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The X effect: Male brands for female; without destroying the core proposition

ET Bureau Apr 4, 2012, 04:32AM IST

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Tags: wooing female customers | Russell Taylor | male brands | Hindustan Unilever Ltd. | axe

The most abused principle of positioning strategy is line extension. As per the positioning expert Dick Maggioro, "With the extension into the female category, the very essence that made the **Axe** brand so appealing to the young man will be destroyed."

To which **Russell Taylor**, global brand vice president, Axe, Unilever counters: "Axe is one of the most iconic and loved brands among young guys, which has built its status and reputation by surprising our target year after year with new and fresh insights. We therefore have the license to explore lots of different territories - as long as they are promised attraction in the end."

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Hindustan Unilever Ltd.

<p>BSE</p> <p style="font-size: 1.2em; color: green;">415.30 ▲</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">0.21 % 0.90</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Vol: 2717 shares traded</p>	<p>NSE</p> <p style="font-size: 1.2em; color: green;">416.60 ▲</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">0.39 % 1.65</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Vol: 24441 shares traded</p>
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Agrees David Kolbusz, creative director/partner at BBH London (the agency behind the Axe Anarchy 'Unleash the Chaos' campaign globally), "By creating Axe for women, the idea is to put some power back into ladies' hands, but in the end guys would still benefit. The more men thought about it, the more they realised that if women are wearing Axe, then women become active participants in the mating game, rather than just objects of desire. When women become active participants, it means they're more interested, which is ultimately better for guys."

Makes sense? Hope so. Taylor reiterates, "Rest assured, we have no plans of becoming a female brand."

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