

ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS FOR SUNSCREEN PRODUCTS OF COSMETIC BRANDS

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Abstract: The article aims to evaluate advertising campaigns for sunscreen products from cosmetic brands. A detailed analysis was conducted of brands such as Holika Holika, La Roche-Posay, and Nivea and their marketing activities to promote sunscreen products. The analysis was carried out using critical analysis, desk research and a scoring method. The considerations presented are of an illustrative and preliminary nature. The authors described selected issues related to advertising campaigns and types of sunscreen products. The central part of the discussion presents an analysis of the activities of selected cosmetic brands, including an evaluation performed using the scoring method. In the empirical part, particular attention is paid to aspects such as communication channels, methods of engaging the audience, visual appeal, and the effectiveness of activities. The analysed aspects were rated on a scale of 1 to 10 points. They assigned the following weights: 0.2 for communication channels, 0.2 for audience engagement methods, 0.2 for visual attractiveness, and 0.4 for the effectiveness of health education activities. The authors tried to identify the assumptions adopted by the cosmetic brands in promoting sun protection within their marketing activities. The comparison of different approaches highlights the importance of considering the needs, values, and preferences of the audience when designing marketing communication. The analysed brands create educational messages for their advertising campaigns, including content that communicates the adverse effects of ultraviolet radiation on the skin.

Keywords: advertising campaigns, cosmetic brands, marketing communication, point evaluation, sunscreen products

JEL Classification: M31, M37, M14, I12

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Introduction

Contemporary advertising campaigns by cosmetic brands also address content related to consumer education and the impact of their products on health. Marketing initiatives align with the growing expectations of the consumer audience, which are increasingly concentrated on authenticity and representation in advertising (Ustymenko, 2023). Including these aspects in advertising messages allows cosmetic brands to shape their relationships with consumers, emphasising their commitment to important activities dedicated to popularising and promoting healthy behaviours (Portilho et al., 2022). One such activity involves communicating issues related to sun protection, a crucial aspect of skin care that affects both appearance and health. There has been growing awareness of the risks associated with excessive exposure to ultraviolet radiation, which has led to increased interest in sunscreen cosmetics and the launch of targeted advertising campaigns that address this concern. In statutory terms, a cosmetic product is defined as „any substance or mixture intended to come into contact with the external parts of the human body (epidermis, hair, nails, lips and external genitalia) or with the teeth and mucous membranes of the oral cavity, the sole or main purpose of which is to keep them clean, perfume them, change their appearance, protect them, keep them in good condition or correct body odour” (Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009..., 2009).

The general trend suggests that consumers are increasingly making informed choices about products that cater to their individual skin care needs (Arya et al., 2024). Many internal and external factors influence the condition of the skin. Internal factors include age and hormonal balance. As we age, the structure of skin cells changes, contributing to the ageing process (Quan, 2023). The presence of endocrine disruption can also contribute to changes in skin appearance (Resich-Koziel & Niemyjska, 2020). It should be noted that it is not possible to control changes determined by external factors directly; however, their impact can be mitigated. These factors can either harm or improve the condition and appearance of the skin (e.g., stress, stimulants, environmental pollution) or have a positive impact (e.g., proper eating habits, care, regular physical activity) (Resich-Koziel & Niemyjska, 2020).

Literature review

Brand advertising campaigns – selected aspects

An advertising campaign is defined as “an integrated set of advertising activities pursuing a uniform goal” (Grzegorzczak, 2010, p. 237). Its structure depends mainly on the type of product, previously adopted marketing assumptions and the characteristics of the target audience (Kotler & Keller, 2016; Raudeliūnienė et al., 2018). Advertising campaigns are carried out for various purposes. They can be divided into the following categories (Kozłowska, 2016):

- sales, aimed at persuading the recipient to make a purchase,
- image-building, focusing on building brand awareness among consumers.

In addition to the above-mentioned objectives, we should also include those of an educational nature, such as addressing current issues of interest to consumers. Undoubtedly, health issues and the positive effects of specific cosmetics on health can serve as examples. When introducing a new product to the market, a significant condition is to build brand awareness (Huang & Sarigöllü, 2012). Therefore, brands should consider implementing activities that allow them to create an image aligned with their established sales objectives. Properly developed advertising content undoubtedly influences the effectiveness of planned campaigns. First and foremost, this message includes visual and/or audio information prepared by the advertiser to inform and/or convince the audience about a product, organisation or idea. The following main elements of advertising messages can be distinguished: headline, slogan, message content, visual elements such as graphics, audio and video, and a call to action (Sokół-Klein, 2014, pp. 107-109).

As part of the assumptions of the research methodology, aspects of advertising campaigns were discussed, including communication channels, audience engagement methods, visual appeal, and the effectiveness of activities. In the empirical part of the article, the latter aspect concerns activities in the field of health education. The first aspect analysed concerns communication channels. When designing an advertising campaign, the selection should take into account the following conditions (Taranko, 2015, p. 218):

- reach of communication channels – their degree of penetration into the target market,
- opportunities for presenting the message,
- place of impact,
- contact situation,
- length of contact,
- repeatability of contact,
- degree of isolation of competing messages,
- group attitude towards a given channel.

The conditions contribute to the effectiveness of advertising messages and the memorisation of communicated content by recipients. At the campaign planning stage, it is essential not only to consider their needs but also to take appropriate and consistent actions to achieve the desired results.

Another aspect analysed focuses on audience engagement with brands. The creation of this type of consumer attitude is illustrated by behaviours such as shaping attention, strengthening dialogue, building interaction or triggering emotions in the audience environment (Witczak, 2018, p. 72). In the social media environment, consumer engagement manifests itself through their participation in competitions, communication with the brand or sharing content presented as part of campaigns (Medina et al., 2023). Most often, the development of this type of behaviour among consumers generates significant benefits for brands. Furthermore, the literature on the subject suggests a positive relationship between the phenomenon in question and purchasing (Krowicki, 2022).

The visual appeal of advertising campaigns comprises a significant part of the message that not only captures the recipient's attention but also influences their perception, emotions, and purchasing decisions (Tang et al., 2025). As a result, this aspect encompasses not only aesthetic elements but also methods of conveying specific brand values and capturing the consumers' attention (Bočaj & Ahtik, 2023). These elements mainly include colour scheme, graphics, typography techniques, message composition and visual identity.

The last aspect of the advertising campaigns examined concerns the effectiveness of activities. An activity is considered adequate when the degree of achievement of the objective is higher than expected. It is worth noting that the definition of the term effectiveness does not account for the cost of achieving the objective of advertising activities or their economic impact (Taranko, 2015, p. 227). The effectiveness of an advertising campaign from the brand's perspective is primarily assessed based on the profit generated from sales. To evaluate it, various measurement indicators are used to determine the impact on purchasing decisions and the company's financial condition (Olejniczak & Tomorad, 2015). Research on the effectiveness of an advertising campaign should be conducted at all stages of its development, including before it begins, during its execution, and after its completion (Karpińska-Krakowiak, 2015). Marketing research enables the collection of current market data based on the behaviour and preferences of the campaign's audience, allowing for the identification of their reactions and expectations. It is also worth mentioning the monitoring of consumer behaviour and their interaction with the campaign at various stages of the purchasing process (Naim, 2023).

Types of sunscreen products

The global cosmetics market is constantly evolving. Significantly, in Poland, after its accession to the European Union, the value of the cosmetics market increased almost threefold, reaching 25.4 billion PLN in 2023 (Polski Związek Przemysłu Kosmetycznego, 2024, p. 26). It is worth noting that women are the primary purchasers of cosmetic products. It is due to deeply ingrained patterns, often reproduced in the media, which equate women with caring for a healthy and attractive appearance (Aharoni Lir & Ayalon, 2024). However, the literature notes a growing market for skincare products specifically designed for men (Kenalemang-Palm, 2023). Among the fastest-growing categories of cosmetic products are facial care, body care, and makeup (mBank, 2024).

Sun protection has gained particular importance in recent years, as reflected in the increasing popularity of cosmetics with UV filters and the increase in educational efforts on the adverse effects of ultraviolet radiation on the skin (Malinović-Miliević et al., 2025). The range of sunscreen products is extensive, particularly in drugstores and other online shops. There are various types of cosmetics with UV filters, including creams, gels, sprays, lotions, mists, sticks, oils, foams, emulsions, and lotions. Additionally, hair preparations and protective lipsticks with UV filters are becoming increasingly available on the market (Kosmopedia.org). In addition, makeup products with sun protection, such as foundations, BB (beauty balm) creams, CC (colour

control) creams, and face powders, have started to be produced. However, it is essential to note that the protection they provide may not be sufficient, as the likelihood of applying a cosmetic product too thinly or unevenly is high.

Increased consumer awareness and developments in the cosmetic market have contributed to the increasing popularity of products with UV filters (Bahashwan, 2024). For many people, sun protection has become an integral part of their daily skincare routine both due to aesthetic and health concerns. It is worth noting that many aspects of UV filters still require further research to enhance their effectiveness and develop consistent standards for measuring and labelling ultraviolet protection.

Methodology

The objective of the article is to evaluate the advertising campaigns of cosmetic brands of sunscreen products. The authors analysed in detail the marketing activities for promoting sunscreen products such as Holika Holika, La Roche-Posay and Nivea. The following research questions were formulated to deepen and detail the issues analysed:

- How do the analysed brands create the advertising message regarding sunscreen products?
- What is distinctive about the advertising campaigns implemented?

As part of the adopted research convention, critical analysis (Fairclough, 2001) and the desk research method (Guerin et al., 2018) were applied. It was also decided to score the analysed advertising campaigns. This method enables the assessment of any object against a set of established criteria (Gierszewska & Romanowska, 2017; Manczak & Bajak, 2021). It is worth mentioning that the scoring method is based on composing a list of criteria (factors) to describe and differentiate the analysed object (Stabryła, 2011). The distinguished criteria are assigned appropriate weights (not every criterion has the same importance) and numbers of points (scores) from a selected numerical range (Szyran-Resiak, 2016).

The following aspects of the analysed advertising campaigns were assessed:

- communication channels,
- the method of engaging the audience,
- visual attractiveness,
- effectiveness of pro-health education activities.

The highlighted aspects were rated on a scale of 1 to 10 points and assigned the following weights: 0.2 for communication channels, 0.2 for methods of engaging the audience, 0.2 for visual attractiveness, and 0.4 for the effectiveness of health education activities. The authors decided to give the highest importance to the aspect that was mentioned last. This stems from the adopted research assumptions and the interests of the research team.

Secondary data was collected from online sources and social media of brands, which were treated as documents. For further considerations, document analysis was applied, with particular attention paid to the textual component (Glinka & Czakon, 2021). The observation of cosmetic brand profiles was conducted from March 17 to

April 30, 2025. It is worth noting that the current campaigns were not examined; instead, the completed ones were. The Holika Holika brand occasionally continues to use the hashtag #TenGreen in its marketing messages. In this case, the focus was on the most intense period of activity, which fell in June-August 2024. The La Roche-Posay campaign, on the other hand, analysed ongoing activity in the period March-April 2024. During this period, two advertising spots were made available. In contrast, the Nivea brand released two videos in April 2019.

Results

Analysis of selected advertising campaigns of cosmetic brands

Cosmetic brands seeking to reach diverse consumer segments and promote sun-screen creams develop targeted marketing activities that align with the preferences of specific groups and current market trends (Kim et al., 2021). The following discussion attempts to provide an overview of the advertising campaigns of selected cosmetic brands: Holika Holika, La Roche-Posay and Nivea. The authors noted that the featured brands have developed different approaches to promoting their sun-screen products.

Holika Holika is a Korean cosmetic brand that has gained significant popularity in Poland, particularly among Asian skincare. Its cosmetics are available in many online pharmacies, drugstores, stationery stores, and chain stores. The brand's range includes products for skin cleansing, skincare, and makeup (Holika Holika, 2025). Holika Holika actively engages with Polish consumers through social media, regularly publishing posts about products and skincare tips. In addition, Holika Holika maintains a Polish-language website, making it easier for customers to access the range and detailed information about the ingredients and use of the cosmetics. Observing Holika Holika's social media profiles suggests that promoting sunscreen products is a priority for the brand. One example of this is the #TenGreen campaign, which aims to raise awareness of sun protection and promote the Aloe Waterproof Sun Gel cream. For this campaign, the brand focused on solutions that leveraged influencer marketing and social media publishing. The primary target audience for the campaign was young women interested in skincare and make-up. Public relations packages received by several online beauty and skincare influencers, including nano- and micro-influencers, played a significant role in the brand's strategy. When analysing the posts made under the tagline #TenGreen, it can be assumed that the influencers' task was to add a photo or video showing the product, describing how it works, and highlighting the waterproof and high-capacity nature of the cosmetic. In addition, Holika Holika shared promotional graphics, educational posts about sun protection and content in the form of interactive questions and competitions on its social channels to increase audience engagement. The message of the #TenGreen campaign focused on several key aspects:

- lightweight formula and comfort of application – it was repeatedly emphasised that the cream does not weigh down the skin, is not white and is ideal for application under make-up;

- daily sun protection – it was communicated that applying sunscreen should be part of the daily routine, regardless of the season;
- the “green” theme was carefully considered to ensure visual consistency throughout the campaign, which was evident in both promotional materials and influencer testimonials.

The green colour, visible on the packaging of the Aloe Waterproof Sun Gel cream, was used as an identifying element of the product, associated with nature and freshness. The choice of this colour emphasised the presence of aloe vera as the main ingredient in the product. However, it is also intended to reinforce positive associations with a healthy and ecological approach to care.

Another brand addressing the theme of daily sun protection in its advertising activities is La Roche-Posay. This French dermocosmetic brand, part of L'Oréal, specialises in the development of products for sensitive skin. According to the manufacturer's website, its formulas are developed in collaboration with dermatologists and are often recommended by specialists internationally (La Roche-Posay, 2025). La Roche-Posay actively maintains a website and is active on social media (Instagram, TikTok, Facebook). In addition to the main international account on social media channels, dedicated profiles have been created for some countries. One of the flagship cosmetic lines of the brand in question is the Anthelios line, which offers a wide range of sun protection products. To promote it, the “Every day is a sunscreen day” campaign was implemented in 2024, with a slogan emphasising the need for daily sun protection. The campaign activities covered all brand communication channels, with La Roche-Posay focusing on the publication of educational materials. The campaign was based on the collaboration with well-known tennis players, who appeared in two advertising spots broadcast (including on YouTube). The target group consisted of active individuals who enjoy spending time outdoors. The first spot, published on March 18, 2024, on the official La Roche-Posay USA channel, features the tennis court game of professional athletes Madison Keys and Frances Tiafoe, judged by dermatologist dr Mamina Turegano. The film's protagonists emphasise the importance of using sunscreen daily, regardless of location or circumstance, to protect against the adverse effects of UV radiation, including skin cancer and photoaging. The spot maintains a dynamic pace, blending shots of a tennis game with scenes that feature the advertised product. The second spot, published on April 10, 2024, maintains a similar convention to the previous one. This time, Italian tennis player Jannik Sinner takes the lead role. The athlete's statement “Sports are all about discipline. Every two hours I practise my best defence” refers to the need to reapply a sunscreen product throughout the day, ideally every two hours. The message aims to make the viewers understand that adequate sun protection requires regularity, much like sports training. Both award-winning advertising spots are characterised by consistent visuals, maintained in shades of blue and white with orange accents, which refer to the visual identity of the La Roche-Posay brand.

The last brand analysed is Nivea, which is recognised as a manufacturer of facial and body care products and is owned by the German Beiersdorf Group (Nivea, 2025). Like the brands presented above, Nivea engages in active promotional activities, including its website and social media accounts. An example of such activity

is the campaign published on 15 April 2019 on Nivea UK's official YouTube channel, which featured two short advertising spots featuring an animated sun character called Mr Sun. This campaign was created in partnership with the UK charity Cancer Research UK. The primary objective of the advertising campaign was to increase public awareness of the risks associated with excessive exposure to ultraviolet radiation, particularly among parents and children. The first video, entitled “Through the clouds”, depicts a scene where two women have gone on a bike ride together. When one of the heroines reaches for the sunscreen, she is met with incomprehension by her companion. This is because she believes that UV radiation does not penetrate clouds, suggesting that protection is unnecessary at that moment. This statement is then followed on screen by the figure of Mr Sun, whose presence symbolically undermines the woman's words. Therefore, the spot debunks one of the common myths about sun exposure, emphasising that skin protection should be applied regardless of weather conditions. The second video, 'There is only one sun', on the other hand, shows a scene set in an outdoor park, where a father is spending time with his daughter. The girl asks him why he has not put on sunscreen. The man replies that there is no need, arguing that the 'sun at home' is different from the one they face on holiday. The father's words suggest that it is only necessary to protect the skin when on holiday, as day-to-day radiation does not carry the same risks. At this point, as in the first spot, Mr Sun appears, whose presence prompted the man to apply sunscreen. In the final part of both videos, Nivea included a segment presenting its sun protection products, as well as recommendations for outdoor activities, such as seeking shade, wearing protective clothing, and applying sunscreen with a high SPF. It can be concluded that the campaign analysed was based on storytelling, which conveys the need to use sun protection in an accessible and humorous way. The animated character Mr Sun was tasked with drawing attention to misconceptions and unhealthy habits related to sun exposure.

Each of the featured brands used different tools to reach their target audiences and raise awareness about sun protection. The evaluation of selected advertising campaigns for sunscreen products is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Evaluation of selected advertising campaigns for sunscreen products

Brand	Campaign evaluation criterion				Final rating (1-10)
	Communication channels 0.2 (weight)	Method of engaging audiences 0.2 (weight)	Visual appeal 0.2 (weight)	Effectiveness of health education activities 0.4 (weight)	
Holika Holika	9 × 0.2	10 × 0.2	7 × 0.2	8 × 0.4	8.4
La Roche-Posay	10 × 0.2	8 × 0.2	10 × 0.2	10 × 0.4	9.6
Nivea	8 × 0.2	8 × 0.2	9 × 0.2	10 × 0.4	9

Source: Own study

To compare the effectiveness of these activities, a scoring scale of 1 to 10 was used. The following aspects related to the marketing message (communication channels, audience engagement, and visual appeal) and the educational message (effectiveness of health education activities) were assessed. The La Roche-Posay campaign was rated highest, standing out for the high quality of its educational message and visual aesthetics. Holika Holika, on the other hand, was effective in activating audiences (e.g., through the organisation of competitions), but its visuals performed less well compared to those of other brands. The Nivea campaign, although less dynamic, positively surprised with a humorous and straightforward message. The diversity of solutions implemented confirms that practical marketing activities can be implemented in various ways, depending on the essence of the brand and its target audience.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the article addresses a topic within the scope of current academic discussion and business practice, combining advertising campaigns and awareness-raising activities in the context of health promotion. The issue of sun protection is gaining increasing importance, which is reflected in the wide range of cosmetics with UV filters and their growing popularity among consumers. In addition, various educational initiatives and advertising campaigns by brands such as Holika Holika, La Roche-Posay, and Nivea have been launched to raise awareness of the adverse effects of ultraviolet radiation on the skin.

Referring to the formulated research questions, the following conclusions can be indicated:

- the cosmetic brands analysed developed different approaches in their advertising campaigns,
- each brand attempted to orchestrate a message that would be attractive and arouse interest among potential users,
- several marketing activities were carried out on a variety of social media channels, including the participation of sports stars (La Roche-Posay),
- an important element of the campaign was to build engagement among consumers through interactive competitions (Holika Holika),
- one brand relied on storytelling (Nivea).

The analysis of the selected advertising campaigns provided insight into the assumptions adopted by the cosmetic brands studied in their promotion of sun protection. The juxtaposition of different approaches highlights the importance of considering the audience's needs, values, and preferences when designing marketing communications. Such comparisons are an important area of contemporary marketing research, enabling the identification of practical actions and potential directions for future campaigns focused on sun protection products. The highest rating was given to the La Roche-Posay brand. Its activities were considered to stand out from other examples in terms of promoting health-promoting behaviour.

Limitations of the approach include the subjective nature of the ratings provided by the author's team and the inclusion of multiple brands in the analysis. The comments presented are preliminary and highlight only some aspects related to the advertising campaigns of cosmetic brands that offer sunscreen products. However, they may serve as a contribution to deepen the results obtained through (quantitative, qualitative) research among consumers who purchase sunscreen products.

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Authors' Contribution: Equal participation of co-authors.

Acknowledgements and Financial Disclosure: The publication was financed from the subsidy granted to the Krakow University of Economics – project no. 055/ZZH/2024/POT.

Conflict of Interest: No conflict of interest.

Ethics Declaration: The ethical clearance was not required for the research.

AI Declaration: Tools based on AI solutions were used to translate fragments of the text into English and to perform language correction without affecting the creation of the article's content.

KAMPANIE REKLAMOWE PRODUKTÓW Z FILTREM PRZECIWSŁONECZNYM MAREK KOSMETYCZNYCH

Streszczenie: Celem artykułu jest dokonanie oceny kampanii reklamowych produktów z filtrem przeciwsłonecznym marek kosmetycznych. Szczegółową analizą objęto takie marki jak Holika Holika, La Roche-Posay i Nivea oraz ich działania marketingowe dotyczące promocji preparatów zapewniających ochronę przeciwsłoneczną. W trakcie przeprowadzania rozważań zastosowano krytyczną analizę, metodę desk research oraz metodę oceny punktowej. Prezentowane rozważania mają charakter poglądowy oraz wstępny. Zarysowano wybrane kwestie dotyczące kampanii reklamowych oraz rodzaje produktów przeciwsłonecznych. W kluczowej części rozważań zaprezentowano analizę działalności wyróżnionych marek kosmetycznych, w tym ocenę dokonaną w wyniku zastosowania metody punktowej. Analizowane aspekty oceniano w skali od 1 do 10 punktów i przypisywano im następujące wagi: 0,2 kanałom komunikacji, 0,2 metodom angażowania odbiorców, 0,2 atrakcyjności wizualnej oraz 0,4 skuteczności działań w zakresie edukacji zdrowotnej. W części empirycznej zwrócono szczególną uwagę na takie aspekty badanych kampanii, jak kanały komunikacji, sposób angażowania odbiorców, atrakcyjność wizualna oraz skuteczność działań. Starano się rozpoznać założenia przyjęte przez badane marki kosmetyczne w propagowaniu ochrony przeciwsłonecznej w ramach realizowanych działań marketingowych. Zestawienie różnych podejść pokazuje, jak ważne jest uwzględnienie potrzeb, wartości i preferencji odbiorców w projektowaniu komunikacji marketingowej. Analizowane marki kreują przekaz edukacyjny na potrzeby realizowanych kampanii reklamowych, w tym komunikują treści odnoszące się do negatywnego oddziaływania promieniowania ultrafioletowego na skórę.

Słowa kluczowe: kampanie reklamowe, marki kosmetyczne, komunikacja marketingowa, ocena punktowa, produkty z filtrem przeciwsłonecznym

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