I’m willing to share that with other people to help them with their buying decision.” (Interview, Julia; Appendix E: p. 14).

In addition to this, another consumer mentions:

“Of course it is my subjective experience that I share but I think the way I express it, like in an open way and very detailed, is helpful. And therefore I also hope that others can consider it or that it helps them somehow.” (Interview, Mara; Appendix E: p. 44).

While the willingness to share personal experiences has not been requested by anyone and is thus driven by the altruistic concern for other consumers, the choice of the word “*help*” indicates that the product is reviewed in order to help potential customers with their product choice. What is new to this combined motive is the existence of the helping motive within the creation type as it has originally occurred within the contribution type of the COBRA framework. As presented by Muntinga et al. (2011), helping incorporates answering of brand-related questions of other users. While this

definition of helping is linked to reactive behaviour, helping within the creation type reveals a more active trait. This means that current consumers review a product without a preceding request but rather assume what could be interesting for others so that they indirectly anticipate potential questions and answer them proactively. Moreover, the first quote reveals that the creation of positive OCRs is triggered by strongly positive experiences, which is aligned with the notion of Gensler et al. (2013) that extreme experiences with a brand are more frequently shared with others. However, while Gensler et al. (2013) refer to CGBS spread on social media, we observe that this tendency also arises with regard to OCRs on retailer websites.

### **Norm of reciprocity & Social pressure**

In addition to the first combi-motive, we detect a second combination that can be referred to as the 'Norm of reciprocity & Social pressure' motive:

“And I also do my job and share my knowledge and experiences with the community to make my contribution. So... yeah, it is all about giving and taking (...). That’s the purpose of all these platforms for me.” (Interview, Mara; Appendix E: p. 43).

“You can’t just go in there and ask questions – you have to give something to receive something.” (Interview, Vyvy; Appendix E: p. 73).

Similar to the aforementioned combination of 'Concern for other consumers & Helping', the 'Norm of reciprocity & Social pressure' motive also occurs in a new context. The aspect of “*giving and taking*” points to the governing norm of reciprocity within virtual communities, whereas the choice of the word “*job*” points to the perception of social pressure caused by already existing OCRs. However, in connection with OCRs, the COBRA sub-motivation of social pressure gets a new meaning. While the corresponding umbrella motive of *integration & social interaction* fosters interactivity among social media users, the level of consumer-consumer interactivity on rather static retailer websites or opinion platforms is assumed to be low. Nevertheless, the choice of the word “*community*” in the above quote indicates that creators of OCRs still feel social affiliation with other users of the same platform. Therefore, the 'Norm of reciprocity & Social pressure' motive also has a social but less interactive trait.

### **Self-enhancement and Helping the company**

Besides the conformity in consumer motives, there are also differences. While one consumer is motivated to be “*recognized as an authentic reviewer by other members of the community*” (Interview, Mara; Appendix E: p. 45), another consumer admits, “*I simply shared my opinion with others, which is good, but I don’t feel excited about that or extremely happy*” (Interview, Julia; Appendix E: p. 17). Regarding the former quote we argue that the desire to be recognized as an “*authentic reviewer*” resembles the description of Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004, p. 43) of “*a consumption expert or intelligent*

*shopper*” as incorporated in the *self-enhancement* motive. However, as the difference in the two quotes reveals, this motive encourages the creation of an OCR in some cases but not in others. The same applies to the *helping the company* motive, meaning that the willingness to help the company by means of a positive OCR drives some users of retailer websites or opinion platforms but not others. One consumer explains the lack of this motive by saying, “*I am aware of the impact my review can have on the company but I don’t do it to actively promote the company*” (Interview, Julia; Appendix E: p. 17).

Overall, customers of L’Oréal Paris are driven by the desire for ‘Independent information’ within the consumption type, while they share the common motives of ‘Concern for other consumers & Helping’ and ‘Norm of reciprocity & Social pressure’ when it comes to the creation of OCRs on retailer websites and opinion platforms.

#### **4.2.2 Social media: uses & gratifications**

In order to be able to better understand consumers’ brand-related activities on social media, we have first made one step back by applying the U&G approach. This approach allows us to investigate how and why individual customers of L’Oréal Paris use different social media platforms on a personal level before moving towards the more specific brand activity level.

##### **Change in uses & gratifications of Facebook**

With regards to Facebook, there are two opposing tendencies in the level of utilisation. While some users tend to switch to other social media platforms and therefore decrease their activeness level on Facebook, others maintain active interaction with other users, especially in Facebook groups. When it comes to the creation of own written or illustrative posts on their Facebook pages, two customers of L’Oréal admit:

“The platform I use the most is probably Snapchat and Instagram. I actually don’t use Facebook that much more (...)” (Interview, Willow; Appendix E: p. 86).

“In my opinion, Instagram is faster and less static. There, you always see something new and I have the impression that people read or see your posts more often than on Facebook” (Interview, Lisa; Appendix E: p. 36).

While both statements reveal a higher preference of using Instagram for the distribution of own content and pictures, the latter quote further implies that Facebook posts receive less attention by the social network. This impression is supported by another user, who points to the increasing dominance of video and memes content on Facebook and therein sees the reason for the attribution of less attention to own user posts (Appendix E: Interview, Katrin, p. 26). Even though there seems to be a tendency of posting less on the personal Facebook page, the reactions to this are different. While some

users switch to other social media platforms to share UGC with their social network, others relocate the contribution and creation of content from their general Facebook pages to more topic-related Facebook groups. When talking about activities within Facebook groups, one respondent states, “*I respect them [other members] and consult them when I need a product-related information.*” (Interview, Lisa; Appendix E: p. 37), whereas another respondent is “*creating a look and posting it and getting comments from others*” (Interview, Tatevik; Appendix E: p. 63).

### **Consideration of social ties**

Besides the consideration of the right location for own Facebook posts, the respondents further take their audience into account and how their posts will be perceived. One interview respondent generally takes into account, “*if all people should know it or whether it is unnecessary*” (Interview, Jeanette; Appendix E: p. 11) and thereby considers the potentially added value of a Facebook post for the audience, whereas other respondents pay special attention to the image that a Facebook post can generate of themselves:

“(...) now that we are grown up and want to start working for a company, it can happen that they check your Facebook profile before.” (Interview, Lisa; Appendix E: p. 37).  
“I’m also thinking about my general appearance on Facebook, because (...) a few months from now I have to search for a job and that’s also something I think of” (Interview, Tatevik; Appendix E: p. 69).

Special emphasis is thereby put on the impression that Facebook posts can leave on other people. While Wang et al. (2016) have determined that social network ties have an impact on the exchange of information among the network, the two quotes indicate that especially unknown future employers, who are outsiders to the own social network and can be thereby referred to as ‘No ties’, are considered. This way of thinking is aligned with two distinct features of online communication: *two-way mass communication* and *negotiable and uncontrolled*. The definition of two-way mass communication, stating that “*one interacts directly with the few, and indirectly with the many*” (Gulbrandsen & Just, 2011, p. 1100), hence applies to the direct and intended interaction with weak to strong ties within the social network as well as to the indirect interaction with ‘No ties’ such as future employers. The indirect interaction is further caused by the second feature of online communication, namely its negotiable and uncontrolled nature. This means that published content on the Internet cannot be controlled by a single producer but can be rather accessed and stored by any receivers who “*check your Facebook profile before*” (Interview, Lisa; Appendix E: p. 37). As a consequence, special attention is paid to a post’s potential impression on ‘No ties’, in particular when the post is visible on the personal Facebook profile. The consideration of social ties and a certain kind of timidity further

point to a lack of self-disclosure by the respondents, meaning that they are only willing to reveal personal information to known social ties.

However, when it comes to interactions within (closed) Facebook groups, no differentiation is made between what is shared, but rather how it is shared. While one respondent states, “*Whatever I tell them [group members] I would also tell my friends or I’ve even already done that.*” (Interview, Lisa; Appendix E: p. 38) and thereby clarifies that beauty recommendations to strong social ties and unknown group members are the same, another respondent admits:

“(…) some of my friends don’t care this much about it [beauty] and therefore don’t need a detailed analyze or review, so I can easily cut it down a bit. I geek myself down a bit (laughing)” (Interview, Simone; Appendix E: p. 60).

The use of “*geek*” language indicates that other group members are considered as knowledgeable, whereas the exchange of similar product recommendations compared with friends points out that other Facebook group members are further considered as trustworthy. So far, our research findings have revealed the impact of social ties on social media behaviour. However, in order to shed light on the special relationship between beauty-affine customers of L’Oréal Paris, we will present specific research findings on community elements in a separate section independent of the consumers’ choice of review platform.

### **4.2.3 Facebook**

#### ***4.2.3.1 Consumption of brand-related content***

##### **Independent information and Pre-purchase advice seeking**

The social networking site Facebook provides consumers different opportunities to get in touch with L’Oréal Paris. One location for brand-consumer interaction is L’Oréal Paris’ brand page on Facebook (Appendix H), where brand news are shared by the company and consumed by its customers. While this kind of interaction is triggered by the company that created the brand page and its product posts, various Facebook beauty groups provide another space for the exchange of product- and brand-related knowledge. Being asked about the first contact with positive eWOM about L’Oréal Paris, one respondent explains:

“I think it started 2 years ago, because I became a member of different Facebook groups – beauty, makeup and skincare groups. (...) That’s also when I started to, you know before buying a product, check what others thought of the product.” (Interview, Tatevik; Appendix E: p. 62).

This quote reveals that potential customers of a certain product get in touch with current customers and seek out experienced-based consumer information. Thereby, the 'Independent information' motive acts as a driver among Facebook group members who first consult each other before making a final buying decision. However, this consumption motive either acts on its own or in combination with another motive, which we label 'Pre-purchase advice seeking'. As the term indicates, this consumption motive partly resembles the *post-purchase advice-seeking* motive. However, while *post-purchase advice-seeking* encourages consumers to search for product information online to "*better understand, use, operate, modify, and/or repair a product.*" (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004, p. 43), the 'Pre-purchase advice seeking' motive includes a different temporal component. As two respondents reveal, they seek for advice within a Facebook group before buying a product in order to make a more elaborate purchase:

"(...) after using some medicine I was kind of desperate as I lost lots of my hair. (...) and also started to join special groups addressing this topic on Facebook to exchange some knowledge with others." (Interview, Lisa; Appendix E: p. 30).

"I became a member of these groups because I wanted inspiration or advice on how to take care on my skin issues." (Interview, Simone; Appendix E: p. 51).

As both quotes reveal, the search for independent information combined with pre-purchase advice seeking tends to be problem-driven, indicating again that Facebook members seem to consider each other as both knowledgeable and trustworthy communication partners with whom they can discuss private but rather specific problems such as loss of hair or skin issues. Consequently, the original motive of post-purchase advice seeking on opinion platforms turns into a pre-purchase motive merged with the desire for independent information on Facebook. Moreover, the combi-motive of 'Independent information & 'Pre-purchase advice seeking' encourages brand-related interaction among unknown group members, who are outsiders to each other's social network and therefore represent 'No ties'.

#### **4.2.3.2 Contribution to brand-related content**

##### **Recommending through tagging**

While consumption of brand-related content is coined by consumer-consumer interaction among 'No ties' within Facebook groups or on L'Oréal Paris' brand page, contribution to brand-related content can take place by two means. One means is the function of tagging social ties in brand posts on Facebook in order to make a product recommendation, which is considered as "*a great Facebook-function as it is the easiest way to show your friends that company 'X' has launched a cool product.*" (Interview, Mara; Appendix E: p. 46). Moreover, another respondent admits, "*I have done this several*

times. To tell them that they should also look at this.” (Interview, Lisa; Appendix E: p. 37), whereas another jokes, “*That’s what I have my friends for*” (Interview, Vyvy; Appendix E: p. 77). Netnographic observations provide further evidence for this recommendation behaviour among strong social ties, showing that customers of L’Oréal Paris tend to tag like-minded friends in official brand posts. The name-tag can also be accompanied by additional comments such as “*it’s the smartest thing I’ve ever seen*” (Appendix H, Netnographic research: Post 15) and “[Name], *they appear in week 8*” (Appendix H, Netnographic research: Post 12) or a reminder of a special product offer (Appendix H, Netnographic research: Post 11).

### **Reciprocating through commenting**

In addition to tagging, the commenting function serves as a way to interact with ‘No ties’ within Facebook groups or on L’Oréal Paris’ brand pages and is driven by different motives. One consumer comments on product recommendations if “*in doubt about the product*” or if clarification is needed (Interview, Vyvy; Appendix E: p. 77) so that the *information* motive is the driving force. Other consumers drop comments underneath a product recommendation “*simply to give something back*” (Interview, Lisa; Appendix E: p. 38) or “*because I like to receive comments like that myself, so I tend to write to other people as well*” (Interview, Tatevik; Appendix E: p. 70). Thereby, they foster giving and taking, so that the *norm of reciprocity* motive encourages current and potential customers of L’Oréal Paris to contribute to each other’s brand-related content. The tendency to reciprocate through commenting can also be observed on Facebook, where other members of a Facebook group are commenting on a makeup review and agree with how good the product is (Appendix H, Netnographic research: Post 2). While this kind of reciprocating is a proactive way of pleasing other consumers, reciprocating can also have a reactive trait as included in the combi-motive of ‘Norm of reciprocity & Helping’.

### **Norm of reciprocity & Helping**

Driven by the combi-motive of ‘Norm of reciprocity & Helping’, consumers are reacting to questions that have been directly addressed to them as one respondent explains, “*If they make the effort to text me, I would like to help wherever I can.*” (Interview, Lisa; Appendix E: p. 38). In addition to this, another respondent explicitly chooses the word “*reciprocity*” in order to argue why she is willing to help other consumers who have chosen her as a source of help and advice (Appendix E: Interview, Katrin, p. 28). As the two respondents reveal, the wish to reciprocate is combined with the willingness to help other consumers, who have “*the same interest*” (Interview, Katrin; Appendix E: p. 28). Even though it is difficult to distinguish the intrinsic motives of *concern for other consumers* and *norm of reciprocity* by solely observing consumer interaction through netnographic research, we argue that the combi motive

of 'Norm of reciprocity & Helping' is further supported through our netnographic research findings. Whenever a consumer asks for advice within a Facebook group or on L'Oréal Paris' brand page, there are other group members who are willing to help and reply to the post (Appendix H, Netnographic research: Post 3; Post 9; Post 10). The disclosure of their personal experiences with the product can hence be interpreted as a means of helping, but also as a means of reciprocating. As a means of reciprocating, experienced consumers give their experiences back to another consumer (giving), who has disclosed the need for product-related advice (taking).

#### **4.2.3.3 Creation of brand-related content**

##### **Pre-purchase advice seeking**

In addition to pre-purchase advice seeking within the consumption type, the same motive also drives the creation of own UGC in groups and on L'Oréal Paris' Facebook page. Regarding the exchange of knowledge within Facebook groups, one interview respondent explains:

“[I] also started to join special groups addressing this topic [hair loss] on Facebook to exchange some knowledge with others.” (Interview, Lisa; Appendix E: p. 30).

In this regard, the exchange of knowledge and request for advice is problem-driven, which is further supported through netnographic research findings. Exemplary for this, one customer directly addresses L'Oréal Paris on their Facebook page and asks for advice on a product that suited her needs but was taken out of the market (Appendix H, Netnographic research: Post 9). The problem to find a suitable substitute product hence triggered the creation of a Facebook post. However, netnographic research further reveals that pre-purchase advice seeking can also occur if consumers want to get advice on a product launch to judge whether the new product is worth buying. Exemplary for this, one consumer creates own UGC and posts a picture of a new eyebrows product next to a picture of her face in a Facebook group to get advice by the community whether this product is suitable for her eyebrows (Appendix H, Netnographic research: Post 3). Similar to this, another consumer seeks out for pre-purchase advice in from of confirmation that a highly praised L'Oréal Paris mascara is living up to expectations (Appendix H, Netnographic research: Post 4).

##### **Expressing positive emotions**

The exchange of positive eWOM on Facebook is driven by strongly positive feelings attached to the product experience. The creation of *extreme reviews* is thereby aligned with the notion of Gensler et al. (2013) that very positive brand experiences are more frequently shared with others and represents a recurring theme that has already been detected in connection with review creation on retailer websites and opinion platforms. In this regard, positive eWOM about L'Oréal Paris is spread when its



customers feel a high level of satisfaction, as expressed by statements like *“REALLY satisfied”* (Interview, Katrin; Appendix E: p. 23) or *“(…) super satisfied. Like a lot.”* (Interview, Lisa; Appendix E: p. 34). In a more nuanced way, another respondent reflects about the distribution of positive brand experiences, saying, *“So why do I write about L’Oréal... it’s because I’m happy with the things that I write about.”* (Interview, Simone; Appendix E: p. 56). While all quotes reveal satisfaction with the product, the latter further points out the desire to share the joy of consuming a satisfactory product with others. In this regard, customers of L’Oréal Paris are driven by the *expressing positive emotions* motive.

### **Concern for other consumers & Expressing positive emotions**

Besides the motive’s own driving force, it also appears in combination with the *concern for other consumers* motive, which can manifest itself in two different ways. On the one hand, a respondent explains, *“I wanted to share the positive L’Oréal experience and satisfaction with others.”* (Interview, Katrin; Appendix E: p. 20). In this regard, the concern for other consumers is solely altruistic, implying that a product solution to a problem should be shared with others. However, the *concern for other consumers* motive can also have a charismatic facet:

“And I want to distinguish myself from those people who solely go online to share their negative feelings and describe in detail what was bad just to get rid of their anger.” (Interview, Lisa; Appendix E: p. 36).

“There are so many who write every time there is something bad, and then post it. That I don’t want to do, because people will be immune to it in the end and think it’s boring.” (Interview, Willow; Appendix E: p. 86).

Aligned with this facet is the intentional attitude to counterbalance *“boring”* product complaints by spreading positivity on social media for the joy of others. Thus, the combination of the ‘Concern for other consumers & Expressing positive emotions’ motive can encourage consumers in two different ways to share their product satisfaction with other Facebook users.

### **Concern for other consumers & Helping**

In accordance with the findings for retailer websites and opinion platforms, the creation of brand-related Facebook content is also driven by the combi-motive of ‘Concern for other consumers & Helping’. One respondent admits, *“I somehow feel like I helped others with a decision-making.”* (Interview, Lisa; Appendix E: p. 35) and another assumes, *“I think... it’s because I read reviews as well and I feel like it’s a huge help for me. So I hope that I can help others as well”* (Interview, Vyvy; Appendix E: p. 78). While the concern for others’ decision-making and their access to valuable product information is summarised in the *concern for other consumers* motive, the intentional use of the word *“help”* further reveals the combination with the COBRA motive of Helping. New to this combination of

motives is the occurrence of pro-active helping that drives the creation of brand-related content as opposed to the rather reactive helping motive that has been presented in the previous section on Facebook contributions.

### **Concern for other consumers & Helping the company**

Another new finding to the creation of brand-related content on social media is the combined motive of 'Concern for other consumers & Helping the company' that drives customers of L'Oréal Paris to present their product experience in a way that it is beneficial to other consumer and the company at the same time:

"Well, people can't know what to go for if there isn't someone who responds to things. Companies behind these products or selling something, can't know anything if they don't get feedback for things." (Interview, Willow; Appendix E: p. 83).

"I've just experienced that in these groups, L'Oréal doesn't get that much attention. So somehow I just wanted to show people that it's a fine product and does work (...)." (Interview, Tatevik; Appendix E: p. 67).

Characteristic for this combination of motives is the causality between the concern for other consumers and the willingness to help the company. As the latter quote reveals, some consumers act as ambassadors for the brand. This means that they believe in the products they use and also want other consumers to be able to experience the same. Resulting from this concern for other consumers, these 'brand ambassadors' draw their audience's attention to the brand and thereby push it. As this behaviour is beneficial to the company, the *concern for other consumers* motive also brings along the motivation to help the company. However, statements such as, "*Honestly, I think I'm a too small fish for that*" (Interview, Vyvy; Appendix E: p. 76) and "*my little review in a Facebook group doesn't really bother the brand*" (Interview, Tatevik; Appendix E: p. 68) further imply that consumers consider their personal impact on the company as somewhat limited. In this regard, we consider the choice of expressions such as "*too small fish*" and "*my little review*" as a form of self-induced degradation suggesting that these consumers certainly wish for the opposite, namely to have more influence.

### **Concern for other consumers & Reassurance**

In order to improve the value of their Facebook review for other consumers, customers of L'Oréal Paris are further driven by self-assurance in a new form of reassurance. In this regard, two respondents point out the causality between the *concern for other consumers* motive and the new form of 'Reassurance':

“My intention was just to inspire people that was my first thought. Then I received a lot of likes and a lot of comments on the look (...). I don’t know, I just think it made me feel good.” (Interview, Tatevik; Appendix E: p. 67).

“Then again, I make sure to write that I have this type of skin and etc. So people know what they get themselves into. Then it’s very nice, when they write that they have the same skin type and just bought the same product.” (Interview, Simone; Appendix E: p. 60).

While the overriding aim is to create a beneficial review for other potential customers so that the concern for other consumers comes first, positive reactions to a review by the audience also have a motivating effect. We argue that these positive reactions serve as a means of reassurance for reviewers indicating that the review was helpful. Originally, the COBRA sub-motive of self-assurance refers to consumers who create brand-related content to gain self-assurance through the recognition of others. However, we argue that the term ‘reassurance’ through positive feedback is more suitable in the case of L’Oréal Paris as the feedback has not been intentionally pursued but rather arises as a positive side-effect reassuring reviewers to continue.

### **Concern for other consumers & Encouragement**

Besides the novel form of the reassurance motive, the motive of *empowerment* also occurs in different combinations and facets. If the concern for other consumers gets really intense and the satisfaction with the reviewed product is high, customers of L’Oréal Paris tend to encourage other consumers to buy the same product:

“So I want to motivate or encourage other people, who are in doubt, to give a good product a try so that they will become equally satisfied.” (Interview, Lisa; Appendix E: p. 35).

“So somehow I just wanted to (...) inspire people to use it and not just buy really expensive brands.” (Interview, Tatevik; Appendix E: p. 67).

As the two quotes reveal, the satisfaction with a product causes the need to persuade others to try it as well. In this regard, we reveal the underlying motivation as a new form of empowerment that has a less powerful but rather encouraging trait. While empowerment originally drives those social media users who want to exert power over other users or companies, we consider the encouragement motive as a weaker form of empowerment. As such, encouragement is less focused on the sole exertion of power but rather tied to the concern for other consumers who should benefit from the reviewer’s positive product experience. Furthermore, the combined ‘Concern for other consumers & Encouragement’ motive can be linked to the pursuit of *self-enhancement*:

“(...) there are some young people who don’t have as much experience with anything. If, for example, they just began to use makeup, then surely they’ll think it’s smart how these products work, right?” (Interview, Jeanette; Appendix E: p. 10).

The targeting of younger and particularly less experienced consumers is therefore not solely driven by the concern for other consumers and the willingness to encourage them to use the product. It is additionally driven by the enhancing feeling of being seen as “*a consumption expert*” (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004, p. 43), who is more experienced and can thus encourage less experienced consumers to buy “*smart*” products.

Overall, the creation of reviews on Facebook is dominated by the motive of *concern for other consumers* that can occur in combination with the need of *expressing positive emotions* and the willingness of *helping*. Moreover, the concern for other consumers can cause the desire for *helping the company* and ‘reassurance’, as well as foster ‘encouragement’ and *self-enhancement*.

#### **4.2.4 The L’Oréal Paris brand community**

In addition to the shared motives that encourage customers of L’Oréal Paris to consume, contribute to and create brand-related content on different platforms, our research findings further reveal community elements corresponding to the three markers of a brand community defined by Muñoz and O’Guinn (2001). This is further aligned with the purpose of corporate branding, which should give the customers a sense of community (Hatch & Schultz, 2001).

#### **Consciousness of kind**

In accordance with the first marker, customers interacting with L’Oréal Paris and each other online are united by a certain feeling of consciousness of kind. This feeling is particularly expressed through the collective “*sense of belonging*” (Interview, Katrin; Appendix E: p. 28) that occurs even though “*you don’t know these other people but at least you share the same product interest, which interconnects you somehow.*” (Interview, Mara; Appendix E: p. 48). As indicated by the two quotes, the same interest in the brand and beauty in general creates a bond between brand enthusiasts, motivating them to interact with L’Oréal Paris as well as with each other. Netnographic research on L’Oréal Paris’ official brand page on Facebook and within various Facebook beauty groups reveals a high level of brand-consumer interaction, but an even higher level of consumer-consumer interactivity, which is a distinct feature of consciousness of kind. The high level of consumer-consumer interactivity is caused by a multitude of comments as well as answers to comments triggered by a single post (Appendix H). Exemplary for this, both consumer requests for personal experiences with a new L’Oréal Paris product, accompanied by a picture of the product in use (Appendix H, Netnographic research: Post 3; Post 4) and official brand posts (Appendix H, Netnographic research: Post 10) generate user comments and encourage knowledge exchange and discussions. Complementary to netnographic

research findings, another interview respondent states, *“What we have in common is that we’re open to new products and trends (...)”* (Interview, Vyvy; Appendix E: p. 78). Moreover, the *“common interest”* (Interview, Tatevik; Appendix E: p. 70) in new products is underpinned by a certain degree of oppositional brand loyalty, provoking that customers of L’Oréal Paris are *“(...) not too thrilled with other brands. For example Rimmel London or whatever it’s called.”* (Interview, Jeanette; Appendix E: p. 7).

### **Rituals: Narrative style & Norm of reciprocity**

Due to the fact that the L’Oréal Paris brand community exists in a virtual environment solely based on online communication, community members have established narrative rituals. Being part of the community *“(...) gives [them] the opportunity to exchange [their] thoughts and knowledge with a selective circle of consumers”* (Interview, Mara; Appendix E: p. 48), who frequently engage in storytelling in form of review creation. The aspect of communicating with a *“selective circle of consumers”* (ibid.) particularly applies to Facebook groups, which foster a more intimate feeling among like-minded members:

“So I write my review in these groups because I know that the audience is interested and actively searching for information on the application or usage of a particular product. So an exclusive audience so to say.” (Interview, Lisa; Appendix E: p. 36).

“Posting on Facebook groups, it feels like you have this little community where we help each other and I think I would lose that feeling if I just posted it on L’Oréal’s Facebook page. I wouldn’t know the reader in the same way.” (Interview, Tatevik; Appendix E: p. 70).

Besides the bonding element of *“always searching for the best of the best”* (Interview, Vyvy; Appendix E: p. 77), online communication between L’Oréal Paris community members is characterized by a personal and emotional narrative style. This narrative style is defined by greetings such as *“Hej skønne piger”* [engl.: “Hey lovely girls”] (Appendix H, Netnographic research: Post 4) and the use of multiple heart and kiss emoticons (Appendix H, Netnographic research: Post 2; Post 11; Post 12) in posts and comments. We consider this particular choice of words and emoticons as rather untypical for messages addressed to a large unknown audience and therefore assume a high level of tie-strength between unknown Facebook users, built upon the ongoing exchange of personal product experiences. Moreover, netnographic research reveals that reciprocating through commenting has been established as a common ritual within the brand community. This ritual of reciprocity can occur in many different ways and locations on social media. While one interview respondent points to the unspoken ritual of reciprocity by saying, *“(...) it’s very easy if someone asks about a foundation, because I can immediately answer it.”* (Interview, Simone; Appendix E: p. 56), netnographic observations give further evidence. Community members use the commenting function to ask for advice and to share their experiences

(Appendix H, Netnographic research: Post 4), to reply to advice-seeking posts (Appendix H, Netnographic research: Post 3), to answer brand-related questions originally addressed to L'Oréal Paris if the company misses to reply (Appendix H, Netnographic research: Post 9) and to share their experiences with each other underneath a brand post (Appendix H, Netnographic research: Post 10).

### **Sense of moral responsibility**

Moreover, L'Oréal Paris' brand community members feel a sense of moral responsibility for each other as revealed by both netnographic research and interview findings. One interview respondent points to the moral values established within the community that should foster open communication without judging each other:

“Many people told me that my shampoo reviews were helpful. And also thanked me that I was so kind to share my experience and sometimes they even defended me against critics.” (Interview, Lisa; Appendix E: p. 35).

While positive feedback can serve as a form of reassurance that encourages members to create further reviews (see 4.2.7), defence of members against critics can be understood as a part of an established moral system. Furthermore, this moral system serves the purpose of assisting other members in the use of the brand or specific products, who have similar product needs or even share the same problems:

“I think if someone is interested in the same things as you are, then you feel that you have some kind of connection and then you also like to share your knowledge because you are interested in the same things (...).” (Interview, Katrin; Appendix E: p. 28).

“As we all share the passion for the same product or brand and the characteristics that this product addresses. (...) So these people are sometimes not only like-minded, but even share the same problems or feelings.” (Interview, Lisa; Appendix E: p. 38).

Thus, assistance in the use of the brand can come in form of problem solutions or pre-purchase advice. While one interview respondent admits, “*I respect them and consult them when I need a product-related information.*” (Interview, Lisa; Appendix E: p. 37), pre-purchase advice seeking can also be observed within different Facebook groups. Exemplary for this, one Facebook user asks the community for advice on a new eyebrow product, attached with pictures of the corresponding product and her own eyebrows (Appendix H, Netnographic research: Post 3). In contrast to this, another user directly addresses L'Oréal Paris with a request on a substitute product (Appendix H, Netnographic research: Post 9). However, in both cases, replies to these two requests have been solely given by other members of the community, who feel responsible for sharing their personal experiences with each other.

### 4.3 Company perspective: Customer-based Brand Equity

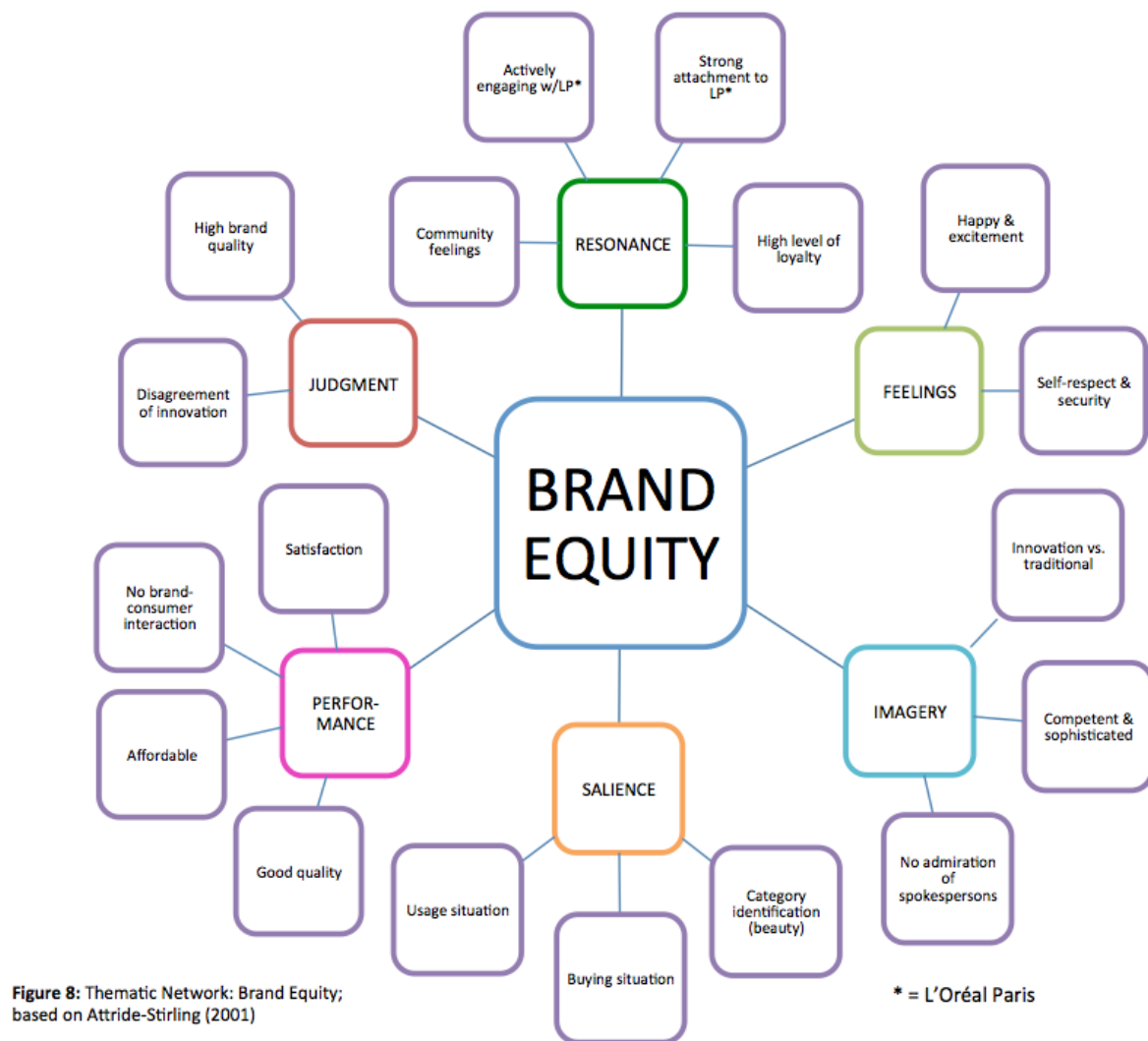


Figure 8: Thematic Network: Brand Equity; based on Attride-Stirling (2001)

Finally, we will present the second global theme from our in-depth interviews and netnographic research. We clustered our findings into six organizing themes that correspond to the six building blocks in the CBBE model: salience, performance, imagery, judgment, feelings and resonance (Figure 8). Exemplary to this, 'satisfaction', 'no brand-consumer interaction', 'affordable' and 'good quality' act as basic themes grouped together to form the organizing theme, 'performance'. Each theme will in the following part be analysed accordingly with the CBBE model.

#### **Brand Salience**

In the first step of the CBBE model, our findings show that L'Oréal Paris are recalled in beauty shopping and buying situations, where the consumer either wants a new product or the current product is empty (Appendix E: Interview, Mara, p. 40; Julia, p. 14). In buying situations, one respondent especially recognises the products due to the similarity between the product's packaging

and the corresponding ad as it usually catches her attention and stays in her mind (Appendix E: Interview, Julia, p. 14). For other respondents, recalling the brand often occurs in specific usage situations such as in the shower, when using products of L'Oréal Paris (Appendix E: Interview, Katrin, p. 20; Simone, p. 50; Lisa, p. 31). However, some respondents did not immediately thought of L'Oréal Paris in usage situations before describing the particular step(s) in their beauty routine that include the use of the brand (Appendix E: Interview, Simone, p. 50; Vyvy, p. 73). We argue that this can be caused by the infrequent repetition of the beauty step, as one respondent discloses, *"I only use the shampoo once a week, so that's why I haven't thought of it"* (Interview, Simone; Appendix E: p. 50). The findings show that the respondents have no difficulties with recalling or recognising the brand in different situations, and we therefore evaluate that the brand awareness of L'Oréal Paris is both deep and broad. Furthermore the brand awareness in the different situations indicate that these consumers are perfectly aware of the category, which L'Oréal Paris competes in.

### **Brand Performance**

Our findings regarding this building block reveal how consumers think L'Oréal Paris perform as a brand and thereby meet their customers' functional needs. Starting with satisfaction, we found a consensus among the respondents that L'Oréal Paris satisfy their functional needs as their products in general work very well (Appendix E: Interview, Katrin, p. 21; Mara, p. 41; Simone, p. 52; Willow, p. 80; Jeanette, p. 8; Lisa, p. 33) and the brand covers *"pretty much everything in my routine"* (Interview, Vyvy; Appendix E: p. 73). Even though one respondent had a very unpleasant experience with one of their products, she is still satisfied with the brand in general as she feels *"like they have a good quality and that they really achieve a visible result"* (Interview, Lisa; Appendix E: p. 32). Another respondent is really satisfied with a makeup product as she says, *"Since I discovered it, I've only used this one and I don't think I will use any others in the future"* (Interview, Simone; Appendix E: p. 52). In this case, the product performance affects behavioural loyalty in the top of the pyramid as it triggers repeat purchases. This aspect of brand performance triggering behavioural loyalty is shown in multiple statements from the respondents:

*"The products work as promised (...) so there is no reason for me to switch"* (Interview, Mara; Appendix E: p. 41).

*"I bought it for the first time when I was really young (...) Till the day today, I still use it sometimes because it's really good"* (Interview, Vyvy; Appendix E: p. 76).

*"(...) right now I'm looking for shampoos without silicone and sodium laureth sulfate and I found one from L'Oréal and have been using it ever since"* (Interview, Simone; Appendix E: p. 50).



In another example, the brand performance is so satisfying that it triggers brand engagement as the customer happily shares her recommendation on Facebook, “(...) *it's really good! I've had it a few years ago, but couldn't remember that it was so good*” (Appendix H, Netnographic research: Post 2, Jannie).

In addition, the respondents appreciate the durability of L'Oréal Paris' products (Appendix E: Interview, Willow, p. 83; Jeanette, p. 7). Furthermore, the respondents characterise the product design of L'Oréal Paris as smart, gorgeous, appealing and something that is important for them (Appendix E: Interview, Jeanette, p. 8; Mara, p. 43). Also the price point for the products is generally perceived as reasonable and affordable (Appendix E: Interview, Jeanette, p. 6; Mara, p. 41; Vyvy, p. 73; Lisa, p. 33), while the brand itself still performs “*as good as these more expensive brands*” (Interview, Mara; Appendix E: p. 41) or even better than expensive products recommended by hairdressers (Appendix E: Interview, Katrin, p. 21). However, the respondents feel that L'Oréal Paris are missing one very important performance aspect, namely the service interaction. In other words, they would like to receive some feedback when they post on L'Oréal Paris' official Facebook page (Appendix E: Interview, Mara, p. 41; Tatevik, p. 68; Jeanette, p. 10; Katrin, p. 22; Lisa, p.34). One respondent specifically expresses, “*You could miss some response from them on their Facebook page (...) I have certainly asked about some stuff in there and I haven't really got an answer*” (Interview, Jeanette; Appendix E: p. 11).

### **Brand Imagery**

Regarding brand imagery, our findings show one frequently mentioned aspect by the respondents, namely the idealized users. In the case of L'Oréal Paris, idealized users are represented by the famous spokespersons of the brand. However, our findings reveal that the intended associations with spokespersons are either not very strong in the minds of the respondents or that idealized users, embodied by spokespersons, do not cause admiration or identification by their actual users. While one respondent admits, “*I really like Blake Lively, but I don't really think of L'Oréal when seeing her.*” (Interview, Simone; Appendix E: p. 53) and thereby shows a weak association of the spokesperson with the brand, other respondents point to the lack of admiration of the spokespersons:

“Why should I look up to them? They are not doing anything special or something worth admiring them, at least not to me. Especially not in the advert itself.” (Interview, Julia; Appendix E: p. 15).

“I don't look up to celebrities, actually. I think they are very pretty but this is not my absolute aim in life.” (Interview, Katrin; Appendix E: p. 21).

In addition to this, one respondents considers the use of celebrities in commercials as less trustworthy and further lacks identification with L'Oréal Paris' spokespersons:

"I personally consider adverts as more trustworthy when no celebrities are in focus. Simply because... you can't identify with these celebrities who have a completely different lifestyle than you have." (Interview, Lisa; Appendix E: p. 32).

Another aspect of brand image is the brand personality and its values, where L'Oréal Paris are described as a competent and sophisticated brand. According to the respondents, L'Oréal Paris are characterized by competence, *"Because they have everything you associate with makeup, but they're also developing all the time."* (Interview, Vyvy; Appendix E: p. 76), so that they have become a *"broad"* brand (Interview, Willow; Appendix E: p. 82). Moreover, L'Oréal Paris are considered as sophisticated, based on associations like *"Shiny, flowing hair, high-quality"* (Interview, Julia; Appendix E: p. 15) and *"a 'grown-up' brand, but also luxury"* (Interview, Tatevik; Appendix E: p. 64).

Finally, when it comes to the brand's innovativeness, the associations of the respondents differ according to their personal definition of innovativeness and the chosen benchmark. While some respondents consider L'Oréal Paris as an innovative and *"constantly developing"* brand (Interview, Mara; Appendix E: p. 41) based on frequent product launches and the use of new product formulas or communication channels (Appendix E: Interview, Julia, p. 16; Katrin, p. 22), other respondents consider them as traditional. One respondent explains her association with traditional by saying, *"I feel like other beauty brands are usually a step ahead."* (Interview, Lisa; Appendix E: p. 33), whereas another respondent demands *"more trendy products from them."* (Interview, Simone; Appendix E: p. 53). However, she further admits that, *"they [L'Oréal Paris] are pretty innovative if you haven't used Korean cosmetics before"*, implying that the individually considered benchmark by each consumer makes the difference between the brand imagery associations of 'innovative' or 'traditional'.

### **Brand judgments**

One type of brand judgments is brand quality and here the respondents agree upon that the brand *"seems to have a high quality"* (Interview, Julia; Appendix E: p. 14). While one respondent explains that, *"The entire product, be it the packaging or the commercials, gives you a high-quality image."* (Interview, Mara; Appendix E: p. 42), another interviewee expresses her impression that, *"(...) even though it is sold through supermarkets and is a drugstore brand then it's really quality compared to other brands or products."* (Interview, Vyvy; Appendix E: p. 73). Another type of customers' brand judgements is the evaluation whether L'Oréal Paris are consumer-oriented and their promises are credible. Innovativeness is a part of L'Oréal Paris' promise to their customers, which the brand either lives up to or not. However, the innovativeness aspect is also incorporated in the brand's history, heritage and experiences and has caused disagreement among the respondents. Thus, we argue that those who consider L'Oréal Paris as innovative also perceive the brand as credible, whereas those who consider

them as traditional might perceive a lack of credibility. When it comes to consumer orientation, the respondents agree that L'Oréal Paris understand their needs as a consumer (Appendix E: Interview, Katrin, p. 22; Lisa, p. 33). However, one respondents critically adds that, "*L'Oréal understands my needs but they are not the only ones.*" (Interview, Lisa; Appendix E: p. 33). Even though the respondents do not directly refer to the aspect of brand consideration, we argue that it can be assumed that they deem L'Oréal Paris relevant and take the brand into consideration. This assumption is based on their favourable brand associations of competence and sophistication and further supported by statements of superiority of L'Oréal Paris over other brands, such as "*There's very little ammonia in it. I don't think it smells as much as when I use Schwarzkopf or what it is called.*" (Interview, Jeanette; Appendix E: p. 6) and "*The best mascara! Love it! Really good!*" (Appendix H, Netnographic research: Post 6).

### **Brand feelings**

In the case of L'Oréal Paris, our findings show four types of brand feelings: the immediate feelings of fun and excitement and the enduring feelings of security and self-respect. Regarding the first two kinds of feelings, one respondent explains, "*you get so happy after buying a few products*" (Interview, Jeanette; Appendix E: p. 8) and therefore reveals a brand feeling of fun, whereas another interviewee feels excitement for L'Oréal Paris as the use of the brand makes her "*feel kind of pretty*" (Interview, Katrin; Appendix E: p. 21). However, the most frequently mentioned and enduring feeling among respondents is self-respect, which can arise in different ways. While one respondent directly mentions that, "*The products somehow increase my self-esteem when I use them*" (Interview, Mara; Appendix E: p. 41), others point to the feelings of "*confidence*" (Interview, Jeanette; Appendix E: p. 7), "*professional*" (Interview, Julia; Appendix E: p. 15), "*kind of affordable luxury*" (Interview, Tatevik; Appendix E: p. 63) and the "*feeling of self-indulgence*" (Interview, Willow; Appendix E: p. 81). These emotional expressions are all united by the impact on consumers' selves. This means that professional or luxurious products that trigger the feeling of self-indulgence make the respondents feel better about themselves and thus cause the brand feeling of self-respect. In addition to this, two respondents reveal the enduring feelings of security, which are linked to their experiences with the products and their relationship with the brand. Based on the positive experience with L'Oréal Paris, one of them admits:

"I'm afraid that other products won't work. (...). With the products that I use, they are something that I can count on to work on me." (Interview, Simone; Appendix E: p. 52).

The quote reveals that the respondent trusts in the performance of the products, which then triggers the subsequent feeling of security in case of a satisfactory product performance. Another respondent says, "*I know L'Oréal*" (Interview, Vyvy; Appendix E: p. 72), which can be interpreted as feeling closely connected to the brand as well as strongly attached, similar to having a trust-based relationship with a

friend. Thereby, the respondent reveals a feeling of security linked to L'Oréal Paris that further leads to brand resonance.

### **Brand Resonance**

Brand resonance is the highest and most valuable building block in the pyramid. In this block, we reveal our respondents' relationship with L'Oréal Paris and then elaborate on how brand resonance has been reached. Our findings show a large degree of behavioural loyalty among the respondents, where they regularly use products from L'Oréal Paris:

"And for washing my hair I use their [L'Oréal Paris] products all the time" (Interview, Julia; Appendix E: p. 13).

"(...) I use their shampoos and treatments, sometimes even overnight" (Interview, Lisa; Appendix E: p. 31).

"I use shampoo from L'Oréal everyday. I think it's called Elvital. I change it quite often, but it's always within the product line, Elvital" (Interview, Vyvy; Appendix E: p. 73).

"I have used it [highlighter from L'Oréal Paris] for a month, but before I had the same one. It's just one that I always have" (Interview, Willow; Appendix E: p. 80).

One respondent even declared that she wants a mascara *"every time they [L'Oréal Paris] launch a new"* and she wants *"to have them as soon as possible"* since she *"must try it"* (Interview, Jeanette; Appendix E: p. 50; 11). Another respondent underlined that she has a foundation from L'Oréal Paris, which is a permanent item in her makeup collection (Appendix E: Interview, Simone, p. 49). During the interview, she was surprised of her own loyalty by expressing *"I didn't know that I use so many products from them"* (Interview, Simone; Appendix E: p. 52). However as expressed in the theory part, behavioural loyalty is not enough by itself for brand resonance to occur, which leads us to customers' attitudinal attachment. This occurs when a customer feels strongly attached to L'Oréal Paris, for example by expressing *"I appreciate the brand"* (Interview, Mara; Appendix E: p. 41). The expression of her attachment to L'Oréal Paris indicates that she holds a favorable attitude and has a personal relationship with the brand. Other respondents also hold a strong attachment to the brand, as one states *"Well, I guess I love L'Oréal"* (Interview, Vyvy; Appendix E: p. 75), when discussing her interest for the brand. On Facebook, another customer shows her attachment to a mascara from L'Oréal Paris by writing, *"One of my holy grails (...) the gold makes long and delicious dense lashes"* (Appendix H, Netnographic research: Post 4, Maya). Meanwhile another respondent expresses that she *"can't live without these two things [hairspray and highlighter from L'Oréal Paris]"* (Interview, Willow; Appendix E: p. 82), when being asked about her favorite products. A third respondent also shares some thoughts on her favorite products during the interview, saying *"One of my favorite mascaras is called 4D architect from L'Oréal (...) Since I discovered it [True Match foundation from L'Oréal Paris], I've only used*

*this one and I don't think I will use any others in the future*" as she has *"been totally blown away"* with the foundation (Interview, Simone; Appendix E: p. 49; 52). The same loyal customer of L'Oréal Paris describes herself as a comfort-addict, who sticks with the products that work for her (Interview, Simone; Appendix E: p. 52). In other words, she feels strongly attached to products that work for her and would therefore repeat the purchases of them. Thus, a satisfying brand performance caused by individual products ultimately affects her behavioural loyalty. Even though the two last respondents show attachment to products and not brands, they still describe the products as their favorite possessions and thereby indirectly express their attitudinal attachment to the brand.

In addition to behavioural loyalty and attitudinal attachment, we have already revealed a sense of community among the respondents, who share the three markers of a brand community (see section 2.2.5). Thereby, they are united by their consciousness of kind expressed through a sense of belonging and enhanced through a high level of brand-related consumer-consumer interactivity. Moreover, they have established a distinct narrative style and the norm of reciprocity as community rituals, accompanied by a sense of moral responsibility. This moral system should help other members in the use of the brand and foster open communication within the community.

Regarding active engagement, our findings show that the respondents like to talk about L'Oréal Paris with others, but also learn more about the brand in different ways (Appendix E: Interview, Jeanette, p. 9; Julia, p. 16; Katrin p. 22; Lisa, p. 34; Mara, p. 42; Vyvy, p. 75; Willow, p. 83). For example, one customer expresses that she likes *"to talk about the brand"* because she loves them (Interview, Vyvy; Appendix E: p. 75), while another customer is more eager with the learning aspect, *"The more you learn - the better. Then you know more about the products"* (Interview, Jeanette; Appendix E: p. 9). The latter also feels like she's a brand ambassador for L'Oréal Paris as she tells her friends when she is happy with some products and encourages them to try the products as well (Appendix E: Interview, Jeanette, p. 9). We argue that their interest in learning more about L'Oréal Paris can also be aligned with their general high level of personal innovativeness, for example one respondent discloses that she tries new things as *"there is always something that has been improved"* (Interview, Vyvy; Appendix E: p. 76).

In addition, our findings show that the respondents actively engage with L'Oréal Paris on social media (Appendix E: Interview, Jeanette, p. 12; Lisa, p. 34; Mara, p. 45), where they for instance like to receive updates about product launches (Appendix E: Interview, Jeanette, p. 12; Lisa, p. 34). Additionally, our netnographic research (Appendix H, Netnographic research, post 10-15) also shows how customers of L'Oréal Paris actively engage with the brand by commenting on their Facebook posts. Moreover, previous research findings have already revealed the respondents' motivation to share positive eWOM

about L'Oréal Paris, indicating that they are willing to invest both time and effort into the brand. When sharing eWOM, the respondents tend to act as recommenders, who share their brand experiences with others (Appendix E: Interview, Jeanette, p. 9; Julia, p. 16; Katrin, p. 23; Lisa, p. 34; Mara, p. 43; Simone, p. 55; Tatevik, p. 66; Vyvy, p. 75; Willow, p. 83). Based on their investment of time and effort and their roles as recommenders, the conclusion could be that they feel that there is "*a completely harmonious relationship between [them] and the brand*" (Keller, 2008, p. 57). Even though the respondents have built a relationship with L'Oréal Paris coined by behavioural loyalty, attitudinal attachment, a sense of community and active engagement, we argue that the relationship could be even more intense and harmonious. So far, the level of consumer-consumer interactivity is high whereas brand-consumer interaction is only one-directional, driven by the respondents and perceived as not being maintained by L'Oréal Paris.

#### **4.4 Focus group insights**

In our focus group interview, we asked the participants to do a free association task that will give us insights into what they associate with L'Oréal Paris (Table 5), whereby the numerical order (1., 2. etc.) gives us a rough indication of the strength of each association in the memory of participants (Keller, 2008). Based on their nature, we have then divided the different associations into brand salience and brand meaning. Furthermore, our findings include insights on the participants' recommendation behaviour and their social media usage in general, which will be presented later on in this chapter.

	Hawra	Johanna	Liangye	Katarina	Jasmine	Liliana
1.	Beauty	Colorful	Shampoo	Min. quality for products	France	Hair oil
2.	Happy	French	Conditioner	French	Beyonce hair straight/curly	Shampoo / conditioning
3.	Different	Questionable CSR	Because you're worth it	Celebrity endorsements	Lobbying in EU	Because you're worth it
4.	Pamper yourself	Large brands	TV commercials	Well-known brand	Because I'm worth it	Face cream at the supermarket
5.	Care about yourself	Deo	"White girls"	Many sub-brands	Airport	Makeup <input type="text"/>
6.	Availability	Mascara	Hair color/dye	Good reputation	Makeup	Being pretty
7.		Airport	Hair spray	Affordable pricing	Own many beauty brands like Body Shop	
8.			Easy to get	Present on all markets	L'Oréal for younger, other brands for older	
9.			Empower			

**Table 5:** Free association task; own table

### **Brand Salience**

Our focus group findings show that the participants often associate L'Oréal Paris with the marketing mix element 'place', which we allocate to the range of purchase and consumption situations referring to brand awareness. With regard to the element of place, the participants think of L'Oréal as an international brand, while one participant specifically describes them as "*present on all markets like international*" (Focus group, Katarina; Appendix F: p. 95). Two participants further associate the brand with airports in their memory, which we consider as another way of associating L'Oréal Paris with 'international', as airports usually stand for an international environment accessible to people from all over the world. When it comes to accessibility, there is an agreement among participants in the easy accessibility of L'Oréal Paris' products (Table 5). Exemplary for this, one participant expresses that "*You can buy them everywhere. (...) in Matas, Netto, Lidl ... everywhere. Easy to get!*" (Focus group, Liangye; Appendix F: p. 95). However, the easy accessibility of L'Oréal Paris' products combined with their advertisement also confuses some participants as one describes:

"I thought that their advertisement is like more upper end market and then I see it at the supermarket for a very affordable price" (Focus group, Liliana; Appendix F: p. 96).

Table 5 also shows that every participant can identify a category that L'Oréal Paris compete in. Based on their strong associations of the brand with 'Beauty', 'Shampoo', 'Makeup', 'Mascara', 'Hair oil' and 'Conditioner', we can see that the participants associate L'Oréal Paris with different product segments, which are mainly allocated to the hair care and makeup category. Therefore, they identify two out of six categories the brand competes in.

### **Brand Imagery**

When it comes to the brand image of L'Oréal Paris, participants often associate the French origin with the brand (Table 5). One participant discusses that even though they have a good reputation and the products are often affordable, she questions the quality (Appendix F: Focus group, Katarina, p. 94) of the products. Meanwhile other participants question their CSR, as they do not believe that L'Oréal Paris care about the environment, but only about turnover and sales (Appendix F: Focus group, Jasmine, p. 94; Johanna, p. 95).

When discussing L'Oréal Paris' slogan 'Because You're Worth It', the participants thought of it as something that empowers women (Appendix F: Focus group, Liangye, p. 97; Johanna, p. 98; Jasmine, p. 98). However, they consider empowering women as something that belongs to the past, since they believe that women no longer need to be told that they are worth it, because they are "*as equal as anyone else*" (Focus group, Johanna; Appendix F: p. 98). Another participant believes the brand "*might seem so much in the past that it's a bit cheap*" (Focus group, Katarina; Appendix F: p. 99) and does not consider the brand as nice, simply because someone famous represents or uses it. However, as indicated in Table 5, some respondents closely associate L'Oréal Paris with their TV commercials, celebrity endorsements and Beyoncé. Despite the strength of these associations, the use of famous spokespersons or celebrities is perceived critically or even negatively by the participants (Appendix F: Focus group, Katarina, p. 99; Johanna, p. 99; Jasmine, p. 99), as none of them can relate to these user profiles, saying that, "*it's not representable of the women out there*" (Focus group, Johanna; Appendix F: p. 100). Another participant agrees and requests "*more regular women in the commercials*" as it "*would be more appealing*" (Focus group, Hawra; Appendix F: p. 100). Contrary, one of the participants does not think that the change should be so large as she questions how the identity of L'Oréal Paris would be, if they, out of a sudden, would become neutral in their appearance (Appendix F: Focus group, Liliana, p. 99). On the other hand, if L'Oréal Paris would adopt a reversing concept with "*less is more*", it would be perceived as innovative of the brand by one respondent (Focus group, Johanna; Appendix F: p. 97). The same participant also feels like L'Oréal Paris do not understand the needs of Scandinavian consumers, who are more "*down to basic*" and less interested in "*glitter and glam and a lot of fancy formulas*" (Focus group, Johanna; Appendix F: p. 97). Another participant agrees that in Scandinavian "*pink and glitz and glamour*" are not appropriate association as Scandinavia is "*A little more about the*



*trend of being down to earth, natural*" (Focus group, Jasmine; Appendix F: p. 98). In addition to not recognising consumers' needs, the participants in the focus group consider L'Oréal Paris as *"very behind"* (Focus group, Liangye; Appendix F: p. 96) with their products in terms of innovativeness. In general, the participants neither have many favorable brand associations with L'Oréal Paris nor embrace the brand, so that they might not consider to buy or use it. Consequently, the level of brand consideration is low.

### **General recommendation behaviour**

In accordance with the lack of brand consideration in the third layer of the CBBE model, the focus group participants also reveal a lack of brand resonance with L'Oréal Paris. In general, they show no behavioural loyalty on the brand level; however one participant reveals a certain degree of behavioural loyalty on the product level:

"And I'm quite disloyal, so I could change brands very easily. (...) But if I have something that I really like, like my hair oil by L'Oréal and I would never change it!" (Focus group, Liliana; Appendix F: p. 102).

Moreover, the participants lack active engagement with L'Oréal Paris but are willing to learn and talk about beauty brands in general. As the discussion reveals, the participants oftentimes prefer traditional channels to get inspiration and recommendations about beauty products. While one participant explains, *"Normally in the last pages of the sections in magazines – beauty sections – I look there."* (Focus group, Johanna; Appendix F: p. 102), another says, *"I get inspired by the physical stores"*, adding that *"the drivers for the choice is also the smell, the fragrance or the color."* (Focus group, Liliana; Appendix F: p. 102). This viewpoint is further supported by two participants, whereas one of them admits to also *"google reviews by common people"* (Focus group, Liangye; Appendix F: p. 103). As the affirmative reactions by all members of the group show, Google serves as a common source of information, while one participant further lists Instagram as a source of inspiration (Appendix F: Focus group, Jasmine, p. 103). Thus, we can assume that traditional channels are preferred over online platforms, which are used complementary. However, online platforms solely serve the purpose of consumption, as two participants show strong aversion for interaction with other consumers in chat rooms or online fora (Appendix F: Focus group, Johanna, p. 103; Liangye, p. 103). We consider this aversion as an absence of community feelings towards other users of a product or brand. Furthermore, we argue that this is closely linked to their common lack of voluntary self-disclosure in an online context as revealed by several statements. While one participant explains, *"I only recommend to my friends"* (Focus group, Hawra; Appendix F: p. 107), others add, *"I'm also not online with this"* (Focus group, Liliana; Appendix F: p. 106) or point to the very personal and intimate nature of beauty topics (Appendix F: Focus group, Johanna, p. 106; Katarina, p. 106). Consequently, one respondent explains

*"(...) I would never start giving recommendations, if (...) not asked"* (Focus group, Liliana; Appendix F: p. 105), whereas others rather act as informants than recommenders when sharing their beauty product experiences with friends in a face-to-face context (Appendix F: Focus group, Jasmine, p. 104; Katarina, p. 104; Johanna, p. 105).

### **Social Media Usage**

In the Focus group, we further discussed the participants' social media usage to discover their online behaviour. All of the participants use Facebook *"just to stay social"* (Focus group, Liangye; Appendix F: p. 108) and the messenger function *"to stay connected with family and friends"* (Focus group, Jasmine; Appendix F: p. 107). In addition to the social aspect, the participants also use Facebook as a platform to organize events (Appendix F: Focus group, Liangye, p. 108; Jasmine, p. 109) and be updated with news from different newspapers profiles (Appendix F: Focus group, Katarina, p. 107; Hawra, p. 109; Jasmine, p. 109; Johanna, p. 109; Liangye, p. 110; Hawra, p. 110; Liliana, p. 110). However, they recognise a decrease of their own activity on Facebook during the last few years, where one participant reveals that she does not *"post so often on it [Facebook] anymore"* and turn to Instagram *"to see pictures as inspiration"* (Focus group, Jasmine; Appendix F: p. 108). Another participant further elaborates on the topic, *"But now it's just so much (...) I don't do that [Facebook] so much more as I did before"*, while Instagram is *"to get inspiration from people"* (Focus group, Katarina; Appendix F: p. 107). Overall, our findings show an increasing tendency of participants switching to other social media platforms, such as Instagram and Snapchat, to share UGC with their social network (Appendix F: Focus group, Katarina, p. 107; Jasmine, p. 108; Johanna, p. 108; Liangye, p. 108; Hawra, p. 109).

## 5. DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

### 5.1 Discussion

In the following, we will discuss our findings according to the three research sub-questions to finally answer our overall research question in the conclusion.

#### 5.1.1 How do L'Oréal Paris want their customers to perceive their brand identity?

We have applied the CBIM to answer our first sub-question as it offered us a structured overview of the intended corporate brand identity. The matrix shows us how L'Oréal Paris want to be perceived by their customers, where the core sums up the most important values that they want to be associated with, namely innovativeness, diversity, self-confidence and creating a better world. With these values, they promise to sculpture the future of beauty.

More specifically, L'Oréal Paris reflect innovativeness through seven elements, diversity and self-confidence through four elements and a better world through three elements. This shows that it is most important for them to be perceived as innovative, where diversity and self-confidence come in second and the intention to create a better world comes in third.

#### 5.1.2 What motivates customers of L'Oréal Paris to share positive brand-related eWOM?

As indicated in Table 6, the answer to our second research sub-question is versatile.

Activity type	Retailer websites & Opinion platforms	Social media (Facebook)
	Motives	Motives
Consumption	Independent Information	Independent Information Pre-purchase advice seeking [New]
Contribution	-	Norm of reciprocity (proactive): Reciprocating through commenting Norm of reciprocity (reactive) & Helping
Creation	Concern for other consumers & Helping	Pre-purchase advice seeking [New]
	Norm of reciprocity & Social pressure	Expressing positive emotions
	Self-enhancement	Concern for other consumers & Expressing positive emotions
	Helping the company	Concern for other consumers & Helping [New to creation type]
		Concern for other consumers & Helping the company
		Concern for other consumers & Reassurance [New] (orig.: self-assurance)
		Concern for other consumers & Encouragement [New] (orig.: empowerment)
+ Brand community elements		

**Table 6:** Research findings from in-depth interviews & netnography; linked to research sub-question 2

First of all, we consider the application of the three-type activity continuum adopted from the COBRA framework as a valuable means to oppose the motives that drive some customers of L'Oréal Paris on retailer websites and opinion platforms with the motives that drive others on Facebook. Thereby, it gets apparent that those customers, who are active on retailer websites and opinion platforms, are not engaging in contribution activities, which we ascribe to the rather static nature of these platforms.

Moreover, the number of motives encouraging brand-related activities on Facebook excels the number of motives on retailer websites and opinion platforms. However, there are also similarities on the different kinds of platforms.

The desire for *independent information* similarly motivates customers of L'Oréal Paris to consume positive eWOM, while the *concern for other consumers* is a common motive for the creation of eWOM. Thereby, it becomes apparent that the motives derived from previous research on different online platforms intermingle. Consequently, unlike prior research, we consider them as applicable to more than one platform at a time. Exemplary for this, the motives of *concern for other consumers*, *expressing positive emotions*, *helping the company* and *(pre-purchase) advice seeking* detected on opinion platforms also apply to activities on Facebook in our study. However, we observe advice seeking as a motive that occurs pre- rather than post-purchase and motivates both the consumption and creation of eWOM and UGC on Facebook. Equally new to the creation type on Facebook is the *helping* motive, which has been solely known as a driver of contribution activities so far. Furthermore, our research findings reveal that, in combination with concern for other consumers, *self-assurance* turns into 'reassurance' and *empowerment* into 'encouragement'.

Our research findings further reveal that the motivation to reciprocate through the creation of positive eWOM on retailer websites and opinion platforms is combined with a certain degree of extrinsic social pressure. This is in opposition to the research findings on Facebook. There, reciprocating is solely driven intrinsically and can have a proactive or reactive stance. Thus, reciprocating occurs in form of nice feedback or helpful comments addressed to other members. After close consideration of the drivers of eWOM on social networking sites, we consider reciprocating through commenting on Facebook as a means of expressing one's membership to the L'Oréal Paris brand community. All researched customers of L'Oréal Paris are characterized by a moderate to high level of personal innovativeness and are united by the common interest in beauty and trends. However, the level of personal innovativeness is especially high for members of Facebook groups. Among these groups, the common interest in beauty and L'Oréal Paris is perceived as consciousness of kind, while the aforementioned acts of reciprocity combined with a distinct narrative style represent established rituals among community members. Moreover, we observed a higher level of self-disclosure for members of (closed) Facebook beauty groups, even though our findings reveal a general tendency towards more online privacy, in particular regarding 'No ties'.

Overall, the contribution of our research is twofold: First it lies in the detection of new facets of known motives and their detection in new contexts. Second, we consider the identification of brand

community elements in connection with research on consumers' motivation to share positive eWOM as new to the field.

### **5.1.3 How do customers of L'Oreal Paris perceive the brand and engage with it?**

In order to answer the third sub-question, we firstly refer to Figure 8, *thematic network for brand equity*. Thereby, the organizing themes salience, performance, imagery, judgment and feelings tell us how customers of L'Oréal Paris perceive their brand, while resonance indicates how the customers engage with the brand.

We expected in section 2.3.1 that brand imagery would play an important role for how customers perceive the brand as it involves the spokesperson aspect, which is a big part of the brand identity of L'Oréal Paris. Even though they perceive the brand itself as competent and sophisticated, our findings also show that the spokespersons are perceived negatively by the respondents as they do not admire or cannot identify themselves with these ideal users. On the one hand, the respondents have a positive perception of L'Oréal Paris as they associate the brand with satisfaction, affordability, high & good quality and other positive brand feelings towards the brand as happy, excitement, self-respect and security. On the other hand, they are missing the brand-consumer interaction from the brand's side, which ultimately affects their perception of the brand performance. In addition, not all respondents associate L'Oréal Paris with 'innovative', but instead with being a 'traditional' brand.

In section 2.3.1, we assumed that customers of L'Oréal Paris have built brand resonance as they invest time and energy when sharing their brand experiences with other consumers. Our findings show a high level of behavioural loyalty, strong attachment to the brand, community feelings to a certain degree and lastly a very active engagement with L'Oréal Paris. We found that the respondents actively engage with L'Oréal Paris, when they spend time and effort to write OCRs or contribute to others OCRs. The respondents put a lot of efforts in their OCRs, where they act as recommenders and describe their experience with the brand or product in-depth. Furthermore, they engage with L'Oréal Paris on social media, where they keep up with and sometimes even comment on Facebook posts from the brand, which shows a high degree of engagement.

### **5.1.4 Alignment of intended and perceived brand identity**

Linking back to the first research sub-question and based on the abovementioned findings, we will detect any alignments or misalignments between the intended and perceived brand identity of L'Oréal Paris. This will enable us to give recommendations on how to create alignment in the future. Starting with alignments, our findings show that the respondents associate L'Oréal Paris with self-respect and self-indulgence, which correspond to self-confidence in the brand core and three other elements of the

CBIM. The second alignment between intended and perceived brand identity is satisfaction. The respondents expressed a high degree of satisfaction in terms of brand performance, which is harmonizing with L'Oréal Paris' mission statement. One of the reasons for satisfaction is the broad product range that L'Oréal Paris offer, which is also described in the position element as being a *"total beauty care company"*. In addition to satisfaction, the respondents associate the brand with affordability, which is corresponding to making products accessible for everyone in the CBIM. Furthermore, the respondents perceive the brand as sophisticated and luxury, which is aligned with *"luxury beauty at mass"* in the position element and *"provide accessible luxury"* in the competences element. Lastly, the customers of L'Oréal Paris consider the brand as high quality as part of their brand judgment, which is further aligned with the intended brand identity.

However, when it comes to innovativeness, there is a disagreement among the respondents as some associate them with innovativeness in terms of communication channels and product formulas, while others associate them with being a traditional brand. The latter group perceived them as traditional as they found other brands to be trendier than L'Oréal Paris. The innovativeness value in the CBIM is evaluated to be the most important value as it is one of L'Oréal Paris' core values and reflecting in seven other elements. Therefore, it is crucial for L'Oréal Paris to be perceived as innovative by their customers.

Lastly, we found one clear misalignment between the intended and perceived brand identity, which is the spokespersons aspect. Spokespersons are reflected in the expression and relationships element and work as their ideal users. However, the respondents cannot identify themselves with these ideal users and also show no admiration for them. This misalignment points out that the CBIM is not ideal to provide a holistic impression of the brand identity as brands are no longer marketer-driven, but also driven by consumers. Consequently, there is a need for a framework that considers brand identity as socially constructed by the company and its customers as incorporated in the more recent and dynamic brand identity approach (Heding et al., 2009). However, we found the intended and perceived brand identity to be closely corresponding to each other, as we only found one misalignment between the intended and perceived brand identity, namely the spokespersons aspect. However the innovativeness in the intended brand identity is not completely aligned with the perceived brand identity, as some respondents associated the brand as traditional. We argue that this specific value should be completely aligned as this is their core value.

### **5.1.5 Comparison of findings: Focus group vs. in-depth interviews**

While we have elaborated on the aspect of alignment or misalignment between L'Oréal Paris' intended brand identity and the perception of the interview respondents in the previous section, we now focus on the difference between the data from the focus group and the in-depth interviews. We will thereby

refer to the aspect of congruency, which we clearly distinguish from the aspect of alignment. We argue that two components can be aligned even though they are not exactly the same, whereas we refer to congruency when two aspects are identical to each other. When comparing the findings from the focus group with the findings from the nine in-depth interviews, we detect a few similarities and many differences. Both parties share that they do not admire L'Oréal Paris' famous spokespersons and have difficulties to identify with these people with whom they have less in common. Moreover, all focus group participants consider L'Oréal Paris as more traditional than innovative, while there was a disagreement on that among the interview respondents, with a slight tendency towards innovativeness.

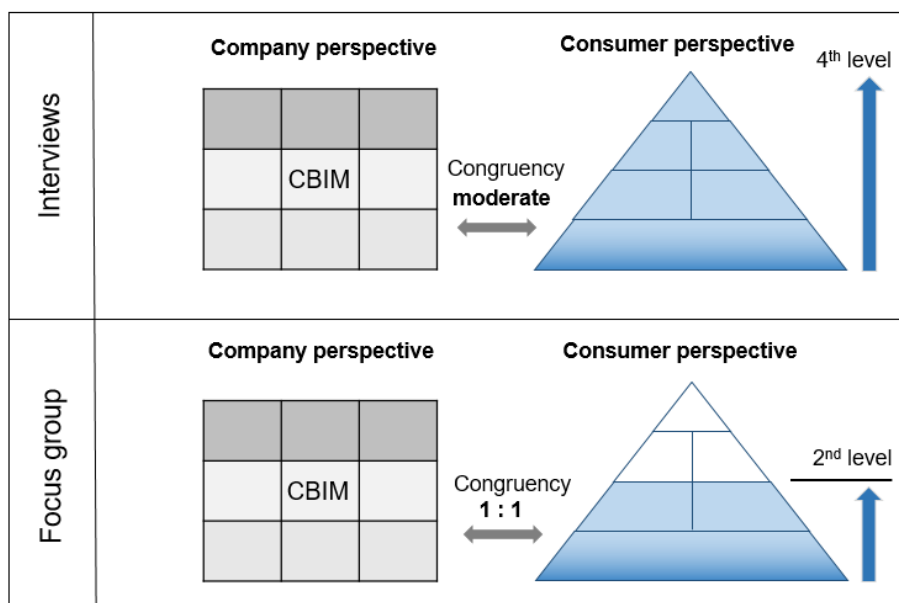
In contrast to this, one major observation is the difference in recall situations and associations with L'Oréal Paris as part of the brand imagery. The focus group participants associate L'Oréal Paris with high availability and supermarkets such as Netto and Lidl. Despite the congruency with the aspect of accessibility to the mass market inherent in L'Oréal Paris' intended brand identity, the participants perceive these associations as unfavourable, as they are further associated with 'minimum quality' and 'cheap' in their memory. On the contrary, the interviewees mainly recall the brand in their domestic bathroom, which creates very individual associations of L'Oréal Paris with personal usage situations. Moreover, the participants of the focus group associate the brand with adjectives such as 'pink, glitz & glamour', which is congruent with the character trait 'glamorous' of L'Oréal Paris' specified personality. However, these associations are again perceived as unfavourable and unsuitable in Scandinavia by the participants. Compared to this, the interviewees characterize L'Oréal Paris as a competent and sophisticated brand that induces favourable associations. As a final example, the participants of the focus group associate L'Oréal Paris with its slogan 'Because you're worth it', which is part of the brand's core. However, this slogan is further associated with the aim to empower women, which is perceived as outdated. In contrast to this, the interview respondents think less about the slogan and more about their perceived brand feelings of self-respect and increased self-esteem.

Consequently, by comparing the findings from the focus group and in-depth interviews, two insights are striking. First, there is high congruency between the brand associations in the memory of the focus group participants and those associations determined by L'Oréal Paris as part of their intended brand identity, whereas the congruency is lower for the interview respondents, who express their individual and experience-based associations with L'Oréal Paris. Second, the focus group participants perceive their associations with L'Oréal Paris as unfavourable as opposed to the interview respondents. Therefore, by setting the two insights into relation, we make the following observation: It might be more beneficial for L'Oréal Paris to be associated with experience-based aspects that are probably not

100% congruent with the elements constituting their intended brand identity than with aspects that are adopted one-to-one but lack personal experience. This observation is supported by the intensity of brand-consumer and consumer-consumer interactivity of both parties. The interview respondents have developed their own interpretation of L'Oréal Paris' brand identity through active engagement and interaction with the brand and other users, so that a sense of community and brand resonance occurs. Contrary to this, the participants of the focus group lack any kind of interactivity and brand resonance does not occur. Corresponding to the aforementioned observations and differences between the two parties, the focus group participants mainly have associations with L'Oréal Paris in relation to the marketing mix elements price and place, whereas the interviewees focus a lot on the product elements. This can be explained by their high level of engagement with the brand and its products and is also reflected by their review behaviour, as they predominantly act as product recommenders. In this role, they are familiar with the product details and refer to their best experiences with the product in their positive reviews.

Metaphorically speaking, the focus group participants arrive at the second level of the CBBE pyramid, whereas the interview respondents climb up until they reach brand resonance in the top of it (see Figure 9). This can be explained by looking at the behavioural differences between the two parties. The participants of the focus group consider beauty reviews as a sensitive and very personal topic and therefore prefer to give personal recommendations to strong ties only and in a face-to-face context. This behaviour points to a low level of voluntary self-disclosure and the absent willingness to interact with unknown other users of L'Oréal Paris online. In contrast to this, the interview respondents have established a sense of community and perceive other users of the brand as like-minded others with whom they foster active engagement revolving around L'Oréal Paris. Thereby they arrive at the top of the pyramid whereas the focus group participants reside in the bottom.





**Figure 9:** Comparison of findings; own illustration

### 5.1.6 Methodological discussion

So far, we have answered the three research sub-questions and discussed our findings from a theoretical perspective. Complementary to this, we are now going to discuss our findings from a methodological point of view. We thereby structure this section by referring to the three qualitative methods we used for the data collection.

#### In-depth interviews

Throughout the nine in-depth interviews we experienced that it sometimes took a while to make the respondents feel comfortable with talking to a researcher and verbally reflecting about their inner feelings and motivations. In this regard, we consider the careful selection of comfortable settings within Copenhagen and the personal face-to-face contact with the respondents as beneficial. Moreover, the use of the laddering technique and floating prompts turned out to be helpful in encouraging the respondents to clarify or further elaborate upon their answers. Thereby, we tried to make sure that we do not misinterpret any statements and thus decrease the researcher bias as much as possible. Regarding knowledge generation, we could not observe any striking differences between the seven interviews conducted in English and the last two interviews conducted in Danish. This could be possibly explained by the high level of English proficiency by the respondents, who were not interviewed in their mother tongue. When comparing the two Danish interviews by Jeanette and Willow, it turns out that differences in knowledge generation are rather caused by the difference in personality traits by the respondents and their power of concentration. While Willow was really opening up during the interview and extremely focused and precise in her answers, Jeanette seemed

to be less focused. Therefore, we critically considered the validity of data collected through her interview and only used her statements in a selective way. Due to the possibility to clarify potential misunderstandings during the interviews and the subsequent data analysis, we believe in the validity of our interview data in form of its credibility. Complementary to this, the adaptation of the saturation approach, the depiction of recurring themes in the data and the use of methodological triangulation make us also believe in the reliability of the data according to the dependability indicator.

### **Netnography**

The netnographic findings triangulated the findings from the interviews and vice versa, so that we focused on the frequent recurrence of themes. Due to these reasons, we assume the data to be reliable, meaning that it is consistent. For the sake of practicability and due to the scope of this thesis, we reduced the large amount of generated netnographic data to those findings that were most significant, which can be found in Appendix H. However, we remain critical when it comes to the assessment of data validity as we were confronted with a trade-off of acting as covert or overt researchers. We decided to act as covert researchers to gain unbiased and in this regard more valid results. Nevertheless, this argument can be rebutted by pointing out the advantages of overt netnographic research. During a more extensive or even longitudinal study, overt research would have allowed us to build trust with the research subjects and also share our findings with them, so that validity would have been enhanced through higher credibility of the data. Moreover, as covert research lacks interaction with the research subjects, we could not judge whether they ‘played a role’ online or behaved differently as in a personal interaction.

### **Focus group**

The focus group discussion was uncoupled from the second research sub-question and solely served the purpose to better understand the interview participants. This was done by differentiating between motivated and unmotivated customers of L’Oréal Paris regarding the distribution of positive eWOM. However, we critically ask ourselves whether or not the focus group of CBS students is a valid and reliable representation of young Danish consumers. As we already reflected about their degree of expertise with regard to our chosen subject matter in section 3.4.3 of this thesis, we will now elaborate on our findings. Based on our subjective impressions, the focus group participants behaved, thought and acted as ordinary young Danish consumers as the content and narrative style of the findings do not resemble those of a professional. This might be explained by the chosen research method, as the focus group was dynamic and coined by mutual interaction, so that the participants confronted each other with very personal questions that had to be answered from the perspective of an ordinary consumer. Exemplary for this is the reaction by Katarina to Hawra’s beauty routine, who was admired

for her flawless skin by the rest of the participants and thus shared her beauty tips with the group throughout the discussion (Appendix F: Focus group, Katarina, p. 90). However, we remain critical regarding one aspect. Our findings oftentimes incorporate Johanna's strong and consistent opinion represented throughout the discussion. We do not consider her as an opinion leader as the others also expressed divergent opinions. However, as she was strongly focused on natural cosmetics and thought negatively about L'Oréal Paris, the other participants might have expressed their opinion about the brand in a more negative way than they actually feel and think about it.

## 5.2 Conclusion

The aim of this study was to build the bridge between consumer behavioural research and the practice of brand management. This was driven by the overarching research question, *"How can L'Oréal Paris leverage insights on consumers' brand-related online behaviour and their perceptions of the brand to enhance customer-based brand equity?"*

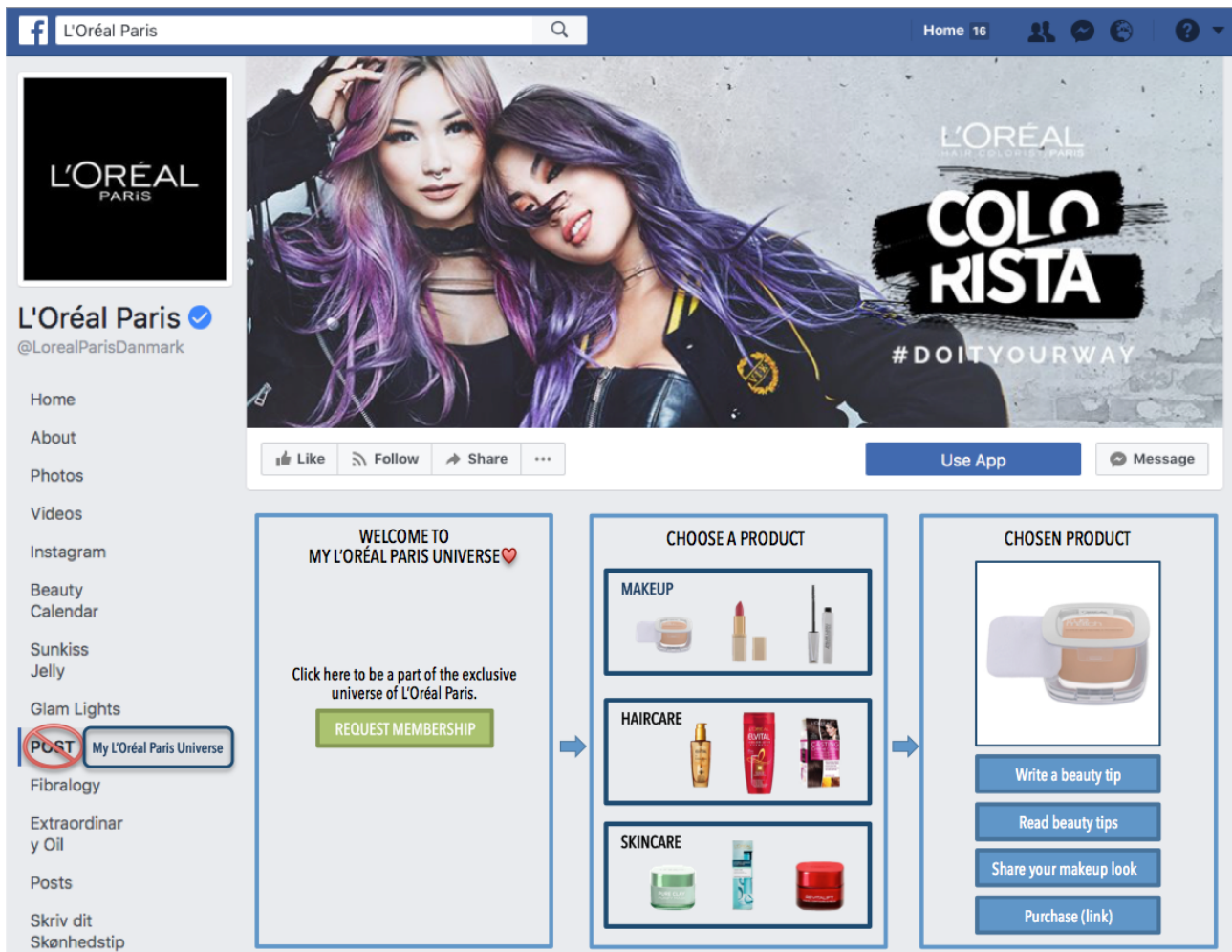
It is important for L'Oréal Paris' brand management to understand that creating a strong brand identity is a dynamic process, in which their customers act as co-contributors so that their perceptions of the brand have to be considered. A comparison of the intended and perceived brand identity of L'Oréal Paris points out misalignments regarding the use of spokespersons and creation of an innovative image. Due to their customers' lack of identification with celebrities, L'Oréal Paris should rely on awarding glamour to more approachable spokespersons while staying true to their sophisticated brand personality. In order to increase the consumption of brand-related content, insights on motivations show that L'Oréal Paris have to satisfy their customers' desire for independent information. Additionally, to elicit more positive eWOM, their customers' prevalent concern for other consumers has to be triggered. In combination with fostering reciprocal commenting as a ritual on their Facebook page, L'Oréal Paris can leverage the sense of community among consumers. Careful attention has to be paid to their customers' general tendency towards more privacy online, especially on social media, and their strong consideration of 'No ties'. This is especially relevant in conjunction with consumers' readiness to contribute to or create brand-related eWOM. Due to the aforementioned tendency, some customers turn to retailers' website and opinion platforms to share brand-related eWOM so that the use of these platforms has to be encouraged. Furthermore, their customers' willingness to spend time and effort to write or contribute to OCRs should be recognized and rewarded. Additionally, L'Oréal Paris can benefit from consumers, who develop their own experience-based brand associations. Even though L'Oréal Paris have already built a strong brand, their customer-based brand equity can be strengthened by fostering brand-consumer interaction and consumer-consumer interactivity. Overall, the contribution of this study is twofold: First, it emphasizes the

importance of the concern for other consumers motive occurring in various combinations for eliciting more positive eWOM. Second, it advises brand managers to foster active brand engagement and appeal to a sense of community among consumers in building customer-based brand equity.

### **5.3 Managerial implications**

One important question for L'Oréal Paris to answer is, *'How can we be perceived as more innovative by our customers?'* Many customers follow the brand on Facebook and are interested in learning about it. Therefore, we advise L'Oréal Paris' brand managers to implement the following. First, they should use social media to promote the innovativeness in products, e.g. by creating short teaser videos on how innovative products such as their cushion foundation are. Additionally, L'Oréal Paris brand managers should frequently post on Facebook where their research & development colleagues get their inspiration from. However, these insights should not be too detailed to not benefit competitors. Second, we recommend L'Oréal Paris to be innovative in terms of reaching their customers by focusing more on modern communication channels rather than the traditional ones. Besides Facebook, some interviewees mentioned YouTube and Instagram, instead of magazines and television, as their source of inspiration on beauty trends and brands. Moreover, L'Oréal Paris is advised to use local trendsetters, who represent local beauty ideals, as spokespersons. Thereby, they would increase their customers' identification with these idealized but approachable users.

With regard to their customers' brand-related online behaviour, we recommend L'Oréal Paris to foster two-way brand-consumer interaction on their official Facebook page by providing answers or feedback to any interaction initiated by consumers on L'Oréal Paris' Facebook page or posts. In addition, we recommend to build a universe for the brand community to strengthen brand resonance and ultimately enhance their customer-based brand equity. In the illustration below (Figure 10), we present our recommendation of how to create community feelings among their customers. The exclusive community, which we call 'My L'Oréal Paris Universe', is visible on their Facebook page, where membership is requested to gain access. In this way the content will not be public as the consumers' privacy concerns have been taken into consideration.



**Figure 10:** Recommendation of brand community; own figure

After becoming a member of this closed community, the consumer will gain access to beauty tips written by fellow members and be able to write them as well. The purpose of this idea is to create a universe with all of L'Oréal Paris' products, where consumers can write reviews, find a direct link to purchase the products and ask questions to either the brand itself or other members of this community. The members will be driven by different motives such as concern for other consumers, helping the company and pre-purchase advice seeking. The consumer will be able to consume, contribute to and create brand-related content in this universe. L'Oréal Paris will act as the moderator of the community, while extracting relevant insights about their products and customers. However, as the positive eWOM generated in the universe will not be visible to the public, L'Oréal Paris should also elicit positive eWOM on their official Facebook page or other publicly accessible platforms. Therefore, whenever L'Oréal Paris promotes their brand in a Facebook post, they should give their customers two options of engaging with it. Firstly, by asking them to recommend their favourite product to a friend, so that tagging is also encouraged. Secondly, by attaching a link to a retailer website, e.g. Matas, where

the product can be ordered and reviewed all-in-one. Thereby, L'Oréal Paris' brand managers strengthen brand resonance and ultimately enhance customer-based brand equity.

#### **5.4 Limitations & Future research**

There are several limitations connected to this thesis, especially to its empirical set-up. Firstly, findings on the motivations of L'Oréal Paris' customers to share positive eWOM could have been further confirmed and validated through the use of a third method, e.g. focus groups. The use of focus groups could be particularly beneficial as it would provide us with a more extensive comprehension of the social aspects inherent in the motivation to share positive eWOM. Furthermore, the present qualitative study could be enlarged by increasing the sample size. However, within the scope of this thesis, interviewing a relatively small number of people allowed us to thoroughly explore their motivations to share positive eWOM about L'Oréal Paris and their perceptions of the brand. In contrast to other studies, which investigate more than one case, this study exclusively sheds light on the case of L'Oréal Paris. Even though this allowed us to remain very focused, it would be beneficial to include other beauty brands and companies in future research. Regarding the temporal frame, conducting a longitudinal study would allow future researchers to shed light on the underlying research question over a longer period in time. Moreover, when acting as overt instead of covert netnographic researchers, they could build trust with the research subjects. Moreover, we delimited our study to the online scope of retailer websites and opinion platforms as well as the social networking site Facebook. Consequently, future researchers should further investigate brand-related online behaviour on other platforms, such as Instagram or YouTube. Due to the qualitative nature of our research question, we adopted the interpretivist philosophy, which requires interpretation through the researcher and does not lead to generalisable results. To counterbalance the inherent weaknesses, it would be beneficial to use a mixed-methods approach by also applying quantitative methods, e.g. Brand Concept Maps (BCM approach) (John, Loken, Kim & Monga, 2006). This approach would allow for a better assessment of the strength, favorability and uniqueness of brand associations. In order to pursue generalisation in a subsequent step, future researchers should take an objectivistic and positivistic research approach to complement our pursued interpretivist approach. However, they have to be careful in taking over findings from a Danish sample to very distinct cultures. Under consideration of this aspect, the applicability of the qualitatively detected motives should be quantitatively tested for a large sample to further reveal potential causal effects of positive eWOM on customer-based brand equity.

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## MASTER'S THESIS

### Leveraging positive eWOM to enhance customer-based brand equity

*A study of L'Oréal Paris*

Copenhagen Business School/ M.Sc. Brand and Communications Management

Supervisor: Lars Bech Christensen

## Appendices: Overview

<b>Appendix A – Facebook beauty group: number of members.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Appendix B – Interview guide for In-depth interviews (semi-structured) .....</b>	<b>2</b>
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## Appendix A – Facebook beauty group: number of members



9 March ·

Makeup og Tips



KÆRE ALLE MEDLEMMER.

Vi har fjernet det midlertidige loft i gruppen, hvilket betyder at vi er igang med at lukke over 6.000 nye medlemmer ind i gruppen. Vil I ikke alle være søde og læse gruppens regler inden i begynder at bruge gruppen? Jeg har desværre allerede måttet lukke nogen ud igen grundet brud på disse. Jeg opridser lige kort:

- INGEN REKLAME. Hverken for dine sociale medier, virksomhed eller produkter du er forhandler af.
- Ingen køb og salg.
- Ingen livestreams.... [See more](#)

Dear all members.

We have removed the temporary ceiling in the group, which means we are closing up over 6.000 new members into the group. You won't all be sweet and read the group rules before you start using the group? Unfortunately I have already had to let someone out again due to breach of those. Let Me Review Cards:

- no advertising. Not for your social media, company or products you're dealer.
- no buying and selling.

No livestreams.

Keep a good tone

(this is of course not all rules which costs exclusion - see more of the rules 😊)

That's the boring part. The funny part is: welcome to!!! We are so happy to have you and we are happy and to see what everyone has to offer. I promise that we have so many sweet and wonderful people in the group which is more than ready to help, mentor and talk 😊

You are always welcome to send a PB for one of us admins if you are in doubt about something.

Your Admin team

· [Rate this translation](#)

69

65 Comments

Like

Comment

## **Appendix B – Interview guide for In-depth interviews (semi-structured)**

### **General grand-tour opening question:**

- How does your daily beauty routine look like? (general)
- In which of the steps that you have just described do you use L'Oréal Paris products? (case related)

### **Motives for sharing positive opinions about a brand online:**

How did you get in touch with online reviews for the first time?

- What about online reviews about beauty products?
- Could you please tell us how you developed toward writing your own reviews?

### **Questions leading to our research case/ CBBE model:**

- Which brands might you be likely to use when coloring/washing your hair / putting makeup on?
- In which situations do you think of L'Oréal Paris?
- Do you prefer to use L'Oréal Paris instead of other brands?
  - Would you consider yourself as loyal to this brand?
- What feelings do L'Oréal Paris give you? When thinking of the brand and using it?
- To what extent do L'Oréal Paris satisfy your product needs?
- Do you know the people that L'Oréal Paris use in their commercials? (TV/Magazines)
  - To what extent do you admire them or look up to them? Why?
- How do you identify yourself with other users and spokesperson of the brand?
- How would you describe L'Oréal Paris with a few words?
  - Which adjectives would you use to describe the brand?
- Do you think their products are innovative or traditional? And how come?
- To what extent do L'Oréal Paris understand your needs?
  - And do you think that they care about your opinion? Why?
- What is your favourite L'Oréal Paris product?
- How interested are you in talking and learning about L'Oréal Paris?
- For which product of L'Oréal Paris did you write your last positive review?
- Which aspects did you mention in this review?
- How frequently do you write reviews in general?
- Why do you write reviews about L'Oréal Paris?
  - What do you get out of writing these reviews?
- How do you think other consumers will interpret your positive review?
- To what extent is it important to you how your review will affect them?
- How do you feel once you have written a review and published it?
- Why do you feel like that, i.e. what is it that gives you this feeling?
- Do you have in mind what your review means to the company behind the brand? In what way?
- How strong is the positive feeling that you have about the reviewed product?

**Drivers of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) on social networking sites:**

- Where do you publish your review? On which platform?
- Why did you choose this platform and not another one?
- How frequently do you test new products? How important is it to you to be up-to-date with the latest beauty trends? WHY?
- For which personal purpose do you use Facebook?
- How often do you make a posting on Facebook? WHY?
- How do you feel and what do you consider when you make a posting on Facebook?
- Do you “follow”/ like any (beauty) brands on Facebook? WHY?
- Would you recommend a product to your friends via Facebook, e.g. by tagging a friend in a positive review by another consumer?
- How do you think about publishing your positive review of L’Oréal Paris on their Facebook page? WHY?

**Questions concerning consumer-consumer interactivity and the sense of community:**

- How would you describe your “relationship” with other consumers who follow/ like the same beauty brands on Facebook than you do?
- How do you/ would you feel when other consumers want to exchange their brand knowledge and opinions with you via Facebook?

Questions to those who publish their opinion on Facebook:

- What kind of feedback from other consumers have you experienced so far when you published your product opinion on the brand’s (L’Oréal Paris’) Facebook page?
- Have you ever commented on postings made by other consumers? WHY?
- Would you say that the other “brand followers” and you have something in common that differentiates you from other Facebook users? If so, what? And why do you think so?
- How does it feel to you to share your product experiences with unknown others compared to sharing them with friends and acquaintances?
- How important is the exchange with other “brand followers” for you?

## Appendix C – Interview guide for Focus group

### Opening questions:

1. Please introduce yourselves to each other (name/occupation)
2. Can you shortly walk us through your daily beauty routine?
  - a. Which brands might you be likely to use when coloring your hair / putting makeup on / washing your hair?
3. What was the last beauty product you bought and why?

### L'Oréal Paris questions: (*Hand out free association task: leading to mental map*)

1. What do you associate with L'Oréal Paris? (Explain why)
2. What do you think about their products? / when did you start using LP?
  - a. *Innovative/traditional*
3. Can you identify yourself with the people that L'Oréal Paris use in their ads?
  - a. *Spokesperson topic*
4. What is your favorite L'Oréal Paris product?
5. To what extent do L'Oréal Paris understand your needs?

### Recommendation behaviour questions

1. How often do you test new products? And/or how important is it to you to be up-to-date with beauty trends?
2. Where do you get your inspiration from when buying new products?
3. Imagine if you are recommending your favourite beauty product to your friend: Could you please fill out the bubble (*projective technique: completion & interpretation tasks: "bubble exercise"*).
4. How do you usually share your personal opinions about beauty products with others?
  - a. Why do you prefer this approach among others?
5. Could you also imagine to recommend a product to a stranger online?
  - a. Why/ why not?
6. If yes, on which platform would you prefer to make the recommendation?

### Social media questions

1. What do you use Facebook for?
2. Do you have other social media accounts?
  - a. If yes, for which purposes?
3. What/whom do you follow on the different social media accounts?
4. Do you tag your friends in posts made by the pages/people that you follow? And why?
5. What kind of content do you usually post on your different social media accounts? Why?

**End up the focus group:** How did it feel to talk about beauty topics in front of strangers today?

## Appendix D – Colour coding: overview of colours and meaning

Green	Brand resonance
Yellow	Brand responses
Blue	Brand meaning
Teal	Brand salience
Pink	COBRA/ Motives/ Content of review
Red	Social ties & platform choice (criteria)
Dark yellow	Brand-/ Consumer-consumer interaction
Purple	Uses & gratifications; social media
Dark green	Community elements

## Appendix E – Transcripts and coding of In-depth interviews

### Jeanette

Age: 25 years

Occupation: Stay-at-home mother with 2 kids

Description: Was not mentally present - kept checking her phone during the interview.

Verbatim transcript	Descriptive Coding	Interpretive Coding
<p>I: Thank you for taking the time today. Just as a short introduction. There are no right or wrong answers to my questions, so please feel free to say whatever comes to your mind. (Smiles)</p> <p>J: Okay</p> <p>I: I would like to start with asking you, how your daily beauty routine looks like?</p> <p>J: Ohh yes, I use eye shadow from L'Oréal and then their mascara and in the evening I use these facemasks – the black, the green and the red or whatever we can call it.</p> <p>I: Is it the ones that can be mixed?</p> <p>J: Yes exactly! I use them before bedtime. More or less, not every day, but every second day or something.</p> <p>I: Is it something that you've been using for a long time?</p> <p>It is relatively new.</p> <p>J: Yes it is, I've been using it since December.</p> <p>I: What about hair coloration? Is it something you do?</p> <p>J: I also use from L'Oréal. <b>There's very little ammonia in it. I don't think it smells as much as when I use Schwarzkopf or what it is called.</b></p> <p>I: So, you have tried a bit of everything?</p> <p>J: Yes I have, also the different mascaras from there [L'Oréal Paris]. I buy one every time they launch a new. Then I must try it.</p> <p>I: Are you only using makeup from L'Oréal Paris?</p> <p>J: I change a bit between Lancôme and L'Oréal. Lancôme only once in a while, because I think it's a bit expensive. But it is good! And it's not always that I can afford expensive, so I use L'Oréal because I think the price is reasonable.</p> <p>I: Yes it can be expensive to try something new with Lancôme.</p> <p>J: Yes! A mascara from Lancôme costs like 250? Whereas mascara from L'Oréal is 139 kr., I know you can get one at that price.</p> <p>I: Lets move to something different. Do you remember the first time you saw a review or comment on beauty</p>	<p><i>Heavy user of LP</i></p> <p><i>LP better than comparable brands</i></p> <p><i>Testing all newly launched LP mascaras</i></p> <p><i>Certain degree of loyalty for LP and Lancôme; compares LP with Lancôme, but considers LP's price more affordable as she can't always afford the expensive (Lancôme).</i></p> <p><i>She saw LP post something on their FB and another</i></p>	<p><b>Brand resonance – loyalty</b></p> <p><b>Oppositional brand loyalty (individual)</b> <b>Brand responses:</b> <b>Brand judgements - superiority</b></p> <p><b>Brand resonance – loyalty → Early adopter</b></p> <p><b>Brand resonance – loyalty; Brand meaning: Brand performance</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: Development from consumption to contribution; Motive: concern for others</b></p>

<p>products?</p> <p>J: No not really. <b>I saw L'Oréal posted something on Facebook about how you could mix and match. Then someone asked if these were good. I just replied my opinion that I thought they were good.</b></p> <p>I: When was this? A few years or months ago?</p> <p>J: No, not a year, perhaps 6 months or something like that.</p> <p>I: Was this how you started writing your own comments about products?</p> <p>J: Yes.</p> <p>I: Would you say that you're loyal to L'Oréal?</p> <p>J: Yes, I would say so. Let's just say it like this; I often buy their brands and products.</p> <p>I: Do you also prefer to use them compared to other brands?</p> <p>J: Yes, <b>I'm not too thrilled with other brands. For example Rimmel London or whatever it's called.</b></p> <p>I: So, the ones at the same price point?</p> <p>J: Yes, <b>I think L'Oréal works better than the other ones. They last longer.</b></p> <p>I: May I ask you which emotions L'Oréal provoke in you? When you either use or think of them?</p> <p>J: <b>Satisfaction, definitely, and it gives a good look – give us confidence and nice hair as they say (laughing). Especially when I color my hair, it really gives a boost, right?</b></p> <p>I: Boost as in confidence?</p> <p>J: Yes, because I think it works! I tried to color my hair and used different hair products from other brands and then you think: "Was this it?" Well, when you're used to L'Oréal and they give more color than any of the other ones.</p> <p>I: Do you remember for how long you've been using L'Oréal?</p> <p>J: Yes, I'm 25 years old and I've been using their products since I was 15 or something.</p> <p>I: That's quite some time!</p> <p>J: Yes!</p> <p>I: How often do you buy makeup and other beauty products?</p> <p>J: Every second month, then you need coloration or your mascara is getting dry.</p> <p>I: Before you mentioned, which feelings L'Oréal provokes in you – would you say that they satisfy your needs?</p>	<p><i>consumer was asking if the product in the post was good and she responded. This is also when she started on sharing her opinion online</i></p> <p><i>Personal consideration as "loyal to LP"</i></p> <p><i>LP better than other competitive brands, e.g. Rimmel London</i></p> <p><i>LP: long-lasting compared to other brands</i></p> <p><i>When asked about emotions, she replies satisfaction at first and then boost in confidence when coloring her hair</i></p> <p><i>Long usage period (10 yrs) on voluntary basis</i></p> <p><i>Satisfying needs</i></p>	<p><b>Brand resonance – loyalty</b></p> <p><b>Oppositional brand loyalty (individual);</b></p> <p><b>Brand responses: Brand judgements - superiority</b></p> <p><b>Brand meaning: Brand performance</b></p> <p><b>Brand responses: Brand feelings – self-respect ~ confidence</b></p> <p><b>Brand resonance: Brand relationship – "Committed partnerships" (Fournier)</b></p> <p><b>Brand meaning (meet functional needs): brand performance –</b></p>
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<p>J: Yes I think so, I'm very satisfied with the products that I have from them.</p> <p>I: You also talked about the boost that hair coloration gives you. Do you know the spokespersons that are used in their ads?</p> <p>J: Ehh, yes I do.</p> <p>I: What's your opinion about these spokespersons? Do you look up to them or can you identify yourself with them?</p> <p>J: Well, I don't really have any opinions about this – at least nothing I'm aware of.</p> <p>I: So it's not like you buy the products because of them?</p> <p>J: No, it's more or less because I think their products work. Now that I've tried everything.</p> <p>I: If you would describe L'Oréal in a few words, how would you describe them?</p> <p>J: Eh, can you say smart?</p> <p>I: Yes of course!</p> <p>J: <b>Smart gorgeous design ... that works in everyday life.</b></p> <p>I: They also have a slogan: "Because you're worth it". What do you think about this?</p> <p>J: I actually think that it works! It's a good slogan.</p> <p>I: Do you feel better after buying their products? Perhaps in terms of spoiling yourself?</p> <p>J: Yes, <b>you get so happy after buying a few products – spoiling yourself!</b></p> <p>I: So do you think L'Oréal understands your needs? And listens to you?</p> <p>J: Yes, <b>they know what women want and I actually think that it is something that we can be proud of.</b></p> <p>I: You mentioned earlier that they are smart – if I say innovative, do you think it fits them?</p> <p>J: <b>I just think they are smart, it has something to do with for example, the small eye shadows that they have made. They fit right to your bag</b> and they... I don't know how to explain it.</p> <p>I: That they fit your needs?</p> <p>J: <b>Yes, I think so – to every woman's need.</b> I don't know if many purchase L'Oréal, but I think it's a product that works. Now that I'm a busy housewife and life is fast, it can look like I spent hours putting on makeup by using L'Oréal.</p> <p>I: It is not always that you have hours to put makeup on.</p> <p>J: Yes that's it! It's perhaps only celebrities that have someone to come and put makeup on them. Sometimes, it has to be very fast, especially when the kids are not</p>	<p><i>Knows the spokespersons, but they don't have any influence on her and buys product because it's working and not due to spokespersons.</i></p> <p><i>Nice design and smart; works for her everyday life</i></p> <p><i>Approval of slogan</i></p> <p><i>Happy feelings, spoiling yourself</i></p> <p><i>Proud that LP understands female needs</i></p> <p><i>She indirectly thinks that they are innovative, but uses the word smart instead about their products</i></p> <p><i>Fitting/ understanding women's needs</i></p>	<p>quality/ Brand responses: Brand feelings – satisfaction</p> <p>Brand meaning: Spokesperson not part of brand imagery; Brand meaning: Brand performance</p> <p>Brand meaning: Brand performance – design; Brand association: smart, gorgeous design &amp; fits her needs</p> <p>Brand meaning: Brand imagery LP's → aligned with LP's intended brand identity</p> <p>Brand responses: Brand feelings – fun, self-respect</p> <p>Brand responses (consumer oriented): Brand judgements – credibility</p> <p>Brand responses: Brand judgements – credibility (~ innovative); Brand meaning: Brand imagery ~ associations → aligned with LP's intended brand identity</p> <p>Brand responses (consumer oriented): Brand judgements – credibility</p>
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<p>acting nice and you still want to look nice at work. I: Do they add a bit glamour to your everyday life? J: Yes... Yes! Then you're not all boring and grey.</p> <p>I: May I ask you, what your favorite product from L'Oréal Paris is? J: Ehhm I have this... Smokey beige palette eye shadow. I'm really happy with those – I have them in many colors. I: How come you like them so much? J: On the backside, there is a drawing of how you can put on pretty makeup. I use that a lot. In terms of that it has to go very fast and you don't have time to hire your own makeup artist. I: So you get a kind of guide that tells you, how to put eye shadow on? J: Yes exactly!</p> <p>I: How interested are you in learning and talking about L'Oréal Paris? J: That's okay, I guess. <b>The more you learn – the better. Then you know more about the products.</b></p> <p>I: Do you remember the last product you reviewed from L'Oréal Paris? J: Yes, it was these face crèmes or what they are called... facemasks! I: Do you remember what you wrote in this review? J: No not right now I: Was it own experiences or something regarding the ingredients? J: Own experiences! I: Did you recommend the products to other consumers? J: Yes, someone was asking if it worked. And my experiences were that it does. And I've also recommended it to my friends, who have had acne skin and they say that it worked. <b>They also bought it, because I told it to them.</b> I: It is almost like you're an ambassador for the brand? J: Yes, when I'm happy with something I tell it to my friends and then they usually try it as well. Also with perfume brands etc.</p> <p>I: How often do you reply to people who are curious about the products here on these Facebook posts? J: As soon as I have tried something and see a post with it. Then I would like to talk about it. I: Then you would like to share your good or bad experiences? J: Yes</p>	<p><i>Favourite product from LP: eye shadow with an application guideline on the product</i></p> <p><i>Eager to learn more about LP</i></p> <p><i>Review content: own experiences, recommendation to friends &amp; 'strangers'</i></p> <p><i>Acting like a brand ambassador for LP</i></p> <p><i>Eager to give recommendations whenever someone asks for it</i></p>	<p><b>Brand meaning: Brand performance;</b> <b>Brand responses:</b> <b>Brand judgements – credibility</b></p> <p><b>Brand resonance – engagement</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: Creation: Recommender review consumer-consumer interaction with different social ties (weaker ties = strangers &amp; strong ties = friends); Motive: empowerment</b></p> <p><b>Brand resonance – Engagement; Motive: Self-enhancement (seen as an expert/ambassador)</b> <b>Frequent recommendations to weaker ties = strangers; Motive: Concern for other consumers</b></p>
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<p>I: Is there a special reason why you selected Facebook? Compared to Matas?</p> <p>J: Nah, not as such. It was because I did not know that you could do it on Matas as well. Well review.</p> <p>I: Is it something you would do? Now that you know about it?</p> <p>J: Yes it would. <b>It would also be a good thing by Matas, if for example, they said: "okay, if you now review a product, then you could make a little competition out of it or maybe a small gift or sample, maybe? Just something. It will draw people to review their products if they need it - that people say good things about their products.</b></p> <p>I: Definitely.</p> <p>J: Yes it gives some kind of enthusiasm. Or I don't know if you can call it enthusiasm. But for me it will be motivate me to write about the things I've tried.</p> <p>I: Do you feel like you get something out of writing these reviews now?</p> <p>J: I don't really feel like I get something out of it. No more than when I can see that I have written something, then if my friends ask, I can say that they can just go in there and see it there. Hmm .. Well, I just like to come up with my experiences.</p> <p>I: So you like to share your experience?</p> <p>J: Yes</p> <p>I: Do you think of how your experiences also affect other consumers? Perhaps in a good way?</p> <p>J: No, I don't really think about that.</p> <p>I: You'll just share what you know?</p> <p>J: Yes, there are some young people who don't have as much experience with anything. If, for example, they just began to use makeup, then surely they'll think it's smart how these products work, right?</p> <p>I: After you've written something, do you feel satisfied?</p> <p>J: Yes, <b>I think so that I might have helped another person.</b></p> <p>I: Have you thought about how your review also affects L'Oréal Paris?</p> <p>J: To be honest, I don't think they see it (depressed).</p> <p>I: It might be an indirect effect, where you get other consumers to use their products?</p> <p>J: No, I haven't thought about that. I actually didn't think that they (L'Oreal) looked at them etc. <b>You could miss some response from them on their Facebook page,</b> for example.</p> <p>I: Is this related to if you have any questions you want to</p>	<p><i>Competitions or gift card will drive and motivate her to write reviews on Matas.</i></p> <p><i>Refers friends asking for recommendation to online review</i></p> <p><i>Likes to share experiences with others</i></p> <p><i>Satisfaction of helping other people, especially younger and <u>less experienced</u> women</i></p> <p><i>Is sad about missing response by LP</i></p> <p><i>No responses by LP on Facebook page</i></p>	<p><b>Motive: Economic incentives</b></p> <p><b>Motive: concern for other consumers combined with self-enhancement (expert role) &amp; empowerment</b></p> <p><b>No brand-consumer interaction (one-directional communication)</b></p> <p><b>No brand-consumer interaction (one-directional communication)</b></p>
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<p>ask them? Or how to use the product?</p> <p>J: Yeah things like that. I have certainly asked about some stuff in there and I haven't really got an answer. That's why, I'm not thinking about it.</p> <p>I: So they could be better at answering consumers on Facebook?</p> <p>J: Yes exactly!</p> <p>I: How often do you try new products?</p> <p>J: <b>Their mascaras - when they launch one, then I usually want to have them as soon as possible.</b></p> <p>Because some of their mascaras have not been optimal then there are others, which are really good.</p> <p>I: Is it important for you to be up-to-date with the latest makeup trends?</p> <p>J: Not so important again, but still so you can say that you have it and think it is good if you have tried it. Well, I have many friends who ask me about different mascaras, because they know that I have many different ones both from L'Oréal and Lancome. They also know my opinion on Lancome that it is expensive, but also good. But if you can't afford the expensive, well then L'Oréal is the next.</p> <p>I: Is it a good alternative?</p> <p>J: Yes</p> <p>I: Then I will ask a little into your usage of Facebook; how do you use Facebook. What do you use Facebook for in generally?</p> <p>J: Putting statuses up and write a bit with friends instead of text-messages. Then I also like to participate in competitions.</p> <p>I: How often do you post something up on Facebook?</p> <p>J: Hmm ... once a week, 2 maybe 3 times a week.</p> <p>I: Is there anything you think of before you posting anything on Facebook?</p> <p>J: Yes, it is whether if all people should know it or whether it is unnecessary.</p> <p>I: For example, when writing on L'Oréal's Facebook page, do you think of who sees it?</p> <p>J: If my friends see it, they know that I am happy with the product. Something like that.</p> <p>I: Do you follow other makeup or skincare brands on Facebook?</p> <p>J: I also follow Lancôme's, and then I follow the celebrities who also use quite a lot of makeup.</p> <p>I: When you say celebrities, is it then actresses, singers, makeup artists or bloggers?</p> <p>J: For example, Irina who she is makeup blogger. She posts about everything and sometimes the things she</p>	<p><i>Would appreciate answer by LP</i></p> <p><i>Always wants to buy the newest mascara</i></p> <p><i>Being up-to-date: only for mascara</i></p> <p><i>Friends ask her for mascara recommendations as they know she has tested a lot</i></p> <p><i>Facebook usage: socialize, participate in competitions</i></p> <p><i>Before Facebook post: consideration of value of contribution; tie-strength (if <u>all</u> people should know it or not); Consideration of friends when writing on brand pages</i></p> <p><i>Facebook "follower" of LP, Lancôme, celebrities</i></p>	<p><b>Personal innovativeness regarding one product segment</b></p> <p><b>Motive: self-enhancement (consumption expert) combined with empowerment</b></p> <p><b>Facebook: Uses &amp; gratifications: Socializing, entertainment (competitions)</b></p> <p><b>Consideration of "added value" for social network; tie-strength</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: Contribution - Emphasis on strong ties</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: Consumption of beauty brand/ blogger information</b></p>
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<p>talks about and demonstrates; I copy those things. For example, how to apply makeup correct, because I think she's good at it. But her opinion about makeup is not quite the same as mine. It is also because she likes the expensive stuff and all that. Although she also uses cheap products, but she probably has a little more money than I have. Otherwise, there are not that many others I know who post something with makeup.</p> <p>I: May I ask why you follow Lancôme and L'Oreal Paris on Facebook?</p> <p>J: It's probably because it's my two favorite products [brands].</p> <p>I: What do you feel that they can contribute to you on their Facebook pages?</p> <p>J: Well they keep me a bit up-to-date with new product launches. Perhaps a new mascara or foundation.</p> <p>I: Just a few last questions. Would you recommend products to your friends by tagging them on a post or review by another customer?</p> <p>J: Yes, I would. <b>I would like to tag my friends to for example say that they need to try these products.</b></p> <p>I: What do you think about, if you could review products on L'Oreal Paris' Facebook page? If they had a feature where all the reviews were gathered in one place?</p> <p>J: Yes I would do it. I think that it would be cool for them. It could be smart.</p> <p>I: Yes, instead of you reviewing the product in a comment, you could write your opinion there.</p> <p>J: <b>Yes, I would like to do that! It would be really smart. Then I can see what others have written too.</b></p>	<p><i>She follows LP and Lancôme, but also celebrities who use a lot of makeup; Reason for following being up-to-date; new product launches</i></p> <p><i>Likes to tag friends on Facebook to give recommendation</i></p> <p><i>Would appreciate review feature on Facebook (→ better overview of reviews)</i></p>	<p><b>Brand resonance – engagement; brand-consumer interaction</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: Contribution: recommendations through tagging</b></p> <p><b>Brand resonance: fostering active engagement</b></p>
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## Julia

Age: 26 years

Occupation: Working in the finance sector, from Copenhagen

Description: Very private when it comes to the use of social media; straight to the point

Verbatim transcript	Descriptive Coding	Interpretive Coding
<p>I: Hi Julia, thanks for taking the time today. Just as a short introduction in the beginning: There is no right or wrong regarding your answers, so please feel free to say whatever comes to your mind. I'm just curious about how you think and feel about certain topics.</p> <p>J: Okay, good to know.</p> <p>I: To start with a general question I would like to know how your daily beauty routine looks like. Could you describe that a little bit?</p> <p>J: Well, I wake up in the morning. I go straight to the bathroom and take a shower. Then I'm drying my hair and then... I'm cleaning my face, put cream on, and blow-dry my hair. Afterwards I put my make-up on. But not too much during working days.</p> <p>I: And in which of these steps do you use products of L'Oréal Paris?</p> <p>J: While I'm showering. I take a shower every morning to wake up and have a refreshing start into the day. <b>And for washing my hair I use their products all the time, especially the L'Oréal Elvital Extraordinary Oil shampoo. That's really working for dry hair.</b></p> <p>I: Okay, thanks for sharing that insight. Let's build the bridge now to another topic, namely online reviews. Could you tell me how you got in touch with online reviews in general for the first time?</p> <p>J: Yes, sure. Well, usually when you go on Matas and order a product, which is something I frequently do nowadays to save some time, the star ratings for each product directly catch your attention. <b>So every time before I finally buy anything I check if there are either very good or very bad ratings for this particular product. And if so I read the corresponding reviews. Just to get a first overview whether it is worth buying the product or not.</b></p> <p>I: Okay, and how come that you also considered reviews for beauty products?</p> <p>J: Ehm, <b>for me beauty products are equal to all other products from other categories, so why not?</b> In the past I once had a shampoo that was really bad and didn't work as promised, even though the advertisement said</p>	<p><i>Always uses LP Elvital shampoo; it works for her hair</i></p> <p><i>Checks "extreme" reviews according to star ratings; Online reviews give an overview before buying a product</i></p> <p><i>Considers beauty products as worth checking and equal to products from other categories; reads reviews to avoid</i></p>	<p><i>Brand resonance loyalty (shampoo); Brand meaning; Brand performance</i></p> <p><i>COBRA: consumption: star ratings/ corresponding reviews; Reviews impact on buying decision; Motive: Information</i></p> <p><i>COBRA: consumption; No differentiation in review behavior between product categories</i></p>

<p>something else. The same with a hair mousse. These two products turned out to be completely different in reality compared with the corresponding ad.</p> <p>I: And then you were disappointed?</p> <p>J: To be honest, yes! My hair looked really stupid and this was definitely not the result I was looking for...</p> <p>I: But how come that you also started actively writing your own beauty reviews?</p> <p>J: <b>Once I made these bad experiences I realized that it would have been helpful to have some honest insights from current customers who share their product experiences. So then I started sharing my own experiences, be it good or bad ones. To make sure that other people can avoid to make bad experiences themselves due to my review.</b></p> <p>I: That makes sense, but let's talk more about positive reviews today. You are writing positive reviews as well, right?</p> <p>J: Yes, I do. <b>Whenever I liked a product a lot I'm willing to share that with other people to help them with their buying decision.</b></p> <p>I: So you want to make life easier for other people?</p> <p>J: Exactly!</p> <p>I: Okay, getting back to L'Oréal Paris I would like to know: in which situations do you think of the brand or the related products?</p> <p>J: <b>Usually when you watch TV, L'Oréal is omnipresent with a lot of ads in which models with super shiny hair present the latest shampoo or hair care products. And even though this shiny hair looks completely unrealistic, or especially because it does, L'Oréal somehow catches my attention and stays in my mind.</b></p> <p>I: So when you do your beauty shopping, does the shiny hair come to your mind again?</p> <p>J: Yes, it does. Because when you look on the packaging of colorations or also some hair treatments, you can see the same shiny hair – similar to the hair shown in the ads. <b>Of course I know it's unrealistic, but if you have to choose, you would rather go for shiny hair on the package than for ordinary one, right?</b></p> <p>I: So would you say that you prefer L'Oréal Paris products over competitive ones?</p> <p>J: Yes, you can say that.</p> <p>I: So you consider yourself as somehow loyal to the brand?</p> <p>J: <b>I do, yes. Because L'Oréal is appealing and because it seems to have a high quality.</b></p> <p>I: This nicely leads over to my next question: which</p>	<p><i>disappointment</i></p> <p><i>Started review writing due to negative experience and no previous "warning" through other consumers</i></p> <p><i>Write reviews when there's a strong positive feeling with a product - to help other people</i></p> <p><i>"Unrealistic" TV commercials make LP more memorable; LP omnipresent</i></p> <p><i>Unrealistic shiny hair is preferred over ordinary hair on packaging as it is more appealing</i></p> <p><i>Loyal to LP due to appeal and quality</i></p> <p><i>Has professional</i></p>	<p><b>COBRA:</b> development from consumption to creation: bad experience as triggering situation; Motive: Concern for other consumers</p> <p><b>COBRA:</b> Creation triggered by strongly positive experience (Gensler) Motive: Concern for other consumers combined with Helping (NEW to creation type)</p> <p><b>Brand salience:</b> exaggerated commercials foster brand awareness (especially recognition in supermarket shelves)</p> <p><b>Brand resonance – loyalty:</b> Brand responses: Brand judgements – high quality</p> <p><b>Brand responses:</b> Brand feelings –</p>
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<p><b>about their ads, they frequently mention new formulas or product updates. So yeah, I would say innovative.</b></p> <p>I: Now that we already talked about the company standing behind the brand: would you say that L'Oréal cares about your opinion.</p> <p><b>J: I guess they do. Otherwise they would not have a feeling on how their new products are recognized by their customers and if a new formula works as intended.</b></p> <p>I: And how interested are you in talking and learning about L'Oréal Paris?</p> <p>J: Well, before I buy a new product I definitely take a closer look at the different alternatives. I check on the Internet whether I find any reviews or ratings from which I could learn. And I compare these reviews with those of other products. So whenever there are NEW products, I'm interested in learning about them, yes...</p> <p>I: And which was the last product that you reviewed positively?</p> <p>J: The Extraordinary Oil Shampoo, which is still my favourite product.</p> <p>I: And which aspects did you mention your positive review? Like content wise?</p> <p>J: That I'm use the shampoo over a longer time period now and that I like to use it. I'm satisfied with the product, which is promoted as a product that gives repair to very dry hair and to be honest, I really think that my hair looks more... healthy. So whenever you spent a day in the sun or you coloured your hair and it is getting dry from that, my hair feels stronger after using the oil shampoo.</p> <p>I: So to sum it up you mentioned your experiences with the product but also some product details. But the main focus is on your experience?</p> <p>J: Correct.</p> <p>I: And how frequently do you write reviews in general?</p> <p>J: Hmmm... from time to time. Not on a frequent basis but only when a product turned out to be really positive or negative.</p> <p>I: Okay, this is reasonable. So once you wrote the review, what did you get out of it? Why do you write L'Oréal Paris reviews?</p> <p>J: Well, they brought a new product to the market that I like a lot and then I wanted to share this product highlight with others so that they can use it as well.</p> <p>I: Does this mean that you think about other consumers and how they will interpret your review while writing it?</p> <p>J: <b>Well, if I wouldn't care about other consumers I wouldn't publish my review on a public platform,</b></p>	<p><i>innovativeness based on new formulas/ product updates</i></p> <p><i>Assumes/ considers it necessary that LP cares for consumers opinions</i></p> <p><i>Is interested in learning about NEW products of LP</i></p> <p><i>Mainly mentions own product experiences in review but also some product details</i></p> <p><i>Only writes review when the feeling is strongly positive or negative</i></p> <p><i>Cares for other consumers and wants to share her personal product highlights with</i></p>	<p><b>innovative); Brand meaning: Brand imagery ~ associations → aligned with LP's intended brand identity</b></p> <p><b>Brand responses: Brand judgements – credibility</b></p> <p><b>Brand resonance – engagement with new product launches</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: Creation: Mainly recommender reviews/ some informant elements</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: Creation: Creation of 'extreme' reviews (Gensler et al.); Motive: Extraversion; expressing positive feelings/ venting negative feelings</b></p> <p><b>Motive: Concern for other consumers</b></p>
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<p><b>especially not on a platform like Matas that is so frequently used</b>, but...ehm... rather send a private email or something like that to the company.</p> <p>I: So you are aware of the fact that you might influence other consumers' buying decisions with your review and this is <b>also important to you</b>?</p> <p>J: Yes, exactly!</p> <p>I: Okay, thank you. And how do you feel once you have published your review?</p> <p>J: Hm, it doesn't really give me a special feeling. <b>I simply shared my opinion with others, which is good, but I don't feel excited about that or extremely happy.</b></p> <p>I: Well, you already explained that you definitely keep in mind how your review could affect other consumers. Does the same also hold for the company, meaning that you also consider the company behind the brand when writing your review?</p> <p>J: Yes, you can't even avoid that, both in a positive and a negative context.</p> <p>I: What do you mean by that?</p> <p>J: <b>If I write something positive other potential buyers will most likely rely more on what I wrote rather than what the company says in its ads, so in this regard my review has an impact on the company and its messages.</b></p> <p>I: So is this impact on the company and its messages then part of your overall motivation to write a positive review?</p> <p>J: <b>Hm, I am aware of the impact my review can have on the company but I don't do it to actively promote the company.</b></p> <p>I: All right. And on which platform do you usually publish your review?</p> <p>J: <b>On Matas. Only there. Because this is the platform where I also buy my own products.</b></p> <p>I: Could you please elaborate a bit more why you choose explicitly Matas and not another platform?</p> <p>J: <b>I choose Matas because a wide product range is directly linked to a high number of reviews. So that someone who wants to buy a product can easily find it there and also read the corresponding reviews attached to the product description. So it's an all-in-one platform.</b></p> <p>I: Okay, interesting insight. My next question would be how frequently do you test new products?</p> <p>J: Every couple of weeks.</p> <p>I: And how important is it to you to be up-to-date with the latest beauty trends?</p> <p>J: Well, I'm not that kind of person who frequently buys</p>	<p>them</p> <p>No special feeling after sharing review with others; just wants to share opinion with others</p> <p>Unavoidable impact on the company with each review</p> <p>Awareness for impact of review is not a <u>motivation</u></p> <p>Platform (Matas' retailer website) is chosen because she can also buy her products there</p> <p>Other potential consumers can also read review and buy/order products accordingly</p> <p>Being up-to-date (→ buying) is less important but still tries to see what is</p>	<p>Motive: Concern for other consumers; lack of self-enhancement</p> <p>Missing motive: Lack Helping the company &amp; exert (collective) power over companies</p> <p>Platform choice criteria: Characteristic of retailer website: dual-option: buy &amp; review</p> <p>Characteristic of retailer website: "all-in-one-platform" = dual-option: buy &amp; review</p> <p>Moderate level of personal innovativeness</p>
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<p>magazines to see the latest ads or product tests, but I still try to observe and follow the trends.</p> <p>I: Okay, let's get back to this topic later and talk about Facebook now. For which purpose do you personally use Facebook.</p> <p>J: Oh, well, to get news from all different newspapers and segments, be it politics, lifestyle, sports or travel. And to keep in touch with people from all over the world that I have met over the years.</p> <p>I: Okay, what kind of relationship do you have to these people?</p> <p>J: Well, I either met them during my exchange in high school or the exchange semester in university. Or later on at international conferences that I attended. So I would say the relationship is something between former friends, people you still want to keep in touch with, and colleagues. And... sometimes when I see that a former friends of mine, let's say one of the Australian girls, is travelling through Europe, I message them on Facebook to schedule a "date" (makes quotation marks with her fingers) somewhere. So Facebook shows me what these people are doing and allows me to contact them.</p> <p>I: So would you describe these former friends and colleagues as close or loose acquaintances?</p> <p>J: I would say both!</p> <p>I: And what do you consider when you yourself post something on Facebook?</p> <p>J: In general I post very few things and not very often.</p> <p>I: May I ask why?</p> <p>J: Sure. Well, when I post something, I mainly change my profile picture to ensure that it is not completely outdated. <b>But the main reason is that I don't want to share my private business with all my Facebook friends. If I would like to do that, I would rather use Instagram. I don't do it, but for this purpose Instagram seems to be more appropriate for sharing private pictures as it is all about nice pictures and lifestyle there.</b></p> <p>I: Well, you previously said that you use Facebook for getting the latest news. Did you also like brand pages of beauty brands on Facebook to get updates there?</p> <p>J: No, not yet. So far I mainly follow newspapers or other independent news sources.</p> <p>I: Could you explain why you haven't liked any brand pages yet?</p> <p>J: To be honest, I haven't considered that so far. But sure, why shouldn't you do that as well!?</p> <p>I: It's at least an option (smiles slightly).</p> <p>J: Yes, it now seems super logical to me that all the different brands also have their own pages on</p>	<p>available (→ observing)</p> <p><i>Facebook usage: get informed, socialize with acquaintances</i></p> <p><i>Facebook: Social network consists of (former) friends and colleagues</i></p> <p><i>Facebook: makes few posts herself</i></p> <p><i>Wants to keep private things private; does not use Facebook for personal things, however she considers Instagram as a more appropriate platform for sharing pictures of your private life</i></p> <p><i>No Facebook "follower" of brands yet (has never considered that)</i></p>	<p><i>Uses &amp; gratifications: Facebook: Information, entertainment (consumption focus), social interaction</i></p> <p><i>Social network: strong, 'medium' &amp; weak ties</i></p> <p><i>Facebook: Uses &amp; gratifications: not for posting</i></p> <p><i>Platform choice: Instagram more appropriate for sharing private pictures</i></p> <p><i>COBRA: no consumption of brand information on brand pages</i></p>
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<p>supermarkets or when I pass a hair salon. So then I think, "Ah, this is the product I also use", or when I see other brands from the same company, like Kérastase.</p> <p>I: Well, I think you previously touched this aspect already, but would you say that you prefer L'Oréal Paris over other brands and consider yourself as loyal to the brand?</p> <p>K: Yes! <b>Because I used a lot of different brands for a long time and as I've mentioned before my hair was really damaged and now it's better. Therefore I have used the products now for... four years and would not change them. So I would say that I'm kind of a loyal customer.</b></p> <p>I: Yes, that's true. Not a switching but rather a loyal one.</p> <p>K: Yes.</p> <p>I: So when you just reflect on situations in which you are using the products, what kind of feelings do you get?</p> <p>K: Ehm, I mean I... <b>feel kind of pretty. I really like my hair and I want to keep the long hair. So it gives me a sense of... fashion and I really feel good about it.</b></p> <p>I: You already said that you are satisfied. Are you entirely satisfied or is there anything that you would change if you could?</p> <p>K: No, I mean I've been using the products for a long time now and I've also talked to many hairdressers a lot and don't think that the expensive products they sometimes recommend are better. So I would say that I'm completely satisfied.</p> <p>I: Okay, thank you. And when you think of all these L'Oréal Paris commercials that you can frequently see on television or adverts when you open a magazine: do you know these people that L'Oréal is showing?</p> <p>K: Well, yes, I think they used Heidi Klum a lot for Elnett and ehm... well, I don't really know who they use but normally when I see someone I can recognize the person.</p> <p>I: So recalling is a bit difficult but when you see someone you recognize the person and think, "oh, this is someone I know"?</p> <p>K: Exactly!</p> <p>I: Okay. So no matter who we take now as an example, would you generally say that you admire these people or look up to them?</p> <p>K: Well, as I said before my hair is kind of a sense of fashion for me and I think that someone with nice long hair looks pretty. <b>I can identify with the people they show because they usually have such nice hair so this is why I use the products. So I think I can identify with them to that extent but not in other situations of life.</b></p> <p>I: And identifying means that you can see a bit of yourself in them?</p> <p>K: Yes, I do.</p> <p>I: Would you also say that you look up to them or want to become like them?</p> <p>K: I don't really know... <b>No (energetic)! I don't look up to celebrities, actually. I think they are very pretty but this is not my absolute aim in life (laughs slightly). For me, personally, there are more important things and I would not look up to someone who is pretty, or a</b></p>	<p><i>products mostly in the evenings.</i></p> <p><i>LP first brand that works for her hair; uses hair care products for 4 years, is loyal</i></p> <p><i>Feels pretty when using LP; her hair is a piece of fashion for her</i></p> <p><i>Is completely satisfied with her LP products</i></p> <p><i>Does not know many LP spokesperson by heart but recognizes them when she sees someone</i></p> <p><i>Can identify with spokespersons due to their focus on nice hair but not more than that</i></p> <p><i>No admiration of spokespersons/ celebrities due to different aims in life</i></p>	<p><b>recognition (supermarkets)</b></p> <p><b>Brand responses: Brand judgements – superiority; Brand resonance – loyalty (for hair care)</b></p> <p><b>Brand responses: Brand feelings – self-respect</b></p> <p><b>Brand meaning: Brand performance (meet functional needs)</b></p> <p><b>Brand meaning: Brand imagery: Recognition of spokespersons easier than recalling</b></p> <p><b>Brand meaning: Brand imagery: limited identification with spokespersons</b></p> <p><b>Brand meaning: Brand imagery: No admiration of celebrity endorser</b></p>
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<p>model for example, or a singer. I mean they are very successful people but I look up to other persons. Maybe people in economics or... maybe sports people, actually. Yes, I would say this is more the type of people I would look up to. But not actresses or models.</p> <p>I: Okay. So if you think about the brand L'Oréal Paris and could choose a couple of words or descriptive adjectives, what kind of words would you spontaneously pick to describe the brand?</p> <p>K: <b>I think it's a creative brand... because they bring a lot of... okay, let's say creative and innovative. As there are new products all the time and they also bring some creative new products.</b> There actually has been an ad on YouTube about this hair colouring spray.</p> <p>I: Colorista?</p> <p>K: Yes, that's it. Which I thought was a really creative and innovative product and ehm... what else would I like to say? <b>It kind of feels like home, at least a bit, since I've been using the products for a long time.</b> So, yeah, I think that's basically it.</p> <p>I: So you already mentioned the word "innovative". How would you define innovativeness and what is it that makes a company innovative to you?</p> <p>K: Well, <b>I actually think that a lot of product innovations bring innovativeness but also using modern channels to get in contact with customers. And I know that L'Oréal in general has a couple of different Apps that the customers can use on the Iphone or other phones to get to know the products better and I think this is also something I would definitely consider as innovative.</b></p> <p>I: Okay, thanks a lot for this insight. And to what extent do you think that L'Oréal Paris understand your needs as a consumer?</p> <p>K: I would say to a large extent because for me it was important to find products for my hair to recover and that is what is totally met.</p> <p>I: So what they promised also turned out to be true?</p> <p>K: Yes!</p> <p>I: Okay thanks. Did you ever experience that you got some feedback from the company or have the impression that the company itself is also caring about your opinion as a consumer?</p> <p>K: No, not really. I didn't get any comment by L'Oréal on my online review, so I don't know if they care about my opinion?</p> <p>I: And how eager are you in general to talk and learn about the brand and get the latest news?</p> <p>K: Well, I'm... open, <b>if I can catch any news like mentioned before when I see some advertisements on YouTube, I will watch it. But I'm not actively searching for news because I basically found the products I want to use and I use them regularly and don't intend to switch.</b> So I'm actually not looking for so much new input or information.</p> <p>I: Okay. And when going into more detail with the topic of online reviews: what was the last product of L'Oréal Paris that you wrote a positive review for?</p>	<p><i>Considers LP as creative and innovative brand; often launch new products</i></p> <p><i>LP feels like home</i></p> <p><i>Defines innovativeness based on product innovations and the use of modern communication channels</i></p> <p><i>LP understands her consumer needs</i></p> <p><i>Did not receive any feedback by LP → does not know if they care about her opinion</i></p> <p><i>Willing to learn about LP if she is confronted with information, but does not search for news proactively; uses modern channels</i></p>	<p><b>Brand responses: Brand judgements – credibility (~ innovative); Brand meaning: Brand imagery ~ associations → aligned with LP's intended brand identity</b></p> <p><b>Brand resonance: Brand relationship: "Best friendships" (Fournier)</b></p> <p><b>Brand responses: Brand judgements – credibility (~ innovative); Brand meaning: Brand imagery ~ associations → aligned with LP's intended brand identity</b></p> <p><b>Brand responses: Brand judgements – credibility (consumer-oriented)</b></p> <p><b>No brand-consumer interaction (one-directional communication) [see Jeanette]</b></p> <p><b>Brand resonance – no active brand engagement (regarding news search) due to product loyalty</b></p>
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<p>doesn't reflect on that in detail, right?</p> <p>K: True! So I do it when I'm really satisfied to recommend the service, the product and the company in general, or I do that on the other hand when I'm really dissatisfied. Mostly for a bad service, I never did that for a product, actually. Because I feel that customers can assess product quality better before buying it and everybody should decide for him- or herself. But in the service business a lot of customers cannot assess that beforehand and then I want to warn them. It's not necessary that they have to make the same bad experience.</p> <p>I: And now that you say a beauty product is a more tangible product and that you can more easily assess it in advance, why do you then write a positive review when you are especially satisfied?</p> <p>K: As I said I only do that <b>when I'm extremely satisfied to... recommend the product to other customers, who might have the same problems. So probably they can... or they have the problem and the product is a good solution for them.</b></p> <p>I: This actually leads over to my next question: how do you think other consumers will interpret your positive review?</p> <p>K: Well as I don't write a lot about my personal feelings but more about the product attributes I think the customers will think... about it when interested in buying the products. They will either feel like, "This is also what I'm looking for and she has the same problems as I did. So this probably could be a good solution for me", so I actually think people in that case will be positive about my review. And then there are other people who think "Well, she has the same problem but she likes this and that attribute in a product and I don't", so that might probably make them choose another one. So I think that people generally feel positive about the review because I don't over exaggerate, I mainly describe the features.</p> <p>I: And to what extend is it then important to you that your review will affect other people?</p> <p>K: Not so much! <b>I want to give others a recommendation but I don't win or lose anything in case they choose the product or not (laughs slightly).</b> So my review is something I wanna provide for others and they can decide themselves if this is useful or not.</p> <p>I: And once you have published your review...? Let's say you are sitting down, make the effort to write something, send it out. Is there a special feeling after you have published it?</p> <p>K: Yeah, I feel positive about it. I mean <b>if I write a positive review about something I feel satisfied because I did the review and made a recommendation. So hopefully other people can use it to make their purchase decisions, ehm... but also when I write negative reports I sometimes feel like "Hopefully they will read it" (laughs). I somehow also feel satisfied then that I now expressed my... anger.</b></p> <p>I: Yes. And while you write your positive review, do you also actively think about the company behind the brand</p>		<p>COBRA: Creation of 'extreme' reviews (Gensler et al.); Motive: Concern for other consumers (NEW: in form of 'problem solution')</p>                      <p>COBRA: Creation; Motive: Concern for other consumers but lack of empowerment</p>                      <p>COBRA: Creation; Motive: Concern for other consumers; Extraversion; expressing positive feelings combined with self-enhancement / venting negative feelings</p>
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<p>and how they will consider your review?</p> <p>K: Yeah, it depends on the channel where you express it. I think when you write a review on a channel where a company can really SEE that someone now wrote a review, then I think more about it than when I write a review for example on... let's say Amazon. I don't know if the companies there get a notification or so.</p> <p>I: Which channels do you have in mind when you say the company can see your review?</p> <p>K: I actually think this might hold true more for service providers again. For example when you write a review for doctors, there is a portal called "Yamera" where they get a notification when someone wrote a review and also <b>when you write a review on TripAdvisor, I think the hotels get a DIRECT notification. I'm not sure if this also happens when you review a product on Amazon but I actually... at least for me I feel closer to the company in case of these service provider platforms.</b></p> <p>I: And on which platforms do you usually publish your reviews? The beauty reviews?</p> <p>K: The last one I wrote, I wrote it on social media, on Facebook.</p> <p>I: And why did you chose this platform and not another one?</p> <p>K: Well, it was not actively chosen but I just came across the product there and then thought I could probably write something.</p> <p>I: So there was a trigger on Facebook?</p> <p>K: Yeah. A post.</p> <p>I: Okay. You already mentioned that you are satisfied and not this kind of brand switcher, but how frequently do you test new products?</p> <p>K: Ehm, <b>for make-up products very often, because the different products give you a different style. They have a lot of different colours, so I change regularly. Summer, winter, autumn, spring. Or if I buy a new jacket or get new glasses or whatsoever, then you need a new lipstick. So I change more often, but for the hair products I don't change.</b></p> <p>I: Okay.</p> <p>K: And I also don't really test them.</p> <p>I: Is there a reason why?</p> <p>K: Ehm, as I said, because I'm satisfied so I actually think I cannot find something that is better for a similar price.</p> <p>I: Okay, this is very reasonable. So how important is it to you to be up-to-date with the latest beauty products. So when you talked about a new lipstick when a new season comes across. Is it also important for you to be up-to-date with trends, let's say pink is the new colour this spring?</p> <p>K: <b>No! Not at all (energetic)! I basically try that it fits my clothing and style and I figured out over the last couple of years that red and pinkish colours look better at me than orange ones, so I would not go with an orange trend if there is one (laughs slightly).</b> So for me it's more about my clothing. But it can happen that when they sell a lot of one colour and it happens that I need to buy something of this colour then I might go with the trend, but it's not that I intentionally look for the latest</p>	<p><i>Only considers company when writing her review if the company gets a notification (mainly service platforms); Feels a closer connection with the company when they get a notification whenever a review is written</i></p> <p><i>She writes reviews on Facebook, because she's usually triggered by something or someone else on Facebook → convenience</i></p> <p><i>Being up-to-date (self-driven): only for make-up and not for hair care products</i></p> <p><i>Being up-to-date with the latest trends is not important for her</i></p>	<p><b>COBRA: Creation; Motive: Helping the company (for services; limited for beauty reviews)</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: Development from consumption to creation; choice of platform caused by trigger (post)</b></p> <p><b>Brand resonance; Brand loyalty (for hair care); (Self-driven) personal innovativeness regarding one product category (make-up)</b></p> <p><b>Absence of trend-driven personal innovativeness (see above)</b></p>
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<p>think that it is not so well seen than it was before just because of this crowd of other things. So what I also wanted to say is that there is this problem that a lot of people post a picture on Instagram and they post the same picture on Facebook. And I personally think that it is irrelevant. My close friends or the inner circle, if I can call it like that, they are on Instagram so they see the picture there and of course on Facebook I have more followers, so maybe I wanna show off (laughs slightly) and also show the picture to them but I think a lot of people do that. I also do that from time to time. But we should focus more on the important things. <b>So if you post everything on two channels I feel a bit overwhelmed by these people. I just think to myself, "I don't need to see this picture everywhere. Just choose one channel" and I think that the new channel for pictures has become Instagram.</b></p> <p>I: Yes. And now that you already mentioned this tagging behaviour, would you also do that when you see an interesting brand posting by L'Oréal Paris or a positive review by another consumer? Like tagging your friends in the comment function and indirectly tell them that it might be interesting for them as well?</p> <p>K: In general with these videos and memes, I rarely do that. Maybe ten times in total, so no, I don't think I would do that.</p> <p>I: What distracts you from doing that?</p> <p>K: <b>I feel that if I really want to recommend something to someone, I can tell this personally.</b> So if I would like to recommend this published product to you, for example, I would do that the next time when we see each other. Saying that "You remember, we talked about this and that last time and I saw something interesting for you". Because otherwise I also sometimes think "I don't care and I'm busy now" when someone tags me on Facebook. I don't wanna waste much time on that.</p> <p>I: So you prefer to make a personal product suggestion?</p> <p>K: Yes!</p> <p>I: And when you think about these kind of "brand groups" (forms quotation marks with her fingers) created by all the companies that are present on Facebook: how do you feel when other consumers, so mainly strangers, want to exchange their knowledge or product experiences with you?</p> <p>K: <b>Well, if I'm part of a certain group and someone just texts me and says, "Well, I was wondering if you have some experience on this and that?", I would be open to share my knowledge and I mean, I haven't yet talked about products in this context with other people, but I have done this a lot with people who also wanted to go on exchange.</b> So people asked, "Oh, we have seen that you have been to this university, could you share your opinion about it" and I have always been very willing to share a lot of knowledge and answer all their questions. So I'm sure that I would also do that when someone asks me about a certain product but that has not happened before.</p> <p>I: And it does not matter if the person is a stranger unless</p>	<p><i>disappear in the crowd of other posts</i>  <i>She uses Instagram for her strong social ties</i></p> <p><i>Facebook to "brag"</i></p> <p><i>Considers same content on Facebook and Instagram as irrelevant and overwhelming</i></p> <p><i>Does/would not actively tag friends in brand posts on Facebook</i></p> <p><i>Facebook: Prefers to make product recommendations to friends personally</i></p> <p><i>Does not refrain from recommending a product to strangers if they would ask her</i></p>	<p><i>suitable for sharing pictures anymore (change from creation to consumption of videos/ contribution through tagging)</i>  <i>Instagram: Strong ties; Facebook: Medium/ weak ties</i></p> <p><i>COBRA: contribution: No Tagging</i></p> <p><i>Differentiates between eWOM and WOM dependent on tie-strength of her network (offline: strong ties; online: weak ties)</i></p> <p><i>Recommendation to weak ties if requested</i></p>
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<p>he or she is friendly?</p> <p>K: Yes, that was also the case with the going abroad topic, I didn't know the people. <b>I think if someone is interested in the same things as you are, then you feel that you have some kind of connection and then you also like to share your knowledge because you are interested in the same things kind of</b>, yeah, as I already said (laughs slightly). <b>And the other person chose you because you have the same interest, so in reciprocity I want to give something back.</b> Do you know what I mean?</p> <p>I: Yes, I definitely know what you mean! And even though I think we touched it before, but just to reassure: did you ever receive a feedback on your Facebook posts when you recommended a product to other consumers?</p> <p>K: No.</p> <p>I: Okay. And have you ever commented on a post made by someone else?</p> <p>K: Yes, a lot, but in general and not on beauty products.</p> <p>I: You already mentioned something similar, but would you say that you have something in common with the other users in a certain Facebook group? Such as that you are all brand followers or would you consider you and the others as completely different?</p> <p>K: Well, I feel that with a lot of people you have similarities and differences. It's the same with my very close friends. Some of my close friends also do sports but they are not interested in my other interests, so I think this is very normal. <b>So I feel that if you are all part of this group you have some kind of sense of belonging. You all have that one thing in common, which does not cause that I feel myself very close to everyone, but this is our common basis. So in case that you have a certain need or something, it can get a stronger bond or connection, which I would now not say that I have it to all of them. But we have at least a certain basis.</b></p> <p>I: And you also already mentioned that therefore it is not strange to also share your experiences with strangers, right?</p> <p>K: Right.</p> <p>I: And how important is it in general to you to exchange knowledge with other brand followers? Are you doing that frequently or do you exchange your beauty tips and tricks more with your friends?</p> <p>K: Mostly with friends.</p> <p>I: Okay, is there a reason why? I mean you are open to also help strangers but... not proactively?</p> <p>K: Yeah, exactly, I don't wanna annoy other people with my opinion (sounds a bit embarrassed). I mean I do that rarely, now and then, and otherwise I think that if someone wants to know something, they should ask me. And, ehm, <b>I mean I'm a user of a product so I have a certain knowledge but I'm not an expert on everything and I'm actually a fan of expert knowledge. So I sometimes write user reviews myself but in general I prefer to rely on expert knowledge. Because I mean there is a reason why there are experts in certain</b></p>	<p><i>Feels connected to strangers who share the same product interests; is thus willing to share her knowledge with them</i></p> <p><i>Wants to give something back if people ask for her advice</i></p> <p><i>Has not (yet) commented on a beauty product post by another consumer</i></p> <p><i>Thinks that people of the same group have a "sense of belonging" and that a shared problem could foster this feeling</i></p> <p><i>Mostly exchanges beauty tips with friends</i></p> <p><i>Besides writing some reviews herself (considers herself as somewhat knowledgeable), she prefers to rely on</i></p>	<p><b>Community elements:</b> 'Consciousness of kind' / 'A sense of moral responsibility' = assistance in brand usage</p> <p><b>COBRA:</b> Contribution: Motive: Norm of reciprocity; Sub-motivation of integration &amp; social interaction: Helping</p> <p><b>COBRA:</b> no contribution through commenting on beauty product posts by other consumers (no consumer-consumer interaction in this regard)</p> <p><b>Community elements:</b> 'Consciousness of kind' ~ "sense of belonging"</p> <p><b>Beauty recommendation behaviour depending on tie-strength (focus on strong ties)</b></p> <p><b>COBRA:</b> consumption: preference for expert information over "ordinary consumer" information</p>
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## Lisa

Age: 26 years

Occupation: Working as a sales assistant for Hugo Boss, lives in Copenhagen

Description: Very outgoing, also when it comes to private topics; talkative and opened up fast

Verbatim transcript	Descriptive Coding	Interpretive Coding
<p>I: Hi Lisa, thanks for participating today. I would like to mention something important in the beginning: today I'm interested in your very personal opinions, thoughts and feelings. So there is no right or wrong. Whenever something comes to your mind, feel free to mention it and we will see where it leads us to.</p> <p>L: Okay.</p> <p>I: Perfect. To start with, could you walk us through your daily beauty routine, please? The steps that you do frequently.</p> <p>L: So what I do frequently is the following: In the mornings, I put my make-up on, some mascara, do my eyebrows, contouring whenever I had to go to work, so actually the entire procedure (laughs). Additionally, I use some special skin care products and make-up remover... and... what else belongs to my beauty routine? Well, ehm, I use a hair treatment at least once or sometimes twice a week for dry hair. I mean, I have coloured hair so you frequently have to use hair care products to keep them alive (laughs slightly). What else? Ehm, I brush my teeth three times a day with a whitening toothpaste and... in addition I put on a face mask two to three times a week to clear my skin. I guess that's it for now...</p> <p>I: Great. And in which of the previously described steps do you use products of L'Oréal Paris?</p> <p>L: For hair care. L'Oréal shampoo and treatment.</p> <p>I: What kind of hair care products in particular?</p> <p>L: Those of Elvital.</p> <p>I: So the interesting question now is: how did you get in touch with online reviews?</p> <p>L: Oh, well, to explain it properly I have to start in the past and talk a bit longer (laughs).</p> <p>I: No problem, I'm curious!</p> <p>L: Good! So, the reason I started to rate or review products was the following...ehm, after using some medicine I was kind of desperate as I lost lots of my hair. Therefore, I was searching online for products that will make it grow again. I know it sounds odd, but we are women, right? We want to have full hair. And you have probably seen it as well, but sometimes on Facebook you get these ads of something called "Hair Jazz". So I checked that out and also started to join special groups addressing this topic on Facebook to exchange some knowledge with others. What other people experienced and if the products worked, and if so how well. So due to this I started buying these products and afterwards I wanted to share my experience as well. Because what</p>	<p><i>Extensive beauty routine; necessity for hair care as her hair is dyed</i></p> <p><i>Uses LP in daily/ weekly hair care</i></p> <p><i>Reading of online reviews was triggered by hair problem and the hope to find a solution online</i></p>	<p><i>Heavy user of beauty products</i></p> <p><b>Brand meaning: Brand imagery - usage situation</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: consumption: Motive: Information combined with pre-purchase advice-seeking (NEW: in form of problem solution)</b> [see Simone]</p>

<p>really helped me to make my decision was the experience of other consumers. They sometimes documented the progress by showing pictures of their hair and then saying “after 1 week”, “after 4 weeks” and so on. <b>So what I thought to myself was that other people probably also doubt if the products work as intended and even though there might be ten negative reviews saying that the products do not work, I wanted to write a positive one as they really worked for me. To motivate them to try the products as well.</b></p> <p>I: It makes perfect sense that you read reviews first before you purchase a specialised product such as the one you talked about.</p> <p>L: Yes, but also for less specialized products. For example when you are unsure whether you buy a new face mask or not. <b>If you look at the L’Oréal series with the three different colours – green, black and red – which come in this glass box, but also cost 80 Kroner, you ask yourself, “Is it really worth buying such an expensive face mask, which you should use two to three times a week so that one box is not even long-lasting, even though there are the cheap ones in the little plastic bags?”</b></p> <p>I: Indeed, that’s very true.</p> <p>L: So for this reason I also check out reviews for less specialized products that are not expensive in general but compared with other products in the same category, they are.</p> <p>I: And what finally motivated you to write positive reviews yourself?</p> <p>L: In my case the specialized shampoo I talked about worked really well. <b>And in the Facebook groups that I joined I read that many consumers were unsatisfied so that they complained about it in the group. This again deterred other people, who seemed to be interested, from buying it. So they commented on these negative reviews and wrote that they were close to buying it but will not do it due to the negative experience. So I felt the need to encourage them to still buy it and started to share my visible progress in these groups plus I commented on their comments as well to directly tell them that I am a positive example, that I’m more than satisfied and would buy it any time again. And for my comments I often received positive feedback, meaning that these people commented again saying, “Hey, you were right, I’m super happy that I tried it thanks to you.”</b></p> <p>I: Oh that’s nice!</p> <p>L: Yes, it is, <b>and it kept me going.</b></p> <p>I: If we go back to L’Oréal Paris: in which situations do you think of the brand?</p> <p>L: In the shower! As previously mentioned, I use their shampoos and treatments, sometimes even overnight. So, yes, I think about it in the shower because this is where I wash and treat my hair, right?!</p> <p>I: Yes (laughs slightly).</p> <p>L: Or else I also used to buy their make-up products BUT</p>	<p><i>Writing of reviews was triggered by the positive experience and the wish to help/ motivate others</i></p> <p><i>Writes reviews for specialized and non-specialized beauty products; considers certain LP beauty products as expensive compared to other products in the same category</i></p> <p><i>Consumes specialized/ non-specialized reviews to affect choice of purchase decision</i></p> <p><i>Facebook: Comments on other people’s review posts and also shares her own progress</i></p> <p><i>Feedback through comments keeps her going</i></p> <p><i>Thinks of LP in the shower where she uses it</i></p>	<p><b>COBRA: creation; Motive: Concern for other consumers; expressing positive feelings &amp; empowerment (NEW: in form of being able to motivate others “to try the product = encouragement)</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: Creation; No differentiation in review behavior between specialized and non-specialized products [see Julia p.1]; Beauty products as (personally) high-involvement products;</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: Consumption: No differentiation in review behavior between specialized and non-specialized products [see Julia p.1];</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: contribution through commenting and creation of own UGC (progress documentation)</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: Contribution: Motive: Self-enhancement combined with self-assurance (NEW: in form of ‘reassurance’ that it is helpful); Feedback feature is valuable</b></p> <p><b>Brand salience – brand recall in usage situation</b></p>
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<p>their make-up colours never matched my skin colour. In winter times I'm more this kind of "snow white" person, you know (laughs). So for this reason I switched to something more expensive that finally matched my skin colour.</p> <p>I: And regarding their hair care products, would you say that you prefer to use the Elvital products and consider yourself as loyal to L'Oréal?</p> <p>L: Let me quickly walk mentally through my bathroom... oh, well, I use to buy two to three brands regularly. So from one brand I buy the shampoo, from the other one the conditioner and from the third one the treatment. And once something is empty I switch around. So even though I do not solely use L'Oréal, they belong to one of my three basic brands to which I'm loyal, yes!</p> <p>I: Okay, that's for sure a certain degree of loyalty. Do you also get some special feeling when using L'Oréal products?</p> <p>L: Well, regarding my hair I'm satisfied with most of the products I've tried and feel like they have a good quality and that they really achieve a visible result – except for ONE product! I really hated that product but didn't want to throw it away immediately. So I asked a friend if she wants to use it up but she was equally disappointed. I guess I can tell you: it was this hair mask in form of a foam but that made my hair really sticky and it looked disgusting but it had no caring effect at all. But with all other products, I'm satisfied.</p> <p>I: This would have been my next question. So with the other L'Oréal products you are satisfied.</p> <p>L: Yes, exactly.</p> <p>I: Okay. Let's get to another topic: commercials. When you think about the commercials of L'Oréal Paris, do you know any of their spokespersons or celebrities shown on television?</p> <p>L: Ehm... yes, I think so. A couple of them. Don't they work with Blake Lively?</p> <p>I: Yes, they do.</p> <p>L: And this new hair colour... what was it called again...? Prodigy? There they show these Victoria's Secrets models. Karlie Kloss and the other one with the darker skin. I don't know her name.</p> <p>I: That's not a problem at all. It's no test today (smiles). I just wanted you to reflect upon some of these people to now ask you whether you look up to any of these celebrities or admire them.</p> <p>L: Hmm (sounds really sceptical)... admiring... no, not necessarily.</p> <p>I: No problem, but could you tell me why not?</p> <p>L: Well, <b>I personally consider adverts as more trustworthy when no celebrities are in focus. Simply because... you can't identify with these celebrities who have a completely different lifestyle than you have. And you are never wearing such a perfect make-up, like they do, all day long. Even though they show this perfect make-up and pretend that it's done with their products, that's never the case.</b> If we would</p>	<p><i>Switches between three brands (LP included) regularly but not to others</i></p> <p><i>For her LP provides good quality; is satisfied with most of the products she tried/ is satisfied with all currently used LP products</i></p> <p><i>Does only know a couple of spokespersons by heart but seems to recognize them while watching the commercial</i></p> <p><i>No admiration of spokespersons/ celebrities due to different lifestyles → no identification</i></p>	<p><b>Brand resonance – certain degree of loyalty, but not unlimited</b></p> <p><b>Brand responses: Brand judgements – quality; Brand meaning: Brand performance (meet functional needs)</b></p> <p><b>Brand meaning: Brand imagery: Recognition of spokespersons easier than recalling recalling to a certain degree possible</b></p> <p><b>Brand meaning: Brand imagery: no identification with spokespersons, no admiration of celebrity endorser</b></p>
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<p>have an entourage of personal stylists we might be able to look like the celebrities in these ads, but <b>this is not the case in real life</b>. So this is why I wouldn't look up to them. <b>I would rather prefer to see an ordinary woman using make-up products in her tough daily life. You know, this kind of woman that manages to look natural but good while managing her life and the lives of her five children.</b> In this case I would say it is worth admiring her for her talent to manage life and making the best out of herself at the same time. But this does not account for these celebrities, no.</p> <p>I: This would have been my next question to what extend you can identify yourself with these celebrities, but you already answered that one as well (smiles).</p> <p>L: Exactly, not that much.</p> <p>I: So if you could choose a couple of words or adjectives to describe L'Oréal Paris, which would you use?</p> <p>L: Hmm, good quality, somehow expensive regarding the make-up products and appropriate for the hair care products, ehm... everything works as promised or described on the package, despite this hair foam (laughs). What else...?</p> <p>I: So authentic would be another word, meaning that it works as promised?</p> <p>L: Ah yes, that was the word I was searching for, exactly! I guess these three descriptions sum it up quite well.</p> <p>I: If you would now think about the products again, would you say that they are more innovative or traditional?</p> <p>L: <b>I would rather call them traditional, to be honest.</b></p> <p>I: Interesting, why?</p> <p>L: <b>I feel like other beauty brands are usually a step ahead. Such as Maybelline, this brand is younger, on track with the latest trends, or sets even new trends compared to L'Oréal.</b></p> <p>I: Okay, Maybelline also belongs to the overall L'Oréal Group. Do you also have another completely independent brand in mind?</p> <p>L: Ehm, I don't know if this one is independent and I also don't know how to pronounce it, but it is written "NYX". I think it is American and always has the latest trends or newest technology. For example all these contouring products that everybody uses right now or these powders that have no colour anymore but are transparent. This is a <b>really cool technology</b> as you do not have to search for your matching skin colour, as I once did for my very light skin, but can use it no matter how tanned you are. But <b>NYX seems to be younger as L'Oréal Paris. So maybe the brands that appeal to younger people are more innovative than those that have rather adult consumers.</b></p> <p>I: Now that we found out that you consider L'Oréal Paris as more traditional, do you still feel that they care for your needs as a consumer?</p> <p>L: <b>Yes, BUT: I have to admit that other brands do that as well.</b> So in case that you are searching for something that makes your hair look healthier, <b>all brands selling a conditioner or treatment for dry hair understand your</b></p>	<p><i>She would rather prefer to see ordinary women in tough situations with whom she can identify</i></p> <p><i>Describes LP as providing high-quality, expensive or appropriately priced depending on product category, working as promised</i></p> <p><i>Considers LP as rather traditional and less "young" compared with other brands who catch up with/ set the latest trends, such as Maybelline or NYX</i></p> <p><i>LP understands her needs but is not the only brand doing so; other brands do it as</i></p>	<p><b>Brand meaning:</b> <b>Brand imagery:</b> <b>Trustworthiness is negatively related with celebrities</b></p> <p><b>Brand responses:</b> <b>Brand judgements – quality; Brand meaning: Brand performance (meet functional needs)</b></p> <p><b>Brand responses:</b> <b>Brand judgements – credibility (~ rather traditional); Brand meaning: Brand imagery ~ associations → misaligned with LP's intended brand identity</b></p> <p><b>Brand responses:</b> <b>Brand judgements – credibility (consumer-oriented) BUT:</b></p>
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<p><b>needs. So L'Oréal understands my needs but they are not the only ones.</b></p> <p>I: In the beginning you mentioned that you already shared your opinion on Facebook. Have you also done this for L'Oréal products and if so, have you ever gotten feedback by the company itself?</p> <p>L: Yes, also for L'Oréal, but so far I never got feedback by the company.</p> <p>I: Just because I'm curious: what is your favourite L'Oréal Paris product right now?</p> <p>L: I don't know the perfect name, but it is this green Elvital shampoo with clay. So far I only knew clay from face masks but it turned out to be also good for my hair.</p> <p>I: Yes, that's kind of interesting that clay nowadays also plays a role in hair care. And how interested are you in general to talk about the brand or learn more about L'Oréal Paris?</p> <p>L: Well, I'm <b>definitely interested. I also follow them on Instagram to see what they launched recently. For this reason I prefer Instagram over Facebook, to be honest. Because Instagram also gives me the opportunity to follow bloggers who frequently test new lipsticks or something else. I like to watch these videos more than reading about new products because they directly show you how the product works.</b></p> <p>I: But if we stick to the written words right now: what was the last product you reviewed positively?</p> <p>L: Ehm, I actually wrote something positive about the shampoo with clay. The one I talked about. That it really works and cleans my hair properly without making it dry. Because oftentimes cleansing leads to either dry skin or dry hair, at least from what I experienced before. So for this product I mentioned that I'm satisfied.</p> <p>I: So you highlighted your personal experience and feelings with regard to the product?</p> <p>L: Yes, exactly!</p> <p>I: And how often do you write these reviews in general?</p> <p>L: I have to admit not that often. Not because I'm too lazy to write something, but <b>I only write a positive review when I'm super satisfied. Like a lot.</b> These are the moments in which I think that other consumers should not make the mistake and to not try the product. <b>Or, when the opposite is the case</b>, meaning that I'm disappointed, to make the mistake and buy it. But when I tried a couple of new products, I guess three to four reviews a month.</p> <p>I: Oh, I actually thought you will say something less than that.</p> <p>L: Well, it all depends on what you call frequently. There are some months during which I test a lot of new products so that I write about all of these that satisfied me and then there are months during which I don't need anything new, so I have no new input or experience to write about.</p> <p>I: So overall: what is your motivation to take the time and write a positive review?</p> <p>L: <b>My motivation is that I want to share my positive</b></p>	<p>well</p> <p>No feedback by LP on Facebook</p> <p>Eager to learn more about LP; prefers Instagram over Facebook for learning about/ being up-to-date with LP</p> <p>Mentions personal experience in her reviews</p> <p>Only writes review when the feeling is strongly positive or negative</p> <p>Triggered by satisfaction</p> <p>Motivated to share</p>	<p>understanding needs is something general and not attached to LP only</p> <p>No brand-consumer interaction (one-directional communication) [see Jeanette &amp; Katrin]</p> <p>Brand resonance; engagement; Uses &amp; gratifications: Instagram; Consumption: Information ~ following bloggers</p> <p>COBRA: Creation; Recommender reviews</p> <p>COBRA: Creation of 'extreme' reviews (Gensler et al.); Motive: Extraversion; expressing positive feelings/ venting negative feelings</p> <p>COBRA: Creation; Motive: Concern for other consumers</p>
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<p><b>experiences with others because vice versa I'm also influenced by the opinions of other consumers.</b> As we see in the case of this specialized shampoo for hair growth. <b>And I have to admit that the positive reviews have a higher value for me than the negative ones.</b> So when there are only a few positive reviews and these people write, "Hey, I was satisfied and would recommend you to try it as well. You have nothing to lose, just give it a chance", I would rather give it a try than listening to the bad reviews. But when there are ONLY positive ones it is not really trustworthy. <b>So I want to motivate or encourage other people, who are in doubt, to give a good product a try so that they will become equally satisfied than me.</b></p> <p>I: Okay, great. And how would you think do other consumers feel or judge about your reviews?</p> <p>L: <b>Many people told me that my shampoo reviews were helpful. And also thanked me that I was so kind to share my experience and sometimes they even defended me against critics.</b> When these critics commented on my review and said that this is not true bla bla, they defended me and said that this is my personal opinion and this cannot be right or wrong. Meaning that when it worked for me, they can't say it didn't because it is a very personal... feeling. And another woman once commented that it also worked for and that she only tried it because of my recommendation. So overall there is positive and negative feedback, but most of it was positive so far (smiles).</p> <p>I: On which platform did this happen?</p> <p>L: That was on Facebook.</p> <p>I: Okay, thanks. I just wanted to get it right. But yes, it makes sense that it was in social media as other people commented on your review and discussed it.</p> <p>L: True.</p> <p>I: And how important is it to you to see how others value your review? In form of likes or comments?</p> <p>L: <b>I consider likes a bit but comments are more important to me. And I'm happier when I get a positive comment that says that my review was helpful. It's somehow nice to be supported in your own opinion.</b></p> <p>I: As you take the effort and time to write your review: how do you feel once you have published it?</p> <p>L: Good? (laughs) I guess it would be dramatic of I would sit down and cry and think "Oh no, now you shared half of your private life with these guys" (sounds ironically). <b>I somehow feel like I helped others with a decision-making.</b></p> <p>I: So what is it that gives you the feeling that you were supportive or helpful?</p> <p>L: The impression that another person might be less in doubt after reading my review, simply because she has the opportunity to get another external opinion. Because we all know the feeling when we are searching for answers. Nobody would do that if the decision would be unimportant, <b>so in case that someone makes the effort</b></p>	<p><i>positive experiences with others as she is also influenced by positive reviews herself</i></p> <p><i>Wants to encourage other people to try a good product to make them satisfied</i></p> <p><i>Receives positive feedback for Facebook reviews and is defended by critics</i></p> <p><i>Is happy about positive feedback comments (prefers comments over likes on Facebook)</i></p> <p><i>Feels as a supporter in others' decision-making</i></p> <p><i>Wants to provide</i></p>	<p><i>combined with norm of reciprocity; Sub-motivation of integration &amp; social interaction: Helping (NEW to creation type)</i> [see Katrin p.9]</p> <p><i>COBRA: creation; Motive: Concern for other consumers combined with empowerment (NEW: in form of being able to motivate others "to try the product = encouragement)</i></p> <p><i>Motive: Creation: Social interaction; Community element: "Sense of moral responsibility" by other members to defend her against critics</i></p> <p><i>COBRA: Creation; Motive: Self-enhancement</i></p> <p><i>COBRA: Creation; Motive: Concern for other consumers combined with sub-motivation of integration &amp; social interaction: Helping (NEW to creation type)</i></p> <p><i>COBRA: Creation; Motive: Concern for</i></p>
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<p>to search there should also be some answers available. So that I can be an external supporter in the decision-making process; a supporter who really tells a personal story from which you can extract something rather than a single sentence like “It was good”. That does not really help me. And I want to distinguish myself from those people who solely go online to share their negative feelings and describe in detail what was bad just to get rid of their anger.</p> <p>I: While you are writing the review, do you also consider the impact of your opinion on the company that stands behind the brand or product?</p> <p>L: Not really! I mainly do it for other users.</p> <p>I: Okay. I know that we already talked about the choice of platforms, but which platforms do you choose frequently to publish your review on?</p> <p>L: There are actually two: Facebook and Instagram. And sometimes also on Amazon. I have to admit that I mainly read lots of reviews on Amazon, simply because there are plenty of reviews on each product. Therefore, I also write a few there, but less often than on Facebook or Instagram. Because on Facebook there are also special groups for the application of certain products which I joined and consult from time to time.</p> <p>I: So you choose Facebook because of these groups?</p> <p>L: Yes, these are groups that deal with very special topics, for example the usage of certain shampoos. Or there is a group addressing Eos lip care. So I write my review in these groups because I know that the audience is interested and actively searching for information on the application or usage of a particular product. So an exclusive audience so to say.</p> <p>I: When we talk about Facebook: what is your overall purpose for using it?</p> <p>L: Mainly to remain informed about the lives of my friends and some loose contacts that you stalk on Facebook from time to time (laughs slightly).</p> <p>I: And how often do you share something on your social media accounts?</p> <p>L: In earlier times or nowadays? Because nowadays I post less actively on Facebook but in earlier times I could have told you that that I shared something three to five times a week, whereas nowadays maybe once a month.</p> <p>I: How come that you decreased the number of posts?</p> <p>L: Because I changed to Instagram. In my opinion, Instagram is faster and less static. There, you always see something new and I have the impression that people read or see your posts more often than on Facebook. Especially the younger generation comments way more on Instagram than on Facebook.</p> <p>I: And when you personally share something on Facebook or Instagram, is there anything that you consider in advance? Something that might support or distract you from posting?</p>	<p>answers if someone searches &amp; be an “external supporter”; provides details</p> <p>Wants to spread positive feelings to counter the negative ones spread by others</p> <p>Mostly writes reviews on Facebook and Instagram (social media), but also Amazon (there her main focus is on reading)</p> <p>Writes reviews in Facebook groups because of the interaction with like-minded others</p> <p>Facebook usage: remain informed about lives of friends</p> <p>Facebook: reduced her amount of posts over the years</p> <p>Changed from Facebook to Instagram to share pictures</p>	<p>other consumers combined with the norm of reciprocity (~ only if people contribute there are answers available)</p> <p>COBRA: Creation; Motive: Expressing positive emotions combined with a concern for other consumers (NEW: as she spreads positivity for others); Missing motive: Helping the company</p> <p>Platform choice for creation (COBRA) of reviews: social media; for consumption: Amazon/ retailer website</p> <p>COBRA: Creation; Motive: Social interaction; Brand resonance – community; Community elements: ‘Consciousness of kind’/ ‘shared rituals and tradition (storytelling)</p> <p>Uses &amp; gratifications for Facebook: Focus on social interaction with social ties, information; Assumption: uses &amp; gratifications have changed; Facebook now serves mainly consumption purpose &amp; less often creation [see Katrin p.7]</p> <p>Facebook; Assumption: uses &amp; gratifications: not suitable for sharing pictures anymore; Instagram more appropriate [see Katrin p.7]</p>
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<p>L: Ehm, when I share something negative, I try to formulate it in a way that does not give a really bad impression of myself. Especially when it comes to your political opinion or certain values that are important to you. With regard to these topics, I was more willing to share my opinion in earlier times, because now that we are grown up and want to start working for a company, it can happen that they check your Facebook profile before. And you never know how good they are in checking it or what they might stumble upon in the groups. I'm not afraid to give my opinion but I also don't want to be misunderstood and this can easily happen with a post or comment that is not seen in context. And for written contributions there might be multiple ways of interpretation. So due to this, I think about my words a bit longer and choose them carefully. And I have to admit that I also check the spelling for the same reason. It would be somehow embarrassing to be a well-educated person but to make spelling mistakes on social media (laughs slightly).</p> <p>I: Oh, yes, I agree. So you also indirectly consider you network or the potential receivers of your post?</p> <p>L: Among other aspects, yes. I'm definitely thinking about how they might perceive it but due to the fact that 90% of my posts are not polarizing, like pictures of my holidays or your first day at work or something like that, <b>the receivers are a bit less important to me. It's rather the content and the way it is presented.</b></p> <p>I: Okay, I get that. But in case that you see an interesting brand post or a positive product review by another consumer, are you willing to tag your friends in the comments? Simply to indirectly tell them, "Hey, I've seen this and it could be also interesting for you"...</p> <p>L: Yes, I have done this several times. To tell them that they should also look at this.</p> <p>I: Well, we already talked about these specialized Facebook groups and there are also Facebook pages where individual brands present themselves.</p> <p>L: Yes.</p> <p>I: When you think about the other group members or people who follow the same brands than you do, how do you feel about them? What is your "relationship" (forms quotation marks with her fingers) with them?</p> <p>L: <b>I respect them and consult them when I need a product-related information.</b> So I consider their opinions and only in case that they say something that I really can't support, I make a corresponding comment. I once, and it really happened only once, caused a real shit storm on the Facebook page of a vegan cook. Since then I rather keep quiet.</p> <p>I: What happened?</p> <p>L: Oh god, don't ask me. I once liked this page even though I'm not a vegan. However, I like to cook without meat from time to time and these vegan recipes sounded good. But then, one day, he posted something REALLY stupid saying that everybody who drinks milk indirectly kills little cows...ehm, calves, because they are separated</p>	<p><i>Is concerned about her image on Facebook; considers impression on future employer</i></p> <p><i>Does not want to be misunderstood/ misinterpreted and thus chooses her words carefully</i></p> <p><i>Is even more concerned with content than with receivers of her posts</i></p> <p><i>Facebook: Tags friends to give recommendation</i></p> <p><i>Consults Facebook groups for product-related use</i></p> <p><i>Once caused a real shit storm</i></p>	<p><b>Platform choice criteria: indirect consideration of social ties (audience), especially weak ties or even no ties like future employer</b></p> <p><b>Platform choice criteria: Focus more on presentation of content than social ties</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: Contribution: recommendations through tagging (mainly in official brand posts)</b></p> <p><b>Facebook: uses &amp; gratifications/ Community elements: Assistance in the use of the brand = 'Sense of moral responsibility'</b></p> <p><b>Negative outcome of social interaction with weak ties</b></p>
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<p>from their mothers at an early age to milk the mothers. So really an extreme opinion that is only shared to make his extreme followers happy. And then I wasn't able to keep quiet and countered that someone who also posts pictures in his expensive car with leather seats is not better than someone who drinks milk, especially as milk is good for young children and their bones. Because being an extreme vegan and having leather seats is not aligned for me. And afterwards this vegan community bombed me with a real shit storm, asking how I could support mass animal farming and if I would be so disgusting to also drink breast milk of human women and all these incredibly crazy comments. So whenever I went online and opened Facebook I got the notification that there were 200 new comments within one hour. That was a bit too much for me. Since then I sometimes actively withhold my opinion to avoid another shit storm. By the way, as a consequence I was thrown out of this group (seems to be a bit embarrassed).</p> <p>I: I totally understand that this was a really unpleasant experience. So what would you do when other consumers would proactively ask for your opinion about a beauty product? Would you then respond to them?</p> <p>L: <b>If they make the effort to text me, I would like to help wherever I can.</b></p> <p>I: And have you ever received any feedback for this?</p> <p>L: Yes. Often very thankful and positive comments or messages. <b>And I also dropped a nice comment whenever someone else helped me, simply to give something back.</b></p> <p>I: Would you say that you have something in common with these people?</p> <p>L: Whenever I really feel attached to a great product, I would say that. <b>As we all share the passion for the same product or brand and the characteristics that this product addresses.</b> Like with the specialized hair shampoo, we all had some hair loss problems, which unites you somehow. <b>So these people are sometimes not only like-minded, but even share the same problems or feelings.</b></p> <p>I: And how does it feel to share your experience with strangers compared to sharing it with friends? Are there any differences?</p> <p>L: No, not really! <b>Whatever I tell them I would also tell my friends or I've even already done that.</b></p> <p>I: Okay, so to what extent is it also important for you to exchange your knowledge and experiences with strangers; in addition to talking to friends and family?</p> <p>L: From time to time it is quite valuable to get an objective opinion and probably also an opinion that has a completely different perspective. Because usually you have a lot in common with your family and friends so that your opinions might be similar. So it can't be bad to get some new thoughts here and there.</p> <p>I: Thank you very much, Lisa. That's it for today. I feel like I got really good insights and as you said, also some new perspectives. Thank you!</p> <p>L: You are welcome and nice to hear.</p>	<p><i>Wants to give something back if people make the effort to ask for her advice</i></p> <p><i>Makes nice comments to "give something back"</i></p> <p><i>Feels connected to strangers who share the same product interests</i></p> <p><i>Tells strangers the same as friends</i></p>	<p><b>COBRA:</b> Contribution: Motive: Norm of reciprocity; Sub-motivation of integration &amp; social interaction: Helping</p> <p><b>COBRA:</b> Contribution: Motive: Norm of reciprocity</p> <p><b>Community elements:</b> 'Consciousness of kind'/ 'A sense of moral responsibility' ~ helping each other/ solve problems through brand recommendations</p> <p><b>No differentiation between weak and strong ties regarding social interaction/ helping motivation</b></p>
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## Mara

Age: 27 years

Occupation: Tax consultant, working in Copenhagen

Description: talkative; elaborates on her answers; tends to repeat herself; detail-oriented & private

Verbatim transcript	Descriptive Coding	Interpretive Coding
<p>I: Hi Mara, thank you very much for taking the time today. Just a brief introduction in advance: there is no right or wrong, I'm just interested in how YOU think and how YOU feel and yeah, let's just start and everything else will naturally develop.</p> <p>M: Okay, all right.</p> <p>I: Well, the first question I would like to ask you is a very general question. Could you please describe how your daily beauty routine looks like?</p> <p>M: My daily beauty routine... Well, I wake up and go to the bathroom. There I wash my face with a cleansing product, afterwards I use a facial cream before I finally apply my make-up. And when washing my hair I also use hair care products.</p> <p>I: Okay, and during the steps you previously described: where do L'Oréal Paris products play a role?</p> <p>M: (thinks for a while) In the mornings?</p> <p>I: You described your morning procedure so far, but you can of course also talk about evenings.</p> <p>M: Okay, because in the evenings I frequently use a face mask by L'Oréal. 2-3 times a week, so in this case L'Oréal definitely plays a role. Or, when thinking about my make-up routine, I also use L'Oréal products.</p> <p>I: What kind of make-up product do you think of?</p> <p>M: Actually, right now I'm testing a great new matte lipstick that has been launched just recently.</p> <p>I: Now that you talked about testing, let's talk about today's topic: online reviews and opinion sharing. In this regard, my first question would be how you got in touch with online reviews for the first time?</p> <p>M: Well, I think that was years ago when I was searching for products on the Internet myself. And at some point I stumbled upon reviews and star rating by other consumers on the websites of different retailers. <b>I then read and considered these reviews for my product choice and I actually thought it was insightful that other consumers, independent of the company's product description, expressed their personal opinions about the product.</b> I think I mainly checked Amazon at that time.</p> <p>I: Okay, and what kind of products have that been?</p> <p>M: It all started with searching for information on electronic goods, such as TVs or at that time the first smartphones, so definitely quite complex and expensive products. But nowadays it is more or less the usual procedure for me to check a couple of reviews before buying products from nearly any product category.</p>	<p><i>Frequently applies LP's face mask</i></p> <p><i>Currently tests a recently launched LP lipstick</i></p> <p><i>First got in touch with reviews when searching for a product; started with reading reviews and checking star ratings; Reason for review reading: pre-selection based on honest opinion; Started review reading for expensive electronic goods but</i></p>	<p><i>Frequent user of a LP skin care product</i></p> <p><i>Early adopter ( → recently launched) of a product [see Jeanette]</i></p> <p><b>Development: COBRA: started with consumption: star ratings/ corresponding reviews on Amazon; Advantage of reviews: independent means of opinions/ experiences; Motive: Information</b></p>

<p>Because...hm...independent of the price you can find lots of reviews and people are happy to share their opinions.</p> <p>I: And how did you get in touch with beauty reviews in particular, which are less complex and expensive as those products that you mentioned earlier?</p> <p>M: <b>Just because the opportunity exists and it became super easy to quickly inform yourself about beauty products from your couch at home before you do the shopping. So you can skip the step of going to a shop</b> for the first time just to get some consultancy on which product is good or bad but you can make your mind based on other peoples' honest opinions. So these reviews can already steer your decision in a certain direction.</p> <p>I: Just to get it right: how come that you also take the effort and time to read reviews in advance when you buy a beauty product that costs, let's say 50 Kroner, instead of buying a TV that is way more expensive? Do you have the feeling that the effort you make and the insight you get are balanced?</p> <p>M: Actually yes! Because the beauty products I buy are everyday products which I use on a very regular basis and.. ehm... <b>I really want to be satisfied with this kind of product every day. And especially with beauty products that cause a result visible for other people, either in form of a nice make-up or bad skin if the product is not working as promised, it makes much sense to me to check them in advance. And to read some reviews because I use them on a daily basis, even though they are less expensive.</b></p> <p>I: So far we talked a lot about reading reviews but how come that you also started to actively write your own reviews?</p> <p>M: <b>Simply because I saw how much I personally got out of reading other peoples' reviews, which helped me a lot to make a decision. So, yeah.. I decided to do the same and give other people the opportunity to consider my experience with the product</b> and figure out what my attitude towards the product is. <b>Especially review portals can only exist when a lot of people contribute. So I told myself that once I can read a review I can also write one myself. I guess this kind of thinking is the reason why review writing got so common and why more and more people start doing that.</b> And yes, that's the way of working of all kinds of review portals for me: if I want to consider other peoples' opinions I have to be equally fair and share mine as well.</p> <p>I: We already talked about L'Oréal Paris but now I would like to know in which situations you think about the brand or consider it?</p> <p>M: In which situations?</p> <p>I: Yes.</p> <p>M: Well, in buying situations, when I want to get a new product or when one of my current products is empty. So then I have to ask myself "Do I want to buy the exact same product again or do I want to test a new one?" Then</p>	<p><i>now does it for nearly every product category for a first check</i></p> <p><i>Review writing at home takes less effort than getting consultancy at a shop</i></p> <p><i>Beauty products are used on a daily basis and cause a visible results → considers beauty products as worth checking and equal to products from other categories</i></p> <p><i>Benefits from other people's reviews and wants to give them the same opportunity</i></p> <p><i>Started to write own reviews based on the way review portals work (in her opinion): you benefit from other people's reviews so you should also write one yourself</i></p> <p><i>Thinks of LP when in need of a new product</i></p>	<p><b>COBRA:</b> consumption of reviews requires less effort compared with getting consultancy at a shop ~ convenience</p> <p><i>Beauty products as (personally) high-involvement products [see Lisa p.2];</i></p> <p><b>COBRA:</b> Consumption: No differentiation in review behavior between specialized and non-specialized products [see Lisa &amp; Julia]</p> <p><b>COBRA: Creation:</b> Motive: Concern for other consumers combined with Norm of reciprocity &amp; Helping (NEW to creation type)</p> <p><b>COBRA: Creation:</b> Motive: Norm of reciprocity ("be equally fair" combined with Social pressure ("I have to share mine as well", "the way of working")</p> <p><b>Brand salience:</b> thinks of LP when</p>
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<p>I think more about the brand than in my normal daily life or when I'm at work...</p> <p>I: And are there situations for which you would think of L'Oréal Paris stronger than in other situations? You mentioned in the beginning that you use the face mask, so that's a skin care product. But the product portfolio of L'Oréal Paris is very broad and ranges from skin care, to hair care or make-up. In this regard, are there any situations for which you would prefer L'Oréal Paris products over those of other brands?</p> <p>M: Well, <b>in the situations in which I use them now, like skin care and make-up, I think of the brand again and again and would prefer these products because I appreciate the brand.</b> But for hair care I don't use it right now and wouldn't consider to switch brands as I'm happy with what I'm using right now.</p> <p>I: So in those situations in which you use L'Oréal Paris right now: would you say that you are loyal to the brand?</p> <p>M: Yes, definitely! <b>The products work as promised and the price is okay as well, so there is no reason for me to switch.</b></p> <p>I: Okay. And while or after using L'Oréal products, which feelings do you get from using the brand?</p> <p>M: Well, the products are high quality, which is important for skin care. So I appreciate good ingredients. And <b>I feel like... L'Oréal is a modern and innovative brand. There are new products to the market on a regular basis so I feel the brand is constantly developing. And this is really important to me as products are NEVER 100% perfect so that new research insights or something like this are helpful. I think L'Oréal is eager in developing further and keeps up with the time.</b></p> <p>I: Yes, okay. And what kind of feeling do you have YOURSELF when you apply the products?</p> <p>M: Hm, how do I feel? I would say well. <b>The products somehow increase my self-esteem when I use them.</b></p> <p>I: So to what extend would you say that L'Oréal Paris satisfies your product needs?</p> <p>M: Well, as I said. It's a modern product for daily use. It is high quality but not too expensive, such as other brands. But for those I don't see the on-top benefit for which I would be willing to pay more. So I would say L'Oréal is as good as these more expensive brands and I'm satisfied, yes.</p> <p>I: Okay, thank you. When you now think about L'Oréal Paris' commercials on TV or in magazines: do you know any of their spokespersons?</p> <p>M: Ehm... yes! <b>I would say that L'Oréal is a company that emphasizes the effect of commercials a lot and it seems like they invest a lot of money for this purpose. And they use lots of celebrities in their commercials. I can remember Eva Longoria, for example, and this is also why you can remember their commercials so easily.</b></p> <p>I: And to what extend would you say that you look up to these people or admire them?</p>	<p><i>or if a currently used product is empty</i></p> <p><i>Prefers to buy LP for skin care and make-up, but not for hair care; thinks of usage situations;</i></p> <p><i>She's loyal to the brand and sees no reason to switch</i></p> <p><i>For her LP provides high quality</i></p> <p><i>Consider LP as modern and innovative; defines innovativeness based on constant development/ new formulas based on research insights</i></p> <p><i>Now talking about real feelings; Feels well when using LP as the brand boosts her self-esteem</i></p> <p><i>Considers LP's price as reasonable compared with other brands; is satisfied with the brand</i></p> <p><i>Use of celebrities makes her remember the commercials</i></p>	<p><i>there is a product need</i></p> <p><i>Brand salience; Brand recall in usage situations; Brand resonance; Brand attachment ("I appreciate the brand")</i></p> <p><i>Brand resonance – loyalty: in two product categories (skin care &amp; make-up); Brand meaning: Brand performance</i></p> <p><i>Brand responses: Brand judgements – quality;</i></p> <p><i>Brand responses: Brand judgements – credibility (~ innovative); Brand meaning: Brand imagery ~ associations → aligned with LP's intended brand identity;</i></p> <p><i>Brand responses: Brand feelings – self-respect</i></p> <p><i>Brand meaning: Brand performance (price, satisfaction) (meets functional needs)</i></p> <p><i>Brand salience; Positive effect of celebrity endorsement on brand awareness (recall)</i></p>
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<p>M: Well, I think L'Oréal uses celebrities with a strong personality and a positive image. No celebrities that were involved in any scandals. <b>I wouldn't say that I admire them because they are mainly actors or singers who do something very special and belong to a selective circle... And I do not necessarily look up to them but I can admit that these people are for sure successful so they perfectly work as spokespersons for a company like L'Oréal.</b></p> <p>I: And how can you identify with this selective circle of people?</p> <p>M: Well, <b>it somehow speaks for itself when L'Oréal manages to get these celebrities as spokesperson for their brand. And thereby it reassures me to also use these products when celebrities, who get similar offerings from many different company, have decided to act as a spokesperson for this particular brand and probably also use L'Oréal Paris products themselves.</b> So I, as a 'normal consumer', feel a bit better when using L'Oréal Paris products in my daily beauty routine.</p> <p>I: When you should now describe the brand with a few words or descriptive adjectives, which ones would you use?</p> <p>M: Well, as I mentioned earlier, the brand is very modern, pro-active and keeping up to date with innovations and interested in development. And the brand is multi-faceted and has a high-quality image. The entire product, be it the packaging or the commercials, gives you a high-quality image.</p> <p>I: So if I would summarize with three words, you would say innovative, multi-faceted and high-quality?</p> <p>M: Yes, exactly!</p> <p>I: Okay, good, thanks. You already mentioned that L'Oréal Paris satisfies your product needs. But to what extend would you say that they also care for your opinion as a consumer? Did you ever have the impression that you achieved something by giving positive feedback about the brand?</p> <p>M: No, not yet. I can't tell whether L'Oréal reads or considers my reviews or not. But why not? They could do that.</p> <p>I: Yes, true. So what's your favourite L'Oréal Paris product right now?</p> <p>M: Right now it's the green face mask with clay.</p> <p>I: And how interested are you in talking and learning about the brand L'Oréal Paris?</p> <p>M: <b>A lot, to be honest. I'm always interested in learning more about the company standing behind my favourite products, their values and so on. And I would also be willing to exchange this kind of knowledge with others.</b></p> <p>I: Okay, and for which L'Oréal Paris product did you write your last POSITIVE review?</p> <p>M: That was this green face mask. I guess two or three weeks ago.</p> <p>I: Okay. And which aspects did you mention in this</p>	<p><i>Considers LP's spokespersons as suitable for the company and as representable, but does not admire them</i></p> <p><i>Representable spokespersons work as reassurance for own product usage</i></p> <p><i>Describes LP as very modern, pro-active, innovative, multi-faceted and high-quality (based on product packaging and commercial → draws conclusion from marketing mix element "promotion" on "product" quality)</i></p> <p><i>Can't judge whether LP care for her opinion</i></p> <p><i>Eager to learn more about LP; likes to share her knowledge with others</i></p>	<p><i>Brand meaning: Brand imagery: no identification with spokespersons ("selective circle";, no admiration of celebrity endorser</i></p> <p><i>Brand meaning: Brand imagery impacts brand judgements – quality, product usage; Brand feelings – self-respect ("So I, as a 'normal consumer', feel a bit better")</i></p> <p><i>Brand responses: Brand judgements – credibility: innovativeness → as aligned with LP's intended brand identity; quality</i></p> <p><i>Brand judgements – credibility: questionable (regarding consumer opinion); missing brand consumer interaction</i></p> <p><i>Brand resonance – engagement: Community element: Sharing knowledge</i></p>
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<p>And it's the same for beauty products. Because when you haven't tested a new beauty product yet, you can solely rely on the company's advertisement and description on the packaging. <b>But of course this sounds always promising and good. So in case that I have a real-life experience, I can share it.</b></p> <p>I: Can you also see any differences between services, like in a hotel, where you have to make an experience first before you can judge and a beauty product?</p> <p>M: Yes, it's true what you say. But another <b>difference is the time frame</b>. When you visited a hotel or restaurant, you can directly judge the service experience the moment you leave, but for beauty products it takes a while before you can see how it works and if it works as promised. <b>So the point in time when you write your review is different. This is maybe something that keeps other people away from writing beauty reviews.</b> Because when you come back from your holidays and you are still super happy, you are maybe in the mood to directly write a couple of positive feedback sentences. <b>But for beauty products you have to wait quite some time before you might see some visible results</b>, e.g. for skin care that your skin looks brighter. <b>And after this waiting period the hurdle is probably higher to make the effort and share your experience.</b></p> <p>I: Okay. And to what extend would say that it is important for you how your review affects other consumers?</p> <p>M: That's actually pretty important for me. <b>Of course it is my subjective experience that I share but I think the way I express it, like in an open way and very detailed, is helpful. And therefore I also hope that others can consider it or that it helps them somehow.</b></p> <p>I: We already addressed it somehow. But do you have a special feeling once you have published your review?</p> <p>M: <b>I kind of feel good. And if other people click on "It was helpful" or something similar, it encourages me to keep on going.</b></p> <p>I: We previously addressed how L'Oréal Paris consider your opinion as a consumer. But now my question is if and how you consider what your review means to them as a company?</p> <p>M: I think a review can have an impact on the company as well. When I write a positive review it might confirm them that their product is of high-quality and so they can learn from that in the future. But I think especially negative reviews can have a really bad influence if lots of consumers complain about a certain product and share their dissatisfaction publically or on social media. In these cases a company can't ignore it.</p> <p>I: So when you sit down and write your review you also keep in mind how it might affect the company?</p> <p>M: Yes, definitely. Due to the fact that I publish it so that everybody can see it, I'm definitely aware of the fact that my words can benefit or harm the company.</p> <p>I: Okay, but just to make sure: we solely focus on positive reviews right now (smiles).</p> <p>M: Okay, sure. But <b>this also holds for positive reviews,</b></p>	<p><i>Critically differentiates between the promising descriptions of the company and real consumer experiences</i></p> <p><i>Reflects about the difference between beauty products and services; sees the difference in time frame as a hurdle for review writing when it comes to beauty products</i></p> <p><i>She puts a lot of effort in her reviews; Impact on other consumers is important in a way that the review should be helpful</i></p> <p><i>Reassurance through clicks keeps her going</i></p> <p><i>Is aware that her review can benefit the</i></p>	<p><i>Potential explanation for absence of motivation (by some consumers)</i></p> <p><b>COBRA: Creation: Motive: Concern for other consumers combined with Helping (NEW to creation type)</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: Creation: Motive: self-assurance (NEW: in form of 'reassurance'); Feedback feature is valuable [see Lisa p.1]</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: Creation: Motive: Helping the company combined</b></p>
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<p>even though I'm one out of many who writes something on the Internet so I know that my "influence" (forms quotation marks with her fingers) is definitely limited (laughs slightly).</p> <p>I: Would you think it's nice to have more influence?</p> <p>M: Yes, why not... <b>You can also work on your image as a reviewer and once you are recognized as an authentic reviewer by other members of the community, you can probably have a stronger impact than if you write only one or two reviews and then never again.</b></p> <p>I: Until now, you talked about review platforms like Amazon and in your last answer you also talk about the community. So do you also publish your reviews on social media?</p> <p>M: No, for beauty products it's solely Amazon. And TripAdvisor is a special community just for hotel and restaurant reviews.</p> <p>I: Okay, and why did you choose Amazon over other platforms? I mean there are also other retailer websites, such as Matas, or general opinion portals...</p> <p>M: I chose Amazon because I'm used to it from Germany. Here it's crazy expensive to order from there so I buy my products in the supermarket but Amazon is still one of the biggest platforms, nearly everybody knows and uses it. And it was important for me that I write my reviews on a platform where people can also buy the product. So that you can directly check some reviews and make your mind immediately before you buy something. <b>And it's easy for me</b> because I can search for the product and can give my feedback directly underneath the product description. <b>So it's most important for me that people have the direct link between reading the review and the option to buy products.</b></p> <p>I: Okay. And how frequently do you test new beauty products?</p> <p>M: Hmmm... (thinks) I would say as often as I write the reviews. Like every couple of months.</p> <p>I: So do you prefer to check the latest beauty news instead of testing every new product?</p> <p>M: Well, generally I don't see any reason to switch products when I'm satisfied. But if there is a new innovative thing that is completely new to the market I'm definitely willing to test it.</p> <p>I: How important is it therefore for you to keep up-to-date with the latest beauty trends?</p> <p>M: Quite important. I also requested some newsletters of beauty brands or have liked their Facebook page. I check more than one brand to see what the market has to offer.</p> <p>I: Now that you talk about Facebook: What is your very personal reason for using Facebook?</p> <p>M: Well, of course I have a Facebook account <b>for me</b> <b>Facebook serves mainly as an information platform. I have liked a lot of pages and thus I get all the news that I would like to get – tailored to my interests so to say.</b> And you can always remain up-to-date because</p>	<p>company; considers her influence as limited</p> <p><i>Wants to have the image of an "authentic reviewer" which gives her more influence in the community</i></p> <p><i>Writes reviews on platforms where she can easily find the product to be reviewed and where her audience can also order the product</i></p> <p><i>When she is loyal to a product she is not testing new things, only if they are entirely new</i></p> <p><i>Does a lot to learn more about LP (but also other brands)</i></p> <p><i>Facebook usage: get informed in a personalized/ customized way</i></p>	<p>with Exertion of power over companies</p> <p>COBRA: Creation: Motive: Self-enhancement (enhance her impact as an "authentic reviewer"); Social identity?</p> <p>Platform choice criteria: ease of usage; characteristic of retailer website; dual option: review &amp; buy</p> <p>Brand resonance – loyalty; Personal innovativeness (= trying new things) varies</p> <p>Brand resonance – engagement</p> <p>Uses &amp; gratifications: Facebook: Tailored information</p>
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<p>social media is often faster than the normal press. Plus I like that lots of companies are present on Facebook and present themselves, so that you do not have to search for news about them but directly see it in your newsfeed. <b>But besides that I don't use it to publicly post anything or share my holiday pictures (laughs slightly). That's not Facebook for me</b> – it is more about getting tailored news.</p> <p>I: Okay, so how often do you post something on Facebook?</p> <p>M: Never.</p> <p>I: Okay, why not?</p> <p>M: I simply don't get anything out of it when I tell others where I am right now or what I do all day long. <b>I don't need to present myself on social media that much or impress others by showing them what I do. I have a nice private life and don't need to increase my self-esteem through social networks.</b></p> <p>I: So what do you take into consideration that finally leads to your decision to not make a posting? For example network wise?</p> <p>M: Why I don't post anything? <b>Simply to keep my private life private.</b> Let's take the holiday example again: if I want to share nice pictures from my holidays I do that with close friends who ask for it and who are interested in seeing the pictures. <b>But not with everyone in my social network, no matter if these people want to see it or not. Somehow it seems to me as if Facebook never forgets anything...</b> So once you post something, <b>it frequently pops up again</b> and even if you delete it, you can never be entirely sure that it's gone forever. No, I don't want that to happen.</p> <p>I: Well, you already mentioned before that you liked some beauty brands on Facebook. Why do you do that?</p> <p>M: <b>To get informed about new products and to condense the large amount of information on one platform. So that my newsfeed is what the name says: an extensive feed of new information. So it's all on one platform.</b></p> <p>I: Okay, due to the fact that you previously mentioned that you make no active postings yourself, I'm curious to know whether you tag your friends under interesting postings - be it brand infos, product launches or something else.</p> <p>M: Yes, I definitely do that! <b>I think tagging is a great Facebook-function as it is the easiest way to show your friends that company "X" has launched a cool product. Thereby I indirectly tell my friends, "Have a look at that. I think it's cool and it might be interesting for you as well." Honestly, for THIS purpose Facebook is perfect (smiles)!</b></p> <p>I: Would you only tag your friends under an official company post or also under a positive or interesting comment made by other users?</p> <p>M: Well, that's something I might do but it depends. And I think you have to be a bit careful in those situations because some people also use Facebook to spread fake news or to just say anything- no matter whether it's crap or not. So I would be a bit more selective when it comes</p>	<p><i>Makes no Facebook posts herself; does not consider Facebook as appropriate for this purpose</i></p> <p><i>Does not use social media to present herself or boost her self-esteem</i></p> <p><i>Wants to keep private things private; only shares e.g. holiday pictures with close friends; feels like posts on Facebook frequently "pop up again"</i></p> <p><i>Facebook usage: get informed</i></p> <p><i>Likes to tag friends on Facebook to give recommendation</i></p> <p><i>Is more critical when it comes to tagging in consumer posts regarding the trustworthiness of the</i></p>	<p><b>COBRA: Facebook serves solely the purpose of consumption (of general news &amp; brand information)/ not for creation of own UGC</b></p> <p><b>Uses &amp; gratifications: Facebook: absence of self-assurance &amp; self-enhancement</b></p> <p><b>Social interaction with strong ties only; COBRA: Missing motivation for creation due to Facebook algorithm</b></p> <p><b>Uses &amp; gratifications: Facebook: Information (consumption focus)</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: Contribution: recommendations through tagging (mainly in official brand posts)</b></p>
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<p>to random comments.</p> <p>I: Okay, now that you talk about fake news and authenticity: how would you compare Facebook with Amazon? Taking into account that you can see a personal profile on Facebook linked to a comment but only an account name on Amazon...</p> <p>M: Well, <b>I would definitely say that the effort put into a written review differs between Facebook and Amazon.</b> While everybody has a Facebook account nowadays and can easily write a review, it takes more to do the same on Amazon. <b>You have to create an account in addition to the already existing Facebook account and actively search for the product that you want to review, rather than spontaneously make a quick comment on Facebook. I think that criteria can make the difference between bullshit and no bullshit (laughs).</b></p> <p>I: (laughs as well) So you would say that the additional effort that makes the difference is that you have to create an extra account on Amazon?</p> <p>M: Exactly. On Amazon you decide consciously that you want to write a review whereas on Facebook you might simply drop a comment by coincidence. <b>Even though you haven't searched for a posting actively, you might simply stumble upon it and leave your opinion underneath in the comments. That wouldn't happen on Amazon.</b></p> <p>I: Can you also see an advantage in these kinds of spontaneous comments? Do you consider that as authentic, unauthentic or, let's say, neutral?</p> <p>M: Well, <b>from a company perspective it is way easier to get spontaneous feedback on Facebook and probably you also get more opinions in this way. Simply because the consumer does not have to create an additional account and so on... And because you address consumers on a platform that they are used to visit frequently.</b></p> <p>I: Yes, that's more from the company perspective. How would you see it from your own point of view?</p> <p>M: It depends on the quality of the posting or comment. If someone simply says "nice product", I realize it and that's it. But if the posting is more extensive and the person describes the product well or gives some good insights why it is a good product, why not?</p> <p>I: Okay, thank you. And how do you think about publishing your positive review of L'Oréal Paris on their Facebook page? Once the text is already written.</p> <p>M: To be honest I think I wouldn't do that due to the reasons I mentioned before as <b>I don't consider Facebook as the right platform for product reviews.</b> In comparison to special review platforms, retailer websites or even blogs. I consider Amazon as more specific when it comes to the purpose of review writing whereas Facebook serves many more different purposes besides that. No, I wouldn't do it personally...</p> <p>I: In this regard it would be interesting to know how you</p>	<p><i>posts</i></p> <p><i>Feels like a review on Amazon requires more effort than one on Facebook based on the existence of a user account and the degree of spontaneity</i></p> <p><i>(linked to above)</i></p> <p><i>Considers spontaneity of Facebook comments as easy feedback for the company</i></p> <p><i>She does not get much out of short and less detailed reviews</i></p> <p><i>Clearly differentiates between social networking sites and shopping platforms; considers Facebook as wrong platform for reviews</i></p>	<p><b>Platform choice, COBRA: Amazon review falls into creation type whereas Facebook comment falls into contribution type</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: Consumption: The quality of the review is about how detailed it is (more details = higher quality/credibility) [see Lisa]</b></p> <p><b>Platform choice criteria linked to personal uses &amp; gratifications of platform</b></p>
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<p>would describe your “relationship” (forms quotation marks with her fingers) with other consumers who have liked L’Oréal Paris’ Facebook page. Let’s say there are 120.000 likes and you are one of them.</p> <p>M: (laughs slightly) Good question... (thinks about it). Well, <b>you don’t know these other people but at least you share the same product interest, which interconnects you somehow. And it gives you the opportunity to exchange your thoughts and knowledge with a selective circle of consumers.</b></p> <p>Because all of them have decided to like this particular product or want to talk about that explicit brand. So in this regard you have another audience when you exchange information and you act among experts so to say.</p> <p>I: Okay, and how would you feel if these other experts, as you called them, would like to exchange their knowledge with you on Facebook?</p> <p>M: That could be nice. If they would like to hear my opinion and also consider me as a “group expert”, I would share it.</p> <p>I: Would you say that there is a conflict between your general attitude to not share anything on Facebook and this hypothetical behaviour?</p> <p>M: Hm... (starts laughing) well, generally I stick to the principle to not share anything on Facebook. But yeah, that’s tricky now. Let’s say it depends! If it fits the situation and context, I might also exchange my experience with others on the brand page on Facebook (seems to slightly laugh about herself). But primarily I would choose another platform.</p> <p>I: All right, thank you very much. Our conversation already comes to an end. I really appreciate your contributions and the honest thoughts and feelings that you shared. So thank you for these insights.</p> <p>M: You are welcome.</p>	<p><i>Feels that she is connected with other ‘brand followers’ due to shared product interest</i></p>          <p><i>Is willing to share her “expert” knowledge with others on Facebook &amp; likes to be considered as an expert; but generally she prefers other platforms (retailer websites) over Facebook</i></p>	<p><b>Community elements:</b> ‘Consciousness of kind’</p>          <p><b>Uses &amp; gratifications:</b> Facebook; “wrong”/inappropriate platform for the creation of brand reviews; Potential motive for creation: Extraversion/ self-enhancement (“group expert)</p>
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## Simone

Age: 24 years

Occupation: IT student

Description: Very open and calm

Verbatim transcript	Descriptive Coding	Interpretive Coding
<p>I: Thank you for taking the time to do this interview today! (smiles) Please let me know, if my questions are unclear to you and there are no wrong answers!</p> <p>S: Yes (smiles)</p> <p>I: How does your daily beauty routine look like?</p> <p>S: I actually use a lot of Korean Cosmetics with a 12-step routine. But I don't go through all these steps (laughing). I use a lot of products though; in the morning I use a foam cleanser from Matas, because it has a low pH-value and that's what I need. I had a break-out on my face with a high pH-value cleanser from Korea. So I just looked for a cheaper one and I found the one from Matas. After the foam cleanser, then I use a toner, also with a low pH-value, and then I use an eye cream, it's a cooling eye-cream. Then I use a snail serum and then I use a daily face cream. That's how it looks like in the morning. In the evening, I use an oil cleanser to remove my makeup and then I just use the same products as in the morning. Makeup, I use a full face even though I hope it doesn't look like a full face (laughing). That's because my skin is quite ugly at the moment, so I use a lot of products and too much money on it. However, I use a primer; today I've used the Urban Decay setting spray. It's a primer and makes my small facial hair lay down. I use Nick's green concealer and then Maybelline's regular concealer and L'Oréal foundation. Then I do my brows with a Korean pencil and afterwards I put blush on and today I used high-lighter as well from Benefits – the blush is something I received from Goodiebox, if you know what it is. Today, I used a mascara from Rimmel and setting spray again.</p> <p>I: Okay, so you actually only use a foundation from L'Oréal Paris?</p> <p>S: Well permanently, yes. <b>But I'm quite happy with buying L'Oréal products because they are often at a good price and I've good experiences with the brand. Especially their mascaras, however I have so many of them.</b></p> <p>I: Okay, so you have other products from L'Oréal as well but you just don't use it at the moment?</p> <p>S: Not today, at least. One of my favorite mascaras is called 4D architect from L'Oréal and I have so many of those, because Matas often have a 3 for 2 offer and then it's always the one I buy. The only reason why I used a</p>	<p><i>Extensive beauty routine; focus on ingredients (pH-Value)</i></p> <p><i>Uses different brands besides LP: Maybelline, Urban Decay, Rimmel, Benefits</i></p> <p><i>LP foundation is a permanent product in her beauty routine due to the good price</i></p> <p><i>One of her favourite mascaras is from LP but she does not use it every day because she has so many mascaras; buys on sales offer</i></p>	<p><i>Heavy user of beauty products</i></p> <p><b>Brand resonance – loyalty; Brand meaning: Brand performance</b></p> <p><b>Brand resonance – loyalty</b></p>

<p>different today is because I have so many mascaras.</p> <p>I: Are their other situations where you use L'Oréal Paris?  S: Well it's only in my makeup routine. I know that my mom is really happy with their face creams and use it a lot. I also used it before, they had ... I can't remember what it's called, it's a while ago ... I used it before because my mom really liked it and then I also used it.</p> <p>I: What about hair care products or colorations?  S: Yes, hair care! I forgot about that, but I almost only use from L'Oréal. I don't dye my hair, I want to but haven't tried it yet. However, all my shampoos etc. are from L'Oréal! It's nothing that I think about, because I shower a couple times a week and only wash my hair once a week since I've read that it's better for the hair. I only use the shampoo once a week, so that's why I haven't thought of it.</p> <p>I: Is it something that you've been using for many years?  S: No I've changed my shampoo a lot through the years. I've used ... <b>right now I'm looking for shampoos without silicone and sodium laureth sulfate and I found one from L'Oréal and has been using it ever since.</b> I used to use the ones from Schwarzkopf because it was something my mom used and that was something we had at home. When I moved out, I also got these products packed with me so therefore I used them. But they don't have any without silicone and sodium laureth sulfate.</p> <p>I: Do you remember the name of the shampoo?  S: Hmm... no. I bought it online but you can also get it in the supermarkets.</p> <p>I: Is it the one from the L'Oréal Expert line?  S: Yes!</p> <p>I: Do you use other hair products?  S: I use hair oil, which is actually also from L'Oréal. I can't remember the name but it's yellow or gold with a pump – a yellow pump.</p> <p>I: Actually, you use a lot of L'Oréal Paris products...  S: Yes, when I think about it because it's nothing that I've thought about.</p> <p>I: Let's talk about reviews. Do you remember the first time you got in touch with reviews in general?  S: Yes it was in 2010, because it was in my high school class. I'm a bit older than most of the students here. I'll be 25 years in two months. In 2010, in my high school class, Danish bloggers just became bigger and more known and my Danish teacher wanted to analyze these bloggers. <b>I remember someone from my class made a presentation about Emily Salomon, who is a Danish blogger, then I checked her out. She reviews restaurants, food and so on. I read a lot of reviews form</b></p>	<p><i>Uses LP products from one product category (Make-up); also used LP skin care products earlier due to her mom</i></p> <p><i>Forgot that she also uses LP hair care products; the ingredients work well for her so she is using the same product since then</i></p> <p><i>Uses LP hair oil as well as she remembers later</i></p> <p><i>Started to read reviews on (beauty) blogs</i></p>	<p><b>Brand resonance:</b>  <b>Brand relationship:</b>  <b>Arranged marriage (but on a more voluntary basis)</b></p> <p><b>Brand salience:</b>  <b>Recall of brands used in certain situations is difficult</b>  <b>Brand resonance – loyalty;</b>  <b>Brand meaning:</b>  <b>Brand performance</b></p> <p><b>Brand salience:</b>  <b>brand recall is difficult</b></p> <p><b>COBRA:</b>  <b>consumption of reviews on blogs</b></p>
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<p><b>blogs – primarily beauty blogs.</b></p> <p>I: How come you read reviews on blogs?</p> <p>S: Now I've said that I read a lot of reviews on blogs, but I don't read a lot of blogs. <b>I'm pretty loyal to the blogs that I read. I feel like I know these bloggers, even though I really don't.</b> So if I read a blog and she recommends a product then I would most likely do a bit of research of this product and see if it's interesting for me. Then I buy it.</p> <p>I: What criteria do you choose blogs from?</p> <p>S: When it started, I choose the fashion bloggers, who wore dresses and a lot of colors. Because I wear a lot of dresses, so it's quite odd that I'm wearing pants today. The same goes for colors even though I'm not wearing so many colors today. Then I've followed Pudderdåserne in quite a while and they have mentioned which blogs to read and in that way I started to read beauty blogs more. I choose blogs based on if they create something that I can use – mostly reviews, but also if they attend blogger's events. This is quite interesting for me and if they mix a style in the blog that I think is beautiful.</p> <p>I: How did you start with beauty reviews? Reading and writing them.</p> <p>S: <b>There was a transition from reading to writing</b>, because skin care didn't interest me before I started in folk high school, which was in 2011. I started to ... I've always had a really ugly skin and still has it. I started to do something for my skin because I had the time to it. I began to research about it. I also bid my nails, so I began to use nail polish. I think, I started to read nail polish blog posts. I think it was the first beauty product that I read about.</p> <p>I: So did you look for a solution or advice with you nail problem?</p> <p>S: Yes, why I bid my nails because all these products didn't help me. But it helped when I had nice nail polish on, so I began to search for pretty nail polish. So that was the first thing I read about, which started when I attended folk high school.</p> <p>I: How did it develop to writing you own reviews?</p> <p>S: I started ... in the beginning of ... late in 2015 or early in 2016. Between late 2015 and the beginning of 2016, where I became a member of "Make-up &amp; Tips" Facebook group and "Smuk &amp; Skønhed" group. Where the members of these group really care about ... <b>well I became a member of these groups because I wanted inspiration or advice on how to take care on my skin issues. So I've been following these groups and read their posts for a while before writing reviews in these groups.</b> Because I wanted to feel that I could contribute or share my knowledge before writing reviews. <b>Now that I've learned</b></p>	<p><i>Is loyal to the blogs she consults to get some inspiration; feels some kind of connection to the bloggers</i></p> <p><i>Chooses bloggers with whom she can identify and who create content that is relevant for her</i></p> <p><i>Development from reading reviews to writing them herself</i></p> <p><i>Reading of online reviews was triggered by skin/nail problem and the hope to find a solution online</i></p> <p><i>Became a member of different beauty Facebook groups to get inspiration and advice</i></p> <p><i>Only read reviews in the beginning as she felt the need to gain</i></p>	<p><b>COBRA: Loyalty in consumption; Blogger community element: 'Consciousness of kind'</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: development from consumption towards creation in slow transition</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: consumption: Motive: Information combined with pre-purchase advice-seeking (NEW: in form of problem solution) [see Lisa]</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: consumption: Motive: Information combined with pre-purchase advice-seeking (NEW: in form of problem solution) [see Lisa; Katrin for creation]</b></p> <p><b>Wanted to become a consumption expert first before creating</b></p>
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<p><b>different things, I feel that I can contribute with my knowledge and write these reviews.</b> The internet connection at my folk high school was really bad, so I began when I had a great connection. So I think it was 1-1,5 years ago.</p> <p>I: So you read reviews before writing them?</p> <p>S: Yes I read them long time before starting to write my own reviews.</p> <p>I: Would you say that you prefer to use L'Oréal Paris?</p> <p>S: Well, I didn't know that I use so many products from them. So it depends on which kind of product. Apparently for my hair, it has a good effect on my hair and I'm happy with the result. They fulfill my needs for my hair. Their mascaras are amazing, also their foundation – it's called True Match, which they sell a lot of. Since I discovered it, I've only used this one and I don't think I will use any others in the future. So the 4D mascara and the True Match foundation and probably also the hair products do what I need them to do. <b>I'm quite a comfort-addict so whenever I find something that works then I will stick with it.</b></p> <p>I: Would you say that you're loyal to the brand?</p> <p>S: With specific products, yes. But there are also some products that I don't like from L'Oréal.</p> <p>I: Which ones?</p> <p>S: For example their lip products, I don't think that they are good. When it comes to lip products, I prefer Rimmel – at least when we are talking drugstore. I like Korean products the most, but if we talk about drugstore and products that you can buy in Denmark, then it's lip products from Rimmel and Gosh. However, L'Oréal's nail polishes are also quite good. Neither Gosh nor Rimmel has good ones in this category. <b>So with some products, I'm pretty loyal.</b></p> <p>I: Which feelings do L'Oréal Paris give you? When you either use or think of the brand.</p> <p>S: Hmm... what feelings ...</p> <p>I: What do you think when using their products?</p> <p>S: I think, it has something to do with that I trust that it works, when I use it. But there has been a lot of trials and errors of what works for me. As I mentioned, my skin is bad – so when I finally find something that works, in this case not skin care from L'Oréal, then I want to continue to use it because I'm afraid that other products won't work. I'm afraid to use something that doesn't work. <b>With the products that I use, they are something that I can count on to work on me.</b></p> <p>I: Do you have a trust in the brand then?</p> <p>S: Yes, we can call it that.</p>	<p><i>some knowledge before she can write reviews herself</i></p> <p><i>Read reviews a long time before writing them herself</i></p> <p><i>LP hair care satisfies her needs, while their mascara and foundation are "amazing"</i></p> <p><i>When a product works she stays with it</i></p> <p><i>Loyalty for products rather than brands</i></p> <p><i>She counts on the products that work for her</i></p>	<p><i>reviews; COBRA: Creation: Motive: self-enhancement</i></p> <p><i>COBRA: Slow development from consumption to creation</i></p> <p><i>Brand meaning: performance (meet functional needs); Brand resonance – attachment ("amazing" LP mascara and foundation)</i></p> <p><i>Brand meaning: Brand performance determines brand loyalty</i></p> <p><i>PRODUCT resonance – loyalty depends on product performance</i></p> <p><i>Brand/ PRODUCT responses: feelings: Security (based on trust)</i></p>
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<p>I: To what extend do L'Oréal Paris satisfy your needs?  S: Hmm... in general or for the products that I use?  I: Just in general.  S: <b>In general, I think that I miss that they renew themselves – becoming a bit more trendy.</b> Again, I like to try new things, but I don't want to try things ... okay this sounds so odd... I don't want to try things that harm my skin. On some level, they could ... for example they just launched these Colorista products, which I'm crazy about! I've bought some and I can't wait to try it. <b>So I'm demanding more trendy products from them.</b> For example with their nail polishes are in very classic colors, so perhaps they could add more colors to the product range. They also just launched these ombre lipsticks. I won it in a Matas competition – matte lips are a huge trend right now and I though it was so cool that they were on this trend. However, I was really disappointed with it. It didn't match my expectations. I don't know if that answered your question?  I: It did! Do you know the people that L'Oréal Paris uses in their commercials?  S: Hmm... no one I can think of.  I: Perhaps advertising on TV or magazines?  S: I don't really watch TV – I have one, but I don't have any channels.  I: What about on youtube?  S: I've seen some of their commercials on Youtube and Instagram. That's where I know the Colorista products from, but I don't know, who they used.  I: They used bloggers to promote these products.  S: Yeah, it looked like bloggers, but no one that I know or follow. And after seeing these bloggers, I didn't search for them or anything.  I: So it's not anyone that you can identify yourself with or look up to?  S: No, not really. Was it L'Oréal who used Zooey Dechanel?  I: No I don't think so, they have had a lot of celebrities like Eva Longoria and Blake Lively.  S: Now that you mentioned it, I do remember seeing ads with both of them. I really like Blake Lively, but I don't really think of L'Oréal when seeing her.    I: How would you describe L'Oréal Paris? Perhaps using adjectives.  S: Hmm... Since it's something that my mom has been using then I think, I would say old – not old-school, but that they have been on the market for a while and those products that I'm happy with from L'Oréal – I'm really happy with them! As we talked about, "trustworthy" would I say.</p>	<p><i>Misses new and trendier products by LP</i></p> <p><i>Participates in beauty competitions/ raffles</i></p> <p><i>Is satisfied with some LP products and dissatisfied with others</i></p> <p><i>Follows the brand on Instagram and YouTube; no TV usage; does not know and identify with LP spokespersons</i></p> <p><i>Remembers some spokespersons when she gets a hint but does not think about them in context with LP</i></p> <p><i>Considers LP as old (in form of established on the market and used by her mom) and</i></p>	<p><b>Brand responses:</b>  <b>Brand judgements – credibility (~ not innovative in general); Brand meaning: Brand imagery ~ associations → misaligned with LP's intended brand identity (need to "renew themselves")</b></p> <p><b>Brand meaning:</b>  <b>Brand performance: inconsistent: (dis-) satisfaction on product level, not brand level</b></p> <p><b>Brand meaning:</b>  <b>Brand imagery: no identification with spokespersons, no admiration of celebrity endorser</b></p> <p><b>Brand meaning:</b>  <b>Brand imagery: Does not relate spokespersons to LP</b></p> <p><b>Brand responses:</b>  <b>Brand judgements: credibility</b></p>
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<p>I: Yes, what do you associate L'Oréal Paris with? For example with Mac Cosmetics, it's the makeup artists.</p> <p>S: Hmmm... I don't associate L'Oréal with something like that. In the moment with these Colorista products ... if they continue on this road, then I would probably associate them as a young brand on some level.</p> <p>I: My next question is whether you see them as innovative or classic and traditional?</p> <p>S: I see them as stagnant, but with these Colorista products that I really want to try soon, but haven't got the time to yet – I could see them moving to be more innovative. I could imagine, if you asked me in a few years then I would maybe say innovative, if they continue to make these products.</p> <p>I: What about their current products? Do you think there's any innovation there?</p> <p>S: They just made these cushion foundations; <b>they are pretty innovative if you haven't used Korean cosmetics before</b>. I could imagine that they are starting to make new things. Lancome made a cushion first, but L'Oréal Paris was the first one among drugstore brands. In that way, they're beginning to be more trendy. But I haven't used them yet, since I already have from Korea and know cushion from Korea. Perhaps they are becoming more innovative. Didn't they also have a vibrating mascara once? I thought it was pretty cool at that time, but I've never bought it.</p> <p>I: But do you feel like they understand your needs? As a consumer.</p> <p>S: Well, again I use very specific things from them and in this perspective they do fulfill my needs and that's why I use them.</p> <p>I: But on the other hand, do they fulfill your needs with other products since you don't use them there?</p> <p>S: Yeah, I don't like their lip products at all and is why I don't use them. I really like to have lipstick on and I have so many colors, but not one from L'Oréal besides the one that I won. There is nothing about their products, which I think is nice.</p> <p>I: What about skincare?</p> <p>S: Again, my mom really loves them... <b>I'm a sucker for packaging and Korean cosmetics have the cutest packaging. So that's also a selling point for me and if it also works then I'm more likely to continue using those products</b>. Because I know my skin can tolerate it. I'm not too happy with trying something that I don't know how will work on my skin, but my mom vows to L'Oréal.</p> <p>I: Do you think that is why you're using so many L'Oréal Paris products without being aware of it?</p>	<p><i>trustworthy</i> Would consider LP as young if they would launch more trendy products, but not yet</p> <p><i>Considers LP as "stagnant" right now but sees a potential development towards trendier products; sets innovativeness equal with trendiness, compares with Korean products</i></p> <p><i>Specific products from LP fulfil her needs</i></p> <p><i>Focus on packaging</i> <i>It is really important for her how products work, especially for skincare; her mom is frequently mentioned</i></p>	<p><i>("trustworthy"); Brand meaning: Brand imagery ~ associations</i></p> <p><i>Brand meaning: Brand imagery: innovativeness is not yet part of her brand associations; Brand responses: Brand judgements – credibility: potential development towards innovativeness, but currently stagnant → misaligned with LP's intended brand identity; Benchmark: Korean cosmetics</i></p> <p><i>Brand meaning: Brand performance (meets functional needs): only on PRODUCT level; depends on the product segment</i></p> <p><i>Brand meaning: Brand performance: focus on design and style; Brand performance has to give her the feeling of security; Strong ties (her mom) as attachment figure and buying influencer</i></p>
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<p>S: Yeah, I could easily imagine that's why. <b>That it's incarnated in you or contaminated by your parents. That I can easily imagine, because when I moved out, I bought the shampoos that I got with me from home and they were from L'Oréal. You look for something familiar at the supermarket, when you buy things like these. It's really silly! But that's just how it is (laughing)</b></p>	<p><i>Feels like her product choice is predetermined by her mom's preferences; still looks for something familiar in the supermarket</i></p>	<p>Brand resonance: Brand relationship: Arranged marriage and childhood friendships; Brand salience: Brand recall in supermarkets</p>
<p>I: What is your favorite product from L'Oréal Paris? S: I've been using their 4D architect mascara for the longest time, <b>but I've been totally blown away with their True Match foundation</b>, which I just tried recently. I'll never go back to the old foundation, I think. It's also because there are so many shades and undertones. I like to put my foundation on, and it's also liquid so there's nothing that will keep me from buying that foundation again. So one of those two. I: How interested are you in learning and talking about L'Oréal Paris? S: What did you have in mind? I: As in researching more about the brand and exchanging knowledge about it as well? S: If I have to buy something, for example I need to buy a new concealer and before buying one – I always do my research. Then I look at what I can in Matas, because it's something I need here and now so that's why I buy it in Matas or else I would've bought it online. Then I will research this concealer that's in my price range and this concealer in my price range and another one. I: So it's not specifically L'Oréal Paris as a brand you research? S: No, it's more generally.</p>	<p><i>Loyal to two favourite LP products, is "blown away" by their True Match foundation</i></p> <p><i>Does her research whenever she has to buy a new product; does not search for LP brand news proactively</i></p>	<p>Brand resonance – loyalty on PRODUCT level &amp; attachment ("blown away")</p> <p>Limited brand resonance: no active brand engagement</p>
<p>I: Do you remember the last review you wrote for L'Oréal Paris? S: Yeah I: What did you mention in that review? S: The foundation. I: Do you remember what you specifically mentioned in it? S: Mhhh... I wrote my skin type and then I wrote that it lasts for long and that there are many shades of it. Also how I apply it – by a beauty blender and I think that's it. I didn't mention anything about the price. I: So it was more or less your own experience of the product? S: Yeah I: How often do you write reviews in general? S: Okay often, but primarily in these groups. I read a lot of blogs, but not so good at commenting on the posts. But if I see a product in the Facebook group that has been</p>	<p><i>Mentions product details in her reviews as well as how she uses the product</i></p> <p><i>Reads lots of reviews but also writes some in Facebook groups;</i></p>	<p>COBRA: Creation: Mainly informant reviews but also some recommender elements</p> <p>COBRA: focus on consumption; no contribution; creation</p>

<p>mentioned in the blog, then I must follow this post and try the product as well! I have to try this product and then I can say that I have tried this and it was nice.</p> <p>I: What about Matas? It's also possible to write reviews there.</p> <p>S: Yes I know that, but I have never tried that.</p> <p>I: How come? Is it because there's no interactivity on Matas.dk</p> <p>S: That could be why, but also ... <b>this is ridiculous, but I think it's difficult even though it's not difficult. But on Facebook, I'm always logged in on my phone and when I scroll down my feeds, then these groups always appear. Then it's very easy if someone asks about a foundation, because I can immediately answer it. But on Matas – even though it's not difficult, but in my head it is – then I have to log in and find the right product, remember what I want to say and give it some stars as well.</b></p> <p>I: You said that you buy some of your products online, don't they ask you sometimes whether you want to review their product?</p> <p>S: Yes they do, but I don't do it. I should, because I'm happy with it.</p> <p>I: But do you read the reviews on the different sites then?</p> <p>S: Yes I'm reading them, so it's quite silly. <b>I read them to get a feeling of what this product does and there are probably others that do that as well, so I should write reviews on these sites.</b></p> <p>I: Why would you say that you're writing reviews for L'Oréal Paris?</p> <p>S: Well, I haven't written any negative reviews about L'Oréal – <b>I only write positive ones. So why do I write about L'Oréal... it's because I'm happy with the things that I write about. And I have never written a review where I either trash a brand or product.</b></p> <p>I: What do you receive by writing reviews? As a reward or personal benefit.</p> <p>S: Hmm... <b>I don't really gain anything from it, but I hope that others do.</b></p> <p>I: How do you think other consumers will interpret your positive review? Is it important for you that your review affects them?</p> <p>S: Hmm... I don't really think about it because I never write a negative one. Perhaps it's because I just think that it must be my skin that doesn't work with the product or something else that doesn't suit. It can be fantastic products for some, but not necessarily for me. So I think it's very important to write my skin type, I have a combination skin type, but</p>	<p><i>considers herself as bad in commenting</i></p> <p><i>Feels like a review on Matas requires more effort than one on Facebook based on the existence of a user account and the degree of spontaneity</i></p> <p><i>Reads reviews on retailer websites but has not written any reviews there, considers that as "silly" and that she should do it</i></p> <p><i>Solely writes positive reviews, wants to share her happy feelings</i></p> <p><i>Is not rewarded by writing reviews; writing reviews in hope of others benefitting from it</i></p>	<p><i>primarily in Facebook groups</i></p> <p><i>COBRA: Matas review falls into creation type whereas Facebook comment falls into contribution type ("immediately answer it") → Platform choice criteria: ease of usage/ convenience of social media [see Mara p. 10,13]</i></p> <p><i>COBRA: Consumption &gt; creation; Motive: Aware of social pressure for creation but has not yet been motivated by that</i></p> <p><i>COBRA: Creation; Motive: Extraversion; expressing positive feelings (also see Gensler); missing motive: venting negative feelings</i></p> <p><i>COBRA: Creation; Motive: Concern for other consumers</i></p>
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<p>perhaps one with dry skin type will not think that this foundation is good. So I try to make my reviews as useful as possible, so I also guard my back if anyone says that this product doesn't work well, then I can ask if she has the same skin type as me. <b>So I guess that I think about it, and it's quite important how my review gets interpreted. Also to make it as useful as possible for others.</b></p> <p>I: Do you have in mind what your review means to the company behind the brand?</p> <p>S: Again, I only write positive reviews – I really don't understand <b>when sometimes I look at Facebook, there are these bad and shitty complaints over a brand that's something I really don't get. It's totally not okay!</b> You have this bad experience with a company and then you choose to stamp this company or brand with a bad reputation. <b>However, I don't really think about that my review will give the company a better reputation. And in these groups, only the members can read the reviews – I don't think the company will go into these groups and read about themselves.</b></p> <p>I: Now you mentioned that you only write reviews in these groups, why do you only do that?</p> <p>S: It's easier for me. I also like ... <b>I don't know if I have liked L'Oréal, but I also like brands on Facebook and interact on their posts, either be reacting with an emoji or write a comment</b> such as "it's really good" "you should try this". <b>It's just easier for me to have everything gathered in one place.</b> I also assume that when you like or interact with a brand's post, then there is a social manager behind it.</p> <p>I: How often do you test new products?</p> <p>S: Hmm... I get a Goodiebox each month. So once a month. But I'm also really careful because I'm afraid my skin will have a break-out, so I look at the product and evaluate if I can use it or it sounds interesting.</p> <p>I: How important is it to you to be up-to-date with beauty products?</p> <p>S: <b>Pretty important, also therefore I wish that L'Oréal were more trendy. It's important that the brands follow up with the events and trends that happen in the surroundings,</b> for example what's happening on Youtube? <b>What's the new big thing on Youtube? What's new on Instagram?</b> Recently, there was this thing with colored freckles, where some of the big brands began to ... they say "hey, this person used our product to make this freckles". <b>In this way they renew their products. So it's quite important that companies know what's</b></p>	<p><i>Considers her review's benefit for other consumers and how they interpret her review</i></p> <p><i>Considers public complaints about a brand as unacceptable</i></p> <p><i>Does not think about the company when writing reviews, especially in groups with a selected audience</i></p> <p><i>Likes to interact with the brand on Facebook</i></p> <p><i>Facebook: Convenience of having everything accessible in one platform</i></p> <p><i>It's important for her to be up-to-date with the latest beauty trends; wished that LP would be more up-to-date with YouTube or Instagram trends</i></p>	<p><b>COBRA: Creation; Motive: Concern for other consumers</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: Creation; Missing motive: 'Exertion of (collective) power over companies' &amp; 'venting negative feelings'; but also absence of 'Helping the company' motivation</b></p> <p><b>Consumer-brand interaction</b></p> <p><b>Characteristic of Facebook: Convenience of an "all-in-one-platform" = dual-option: like/follow &amp; review [compare with Julia &amp; Mara → retailer websites]</b></p> <p><b>High level of personal innovativeness; Brand responses: Brand judgements credibility: ~ trendiness/ innovativeness could be improved when keeping track with trends on social media →</b></p>
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<p><b>happening in this world.</b></p> <p>I: A bit more about Facebook, what do you use Facebook for besides the things you already mentioned?</p> <p>S: News, I follow Politiken – but on some level I hate myself for this, reading news on Facebook but on the other hand it's so convenient to have everything on Facebook. I use it for job postings. I follow a lot of companies that I would like to work for. <b>I almost get disappointed to hear, if there's a company that I want to work for doesn't have Facebook. Then it's out of my mind.</b></p> <p>I: So if it doesn't exist on Facebook, it doesn't exist at all?</p> <p>S: Yeah, <b>this is how my mind works – it's terrible.</b></p> <p>I: Do you post anything on your own Facebook profile?</p> <p>S: Not as much as I used to. We just talked about it the other day in class, I think. <b>When you just joined Facebook, you posted something all the time, but now that it has this memory thing. Here you can see what you posted 5 years ago and it's just embarrassing. You're just thinking: "this is something I will never do again!". So I actually don't post a lot anymore.</b></p> <p>I: What do you think about when you post anything then?</p> <p>S: Hmm...</p> <p>I: For example, do you think about what you like on Facebook?</p> <p>S: That is something I just started with. For example my boyfriend ... <b>Facebook has that algorithm, which shows something from the ones you interact with the most. So he sees a lot of things that I like, and I see a lot of things that he likes. So I've started to think that I shouldn't spam him too much with the things that I like.</b> I also often like the things that I think is politically correct.</p> <p>I: Is that how you express yourself?</p> <p>S: Yes it is!</p> <p>I: Do you also think about how your future employer will see your profile?</p> <p>S: Yes I do! <b>That's why my Facebook is quite private. So you can only see my name unless you're friends with me.</b></p> <p>I: Do you follow a lot of beauty brands on Facebook?</p> <p>S: Yes I follow a lot of beauty brands, but I can't remember them right now. I follow more brands on Instagram.</p> <p>I: It's more why you follow them?</p> <p>S: To get info about new products, I think, and to participate in competitions.</p> <p>I: Why do you follow them on Instagram?</p> <p>S: <b>That's more to look at pretty pictures... inspiration!</b></p> <p>I: Would you recommend a product to your friends via</p>	<p><i>Facebook usage: get informed about many different things (news, job offers)</i></p> <p><i>If something does not exist on Facebook, it is out of her mind</i></p> <p><i>Facebook: makes few posts herself; has reduced her amount of posts over the years; feels like this is a general tendency [see Katrin page 7]; does not want to be reminded of old posts; Started to think about her liking behavior due to Facebook algorithm</i></p> <p><i>Expresses herself through liking on Facebook</i></p> <p><i>Wants to keep private things private [see Julia &amp; Mara]; Is concerned about her image on Facebook; considers impression on future employer</i></p> <p><i>Follows beauty brands on Facebook and mainly on Instagram for inspiration Likes to tag + comment to friends on Facebook</i></p>	<p><b>impact on brand identity</b></p> <p><b>Uses &amp; gratifications:</b> Facebook: Information (consumption focus); convenience of all-in-one platform</p> <p><b>Uses &amp; gratifications:</b> Facebook as THE means of truth; information; high dependency on one platform</p> <p><b>Uses &amp; gratification:</b> Facebook: consumption of news; creation solely in Facebook groups; COBRA: Missing motive for creation on own profile/ contribution through liking due to Facebook algorithm [see Julia &amp; Mara]</p> <p><b>COBRA: contribution in form of liking of Facebook pages as a means for expressing personal identity</b></p> <p><b>Platform choice criteria: indirect consideration of social ties (audience), especially weak ties or even no ties like future employer [see Lisa page 7]</b></p> <p><b>Brand resonance – engagement: consumption (COBRA) + Contribution (tagging/ commenting); Uses &amp; gratifications: Instagram: Source of</b></p>
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<p>Facebook by tagging a friend in a review, for example?</p> <p>S: Yes I do that, but I don't just tag them I write something like "You must try this one". Yeah I would do that.</p> <p>I: We've talked a bit how Facebook is your universe, would you write reviews directly on L'Oréal's Facebook page?</p> <p>Lets say that they have a function on their Facebook, where you could review all of their products and the reviews will be gathered in one place?</p> <p>S: via Facebook?</p> <p>I: Yes, for example sometimes you can see reviews for hotels or restaurants. Here you would be able to see reviews for each product.</p> <p>S: I would say yes ... but in practice I don't know if I would. Right now, I would say yes. But it would only be for products that I'm happy with.</p> <p>I: Is there a difference in posting your review in a Facebook group or directly on their Facebook page, where everyone can see it?</p> <p>S: <b>Yes, there is. Because the group is closed so you have to be a member to see its posts. On some level, it's also embarrassing that I care so much about my skin and makeup. I would probably be more careful; I would still do it, but moderated, because I don't want others to see me as someone who only cares about makeup and my looks. So that's the difference.</b></p> <p>I: Do you feel that you have a bond or relationship with other users liking the same pages or being members of the same group as you?</p> <p>S: In these groups, it's more or less the same people who post. You start to recognize the same people. I only review products; I'm not so good at posting my looks. So in this way I don't think that I'm known in these groups, but I do know them.</p> <p>I: Do you feel that you have something in common with them compared to other Facebook users?</p> <p>S: <b>No, because I don't think that ... I'm in the middle ground.</b> In these groups, there are the ones who are really into it. They follow makeup artists on Instagram and make these wild looks. Then there are these, who are a bit older and don't even know what a mascara is. Then there are the others like me, who came a bit later – late bloomers, and who also got to know about these makeup things a bit later. Compared to the 14 years old now, I didn't know as much when I was 14 years old. So I feel that I'm in the middle, of course I'm not alone here. I'm not as visible as the others in these groups, but at the same time I know more than those who don't know what a mascara is. <b>I think the ones who are very active in the groups have a closer bond to each other compared to me. Also when you read the</b></p>	<p><i>Would consider to review brands by a Facebook review function</i></p> <p><i>Clearly differentiates between closed Facebook groups and 'public' posts, her posts seem to be less "embarrassing" in a closed group; cares about her image</i></p> <p><i>Sees herself as "in the middle ground" of the community; members have different intensity of interests; more active members have a closer bond</i></p>	<p><i>inspiration</i></p> <p><i>COBRA: creation; consideration of personal image, Motive: personal identity; Community elements: closed Facebook groups = "Consciousness of kind" (hidden but otherwise she would be "more careful")</i></p> <p><i>Community elements: different roles (depending on activeness level → contribution &amp; creation)</i></p>
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<p><b>comments, they write something like “you’re so hot babe” etc.</b> This is something I wouldn’t write, I can write something like “That’s a pretty makeup” or “ you’re pretty”.</p> <p>I: Have you experienced any feedback for your review from other users?</p> <p>S: Yeah, they write, “oh I just bought that” or “I bought it because you recommended it” something like that.</p> <p>I: Was it nice to hear that?</p> <p>S: <b>Yeah, that’s very nice. Then again, I make sure to write that I have this type of skin and etc. So people know what they get themselves into. Then it’s very nice, when they write that they have the same skin type and just bought the same product. That’s really nice!</b></p> <p>I: Have you ever commented on postings made by other consumers?</p> <p>S: Yeah, more if they haven’t written which skin type they have then I might ask. For example, I don’t correct others, but I might add something like “I’ve also tried that on my skin, but it didn’t really worked so I used this one instead, which is from the same brand but another variant”</p> <p>I: So you either ask for more information or provide more information?</p> <p>S: Yes, I try to do it in a way so I don’t degrade the original reviewer.</p> <p>I: Is there a difference when you share your product experiences with unknown others compared to sharing them with friends and family?</p> <p>S: I don’t share something like this with my family. They don’t really care about skin care and makeup. <b>With my friends, then it’s more face-to-face, where I can ask where her lipstick is from or she can ask me to recommend something. Then I tell her to try this, but nothing written.</b></p> <p>I: Is there still a difference between friends and people you don’t know personally, even though it’s face-to-face?</p> <p>S: Well I don’t talk so much about makeup with people that I don’t know since I’m afraid that they will think that’s the only thing I care about. So yes, I guess there is. For example, I’m a huge Pokemon fan, but it’s not something I go around and share with others (laughing). So of course, there is a difference in what I tell people that I know and people that I don’t know.</p> <p>I: Where do you provide your most honest opinion?</p> <p>S: That’s a difficult questions ... this is a bit difficult...</p> <p>I: Is there something you would say to the other group members, which you won’t say to your friends or vice versa?</p> <p>S: Yeah, some of my friends don’t care this much about it and therefore don’t need a detailed analyze or review, so I</p>	<p><i>She has received feedback from others which she liked</i></p> <p><i>Reassurance through comments as really nice; others should know “what they get themselves into”</i></p> <p><i>Also comments on posts made by others but she carefully does it</i></p> <p><i>Facebook: Prefers to make product recommendations to friends personally</i></p> <p><i>More detailed to Facebook group members when reviewing products compared with</i></p>	<p><b>COBRA: Creation: Self-enhancement</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: Creation: Motive: self-assurance (in a way to be assured that it is helpful = NEW: reassurance) combined with concern for other consumers [see Lisa page 2]; Feedback feature is valuable</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: consumer-consumer interaction through contribution (commenting)</b></p> <p><b>Differentiates between eWOM and WOM dependent on tie-strength of her network (offline: strong ties; online: weak ties) [see Katrin page 8]; also differentiates regarding content</b></p> <p><b>Content-wise differentiation between weak and strong ties;</b></p>
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<p>can easily cut it down a bit. <b>I geek myself down a bit</b> (laughing). If I have to be honest, I have research it a lot! <b>So I know a lot, but not everyone needs to know that.</b> <b>So for my friends, it can be enough that I just say “use this”.</b></p>	<p><i>friends; knows a lot but only wants to reveal that in front of strangers who are interested in the details</i></p>	<p><b>COBRA: Creation:</b>  <b>Motive: Self-enhancement (weak ties) (consumption expert = “geek” language)</b></p>
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## Tatevik

Age: 25 years old

Occupation: Political science student at SDU

Description: Never been interviewed before, so it took a while to open her up

Verbatim transcript	Descriptive Coding	Interpretive Coding
<p>I: First of all, thank you for participating in this interview. Please don't hold back any questions or comments (smiles) and whenever you feel uncomfortable, let me know and we stop the interview if necessary!</p> <p>T: Thank you!</p> <p>I: So my first question would be: How does your daily beauty routine look like?</p> <p>T: Well, I guess it starts with waking up and wash my face, then I use cleansing products, applying moisturizer and all that kind of stuff. On days where I'm wearing makeup, I continue with foundation, powder, blush and yeah. Normally, I don't use products for my hair.</p> <p>I: Which brands do you use?</p> <p>T: It's a lot of different brands, actually. I'm not really loyal to any brands. It's different brands and also what I just have. It's not something I think too much about. Some of the brands that I use are: Garnier and L'Oréal – that's what I use to color my hair. When it comes to makeup, I use Maybelline, L'Oréal again, Smashbox, Morphe and stuff like that. Yeah, it's a lot of different brands.</p> <p>I: To move on to reviews, do you remember the first time you got in touch with reviews in general?</p> <p>T: I don't think I remember the exact time, but I think the first experience was with hotels and webshops. I normally order both makeup and clothing from webshops. So webshops and hotels maybe 8 years ago?</p> <p>I: What about online reviews for beauty products?</p> <p>T: Specifically beauty products?</p> <p>I: Yes, beauty products!</p> <p>T: I think it started 2 years ago, because I became a member of different Facebook groups – beauty, makeup and skincare groups. That's where I started to read reviews on beauty products for the first time. That's also when I started to, you know before buying a product, check what others thought of the product.</p> <p>I: Can you tell me about how you developed to writing reviews yourself?</p> <p>T: Ahh, well ... Facebook groups are mostly... the posts</p>	<p><i>The extensivity of her beauty routine varies; no hair care routine</i></p> <p><i>Does not consider herself as brand loyal</i></p> <p><i>Uses lots of different brands besides LP: Garnier, Maybelline, Smashbox, Morphe</i></p> <p><i>Got in touch with reviews when ordering from webshops online + checking hotels</i></p> <p><i>For beauty products she started to join Facebook groups to read reviews before buying products</i></p>	<p><b>Brand resonance – lack of brand loyalty</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: it started with consumption</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: Started consumption of reviews in Facebook groups as part of her buying decision</b></p>



<p>on the Facebook groups are mostly about people, who are creating different makeup looks for example. While showing their makeup look, they review the products that they use. So I think, what made me started doing it, was hmm... I don't know ... yeah to make these makeup looks and writing about these products. <b>It was not only the sake of writing about products, but also, you know – the process of creating a look and posting it and getting comments from others. This was what made me starting doing it.</b></p> <p>I: So other consumers inspired you to do your own makeup looks?</p> <p>T: Yes exactly! And then start doing my own reviews.</p> <p>I: Would you prefer to use L'Oréal Paris instead of other brands?</p> <p>T: I don't know, I haven't really thought about it. But if I was forced to only use L'Oréal then I wouldn't mind, because I do like the products. I wouldn't prefer to that – I like mixing, but if I were forced to do it then I wouldn't mind.</p> <p>I: So you wouldn't consider yourself loyal to this brand?</p> <p>T: No</p> <p>I: Can you tell me about the feelings L'Oréal Paris give you? When thinking of the brand or using it.</p> <p>T: <b>I don't know, I get a feeling of something ... kind of affordable luxury, I guess. I like the idea of Paris, you know. I think of the brand as something luxurious and affordable.</b></p> <p>I: So it is the last part of the brand name "Paris" that you associate with luxurious?</p> <p>T: Yes</p> <p>I: How so?</p> <p>T: I don't know... it's Paris!</p> <p>I: To what extend do L'Oréal Paris satisfy your needs?</p> <p>T: Ehm... I mean, I'm satisfied – I don't have any complaints about their product. I haven't felt that I had the need to trash the brand or change something about it. If I buy a L'Oréal product then I use it. I haven't experienced that it was bad or something or that I don't want to use it anymore.</p> <p>I: What about the people L'Oréal Paris use in their commercials? What's your opinion on those?</p> <p>T: Actually, I haven't really see that many commercials, I don't know who they use at the moment.</p> <p>I: But do you remember the ones that they have used before?</p>	<p><i>Started to write reviews tied to the creation of make-up looks in Facebook groups; does it to create something and get comments and inspiration from other consumers</i></p> <p><i>Prefers mixing of brands, does not consider herself as brand loyal</i></p> <p><i>Associates LP with Paris and this is connected with luxury → affordable luxury feeling arises</i></p> <p><i>LP satisfies her needs</i></p> <p><i>Cannot remember any spokespersons or commercials</i></p>	<p><b>COBRA: Creation Motive: Self-presentation (in form of look creation) combined with self-assurance ("getting comments from others"); Uses &amp; gratifications: Facebook groups: Source of inspiration</b></p> <p><b>Brand resonance – lack of brand loyalty</b></p> <p><b>Brand meaning: associations with the city Paris as part of the brand imagery; Brand responses: Brand feelings: Excitement (luxurious), self-respect (affordable luxury = indulge yourself)</b></p> <p><b>Brand meaning: Brand performance (meets functional needs)</b></p> <p><b>Brand meaning: Brand imagery: No recall of spokespersons</b></p>
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<p>T: No not at the moment. If you mention them, I will probably remember them – not now.</p> <p>I: They use Blake Lively and Eva Longoria, for example.</p> <p>T: Okay Eva Longoria, I remember!</p> <p>I: They use all these celebrities, yes. Can you identify yourself with them? Or do you look up to them?</p> <p>T: Uhm... What do you mean? By their looks or?</p> <p>I: Yes, and do they affect you to buy their products?</p> <p>T: I don't really know, it's a bit hard to answer because as I've already said – I don't really look at commercial like that. I don't even remember the last time I saw their commercial. If I saw Eva Longoria on a commercial right now, and it was a product that seems like something I would like then I guess it would affect me because ... I don't know ... because maybe I can identify myself with her dark skin and dark hair. I would maybe then feel a little attracted to it.</p> <p>I: Recently, they also have this advertising for their new product "Colorista" that they promoted heavenly on Facebook and Instagram. They use famous bloggers.</p> <p>T: Ahhh, I remember that! But I don't know who they used.</p> <p>I: But how do these brand ambassadors affect you?</p> <p>T: It really depends on the product, I would never buy a product that I couldn't imagine myself using. <b>So if it's a product that I think will suit me and I like the blogger, who's using it then maybe I would somehow get attracted to that.</b> But I would need to know, who the blogger is.</p> <p>I: How would you describe L'Oréal Paris with a few words?</p> <p>T: I don't know ... like I said before affordable luxury and yeah ...</p> <p>I: Perhaps like adjectives to describe the brands? Or what do you think about their slogan "Because you're worth it" – how does this make you feel?</p> <p>T: I don't know ... like the only thing that I'm thinking about is that <b>I always remember when I was younger, my sister and mom and you know, all the people who was using L'Oréal, and for me back then; L'Oréal seemed like a ... how do I say it ... "a grown-up" brand, but also luxury as I said.</b> That's what I think about; when I think about my first experience with L'Oréal and I think that it was also that, which attracted me. Yeah ... <b>it's a huge brand.</b></p> <p>I: Did you start using it, because your mom and sister used it?</p> <p>T: Yeah, I think do or I did. I don't think it's why I use it now, but back then when I started using makeup and</p>	<p><i>Can only relate/ identify with those spokespersons who have a similar physical appearance compared to her</i></p> <p><i>Consideration of a new product depends on product suitability and the attraction towards the ambassador</i></p> <p><i>Considers LP as luxury, huge and "grown up", which reminds her of the past</i></p> <p><i>Started to use LP as</i></p>	<p><b>Brand meaning:</b> <b>imagery: Identification dependent on similarities in physical appearance (spokesperson vs. self)</b></p> <p><b>Brand meaning: Brand imagers: Affected by relevant spokesperson; Celebrity endorser: aspect of 'likeability'</b></p> <p><b>Brand meaning: Brand imagery</b></p> <p><b>Brand resonance: Brand relationship:</b></p>
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<p>beauty products in general for the first time, <b>I think I just started because people older than me used it. Especially my mom and sister.</b></p> <p>I: Talking about their products, do you think they are innovative or more traditional?  T: Uhm... I would say traditional because ... I ... yeah would say traditional.  I: How come? What makes them traditional or classic or whatever you want to call them?  T: <b>Classic, I think. I don't know, as I said; it's a brand – a grown-up brand. It's not something for young people who want to experiment with different things.</b> Wild colors like blue lipstick or something like that, I really like makeup and beauty and I follow a lot of brands. Comparing them to L'Oréal then I wouldn't say that they are innovated. It's more classic and a brand that almost all age groups can use. It's products that a 60-year-old woman can use as well.  I: So perhaps with your answer, it's more a conservative brand?  T: Yeah, exactly!</p> <p>I: Do you think that L'Oréal Paris understand your needs? Or just general women's needs?  T: Well yeah, <b>I think for the standard woman that's exactly what they understand. But for the younger and wilder generation, who would like to experiment - I don't think they understand them, but I don't think that I'm a part of that group so I do believe that they understand my needs.</b>  I: Do you think they care about your opinion?  T: (long pause) well, <b>I think they do care if I write really bad reviews, but if ... honestly, I don't think that they care if I wrote ideas for future products then I don't think they would care about it.</b> If I wrote a lot of bad reviews and I was an opinion leader then they would care. But I don't think they care about getting inspired.  I: Would you think that it would be a good idea, if they have some kind of group, where consumers or customers could come up with future ideas?  T: Yeah that would be a great idea, actually! But again, I do believe that it would be a good idea but again on the other hand, makeup is really trendy at the moment and I'm afraid that if they listen too much, you know if they follow the trends too much at the moment then they will lose this conservative and classic association with the brand.</p>	<p><i>being affected by her mom and sister</i></p> <p><i>Considers LP as traditional or classic as it is a "grown up" brand to her = nothing for young experiential people</i></p> <p><i>Understand her needs as well as those of a "standard woman" but not of experiential wild people</i></p> <p><i>Thinks that LP cares about bad opinions but not inspirational opinions</i></p> <p><i>Considers LP as conservative and classic; likes the idea of having an 'inspirational group' in place but is afraid that this will make them lose their classic appeal</i></p>	<p>Arranged marriage (but on a more voluntary basis) [see Simone]</p> <p><b>Brand responses: Brand judgements – credibility (~ rather traditional); Brand meaning: Brand imagery ~ associations → misaligned with LP's intended brand identity</b></p> <p><b>Brand responses: Brand judgements – credibility (consumer-oriented) BUT: not for younger generation</b></p> <p><b>Brand responses: Brand judgements – limited credibility (consumer-oriented for bad reviews); no brand consumer interaction (only one-directional)</b></p> <p><b>Brand meaning: Brand imagery ~ associations</b></p> <p>Consumer concern about LP's brand identity/ core values</p>
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<p>I: Okay, now I would like to ask you what your favorite L'Oréal Paris product is?</p> <p>T: A specific product?</p> <p>I: Whatever you like</p> <p>T: Uhm, one of the product that I'm using at the moment, which is my favorite at the moment is the eye shadow palette.</p> <p>I: Why is that your favorite?</p> <p>T: I don't know, it's just a small palette with maybe 10 different colors and they are all neutrals and it's really handy for everyday use and it's more suitable for travel as well. It just suits me at the moment.</p> <p>I: So it's convenient and it fits your needs?</p> <p>T: Yeah</p> <p>I: How interested are you in talking or learning more about L'Oréal Paris and their products?</p> <p>T: Honestly, I'm not that interested. <b>I have a lot of other things that I can spend my time on, so I don't have time to learn more about a brand – just one brand out of so many others. Only if I see a product that interests me then of course I would try to research more about it, but I'm not like overall interested in the brand and want to learn everything about it or what kind of products they have. I'm not like that.</b></p> <p>I: Do you remember the last review you wrote about a L'Oréal Paris product?</p> <p>T: Yeah, I think it was a few months ago. I do remember!</p> <p>I: What product was it?</p> <p>T: It was actually the eye shadow palette. It was in one of those Facebook groups that I mentioned. I made a makeup look and ... I don't know, like I already said it function like that. <b>You create a makeup look and then you post the look and write which products you've used and that was what I did. I posted my picture and product reviews. The important part of the look was the eye shadows and that's how the review of L'Oréal Paris came in.</b></p> <p>I: Do you remember which aspects you mentioned in the review?</p> <p>T: What do you mean?</p> <p>I: Was it your own experience of this eye shadow or was it the ingredients in the product?</p> <p>T: No it was only my own experience of it. How it performed on me.</p> <p>I: How frequently do you write reviews in general?</p> <p>T: Not beauty, just general?</p>	<p><i>Her favourite LP product suits her needs</i></p> <p><i>Does not want to spend her time on learning more about one particular brand, only if she is really interested in a specific product</i></p> <p><i>Review writing is tied to the creation of a make-up look</i></p> <p><i>Mentions the product performance and her experience</i></p> <p><i>She does write beauty reviews frequently but</i></p>	<p><b>Brand meaning: Brand performance (meets functional needs)</b></p> <p><b>Brand resonance – lack of engagement, learning about brands/ LP = waste of time</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: Creation Motive: Self- presentation (in form of look creation) → see above</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: Creation: Writes recommender reviews</b></p>
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<p>I: Yes</p> <p>T: Twice a month, I think.</p> <p>I: Why do you write reviews for L'Oréal Paris?</p> <p>T: It's not like I specifically write reviews for their products. In that context that I just explained, as I said it was one of my favorite products and so that was what I used. Also because, I don't know ... <b>I've just experienced that in these groups, L'Oréal doesn't get that much attention. So somehow I just wanted to show people that it's a fine product and does work – inspire people to use it and not just buy really expensive brands.</b> Because I just wanted to show that this brand is just as good as the others.</p> <p>I: Why don't you think L'Oréal Paris is mentioned that often in these groups?</p> <p>T: Ummm... I think like I said before that makeup is really trendy in the moment and people experiment a lot with makeup looks and wild looks – blue lipstick and black lipstick. A lot of different things that I don't associate L'Oréal with and that is what trendy in the moment, so <b>I think that's why people don't really mention L'Oréal, because they are traditional.</b></p> <p>I: When writing this review, did you feel that you received or gained anything from it?</p> <p>T: If I received anything from it?</p> <p>I: As a personal benefit and etc.</p> <p>T: <b>My intention was just to inspire people that was my first thought.</b> Then I received a lot of likes and a lot of comments on the look and people saying that it looked really good and all that stuff. I don't know, I just think it made me feel good. <b>I think everyone would feel good, when receiving likes, comments and compliments. So I felt good about it.</b></p> <p>I: You felt good about yourself after receiving this feedback?</p> <p>T: Yeah, I did.</p> <p>I: Because the next question is, is it important to you how your review affects other consumers?</p> <p>T: How it affects other... hmm, yeah it is because my purpose to write reviews is to help others. If I write a bad review about a thing or place, a webshop or something, it is to help others to not experience the same thing as I experienced. So what was the question?</p> <p>I: The question was, how important is it to you that your review affects other consumers?</p> <p>T: So yes, it is very important. It's the whole purpose I think.</p> <p>I: Have you ever thought of how your review affects the</p>	<p>not so much for LP</p> <p><i>Wants to show that LP is "just as good as the others" so that others consider to use something less expensive as well</i></p> <p><i>Thinks LP is less discussed in beauty groups because it is less trendy but more traditional</i></p> <p><i>She first wanted to inspire other people when writing her reviews and then liked the positive feedback</i></p> <p><i>Writes reviews to help others (also with a negative review)</i></p>	<p>COBRA: Creation: Helping the company ("fine product") combined with concern for other consumers (less expensive but good) and a certain degree of empowerment (in form of encouragement) [see Lisa &amp; Mara]</p> <p><b>Brand responses: Brand judgements – credibility (~ rather traditional); Brand meaning: Brand imagery ~ associations → misaligned with LP's intended brand identity;</b> Assumption: reason for lack of brand-consumer interaction</p> <p>COBRA: Creation: Motive: Concern for other consumers came first, followed by self-enhancement</p> <p>COBRA: Creation: Motive: Concern for other consumers</p>
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<p>company behind the brand?</p> <p>T: Honestly, I haven't really thought about it. <b>Especially when it comes to L'Oréal then I've just thought that it's a big brand and my little review in a Facebook group doesn't really bother the brand.</b></p> <p>I: Do you feel like you're missing a response from the company?</p> <p>T: <b>I wouldn't say that I've been missing a response, because it's not something that I expect.</b></p> <p>I: But would it be nice to receive a response?</p> <p>T: Yeah! It's the same as I said earlier that I feel good when receiving compliments and likes and all that. Of course it would be nice to receive a feedback from L'Oréal as well.</p> <p>I: Do you post reviews on other platforms then Facebook groups?</p> <p>T: I use Trustpilot, but not so much for products – more places or webshops ... things like that.</p> <p>I: Then mostly for retailers?</p> <p>T: Yes, for products then it's more on different Facebook groups.</p> <p>I: Why did you choose Facebook groups to publish your review?</p> <p>T: Because I feel like people would gain more in Facebook groups by reading my review. I can't really imagine that people ever read my reviews on Trustpilot. And also because on Facebook you receive comments and you see that your review was actually helpful because of the response you got. <b>So I guess that's why I prefer Facebook, because you get this feedback when you review it. It motivates you to do more of it, because you can see it helps other.</b> I don't really feel the same on Trustpilot.</p> <p>I: How frequently do you test new products?</p> <p>T: Like beauty products?</p> <p>I: Yes</p> <p>T: All the time (laughing).</p> <p>I: Is that a few times a week or month?</p> <p>T: I guess, once a week or twice a week.</p> <p>I: It sounds like it's important to you to be up-to-date with all beauty trends?</p> <p>T: I wouldn't say that it's important to be up-to-date with the latest beauty trends. But I think that I'm always searching for the perfect product, you know, the perfect moisturizer and perfect mascara and perfect eye shadow palette. So I think until the day I find the ... reach the end-goal of perfect product – I will always continue testing. But I don't think I will reach that –</p>	<p><i>Thinks that a big brand like LP does not consider her "little review in a Facebook group"; does not expect a response by LP but would appreciate it</i></p> <p><i>She feels good when receiving positive feedback</i></p> <p><i>She uses Trustpilot as a review platform for webshops and Facebook for products</i></p> <p><i>Reassurance through feedback on Facebook keeps her going and motivated</i></p> <p><i>Frequently/ continuously tests new products; the search for the perfect product keeps her going</i></p>	<p><b>COBRA: Creation: (Currently) Missing motive: Helping the company (but her choice of words indicate that she would not mind to have a stronger impact); lack of brand-consumer interaction [s. Vyvy p.5]</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: Creation: Motive: Self-enhancement</b></p> <p><b>Platform choice based on review subject</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: Creation: Motive: Concern for others combined with self-assurance (in a way to be assured that it is helpful = reassurance) [see Mara page 9]; Consumer-consumer interaction persuades her</b></p> <p><b>Personal innovativeness (driven by search for perfect product)</b></p>
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<p>EVER!</p> <p>I: So you will just continuing testing new products?</p> <p>I: Yeah, I think it has become a habit for me somehow. I just like doing it, but the rational me is that ... saying that it's because I want to find the perfect product.</p> <p>I: Jumping to another topic, what purpose do you use Facebook for?</p> <p>T: Facebook in general?</p> <p>I: Yes!</p> <p>T: Actually at the moment I only use it because ... again if I think rational, I only use it because I'm always part of different student groups and you're always working in groups in the university and it's just easier to communicate on Facebook. So that's why I keep my Facebook. Other than that, I also use it to be up-to-date with news and what my friends are doing. Things like that.</p> <p>I: How often do you post anything on Facebook?</p> <p>T: On my own page ... maybe once a month?</p> <p>I: Is there anything you consider, when posting it on Facebook?</p> <p>T: What do you mean?</p> <p>I: For example, do you think of the content of your post or however will read it?</p> <p>T: Yeah I do! I do think about it, if it's something funny that I want to show my friends, then I do think what my mom will say if she saw this. <b>I'm also thinking about my general appearance on Facebook, because of ... I mean a few months from now I have to search for a job and that's also something I think of. How my Facebook looks in general. I don't want to have stupid comments or random stuff on my Facebook page.</b></p> <p>I: Do you follow or like any beauty brands on Facebook?</p> <p>T: No I don't – I don't remember.</p> <p>I: For example, Lancôme or L'Oréal?</p> <p>T: No I don't like those kind of things.</p> <p>I: How about, would you recommend a product to your friends by tagging them in a review made by others?</p> <p>T: <b>Yeah definitely if I knew that my friend has been searching for the product. I would definitely tag them.</b></p> <p>I: How would you think about publishing your review on L'Oréal's Facebook page? If they have a function where their entire product reviews will be gathered on place.</p> <p>T: I don't know, it's a bit difficult to answer. Because on one hand I would do it, because we talked about getting response or feedback from L'Oréal – in that sense maybe I would do it. <b>But on the other hand, I wouldn't</b></p>	<p><i>Facebook usage: socialize/ stay in touch; get informed about general news; organize university projects</i></p> <p><i>Considers her mom when posting funny things to her friends; Is concerned about her image on Facebook; considers impression on future employer</i></p> <p><i>Does not like/follow any beauty brands on Facebook</i></p> <p><i>Would tag friends in product posts if they have searched for the product</i></p> <p><i>She especially writes reviews for her</i></p>	<p><i>Usage &amp; gratifications: Facebook: Social interaction, information, organization [see Katrin page6/7]</i></p> <p><i>Platform choice criteria: indirect consideration of social ties (audience), besides strong family ties especially weak ties or even no ties like future employer [see Lisa page 7, Simone page 10]</i></p> <p><i>No interaction with brands on Facebook</i></p> <p><i>COBRA: Contribution through tagging</i></p> <p><i>COBRA: Creation: Concern for others rather than Helping the company;</i></p>
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<p>feel like the reviews would be for the consumers but more for the brand. Posting on Facebook groups, it feels like you have this little community where we help each other and I think I would lose that feeling if I just posted it on L'Oréal's Facebook page. I wouldn't know the reader in the same way.</p> <p>I: The purpose will be to collect all reviews in one place instead of having reviews on different places or channels. Consumers could just check reviews on their Facebook page instead of searching for reviews in groups.</p> <p>T: Yeah, I think it would be nice if I think of myself as a consumer who wants to buy a product or considering to buy a L'Oréal product. I think it would be convenient to just look at one page, but if I think of myself as one who writes reviews then I think I would prefer to do it in the groups. Again, because of the feedback that other members send.</p> <p>I: How do you feel when other consumers want to exchange their brand knowledge and opinions with you on Facebook?</p> <p>T: I mean, if I write a review and they don't agree with me?</p> <p>I: Not just exchange of knowledge and opinions on Facebook</p> <p>T: Uhm, I think it's great because there is so many stupid things on Facebook, so I think it is just good if can use it for something useful like this. It's about getting inspired or inspiring others with reviews. I think it's good. I think it's a good idea.</p> <p>I: Have you ever commented on Facebook posts made by other consumers?</p> <p>T: Yeah I have. It has mostly been like if they post picture or a review of products – sometimes I do write that it looks good or that I didn't know that the product was that good and stuff like that. <b>I think it's because I like to receive comments like that myself, so I tend to write to other people as well.</b></p> <p>I: Would you say that you have something in common with other Facebook users who are in this group compared to other users?</p> <p>T: Yeah, I think we have something in common. <b>We all like makeup and beauty, so we have this common interest – all of us. That's what combines us somehow.</b></p> <p>I: That also differentiates you from other users?</p> <p>T: Yeah, I don't know if it differentiate us form other users because perhaps I could also be member of other kind of groups for book reviews for example and then I</p>	<p>community in the Facebook groups as these members help each other, rather than for the brand/company</p> <p>Thinks of herself in two different roles: consumer (prefers reviews on brand page) and review writer (prefers to write reviews in Facebook groups due to received feedback)</p> <p>Exchanges her knowledge and opinions on Facebook to be inspired and to inspire others</p> <p>Comments on posts of other consumers because she also likes it when they do the same with her reviews</p> <p>Feels that she is connected with other 'brand followers' due to shared beauty interest</p>	<p>Community elements: 'A sense of moral responsibility' = assistance in brand usage [see Katrin page 8, Lisa page 9]</p> <p>COBRA: Consumption vs. creation; Creation: Motive: Self-enhancement → see above</p> <p>COBRA: Consumption: Motive Information (NEW: in form of inspiration)</p> <p>COBRA: Contribution: Motive: norm of reciprocity (take &amp; give back) triggers consumer-consumer interaction</p> <p>Community elements: 'Consciousness of kind' [see Mara page 14, Lisa 7/9, Katrin 8/9, (Simone 11)]</p>
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<p>would have something in common with them.</p> <p>I: How do you feel when sharing product experiences with unknown users compared to sharing them with friends? Is there a difference?</p> <p>T: Yeah, I mean that's also why I only say that I wouldn't write reviews directly on L'Oréal's Facebook page because I would feel like they are unknown people for me. Foreigners – I wouldn't like that. But in Facebook groups, I would say that they are my friends, but it's a little community so I feel attached to them somehow. They are not completely strangers for me and not completely my friends, but still. Someone I kind of trust.</p> <p>I: Tatevik, thank you for your time and your contribution.</p>	<p><i>Facebook group members do not feel like strangers; she trusts them</i></p>	<p><i>Considers group members as strong rather than weak ties → based on community elements</i></p>
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## Vyvy

Age: 22 years

Occupation: Studies psychology on second semester; student with part-time job

Description: Mentioned that it is her first interview, but really calm and open (maybe a bit nervous in the beginning); difficult to get long answers in the beginning.

Verbatim transcript	Descriptive Coding	Interpretive Coding
<p>I: Thank you for taking the time to do the interview with me! (smiles). I will ask you some questions regarding beauty products and just say whatever that comes to your mind.</p> <p>V: Sure (smiles)</p> <p>I: First or all, how would you describe your daily beauty routine?</p> <p>V: With skincare or makeup?</p> <p>I: Both routines</p> <p>V: Complicated! I start with cleaning my face with two different cleansers, an oil-cleanser and a foam-cleanser. And then I use a tonic to clean it even better, after that I use a serum and facial cream.</p> <p>I: What about makeup?</p> <p>V: I don't use makeup everyday. On weekdays where I have school or work, I use a thin layer of BB cream that is like face cream but just with a little color. Then I just do my brows.</p> <p>I: Do you use any L'Oréal Paris products during those steps?</p> <p>V: Right now, I don't. But I used to, I still have their products in my makeup-bag. Right now I just don't use it, because I use something else.</p> <p>I: What about hair coloration? Do you dye your hair?</p> <p>V: Yes, when I dye my hair I actually use L'Oréal – only L'Oréal Glossy.</p> <p>I: How so?</p> <p>V: Uhm, that's a good question. First of all, the package is the biggest and I have a lot of hair, so I always think that there it's containing more product. But actually, it's not really the case. <b>I just think that it's because I know L'Oréal.</b></p> <p>I: Let's talk a little more about reviews. Do you remember the first time you got in touch with online reviews in general?</p> <p>V: No I don't remember the first time.</p> <p>I: Do you remember what kind of reviews you got in touch for the first time?</p> <p>V: That was reviews for restaurants.</p> <p>I: How did it start with reviews for beauty products then?</p> <p>V: Well, that is because I read a lot of reviews and</p>	<p><i>Extensive skin care beauty routine</i></p> <p><i>She owns LP make-up products but does not use them right now</i></p> <p><i>For colouring her hair she only uses LP</i></p> <p><i>Chooses LP because the package size looks promising and she feels familiar with LP</i></p>	<p><i>Brand switcher for make-up</i></p> <p><b>Brand resonance – loyalty</b></p> <p><b>Brand meaning: Brand imagery; Brand resonance; Brand relationship ("I know L'Oréal")</b></p>



<p>sometimes when you have some questions that you want answers to, you have to be a part of this forum. <b>Where you review some products and then you can get answers to your questions as well.</b> There can be other users who have tried the product and then will be able to answer your questions. <b>You can't just go in there and ask questions – you have to give something to receive something.</b></p> <p>I: How much time did it take you from reading reviews to writing them?</p> <p>V: A while!</p> <p>I: Would you say that you prefer to use L'Oréal Paris products more than other brands?</p> <p>V: Yes, when it's drugstore brands. Then I totally prefer L'Oréal Paris.</p> <p>I: How come?</p> <p>V: Well, I have this idea or feeling and I think there are others who also have it that even though it is sold through supermarkets and is a drugstore brand then it's really quality compared to other brands or products.</p> <p>I: Would you say that you're loyal to the brand then?</p> <p>V: Yeah</p> <p>I: How long would you say that you have been loyal to the brand? When did you start using this brand?</p> <p>V: My first foundation was from L'Oréal</p> <p>I: So it means that you've been using it for a while?</p> <p>V: Yeah</p> <p>I: When you think of L'Oréal Paris or when you use it, what kind of feelings do you get?</p> <p>V: Uhm... <b>It gives me a thought or idea of products that are affordable.</b> If that makes sense (laughing).</p> <p>I: To what extent do they satisfy your needs?</p> <p>V: Well, a lot! <b>They have everything within beauty care, they have cleanser, cream, makeup, shampoo that I use everyday and hair coloration. They cover pretty much everything in my routine.</b></p> <p>I: Do you also use other hair products from L'Oréal besides hair coloration?</p> <p>V: Yes, I use shampoo from L'Oréal everyday. I think it's called Elvital. I change it quite often, but it's always within the product line, Elvital. So it's always a shampoo or conditioner from L'Oréal, it is just different products.</p> <p>I: Do you know the spokespersons L'Oréal use in their commercials?</p> <p>V: I know that they have used Eva something – the one from Desperate Housewives. That's the only one I can think of right now.</p> <p>I: They have a close relationship to these celebrities, what</p>	<p><i>Reads beauty reviews in forums where it is all about giving and taking</i></p> <p><i>Prefers LP over other brands among drugstore brands</i></p> <p><i>Perceives LP as being high-quality</i></p> <p><i>Her first foundation was from LP</i></p> <p><i>Perceives LP as an affordable brand</i></p> <p><i>Is satisfied with LP due to the large product range that covers her beauty routine →</i></p> <p><i>Always stays with LP Elvital shampoo; forgot to mention earlier that she also uses LP hair care products</i></p> <p><i>Can recall one spokesperson</i></p>	<p><b>COBRA:</b> consumption: Motive: Information; Creation: Norm of reciprocity combined with Social pressure ("you have to give something to receive something")</p> <p><b>Brand resonance – loyalty (drugstore brands)</b></p> <p><b>Brand responses: Brand judgements – quality</b></p> <p><b>Brand resonance: Brand relationship</b></p> <p><b>Brand meaning: Brand performance (price)</b></p> <p><b>Brand meaning: Brand performance (meets functional needs)</b></p> <p><b>Brand resonance – loyalty; Brand salience: Recall of brands used in certain situations is difficult [see Simone page 2]</b></p> <p><b>Brand salience: Awareness: Recall possible (to a limited extent); however → Brand meaning:</b></p>
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<p>do you think of that? Are they someone you look up to or can identify yourself with?</p> <p>V: No not really, but I can remember Michelle Phan, who's a Youtuber, was a brand ambassador for L'Oréal Paris. I can remember it affected me at that time when I was younger.</p> <p>I: Do you identify yourself with Eva Longoria or Michelle Phan?</p> <p>V: Naaah, not really. It was just something I was aware of and maybe thought it was cool.</p> <p>I: How would you describe L'Oréal Paris with a few words?</p> <p>V: Like I said before, it's something I associate with quality and something very lovely. They have everything within beauty. That is what I can think of right now.</p> <p>I: What if you should describe it with adjectives?</p> <p>V: Ehhh ...</p> <p>I: What if you come across their commercial or their slogan "Because you're worth it"?</p> <p>V: Well, I don't really know. I can't really think of anything.</p> <p>I: What about their products? Do you think they are classic or innovative?</p> <p>V: <b>Both! Because they have everything you associate with makeup, but they're also developing all the time. They create something new all the time, for example they just creating a blush that's formed as a rose and they also have the cushions, which is something completely new. L'Oréal Paris were the first one, who had it among makeup brands in the supermarket.</b></p> <p>I: Do you feel L'Oréal Paris listen to your needs as a consumer?</p> <p>V: Yes that's what they do! When I use their shampoo, hair coloration and makeup products.</p> <p>I: What's your favorite product from L'Oréal then?</p> <p>V: Definitely their foundation. It's called something with Magnifique.</p> <p>I: How come it's your favorite product?</p> <p>V: Again, because I bought it for the first time when I was really young. I remember that it was something that I could afford back then, but at the same time it was really really good, because it fulfilled all of my needs and expectations of a foundation. Till the day today, I still use it sometimes because it's really good and gives a natural look. The thing with the price that you don't have to spend 300-400 DKK for a foundation. The foundation from L'Oréal is cheap, but it still fulfills your needs.</p> <p>I: How interested are you in talking and learning more about L'Oréal Paris?</p>	<p><i>Does not look up to the spokespersons but was affected by a LP ambassador (Youtuber) at a younger age</i></p> <p><i>Cannot identify with spokespersons/ ambassadors</i></p> <p><i>Describes LP as qualitative, lovely and wide-ranging</i></p> <p><i>Considers LP as classic ("they have everything") and innovative ("they are also developing all the time", e.g. cushion foundation as first supermarket brand)</i></p> <p><i>Feels like LP listens/ to understand her needs</i></p> <p><i>Describes her favorite product as something that she always has been using. That it's affordable and fulfill her needs</i></p> <p><i>Likes to learn more</i></p>	<p><b>Brand imagery: spokespersons not really part of it</b></p> <p><b>Brand meaning: Brand imagery: Affected by brand ambassadors earlier</b></p> <p><b>Brand meaning: Brand imagery: Lack of identity with spokespersons/ ambassadors</b></p> <p><b>Brand responses: Brand judgements – quality; Brand meaning: Brand imagery (associations)</b></p> <p><b>Brand responses: Brand judgements – credibility: Both traditional and innovative brand → the latter is aligned with LP's intended brand identity</b></p> <p><b>Brand responses: Brand judgements – credibility</b></p> <p><b>Brand meaning: Brand performance (price); Brand resonance: Brand relationship: 'Childhood friendships' ("back then")</b></p> <p><b>Brand resonance –</b></p>
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<p>V: Probably a lot! <b>I like to talk about the brand. Well, I guess I love L'Oréal.</b> I would say that I'm a loyal customer – I would say that I'm pretty loyal.</p> <p>I: Do you remember the last review that you wrote for a L'Oréal Paris product?</p> <p>V: Yes that was their hair treatment product.</p> <p>I: Do you remember what you mentioned in the review?</p> <p>V: Well, I remember that I mentioned how I use it and how much I use it like twice a week and it helps keeping my hair healthy. Also that it's the only hair treatment I've ever used and also the first one I bought, which I just continue to buy one after one.</p> <p>I: So it was more your experience of the product?</p> <p>V: Yes! I have no idea what it contains; I think there's perfume in it, because it smells good!</p> <p>I: How often do you write online reviews?</p> <p>V: Probably not that often compared to others. <b>But if there's something that I feel is really really good and that others can benefit from it then I do it.</b> I read a lot of reviews when I buy new products.</p> <p>I: Why do you write reviews for L'Oréal Paris?</p> <p>V: Well, <b>I use so many of their products so it's difficult to avoid writing about their products.</b></p> <p>I: What did you gain from writing the review of the hair treatment?</p> <p>V: Hmm... <b>I don't gain or receive anything directly. However, you can say that all of the reviews I read, there have been someone else who wrote them. So if no one bothered to write reviews then there are no reviews to read.</b></p> <p>I: So it's something indirectly?</p> <p>V: Yes, we can call it that.</p> <p>I: Do you feel that to get something, you have to give something as well?</p> <p>V: Not necessarily, I don't feel that I have to give something when I'm writing a review. <b>It's just the way it is. If nobody chooses to write reviews then no one can read anything about the product. It's like a circle.</b></p> <p>I: Some places offer you coupons if writing reviews etc. What do you think about that?</p> <p>V: Well, I use an app called MakeupAlley. It's a forum where you can review anything within beauty. That's why I'm thinking as I do.</p> <p>I: Do you think about how others interpret your review? Or how your review affects other consumers?</p> <p>V: The most important thing is that I'm honest. So I also</p>	<p>about LP, "loves" the brand and is loyal to it</p> <p><i>Exclusively mentions her personal experience with the brand when writing reviews about LP</i></p> <p><i>Writes reviews when she has a strongly positive feeling</i></p> <p><i>Uses so many LP products that she cannot "avoid" writing reviews about them</i></p> <p><i>Writes reviews as she also reads reviews written by other consumers</i></p> <p><i>Considers the reading and writing of reviews as a circle</i></p> <p><i>Writes reviews in a forum called MakeupAlley</i></p> <p><i>Wants to establish honesty and trust when writing her own experience-based</i></p>	<p>engagement (learning), attachment ("I love L'Oréal"), loyalty</p> <p>COBRA: Creation: Recommender reviews</p> <p>COBRA: Creation of 'extreme' reviews (according to Gensler et al.); Motive: Extraversion; expressing positive feelings combined with concern for other consumers [see Lisa, Katrin, Julia]; Consumption: reading more than writing</p> <p>COBRA: creation: Motive: Norm of reciprocity (read and write) combined with Social pressure ("So if no one bothered to write reviews then there are no reviews to read")</p> <p>(see above)</p> <p>Choice of platform: opinion platform</p> <p>COBRA: Creation: Motive: Personal identity (reinforce personal values;</p>
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<p>hope that everybody else is honest, so I get the right opinions about products. That's why I also try to describe how I use the products and how many times a week I use it. The other people get the best idea of the problem, if you can say it like that.</p> <p>I: When you wrote the review for the hair treatment, how did you feel afterwards?</p> <p>V: <b>It's just something you do.</b> Sometimes you read reviews before and after writing your own review. Then you think it's funny how it can vary that much.</p> <p>I: Do other opinions affect your review?</p> <p>V: No, not at all.</p> <p>I: Have you ever thought of how your review affects the company behind the brand?</p> <p>V: Honestly, I think I'm a too small fish for that.</p> <p>I: So you don't think you affect them?</p> <p>V: No not by myself.</p> <p>I: You mentioned that you use MakeupAlley to review products, do you post your review other places?</p> <p>V: Hmm... I have to think now. I've done it on Matas, but it's soooooooo long ago and it's not something I do now.</p> <p>I: Why Matas?</p> <p>V: I think it was before I discovered MakeupAlley. But it was not that many; I think I wrote perhaps one or two.</p> <p>I: Why did you write reviews on Matas?</p> <p>V: It was also to give my opinion of the product.</p> <p>I: How come you chose MakeupAlley instead of Amazon, Facebook etc?</p> <p>V: Because MakeupAlley is designed for a consumer to read and write reviews on. You can't buy anything from them like other places. If people can't find a review on the retailer's site then they can just search for it on MakeupAlley. <b>They can read all of the reviews in one place.</b></p> <p>I: How often do you test new products?</p> <p>V: Probably too often (laughing)</p> <p>I: How often is that?</p> <p>V: If I take a walk in the city and I see something new, I easily get pursued to buy it or wanting to try it. It can easily be a few times during a month.</p> <p>I: How important is it to you to be up-to-date with beauty trends?</p> <p>V: It's not important for me; it's more the case that there is always something that has been improved. So I try new things, but it's not like I'm just sitting and waiting for new things to launch.</p> <p>I: More about Facebook, what do you use Facebook for?</p>	<p><i>reviews and hopes that others do the same</i></p> <p><i>For her writing reviews is "just something you do"</i></p> <p><i>She does not feel that she affects LP as she is "a too small fish for that"</i></p> <p><i>Writes reviews on platforms where people cannot order something but read all reviews in "one place"</i></p> <p><i>She frequently buys and tries new beauty products</i></p>	<p><i>honesty) combined with concern for other consumers</i></p> <p><i>COBRA: Creation Motive: Social pressure</i></p> <p><i>COBRA: Creation: (Currently) Missing motive: Helping the company (but her choice of words indicate that she would not mind to have a stronger impact); lack of brand-consumer interaction</i></p> <p><i>Platform choice criteria for opinion platforms: no dual-option: review &amp; buy [see contrast to Julia &amp; Mara], but all-in-one review platform</i></p> <p><i>High level of personal innovativeness</i></p>
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<p>V: Generally, I use it to keep in touch with my friends, family and acquaintances.</p> <p>I: How often do you post on Facebook?</p> <p>V: When there's something special. Once in a while.</p> <p>I: What do you consider when posting on Facebook?</p> <p>V: Yeah, first of all what you are going to post and how it will be received.</p> <p>I: Do you follow any beauty brands on Facebook?</p> <p>V: Yes I do</p> <p>I: Do you remember which ones?</p> <p>V: Actually, I think it's more Facebook pages, which sell their products that I follow.</p> <p>I: Why do you follow them?</p> <p>V: Again, to be up-to-date with new products</p> <p>I: Would you ever recommend a product to your friends by tagging them on a review?</p> <p>V: <b>That's what I have my friends for (laughing). I'm just kidding! Well we always try to tag each other on new products and share it with each other when there's something new and great.</b></p> <p>I: Would you ever consider to post a review on L'Oréal Paris Facebook page, if they have a function where all reviews were gathered one place? Maybe like MakeupAlley</p> <p>V: I already posted a lot of reviews on MakeupAlley, I wouldn't feel like writing the same reviews again.</p> <p>I: What if it's for new products that you haven't reviewed before?</p> <p>V: Yeah, it's something I would consider. I'm sure that I would use it!</p> <p>I: How would you describe your relationship with other consumers who follow the same pages as you on Facebook?</p> <p>V: My best friends! (laughing) That was just a joke.</p> <p>I: Do you have anything in common? Can you relate to them?</p> <p>V: Yes, <b>you're always searching for the best of the best and what suits your skins. Then you have someone to discuss it with and come with feedback. So I definitely think that there's a special bond between us.</b></p> <p>I: Then you like to share your opinion and experience on Facebook?</p> <p>V: Well that's what I use Facebook for, but it's not that public where I post it on my own profile. It's more in Facebook groups or in the chat or tags.</p> <p>I: Have you ever received feedback for you reviews?</p> <p>V: No, you can't do that on MakeupAlley. I know what you mean. I haven't received any feedback for my own reviews, but I've commented on other people's review before. I've provided feedback on a review, if I was in doubt about the</p>	<p><i>Facebook usage: socialize</i></p> <p><i>Only posts when there is something special</i></p> <p><i>Considers the content of her post and how it will be perceived</i></p> <p><i>Follows some retailer pages on Facebook</i></p> <p><i>Facebook: Tags friends to give recommendation</i></p> <p><i>Would not consider to write the same reviews as on MakeupAlley also on Facebook but new reviews</i></p> <p><i>Feels like there is a "special bond" between her and the other reviewers</i></p> <p><i>Rather likes to make more private posts in Facebook groups and not on her profile</i></p>	<p><i>Uses &amp; gratifications: Facebook: social interaction</i></p> <p><i>Platform choice criteria: indirect consideration of social ties (audience)</i></p> <p><i>COBRA: Consumption: Uses Facebook to get latest product information</i></p> <p><i>COBRA: Contribution: recommendations through tagging; actively engages with strong ties</i></p> <p><i>Potential uses &amp; gratifications: Facebook: Positive perception of potential review feature on Facebook</i></p> <p><i>Community elements: 'Consciousness of kind'</i></p> <p><i>COBRA: Creation: consideration of privacy/ personal image; Community elements: (closed) Facebook groups = "Consciousness of kind" [see Simone p.11]</i></p>
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<p>product or I wanted something more clarified. We can discuss the details in the review.</p> <p>I: Where did you do this?</p> <p>V: In Facebook groups</p> <p>I: What would you say that you and others members of Facebook groups or users who like the same pages as you, what do you have in common?</p> <p>V: <b>What we have in common is that we're open to new products and trends, new beauty routines that's why you played around with the product.</b> Does that answer your question?</p> <p>I: Yes it does! How does it feels when you share your reviews with stranger compared with your friends?</p> <p>V: <b>I think it's easier with people that you don't know, because you don't try to sell it, you're just describing the product. But with people you know, I think if you love a product then you also try to get them to buy the product.</b> Yeah, that's what I think.</p> <p>I: Are you more honest with strangers?</p> <p>V: Perhaps not honest, but you hype it more. When you're crazy with a product, you also want them to try it. But it's not necessarily that it fulfills her needs and requirements. You just think that it's so good, so you "pathos" (laughing). I hope you know what I mean. I try to appeal more to their (friends) feelings.</p> <p>I: What do you think motivates you to write the reviews?</p> <p>V: <b>I think... it's because I read reviews as well and I feel like it's a huge help for me. So I hope that I can help others as well.</b></p> <p>I: That was my last question, thank you for your time!</p>	<p><i>Also gave feedback to other consumers' Facebook reviews in groups</i></p> <p><i>Feels like she has something in common with other Facebook 'brand followers'</i></p> <p><i>Considers recommendations to strangers as easier as you do not tend to "sell" the product</i></p> <p><i>Tries to appeal more to her friends' feelings compared with strangers</i></p> <p><i>Writes reviews as they help her when reading them so she also wants to help others</i></p>	<p><b>COBRA: consumer-consumer interaction through contribution (commenting)</b> [see Simone p.12]</p> <p><b>Community elements: 'Consciousness of kind'</b></p> <p><b>Clearly differentiates between strong and weak ties; recommendation to weak ties easier as she is more subjective to strong ties</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: Creation; Motive: Concern for other consumers combined with Helping (NEW to creation type)</b></p>
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## Willow

Age: 30 years

Occupation/ Demographics: Freelance makeup artist and photographer, lives relatively close to Copenhagen, has a son

Description: Likes to help other people in all cases/ spread positive energy; very open and present

Verbatim transcript	Descriptive Coding	Interpretive Coding
<p>I: Thank you for letting me interview you today! If you have any questions before we start, please let me know (smiles). And you can at any time interrupt the interview if you feel uncomfortable!</p> <p>W: No it's fine! (smiles back)</p> <p>I: I will start by asking how your daily beauty routine looks like?</p> <p>W: It's a little different from day to day. Most days, I just wake up, wash my face and put some cream on. Ehh, I have something like aloe vera gel, which I mix with my regular face cream. It tightens up a bit and moisturizes my skin. I like that! I do it every morning and I do every night as well, when I've removed my makeup and stuff. 3 times a week I like to use facemask.</p> <p>I: Which different brands do you use for hair, makeup and skin care?</p> <p>W: For hair I use ... at the moment I use a leave-in hair conditioner from Matas with sea buckthorn in it, which is really good. I had very dry and damaged hair since I had highlights in it last year. It didn't go so well, so I had to repair my hair again. It has been okay, I've also got bought a spray from the L'Oréal Botanicals line, which is so good! It works really really well, it can keep my hair straight and smooth. I have strange natural waves or curls in my hair and they do not behave properly. So it tames it and simultaneously gives it a little moisture. It works very well. Otherwise, I don't do much with my hair - well I wash it, of course. I do that every second or third day with regular shampoo and conditioner. In some periods it might be dandruff shampoo and other times it's just such a normal perfume-free neutral one. Then I like to use hair treatment once in a while - a couple of times a month. But right now I use leave-in hair conditioner two times a week, so I put it in my hair and blow-dry it. Then the hair is not greasy and is instantly dry. Two times a week, I use hair oil in the tips while I blow-dry it.</p>	<p><i>Beauty routine with focus on good skin</i></p>         <p><i>She's very happy with her hair spray from LP, which helps her with her hair problems and fulfill her needs; also focus on healthy hair and hair care</i></p>	<p><i>Brand meaning:</i> <i>Brand performance</i></p>
<p>I: Where is your hair oil from?</p> <p>W: Hmm ... I can't remember. It varies what I buy. I have one at home from Seyers, I think it's called that. Then I have one from ... oh I really can't remember where it is</p>	<p><i>She cannot remember the brand/ product name of some of her products</i></p>	<p><i>Brand salience: Lack of brand awareness (recall)</i></p>

<p>from.</p> <p>I: Are they from the supermarket?</p> <p>W: Yeah, with hair products then yes. Otherwise, I often shop in Matas. Especially with skin care products since I use a lot from Raunsborg. I also use products from Forever Living that is through a private retailer - they are the ones with all these aloe vera products. Right now I'm testing a cream called R3 or something. It is also something with aloe vera. It should be a good wrinkle cream or something – crazy expensive! But I'm quite excited; I've only used it for a few weeks.</p> <p>I: What about hair coloration? Do you do the hair coloration by yourself or is it at the hairdresser?</p> <p>W: Two times a year, my hair gets a black color. It is to handle the worst hair roots. I've almost black hair by nature, but there are some grey hairs here and there.</p> <p>I: Is that something you do by yourself?</p> <p>W: Yes</p> <p>I: Do you remember which brands you use?</p> <p>W: It's so rare that I color my hair, so it's just the cheapest permanent black hair color that I can find. If I did it more often, I would probably care a little bit more about the brands.</p> <p>I: Are there other situations during the day when you think of L'Oréal Paris?</p> <p>W: Well, I spray my hair with it [L'Oréal] and I also have makeup from there. At the moment, I use a highlighter from L'Oréal a lot! It's a square one – I think it's called True Match. I'm actually very happy with it.</p> <p>I: Have you been using the highlighter for a long time?</p> <p>W: No, I have used it for a month, but before I had the same one. It's just one that I always have.</p> <p>I: When was the first time you saw a review for beauty products? There are of course many reviews of restaurants, hotels and so on. But now there are many reviews for beauty products too.</p> <p>W: Well, I often get them in the mail because I'm a member here and there when I shop online. <b>Then I often get these emails, where you can review a product. So sometimes I respond to the email and go on the sites and review. Or if I see on Facebook that something just pops up with a product that I have been either happy or not happy with, so I just write my opinion or review there.</b></p> <p>I: So you began to write reviews when you received these emails? Or when you saw these posts on Facebook.</p> <p>W: Yes I give some kind of response when someone asks me.</p>	<p><i>Uses lots of retailer products and brands; seems to switch brands frequently</i></p> <p><i>For hair colorations, she chooses the cheapest option; not willing to spend much for infrequent usage</i></p> <p><i>Currently uses a LP hair spray and highlighter (one that she always has); feels really satisfied about these products</i></p> <p><i>She's often triggered by emails from retailers to review beauty products that she has bought; She also share her opinion about products that she has any experience with as comments on Facebook post</i></p>	<p><i>Questionable whether branded goods are important to her; Brand resonance – lack of brand loyalty</i></p> <p><i>Performance over loyalty</i></p> <p><i>Brand meaning: Brand performance (meets functional needs); Brand resonance – loyalty for LP highlighter</i></p> <p><i>COBRA: Creation: Motive: Helping the company (on request); COBRA: Retailer review falls into creation type whereas Facebook comment falls into contribution type (more spontaneous) [see Mara p.13, Simone p.8]</i></p>
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<p>I: Would you say that you prefer to use L'Oréal Paris instead of other brands?</p> <p>W: No, I prefer The Body Shop instead of L'Oréal Paris. It's because of the ethical in it; I know that with many of their products they have been testing on animals. That I try to take as much distance as possible to it. But then there are also some things you can't avoid - when you get gifts or vouchers, where it has be used. Then I'm just thinking "god it was L'Oréal, but it was a very cool product."</p> <p>I: So you are actually trying to avoid L'Oréal Paris?</p> <p>W: Yes, I try a bit to avoid it. But I know that L'Oréal owns The Body Shop, which I prefer, so it's a bit like 50/50.</p> <p>I: Can you tell me what feelings L'Oréal Paris gives you? When you are either thinking about it or use it.</p> <p>W: Hmm ... it'll probably depend on which product or thing. Ehmm ... often it's the feeling of self-indulgence - that you do something good for yourself. What I like about some L'Oréal products is their pigmentation of their makeup. It's a bit better and it also lasts a little longer during the day, right? I think that is very nice.</p> <p>I: You talked about the unethical in it before - do you also consider that?</p> <p>W: It annoys me a bit; I'm thinking, "is this product tested on animals or is it not?" For this reason, I enjoy The Body Shop and have been pleased with The Body Shop for ... I do not know how many years - 6-7 years, right? So I prefer to go there and shop, but there are a lot of makeup things that they don't have. So I often take what I find - whether it's Rimmel or L'Oreal or whatever it is. I just take what pops in my eyes.</p> <p>I: So you wouldn't say that you are loyal to the brand?</p> <p>W: No, I am not.</p> <p>I: But to what extent would you say L'Oréal Paris satisfy your needs?</p> <p>W: If you think about the products themselves - without thinking about ethics or anything, then I'm fully satisfied! But I don't really use their shampoo or things like creams. But they have indeed made some lines that have been really good. And then there is the Botanicals line, which I'm really happy with. It really fits well with my needs.</p> <p>I: How long have you been using it?</p> <p>W: 3-4 months, as long as it has been there. It's pretty new, right? I have the spray, and then I have something else there too – a hair treatment, I think.</p> <p>I: Do you know the spokespersons that L'Oreal Paris use</p>	<p><i>Prefers The Body Shop over LP for ethical reasons like animal testing but still uses LP products</i></p> <p><i>Tries to avoid to use LP but is also aware of The Body Shop's linkage to the L'Oréal Group</i></p> <p><i>Has a feeling of self-indulgence when using LP and considers it as long-lasting</i></p> <p><i>Considers herself as not loyal to LP</i></p> <p><i>Despite the ethical considerations, she is fully satisfied with LP and how it works</i></p>	<p><b>Brand meaning: Brand performance outperforms brand imagery (animal testing)</b></p> <p><b>Brand responses: Brand feelings: Self-respect ~ self-indulgence; Brand meaning: Brand performance</b></p> <p><b>Brand resonance – lack of loyalty</b></p> <p><b>Brand meaning: Brand performance (meets functional needs)</b></p>
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<p>in their advertising?  W: No, not really.  I: In the TV or magazines?  W: But I can recognize them in commercials and things like that. I'm not really watching TV, so it's more if an advertisement appears on Youtube or something, right?  There are a lot of those. Also in a magazine or something.  I: Is it someone that you can identify yourself with? Or look up to?  W: No not really. <b>In this case, I am probably too much of my own. Often I let myself get inspired by it - for a photo shoot and stuff or if I put makeup on models. Then I can get a little inspired by some different looks that they use.</b>  I: But will it make a difference, if it was Blake Lively or another less known model in the advertisement?  W: No, but I often think that you get in a good mood by their advertising. I don't know if it has something to do with them or if it's just the atmosphere in general.  I: They also have the slogan "Because you're worth it" - what do you think about that?  W: That's also good. It is perhaps a little bit with self-indulgence; you're getting into when you hear it too. So of course you should be spoiled, it's great!</p> <p>I: How would you describe L'Oréal Paris?  W: Hmmm ... broad! They make a lot of different things and there are many good options. There is always something that is repeated in their products and items, so it's not that you will be missing something in a year. Or that you can't get it anymore, that I like - they have some things that they continue to have. I am very pleased with that.  I: What about their products? Do you think they are innovative or more classic and traditional?  W: <b>It varies, because they follow the trend or maybe they are probably even creating the trends or making things trendy.</b>  I: Are they a trendsetter?  W: Yes, they are a bit.</p> <p>I: Do you otherwise feel that they understand your needs when it comes to their many different products?  W: Yes, I feel that. I really think that they do.  I: Do you have a favorite L'Oréal Paris product?  W: Right now, there is the hairspray. It just works, I'm so happy with it! But also my highlighter that I really like. <b>I can't live without these two things.</b></p> <p>I: What about talking and learning more about L'Oréal</p>	<p><i>Does not remember any of LP's spokespersons but can recognize them on YouTube; not using traditional media channels</i></p> <p><i>Cannot identify herself with the spokespersons but sometimes gets inspired/ in a good mood by LP's advertisements and looks</i></p> <p><i>Approval of LP's slogan; associates slogan with self-indulgence (see previously)</i></p> <p><i>Describes LP as "broad" due to large product range</i></p> <p><i>Considers LP as a (partial) trendsetter ~ innovative</i></p> <p><i>Feels like LP understand her needs</i></p> <p><i>She likes her two favourite LP products so much that she "can't live without these two things"</i></p>	<p>Solely uses modern media channels [see Katrin p.3, Simone &amp; Vyvy]</p> <p>Brand meaning:  Brand imagery: no identification with spokespersons; However: Inspiring advertisements</p> <p>Brand meaning:  Brand imagery [see Jeanette p.2] → aligned with LP's intended brand identity</p> <p>Brand meaning:  Brand imagery ~ associations [see Vyvy p. 1,3]</p> <p><b>Brand judgements – credibility ( ~ innovativeness) → aligned with LP's intended brand identity</b></p> <p><b>Brand responses: Brand judgements – credibility (consumer-oriented)</b></p> <p>Brand resonance – attachment (on product level)</p>
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<p>Paris, how interested are you in that?</p> <p>W: Well, I pretty much like to talk and learn about makeup, creams and hair products. I like to check out, what just ... what just pops in your head. In this month, for example, I like that more than anything else. Or if they just have a certain line with something that I really like. Then it is clear that I care more about it. Then I recommend it too!</p>	<p><i>Likes to learn more about LP but also to talk about beauty in general</i></p>	<p><b>Brand resonance – engagement</b></p>
<p>I: The next question is whether you can remember the last review that you wrote for L'Oréal Paris?</p> <p>W. Yes it is that hairspray. But it's a while ago – maybe one month.</p> <p>I: But these emails that you receive – are they from L'Oréal Paris?</p> <p>W: No, it differs a bit. It's probably three days ago that I wrote a review. It was some skin care, it's because I have a subscription with something called Celesti - a makeup subscription. Then sometimes you just receive an email, asking if you would review the product.</p> <p>I: Do you remember what you said in these different reviews?</p> <p>W: Naaah</p> <p>I: Was it the product's ingredients or ...</p> <p>W: It was actually how it lasts. Durability of the product, how well it lasts throughout the day. If you're walking around sweating, will it still last?</p> <p>I: It's your own experiences of the products then?</p> <p>W: It's always the durability that I focus most on.</p>	<p><i>When writing reviews she focuses on the durability and how she experienced that</i></p>	<p><b>COBRA: Creation: Recommender reviews with focus on brand performance (durability) based on own experience</b></p>
<p>I: In general, how often do you write reviews?</p> <p>W: Average, I would probably say 1-2 times a month. It can also be a film or a book review that I have read. I would say 2 times a month anyway. It can also be in a month where I'm bored on a Friday night then I'm just sitting at home doing all strange things on my computer.</p> <p>I: Is there a reason why you chose to write reviews on those specific places? As on Facebook and other pages you mentioned.</p> <p>W: <b>Well, people can't know what to go for if there isn't someone who responds to things. Companies behind these products or selling something, can't know anything if they don't get feedback for things.</b> No matter where I shop, I like to leave a review. Also something like Wish, I also leave a review or feedback after I have received the product and just write "I got this blouse and there are no holes in it and it was fine" or something similar to that. It doesn't matter what it is, because it means a lot to those who come by and see a product - whatever it is then there is so feedback of the</p>	<p><i>Writes reviews to give recommendation to other users and feedback to the company</i></p> <p><i>Also likes to read and refer to other</i></p>	<p><b>COBRA: Creation: Motivation: Concern for other consumer, Helping the company;</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: Consumption: Motive:</b></p>

<p>product. Personally, I really like if I can see that there is someone who has said something about the products such as "Don't buy the cream if you have oily skin" or "This is just super cool - it lasts all day". Then of course I will take the one that lasts all day.</p> <p>I: For example, when you write about the hairspray, is it to give L'Oréal Paris feedback or is it to provide other consumers feedback?</p> <p>W: <b>Both. It might be that there are other people who have a giant bird's nest as I sometimes have in the morning with my hair. It's awesome that somebody just reviewed it and then you might want to try it. And then I of course write to the company hoping that they will let the product line be there for a while, right? Then I have some time to buy a stock, (laughing).</b></p> <p>I: Do you feel that you get something out of writing these reviews?</p> <p>W: Yeah, somehow on the behalf of others. I know what I will get out of reading them. And because I know that I personally like to read others' reviews then I write them myself, because I think that there's someone else who likes to read reviews. <b>It is a great way to give back when there are others who also bother to spend their time writing reviews.</b></p> <p>I: Have you thought about how other consumers interpret your reviews? Is it important to you that your reviews affect them?</p> <p>W: Not necessarily, but they should think a bit about it. It also depends on what their needs are; it's a bit different people like. So in that way it doesn't mean as much. Of course if I praise a product and there is someone who says I'm just an egghead, then it's a little annoying, isn't it? But I will not be annoyed if there was someone who liked a product that I don't like. It's so different. But I also think it is important to tell what skin type you have. For example, when you have to review a foundation, then you should also tell about your skin type, so people can compare. It's no use if you just write that it isn't good without mentioning that you have dry skin since there might be some others who don't have dry skin, where it will work very well.</p> <p>I: Do you prefer more detailed reviews then?</p> <p>W: Yes, it should preferably that you don't just write that it's good or it's bad without explaining it. <b>People should get something out of the review. It's no use if you just write that it's good or bad, you have to explain a little more.</b> Maybe someone has dry skin and uses a</p>	<p>consumers' reviews</p> <p><i>Writes (positive) reviews to encourage the company to keep the product in the shelves and to give customers an idea of the product</i></p> <p><i>Likes to write reviews because she likes to read them; Writes reviews to "give back" to other review writers</i></p> <p><i>Mentions her skin type in her reviews as detailed reviews are important for her to avoid misunderstandings [see Simone p.8,9]</i></p> <p><i>Provides detailed reviews from which the reader can extract something [see Lisa p.6]</i></p>	<p>Information</p> <p>COBRA: Creation: Motive: Exertion of power over companies (NEW: in form of encouragement to keep product)</p> <p>COBRA: Creation: Motive: Norm of reciprocity</p> <p>COBRA: Creation: Motive: Concern for other consumers</p> <p>COBRA: Creation: Motive: Concern for other consumers</p>
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<p>foundation that is more oiled or whatsoever, then other people would know that if it works for her and her dry skin, then it would work for me as well, right? You get more out of the review if it's more detailed or provide more information.</p> <p>I: But have you also thought about how the review affects the company?</p> <p>W: Yeah, well when they choose to be a business and run something as big, then they are of course also used to it [affect on review]. Then there is a possibility that this specific product that they made is perhaps not that great - so there is a chance that people would tell bad things about it. Then there are fewer consumers who buy it, but then perhaps they can improve it. <b>I think they can use them [reviews] for a lot. Then they also know what they need to develop further on and what to keep and what they should just throw out the trash next season.</b> Then there is True Match, which they keep and I'm very happy with that. I have always been really happy with True Match, right? Then there must be others who also are happy with it since they kept it. <b>So there is also an advantage in reviewing that they know what to keep.</b></p> <p>I: How often do you test new products?</p> <p>W: I do ... I would say 3-4 times in a month?</p> <p>I: That's also quite often.</p> <p>W: I like it - I think it's very cozy.</p> <p>I: Is it important for you to be up-to-date with the new beauty trends?</p> <p>W: No, not necessarily. But as soon as something new launches then I like to test it out. Whether it is a palette of eye shadow or new cream, then I'll be like "Ahhh I must try that!"</p> <p>I: Now a little more about Facebook, for which personal purpose do you use Facebook for?</p> <p>W: I use it mostly for photo- and fitness-related things - mostly that. There is not much I have on Facebook – well of course I have my family and my friends on my profile, but it is not totally for that purpose. I think, I only post a picture of my son like 5 times a year - it's not that much. It is more for training and photography purposes.</p> <p>I: Is that something you follow or even post?</p> <p>W: <b>Both, of course I have interactivity with other photographers and models in relation to my own practice. For me, Facebook is mostly work-related.</b></p> <p>I: How often do you post on Facebook then?</p> <p>W: I post ... 3 times a week maybe. It can be on my page,</p>	<p><i>Assumes/ considers it necessary that LP cares for consumers opinions [see Julia p.3/4]</i></p> <p><i>Companies can benefit from reviews to improve their products</i></p> <p><i>She frequently buys and tries new beauty products</i></p> <p><i>Facebook usage: mainly for business purposes, limited: socialize</i></p> <p><i>Facebook is a work-related networking platform for her</i></p>	<p><b>Brand responses: Brand judgements – Assumption of credibility</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: Creation: Motive: Helping the company</b></p> <p><b>High level of personal innovativeness</b></p> <p><b>Uses &amp; gratifications: Facebook: business purposes, (socializing)</b></p> <p><b>Facebook: Social ties: weak ties ~ professional ties</b></p>
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<p>because I've got a new photo that should be shown.</p> <p>I: Is there anything you consider before posting on Facebook?</p> <p>W: Yeah, I learned a bit through time like how serious is this? And is it something that people will just ignore and scroll further and think, "oh, she's so stupid" or is it something people will think is nice? <b>I don't, for example, post negative content. There are so many who write every time there is something bad, and then post it. That I don't want to do, because people will be immune to it in the end and think it's boring. So I post when I see something funny and want to share it.</b> It might be a stupid video or something, or something I've read that I think is really interesting. Or just photos - pictures, for this purpose I use the story part that has come in to Messenger a lot. The part where you can share your day.</p> <p>I: The function like Snapchat?</p> <p>W: I use it too much, Snapchat - especially when I have a photo shoot coming up. 3 days before I share a lot of things leading to the shoot. There are a lot of followers who think it's really interesting. <b>The platform I use the most is probably Snapchat and Instagram. I actually don't use Facebook that much more, it is only to keep my page updated with pictures from the photo shoot.</b></p> <p>I: Do you follow any beauty brands on Facebook?</p> <p>W: Yes I think so.</p> <p>I: Why do you follow them?</p> <p>W: I think it's super cozy and inspiring. And to see what new things will be launched.</p> <p>I: Would you recommend a product to your friends on Facebook by tagging them on a product review written by another consumer?</p> <p>W: Yes sometimes, it also depends on what. I have such a friend who likes to be tagged in everything. I know that I can tag her in things.</p> <p>K. What would you say, if you could review L'Oréal Paris products on their own Facebook page? Not only comment on the post, but on a feature on their page?</p> <p>W: Yes, I would totally do that - yeah I could easily do that! It would be so nice.</p> <p>I: Do you have any relations with other followers of L'Oréal Paris Facebook page? Or those who follow the same as you?</p> <p>W: No not really. <b>Or in one way I could say that I follow many others who love makeup.</b> The ones who only put makeup on while records it and then write which brands</p>	<p><i>Wants to spread positive feelings to counter the negative ones spread by others</i></p> <p><i>Mainly uses Snapchat and Instagram to post content rather than Facebook</i></p> <p><i>Follows beauty brands on Facebook to get inspiration and updates</i></p> <p><i>Tags some friends on Facebook</i></p> <p><i>Would like to have a review function on Facebook</i></p> <p><i>Does not feel like she has something in common with other 'brand followers' but follows others who</i></p>	<p><b>COBRA: Creation; Motive: Expressing positive emotions combined with a concern for other consumers (as she spreads positivity not solely for herself)</b> [see Lisa p.7]</p> <p><b>Uses &amp; gratifications: Decreased usage of Facebook</b> [see Katrin and Lisa talking about this tendency]</p> <p><b>COBRA: Consumption: Motive: Information (NEW: in form of inspiration)</b> [see Tatevik]</p> <p><b>COBRA: Contribution through tagging</b></p> <p><b>Potential uses &amp; gratification: Facebook: Positive perception of potential review feature</b> [see Vyvy p.6]</p> <p><b>No real community feelings</b></p>
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<p>Otherwise I've just been reading others' reviews for 3 years or something. So I thought it would be nice, to write them no matter what it is. Whether it's shoes or clothes or makeup or cream, I will review it as soon as I know anything about it. I know that other people can use them [reviews]. So you might as well write them.</p>	<p><i>Read reviews for a long time before writing her own reviews but then decided she could share her experiences as well</i></p>	<p><b>COBRA:</b> Development from consumption to creation: Motive: Norm of reciprocity ("you might as well write something")</p>
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## Appendix F – Focus group: Transcript and coding

The focus group was arranged in a quiet group room at Copenhagen Business School (CBS) on March, 29<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at 17:30pm. All participants were students at CBS.

### Abbreviations:

I: Interviewer

K: Katarina, 25 y/o, studying M.Sc. International Business.

Ja: Jasmine, 23 y/o, studying M.Sc. Service Management.

Jo: Johanna, 28 y/o, studying M.Sc. Service Management.

Ly: Liangye, 22 y/o, studying B.Sc. Business, Asian language and Culture.

H: Hawra, 24 y/o, studying M.A. Intercultural Marketing.

Li: Liliana, 23 y/o, studying M.A. Intercultural Marketing.

Verbatim transcript	Descriptive Coding	Interpretive Coding
<p>I: I'm going to be the moderator today so every question that is asked, if I'm asking, is coming from my side and then it's up to you to just discuss whatever you think is valuable – what you think, what you feel, what your opinion is. So there is no right or wrong. To begin properly, would you like to introduce yourselves? Probably, I start and we go around. My name is Carolin, 24 y/o and I'm studying BCM, Brand &amp; Communications Management. We, Kimmi and me, are currently writing our Master's Thesis and this is why we are here today.</p> <p>K: So I'm Katarina and 25 years old. I'm studying IB, International Business. That's it!</p> <p>Ja: I'm Jasmine and 23 years old, but I'm studying Service Management.</p> <p>Jo: I'm Johanna and 28. So that's me!</p> <p>Ly: My name is Liang and I'm on my second year of IBA – International business in Asia.</p> <p>H: I'm Hawra and 24 years old. I'm studying Intercultural Marketing.</p> <p>Li: My name is Liliana and from Italy. I'm studying at CBS, the same program as Hawra. I'm 23 and will graduate next year.</p> <p>I: Thanks for participating! Just to warm up - could you just quickly walk us through your daily beauty routine? Probably what you're doing in the mornings and evenings?</p> <p>K: In the mornings, I just shower and wash my face with water. Then I just put some day crème on and some makeup. Should I say what kind of makeup?</p> <p>I: If you would like to, please.</p> <p>K: I put some blush and concealer, and yeah I put blush on and then mascara. Then I do something with my eyebrows. And with my hair, I don't do so much. That's it.</p> <p>I: What about you Jasmine?</p>		

<p>Ja: Uhm ... normally when I get ready in the mornings, I wash my face and then I put on like the tinted moisturizing cream. And I have these different powders, I've this powder foundation and then I have a powder – not bronzer – but like, I don't know – a warmer powder for my cheeks. Then I do mascara and eyebrows and depending on the days, eye shadow if I have the time. And normally on the way out I have lipstick in my bag, so if I feel like putting it on, I will put it on, but not all the time. I have like the lipbalm in my bag, because it's cold here and my lips get dry. And then I always have one at my desk, just in case. And for my hair, I just have like a hair serum that I put in, if it's frizzy and then brush it.</p> <p>K: Yeah me too.</p> <p>Jo: Well okay, I always shower in the mornings and yeah, I wash my face in the shower. I use, actually I use a lot of like ... what is it called? like eco-friendly – like biologic products. Especially body lotion and for face and then I use a dry foundation. Not a foundation, but like a powder ... Minerals or something? Then I do concealer and eye shadow, if I have time. And I use deodorant of course (all laughing). For my hair, I sometimes use oil and that's about it, I think. I don't really do a long beauty routine.</p> <p>Ly: I actually don't do anything. I brush my teeth and do my eyebrows. Because I'm Asian, so we don't have much eyebrows and I just go – I don't brush my hair – I don't do anything.</p> <p>H: Well me, I ... what do I do. Besides brushing my teeth and all that, I use a facial gel cream for washing my face and yeah... after that I only use hydrating gel for my face as well and brush. I do my eyebrows as well. I have much but not at the end (laughing). For my hair obviously, I don't need to use that much, but usually I have curly dry hair so I use oil when I brush it, because it helps a lot. That's it. I actually have weekly routine, I don't know if you want to hear that...</p> <p>I: Please!</p> <p>H: I use a damp machine – water thing. I use that once a week, where I use a scrub and then I use whatever we have at home. Something natural like potato, tomato, whatever. I put that on my face and hydrating cream.</p> <p>I: That's very interesting.</p> <p>H: Yeah, it's really nice</p> <p>K: You have very nice skin! Maybe I should do the same!</p> <p>H: Because, yeah ... I've always had clean skin, but to maintain it, sometimes I get really stressed out with pimples and stuff. So when I do the damp intrigue, it actually helps a lot! And it also helps removing the scars after the pimples.</p> <p>Jo: I actually also do a scars/pores once a week.</p>	<p><i>Extensive beauty routine; focus on makeup</i></p> <p><i>Extensive beauty routine; focus on skin care</i></p>
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*Extensive beauty routine; focus on skin care*

<p>K: But is it an actually machine? A damping machine or like in the shower?</p> <p>H: It's like ... I don't know, you put water and for 10 minutes, you have your face in front of it. And it gets like... not sweaty... but you know the damp and all</p> <p>K: Yeah the moist</p> <p>H: You can do the same with a pot - it has the same effect. That's it...</p> <p>Li: So I shower at night, because I really like to enjoy at least 15 minutes under the shower. So in the morning, it's more face care. I would wash my face with a neutral soap, so my skin gets dry because I've fat skin. I actually tried a lot of soaps to make it dry and nothing is better than the normal soap. And then after just washing it, I put ... in winter ... BB cream or a normal face cream. But in summer I wouldn't use anything, because I get a bit tanned and I don't want to put foundation on because it ruins the color that I naturally have. Uhm, then I would never go out without mascara and I don't do anything with my eyebrows or anything else. The only thing that I would do according to my mood is lipstick. I love red lipstick, but it depends on how I feel that day.</p> <p>I: Okay, so you frequently mentioned that you use organic products. What kinds of brands are these? Or could all of you probably mention for each step what you use?</p> <p>K: Bare Minerals are quite good.</p> <p>Ja: That's also what I use.</p> <p>Jo: Yeah, I use that one for my face. Normally for soap and stuff, I use everything without parabens. I don't use anything with parabens, because my skin gets like very ... it hurts me when I use it. So a lot of things without parabens or I use eco-friendly. There are a lot of small brands that I can't recall them all. I mean, I actually use hand soap for my face. I don't use any specific hand soaps or something like that. I use a Danish brand; it's a quite small one. I don't remember the brand, but I can figure it out later.</p> <p>I: Do you use the ecological friendly ones because you're ecological friendly or because it's better for your skin?</p> <p>Jo: Both, I would say. If the price... because I'm a student, so I don't want to say that I would pay 400-500 for a hand... like, you know a shower gel or something like that. But I mean, normally the price difference isn't that large when it comes to soap and stuff. So that's why I use that. So it's for both reasons.</p> <p>I: Okay</p> <p>Jo: In the long run, I feel the difference.</p>	<p><i>Extensive beauty routine; focus on makeup</i></p> <p><i>Lipstick as a means of expressing herself and her feelings</i></p> <p><i>Participants mention other brands than LP, in this case Bare Minerals</i></p> <p><i>They use Bare Minerals due to the eco-friendly aspect</i></p> <p><i>Uses ecological friendly products for two reasons: her personal values and the impact on her skin</i></p>	<p><b>Brand meaning:</b> <b>Brand performance</b> <b>(of 'pure' products)</b></p>
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<p>I: Do you have any favorite beauty brands? Anything that directly comes to your mind? Like “oh I love it, I have to buy frequently products from this brand”</p> <p>K: Like makeup?</p> <p>I: Anything, makeup, hair and skin ...</p> <p>H: Well for me, I don't have any favorite brands to be honest. But the hair oil that I use for my hair is the one that I use all the time, because it works for my hair. Now I don't remember the brand ... but yeah ... I don't consider or think about brands. Because for my face, I don't care, just something that doesn't make my skin dry.</p> <p>Ly: I use like Elisabeth Arden the 8-hour. If I notice that it's winter and my lips crack then I use that before I sleep and have it over-night. Then I don't need anything else or if I have pimples I will just put it on the spots.</p> <p>Li: Since I'm a lipstick lover, I need to keep my color but it's hard to since they change the collection and it's hard to find the color again. <b>So I try to be loyal, but it's impossible for me. Maybe it's also because I actually buy my lipstick at a shop called Kiko – it's an Italian brand and they change the collection so much that I never made it to finish my lipstick before they change their collection.</b> And I'm a frequent user, so I think that's a problem. And then I think I really like Estée Lauder for the BB cream and then, I actually tried the mascara from Alverde from DM in Germany. Because I'm a bit lazy so I don't remove my makeup sometimes at night, so the problem was that my eyelashes were like starting to fall and Alverde is natural, so that was a good solution for my laziness.</p> <p>Jo: I actually use a lot of &amp; Other Stories products, you know like H&amp;M's. But I mean those are not eco-friendly, but they are without parabens.</p> <p>Ja: Those lipsticks are very nice!</p> <p>Jo: I use their palettes and stuff.</p> <p>I: How come you use a brand that's from a company that is usually known for clothes rather than beauty products?</p> <p>Jo: <b>I mean, I think that they are really good at positioning their beauty products in stores.</b> I mean ... and they branded it very well. <b>And I think, they make it very clear that for example if you recycle stuff – if you recycle one of the boxes then you get 10% discount on your new one – new purchase.</b> So it's sort of an incentive of going back and then I know that they keep this, I use one smell, which is call fig – you know the fig tree?</p> <p>I: Yeah.</p> <p>Jo: <b>It's like a fruit and they have it for 3 years, so I just buy that one and I bring my used bottles and I get 10% discount.</b></p> <p>I: That's a good thing to do actually! Same reason for your</p>	<p><i>She is not really brand loyal, but rather uses products that work for her skin</i></p> <p><i>Really loyal to this particular Elisabeth Arden product</i></p> <p><i>Makes an effort to be loyal but the makeup collections are changing too often so that it is impossible to be loyal</i></p> <p><i>Uses brands unavailable in Denmark to optimize her own beauty routine</i></p> <p><i>Uses brands/ products because they are well-positioned in the stores; likes to get a discount</i></p>	<p><i>Focus not on brands but PRODUCTS; Product performance over product loyalty</i></p> <p><i>Product loyal to a competitive product (compared with LP)</i></p> <p><i>Lack of PRODUCT loyalty instead of brand loyalty</i></p> <p><i>Personal innovativeness; Brand loyalty (for Alverde)</i></p> <p><i>Focus on PLACE (marketing mix element); Driven by economic incentives</i></p>
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<p>guys, as you said that you also like the lipsticks from &amp; Other Stories.</p> <p>Ja: I actually didn't know that they did that. I just have a few of their lipsticks and I really like them. <b>I think that they last for a long time and they have a lot of different ones.</b></p> <p>And I think that they are not, I mean I have a few MAC lipsticks as well, which I really like the color of, but I find that they dry out your lips a bit. So I think those (from &amp; Other Stories) are quite nice, because they somehow are moisturizing as well.</p> <p>Jo: And they are fair in price! I don't know what they exactly cost, but I think 120 or something?</p> <p>Ja: Yeah, but that's the thing with beauty products. They are really expensive in Denmark, for example when you asked about which brands we use, there are so many things that I don't buy in Denmark like my mascara I always buy the same one in the US, which is Cover Girl. So it's like orange and I think that I've used it forever. Whenever I go to the US, I buy like 10 of them, which you're not really supposed to do because they expire at some point! But I bring them back and I use them. It's the only one I like and you can't find it here.</p> <p>K: What's important for me is the makeup removal products and face cream – those I buy the same all the time. When it comes to basic makeup, I ...</p> <p>I: Which brands are they from? Do you remember?</p> <p>K: Ohh.... the makeup remover is BioDerma – the see-through bottle. <b>And the day cream is actually from Lidl, it's a bit embarrassing...</b></p> <p>Ja: But that one is really good! I use that one too!</p> <p>I: Nothing is embarrassing!</p> <p>K: No but it's actually ... my mom tried it and she has seen that it's one of the best creams in a magazine and then I started using it and it costs like €3, it's so cheap and really good! And it works! Before I had a much more expensive cream, which was also nice – but this one works as good ... as well as the other one.</p> <p>I: Okay. The next thing, we would like you to do a little task. So you can find some pens on the desk and I will just hand out this. It's about your association with L'Oréal Paris as this is the case brand that we have chosen. So now that you've thought about your brand and what you use, it will be interesting to see what comes to your mind when you think of this one.</p> <p>Jo: So just whatever we want to write?</p> <p>I: Yeah, whatever that comes to your mind spontaneously.</p> <p>H: Something related to products or?</p> <p>I: Yeah, I mean if you have any special associations for like a couple of L'Oréal Paris products, then definitely!</p>	<p><i>Long usage-period of &amp; Other stories</i></p> <p><i>Focus on long-lastingness and variety</i></p> <p><i>Uses brands unavailable in Denmark to optimize her own beauty routine</i></p> <p><i>Considers the use of a retailer's product as embarrassing</i></p> <p><i>Her mom serves as a beauty recommender</i></p> <p><i>They do not know how to define 'brands associations'</i></p>	<p><b>&amp; Other stories; Brand loyalty</b></p> <p><b>Focus on brand performance(&amp; Other stories)</b></p> <p><b>Personal innovativeness; Brand loyalty (for Cover Girls)</b></p> <p><i>Branded goods are important to her</i></p> <p><b>Impact of strong ties</b></p>
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<p>H: Okay, so associations with their brand I: Can be advertising, packaging – whatsoever!</p> <p><i>A few minutes later...</i></p> <p>I: If you're stuck or done, then don't worry – it's not a test (smiling). It's just to help you later when talking about it then you can just look at the paper. I: Just let me know when you are finished! ... yeah now that you have something in front of you, it's easier than just saying something out loud, when it's written down. Could each of you just explain 1, 2, 3 of these associations and say why you associate it with the brand? Just saying it out loud.</p> <p>K: Okay, so <b>I said celebrity endorsements, because you often see, very often see, ads with L'Oréal Paris including well-known celebrities.</b> I would relate L'Oréal to that. Uhm, I also said – should I say all of them? Or just some?</p> <p>I: Just pick some or if you think you want to present them all, please feel free to do that as well. K: I think that they have a good reputation. Generally, I would say that the products have like minimum quality requirements and to affordable prices. <b>They are not too expensive or I think, most people can afford it.</b> They are not that cheap either – in-between, I think. I: Yeah, makes sense! K: <b>And it's French</b> – as well! (All laughing) I: That's very true! What about you Jasmine? Ja: <b>Yeah, the first thing that I thought about was France and the second thing I thought of was actually Beyoncé.</b> So I was like maybe 11 years old and there was this ad with L'Oréal, where L'Oréal had come out with this new product and it still really sticks to my head. I thought it was so cool! And it was like she had these two different products that she was promoting. One was that it helped make your hair ... or it kept your hair straight after you flatiron it and one that would help keep your hair curly, if you've done the curl iron. This was like really a commercial that I always remember since I was a kid. And the other thing that I wrote down was actually, I use to have a roommate who worked a lot with testing for allergies and stuff and she actually said that L'Oréal is really bad, because they lobbied a lot in the EU for like animal testing and also which kinds of ingredients and stuff that they could use. And then I think the only other big thing that I thought about is their little tagline "Because You're Worth it". Jo: Well I don't know, I think my paper looks really funny,</p>	<p><i>She can remember the content of LP's adverts and the use of celebrities</i></p> <p><i>Considers LP as not too expensive but affordable</i></p> <p><i>Association with France</i></p> <p><i>Association with France and Beyoncé promoting the brand even though it is more than ten years ago</i></p> <p><i>Associates LP with animal testing based on the knowledge of her former roommate</i></p> <p><i>Recalls LP's slogan</i></p>	<p><i>Brand salience: Recall of adverts; Brand meaning: Brand imagery: Spokespersons are part of brand imagery/ associations → Aligned with LP's intended brand identity (expression)</i></p> <p><i>Brand meaning: Brand performance → Aligned with LP's intended brand identity (accessibility)</i></p> <p><i>Brand meaning: Brand imagery [Country of origin as secondary associations (Keller, 1993)]; Brand salience: Recall of adverts; Brand meaning: Brand imagery: Spokespersons are part of brand imagery/ associations → Aligned with LP's intended brand identity (expression)</i></p> <p><i>Impact of social ties On associations/ brand imagery</i></p> <p><i>Brand salience: Recall of slogan → Aligned with LP's intended brand</i></p>
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<p>but I wrote colorful – a lot of colors!</p> <p>I: How come?</p> <p>Jo: I don't know, I was just thinking if, you know, I looked through the magazines and when I see L'Oréal commercials – it's definitely a lot of colors. It's not very minimalistic or I wrote gold maybe, I don't know- <b>a lot of colors, gold and glitter. I also wrote French (laughing) and I also wrote mascaras, because I think they do a lot of mascara commercials</b> (Pause). I actually wrote airport as well, because I think you see a lot of L'Oréal Paris products in airports.</p> <p>Ja: Yeah I also wrote airport!</p> <p>Jo: I don't know, if they have great positioning in airports. When you through the tax-free, I see them in airports.</p> <p>I: That's a really interesting one! Both of you had airports.</p> <p>Ja: Yeah...</p> <p>K: I wrote present on all markets like international.</p> <p>Jo and Ja: Yeah ...</p> <p>Jo: I actually also wrote questionable CSR</p> <p>I: Okay how come?</p> <p>Jo: I mean, I do not ... <b>when I think about L'Oréal, I don't think about the planet first or like animal first. I think a lot about turnover and sales – a lot of customers.</b> That's the only reason why. I'm just wondering; what do they actually do? Re-investing their ... yeah.</p> <p>Ly: Sooo ... I wrote (nervous laughing) white girls. Because I know that they are very international and when you go to China you see a Chinese girl in the commercials. But I've been in Denmark for 18 years, growing up here, and I feel like I only see white girls in the commercials even though Denmark is like a melting pot - a bit similar to the US, but not as much.</p> <p>K: But yeah, they actually got some criticism for whitening some of the darker girls that they use.</p> <p>Ly: Yeah, so they are very "white" and don't appeal to me. Hmm... Then I also wrote hair dye, I think it's like ... I know a lot of Asians, who dye their hair a lot – I do too (smiling).</p> <p>I: To have some different colors, right?</p> <p>Ly: <b>Yeah and they are everywhere, which is another thing I wrote – easy to get! You can buy them everywhere. You can buy them in Matas, Netto, Lidl ... everywhere. Easy to get!</b></p> <p>I: It comes close to every market and channel</p> <p>Ly: You can even buy them in Chinatown; maybe it's fake? (All laughing)</p> <p>H: Well, I've written beauty, happy, care about yourself and that's mainly because of the commercials. As mentioned, it's always "Because You're Worth it" and also it's the same one I've watched it in Arabic. They say the same basically just in Arabic. It's like in my mind.</p>	<p><i>Considers LP as a colorful brand based on its commercials as well as with "gold and glitter"</i></p> <p><i>Associates LP with France and mascaras</i></p> <p><i>Two of them associate LP with airports</i></p> <p><i>Associates LP with bad CSR</i></p> <p><i>Considers LP as an "easy to get" brand; associations with retailers like Matas, Lidl, Netto</i></p> <p><i>Recalls LP's slogan</i></p>	<p><i>identity (expression)</i></p> <p><i>Brand meaning: Brand imagery: gold and glitter → Aligned with LP's intended brand identity (personality – glamorous)</i></p> <p><i>Brand meaning: Brand imagery [Country of origin as secondary associations (Keller, 1993)];</i></p> <p><i>Focus on PLACE (marketing mix element)</i></p> <p><i>Brand meaning: brand imagery → misaligned with LP's intended brand identity (CSR in culture &amp; expressions)</i></p> <p><i>Focus on PLACE (marketing mix element); Brand meaning: Brand imagery: "easy to get" → aligned with LP's intended brand identity (accessibility)</i></p> <p><i>Brand salience: Recall of slogan → Aligned with LP's intended brand identity (expression)</i></p>
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<p>I: What do you think about this slogan?</p> <p>H: Well, I think it sounds good, but I also ... I didn't write it, but I thought about it – I don't think it's like true always. I've tried their products, especially for my hair and it was the most expensive shampoo or whatsoever, but it didn't worked for my hair. So I ended up buying something from Lidl – Response shampoo and it worked so well! So yeah ... that's it. <b>I also wrote availability, they are present in everywhere.</b> And sometimes I think it's confusing, are they like a really a high-quality brand or are they just yeah ... I also wrote quality or whatever. So yeah, that's my opinion.</p> <p>Li: So I also have the slogan of their advertisements – "Because you're worth it". <b>And actually this created a bit of confusion when I saw L'Oréal's products for the first time in the supermarkets. Because I thought that their advertisement is like more upper end market and then I see it at the supermarket for a very affordable price.</b> I was like "wow", I saw it as a very like celebrity ... yeah it was very confusing. <b>I associate it with hair oil, because that's something that I always buy from L'Oréal – the yellow orange-ish bottle.</b> There are several types, but it's like the same product line. And I think about face creams, because that's the thing I see the most in supermarkets from L'Oréal.</p> <p>I: Okay!</p> <p>Li: <b><u>And being pretty because that's the message I got from the advertisement.</u></b> Like you're worth it and you should spend more time on yourself with your beauty and these kinds of things.</p> <p>I: Very different, but some similarities actually. It's quite interesting what you wrote down. When you think about the product you use, what is the judgment? For example rather innovative or traditional?</p> <p>K: It's quite ... <b>It meets expectations. Usually, you get what you paid for.</b> Are we talking about only the L'Oréal brand or also their sub-brands?</p> <p>I: No in this regards it's L'Oréal Paris as the corporate brand.</p> <p>Ly: <b>I feel like they are very behind. I don't feel like I've seen so new products from them.</b></p> <p>I: So more traditional in a sense rather than innovation?</p> <p><b>Everyone: Yeah!</b></p> <p>Ly: I feel like they stopped doing what they do.</p> <p>Ja: Like if someone asked about something new that they have done, I wouldn't know what to say.</p> <p>Ly: Yeah.</p> <p>Ja: <b>Like for me at least, beauty now has come up with a lot of new things, but it's more like in Korea and stuff</b></p>	<p>Considers LP as an "available" brand</p> <p>Recalls LP's slogan</p> <p>Association with a LP product that she always buys</p> <p>Association with pretty based on the slogan</p> <p>LP meets expectations, "you get what you paid for".</p> <p>Feels like LP is "behind" in form of product innovations</p> <p>Agreement on LP being traditional</p>	<p>Focus on PLACE (marketing mix element); Brand meaning: Brand imagery: "easy to get" → aligned with LP's intended brand identity (accessibility)</p> <p>Brand salience: Recall of slogan → Aligned with LP's intended brand identity (expression)</p> <p>Focus on PLACE (marketing mix element) → misaligned with intended positioning as high-quality</p> <p><b>PRODUCT loyalty</b></p> <p>Brand meaning: Brand imagery: associations influenced by slogan</p> <p>Brand meaning: Brand performance (meets functional needs)</p> <p><b>Brand responses: Brand judgements – credibility (~ rather traditional); Brand meaning: Brand imagery ~ associations → misaligned with LP's intended brand identity</b></p>
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<p><b>with all these beauty markets. They always have new things and then I think of L'Oréal and "no they haven't come up with anything".</b></p> <p>I: But what do you think about what they claim in their advertisement with all these new formulas?</p> <p>Jo: It doesn't trigger me at least. I would say, you know it's the same I said, when I think about a commercial from L'Oréal in magazines – <b>I think about gold and glitter or color!</b> And when they just put a lot of extreme words that doesn't really trigger me. <b>Because I think if they would do something reverse like "less is more" and "this is the essential of the beauty kit" and "we only use natural ingredients and this is it!" That would be innovated in my mind for their brand, because now it's just like, you know, a lot of colors – a lot of packaging – a lot of messaging - a lot of celebrities.</b></p> <p>I: Like always the same way of doing it?</p> <p>Jo: Yeah, it is just what they have always done.</p> <p>I: So to get you right: all of you - more or less – do not define innovativeness in terms of how fancy it sounds, but rather in terms of its impact, like that of the Korean cosmetics. If the products have a really new impact on your skin or on your hair or if they can do something completely new. This is rather innovative than saying "let's put some new oil in our shampoo" and it still works as a shampoo.</p> <p>Jo: I used to live in China for like half a year and there I would see a lot of L'Oréal Paris products. I don't know if this is the question, but they are very popular with whitening creams and stuff like that. I think that they were very adapting to the Chinese market. This is just my perception and I don't know if it's true. I mean here, I don't know what they have done to adapt to the European market in that sense. Because I don't know, if I know their top consumers, <b>but for me Scandinavia is not about glitter and glam and a lot of fancy formulas. It's more down to basics and I'm not sure if they have catered to that need.</b></p> <p>I: Okay, that's kind of interesting.</p> <p>Ly: I also feel like they talk a lot in their commercials, but you don't really see it in the products. It's two very different things and sometimes I can't relate them to each other. Because they say all these nice things about the products and you just buy a shampoo. But <b>I remember when I was little; it was very empowering because 'you were worth it' for women. I remember that it was a time, where women were not equal. So I've always liked the commercials, because it was very empowering.</b></p> <p>Ja: I think that it's something ... <b>When I think of L'Oréal, I think about what I liked when I was younger. But it's</b></p>	<p><i>Considers LP as a colorful brand based on its commercials as well as with "gold and glitter"</i></p> <p><i>Innovation in form of "less is more", especially in their promotions</i></p> <p><i>She is not sure if LP understands Scandinavian consumer needs</i></p> <p><i>She talks about LP as an empowering brand but this is something that was more suitable in the past</i></p> <p><i>Association of LP</i></p>	<p><i>Brand meaning: Brand imagery: gold and glitter → Aligned with LP's intended brand identity (personality – glamorous)</i></p> <p><i>Brand meaning: Brand imagery ~ associations → misaligned with LP's intended brand identity</i></p> <p><i>Brand responses: Brand judgements</i></p> <p><i>Brand meaning: Brand imagery: Slogan is outdated</i></p>
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<p><b>not necessary what I would buy now. It's something that we all talked about – something in the past.</b></p> <p>I: Can you probably explain more why?</p> <p>Ja: I think it's about what you (looks at Johanna) said, maybe because <b>in Scandinavia the trend is that you don't necessary need this like pink and glitz and glamour.</b> A little more about the trend of being down to earth, natural and if you ever think about the ingredients in the products that I use now - it's from an Australian brand, which has really natural ingredients and it's called Nude Australia and then I use Bare Minerals and then also because I have like a skin disease called psoriasis, I also use extra natural shampoo from Australia as well. So I think there's a lot more focus on that, than buying like the traditional beauty brands.</p> <p>I: Do you think it also has something to do with what you all experience and explained with your beauty routine, about now getting out fast or not to be completely colored in your face with like heavy pink?</p> <p>Jo: I think it's more about what you (looks at Liangye) said that before, maybe 10, 20 years ago, empowering women and because you were worth it. So it was sort of breaking news stream that they were actually putting women out there and in first place. <b>Now it's like "I know that I'm worth it" and it's not like I'm treating myself because I put this mascara on. I know that I'm as equal as anyone else."</b></p> <p>Ja: Exactly, I think you put on more like makeup on for yourself and if I think about when I'll put a lot of makeup on, it's when I'm going out for a nice dinner or like going out with my friends to bars and stuff like that. Because I feel like dressing up and I don't have enough time to do that on daily basis and <b>I look fine anyways, so why should I?</b></p> <p>H: I also think that it's because; well I can only speak for myself, because <b>now I'm older and more conscious about what works and what doesn't work.</b></p> <p>I: That's what I meant with, maybe your beauty routine changed somehow.</p> <p>H: Now I use, it's not because it has to be fast because I'm like too busy or not, no I will take care of my skin if I have to. But it's more like, when we were younger we would believe whatever that would be like extreme strong words, it would work on us. Now that we are older, these words do not really trigger or apply to you as much, so you know for example you can get ecological stuff for almost the same price or you can get better products for almost the same price. Or you can pay a little bit more and you can get the effective products. <b>So it's also the effectiveness</b> in my opinion.</p>	<p><i>with the past</i></p> <p><i>She is not sure if LP understands Scandinavian consumer needs</i></p> <p><i>Focus on natural ingredients</i></p> <p><i>Builds on the aspect of seeing LP as an empowering brand; agrees that this is something that was more suitable in the past</i></p> <p><i>Decides on her own "what works and what doesn't work".</i></p> <p><i>Considers ecological products (= "better" products) as more effective compared with LP</i></p>	<p><i>Brand meaning: Brand imagery: Brand = outdated</i></p> <p><i>Brand responses: Brand judgements</i></p> <p><i>Brand meaning: Brand imagery: Slogan is outdated; it even seems as if she feels offended by this slogan</i></p> <p><i>Personal innovativeness (self-driven rather than brand-driven)</i></p> <p><i>Lack of brand meaning: Brand performance: LP is ineffective (does not meet functional needs)</i></p>
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<p>I: What about this spokesperson aspect? Some of you also mentioned that in your mental maps, Beyoncé for example somehow stuck otherwise you would not have mentioned it after a couple of years. Can you identify yourselves with these spokespersons that you see? You also wrote celebrity endorsement.</p> <p>Jo: <b>Not really.</b></p> <p><b>All saying: no</b></p> <p>K: No, but I think that's also why it might seem so much in the past that it's a bit cheap. <b>I don't feel like it's nice – nicer, because someone famous has it or Eva Longoria has it or whoever.</b> It just looks fake actually. It just looks like that she doesn't have lashes.</p> <p>Jo: <b>The whole celebrity thing is also, you know connected with that you doll yourself up and you want to look good for someone else and it's the Barbie feeling – seduction, and it's sort of in the past.</b></p> <p>Li: But I think it's also sticky if we all remember it. Always the same message but with different products. I think these on a marketing point of view is sticky, because we all remember this thing , because it's worth it.</p> <p>Jo: The question is what you associate with it?</p> <p>Ja: <b>But another thing that I think is that you have so much more transparency now, where you see celebrities on social media and Snapchat, where you see that without makeup. You see the whole process of putting on makeup and you know that it doesn't take the 15 minutes we use to get ready to look like that.</b> It takes like an hour or more and three professionals and so on. The expectation of what you have of using the product is obviously that your hair is not going to look perfectly straight for the next four hours when I go out, just because I use the same product as Beyoncé. It's going to be 4 minutes!</p> <p>Li: Especially if you are biking.</p> <p>I: So would you think that it would rather have a better... so to say impression on you if it was the other way around with more normal looking, ordinary people? Or do you then think that it doesn't fit L'Oréal anymore?</p> <p>Li: I think it's the second one</p> <p>I: That it doesn't fit L'Oréal anymore?</p> <p>Li: The change should not be so large, for now I associate it more to celebrities and red carpet. <b>For me it's a red carpet and a model is walking down because you're worth it! And if tomorrow they come and say now we're neutral and we do everything natural and we are like the Body Shop – then I would be like "wow".</b></p>	<p><i>Agreement on no identification with spokespersons</i></p> <p><i>They both consider the effect of celebrity endorsement as ineffective and outdated</i></p> <p><i>Social media channels create more transparency so that promises in commercials are considered more critically</i></p> <p><i>Associates LP with models and red carpet; an image change would be surprising for her</i></p>	<p><i>Brand meaning: Brand imagery: no identification with spokespersons</i></p> <p><i>Brand meaning: Brand imagery: no admiration of celebrity endorsers</i></p> <p><i>Brand meaning: Brand imagery: no admiration of celebrity endorsers due to misalignment with own life</i></p> <p><i>Brand meaning: Brand imagery: change in imagery would be misaligned with brand identity</i></p>
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<p>would go for the L'Oréal product. <b>But I wouldn't say that they are innovative and have something that's unique, and that's why I should choose L'Oréal first.</b></p> <p>I: So to get away from L'Oréal again, how frequently do you test new products? And how important is it to you to be up-to-date with the latest trends? Could you just explain it a bit personally?</p> <p>K: So I actually change, except from my daily makeup remover and my cream, <b>I actually change my makeup quite often. Because I haven't really found THE products</b> or because... I also receive a lot of makeup as gifts and stuff. Then I'm kind of forced to try new stuff. <b>But usually, if I have something that I like, I would buy it again.</b></p> <p>I: And would it be important to you to be up-to-date with trends?</p> <p>K: No not necessary, as long as I like it and it's good for my skin ... and I can afford it then I'm fine. So if I have a bit more money, I would buy something like BareMinerals, but now I'm quite broke then I would rather go for something cheaper actually. But that's because of the price difference.</p> <p>H: For me, I'm not much of a makeup user. So I don't care about any makeup trends or whatever. I usually try stuff when I have a problem, like with my hair. It was really dry and I had to do something about it, because I was also losing the hair because it was dry and everything. So I was constantly looking for a solution and I tried so many different products and brands. But then I finally found a shampoo that fitted my hair, so I'm not looking anymore. I remember also, when I got pimples because I was stressed, so I also went to Matas and asked, "what will you recommend for my skin?" She then said "You have a fine skin and it's just stress pimples, so I would just use a basic scrub".</p> <p>I: This was actually my next question, when you need new products – where do you get inspiration?</p> <p>H: I would ask .... (Interrupted)</p> <p>I: Is it always recommendations from experts so to say? Is it always the case when you buy something?</p> <p>Ja: <b>I'm normally looking or talking with my sister</b> or something like "Oh I like your lipstick, oh where did you get it?" and then she's like "Oh I saw it online" or something. I often see new beauty products online...</p> <p>I: Where do you see it online then?</p> <p>Ja: I usually look at this American website called refinery29. They have everything; it's like a modern version of Cosmopolitan!</p> <p>(All laughing)</p>	<p><i>target consumer</i></p> <p><i>Testing new makeup and searching for the best products; would be loyal if she would find a best solution for herself</i></p> <p><i>Is loyal to another brand that solved her hair problem</i></p> <p><i>Ask her sister for beauty recommendations and inspirations</i></p> <p><i>Reads through professional reviews on a website similar to Cosmopolitan</i></p>	<p><b>Personal innovativeness</b></p> <p><b>Lack of brand loyalty</b></p> <p><b>Impact of/ face-to-face recommendations by strong social ties</b></p> <p><b>NO consumption of consumer reviews; reference to professional sources</b></p>
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<p>Because that wouldn't have a huge effect on me.</p> <p>Jo: If I have a problem with my mascara then I would never look online or magazine for a solution. I would probably go to a store and select Illum or something and say "hey, can you help me with which one is most suitable for me?".</p> <p>Ly: Actually, I would ... I work in a shop and I don't trust sales assistants.</p> <p>(All laughing)</p> <p>Ly: I also know that brands place them in this shelf for a reason, they buy the shelf place. Whether it's the lower or upper one. And I know that there are so many products in Matas and I know that the sales assistants haven't tried them all. They just read about it, so I don't trust them. <b>But I would go to Matas and say "I have this issue" and I would listen to her and then google it to read the reviews from people, who have tried the product before.</b> The same goes for magazines, because I know that brands that are getting tested, they buy the way into getting tested. Also, they pay like 20.000 kroner to get a small article about this brand. So that's why I don't really trust it. <b>I read about it and then google reviews by common people. I will find people like me with semi-dry skin, so I can better relate to them.</b></p> <p>I: When you search for these reviews, where do you go? Is there a special platform that you usually go through?</p> <p>Ly: I just go to google.</p> <p>Jo: Yeah, and see the first ones. First or second one... I wouldn't go 20 pages back just to do my research. I will take the top 2 maybe?</p> <p>I: Do you like to go to Amazon? Because there are lots of reviews or do you just google and whatever pops up?</p> <p>All: yeah ...</p> <p>Jo: <b>I wouldn't like to go into a chat room and ask.</b></p> <p>Ly: <b>Or a forum, no.</b></p> <p>Jo: A lot of magazines do rates and stuff. So I would go to Vogue or Elle and read about the products. If everyone is saying " yeah it's a five star product". I would probably be like "hmm, that sounds decent".</p> <p>Ja: <b>What I actually also have done is to go to Instagram and search for hashtags for the products.</b> Often people put up reviews if they are really happy with the products or not, like "I'm so happy with this and it worked really well". So sometimes I do that actually.</p> <p>I: That's quite interesting. Did you (looks at Katarina as she was looking at her) want to say something?</p> <p>K: Yeah that I also go look in the stores, but I tend to go choose makeup from brands that I know or that I've heard about. <b>So it would depend a lot on how it's presented in</b></p>	<p><i>Likes to get expert knowledge first and then test it with consumer reviews</i></p> <p><i>Likes to get expert knowledge first and then test it with the top-line consumer reviews</i></p> <p><i>Both of them would not like to directly ask other consumers in a forum for advice</i></p> <p><i>Searching for hashtags (information) on Instagram</i></p> <p><i>Products should be</i></p>	<p><b>COBRA:</b> Consumption of reviews (Independent information)</p> <p><b>COBRA:</b> Consumption of reviews (Independent information); no extensive research</p> <p><b>Avoiding consumer-consumer interactivity</b></p> <p><b>COBRA:</b> Consumption of information on social media</p> <p><i>Focus on PLACE</i></p>
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<p><b>a store, if it's appealing to me and if I know the brand from before.</b> It's not even sure that it got a lot of reviews, but if the quality is good in my head.</p> <p>Li: Actually one thing, since you said that you don't trust sales assistants. I actually agree with that and <b>if I would have a problem I would go ask the pharmacy. So if I have skin problems, I would go more for La Roche-Posay and not something really commercial.</b></p> <p>I: Now that we talked about recommending behavior, I have something else to hand out. (smiles) We would like you to write a couple of words again. Imagine that you're somewhere with your best friends and you have tried a new product. So just write down how you would recommend it to your friends. A couple of sentences of what you would mention.</p> <p>K: Any products?</p> <p>I: Any beauty products!</p> <p>Jo: So like how I would say that?</p> <p>I: The way you would phrase it and what you think is important to mention to your friends.</p> <p>....</p> <p>Li: So just out of nothing? Because normally she would ask and then I would recommend something</p> <p>I: Maybe you have a situation in mind where someone asks, but it's more important what you include in your answer – the different aspects that you would mention.</p> <p>....</p> <p>I: It's not necessary that you read everything that you have written down, but could you see from what you wrote which different aspects you're mentioning?</p> <p>K: So I said, "Look I use this nail polish, and it's really good. It looks like that you have shellac" and then my friend answers, "Woow, where did you buy it?". "I bought it at Sephora and it's actually their brand". <b>So I guess it were the price, the store and brand ... and the fact that it's good!</b> That it looks better than what it is.</p> <p>Ja: So I said that I bought this liquid lipstick and it makes my lips a bit dry, but I put on my lip balm and then it's okay. But the good thing is that it stays on the whole day and it has a really nice matte color. <b>So for me I guess it's the way it looks and how long it stays on.</b> The bad thing is that it makes my lips a bit dry, but I found a solution (laughing).</p> <p>I: So it's very personally and very experienced.</p> <p>Ja: Yeah... I have this lipstick and used it plenty of times.</p>	<p><i>placed in the store in an appealing way</i></p> <p><i>Prefers expert recommendations for specialized products if she has a problem as opposed to ordinary products</i></p> <p><i>She mentions product details but also her opinion</i></p> <p><i>She mentions her own impressions (look) and experiences (performance)</i></p>	<p><i>Clear differentiation in the consumption/ information seeking between specialized and non-specialized products.</i></p> <p><i>Informant role with recommender elements</i></p> <p><i>Solely Recommender role</i></p>
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<p>Jo: I sound like a nerd (laughing), because I focus on all of these natural things. But I don't know if I was at a party or with my friends, I would say to her or recommending anything like "Look at this mascara, see how long my eyelashes are" (laughing). So I think the only thing that I would talk about, would be maybe nice packaging. That's quite ...no! Actually I don't know if you talk about it like "I bought this facial cream and it has nice packaging". I don't know, it would probably be my decision-making. But I would only said that it's natural, I wrote, "I just tried this new cream and it's amazing. I can really recommend it as it is all natural". <b>That's probably the only reason why I should recommend it to a friend otherwise I would probably ... not.</b></p> <p>Ly: So this actually happened a week ago. One of my friends had stress pimples and she came to me, because she feels like that I always have nice skin, but also have stress pimples. Then I told her that she should try the eight-hour cream and she knows that I don't use that many beauty products. <b>So I would only continue using this one that I'm very loyal to, because I know it works.</b> She also knows it works, because she sees me almost every day and I don't think I have so much ... maybe a little bit here due to the exams.</p> <p>H: Well I actually also have something from real life. I used a special cream for my hair, because my hair split a lot! My friend, she also has curly hair so I was telling her <b>"hey I use this product and you were looking for something for your hair, so you should try this". She actually said that her hair got better. So I shared my experienced with her, basically. Like the effect on that cream.</b></p> <p>Li: Yeah so <b>I would never start giving recommendations, if I'm not asked.</b> So it happened to me last month that ... I actually have really long hair – until here (shows her hair length). So when I have open hair, a lot of people compliment on it like "oh shiny hair", then I would start my recommendations. Because if you noticed, then you might want to have it. This is why I said "Ahh, I don't spend a lot of time on it" to say that it's not a result of a lot of work. It's just natural and I don't use masks or conditioners, but I just use this hair oil when drying it. <b>So I underline that you don't have to invest a lot of time to it. Then I explain the brand and where they can get it. So I give all the factors (laughing).</b></p> <p>I: So you already mentioned it, but you would never do it proactively?</p> <p>Li: I would never say, "Hi you know that I bought this, and it's amazing!" – no. It would be more if someone say "nice lipstick", then I would start talking about even though they haven't asked me where I bought it. <b>I would then draw the</b></p>	<p><i>She would only recommend a product if it's all natural</i></p> <p><i>She only recommends products that she is loyal to because they work from her experience</i></p> <p><i>She shares the effect of a product on herself and the product experience</i></p> <p><i>She would never recommend a product without being asked for that</i></p> <p><i>She encourages others to use products that work for her</i></p>	<p><b>Informant role (natural ingredients) with recommender elements("Amazing")</b></p> <p><b>Recommender role</b></p> <p><b>Recommender role</b></p> <p><b>Only contribution to recommendation requests but no active face-to-face recommendations</b></p> <p><b>Recommender role</b></p>
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<p><b>conclusion that you liked it and maybe want to buy it as well.</b></p> <p>I: But all of you have chosen, so to say – an oral conversation. Would this be the most suitable approach to recommend something? If either someone is asking you or if you're super, super satisfied and you really want to spread the word?</p> <p>Ja: <b>I would take a picture and put it on Instagram.</b></p> <p>I: Okay!</p> <p>Ja: Because I was just really happy about it!</p> <p>K: <b>I really don't do it online ...</b></p> <p>Li: <b>I'm also not online with this, an online reviewer. But I talked about products that I'm satisfied with, with close friends. People that I meet.</b></p> <p>I: Why would you rather do it personally than online? And why do you do it the way you do it? (to Jasmine)</p> <p>Ja: I think that I do, because I have so many family and friends abroad. <b>I also don't have an open account, so it's actually only my family and friends or people that I know. I don't think I would like to do towards everyone.</b></p> <p>I: Why wouldn't you do that?</p> <p>Ja: <b>Because I don't want people knowing my business</b> (laughing)</p> <p>Jo: <b>It's quite personally stuff, like this deodorant is really working well for me. Yeah, I wouldn't put that online.</b></p> <p>I: What about you three? (to Liangye, Liliana and Hawra). I mean you already shared, but would it also be rather word-of-mouth?</p> <p>Jo: Yeah, I would definitely talk with my friends about it.</p> <p>I: Only close friends and acquaintances?</p> <p>Jo: Yeah maybe... I mean I would maybe put up a picture, if the packaging were really nice.</p> <p>I: A picture on Instagram or Facebook group?</p> <p>Jo: Yeah ... but I can't ever recall doing it! I'm a member of this Facebook group, it's like a huuuuge forum for women. It was one of my girlfriends who started it and we just become like 30.000 members in this group on Facebook. People are basically sharing everything like "Okay, I have this job I would recommend to you to apply for it". People just post whatever and other people comment on it.</p> <p>I: Would you consider them as strangers or due to the fact that you're in the same group ... community, so it's not a stranger anymore?</p> <p>Jo: No! I mean, the only purpose of being in that group is to be ... you know that you want to be inspired by other women. So there are no negative talks like "I just tested this one and it's horrible!". I also know a lot of friends of mine, who are part of different groups. I just think that it's</p>	<p><i>Recommendations made on Instagram</i></p> <p><i>No online recommendations</i></p> <p><i>No online recommendations; only face-to-face recommendations to close friends</i></p> <p><i>Online recommendations to family and friends</i></p> <p><i>Considers beauty reviews as very personal and would thus only recommend offline</i></p> <p><i>Does not consider unknown members of a women Facebook group as strangers; in there</i></p>	<p><i>COBRA: Creation of review on social media</i></p> <p><i>Preference of offline recommendations</i></p> <p><i>Preference of offline recommendations to strong ties only</i></p> <p><i>Online recommendations to strong ties only</i></p> <p><i>Preference of offline recommendations due to personal topic</i></p> <p><i>Community elements within Facebook groups</i></p>
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<p>nice, it's sort of a female movement stuff and I don't think anyone would be offended if you recommended something.</p> <p>I: So now that you used the word 'offended', do you think that this also contributes to your decision – all of your decisions – to not post something completely public? That first, not everyone is interested in your daily business. Second it's a private topic and third you can probably be offended by also negative comments? Is this something that you would be afraid of? (Everyone saying no quietly)</p> <p>H: No I don't care about writing about something that I have bought. <b>And for recommendations, I only recommend to my friends, because if I know that they are looking for something.</b> So I would proactively tell them "hey you can get this product". <b>And I don't write reviews online, because I'm just too lazy to do that...</b> (laughing)</p> <p>Li: <b>Is it also maybe that you don't look information up online, so you would also not give it.</b> Because I wouldn't write reviews on like a forum or review websites. <b>Because I wouldn't trust reviews, I would trust more people that I know.</b> And then they can tell me about how they used the product.</p> <p>I: Now that we already touched social media and if we stick to Facebook, what's the personal purpose that you use Facebook for? Just in general and not only beauty related. Why do you have a Facebook account?</p> <p>K: For me, it's more the messenger part. It's where I keep in touch with my international friends. I always change phones and numbers, so this is a good way.</p> <p>Ja: For me, it's also to stay connected with family and friends, because all my family lives all over the world. So just to see my cousins growing up in Australia and my other cousins in the US to see pictures that my uncle and aunt posts of them. It's also nice to kind of feel like you know what they are doing.</p> <p>I: If you could also just directly add on, if you have other social media accounts than Facebook, probably also mention why you have others?</p> <p>K: But also on Facebook, I actually, in earlier times, read the news. I would follow the newspapers. I speak different languages, and so I would follow newspapers in all these different languages – just to keep reading. <b>But now it's just so much – so many things on Facebook that I don't do that so much more as I did before. And for other social media accounts, Instagram and that's to get inspiration from people.</b> More about ... I don't know, decoration tips, food thing and training motivation – things like that.</p>	<p><i>you can talk freely and are not criticized for your thoughts</i></p> <p><i>Only makes recommendations to friends</i></p> <p><i>Is too lazy to write reviews</i></p> <p><i>Is not reading reviews and thus also does not write something; does not trust unknown people</i></p> <p><i>Uses Facebook for messaging and staying in touch with friends.</i></p> <p><i>Uses Facebook to stay in touch with friends and family</i></p> <p><i>Has changed her usage of Facebook because the information there has changed; Instagram serves as inspiration</i></p>	<p><b>Recommendations to strong ties only</b></p> <p><b>Effort put into reviews is too high [see Mara &amp; Simone -&gt; reviews on retailer websites/ opinion platforms consider lots of effort]; Lack of motive: Norm of reciprocity/ social pressure (read &amp; write to give back); Focus on strong ties</b></p> <p><b>Uses &amp; gratifications: Facebook: socializing; focus on strong social ties</b></p> <p><b>Uses &amp; gratifications: Facebook: socializing; focus on strong social ties</b></p> <p><b>Assumption: Facebook: Change of uses &amp; gratifications; Uses &amp; gratifications; Instagram: inspiration</b></p>
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<p>Ja: I have Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat (laughing). I have Facebook that I don't use that much any more. It's more to see what my family is doing. I don't post so often on it anymore. I actually turn off notifications on my phone, because I was getting so many things – like random sell-things-in-Copenhagen groups. It was really annoying. So it's more Instagram to see pictures as inspiration. I follow interior designers and a lot of food blogs to get inspiration for food. For Snapchat it's more like to send a funny picture to my friends or my sister. I think it's just because we are far away, so it's just part of your daily life like "haha something funny happened, I wish I could tell you, but instead of picking up the phone calling you and explaining what I saw that was funny, I could just take a little video of it". It's just a snap shot of your life that you want to share with a person.</p> <p>Jo: I think that I have the same approach. It's like I would never take a photo and upload it to Facebook.</p> <p>I: Okay, why not?</p> <p>Jo: Because I have Instagram, so I would probably post it on Instagram and share it to my Facebook, if that would be something.</p> <p>I: So everything pictures and video related is more Instagram for you then?</p> <p>Jo: Yeah, or if I had an article I would never share that on Instagram. I would use Facebook for that, maybe... It's more messaging or being more close to my friends' living all around the world. Otherwise without Facebook, it would be really hard (laughing).</p> <p>I: So Facebook is really about the networking aspect? Social networking...</p> <p>Ja: Yeah</p> <p>Jo: Or look for job-things related. Hmm... I don't have random people on Snapchat; it's really close friends. I would never share a picture on Facebook though.</p> <p>Ly: I have a lot of social media accounts, but Facebook is just to stay social. Because you create events there. If I had to invite people to a housewarming, I would never write an email to them or send them a letter. They can just press "attend", "interested" or "can't go" and I can also see events near me or which ones my friends are going to. If I see an interesting event, I can invite my friends. So it's more to stay social. And also use the messenger. Because Instagram is very much about posting pictures, and I also do Snapchat a lot. Because it's easier to explain people, why this is funny or ... yeah. And then I have WeChat, which is for my family in China and also for business. A Lot of Chinese people do business on WeChat, so it's like selling stuff. Actually, it is the grey market so sometimes I maybe buy a Chanel bag from a Chinese girl in Paris. Then</p>	<p><i>She is decreasing her Facebook interactions as too much is going on</i></p>          <p><i>She would never use Facebook for showing pictures but rather switch to Instagram for that</i></p>          <p><i>She uses Facebook for messaging and staying in touch with friends</i></p>          <p><i>She uses Facebook for socializing and organizing events</i></p>	<p><b>Assumption:</b> Facebook: Change of uses &amp; gratifications; Uses &amp; gratifications; Instagram: inspiration</p>          <p><b>Uses &amp; gratifications:</b> Tendency to switch to Instagram for pictures</p>          <p><b>Uses &amp; gratifications:</b> Facebook: socializing; focus on strong social ties</p>          <p><b>Uses &amp; gratifications:</b> Facebook: socializing and organizing; focus on strong social ties</p>
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<p>I don't have to pay the trip to go there. I know a lot of Chinese people who make money on WeChat and Facebook shops. I think it's called Shopify. So I feel like the social media is expanding to more like...</p> <p>I: E-commerce?</p> <p>Ly: Yeah...</p> <p>H: Well I have Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Snapchat. Facebook, I created when I started on university just to keep up with my study group and also the news. Then I use messenger to mostly actually schoolwork. Instagram, I have a fashion account. I don't post pictures of myself, but just like fashion and style by others and also to get inspired as the others mentioned. Twitter I use to stalk celebrities (all laughing). Snapchat is really personally; it's only my close friends and family.</p> <p>Li: Yeah I'm a little bit of an outsider – I'm like Facebook – everything is there. I also have Instagram and Twitter, but I almost never use it. If I use Instagram, it's to stalk my sister. She's younger and she's like a leader of Instagram. So I'm mainly on Facebook, I would post a picture of my trips on Facebook and I post every day on Facebook, like videos – maybe not songs, but yeah whatever.</p> <p>Ly: Yeah I also post albums on Facebook. If I have like 60 pictures of my trip in Vietnam.</p> <p>I: Someone already mentioned that you follow a lot of food blogs and you said like celebrities on Twitter. So whom do you follow and what do you like on the different social media accounts? So like newspapers?</p> <p>K: Yeah that would be more Facebook! Yeah and that's it actually. On Instagram it's actually also like Victoria's Secret models to get motivated to go to the gym (laughing). And like interior designs and food and all that. <b>I don't think I follow any brands actually.</b> Only things...</p> <p>Ja: Facebook is where I get news from news outlets or also local restaurants or bars – like local events that are happening. Then for Instagram it's food blogs, interior design and maybe some people who do beauty, but I don't think that many. I would say food and interior designs are big ones and travel! On Snapchat I usually look at the ones that pop up there. Which are like little news articles – anything from like Cosmopolitan that tries to make a comeback and there are the Guardians that comes up sometimes and I think New York Times have articles that come up. It's always different ones; I don't know how they determine that.</p> <p>Jo: It's the same... I would say that Instagram is more for fun, because it's purely inspiration. I wouldn't follow a lot of newspapers on Instagram. On Facebook I would say for groups and for newspapers.</p>	<p><i>She uses Facebook to organize university projects and to message people; Instagram serves more for inspiration</i></p> <p><i>She uses Facebook for multiple purposes and does not use other social media accounts that often; frequently posts on Facebook</i></p> <p><i>She does not follow brands on Facebook</i></p> <p><i>She does not follow brands on Facebook but rather newspapers</i></p>	<p><i>Uses &amp; gratifications: Facebook: organizing; focus on medium social ties; Uses &amp; gratifications: Instagram for inspiration</i></p> <p><i>Uses &amp; gratifications: Facebook: all-in-one platform</i></p> <p><i>Lack of brand resonance: Brand engagement; no brand-consumer interaction</i></p> <p><i>Lack of brand resonance: Brand engagement; no brand-consumer interaction</i></p>
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<p>Jo: I mean I wouldn't be shy, but ... I don't know... I wouldn't feel uncomfortable with a man in the room, <b>but this doesn't feel strange at all.</b></p> <p>I: So does this focus group context feel more private than posting something on the internet?</p> <p>K: <b>Yes, probably because you're asking me about it and I'm answering to the group, but I guess if we were here without you, we wouldn't start talking about deodorants.</b></p> <p>Ja: <b>But I also think it's different, because if you're online and you tag someone in it, it's like for example I see my friend tag her boyfriend in something and I can see it and other people can see it.</b> I know that if my friend was just talking with her boyfriend about it, then obviously it wouldn't be visible. <b>It's the whole visibility online that makes it...</b> now I'm thinking more about if I tag my sister in something that's a random joke between us, <b>then I don't want everyone to see it. This a whole thing with more visibility online and it stays there.</b> It's not going away after a few seconds, if it's online then it's there forever and people can find it again.</p> <p>Jo: I'm really careful... because <b>people can be really nasty online as well. It's about the topic, I don't think that if somebody posts something about beauty that a lot of people would be very ... you know, angry or have that kind of discussion.</b> But it's still my comment is there and it would still be there for an hour if I delete it.</p> <p>Ly: I don't really post on Facebook, because I know that if I'm searching for a new job ... I mean we're in 2017, so they would probably go on my LinkedIn and my Facebook and check it. It's also because <b>I'm friends with my boss on Facebook, so I'm a bit careful.</b> I do tag her in some stuff, but I would never post a picture of me drunk or if my friend did it, I would untag myself as soon as possible.</p> <p>I: Okay, thanks so much for today and a great discussion!</p>	<p><i>It doesn't feel strange to talk about beauty products with strangers, but they do in this situation because they're triggered</i></p> <p><i>For her it's the matter of her privacy and the visibility in an online context</i></p> <p><i>It's not about the topic of beauty, but privacy matters in general and how people would perceive it</i></p> <p><i>Friends with her boss on Facebook, so she's more careful</i></p>	<p><i>Recommendation behavior is triggered by requests</i></p> <p><i>Considers the visibility to the social network</i></p> <p><i>The concern for privacy in an online context holds them back for articulating online</i></p> <p><i>Consideration of medium ties on Facebook</i></p>
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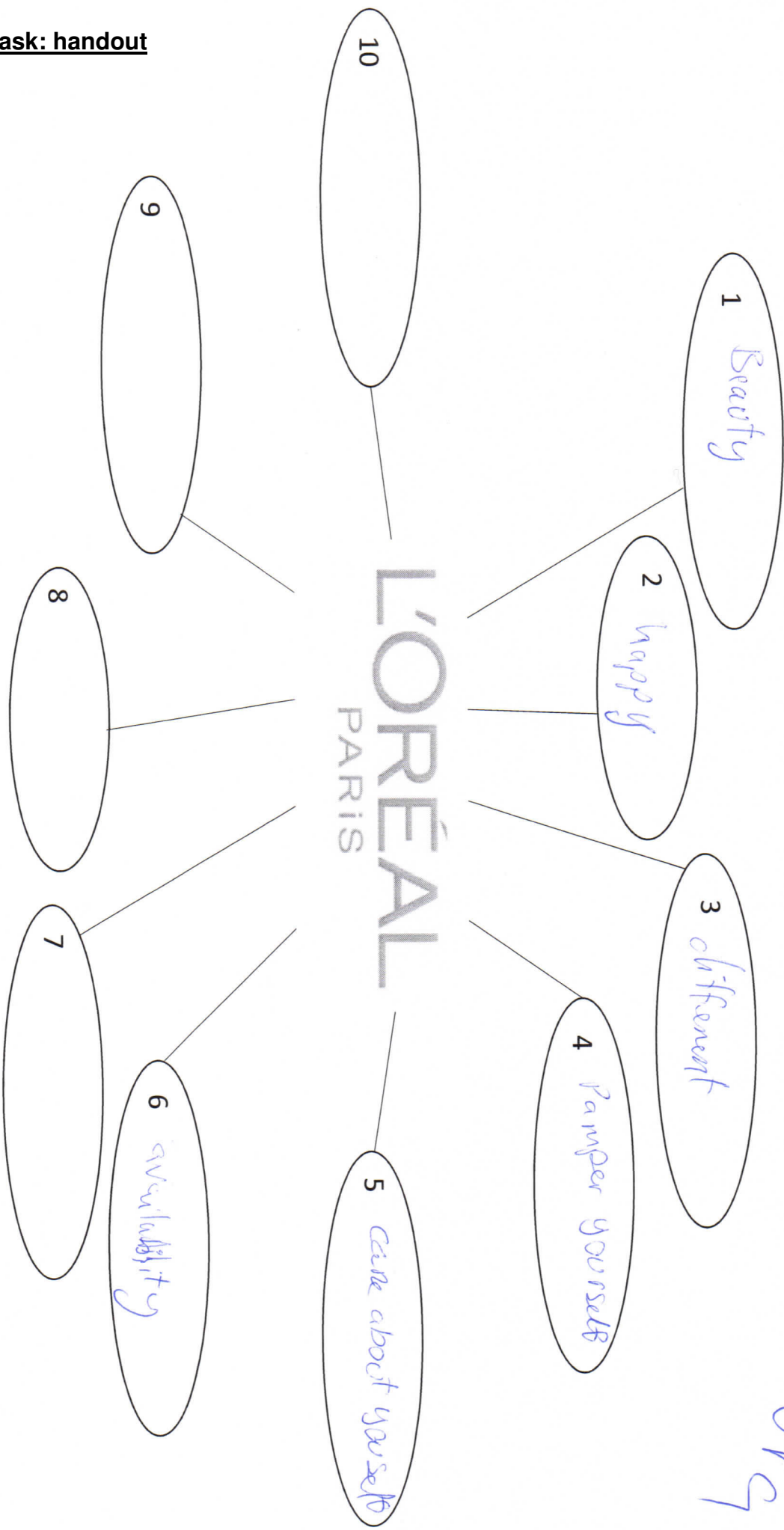
## Appendix G – Focus group: Exercises

### Association task: overview

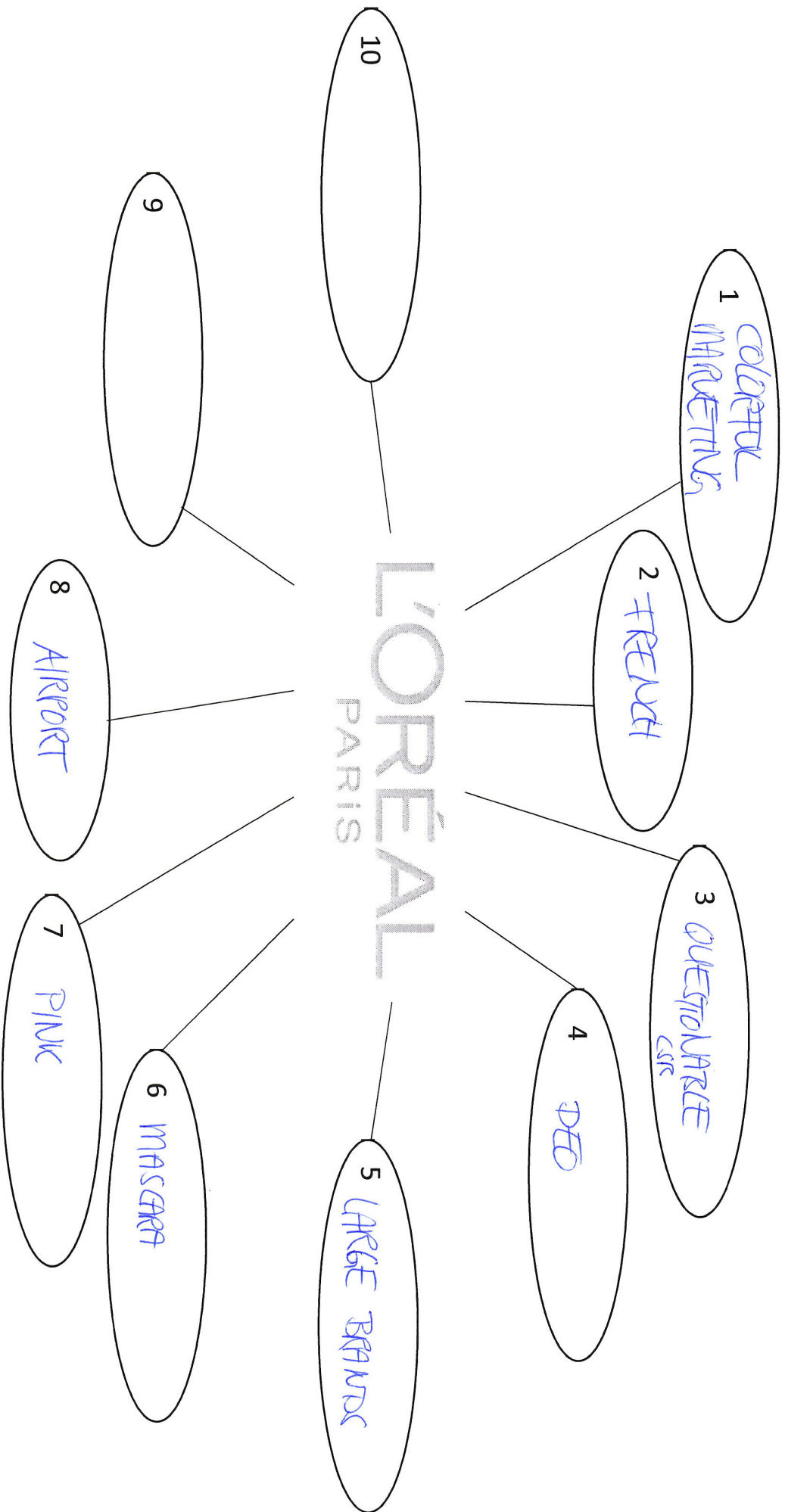
	Hawra	Johanna	Liangye	Katarina	Jasmine	Liliana
1.	Beauty	Colorful Marketing	Shampoo	Min. quality for products	France	Hair oil
2.	Happy	French	Conditioner	French	Beyonce hair straight/curly	Shampoo / conditioning
3.	Different	Questionable CSR	Because you're worth it	Celebrity endorsements	Lobbying in EU	Because you're worth it
4.	Pamper yourself	Deo	TV commercials	Well-known brand	Because I'm worth it	Face cream at the supermarket
5.	Care about yourself	Large brands	"White girls"	Many sub-brands	Airport	Makeup
6.	Availability	Mascara	Hair color/dye	Good reputation	Makeup	Being pretty
7.		Pink	Hair spray	Affordable pricing	Own many beauty brands like Body Shop	
8.		Airport	Easy to get	Present on all markets	L'Oréal for younger, other brands for older	
9.			Empower			
10.						

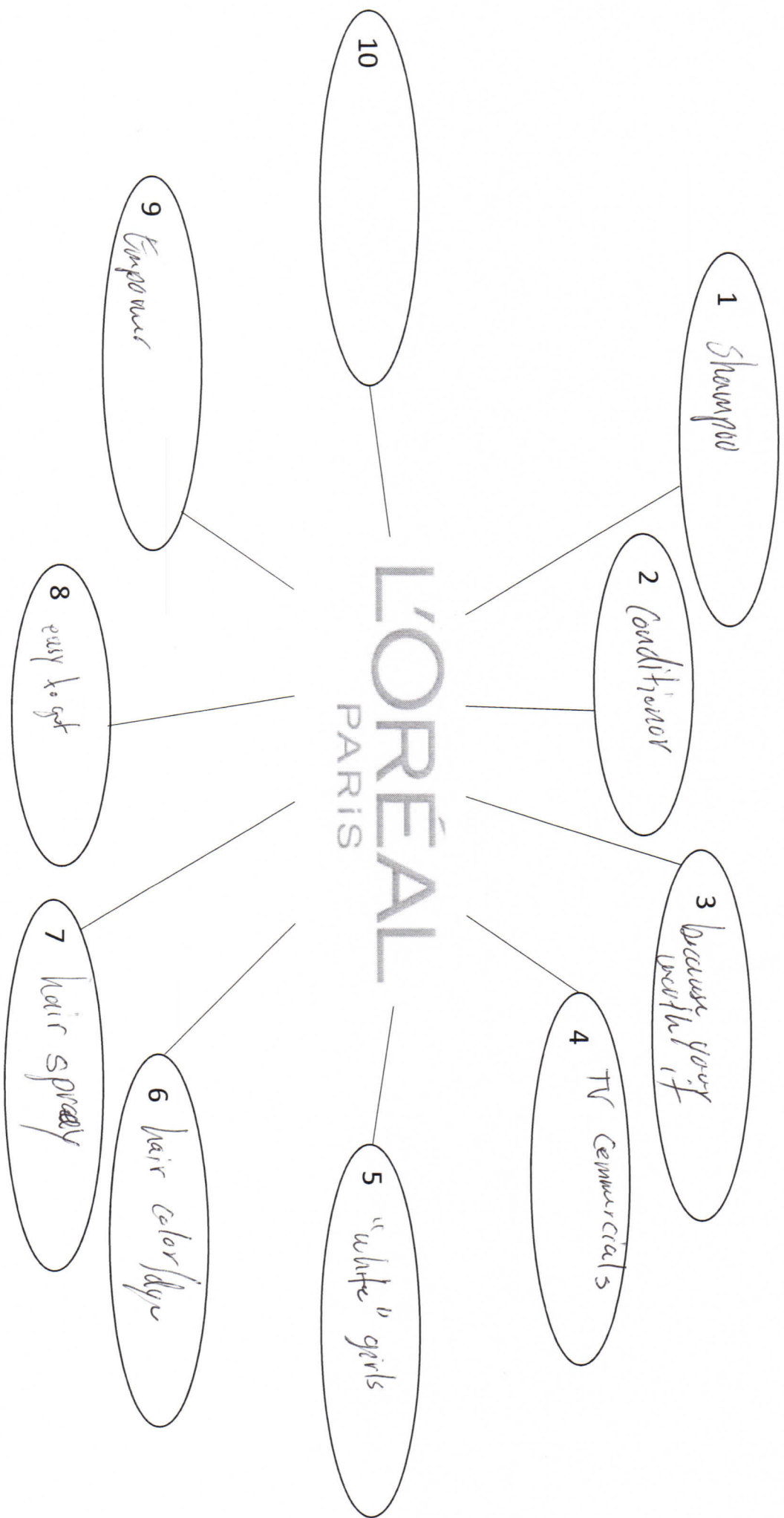


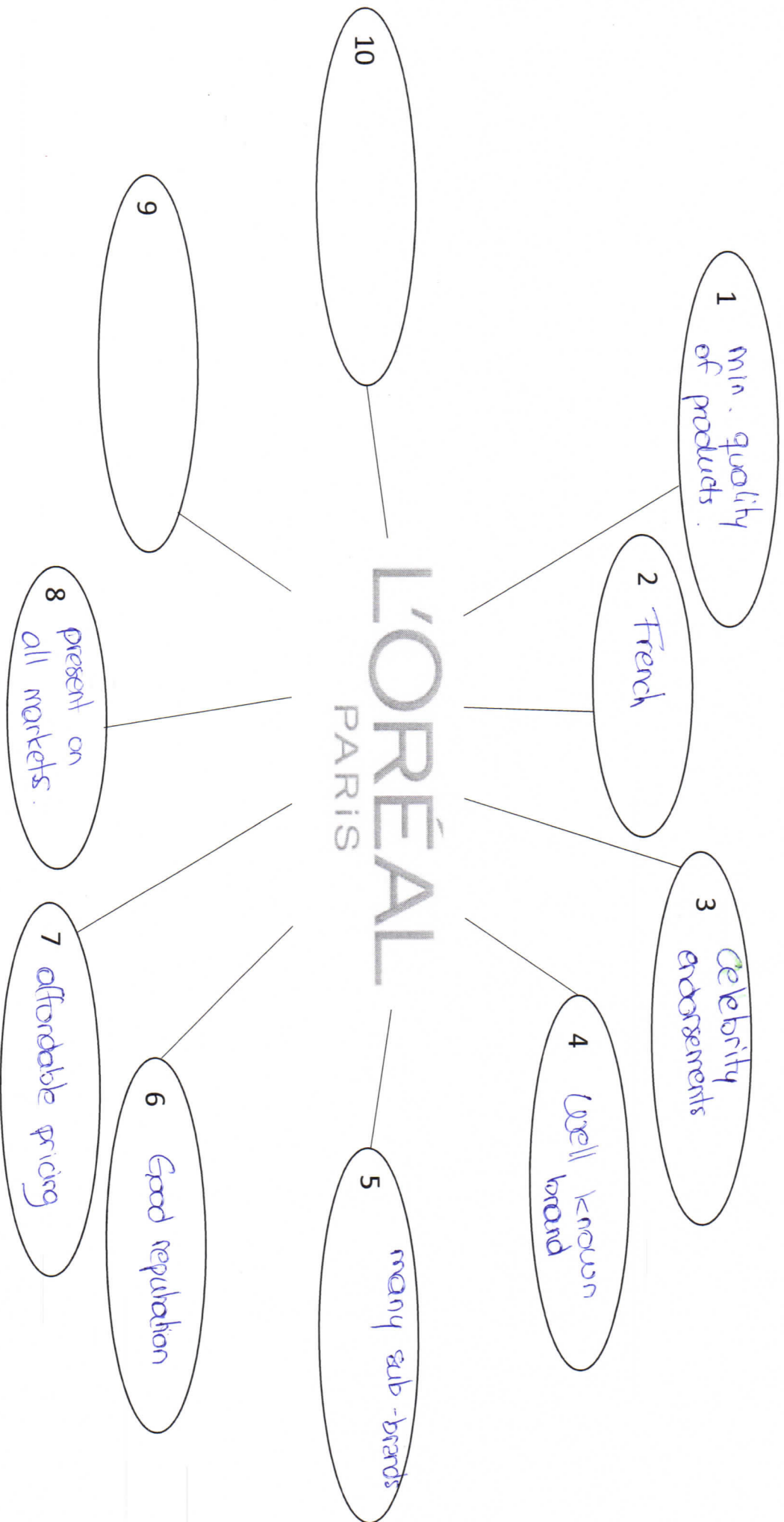
Association task: handout

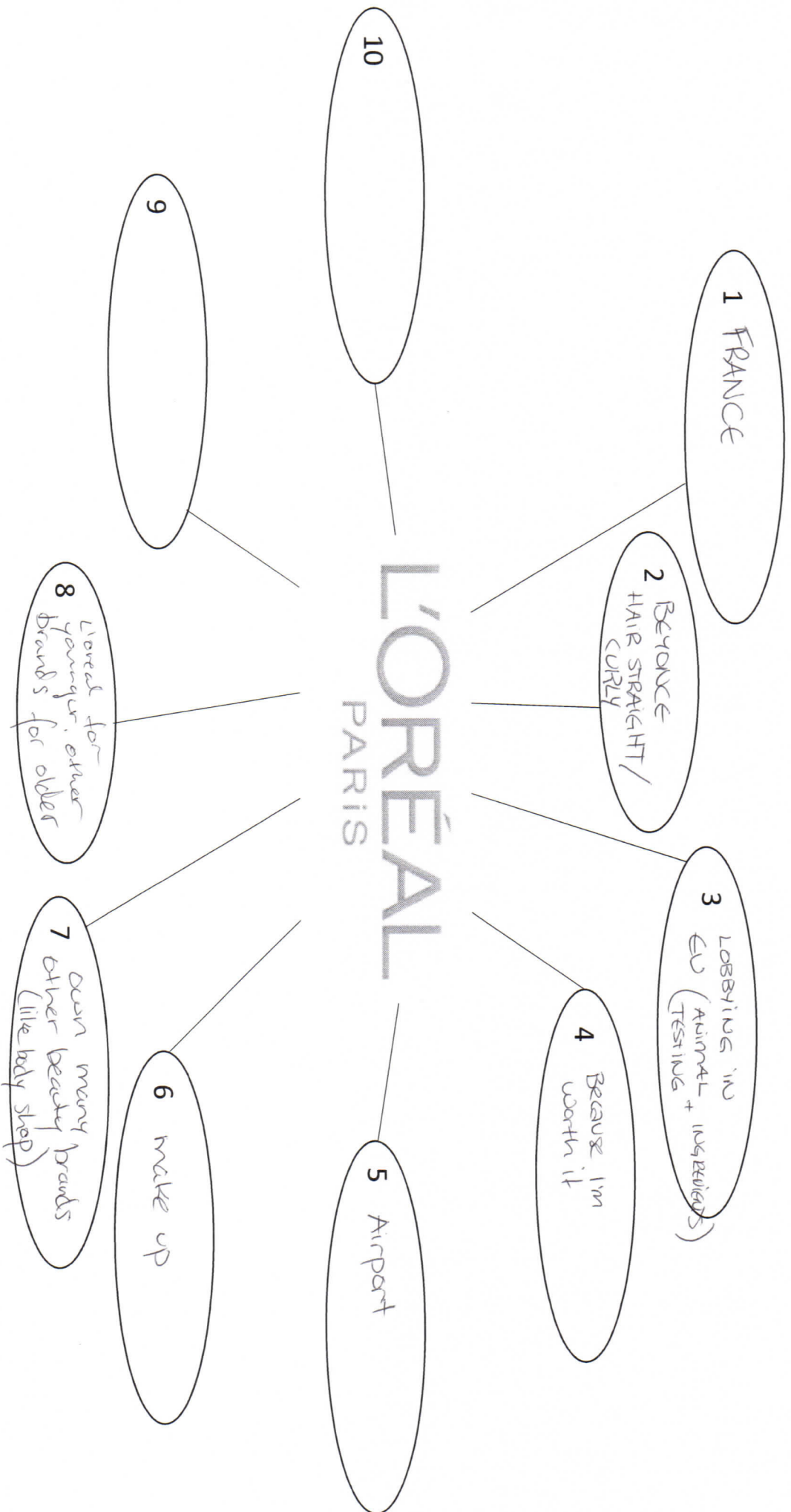


JOHANNA

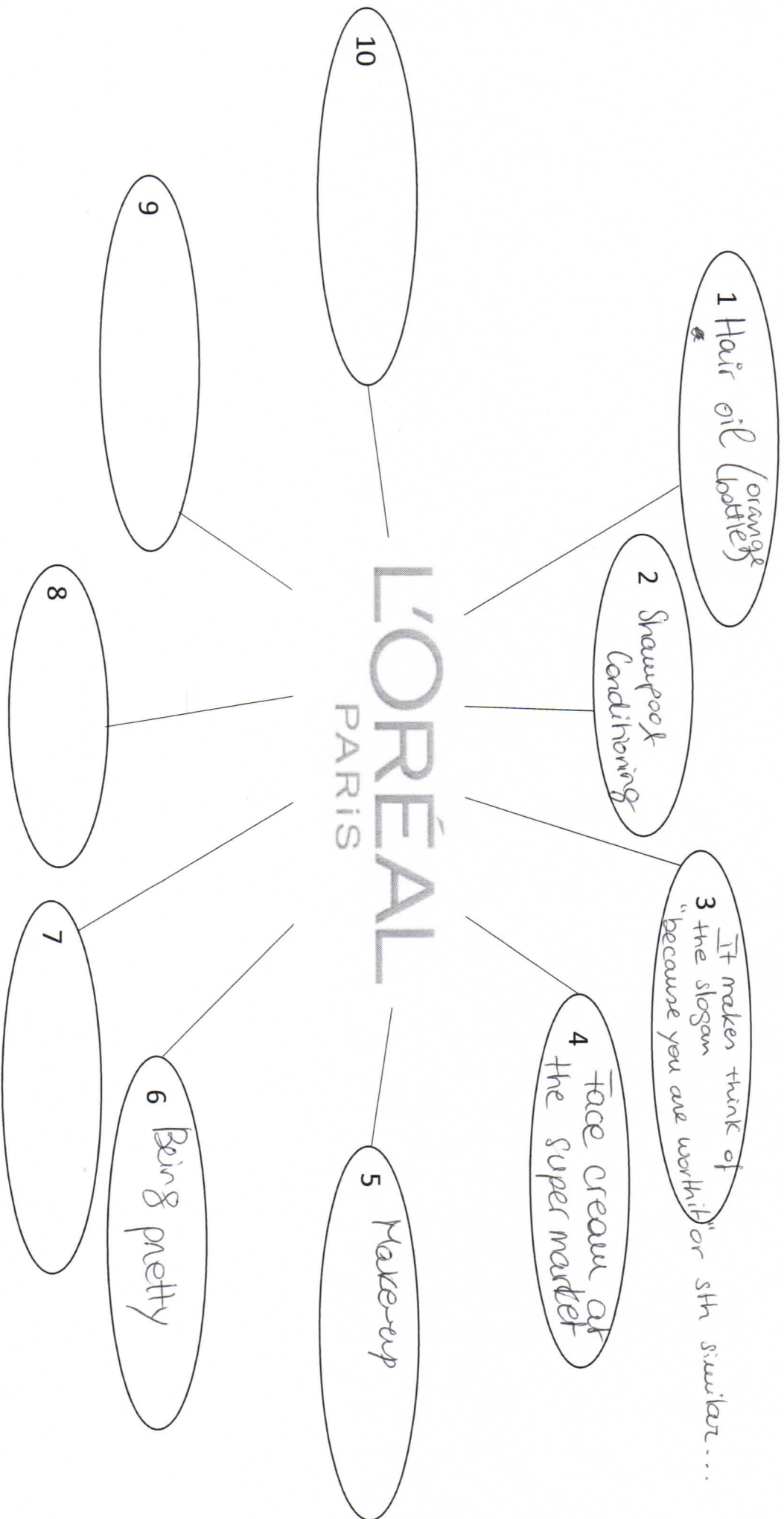






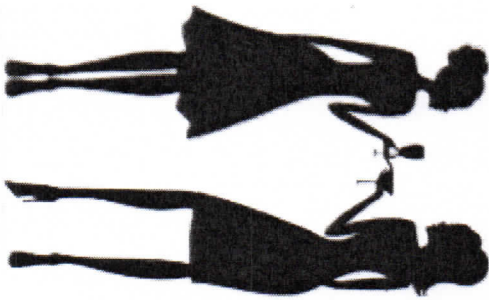


Lilianca





"Bubble exercise": handout



→ I will try it  
→ I actually did that

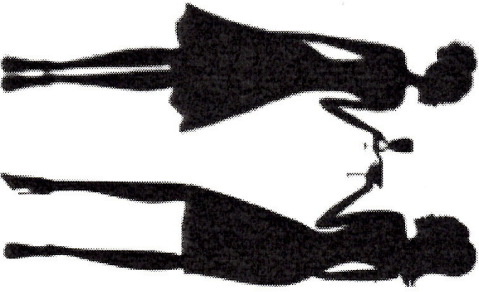
Hey, since I know you also have curly hair, and I know it can be dry, use this serum to hydrate your hair ends, to avoid cutting it too often, since you want to let it grow long. because of split ends

Haura

Twitter  
Instagram  
FB  
LinkedIn

JOHANNA

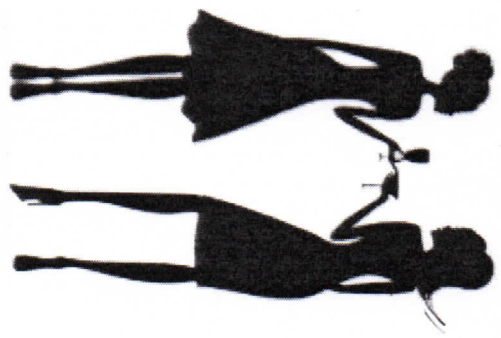
I JUST TRIED THIS NEW CREAM, IT'S  
AMAZING - CAN REALLY ~~RECOMMEND~~ RECOMMEND IT.  
- IT'S ALL NATURAL.



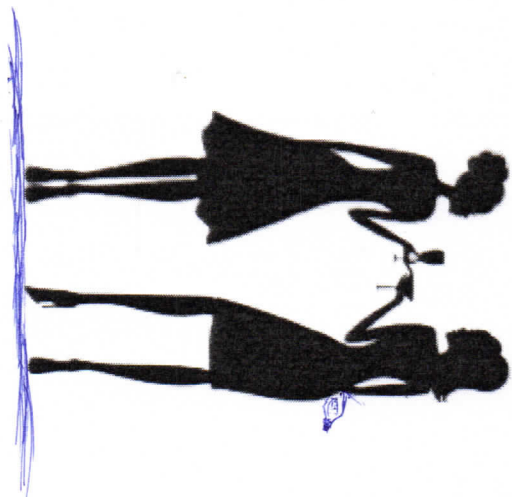


You know how I am with body product

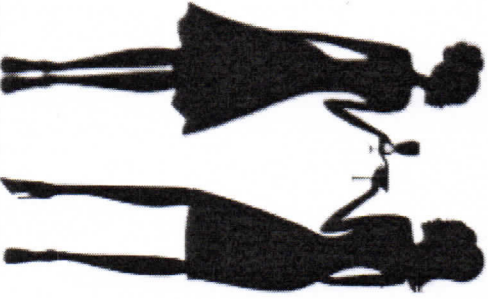
- 8 hour
- weeks
- you can try mine



Look, I ~~used~~ used this nailpolish and it was really  
 good. It looks like I have shellac!  
 - wow! where did you buy it?  
 - I bought it at Sephora in France, it's actually their brand.  
 And it was so cheap.



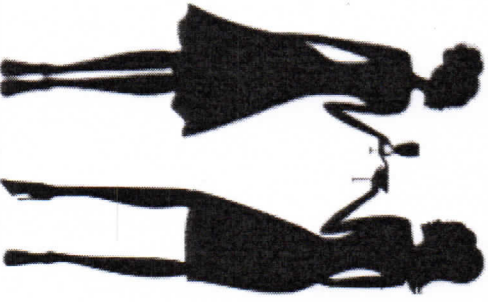
I bought this NYX Lingerie Liquid lipstick.  
It makes your lips a bit dry but I put  
on Burt's Bee before, & it's ok.  
But the good thing is that the  
NYX lipstick stays on really long  
& it's a really nice matte color.



Jiliana

How can  
you have  
so shiny  
healthy hair?





I ~~use~~ actually don't spend so much time  
on it, but only shampoo (not even mask or conditioner),  
but I use a hair oil against split ends and  
it doesn't leave your hair oily. It's not  
super expensive and it don't quite a bit.  
(around 8€)



## Appendix H – Netnographic research (data and coding)

Netnographic research (extracts)	Descriptive coding	Interpretive coding
Consumer-consumer interaction in Facebook groups		
<p><b>Post 1</b></p> <p> <b>Karina</b> 18 March</p> <p>Concealer!</p> <p>Har haft brugt L'Oréals indtil videre. Den er næsten tom så tog i Matas for at købe en nye. Udsolgt. Blev så "prakket på" at købe den fra Smashbox.</p> <p>L'Oréal: 5ml, 89kr Smashbox: 2.7ml, 175kr.</p> <p>Gisp! Har bare at være mindst lige så god som L'Oréal!</p> <p>Concealer!</p> <p>Had used l'oréals until further notice. It's almost empty so took in matas to buy a new. Sold out. Was so "sent" to buy it from smashbox.</p> <p>L'Oréal: 5 ml, 89 kr Smashbox: 2.7ml, 175kr.</p> <p>Gasp! Just have to be at least as good as l'Oréal!</p> <p>👍 Rate this translation</p> 	<p>"have used L'Oréal until now" → she was forced to buy another brand</p> <p>"... good as L'Oréal" → She hopes her new product is as good as LP.</p>	<p>Brand resonance – loyalty</p> <p>Brand meaning: Brand performance</p>



Post 2		
<div>  <p><b>Jannie</b> 14 April at 15:11</p> <p>Til jer med fedtet eller kombineret hud, som søger en rigtig god og dækkende foundation der holder hele dagen, så vil jeg klart anbefale L'Oréal infallible 24h matte foundation. ALLE de foundations jeg har haft, har jeg haft bøv! med at min hud kom til at se fedtet ud i løbet af dagen, og skulle hele tiden sætte den med pudder - PISSE TRÆLS! jeg har prøvet, Estee Lauder, Clinique og en masse andre af de dyre mærker, men de har aldrig sat pænt på mig. Her sidst dag fik jeg en prøve på denne foundation, og den er virkelig god! jeg har haft den for nogle år siden, men kunne ikke huske at den var så god. Jeg kan gå en hel dag uden jeg skal bruge pudder i løbet af dagen. Den skal jeg helt sikkert ud at købe, og så er den også billig! 🥰🥰🥰</p> <p>For you with oily or combination skin, who are looking for a really good and comprehensive foundation holding all day, so I very I 'oréal infallible 24 H Matte Foundation. All the foundation I've been, I've had trouble with my skin came to see fat out during the day and would always set it with powder - piss annoying! I've tried, Estee Lauder, Clinique and a bunch of other expensive brands, but they've never been nice to me. This last day I got a sample of this foundation and it's really good! I've had it a few years ago, but couldn't remember that it was so good. I can go a whole day without I need powder during the day. I'll definitely go out and buy, and it's also cheap! 🥰🥰🥰</p> <p>👍 Rate this translation</p>  </div> <div>  <p><b>Jennie</b> Ja den er nemlig bare rigtig god den har jeg også søde ❤️</p> <p>Yes it is just great I have that too sweetie ❤️ 🥰</p> <p>Automatically translated</p> <p>Like · Reply · 🗨️ 1 · 14 April at 16:36</p>  <p><b>Julie</b></p> <p>Translated from Danish</p> <p>Agree. I can even train with this and still look good after that</p> <p>See original</p> <p>Like · Reply · 🗨️ 1 · 14 April at 18:40</p>  <p><b>Mariasofie</b></p> <p>Translated from Danish</p> <p>I agree, it's so good, and is just so beautiful on your skin!</p> <p>See original</p> <p>Like · Reply · 15 April at 04:02</p>  <p><b>Sofie</b></p> <p>Translated from Danish</p> <p>I use it too. It's so good 🥰</p> <p>See original</p> <p>Like · Reply · 15 April at 05:11</p> </div>	<p><i>"For you with oily or combination skin, who are looking for a really good foundation that last all day, I recommend L'Oréal infallible 24h matte foundation.... I got a sample of this foundation, and it is really good! ... I can get through a whole day without using powder during the day. I definitely need to buy this one, and then it's cheap!"</i></p> <p>→ she's really satisfied with this product and recommends it to everyone with same skin type. She talks about her experience with the product</p> <p>Calling her sweetie and sends hearts and kiss emoji</p> <p>They are commenting on her post, agreeing with how good the product is</p>	<p><b>Brand meaning: Brand performance</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: Creation: Recommender review with focus on brand performance based on own experience</b></p> <p><b>Community elements</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: contribution through commenting on beauty product posts by other consumers</b></p>

### Post 3



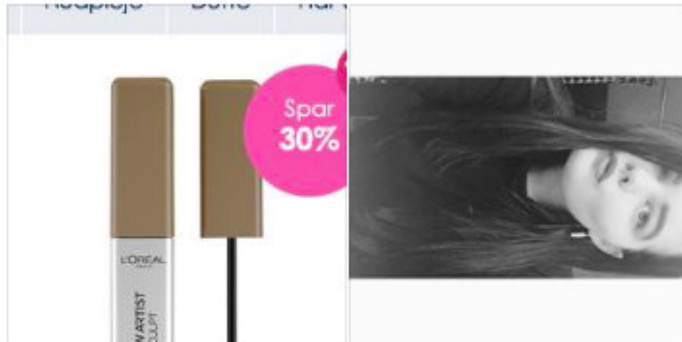
Julie

17 October 2016

Hej alle, er der nogle af jer der har prøvet denne her (L'Oréal Paris Brow Artist Sculpter)? har overvejet at købe den, for at prøve noget andet end en øjenbrynsblyant. Hvad bruger i til jeres bryn? Mine er sådan her, heh

Hi all, are there any of you tried this (L'Oréal Paris brow artist sculpter)? Have considered buying it to try something else than a øjenbrynsblyant. What are you using for your eyebrows? Mine are like this, heh

Rate this translation



2 Comments

Like Comment



Emma

Bruger en gel fra gosh, kan anbefales

Using a gel from gosh, recommended

Automatically translated

Like · Reply · 1 · 17 October 2016 at 20:00



Cecilie

Jeg bruger den, og jeg synes den er god, dog er den ret våd i det og derfor skal man ikke røre ved brynene efter + du skal være forsigtig så synes alt i alt den er god men påføringen er besværlig fordi den er så våd 😊

I use it, and I think it's great, but it's very wet in it and this is why you should not touch the brows after + you have to be careful so think all in all, it is good but application is difficult because it is so wet 😊

Automatically translated

Like · Reply · 1 · 17 October 2016 at 20:19

She is asking the community if anyone has tried this LP product; adds a picture of the requested product and of her eyebrows

Community elements: Sense of moral responsibility (assistance in the brand usage)

COBRA: creation of UGC; pre-purchase advice-seeking (NEW)

She replies and says that it is good, but she have to be careful when using it

Brand meaning: Brand performance

COBRA: contribution: Motive: Norm of reciprocity combined with helping

## Post 4



Ayat

20 March at 17:35

Hej skønne piger 🙌🌸 Nu har jeg hørt rigtig meget godt om L'oreal Telescopic, men jeg er lidt i tvivl.. Er den overvuderet eller lever den op til sit gode rygte? 😊

Hey lovely girls 🙌🌸 now I've heard really good things about L' Oreal Telescopic, but I'm a little unsure.. It's overrated or live it up to its reputation? 😊

⚙️ · Rate this translation



Camilla

Super god til prisen, synes jeg. Jeg bruger vipper dagligt, men har denne under som base og på de nederste vipper 😊. Super good price, I think. I wear lashes daily, but have this as a base and on the bottom lashes 😊.

Automatically translated

Like · Reply · 🗨️ 1 · 20 March at 17:52



Kristina

Translated from Danish

I think it's super good at getting down to the root of your lashes, then you don't she has mascara on the tips. But is it a bit before going in the right amount of product on my brush. I pull it out, so most will be scraping the side I need 👍

[See original](#)

Like · Reply · 🗨️ 2 · 20 March at 17:55



Maya

Translated from Danish

One of my holy grails.. but the gold not the silver 😊

[See original](#)

Like · Reply · 🗨️ 3 · 20 March at 20:19



Kristina

Translated from Danish

What's the difference between the two? I've only seen the silver....

[See original](#)

Like · Reply · 20 March at 20:20



Maya

Translated from Danish

There are actually 3 😊 Black, silver and gold.. The Black's carbon black which means the color is black.. the gold makes long and delicious dense lashes, available in black and the brunsort.. Silver gives good separation and length.. The Bristles are too different..

[See original](#)

She's searching for information on L'Oréal Telescopic

COBRA: creation of UGC; pre-purchase advice-seeking (NEW)

Greets other members with "Hej skønne piger"

Community elements: 'Consciousness of kind, narrative style (storytelling) as ritual'

These girls are commenting on the post to help.

Brand meaning: Brand performance

They reply with their opinion of the product

COBRA: contribution: Motive: Norm of reciprocity combined with helping



**Alberte**  
Translated from Danish  
It's so crazy good - really a musthave!  
[See original](#)  
Like · Reply · 1 · 21 March at 11:21

**Hadulaa**  
Translated from Danish  
The best mascara! Love it! Really good!  
[See original](#)  
Like · Reply · 1 · 21 March at 12:57

**Maria**  
Translated from Danish  
Think it's amazing to give length!! (which of course is that it has to be primarily) - but personally feel not giving enough fill for me, so when I use the supplements I'm always with a good volume rewarding mascara 😊  
[See original](#)  
Like · Reply · 1 · 21 March at 13:17

**Anja**  
Translated from Danish  
The Gold of them, is really good. I have really short lashes and it's the only one who can make you nice when you give much length 😊  
[See original](#)  
Like · Reply · 21 March at 14:47

**Ann**  
Translated from Danish  
It's a good one 😊  
[See original](#)  
Like · Reply · 21 March at 14:47

*It's the best mascara and she loves it!*

**Brand responses;**  
**brand judgment;**  
**superiority "the best"**  
**and loves it**

*The mascara is really good as it gives her good length*

**Brand meaning; brand performance;**  
**effectiveness**

## Post 5

**Pernille**  
2 March 2016

Er der nogen af jer, der har prøvet Quickstick blush fra [Loréal Paris](#)? I så fald, hvad er jeres erfaring med dem?  
Jeg har lige fået dem, og umiddelbart synes jeg de virker til at være super lækre 😊

Do any of you who've tried quickstick blush from loréal Paris? In that case, what is your experience with them?  
I just got them, and immediately i think they seem to be super hot 😊

⚙️ [Rate this translation](#)



*She's asking the Facebook group if anyone has tried it and what their experiences are*

**Community elements;**  
**'Consciousness of kind'**

**COBRA: creation of UGC; Social interaction**

**Brand-consumer interaction on Facebook page**

**Post 6**

 **Lone** ·  **L'Oréal Paris**  
3 April at 09:40 · Viborg · 🌐

Jeg har købt mig en "Gentle eye makeup remover" med Allantoin, som er "suitable for sensitive eyes"  
Mit spørgsmål går på, om der kan være fyldt et andet produkt i flasken, for det er på INGEN måde "gentle".... det svier som ind i pokker 😞😞  
Og efter brug, føles huden meget udtørret - kan det have sin rigtighed?

I bought me a "gentle eye makeup remover" with allantoin, which is "suitable for sensitive eyes"  
My question is, can there be filled another product in the bottle, for it is by no means "gentle".... it hurts like heck 😞😞  
And after use, the skin feels very dry - it can have its accuracy?

⚙️ · Rate this translation

 **L'Oréal Paris** ·  · **Kære** . Mange tak for din feedback. Vi vil altid gerne høre både ris og ros fra vores forbrugere, og det er naturligvis en skam, at du ikke er tilfreds med produktet. Vi vil anbefale dig at tage kontakt til vores Consumer Care Center på mail: kontakt@loreal.com eller tlf.: 80200607, så vil de hjælpe dig bedst muligt. Rigtig god dag. Mvh. L'Oréal Paris.

Dear Lone. Thank you for your feedback. We will always like to hear both rice and praise from our consumers, and of course it is a shame that you are not happy with the product. We recommend you contact our consumer care centre on mail: Kontakt@Loreal.Com or tel.: 80200607, they will help you as best as possible. Really good day. Your L' Oréal Paris.

Automatically translated

Like · Reply · 🗨️ 1 · 3 April at 10:50

👉 1 Reply

*She has an issue with a product (negative)*

*(We only focus on positive ones, but this is just to show how LP responded)*

*LP responds to her and ask her to contact consumer care, so they can help her*

**Brand-consumer interaction: LP shows concern for customers**

**Post 7**

 **Sonja** ·  **L'Oréal Paris**  
24 January · 🌐

Hvor er jeg ked af - at I har ladet læbestiften nr. 210 udgå af jeres sortiment. Det er længe siden, men hold da helt op, hvor jeg savner den. Jeg har prøvet adskillige andre mærker, men finder ikke en som ligner, men heller ikke har den lækre konsistens eller holder som den gamle.....bare et lille suk!!

I am so sorry that you have allowed the lipstick no 210 deleted from your range. It's been a long time, but wow how I miss it. I've tried several other brands, but won't find a similar, but not have the hot texture or keep the old..... just a little sigh!!

⚙️ · Rate this translation

1 Comment 

👍 Like · 💬 Comment · ➦ Share · Chronological ▾

 **L'Oréal Paris** ·  · **Kære** . Tak for din henvendelse. Hvor er det en skam, at det netop er din yndlingslæbestift, som ikke længere er i sortiment. Vi ved godt, det ikke præcis er den samme farver, men måske kunne 235 Nude eller 236 Organza være alternativer. Ellers kan vi også anbefale dig at kigge på vores læbepalette, Color Riche Lip Palette 01 Nude, som har nogle smukke nuancer i nude og rosa. Vi håber, du finder et alternativ. God aften. Mvh. L'Oréal Paris.

Dear Sonja. Thanks for your request. What a shame that it's your yndlingslæbestift, who is no longer in the range. We know it's not exactly the same colors, but maybe 235 naked or 236 organza be alternatives. Or we can also recommend you take a look at our læbepalette, Color Riche Lip Palette 01 naked that has some beautiful shades in naked and Rosa. We hope you find an alternative. Good night. Your L' Oréal Paris.

Automatically translated

Like · Reply · 🗨️ 1 · 24 January at 18:14

*She shares her disappointment over a lipstick that LP don't make anymore*

*LP answers her in a personally way addressing her issue. They apologize and recommend another similar one*

**Brand-to-consumer interaction: LP tries to help**

## Post 8

**Katrine**  L'Oréal Paris  
26 November 2016 · 

Tips for how to keep this from happening? The Rubber thing to go of excess mascara, always coming loose, so mascaren can no longer be used. This happens to me repeatedly! Tip?

 · [See original](#) · [Rate this translation](#)



**L'Oréal Paris**  **Kære** Tak for din besked, vi beklager meget det sene svar. Vi vil meget gerne høre både ris og ros fra vores forbrugere. Derfor anbefaler vi dig at tage kontakt til vores Consumer Care Center på mail: [kontakt@loreal.com](mailto:kontakt@loreal.com) eller tlf.: 80200607, så vil de hjælpe dig bedst muligt. Rigtig god dag. Mvh. L'Oréal Paris.

Dear Katrine. Thanks for your message, we are very sorry late reply. We'd love to hear both rice and praise from our consumers. Therefore we recommend that you contact our consumer care centre on mail: [Kontakt@Loreal.Com](mailto:Kontakt@Loreal.Com) or tel.: 80200607, they will help you as best as possible. Really good day. Your L'Oréal Paris.

Automatically translated

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 6 December 2016 at 10:05

**Katrine**  
Translated from Danish  
I sent mail a while ago but haven't mottaget some mail. Your K.  
[See original](#)

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 15 January at 10:38

**Katrine**  
Translated from Norwegian  
So is it a few months ago I sent an email, but I didn't get any answers! 😞  
[See original](#)

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 6 April at 10:00











*She's searching for tips as she's unhappy with function of the product*

*COBRA: Creation; Motive: Advice seeking (tips) [however this does not correspond to positive reviews]*

*LP gives her a standard answer and refers her to consumer care. But she doesn't not get any responds after that*

*Lack of brand-consumer interaction or follow-up*



Post 9		
<div>  <p><b>Maria</b> · 16 September 2016 · Roskilde · 🌐</p> <p>Hej L'Oréal.  Får i nogensinde denne makeup fjerner på marked igen?  ^jeg lider meget af allergi, sarte øjne osv.  Og dette er den eneste makeup fjerner jeg har kunne tåle i mange år!  😞 - men fået afvide den er taget af marked, da den indeholdt noget folk ikke kunne tåle .. - jeg har prøvet jeres andre makeup fjerner og mange andre mærker og kan ikke tåle en eneste 😞 ..</p> <p>Hey I ' Oréal.  You ever get any this makeup remover on the market again?  ^Jeg suffer a lot of allergies, sensitive eyes, etc.  And this is the only makeup remover I have could afford in many years! :(but been told it's off the market because it contained some people couldn't handle.. I tried your other makeup remover and many other brands and can't afford one 😞..</p> <p>⚙️ · <a href="#">Rate this translation</a></p> </div> <div>  </div> <div>  <p><b>Nivi</b>  Translated from Danish  Have you tried the normal?  <a href="#">See original</a>  Like · Reply · 16 September 2016 at 10:24</p> <p> <b>Maria</b>  Om den er der, eller ?  If it's there or?  Automatically translated  Like · Reply · 16 September 2016 at 11:57</p> <p> <b>Nivi</b>  Translated from Danish  Yes  <a href="#">See original</a>  Like · Reply · 16 September 2016 at 12:22</p> <p> <b>Maria</b>  Translated from Danish  It removed everywhere... They can't sell it 😞  <a href="#">See original</a>  Like · Reply · 16 September 2016 at 16:18</p> <p> <b>Nivi</b>  Translated from Danish  Aw 😞  <a href="#">See original</a>  Like · Reply · 16 September 2016 at 18:39</p> <p> Write a reply...  </p> </div>	<p><i>She's asking LP about a product.</i></p> <p><i>She doesn't get any answers by LP, but other consumers reply to her post.</i></p>	<p><b>COBRA: creation of UGC; pre-purchase advice-seeking (NEW)</b></p> <p><b>Lack of brand-consumer interaction</b></p> <p><b>Community elements: Sense of moral responsibility (assistance in the brand usage = advice on substitute product)</b></p> <p><b>COBRA: contribution: Motive: Norm of reciprocity combined with helping</b></p>

Post 10



L'Oréal Paris  
20 February · 🌐

Fire situationer. Fire løsninger. Et resultat. Skræddersyet dækning i 24 timer. Hvordan farvekorrigerer du? #coversmart

Læs mere: <http://www.lorealparis.dk/infallible-concealer-palette/>

Four situations. Four Solutions. The result. Customised cover in 24 hours. How Farvekorrigerer you? #Coversmart read more: <http://www.lorealparis.dk/infallible-concealer-palette/>

⚙️ Rate this translation



Louise

Translated from Danish

Hahah it must be something you can translate 🤔🤔 hitting Anne-Katrine

See original

Like · Reply · 22 February at 08:22



Lene

Hvorfor blå og grøn?? Nogen der kan forklare mig det ??

Why Blue and green?? Can anyone explain it to me??

Automatically translated

Like · Reply · 22 February at 06:12



Nina

Translated from Danish

Is not sure, but it's enough to neutralize redness and shiny skin 😊 know it does but what color it is, I'm a little unsure haha

See original

Like · Reply · 1 · 22 February at 06:17



Lene

Hehe oka..

Like · Reply · 22 February at 06:24



Jasmin

Translated from Danish

Green Reduces redness, can't remember what the purple makes 😊

See original

Like · Reply · 1 · 22 February at 07:54



Lene

Smart 😊

Like · Reply · 22 February at 08:13



Natalia

Translated from Danish

It says, if you log on to their link: Green Reduces redness and purple makes your skin glow 😊

See original

Like · Reply · 1 · 22 February at 08:35

She's tagging her friend on a Facebook post from LP

She is seeking information in a post with a comment and she receives a lot of replies

COBRA: Contribution: recommendations through tagging; actively engages with strong ties

COBRA: consumer-consumer interaction through contribution (commenting); engages with weak ties

COBRA: contribution through commenting; Motive: Norm of reciprocity combined with helping

## Post 11



L'Oréal Paris

9 February · 🌐

Vipper med ekstra af det hele? Ja tak 🙌 Vælg False Lash Superstar Xfiber mascara for enorm længde og volumen. Læs mere: <http://www.lorealparis.dk/xfiber-mascara>

Rocking with extra of everything? Yes please 🙌 select false lash superstar xfiber mascara for huge length and volume. Read more: <http://www.lorealparis.dk/xfiber-mascara>

⚙️ Rate this translation



Iwona

Translated from Danish

No go if you wear contact lenses 😊

[See original](#)

Like · Reply · 9 February at 23:04



Christina

Den må vi prøve Birgitte 🍋🍋

The we must try Birgitte

Automatically translated

Like · Reply · 1 · 9 February at 21:59



Birgitte

Translated from Danish

Watch there will be two for one price as usual 🍋🍋 see you on Monday.. welcome 💋

[See original](#)

Like · Reply · 1 · 9 February at 22:00



Christina

Translated from Danish

Birgitte Yes!!! Keep eyes and ears open 🍋 also delighted mouse 💋💋

[See original](#)

Like · Reply · 1 · 9 February at 22:01



Write a reply...



Natasha

Translated from Danish

Chanette : I wish me

[See original](#)

Like · Reply · 1 · 12 February at 23:25

Consumers tagging each other on official brand posts

COBRA: Contribution: (recommendations) through tagging; actively engages with strong ties

## Post 12



LP replies a consumer asking for information

Brand-consumer interaction

Consumers tagging each other on official brand posts

COBRA: Contribution: (recommendations) through tagging; actively engages with strong ties





## Post 13



Oplev Botanicals Fresh Care - en eksklusiv hårplejeserie inspireret af nogle af naturens allerfineste blomsterekstrakter #botanicalsfreshcare

Findes nu i Matas <https://www.matas.dk/kampagnesider/botanicals>

Experience The Botanicals Fresh care - an exclusive hårplejeserie inspired by some of nature's finest blomsterekstrakter

#botanicalsfreshcare

Available now. <https://www.matas.dk/kampagnesider/botanicals>

⚙️ Rate this translation



**Sanne** · Så lækker!  
So hot!  
Automatically translated  
Like · Reply · 1 · 27 January at 23:55

**Stinne** · Ved du hvad de koster?  
You know what they cost?  
Automatically translated  
Like · Reply · 1 February at 04:11

**Stinne**  
Translated from Danish  
You know what they cost?  
See original  
Like · Reply · 1 February at 04:11

**Louise**  
Translated from Danish  
It says they are \$ 70 if you press the link 😊👍  
See original  
Like · Reply · 1 February at 09:16

**Sanne**  
Translated from Danish  
And is available in matas! 👍  
See original  
Like · Reply · 1 February at 20:32

Write a reply...

**Isabella** · Har netop købt den grønne hårkur idag med koriander, og den dufter simpelthen så skønt! Det er nærmest ren helsebutik på bøsse, virkelig jeg har aldrig duftet til noget så beroligende! Glæder mig til at afprøve den i håret 😊  
Just bought the green hair treatment today with cilantro, and it smells so great! It's almost clean food store in jar, really I have never smelled something so soothing! Excited to try out the hair 😊  
Automatically translated  
Unlike · Reply · 1 February at 20:01 · Edited

Asking other consumers for more information

Consumer-consumer interaction with weak ties

Shares her opinion on social media

COBRA: contribution (comment) → creation (reviewing product); motive: expressing positive emotions



## Post 14



L'Oréal Paris

22 November 2016 · 🌐

Neglelak i køleskabet? Nej. Det er rigtigt, at det forlænger holdbarheden, men det bliver også tykkere og sværere at lægge. Opbevar ved stuetemperatur for perfekte negle. 💅💅

Hvordan opbevarer du din neglelak?

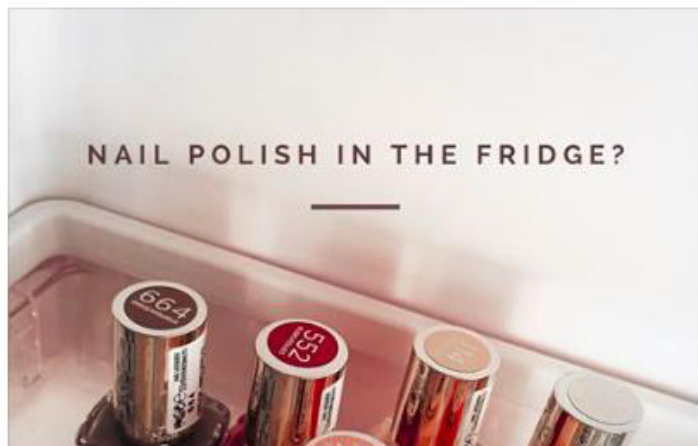
Se vores neglelak her: <https://www.matas.dk/loreal-paris-neglelak-huile-550-rouge-...>

Nail Polish in the fridge? No. It is true that chilled, but it is also becoming thicker and harder to leave. Keep at room temperature for perfect nails. 💅💅

How to store your nail polish?

See our nail polish here: <https://www.matas.dk/loreal-paris-neglelak-huile-550-rouge-sauvage>

⚙️ · Rate this translation



Anne

Alle mine opbevares i IKEA Alex kommoder.

Sikkert, skærmet mod lys og i stuetemperatur 😊

All my store in ikea alex chests of drawers.

Probably, shielded from light and room temperature 😊

Automatically translated

Like · Reply · 22 November 2016 at 20:35



Stephanie

Translated from Danish

Mine is in a box away from heat and sunlight 😊 some of them are several years old and still works like new 🙌

See original

Like · Reply · 22 November 2016 at 16:51



Johanne

Translated from Danish

They are in a dark closet. They'll be fine.

See original

Like · Reply · 23 November 2016 at 04:12



Dorte

Translated from Danish

In the drawer in the bathroom

See original

Like · Reply · 22 November 2016 at 19:34



Mette

Translated from Danish

Gotta Li ha my out of the refrigerator so 🐼

See original

Like · Reply · 22 November 2016 at 23:54

Top comments is selected, so some comments may have been filtered out.

Write a comment...

Consumers are engaging with LP online

Brand resonance – engagement with LP

## Post 15

**L'Oréal Paris**  
20 September 2016 · 🌐

Har du en udvoksning og brug for en hurtig redning?

Mød den nye helt mod grå hår og udvoksninger. Magic Retouch Concealer Spray fra L'Oréal Paris - dækker udvoksningen på få sekunder, når du har brug for det.

#beautyquickie

Lær mere om Magic Retouch her:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch...](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gk_NUysppWQ&index=1&list=PLQpJQYeDIR_6kw_Tw6-COWTQQZa7OZ53H)

You got a udvoksning and need a quick rescue?  
Meet the new hero against grey hair and dark myth. Magic Retouch Concealer Spray from L'Oréal Paris - covers udvoksningen in seconds when you need it.

#Beautyquickie

Learn more about magic retouch here:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gk_NUysppWQ&index=1&list=PLQpJQYeDIR_6kw_Tw6-COWTQQZa7OZ53H)  
[v=gk\\_NUysppWQ&index=1&list=PLQpJQYeDIR\\_6kw\\_Tw6-COWTQQZa7OZ53H](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gk_NUysppWQ&index=1&list=PLQpJQYeDIR_6kw_Tw6-COWTQQZa7OZ53H)

🔧 · Rate this translation



Tagging her friend on this post and say that this is the smartest

COBRA: Contribution: (recommendations) through tagging; actively engages with strong ties

LP replies to her

Brand-consumer interaction

**Maria** · 25 September 2016 at 15:37  
whaaat det er det smarteste jeg nogensinde har set 🤔 der kunne man lige trække næste farvning en måned mere 🤔

**Katrine** · 25 September 2016 at 15:37  
whaaat it's the smartest thing I've ever seen 🤔 where you can withdraw the next colouring another month 🤔

Automatically translated

Like · Reply · 25 September 2016 at 15:37

👉 View 2 more replies

**L'Oréal Paris** · 28 September 2016 at 22:12  
Kære Katrine. Magic Retouch findes i flere farver. Du kan se udvalget på Matas.dk. Vi håber, du finder en, som du passer til dit hår. Mvh. L'Oréal Paris.

Dear Katrine. Magic Retouch is available in several colors. You can see the committee at matas. DK. We hope you find someone who you match your hair. Your L'Oréal Paris.

Automatically translated

Like · Reply · 28 September 2016 at 22:12

**Ellen** · 25 September 2016 at 14:45  
Vil så lige gøre opmærksom på at blond er mørk... 😞 købte en i Onsdags og jeg ville bruge den i går...ikke et fedt resultat 🤔

Will then point out that blonde is dark.. 😞 bought a Wednesday and I'd use it yesterday... not a great result 🤔

Automatically translated

Like · Reply · 2 · 25 September 2016 at 14:45

**L'Oréal Paris** · 26 September 2016 at 15:48  
Kære Ellen. Mange tak for din besked, vi vil altid gerne høre både ris og ros fra vores forbrugere, og det er naturligvis beklageligt, at du ikke har haft en god oplevelse med produktet. Du er meget velkommen til at kontakte vores Consumer Care Center på mail: kontakt@loreal.com, så vil de hjælpe dig bedst muligt. God eftermiddag. Mvh. L'Oréal Paris.

Dear Ellen. Many thanks for your message, we will always like to hear both rice and praise from our consumers, and of course it is unfortunate that you have had a good experience with the product. You are very welcome to contact our consumer care centre on mail: Kontakt@Loreal.Com, they will help you as best as possible. Good afternoon. Your L'Oréal Paris.

Automatically translated

Like · Reply · 26 September 2016 at 15:48

👉 View more replies

LP replies to her concern

Brand-consumer interaction

## Post 16

**L'Oréal Paris**  
7 September 2016 · 🌐

Prøv trenden! Forskellige dele af ansigtet kan have forskellige rensesbehov. Kombiner flere ansigtsmasker for en skræddersyet hudplejerutine. #multimasking #pureclaymask #instadetox

Se mere: [https://youtu.be/FPji-6aCN\\_0...](https://youtu.be/FPji-6aCN_0...)

Try the trend! Different parts of the face can have different rensesbehov. Combine several facials for a tailored hudplejerutine. #Multimasking #pureclaymask #instadetox

See more: [https://youtu.be/FPji-6aCN\\_0?list=PLQpJQYeDIR\\_6O6oTJ77m81g0-WQVhn\\_ta](https://youtu.be/FPji-6aCN_0?list=PLQpJQYeDIR_6O6oTJ77m81g0-WQVhn_ta)

⚙ Rate this translation



Like Comment Share

178 Top comments ~

1 share

**Emilie** · Hvad er bedst til fedet og uren hud?  
What's best for greasy and acne?  
Automatically translated  
Like · Reply · 14 September 2016 at 00:05

**Maria** · Den grønne vil jeg mene da den gør huden mat samt renser 😊  
Like · Reply · 1 · 18 September 2016 at 12:14

**L'Oréal Paris** · Translated from Danish  
Dear Emilie. We apologize for the late reply. We would also recommend you look into the green, purify mask and, furthermore, it could also be beneficial to try the red, exfo mask which gently eksfolierer skin pores get to seem less and leaves the skin soft and smooth. Have fun. Your L'Oréal Paris.  
See original  
Like · Reply · 26 September 2016 at 16:08

**Iman** · Translated from Danish  
Where to buy  
See original  
Like · Reply · 24 September 2016 at 23:20

**L'Oréal Paris** · Kære Iman. Tak for din besked. Du kan købe dem i Matas, på Matas.dk og i supermarkeder. Vi håber, du kan lide dem. God eftermiddag. Mvh. L'Oréal Paris  
Dear Iman. Thanks for your message. You can buy them in matas, matas. Dk and in supermarkets. We hope you like them. Good afternoon. Your L'Oréal Paris  
Automatically translated  
Like · Reply · 26 September 2016 at 16:03

She's asking for more information and both LP and other consumers are answering her

COBRA: creation of UGC; information seeking (NEW)

Engaging with weak ties

Brand-consumer interaction





### Jeanette Interview

I: Tak for at have taget tid ud i dag. Bare en kort introduktion, der er ingen rigtige eller forkerte svar til mine spørgsmål, så du skal bare sige hvad end du tænker på.

J: Okay

I: Jeg vil starte med at spørge dig om, hvordan din daglige rutine med skønhedsprodukter ser ud?

J: Åhh ja men, jeg bruger øjenskygge fra L'Oréal også gerne deres mascara og om aftenen der bruger jeg den der .. de der ansigtsmasker cremer de har - den sorte, den grønne og den røde... eller hvad vi skal kalde det.

I: Det er dem man kan mikse ikke?

J: Jo lige præcis, dem bruger jeg faktisk inden jeg går i seng. Mere eller mindre, ikke hver dag - hver anden dag eller sådan noget.

I: Er det noget du har brugt længe? Det er jo forholdsvis nyt.

J: Ja det er det, jeg har hvertfald brugt det siden december.

I: Hvad med hårfarve? Bruger du også dette?

J: Det bruger jeg også fra L'Oréal. Der er ikke så meget af det der salmiak i. Jeg synes ikke at det lugter ligesom når jeg bruger Schwarzkopf eller hvad det nu hedder.

I: Så du har prøvet lidt af hvert?

J: Ja det har jeg. Også forskellige mascara derfra. Jeg køber hver gang de lancerer en ny. Så skal jeg lige prøve den.

I: Bruger du udelukkende kun makeup fra L'Oréal?

J: Jeg skifter lidt imellem Lancome og L'Oréal. Lancome er kun en gang imellem fordi jeg synes det er lidt dyrt. Men det er godt! Og det er ikke altid jeg har råd til dyrt også går jeg hen og bruger L'Oréal fordi jeg synes prisen er til at hamle op med.

I: Det kan være dyrt at prøve noget nyt med Lancome, ja.

J: Ja en mascara fra Lancome koster hvad 250? Hvor L'Oréal det er 139 kr., det ved jeg at man kan få en til.

I: Nu bevæger vi os lidt hen i noget andet. Kan du huske første gang du så en anmeldelse eller kommentar på skønhedsprodukter?

J: Nej ikke helt.. Jeg så et opslag L'Oréal havde lagt op på Facebook på, hvor man kunne mikse og match. Så var der nogen, som spurgte om de var gode. Så skrev jeg bare min mening, at jeg synes de var gode.

I: Hvornår var det? Et år måneder eller år tilbage?

J: Nej ikke et år, måske 6 måneder eller sådan noget.

I: Var det sådan du selv startede med at selv skrive kommentar til produkter?

J: Ja.

I: Vil du sige at du er L'Oréal overfor L'Oréal?

J: Det vil jeg sige ja. Lad os bare sige det sådan, jeg køber tit deres mærker og produkter.

I: Foretrækker du så også at bruge dem fremfor andre mærker?

J: Ja, jeg er ikke så glad for andre. Rimmel London for eksempel eller hvad det end hedder.

I: Altså, dem i samme pris kategori?

J: Ja jeg synes L'Oréal virker lidt bedre end de andre. De holder længere.

I: Må jeg spørge dig om hvilke følelser L'Oréal giver dig? Når du enten bruger eller tænker på mærket?

J: Tilfredshed hvert fald, og det giver et godt look - giver os selvtillid og lækkert hår som man siger (grinende). Især når jeg farver hår, det giver virkelig sådan et boost, ikke også?

I: Er det boost i form af selvtillid?

J: Ja, fordi jeg synes det virker! Altså jeg har prøvet at farve hår og brugt forskellige hårprodukter fra andre mærker og man tænker bare: hold da op, var det dét? Altså, hvor man er vant til at L'Oréal de giver altså lidt mere farve end nogen af de andre.

I: Kan du huske hvor længe du har brugt L'Oréal's produkter?

J: Ja, jeg er 25 år og har brugt deres produkter siden jeg var 15 eller sådan noget.

I: Det er længe siden.

J: Ja.

I: Hvor ofte køber du makeup og andre skønhedsprodukter?

J: Hver anden måned, så mangler man lige en farve eller så er mascaraen ved at blive tør.

I: Til det du sagde lige før med, hvilke følelser L'Oréal giver dig - vil du så sige at de tilfredsstiller dine behov?

J: Ja det synes jeg. Jeg er hvertfald meget tilfreds med de ting jeg har derfra.

I: Du snakkede også lidt om det boost, hårfarverne giver dig. Kender du de personer L'Oréal Paris bruger i deres reklamer?

J: Ehhh, ja det gør jeg.

I: Har du nogen holdning om disse personer? Er det nogen du ser op til eller kan identificere dig selv med? Eller nogen du beundrer?

J: Ej der har jeg ikke sådan lige nogen holdninger. Ikke hvad jeg selv ved af.

I: Det er ikke sådan fordi at du køber produkterne pga. dem?

J: Nej, det er mere eller mindre fordi jeg synes L'Oréal's produkter virker. Nu har jeg jo prøvet alt forskelligt.

I: Hvis du skulle beskrive L'Oréal Paris i få ord? Hvordan ville du beskrive dem?

J: Ehh, kan man godt sige smart?

I: Ja selvfølgelig

J: Smart lækkert design..... der fungerer i dagligdagen.

I: De har også deres slogan "Because you're worth it". Hvad tænker du om det?

J: Jeg synes faktisk det virker, det er et godt slogan.

I: Får du det bedre af at købe deres produkter? Måske i form af selvforkælelse?

J: Ja, altså man bliver helt glad efter man har købt nogle produkter. Lidt selvforkælelse.

I: Forstår L'Oréal så dine behov? Og lytter til dig?

J: Ja, de ved hvad kvinder vil have og det tror jeg faktisk også er noget vi selv er stolte af.

I: Du nævnte før at de er smarte, hvis jeg nu siger innovative - er det så noget de er?

J: Jeg synes bare det er smart, det der med at de har lavet sådan nogle små nogle - øjenskygger for eksempel. At de lige kan komme med i tasken og de ... det ved jeg ikke lige hvordan jeg skal forklare..

I: At de er tilpasset til dine behov?

J: Ja, det synes jeg - til alle kvinders behov. Jeg ved ikke om der er mange som køber L'Oréal. Men jeg synes hvert fald at det er et produkt som fungerer. Nu er jeg jo en travlt husmor, og hvis det skal gå stærkt, så kan man altså hurtigt få det til at ligne at man har lagt makeup i flere timer - ved at bruge L'Oréal.

I: Nej det er altid man har flere timer til at stå foran spejlet.

J: Ja det er det! Det er nok kun de kendte som har nogen, der kommer og lægger makeup på til dem. Nogen gange så skal det gå stærkt, når børnene ikke lige vil og man skal vil alligevel se godt ud eller repræsentabelt ud på arbejde.

I: De tilføjer lidt glamour til din hverdag?

J: Ja .. ja! Så man ikke er så kedelig og leverpostej-farvet.

I: Må jeg spørge dig, om, hvad dit absolut yndlingsprodukt er fra L'Oréal Paris?

J: Ehhhh, jeg har sådan en.. en smokey beige palette øjenskygge. Den er jeg rigtig glad for! Den har jeg mange i mange farver.

I: Hvordan kan det være, at du er så glad for den?

J: Bag på så er der en tegning af hvordan man kan lægge flot makeup. Den bruger jeg meget. I forhold til, at det skal gå lidt stærkt når man ikke har tid til at hyre en makeup artist selv.

I: Du får en form for guide, de guider dig igennem hvordan du kan lægge din øjenskygge.

J: Ja præcis.

I: Hvor interesseret er du i at lære og snakke mere om L'Oréal Paris?

J: Det er sådan okay! Det har jeg ikke noget imod. Jo mere man lærer - jo bedre. Så ved man mere om produkterne.

I: Kan du huske det sidste produkt du skrev anmeldelse om, fra L'Oréal Paris?

J: Ja det var de der hudcremer, eller hvad er det nu det hedder.. ansigtsmasker!

I: Kan du huske hvad du nævnte i den anmeldelse?

J: Nej, ikke lige sådan på stående fod.

I: Var det mere dine egne erfaringer af produkter eller?

J: Ja det var det!

I: Anbefalte du produktet til andre?

J: Ja, der var nogen som spurgte, om det virkede. Og mine erfaringer var, at det gør det. Og jeg har også selv anbefalet det til veninder, som har haft uren hud og de siger også det virker. De har købt det, fordi jeg sagde det til dem.

I: Så det er ligefør at du er en ambassadør for mærket?

J: Ja, når jeg er glad for noget så fortæller jeg det til mine veninder og så prøver de det som regel også. Også ved parfume mærker og sådan noget.

I: Hvor tit svarer du folk der er nysgerrig om produkter her på disse Facebook opslag?

J: Ligeså snart jeg har prøvet noget og ser et opslag med det. Så vil jeg gerne snakke om det.

I: Så vil du gerne dine gode eller dårlige erfaringer?

J: Ja

I: Er der en special grund til at du netop har valgt Facebook? Ift. Matas.

J: Nææ, ikke som sådan. Det var fordi jeg ikke vidste at man kunne gøre det på Matas eksempelvis. Altså anmelde.

I: Er det noget du kunne finde på? Nu hvor du så ved det?

J: Ja det vil det være. Så vil det også være en god ting af Matas, hvis de for eksempel sagde okay, hvis man nu anmelder et produkt, så kunne man måske lave en lille konkurrence ud af det eller lave en lille gave prøve måske? Bare et eller andet. Det vil jeg trække folk til og anmelde deres produkter, hvis de har behov for det - altså at folk siger noget godt om deres produkter.

I: Helt klart.

J: Ja det giver jo en eller anden gejst. Ej jeg ved ikke om man kan kalde det gejst. Men for mig vil det være motiverende for mig at skrive om de ting jeg har prøvet.

I: Hvad føler du, at du får ud af at skrive de her anmeldelser nu?

J: Jeg får ikke rigtig sådan noget ud af det, ikke andet end når jeg selv kan se at jeg har skrevet noget. Så hvis mine veninder spørger, så kan jeg sige at de lige kan gå derind og se det der. Hmm.. Altså, jeg kan bare godt lide at komme med mine erfaringer.

I: Så du kan godt lide at dele dine erfaringer?

J: Ja

I: Tænker du over at dine erfaringer også påvirker andre forbrugere? Måske på den gode måde?

J: Nej det tænker jeg ikke rigtig over.

I: Du vil bare dele hvad du ved?

J: Ja, der er nogen unge mennesker, som ikke har så mange erfaringer med noget. Hvis de fx lige er begyndt at gå med makeup, så vil de jo synes det er smart at de her produkter virker på den måde, ikke?

I: Efter du har skrevet noget, føler du dig tilfredsstillt?

J: Ja det synes jeg, at jeg har måske hjulpet en anden person.

I: Har du også tænkt på hvordan din anmeldelse også påvirker L'Oréal Paris?

J: Hvis jeg skal være ærligt, så tror jeg ikke de ser det (nedtrykt).

I: Det kan være en indirekte påvirkning, hvor du får andre forbrugere til at bruge deres produkter?

J: Nej, det har jeg ikke lige tænkt over. Jeg troede faktisk ikke, at de (L'Oréal) kiggede på dem og sådan noget. Man kunne godt savne lidt respons fra dem inde på deres Facebook side fx.

I: Er det i forhold til hvis du har nogle spørgsmål du gerne vil stille dem? Eller hvordan man bruger produktet?

J: Jaa sådan nogle ting. Jeg har hvert fald spurgt om nogle ting derinde og jeg har ikke rigtig fået svar. Derfor tænker jeg ikke over det.

I: Så de kunne godt blive bedre til at svare forbrugere derinde?

J: Ja lige præcis

I: Hvorfor ofte prøver du nye produkter?

J: Deres mascara - når de kommer ud med sådan en, så plejer jeg, at ville have dem så hurtigt som muligt. Fordi nogen af deres mascara har ikke været helt optimale så er der andre som er vildt gode.

I: Er det vigtigt for dig at være up-to-date med de seneste makeup trends?

J: Ikke så vigtig igen, men stadigvæk så man lige kan sige, at man har den og synes den er god, hvis man har prøvet den. Altså jeg har mange veninder, der spørger mig om forskellige mascara, fordi de ved at jeg

har mange forskellige både fra L'Oréal og Lancome. De ved også min holdning til Lancome at det bare er dyrt men også godt. Men har man ikke råd til det dyre, jamen så er L'Oréal det næste.

I: Er det et godt alternativ?

J: Ja

I: Så vil jeg spørge lidt ind til dit forbrug af Facebook; hvordan du bruger Facebook. Hvad bruger du Facebook generelt til?

J: At lægge statusser op og skrive lidt med vennerne i stedet for SMS. Så kan jeg også lide at deltage i konkurrencer.

I: Hvor ofte slår du noget op på Facebook?

J: Hmm.. 1 gang om ugen, 2 måske 3 gange om ugen.

I: Er der noget du tænker på, inden du slår noget op på Facebook?

J: Ja det er nok lige om alle folk skal vide det eller om det er unødvendigt.

I: Fx når du skriver på L'Oréal's facebook side, tænker du så på hvem der ser det?

J: Hvis mine veninder ser det, så ved de at jeg er glad for produktet. Noget i den stil.

I: Følger du andre makeup eller hudpleje mærker på Facebook?

J: Jeg følger med i Lancome's også, så følger jeg med i kendte, som også bruger en del makeup.

I: Når du siger kendte, er det så kendte skuespillere, sangere, makeup artister eller bloggere?

J: Fx hende Irina der, hun er makeup blogger. Hun poster alt muligt og nogen gange de ting hun snakker om og viser. Det tager jeg også i brug. Fx at lægge makeup rigtigt, fordi det synes jeg at hun er god til. Men altså hendes mening om makeup er ikke helt den samme som min. Det er også fordi hun er til det dyre og alt det der. Selvom hun også bruger billigt, men hun har nok lidt flere penge end jeg har. Ellers er der ikke så mange jeg ved, som lægger noget op med makeup.

I: Må jeg spørge, hvorfor det lige er Lancome og L'Oréal Paris du følger på Facebook?

J: Det er nok fordi det er mine to yndlings produkter.

I: Hvad føler du, at de kan bidrage med for dig på deres Facebook sider?

J: Jamen de holder jo mig lidt up-to-date med hvad der måske lige er udkommet, med deres ting og sager. Måske en ny mascara eller foundation.

I: Så lige nogle sidste spørgsmål. Vil du kunne finde på at anbefale nogle produkter til dine venner ved at tage dem på et opslag eller anmeldelse fra en anden forbruger?

J: Ja det kunne jeg godt. Jeg vil gerne tage mine veninder for at sige, at det her skal de prøve fx.

I: Hvad vil du sige til, hvis du kunne anmelde produkter på selve L'Oréal Paris' Facebook side? Hvis de havde en funktion hvor alle anmeldelser var samlet et sted?

J: Ja det kunne jeg. Det tænker jeg, at det kunne være fedt for dem. Det kunne være smart.

I: Ja i stedet for du anmelder produktet i en kommentar, kunne du skrive din mening der.

J: Ja, det ville jeg gerne gøre! Det ville være rigtig smart. Så kan jeg se hvad andre har skrevet også.



## Willow Interview

I: Tak for at lade mig interviewe dig i dag! Hvis du har nogen spørgsmål før vi starter, så skal du bare sige til (smiler). Og du kan til enhver tid afbryde interviewet hvis du føler dig utilpas!

W: Nej det er fint (smiler tilbage)

I: Jeg vil starte med at spørge, hvordan din daglige beauty-rutine ser ud?

W: Det er lidt forskelligt. De fleste dage, står jeg bare op, vasker mit ansigt og putter noget creme på. Ehh, jeg har sådan noget aloe vera gel, som jeg blander sammen med min almindelige ansigtscreme. Den strammer lidt op og fugter. Det kan jeg godt lide, det gør jeg hver morgen og det gør jeg også hver aften når jeg har fjernet makeup og sådan noget. 3 gange om ugen kan jeg godt lide at lægge ansigtsmaske.

I: Hvilke forskellige mærker bruger du? Til håret, makeup og hudpleje

W: Til håret der bruger jeg ... lige i øjeblikket der bruger jeg en leave-in hårkur fra Matas med noget havtørne, som er rigtig god. Jeg har haft noget meget tørt og ødelagt hår, da jeg fik lavet lyse striber sidste år. Der gik det ikke så godt, så der har jeg måttet redde det. Så er det gået okay, jeg har også fået købt en spray. Den fra L'Oréal Botanicals, som er så god! Den fungerer rigtig rigtig godt, den kan holde mit hår lige og glat. Jeg har naturlige bølger eller krøller i mit hår på sådan en mærkelig måde, hvor de ikke opfører sig ordentligt. Så den tæmmer det og samtidigt giver den lidt fugt. Det fungerer meget godt. Ellers så gør jeg ikke så meget med mit hår - jo jeg vasker det selvfølgelig, det gør jeg hver anden eller tredje dag med almindelig shampoo og balsam. I nogle perioder kan det være skælshampoo og andre perioder er det bare sådan en helt normal parfume-fri neutral en. Så kan jeg godt lide hårkur en gang imellem - et par gange i måneden. Men lige nu bruger leave-in hårkuren 2 gange i ugen, så putter jeg det i og føntørrer det. Så bliver håret ikke fedtet og tørres med det samme. 2 gange om ugen bruger jeg hårolie i spidserne, mens jeg føntørres det.

I: Hvor er din hårolie fra?

W: Hmm... det kan jeg faktisk ikke huske. Det er lidt forskelligt hvad jeg køber. Jeg har en derhjemme fra Seyers, tror jeg det hedder. Så har jeg en fra ... ej jeg kan simpelthen ikke huske, hvor den kommer fra.

I: Er de fra supermarked?

W: Ja lige med håret så ja. Ellers så køber jeg tit i Matas. Med mine hudpleje produkter, der bruger jeg meget Raunsborg. Så bruger jeg fra Forever Living, altså igennem en privat forhandler - det er dem med alle aloe vera produkterne. Lige nu så prøver jeg en creme af, den hedder R3 eller sådan noget. Det er også sådan noget aloe vera noget. Den skulle være sådan en god rynkecreme - møg dyr! Men nu er jeg lidt spændt, jeg har kun brugt den i et par uger.

I: Hvad med hårfarve? Farver du selv dit hår eller er det hos frisøren?

W: 2 gange om året så får det lige en sort farve. Det er for at tage de værste rødder. Jeg har næsten sort hår af natur, men der er kommet en del grå hår.

I: Er det noget du selv gør?

W: Ja

I: Kan du huske hvilke mærker du bruger?

W: Det er så sjældent jeg gør det, så det er bare den billigste sorte hårfarve, også skal den være permanent. Hvis jeg gjorde det oftere, så havde jeg nok gået lidt mere op i det.

I: Er der andre situationer i løbet af dagen, hvor du kommer i tanke om L'Oréal Paris?

W: Altså jeg sprayer jo mit hår med det og jeg har også noget makeup derfra. Lige i øjeblikket, der bruger jeg meget en highlighter derfra. Det er sådan en firkantet en - True Match tror jeg den hedder. Den er jeg faktisk meget glad for.

I: Har du brugt den i lang tid?

W: Nej jeg har brugt den i en måned, men forinden havde jeg også en. Det er bare sådan en, som jeg har fast.

I: Hvornår var første gang du så en anmeldelse for skønhedsprodukter? Der findes jo mange anmeldelser for restauranter, hoteller osv. Men nu er der kommet mange for skønhedsprodukter også.

W: Altså, jeg får dem jo tit i mailen, fordi man er medlem af lidt forskellige når man handler online. Så får man tit sådan nogle mails, hvor man kan anmelde et produkt. Så nogen gange svarer jeg på den på mail og går ind og anmelder noget. Eller hvis jeg ser det på Facebook, at der lige dukker et produkt op som jeg har været glad for eller ikke har været glad for, så kan jeg godt finde på at gå ind og svare og lige skrive min mening, ikke?

I: Så det udviklede sig fra, at du fik de her emails, hvor du så begyndte at gå ind og anmelde. Men også fra Facebook.

W: Ja jeg giver en eller anden responds når nogen spørger.

I: Vil du sige at du foretrækker at bruge L'Oréal Paris frem for andre mærker?

W: Nej, jeg foretrækker mere The Body Shop fremfor L'Oréal Paris. Det er på grund af det etiske i det, at jeg ved at i mange af deres ting tester på dyr. Det prøver jeg at tage så langt afstand fra som muligt. Men så er der også nogle ting man ikke kan undgå, når man får gaver eller gavekort, hvor man skal få det brugt. Og så til sidst står man "gud det var L'Oréal, når men det var et meget lækkert produkt".

I: Så du prøver faktisk at undgå L'Oréal Paris?

W: Ja, jeg prøver lidt at undgå det. Men jeg ved godt at L'Oréal ejer The Body Shop som jeg foretrækker, så det er sådan lidt 50/50.

I: Kan du fortælle mig, hvilke følelser L'Oréal Paris giver dig? Når du enten tænker på det eller bruger det.

W: Hmm... det kommer nok an på hvad det er for en ting. Ehmm... tit så er det følelsen af selvforkælelse - at man gør noget godt for sig selv. Det jeg så godt kan lide ved nogle L'Oréal produkter er deres pigmentering af noget af deres makeup. Det er lidt bedre og holder lidt bedre, synes jeg - i løbet af dagen, ikke? Det synes jeg jo er meget rart.

I: Du snakkede om det uetiske i det, tænker du også lidt over det?

W: Det irriterer mig lidt, jeg går og tænker "er den her vare blevet testet på dyr eller er den ikke?" Derfor har jeg det ret godt med The Body Shop og har været glad for The Body Shop i ... jeg ved ikke hvor mange år - 6-7 år, ikke? Så jeg foretrækker at gå derind og handle, men der er rigtig mange makeup ting, som de ikke har. Så der tager jeg, hvad jeg finder - om det så er Rimmel eller L'Oréal eller hvad det er. Jeg tager bare hvad der mest springer i øjnene.

I: Så du er ikke loyal overfor mærket?

W: Nej, det er jeg ikke.

I: Men til hvilket omfang, vil du sige L'Oréal Paris tilfredsstiller dine behov?

W: Hvis man tænker på selve produkterne - uden at tænke etik eller noget, så er jeg fuld tilfreds! Men nu bruger jeg jo ikke så meget deres shampoo og sådan noget som cremer. Men de har jo lavet nogle serier, som man er blevet rigtig glad for. Og der er det den der Botanicals serie, som jeg er rigtig glad for. Den passer rigtig godt til mine behov.

I: Hvor længe har du brugt den?

W: 3-4 måneder, hvert fald lige så længe den har været der. Den er jo ret ny, ikke? Jeg har den der spray, så har jeg noget andet derfra også. En eller anden kur.

I: Kender du egentlig de personer, som L'Oréal Paris bruger i deres reklamer?

W: Nej ikke super meget.

I: I TV'et eller magasiner?

W: Men jeg kan godt genkende dem i reklamer og sådan noget. Nu ser jeg ikke rigtig fjernsyn, så det er mere hvis der dukker en reklame op på Youtube eller et eller andet, ikke? Dem er der mange af. Også i et blad eller sådan noget.

I: Er det nogen personer, som du kan identificere dig med? Eller ser op til?

W: Nej egentlig ikke. Der er jeg nok for meget min egen til. Tit lader jeg mig gerne inspireret af det - til photoshoot og sådan noget. Eller hvis der er modeller, som jeg selv skal lægge makeup på. Så kan jeg godt blive lidt inspireret af nogle forskellige looks, som de også bruger.

I: Men vil det så gøre en forskel om det var Blake Lively eller en anden mindre ukendt model i reklamen?

W: Nej, men jeg synes da tit man bliver i godt humør af deres reklamer. Det ved jeg ikke om har noget med de personer at gøre eller om det bare er stemningen i det hele taget.

I: De har jo også deres slogan "Because you're worth it" - hvad tænker du om det?

W: Det er jo også godt. Det er måske lidt det med selvforkælelse, man får ind når man hører det også. Altså selvfølgelig skal man forkæles, det er dejligt!

I: Hvordan vil du beskrive L'Oréal Paris?

W: Hmmm... bredt. De laver rigtig mange forskellige ting og der er mange gode muligheder. Der er altid et eller andet, som går igen i deres produkter og varer, så det er ikke sådan at man står og mangler noget om et år. Altså at man ikke kan få det mere, det kan jeg godt lide - at de har nogle ting som de bliver ved med at have. Det er jeg glad for.

I: Hvad med deres produkter? Synes du de er innovative eller mere klassiske og traditionelle?

W: Det er lidt forskelligt, fordi de følger jo også lidt moden og selvfølgelig er de jo nok selv med til at skabe moden eller hvad der kommer på mode.

I: Er de trendsetter?

W: Ja det er de lidt.

I: Føler du ellers at de forstår dine behov når det kommer til deres mange forskellige produkter?

W: Ja det føler jeg, det synes jeg egentlig meget godt at de gør.

I: Har du et favorit L'Oréal Paris produkt?

W: Lige i øjeblikket, der er det den der hårspray. Den virker bare, jeg er så glad for den! Men ja så min highlighter, den kan jeg rigtig godt lide. Jeg kan ikke undvære de 2 ting.

I: Hvad med at snakke og lære mere om L'Oréal Paris, er du interesseret i det?

W: Ja, det er jeg meget i det hele taget om makeup og cremer og hårprodukter. Jeg kan godt lide at tjekke ud, hvad der lige er .. hvad der lige springer i hovedet, i den her måned kan jeg for eksempel gå mere op i det her end noget andet. Eller hvis de lige har en bestemt serie med noget, som jeg rigtig godt kan lide. Så er det klart, at jeg går mere op i det. Så anbefaler jeg det også!

I: Det næste spørgsmål er om, du kan huske den sidste anmeldelse som du skrev om L'Oréal Paris?

W: Ja det er den der hårspray. Men det er ved at være et stykke tid siden - 1 måned måske.

I: Men på de emails, som du får - er det fra L'Oréal Paris?

W: Nej, der er det lidt forskelligt. Der er det nok 3 dage siden, jeg har skrevet en anmeldelse, hvor jeg sidst svarede tilbage på sådan noget. Det var noget hudpleje, det er fordi jeg har et abonnement hos noget, der hedder Celesti - et makeup abonnement. Så får man også nogen gange en mail om, man gider at anmelde produktet.

I: Kan du huske, hvad du nævnte i de forskellige anmeldelser?

W: Naaah

I: Var det produktets ingredienser eller ...

W: Det var faktisk mest, hvordan det holder. Holdbarhed på produktet, hvor godt det holder i løbet af dagen. Hvis man går og sveder, holder det så stadig?

I: Så det er meget dine egne oplevelser af produkterne?

W: Det er altid holdbarhed, som jeg fokuserer allermost på.

I: Generelt, hvor tit skriver du anmeldelser?

W: Gennemsnitlig, vil jeg nok sige 1-2 gange om måneden og det er sådan i det hele taget. Det kan jo også være en film eller en bog, som jeg har læst. Jeg vil nok sige 2 gange i måneden hvert fald. Det kan også være i en måned, hvor jeg sidder og keder mig en fredag aften også bare sidder inde på alt muligt mærkeligt.

I: Er der en grund til du har valgt at skrive anmeldelser på disse specifikke steder? Som Facebook og de andre sider du selv nævnte.

W: Ja altså, folk kan heller ikke vide hvad de skal gå efter hvis der ikke er nogen, som giver respons på tingene. Firmaer som står bag disse produkter eller sælger noget, de kan jo heller ikke vide noget, hvis de ikke får svar på tingene. Uanset hvor jeg handler, så kan jeg godt lide at komme tilbage med en anmeldelse. Også sådan noget som Wish, der går jeg også ind efter jeg har fået produktet og lige skriver "jeg fik den her bluse og der er ingen huller i og den var fint" eller lignende. Det er lige meget hvad det er, fordi det betyder rigtig meget for dem der kommer ind og ser en vare uanset hvad det er, at der er et eller andet at gå ud fra. Jeg er rigtig glad for det selv, når jeg kan se at der er nogen som har svaret på ting som for eksempel "Lad være med at købe den creme, hvis du har fedtet hud" eller "Den her er bare super fed - den holder hele dagen". Man tager jo selvfølgelig den som holder hele dagen.

I: Når du for eksempel skriver om den her hårspray, er det så for at give L'Oréal Paris feedback eller er det for at give andre forbrugere feedback?

W: Begge dele. Det kan jo være, at der står andre med sådan en kæmpe fuglerede som jeg har om morgen nogle gange. Det er jo fedt, at nogen lige skrev det og så vil man måske selv prøve den. Og så skriver jeg jo også til firmaet, så kan det være at de lader serien blive i noget tid, ikke? Så kan jeg nå at købe lidt lager, ej (laughing).

I: Føler du, at du får noget ud af at skrive de her anmeldelser?

W: Jaa, på andres vegne på en eller anden måde. Jeg ved, hvad jeg selv vil få ud af at læse dem. Og så fordi jeg ved, at jeg selv kan lide at læse andres anmeldelser. Så skriver jeg dem også selv, fordi jeg tænker at der er jo nogen som godt kan lide at læse anmeldelserne. Det er god måde at give igen på, når der er andre som også gider at bruge deres tid på at skrive anmeldelser.

I: Har du tænkt på, hvordan andre forbrugere fortolker dine anmeldelser? Er det vigtigt for dig, at dine anmeldelser påvirker dem?

W: Ikke nødvendigvis, men de må da godt tænke lidt over det. Kommer også an på hvad deres behov er, det er lidt forskelligt hvad man går efter. Så på den måde betyder det ikke så meget. Det er klart, at hvis jeg roser et produkt og der er en som siger jeg bare er en skovl, så er det da lidt irriterende ikke? Men jeg vil ikke blive irriteret over hvis der var nogen som godt kunne lide et produkt, som jeg ikke bryder mig om. Det er så forskelligt. Men så synes jeg også det er vigtigt at fortælle, hvilken hudtype man har. For eksempel, når man skal fortælle om en foundation, så skal man også fortælle om ens hudtype, så folk kan sammenligne. Det nytter ikke noget man bare skriver, at den ikke duer hvis man selv har tør hud og der er nogle andre ikke har tør hud, hvor den vil fungere meget godt til.

I: Foretrækker du mere detaljeret anmeldelser så?

W: Ja, det må gerne være sådan at man ikke bare skriver, at den er god eller den er dårlig uden at forklare det. Det må godt være så folk får noget ud af det. Det nytter ikke noget, at man bare skriver den er god eller dårlig, man må gerne forklare lidt mere. Måske har man tør hud og bruger en foundation, som er mere olieret eller hvad man gør, så folk ved at den fungerer for hende fordi hun har tør hud ligesom mig, ikke? Det får man mere ud af, hvis man går lidt mere i detaljer med det.

I: Men har du så også tænkt på, hvordan anmeldelsen påvirker virksomheden?

W: Jaa, det er jo også sådan når man vælger at være en virksomhed og køre noget så stort, så er de jo også vant til det kan man sige. Så er det også bare, så er der også chancer for at der er et bestemt produkt de laver, som måske bare ikke er godt, så er chancerne for at folk de fortæller dårlige ting om det. Så er der også færre som køber det, men så kan det være at de kan forbedre det. Jeg tror de kan bruge det [anmeldelserne] til meget hvert fald. Så ved de også, hvad de skal udvikle videre på og hvad de skal beholde, og hvad de bare skal smide ud i skraldespanden næste sæson. Så er der også True Match, som bliver ved og det er jeg glad for. For den har jeg altid været rigtig glad for, ikke? Så det må der også være andre som synes, siden de er blevet ved med at have den. Så der er der jo også en fordel i at man anmelder, så ved de at de skal holde på det.

I: Hvor tit tester du nye produkter?

W: Det gør jeg ... jeg vil sige 3-4 gange i måneden?

I: Det er jo også ret ofte.

W: Det kan jeg godt lide - det synes jeg er hyggeligt.

I: Er det så vigtigt for dig at være up-to-date med de nye beauty trends?

W: Nej ikke nødvendigvis. Men jeg kan godt lide, at ligeså snart der kommer noget nyt så kan jeg også lide at prøve det af. Om det så er en palette med øjenskygge eller ny creme, så "åårh det må jeg bare prøve!"

I: Nu lidt mere om Facebook, hvad bruger du Facebook generelt til?

W: Jeg bruger det mest til foto-relateret ting og træning - mest det. Der er faktisk ikke så meget jeg har på Facebook - jo jeg har selvfølgelig min familie og mine venner på min profil, men det er ikke så meget med det at gøre. Jeg tror kun jeg poster et billede af min søn sådan 5 gange om året - det er meget lidt. Det er mere ja træning og fotografi.

I: Er det noget du følger eller selv lægger op?

W: Begge dele, selvfølgelig har jeg den der interaktivitet med andre fotografer og modeller også i forhold til mit eget foretagende. Det er mest det, som det drejer sig om - arbejdsrelateret.

I: Hvor tit poster du så på Facebook?

W: Det gør jeg ... 3 gange om ugen måske. Det kan være på min side, fordi jeg har fået et nyt billede, der skal vises frem.

I: Er der noget du tænker over inden du poster på Facebook?

W: Jaa, der har jeg lært lidt med tiden, hvor seriøst er det her? Og er det noget folk bare vil rulle videre og tænke "ej hvor er hun åndssvag" eller er det noget folk synes er hyggeligt? Jeg gider for eksempel ikke, at komme med negativ stemning. Der er så mange som skriver hver gang der er noget dårligt, og så skal det lægges op. Det gider jeg ikke selv, det bliver man bare immun overfor til sidst og synes det er kedeligt. Så enten er det fordi jeg ser noget sjovt og så deler jeg det. Det kan være en åndssvag video eller sådan noget, eller noget jeg har læst om jeg synes er rigtig spændende. Eller bare billeder - foto, her bruger jeg meget historie-delen der er kommet på Messenger. Den del, hvor man kan dele sin dag.

I: Den funktion ligesom Snapchat?

W: Den bruger jeg også meget, Snapchat - især op til foto shoots. Inden 3 dage, så går jeg meget og deler hvad jeg gør inden. Der er jo mange følgere, som synes det er mega spændende. Den platform jeg bruger mest er nok Snapchat og Instagram. Jeg bruger faktisk ikke så meget Facebook mere, det er kun lige til at holde min side opdateret med billeder fra foto shoot.

I: Følger du nogle beauty brands på Facebook?

W: Ja det tror jeg.

I: Hvad er grunden til at du gør dette?

W: Jeg synes det er smadder hyggeligt og inspirerende. Og for at se hvad der kommer af nye ting.

I: Vil du kunne finde på at anbefale et produkt til dine venner på Facebook ved at tage dem på en produkt-anmeldelse skrevet af en anden forbruger?

W: Ja nogen gange, det kommer også an på hvad for nogen ting. Jeg har for eksempel en veninde, som godt kan lide at blive tagget i alt muligt. Hende ved jeg, at jeg kan tage i ting.

K: Hvad vil du sige til, hvis du kunne anmelde L'Oréal Paris produkter på deres egne Facebook side? Ikke kun i kommentar på opslag, men inde på en funktion på deres side, hvor produkt anmeldelserne er samlet et sted?

W: Ja det kunne jeg godt finde på, ja det kunne jeg sagtens finde på! Det ville være meget praktisk.

I: Har du nogle relationer til andre følgere af L'Oréal Paris Facebook side? Eller dem som følger jeg det samme som dig?

W: Nej, på den måde vil jeg sige at jeg følger jo også mange andre der går op i makeup. Nogen der kun lægger makeup og poster det samt skriver hvilke mærker de bruger og anmelder på den måde. De laver videoer, hvor de fortæller om makeup produkter. Sådan nogle folk følger jeg meget. Jeg synes det er god inspiration.

I: Deler du viden eller meninger om mærker med andre brugere på Facebook?

W: Makeup grupper og lignende er jeg medlem af. Der kan man jo ikke undgå at snakke om de forskellige mærker, hvad de gør og hvor gode de er eller hvor dårlige de er. Det er også en meget god ting. Jeg opsøger rigtig meget selv de der typer, som lægger makeup - især på Instagram. Det er lige mig åbenbart.

I: Har du nogensinde fået feedback for dine anmeldelser på Facebook? Eller andre steder?

W: Ehhhh

I: Eller har du selv kommenteret på andres anmeldelser?

W: Nej, ikke hvad lige kan huske. Jeg plejer hellere ikke at kommentere på andres. Det er nok ikke... der har ikke lige været noget. Der er nogen gange hvor man tænker "ahhh", men så må man lave sin egen anmeldelse. Så man ikke går ind og blander sig for meget i andres. Det gør jeg ikke rigtigt.

I: Det er ikke for at konversere at du anmelder?

W: Ikke sådan helt, altså nogen gange jo - det gør man jo lidt i de makeup grupper eller et eller andet. Så konverserer vi jo. Jeg har også prøvet, hvor jeg anmeldte en primer i en af de der grupper, som jeg var helt vildt glad for. Så var der nogle andre som skrev "ej den er vild dårlig". Det forstår jeg så ikke helt, fordi jeg er så glad for den, fordi den passer til min hudtype. Så kan det være at der er andre, som tænker at de har samme hudtype, så kan de også bruge den. Der var så andre som købte den, som også var glad for den. Så det kunne også være, at hende som synes den var vild dårlig - ikke havde hudtypen til den. Så på den måde er det meget godt at snakke om det, ikke? Men hvis det er en anmeldelse inde på en side, hvor man har handlet, så plejer det bare at være at man efterlade en kommentar, en anmeldelse eller giver den 5 stjerner. Så lader jeg den bare være, det kan godt være at der er nogen som har svaret. Men jeg har bare ikke vendt tilbage for at kigge.

I: Er det ikke noget du går op i?

W: Altså når jeg sidder med det, så synes jeg at det er rigtigt hyggeligt. Jeg foretrækker også selv, at når jeg køber noget så er der lige nogen som har skrevet noget om produktet. Så går jeg lige og tjekker om det er noget jeg vil bruge penge på eller ej. Hvis de har skrevet noget godt, så bliver jeg også påvirket af det.

I: Begyndte du så med at læse anmeldelser før du skrev dem? Eller skete det nogenlunde samme tid?

W: Ja det var mest fordi jeg læste dem og så tænkte jeg, at det kunne være jeg også selv skulle begynde at gå ind og anmelde tingene bagefter.

I: Kan du huske hvornår det begyndte?

W: Det er inden for et år, hvor jeg er begyndt at skrive også. Ellers har jeg bare læst andres anmeldelser i 3 år eller sådan noget. Så tænkte jeg at det kunne være hyggeligt, selv at skrive dem lige meget hvad det end er. Om det er sko eller tøj eller makeup eller creme, så går jeg ind lige så snart jeg ved noget om det. Jeg ved at man kan bruge det [anmeldelser] til noget. Så det kan man lige så godt.