Beauty and Aesthetics
A study of the Professional Hair Care Industry in Sweden

Swedish title
Skönhet och Estetik
En studie om den professionella hårvårdsindustrin i Sverige

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Abstract

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Supervisor: Hans Andersson

Background: Beauty is a subject which is not easy to grasp especially as it is perceived differently. In advertising it is expressed through aesthetic messages and images which we relate to symbolic and social meanings. The professional hair care industry in Sweden serves as a good example where the creation of aesthetic experience influences consumer purchasing behaviour.

Purpose: The purpose of our thesis is to study how consumers’ subjective view on beauty and aesthetics can be influenced by the professional hair care industry and how market is created for products which mainly satisfy emotional needs rather than fulfil utilitarian function.

Research Method: In our study we have applied an abductive research method approach. The empirical findings were based on 3 interviews with P&G Salon Professional representatives and 15 end consumers combined with a survey, conducted in 25 hair salons in the city of Linköping.

Conclusion: Consumers act in a socially constructed world in which products are shaped around impulse and feeling rather than their rationality. When buying a professional hair care product people receive much more than the actual product itself. People improve not only physical appearance but they also feel beautiful from within. While the utilitarian function is basically the same in both professional hair care and retail products, the former contributes to higher degree of satisfaction.

Keywords: Beauty, aesthetics, hair care, purchasing behaviour, marketing
Preface

We would like to thank our supervisor Hans Andersson for all his help and support and all our respondents who kindly agreed to participate in this study.
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1 | Introduction

In the opening chapter we introduce the reader to the cultural aspects of contemporary society and discuss how meaning is located and transferred by its members. In the following section we define the concepts of beauty and aesthetics. They serve as a foundation for our thesis and for that reason we give a short introduction on the history of this subject. Later on beauty and aesthetics are discussed in relation to the theories on consumption, marketing and branding. In the final section we identify the issues end consumers have to deal with when purchasing beauty products in the professional hair care industry.

Society, individuals and organizations create a never-ending cycle in which the three largely affect each other. In order to be a part of the society, people have to fulfil certain unwritten norms and communicate in a way that is widely accepted and understood by other members of that same culture (Bowditch & Buono, 2005). Consequentially, individuals often base their purchases on these premises - to fit in within the group. According to McCracken (1986) this is a cause for organizations to constantly redevelop their product lines in order to match the expectations in society. When this occurs, cultural norms are passed on in products. When these later are purchased the meaning is once more shifted, this time to the customer, and the continuous cultural circle of society, individuals and organizations transform once more. The phenomenon is best described in the picture below presented by McCracken.

This unity between the three is both interesting and easily observed simply by looking around on a busy street. It is easy to notice different groups of people with similar clothing and fashion styles, creating a uniformed basis for recognition and belonging. Schouten & McAlexander (1995), among others, analyzed such sub-groups of society when they studied the Harley Davidson-bikers, who are well known for their brand loyalty. We feel that the view of consumption within a cultural context has been neglected to some degree in the past, as theories on consumption among others have largely focused on the tangible utilities of the product, ignoring the importance of intangible characteristics for a purchase.
It is important to point out that we will not analyze the subject of culture in the sense of explaining differences between different civilizations, areas which authors such as Hofstede (1980) and Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck (1961) among others already have developed to a great extent. Instead we will limit ourselves to the fields of aesthetics and beauty, two closely related concepts which have been interpreted in various ways throughout history.

1.1 Background

Beauty is a subject which is difficult to grasp especially since it is perceived differently and related to various cultural or social norms. Beauty might be seen as a powerful tool that can help one to achieve higher ambitions which might be significant for future growth and development. Hamermesh & Biddle (1994) for example have shown that people that have attractive physical appearance in the labour market are favoured against less attractive or ugly employees and their earnings are higher compared to average-looking individuals.

According to Eco (2004), the word beautiful expresses something that we are fond of, enjoy looking at. For that reason a sense of personal fulfilment as well as indulgence is created (Prettejohn, 2005). Yet, as Eco points out, another interpretation of beauty can
be connected directly to what we not only enjoy admiring but also what we desire to have for ourselves. Hence pretty and sublime things can make us happy if we own them but still remain beautiful even if they are possessed by someone else.

As Vacker (1993) points out, beauty as an axiom can be classified into subjective and objective. Subjective beauty derives from the subject’s mind and the ideal is created from feelings, emotions or person’s judgments due to increased necessity of choice. Another perspective, objective beauty, is acquired through the external reality and a beautiful object is formed independently of the mind’s substantiation of beauty or is even non-existent in our world and therefore only possible to experience through certain objects which the beautiful is channelled through.

It is not easy to answer the question what makes an object beautiful. A well-known expression says that “beauty is in the eye of beholder”. In other words there is something subjective about it, and it suggests that our personal experiences play a part in deciding what is beautiful or not.

To give an illustration to our reader we present the painting of Lady Lilith, made by Dante Gabriel Rosetti who might be regarded as a major precursor of aesthetic symbolic movement. It represents prettiness, sensuality and attractiveness. With this “Body’s Beauty” the painter expresses the outer side of beauty, viewed in visible human properties that can be directly identified as beautiful. The other painting, created by the same artist, shown below, depicts Sibylla Palmifiera, an ancient prophetess who represents the more mystifying “Soul’s Beauty”. The latter work of art, in comparison to the previous, can be interpreted in a way that not all beauty is in the looks but it also arises from within. It is of course up to the observers’ subjective interpretation to decide whether these paintings are beautiful or not.
Quinn, et. al., (2008) have managed to provide empirical evidence pointing towards the objective side of beauty. In their research the discovery was made that newborn infants’ spontaneous attention was captured by beautiful faces. This serves as an indication that beauty is not in the eye of beholder but is imprinted in our genes. Even though this statement argues for our innate ability to judge beauty, the way we perceive it can be refined as no individuals have the same sense of beauty.

Lady Lilith, by Dante Gabriel Rosetti, 1868

“Beware of her fair hair, for she excells
All women in the magic of her locks,
And when she twines them round a young man's neck
she will not ever set him free again."

– A scene from Goethe’s Faust

Sibylla Palmifera, by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, 1865-1870

“The sibyl, or ancient prophetess, of the title bears the palm of victory for her beauty, or perhaps she confers it on the viewer who can appreciate such beauty.

This painting represents the more mysterious ‘Soul’s Beauty’, surrounded by symbols of love, death, and fate. These include roses and blind cupid (love), poppies and a skull (death), butterflies (the human soul) and a carved sphinx (mystery)”
Aesthetics is defined by Berthon, et al., (2009) as a science of perception that relies on our ability to distinguish value or significance in the object of interest and thereby develop taste. Dickie (1997) states that an object, which is perceived disinterestedly and is analyzed from a distance by a person, will automatically change to an aesthetic entity which is dependent on the state of mind that the individual is in and further become more appreciated than before. In other words this aesthetic experience shows that objects which are beyond doubt beautiful will arouse the subjective experience.

In advertising (Vacker, 1993) beauty is produced by aesthetic images and symbols which are interpreted by consumers. The problem here is whether the actual object is consumed or if the meaning it represents to that person is the focus of attention. Vacker also states that in marketing, beauty is easier understood as real and objective. Although it is in several cases possible to distinguish the subjective interpretation of beauty that can be more important for the consumer than anything else.

For that reason, as Schmitt, et al., (1997) state, aesthetics can be used as an influential tool for organizations to differentiate their products with. However, emotions can be easily abused by organizations and hence produce a false view of the “scientific truth” (Jensen, 1999). For instance, illusions can be formed by companies, that state that certain products are better than others and that customers gain more for the money they pay. As a result the companies will neglect the truth as long as consumers are convinced that the information is correct. Jensen discusses the problem further by claiming that a false rationality is eventually created in order to justify the purchases made.

There is extensive scientific documentation that aesthetic experience undoubtedly affects consumer behaviour in several ways (Berthon, et al., 2009; Hirschman, 1983). Further, by using experiential and sensory marketing strategies (Schmitt, 1999), closely studying consumer attitudes and preferences (Gupta, et al., 2008), creating symbolic (Levy, 1959) and emotional (Bauman, 2001) values organizations can produce a luxurious and overpowering feeling of desire (Belk, et al., 2003) that hopefully end in both increased profits and improved consumer value.

To conclude, it is essential for organizations to identify what consumers desire, often before they actually know that themselves, and use the marketing strategies to enhance that desire.
1.2 Problem disposition

In the later half of the 20th century a rapid growth of the global market resulted in a significant increase in the amount of brands and products present in most, if not all, industries with a focus on the end consumers. Companies are obliged to identify the underlying aesthetic reasons for the consumption as consumers have access to numerous and ambiguous choices. This alteration causes a need for differentiation in order to beat the competition by offering products that not only fulfil basic needs but also add value to the lifestyle customers desire to be a part of. Such “brand intangible” features of the brands that do not include any explicit qualities, vital for providing exclusive aesthetic experiences for their customers.

The brand itself requires some clarification. The objective of the company is according to Schmitt & Simonson (1997) to create an image, a sign of recognition and quality. They also explain how positive memories created in consumers in the future can provide loyalty and premium price setting as people are keen to return to the brands that previously delivered trustworthy satisfaction. For Keller & Lehmann (2006), the expansion of benefits of a strong brand is crucial. The company behind the strong brand may, for example, gain easier access to new markets by utilizing a brand extension— the process where novel products are released under the existing brand. This strategy effectively stimulates a feeling of recognition and approval the consumer might have towards the original brand line.

The professional hair care industry serve as a good example where creating an aesthetic experience plays a big part in influencing consumer behaviour. For instance, we have experienced that many styling products often serve little utilitarian purpose and are not necessarily useful from a practical point of view; nevertheless these products seem to create intangible value and significance for the user.

Professional styling products are being sold exclusively in hair salons where a symbolic atmosphere is created. The whole buying process is shaped around generating a social interaction, impulse and feeling. As a result hair salon customer, in our case end consumer, is not only influenced by the companies’ visual output but also by becoming emotionally connected with organizational values and beliefs.
People often purchase products spontaneously without any clear consideration whether a certain product is actually needed or worth the price paid. Mick & DeMoss (1990), suggest that this self-gifting phenomenon is provoked by the endeavour to motivate and indulge, relieve stress or just do something nice for oneself.

Paula Begoun, author of the book "Don't Go Shopping for Hair-Care Products without Me" (1999), explains in an interview to CBS news (2005), that wasting money is not beautiful at all and asks the question:

“What is sexy and attractive about rinsing money down the drain?"

She finishes with the statement that,

"There is absolutely no difference between expensive products and inexpensive products, and I say that unequivocally."

Why do people buy expensive styling products although there are cheaper, easily accessible hair care alternatives? Does the answer rest in getting cleaner, shinier hair or to obtain a confirmation that individuals by using these products will feel beautiful and indeed fit in the picture organizations create? Lastly, are there winning strategies for organizations to pursue in order to beat the competition in this multi-billion industry?

The figure below shows the price difference in products which consumers are willing to pay. The question mark represents the unknown factors that enable consumers to buy professional hair care products at such a high price compared to retail alternatives. Self made model.

![Figure 2: Difference in price consumers are willing to pay for professional and retail products.](image-url)
1.3 Purpose

This master’s thesis will study how consumers’ subjective view on beauty and aesthetics can be influenced by the professional hair care industry and how a market is created for products which mainly satisfy emotional needs rather than fulfil utilitarian function.

To assist us in answering the purpose we formulated the following questions:

- Which needs do consumers want to satisfy when consuming expensive hair care products?
- What emotions do organizations create in order to enhance service and the purchasing experience?
2 | Theoretical framework

In this chapter we present the reader with our theoretical framework first, before introducing our research approach in the third chapter. We feel that further explanation is required on the cognitive reasoning behind the subject of beauty and aesthetics, described in the first segment of the following three sections: people, consumption and marketing. It will be, as a result, easier to follow the reasoning behind our choice of method strategy. The second section describes consumption and the process in which consumers’ needs are enhanced. Lastly we take a closer look into the companies marketing tools, theories on signs and symbols, advertising and customer relations.

2.1 On people and beauty

2.1.1 Objective beauty

It is argued that beauty is not dependant of our senses but it is rather through our intuition we are able to recognize what is truly beautiful. Such an ideal beauty is inherited and intensified through certain objects in our world.

Barbone (1993) remarks that the perhaps most notable philosopher on beauty – Plato – ideally perceived beauty from this perspective. To him beauty is an unchanging and eternal characteristic, external from subjective views or situational dependence. Barbone describes the Greek philosophical concept of Sophrosyne which is the modesty and harmony in people that Plato, among others, saw as a quality of “good” and thus vital to explaining beauty. Without it, beauty would be “skin-deep” and only possible to find in any earthly object.

Hume in his “Of the Standard of Taste” (1757) describes general principles of aesthetic beauty that are inherent in certain objects in nature, something we – if unbiased – can
claim to be purely beautiful, unrelated to individual views and perspectives. For that reason, it is also possible to find a common ground to base critique on, or rate an object’s beauty. However, it takes practice to refine the senses, to remove defects in reasoning and disorder in surroundings. For anyone to be able to correctly judge anything it is important to reflect upon the audience, the time in history and the nation that the artistic object was created in and for. Otherwise we judge it on unfair basis as if we do not consider its initial purpose.

Kant in his “Critique of Judgment” (1790) determines two ways to pleasure; the agreeable which is desired because it gratifies and the good which is held in esteem rather than desire. Further Kant explains a third way to please – the beautiful which is simply something we are fond of, unstained by personal liking (agreeable) or concept (good). To have taste is the ability to judge an object free of any interest in it. What Kant find agreeable is instead best described in the following section on the subjective beauty.

2.1.2 Subjective beauty

In this opposite theory on beauty Barbone (1993) explains how personal liking in an object can give rise to a number of different views. Depending on the perspective, time, place or mood, an object can be viewed as both ugly and beautiful. Therefore it is impossible to make beauty a subject for natural science since there is no objective point to analyse the object from.

As we previously explained Hume (1757 in Dickie, et. al., 1989, p. 244) finds general principles of beauty in nature. This does not however prevent the ability to have a unique taste\(^1\) and emotional affection towards an object. In Hume’s own words:

\[
\text{“Among a thousand different opinions [...] there is one, and but one, that is just and true. [...] On the contrary, a thousand different sentiments, excited by the same object, are all right.”}
\]

\(^1\) The term taste itself had for Hume a different meaning compared to Kant who, as we explained above, defined taste as the ability to judge an object free of any desire or liking.
While Hume in this quote maintains his objective view on opinions he emphasises how every persons reactions towards an object are acceptable and that: “if it pleases it cannot be faulty”. A linguistic definition of beauty would, according to Hume be as fruitless as to define true sweetness or bitterness.

It is possible to relate the subjective view of beauty to the function and importance of an object’s utility in order to strengthen the aesthetic experience. As the utility of the object changes depending on time and situation so will its beauty. The English philosopher Scruton (2009) explains that we cannot truly determine the beauty of an object until we understand its utility. In the following section we describe what value and meaning an object can signal to the person.

2.1.3 Substance and significance

As the diagram below shows, inspired by Per Åman, Senior Lecturer at the University of Linköping, there are two dimensions that contribute to the aesthetic evaluation and appreciation of an object. Substance serves a purpose by signalling functionality and usefulness in a product. Significance on the other axis represents another dimension, namely the immaterial characteristics which the product symbolizes to the buyer. An object can on an individual level represent an aesthetic value while it on the social level becomes a symbolic value. For example a sports car is fun to drive for the owner and at the same time it indicates a symbolic value, showing a social status to the surrounding environment.

Figure 3: Relation between Substance and Significance, inspired by Per Åman, autumn 2009.
Hancock (2002) identifies an ontological problem of an increased need for image and less substance where the aesthetization is being over-stimulated and misused. He remarks that the creation of false experience of sensuality is in fact only a result of corporate marketing. Lash & Urry (1994) consent, saying that it is not objects that are produced but signs. Material objects include not only aesthetic components but also sign-value, an image embodied in the object. Welsch (1997, in Hancock, 2002, p. 25) further explains that the substance is sacrificed to the corporate image and:

“Where everything becomes beautiful, nothing is beautiful anymore; continued excitement leads to indifference; aesthetization breaks into anaesthetization.”

Through advertising organizations gain power and social control over the consumers by sending a message that consumption experience is actually pleasant and that it can solve the problems which might occur for future purchasers. It seems that is essential for the user to show others what one is capable of buying and what is actually owned. Therefore there is always another, unfulfilled subjective need which has to be satisfied. Alvesson & Willmott, (1996, p. 126) state:

“Consumers simply indulge whatever desire happens to food their consciousness.”

The impulsive spending or impulsive behaviour represent the ugly side of consumerism which results in unplanned and spontaneous purchasing for items with no actual need to satisfy other than the very need to consume (Baumeister, 2002). As a self-gifting experience it is often being motivated by an effort to relieve stress, avoid dissapointment and depression or just to pamper oneself after a personal accomplishment (Mick & DeMoss, 1990a; Mick & DeMoss, 1990b). Impulsive spending is a result of a lack of self-regulatory control, since consumers have little consideration over the actual reasons behind a certain purchase and cannot substitute undesirable responses (Vohs & Faber, 2007). Consequentially, companies can influence the meaning of a certain product and the buyers view over what is regarded as beautiful, trendy and stylish.
2.1.4 Beauty in the beauty industry

We can, if we relate the concepts of beauty and aesthetics to the modern hair care industry once more turn to Vacker (1993) who, in consent with Plato and Kant, explain beauty as universal because it is the very ideal we all attempt to attain. However, to reach it there is a need for the beauty to be applied to the reality that surrounds us – in other words a purpose and a context to work with. If in advertisement a supermodel would represent this ideal beauty consumers would subjectively judge it and create different ideas of what the ideal means for them. Through this process there is an objective ideal which is perceived differently depending on the peoples’ subjective experience, genetic, environmental and situational factors.

In our own figure 4, shown below, the universal beauty is represented by a large flower. It is perceived in the context and purpose of the individual whose taste is coloured by his or her environment. This creates a unique indescribable perspective on the object:

![Figure 4: The concept of beauty perceived differently from different perspectives. Self made model.](image)

2.1.5 The ugly side of beauty

It is at this point of some interest to consider the opposite of beauty, or in other words - ugliness. After all, the hunt for beauty can also be seen as the pursuit of being not-ugly. This is widely shown within the market for professional hair care products and more so the beauty industry as a whole. Consumers attempt to look younger, hide wrinkles and receive a healthier skin tone.
As Feitosa (2001, p. 4) explains:

“Ugliness hurts us so deeply because it touches our essential wound; it wildly shows us our mortality”.

The redefinition of the ugly has changed. Smaller movements of people attempt to differentiate themselves from the public by dressing and acting in ways which by others can be viewed as ugly. Feitosa acknowledges this and explains that ugliness perhaps should not be considered as the opposite of beauty, instead it should be viewed as the other form of beauty. Saito (2007) also points out that people might have a stronger appreciation of the way in which objects diverge from their norm. Eco (2007) extends on this saying that what was not allowed yesterday could be acceptable tomorrow. Just as our view on beauty can be re-defined through time and space so can our view on ugliness.

As the perspective changes another interesting aspect can be brought up, whether beautiful objects can still be appreciated and valued as beautiful if there was an ugly side to it? People’s consuming patterns often dictate the way products and services should look like and indirectly determine how these are being manufactured. It is human nature to be attracted to unfamiliar and spectacular things, something extraordinary and perfect (Saito, 2007). Saito does in her book about everyday aesthetics mention consumers’ desire for perfectly white paper, furniture made of rare wood or even smooth fabrics produced in unethical way. She confirms that when aesthetics has been reduced to commercial use and mass production, beauty is being sacrificed to the useful and organizations are through their actions, as Hancock, (2002, p. 101) describes it:

“...guilty of reducing aesthetic experience to little more than just another repository of mechanically produced, instrumentally oriented codes and symbols.”

When emphasizing on the subject of hair care products sold in hair salons, the question might be asked whether these so called “professional hair care products” are worth the price paid and if they actually deliver what is promised for the customer. In fact there is a thin line between the beauty and ugliness or the sense of truth and deception. It is up to the consumer to decide whether the product seems to be truthful or not, and it is not an easy challenge. To Lash & Urry (1994) the subjective interpretation and aesthetic
pre-judgment is needed to reflect upon the impact of consumption, even though the process might be counter reflexive due to lack of information and a need for decreased importance of social status.

Certainly, there will always be outsiders who will challenge and break society boundaries, by provoking the traditional norms and arguing that ugly things are beautiful. That will eventually change the way people think and minimize the gap between beauty and ugliness.

2.1.6 Summary

So far we have presented two major views on the concept of beauty, ugliness and aesthetics as well as their appliance in the hair care market. Also we have explained how substance and significance create another perspective, on the usefulness and the need for certain products.

In the following segment we will further explain the underlying factors that influence the way consumers act when purchasing a product. Additionally, we will emphasize on how consumer emotions are controlled, either consciously or unconsciously and explain the process of creation of multi-sensory experience.

2.2 On consumption

2.2.1 Emotional experiences

Franzen & Bouwman (2001) state that individual perceptions and memories are linked to emotional reactions. The cognitive part of the human brain reflects, analyzes and makes decisions, the emotional part of the brain, on the other hand, reacts spontaneously on the perceived external stimulation. When a person is exposed to new information the
Emotional experiences are actual impulses that cause human behaviour and it is possible to identify two types of recollections of emotional experiences:

![Diagram of Emotional Experience with Implicit and Explicit Memory]

Schachter (1996 in Franzen & Bouwman, 2001) states that memory is explicit when we generate a capacity to recall information from events which occurred in the past, such as facts, numbers, smells or sounds. Implicit memory indicates the memory functions that happen outside the human consciousness that for instance can be highly influenced by advertising. People perceive most marketing unconsciously and superficially but they are still influenced by it in the future purchasing behaviour. As a result a perception of the brand can be seen as unconscious and implicit unless it has already been connected to concrete experiences which have led to explicit cognitive recollections (Franzen & Bouwman, 2001).

Through a multi-sensory experience, created by sensory perceptions, people respond to external stimulations as well as they react to emotional images which are either consciously or unconsciously. This creates possibilities for hedonic consumption which is, as explained by Hirschman & Holbrook (1982, p. 92), a phenomenon that:

“...designates those facets of consumer behaviour that relate to the multi-sensory, fantasy and emotive aspects of one’s experience with products”.

It is essential for companies to identify the symbolic meaning of consumer goods which are increasingly becoming a part of our consumer identity and image. In addition, when the overall purchasing choice process is distinguished it can be easier facilitated and corporate brand can be discerned (Levy, 1959).
2.2.2 Consumer behaviour and human needs

When clarifying the consumer behaviour several authors describe purchases from a need-goal perspective (Solomon, 1992, Schiffman & Kanuk, 2000). With some difference in terminology they explain how a need is created for a human being, for example, a feeling of hunger or the aspiration to become an esteemed member of society. As one might notice these needs are very different in their source. Hunger is a biological essentiality to survive and respect is a social construct. Maslow (1943), a researcher on consumer needs, presents a hierarchy of needs. He argues that the level below is always more important than the one above. The lowest level consists of what could be called innate or primary needs; the above example of hunger belongs to this category. Higher up in the pyramid are the acquired or secondary needs. The above example of being an esteemed member of society fits into the second highest of these levels labelled “esteem”).

Maslow has received critique from Schiffman & Kanuk (2000), who argue that a person can fulfil a higher need regardless of the sequence of the levels and that some needs can fit into several different parts of the pyramid. Needs work as motivation to reach a goal that can be generic or product-specific (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2000). A generic goal to cleaner hair would be shampoo; a product specific goal would in turn be shampoo from one of the various brands in the market.

To summarize this segment, we underlined the aspects of consumers’ cognitive reasoning followed by theories on basic human needs. The above mentioned theories, which complement each other, are highly relevant for our study, since they will be applied in order to explain how end consumers are affected by marketing and the

Figure 6: Maslow's pyramid. The levels represent different parts of the hierarchy.
extensive information that surrounds them. Also, these theories are applicable for clarifying how to make a choice as well as discern whether the particular product or service is needed or not.

2.3 On marketing

2.3.1 Artefacts

Gagliardi, et. al. (2004) explains that when the object is being experienced in a physical, tangible reality it is acknowledged through sensory experiences. Organizations can, in this context, be seen not only as physical settings that produce products but also as a brand with the capacity to nourish and promote people’s senses. Artefacts can be defined as a form of message, existing either independently of its creator, or being perceived by the senses. Through these, organizations can contribute to promoting their goals.

In order to transfer organizational values and corporate image towards the customers everyone involved in the creation of aesthetic experience has to have the same understanding of the message the organization wants to forward to the market. As Strati, (1992, p. 576) has expresses it:

“The beauty of the organization is understood through direct knowledge, through experiences, through the organizational actors' own feelings of beauty, and through stories gathered from other organizational members and perceived as beautiful”.

"The beauty of the organization is understood through direct knowledge, through experiences, through the organizational actors' own feelings of beauty, and through stories gathered from other organizational members and perceived as beautiful".
2.3.2 Brand and brand equity

According to Franzen & Bouwman (2001) a brand can be defined as a sign or a symbol of recognition in form of logos, labels, names and colours which evokes associations in people and is commercially linked to saleable goods and services. It is a source of value to both consumers well as the companies. When the brand is purchased the buyer pays for external qualities of the product such as packaging, price, design and internal features. The company in turn, if maintaining a strong brand, achieves loyalty and steady future sales (Kapferer, 1997).

In the following picture, Donius (1984, in Franzen & Bouwman, 2001) examines how brands are being distinguished and what key underlying factors individuals associate them with:

![Conceptual associative model of the brand](image)

Figure 7: Conceptual associative model of the brand, Donius (1984) in Franzen and Bouwman (2001).

Around the very core of the product there are a more or less equally valued attributes. Not only is a shampoo a hair-cleansing device but there are several other aspects that are taken into consideration during the creation process. Such attributes include quality, design, package, colour, smell and much more. Gardner & Levy (1955) define the brand as more than a label, established to distinguish the company from its competitors. Instead they view it as a symbol which makes up a complicated net of various attributes which are sent out by the company. Later these are interpreted and re-valued by the customers and results in an overall public image. For the company, the feelings and attitudes the customers have towards the brands are essential not only to promote and sell any current products but also to attempt to launch new products under the same
brand umbrella. This view of the brand as a symbol that creates awareness, loyalty and associations has later become known under the summarizing definition brand equity (Kotler, et. al., 2005).

As Franzen & Bouwman (2001) puts it, “brands that succeed in strategically linking emotions to them are generally connected to products that have something to do with these emotions.” In other words, when the emotional response reflects the brand and also the very product itself, the brand-owner has succeeded in what all companies seek to do today, to create a unified message to the consumer.

2.3.3 Sensory marketing

Consumers respond to the overall product or service characteristics, both tangible and intangible, produced by a total product offering. Through sensory marketing, appealing to the consumers through smell, music, design and taste, companies not only differentiate their image and create a strong identity but also construct an overall satisfactory personal experience (Hultén, et. al., 2008). The figure below shows how the bodily senses; either separately or in a combined way, creates an experience and reaction from the consumer.

![The sensory experience](image)

**Figure 8: Senses attributing to a combined customer experience, Hultén et al. (2008).**

According to Hultén, et. al., (2008) description, the smell sense contributes to the creation of images in the consumer’s mind and builds attention around the selected item. Different positive smells improve the recall and recognition of the product or service.
The strategic goal related to *hearing*, is for the consumer to pay attention to a certain theme. The *sight* sense comes through the visual images such as product design, packaging or particular style. *Taste* strategy is reinforced through presentations of the environment. For instance customers can be offered coffee or snacks during the service in order to reinforce the total sensory experience. The fifth sense, touch, contributes by creating a feeling of form or consistency. It is therefore essential for people who consume the final product to make sure that they can touch the product of interest.

Kotler (1973) suggests that the key factor is actually the place, or in other words the sensory quality of the space in which the product or service is purchased. In some cases it is more influential than the offering itself and can overrule the primary product. The total design of an offering is apprehended through our individual senses. Effective surroundings serve as a useful strategic tool that influences purchasing behaviour. The right atmosphere does not only draw potential customers but also send a message about its position or status and therefore increase the probability for future purchases. The importance of the possibility for a purchase and the atmosphere is presented by Kotler (1973) below:

![Figure 9: The Casual Chain Connection Atmosphere and Purchase Probability, Kotler (1973).](image)

### 2.3.4 Experiential Marketing

This theory states that consumers are viewed not only as rational decision makers, concerned with functionality and personal benefits, but as emotional human beings, willing to achieve something extraordinary, for instance a memorable and enjoyable experience (Schmitt, 1999). In order to gain competitive advantage organizations offer consumers greater value for their money by providing differentiated offerings which are
perceived by consumers in a way that create those pleasurable experiences (Kotler, et. al., 2005). By generating the uniqueness effect and selecting certain attributes that purchasers value, organization are awarded with premium price which exceeds the extra costs required for the differentiation (Porter, 2004).

Pine & Gilmore (1998) present a model of the progression of economic value where they make a clear statement saying that organizations, in order to remain competitive have to “stage experiences that sell”. Moreover they state that commodities are fungible, goods tangible and experiences are memorable:

![Figure 10: The Progression of Economic value, Pine & Gilmore (1998).](image)

### 2.3.5 Customer relationship marketing

Due to growing product and service alternatives companies have to be aware of the reasons behind the determinants of customer value. Therefore it is essential to capture valuable information about the clients and end consumers by integrating diverse analytical tools into customer relationship management (CRM). The aim of such marketing strategies is to gain an overview of client purchases and sales, provide higher service quality and improve key customer relationships. (Kotler, et. al., 2005; Payne & Frow, 2005) It might be extremely costly to attain new customers therefore it is necessary to reduce the costs by maintaining existing clients and make sure that the corporate image together with superior customer value is transferred forward. (Aaker & McLoughlin, 2007)
Gummesson (2002) identifies 30 different relations in business; one of these is a relationship between a company and their customer’s customer. It occurs when a supplying company needs a middle hand to effectively bring goods into the market because it lacks the knowledge to keep a direct relation on its own. There is still a need for the parent company to understand and map the behaviour of the end consumer. This company can market directly to the end consumer in order to create exposure of the brand name and further give correct information on their product lines. Gummesson also points out that the opposite can be useful, for example when the geographical distance becomes an obstacle or when the manufacturing company is too diversified. It is instead the intermediary company that has a knowledge-advantage. In both situations it is important to distinguish that the downstream company is dependent on the supplies sent by the upstream company. Without regular deliveries the chain stops and the end-consumers’ demands cannot be satisfied.

For larger firms that sell products through other companies Gummesson (2002) describes the heavy influence the parent company has on the latter. Consultants and salespeople travel to the assigned smaller stores and provide them with marketing merchandise, educate them on the products they sell. This partnership makes it possible for the supplying company to bring out their own message to the end consumers while the partner company is educated on the products and also does not have to focus on creating their own in store advertisements.

2.3.6 Summary

In this segment we have explained the theories of branding, marketing and customer relationships which together are used to enhance and satisfy different needs for people to purchase and consume.

In the final summary of this theory chapter we have first described two views on beauty that consumers and organizations influenced by. We determined theories on conscious and sub-conscious experiences and need-goal relations. In the last segment we explained how companies focus and enhance these needs through marketing.

The link between our chosen theories is presented in the figure below. We have earlier explained the connection from “On People and Beauty” to “On Consumption” and in turn relation to “On Marketing”. The final arrow from “On Marketing” back to “On
People and Beauty” relate to the figure 1 which showed how companies, through fashion, advertising and consumer goods influence consumers’ view on the culture and society they act within and thus also their perception of beauty and consumption.

![Diagram](image)

Figure 11: A Summary of theories applied in this study. Self made model.
3 | Method

In this chapter we explain our methodological reasoning which is reflected in the choice of our method strategy as well as the practical approach of our study. Here we also argue for the implications of our used method and evaluation of the critical aspects we have had to consider in order to make our study, valid, reliable and objective.

“Methodology can be seen as a rhetorical attempt to persuade the reader of the scientific authenticity of the document... [and make sure] ...that the research is objective and valid.”

Johnson & Duberley, 2003, p. 108

It is challenging to grasp the aesthetic perceptions and judgments that occur when purchasing a product or service, based on multi-sensory experiences. As Warren (2008, p. 561) states there is “something as short as sudden pleasant rush of memory that “tingles” through us”. She believes that there is another challenge with gathering aesthetic data, namely that even though aesthetics is subjectively experienced and individually interpreted, the interpretations are socially constructed. This argument leads to the key problem of how to document the aesthetic judgments and experiences of our research participants which might differ and therefore not to influence it by our own perceptions.

However we as researchers have our own understanding and experiences about beauty and aesthetics that make up our personal knowledge. We can imagine ourselves in the situations described by our respondents and can independently reflect on or eliminate their false rationalities (Warren, 2008; Strati, 1992; Alvesson & Willmott, 1996).

3.1 Methodological reasoning

3.1.1 Positivism

Positivism is an epistemological position which promotes the appliance of methods from natural science which is conducted in an objective, value free way. Knowledge, which is confirmed by the senses, has a connection with reality that is created by the scientist’s neutral and passive registration of a variety of sensory contributions through the accumulation of objective data (Bryman & Bell, 2007; Johnson & Duberley, 2003).
Consequently knowledge is established through the gathering of facts in both the empirical and material world which exist independently of human actions (Bechara & Van de Ven, forthcoming). To summarize, according to positivism, only the observable reality can be studied and only verifiable facts are meaningful.

### 3.1.2 Interpretivism

Interpretivism is a contrasting perspective that identifies apparent differences concerning the alternative view of an object and the individual. A fundamental distinction is found here, in the fact that social action should be interpreted and explained by subjective meaning and that human action is therefore meaningful (Bryman & Bell, 2007). As Bechara & Van de Ven (forthcoming) explain the social world is subjective and through personal relationships we socially construct it. Alvesson & Willmott (1996), stress further that the aim of this paradigm is to explain how symbols are being used and meaning is created in this constantly constructed subjective world in which the members’ reality has to stay “objectively real” in order for them to fully appreciate and acknowledge it.

### 3.1.3 Critical theory

Critical theory, according to Johnson & Duberley (2003, p. 146) is an alternative dimension, which provides criticism for both the positivist and neo-positivistic interpretative approaches by eliminating the thought of the “theory-neutral observational language, showing how knowledge is underpinned by values and interests”. The main idea behind critical theory is the critique of doubtfulness in how the social reality is constructed and how vital social relationships are governed in a society. According to it human beings are oppressed and dominated by cultural, political and economical power relations that transform them into uncritical, predictable and passive individuals, unable to take advantage of their human potential (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2008; Murray & Ozanne in Belk R. W., 2006). When gaining access to new knowledge, human beings also have an extraordinary capacity to change their behaviour and adapt to existing social systems (Morrow & Brown, 1994). Human insecurity is strengthened by mass media and companies which are eager to control peoples’ consumption decisions and force them to make irrational choices (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2008).
Bechara & Van de Ven stress, in their forthcoming article, that the reality in critical theory, whether social or natural, is independent of human action, nevertheless it is constructed subjectively. As Alvesson & Willmott (1996 p. 48) continue, the aim of this critical reality is to not only “create or refine scientific knowledge of the world, but, rather, to challenge and transform relationships that are productive of socially unnecessary suffering”. As a result, the purpose is to make sure that reality is understood as it is and not being separated, as neither objective nor subjective, as a structure and meaning (Murray & Ozanne in Belk R. W., 2006; Johnson & Duberley, 2003).

It is important to clarify that the positivist social science perspective can be associated with an objective point of view and that a purely interpretive analysis argues for the opposing subjective standpoint. The objectivist philosophy presupposes that reality exists and that it can be captured by the appliance of scientific methods, which through objective elements such as questionnaires can provide information about the variables that create this reality. The subjective perspective denies the above by stating that the social world, on the opposite, is being constantly reproduced through subjective communication processes and can be captured by qualitative tools. (Morrow & Brown, 1994; Alvesson & Willmott, 1996).

Yet, the subjectivist approach argues that reality cannot be implied directly since the understanding of it is created through consciousness and subjectivity, both in turn are directly accessible to us and that the outside world is only indirectly knowable. The positivistic objectivist dimension on the other hand identifies and explains the causes of these social powerful factors but reduces it to causable variables. (Morrow & Brown, 1994). Hence as Alvesson & Willmott, (1996 p. 65) explain it, “facts cannot be separated from values”.

The aim with our critical theory-guided study is to eliminate the problem of a need to “‘objectively’ capture others’ interpretations without placing [our] own gloss upon the meaning of such findings” (Alvesson & Willmott, 1996, p. 114). This approach is also more suitable for our study, since it accepts the dual objective-subjective approach. Critical theory does not deny the causal facts and reasons behind certain behaviour which might occur; neither does it neglect the power of interpreting meaning or symbolic systems (Morrow & Brown, 1994).
3.2 Research approach

3.2.1 Triangulation

In our study we have applied a method of triangulation. The traditional triangulation is built by choosing a practical approach strategy in connection with multiple theories and other data sources (Patel & Davidson, 1991; Svensson, 1996). Nevertheless as Bechara & Van de Ven (forthcoming) state regarding the possibility to achieve satisfactory and valid results in a study, that the chosen method approach should match the studied phenomenon. In our research we were dealing with a quite complex phenomenon of aesthetics and beauty and therefore felt a need to combine multiple philosophies of science which are otherwise seldomly used in connection with each other.

This method of divergent triangulation allowed us to go past the limitations to solely apply theoretical problems which might partly provide the answer to a solution and neglect the alternative ways of looking at the subject. Bechara & Van de Ven (forthcoming) call it a “paradoxical thinking” where the balance should be found between opposite dimensions through shifting different levels of analysis, testing diverse positions and introducing new concepts.

In the figure below we present our summary of this alternative triangulation approach which takes a paradigm-crossing position, a simultaneous recognition of differences and similarities between them, which is achieved through interplay (Schultz & Hatch, 1996). In our “new” triangulation approach the aim is to introduce the reader to our interpretation of the methodological reasoning that argues for the research approach strategy.

Figure 12: Definition of methodological viewpoints. Self made model.
In our study, by identifying the interplay between our multiple dimensions, we could identify the convergence between how the reality is being understood and the subject of aesthetics. For that reason we state that by identifying somewhat contradictory elements from different philosophies and by comparing them to each other, we could achieve certain findings that can be applied to better understand the subject of our interest.

3.2.2 Type of study

We applied an abductive research method approach. It created what Dubois & Gadde (2002) call theory matching and a possibility for learning loops (Taylor, et al., 2002). By applying this research method strategy we worked with a level of flexibility and creativity that inductive and deductive research approaches lack due to the emphasis on already established theories or findings (Morrow & Brown, 1994; Kovács & Spens, 2005).

![Figure 13: The Abductive Research Process, Kovács & Spens (2005).](image)

As illustrated in the picture above from Kovács & Spens (2005) we began our abductive research with prior theoretical knowledge (0) which was, as explained, present before the study and served as a premise for us to notice the deviating real-life observation (1) in the market. This was, in our case, a demand for, and a market where, intangible needs and aesthetic affection seemed to overshadow utilitarian function and economical expenditure. The utility of the product was questionable, if compared to cheaper alternatives and the need instead was based on our perception of beauty and desire for attention and self-fulfillment. Further, the luxurious product itself was visibly hidden as opposed to other products, for instance cars and clothing where the product could be
easily displayed. After this we dealt with the process of theory matching (2) where we searched for suitable theories to fit with our observations. The process of creating new knowledge was in direct opposition to the deductive research method in which general information was used to create focused knowledge on a new situation. Our research results (3) were later summarized in final conclusions which could hopefully be used as a starting-point for future research (4).

3.2.3 Cross-sectional design
We applied a cross-sectional design, a widely used data gathering technique in social research studies. We carried out multiple interviews together with a survey questionnaire; these all together worked as primary tools to achieve satisfactory results (Neuman, 2006; Bryman & Bell, 2007).

Our survey was conducted with 25 randomly chosen hair salons in the central part of Linköping. This complemented the findings from our semi-constructed interviews (Bryman & Bell, 2007) with two brand managers and one ER assistant at P&G Salon Professional (SP), one of the larger firms in the professional hair care industry as well as interviews with 15 end consumers directly after a hair salon visit.

3.2.4 Type of data
By using a quantitative approach we were eager to uncover central issues in the matters of meaning, how people were influenced by aesthetics in the hair care industry and the main reasons behind their actions. In turn, the qualitative aspects extended our research by examining how social behaviour was affected by marketing in our chosen context (Bryman & Bell, 2007). By using a mixed research method technique we both read off the facts about the reality and gained access to the subjective interpretation of that reality (Johnson & Duberley, 2003).

In the following model we have combined our chosen triangulation strategy with our practical research approach and developed it:
As we explained in our opening chapters, beauty has an objective and subjective side to it. From the objective point of view, beauty derives from the external reality, irrespectively of our feelings or experiences. If beauty is perceived from the subjective perspective, we can actually decide whether the object is pretty or not. If combined, beauty has to be imprinted in the object in order for us to experience it.

After interviewing P&G SP representatives we gained an insight into their objective view on the beauty and aesthetics. Interviews with end consumers made it easier for us to translate their subjective interpretations of the beauty. We were interested of hair salons because they dealt with the objective goals set by the supplying companies and also the wishes of their customers in order to operate successfully. It is there were all parties met and interacted. Nevertheless it was important for us to notice that all companies involved, to some degree were influenced by the subjective views of their employees who must understand and translate the message sent by the supplying company to the outer environment and its members.

Regarding the choice of our research strategy we argue that a purely qualitative research based on interviews with the professional hair care company and end consumers could alone only generate results explaining their reasoning behind certain action or behaviour and not how these were put into practice in hair salons. Likewise, a purely quantitative research among hairdressers could fail to correctly show the influence the companies had on the hairdressers and ultimately the end consumer. By utilizing both methods and several perspectives we could show a full view of the process in which consumers, hair salons and supplier companies interacted with each other.

Figure 14: Summary of the practical execution of our study related to the concepts of beauty and methodological standpoints. Self made model.
3.2.5 Level of analysis

Bryman & Bell (2007) refer to four levels possible to analyze: individuals, groups, organizations and societies. This thesis was focused on the organizational level and individual level, including production companies, hair salons and end consumers in our chosen empirical research.

The aesthetic impact on product sales is a valuable area of interest in itself; however in our interviews with P&G SP their answers did not mirror such an objective reality (if such a reality even exists). Instead, we received the view of the phenomenon of aesthetics, interpreted and utilized in an objective way. The way in which people view and work with aesthetics within this industry told us one important thing, how the concept of aesthetics is realized in the market place. In other words, how a concept was turned into a tangible product and further distributed.

A second perspective was used on the individual level. The aim with exploring it was to gain information on how consumers perceived their own and others “hunt for beauty” (or lack thereof) which further was used for our arguments on the perception of beauty within the specific market for hair care products. The consumer views on the hairdresser and supplying companies did, in turn, give us insight into their habits and reasoning behind their choices.

To only research the theoretical aspects of beauty and aesthetics could generate a study on the human mind and cognitive response to the external influence. We seek to not only find answers to it but also analyse the subjects of beauty and aesthetics in its applied form within the market for beauty products.

From this diverse use of different levels of analysis combined with the interplay strategy between our chosen multiple paradigms we came to the conclusions which reflected their interaction.

3.2.6 Ontological standpoints

According to Johnson & Duberley (2003) the word *ontology* originated from Greece and is translated from “ontos” (being) and “logos” (theory of knowledge). As the authors explain, the ontological position emphasizes the essence of the phenomenon and the nature of its existence, in other words whether something is real or illusionary.
In the first part of our study, when conducting a survey with hair salons and interviews with P&G SP representatives, we maintained an objectivist ontological view which stresses that organizations can be seen as objective social entities that independently influence consumer behaviour (Morrow & Brown, 1994; Bryman & Bell, 2007; Johnson & Duberley, 2003). In other words, we looked closer to whether or not organizations are actual fundamental mechanisms which can greatly influence social conduct.

In the second part, when collecting qualitative data from our consumer interviews, we applied a pure subjectivist ontology approach. This contradictory dimension states that external social reality is a mirror of human consciousness and cognitive structure with no independent status (Johnson & Duberley, 2003). It explains, for instance, that the intangible value of a certain product is in fact a social creation which converts this collective illusion into constructed reality which is distinct from physical facts (Neuman, 2006; Bryman & Bell, 2007).

**Ontology**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Subjective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dualism dimension – a choice between two immeasurable alternatives, accept one and deny the other.</td>
<td></td>
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*Figure 15: The dimensions of ontology – a self adjusted picture of Burrel and Morgan in Johnson & Duberley (2003).*

However Johnson & Duberley (2003) state that the external reality cannot be separated from the human cognitive processes and that it is the observer’s – the subject’s - interpretation of particular experiences that is central. This leaves the external reality - the object - to become an outcome of this social construction. This ontological reasoning was again highly applicable to our study where the objective and subjective views colided and yet could be separated.

**3.2.7 Semiotics**

Semiotics studies symbols and signs and how people in society, by communicating with each other, construct meaning. In our case, semiotics helped us in the process of showing how individuals, by using their sensory experiences - taste for fashion and aesthetics - created meaning in products and brands. It is thereby essential for
organizations to identify these factors and apply them into their marketing strategies through packaging, product design and decorative display (Apéria & Back, 2004; Bryman & Bell, 2007; Belk et al., 2003).

In our case, by conducting interviews both in our chosen professional hair care company and with end consumers, we tried to get acquainted with their point of view and obtain knowledge on how organizations were dealing with customer perceptions about their brands and vice versa. Besides that, how by striving to constantly improve and stimulate their aesthetic marketing, P&G SP mediated their brand through hair salons to consumers. Also, how they interpreted the signs in the moment of purchase and shortly after it.

Yet when having ontology and semiotics in mind we identified certain problems which made our research somewhat complicated. The main problem was situated in how to pin down and explain real reasons behind certain behaviour. Opportunities for creation of meaning are unique to different surroundings (Schultz & Hatch, 1996). That is why material objects, expressed through signs and symbols created by companies, represent one meaning for one person and a different one for another.

Nevertheless we assume that it is difficult to know whether the meaning is real in a sense that a person, by signaling his choice to society in fact stands for it. Personal perceptions that are based on either true or false beliefs construct a social reality which in return controls future human actions. For example a person, who might be seen as highly credible by others, buys an expensive product- a dress, made of rare fabric, that in that particular moment means something special. However this person is actually aware that the fabric and its colouring process encourage child labour and cause unhealthy working conditions. Even though the dress is not so flattering on the figure and its material damages the environment, others who are not aware of the effects choose to follow the trend and buy it. It is then false expectations are being created and suppliers take advantage of it.

Indeed many companies associate their brands with succesfull and attractive people. For instance L’Oreal can, by showing pictures of Penelope Cruz and Scarlett Johansson combined with the company’s trade mark, created the impression that a person purchasing this particular product is also going to be succesfull. Certainly it is essential for the companies that their meaning expressed through symbols in form of brands are
associated with high quality, exclusiveness and create rather “unreal” experience for the buyers.

3.3 Practical execution

3.3.1 Survey

For a copy of the survey please see Appendix 1.

According to a press representative from the Swedish Hairdresser Employer Association there are 18,000 hair salons registered in Sweden of which 149 are located in Linköping. The population used in our survey could be defined as the hair salons situated in the city of Linköping that sold professional hair care products from one or several brands.

The sample of our chosen hair salons was what Trost (2007) call a convenience sample, the dense amount of salons in the area gave us maximum coverage in relation to our time and resources. In choosing what salons to visit we conducted what Trost further identifies as an unbound random sample, utilizing no method at all in choosing our sample salons. We decided to focus on the centrally localized beauty salons for two reasons. Firstly, we were eager to maximize the number of them in our immediate surroundings. Secondly, we assumed that they would be more aware of latest fashions and trends as well as they were more exposed to consumers, conscious of their physical appearance. Moreover we believed that hair salons situated in the rural parts of the city paid more attention to availability and quick service for their customers rather than chasing after latest fashion.

Our criterion of the store to sell professional hair care products was fulfilled firstly through a visual inspection of it before entering and secondly confirmed through the question in the beginning of the survey. To ensure a person with knowledge of the products would fill in the survey we emphasized on the importance of it verbally when handing over our survey.

Our choice of location for the study did not directly affect the result as there were no apparent demographic or economic reasons to claim that Linköping was a city that differed distinctly from other Swedish cities regarding consumer behaviour or attitudes towards particular brands. We assumed that no company that sold products within the
industry had any noticeable historic or current connection to the city. Any such link would otherwise have had a noticeable effect on the behaviour of both the hair salons and the end consumers, partly because of the favourable marketing communications they received and partly because of the possible region-patriotic ties between the citizens and the company.

It was important for us to inform the respondents about the nature of our study and in that way create a feeling that hair salons, by collaborating, could contribute to the knowledge of aesthetics in day to day life. Also, our respondents were anonymous and we did not expose which salons we visited. As explained above, all except one kindly agreed to participate with only a few failing to fill out the form due to time shortage.

The survey was of a high level of standardization with the same questionnaire questions. The questions were also of a high level of structure with almost exclusively closed answering options.

Due to the complexity of the purpose of our thesis our survey questions mirrored this to some extent and had to be of a subjective character. In several questions we had to accept that the respondents themselves had to define the meaning of certain words used throughout the survey. For example the words 'importance', or “common” as well as the extensively used scale with extremes set as “fully agree” and “fully disagree”. Several of our questions related to the same subject to ensure that the respondent’s answers were similar even when the formulation of the questions changed.

Survey respondents were also induced to create estimates in order to answer certain questions, such as the importance their customers put on their variety of products for sale. We were aware that such estimates could vary in accuracy between respondents. Further, we asked the respondents to answer questions regarding their own reputation in the minds of their customers, this could possibly have had the respondents grading themselves based on how they wanted to be perceived, not how they actually were seen in the eyes of the customers. Because of this we have been careful to draw any conclusions from their answers without receiving confirmation of the same results when comparing them to the answers received from end consumers.
3.3.2 Interviews with P&G Salon Professional

*For a copy of the interview questions please see Appendix 2.*

Early on in our research we understood that the nature and state of aesthetic representation in marketing was an abstract process which cannot be measured only on a quantitative scale. Neuman (2006, p. 197) states that “*precise questions in a questionnaire give reliable measures, but there is a danger of losing the subjective essence of the construct*”.

In order to create deeper understanding in our survey research we chose to conduct three interviews with P&G SP employees who worked in professional hair care industry and had an insight in the matter we are eager to investigate. Our choice of P&G SP division was made based on its wide representation in Scandinavia, ensuring extensive knowledge on the Swedish consumption patterns. In the P&G Nordic headquarters in Stockholm we interviewed one brand manager – Aurora, and an ER-assistant – Belita. A few days later we carried out a telephone interview with a second brand manager – Callidora. All names were fictive because of our respondents wish to be anonymous.² They agreed to answer our questions only if the whole interview procedure would take no more than one hour per each person. As a result, it was essential for us to make sure that interview questions were constructed in a way that would cover all the aspects of the subject we wanted to get information about.

The P&G respondents were given an opportunity to get acquainted with our interview-guide few days before the actual meeting took place in order to minimize unnecessary confusion and future uncertainties. We also presented our work by giving access to a short description of the key points of the study. Interviews were conducted with a low degree of standardization and with an open structure. A low degree of structuring was appropriate in our case as well, especially when there was a need created to follow up certain questions and generate a natural flow in the interview procedure. Foddy (1995) points out that the main advantage with this choice of open questioning is that

² We chose names closely related to the concept of beauty. Aurora is the name of the princess in the famous Disney adaption of the classic tale of the Sleeping Beauty, Belita is Spanish for “little beauty” and Callidora is Greece for “gift of beauty”.

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respondents can actually express themselves without being influenced by the researchers’ suggestions and comments. In addition, when using open questions, Foddy (1995) explains that the answers contain a larger amount of insight in comparison to specific questions asked that instead limit the amount of knowledge gained.

The semi-structured interviews consisted of our chosen areas of interest related to P&G’s products and sales process. By utilizing such structure for the interviews we could easily expand into new areas brought up in previous questions instead of being forced to go from one pre-determined question to another - something that would have limited the depth and flow of our interviews. A recording device was used during the interviews to make sure that material gathering was as accurate as possible. This technique was favoured over note taking because of the open structure of the interviews and our attempt to seek longer and more complex answers to each subject.

3.3.3 Interviews with consumers

For a copy of the interview questions please see Appendix 3.

Due to the abstract matter of our subject we needed to gain access to how end consumers viewed the subjective aspects of beauty and aesthetics. Initially we asked people in our nearest surroundings, through the social media channel Facebook to answer the questions regarding their experiences when visiting the hairdressers. However we decided to neglect the idea because the answers could have been influenced by their personal relation to us and could be difficult to validate.

Instead we conducted 15 interviews with consumers who had just recently been serviced at five different hair salons that we had previously visited for our survey study. The respondents were chosen through an unbound random sample (Frost, 2007) and no attention was paid to whether they had purchased any product during this specific visit or not. By not questioning them on this particular visit we believe to have received their general opinion unaffected by their recent contact with the hair salon.

The interviews were conducted face to face with a closed structure having all respondents answer to the same questions. They were informed of the purpose with our study and told that they would be completely anonymous. Just as with the survey, where we took a convenience sample of the population, we were careful not to draw any generalizations outside the immediate subject of this thesis.
Freud (in Solomon, 1992) in his work on the human mind emphasizes the importance of unconscious reasons for various purchases. This complicated our attempt to study the consumer behaviour in markets such as the one we have chosen for our master’s thesis. If consumers have made a purchase based largely on impulse and emotional experiences they might have, afterwards, defended their purchase using rational arguments such as “I might need it in the future”, or “it was not so expensive”.

3.4 Evaluation of data

3.4.1 Reliability and validity

As Neuman (2006) states, no matter the research methods present, there is always a strong desire for reliable and valid measurements in order to present a credible and convincing survey. Apart from the fact that reliability and validity are almost impossible to fully achieve, these terms are also interpreted differently irrespectively of the chosen research processes. In order to present a well designed study and improve quality in our quantitative data we were conscious that our questionnaire results would reflect only accurate information and that measurements used were free from random errors (Hayes, 2008).

When reliability was more or less achieved, we felt that validity could also be improved in our quantitative research. The results showed that we were actually measuring the fact that there was a need for beauty products which highlight more than the basic personal requirements. Besides, as we mentioned before, our chosen population group, represented in Linköping, was highly valid as the same results could have been achieved if applied on a substitute from another demographic population.

According to Svensson & Starrin (1996) regarding the formulation of interviews, reliability signifies a slightly different meaning since the outcome of interviews can be influenced by the way a participant is feeling in particular moment. Whether the response is reliable or not it must be judged from the existing situation and thereby indicate that two identical questions can produce quite different answers depending on the time and context. Consequentially, it was important to us that the interview respondents had an opportunity to examine and validate their answers in advance.
3.4.2 Causality

Bryman & Bell (2007) explain that the concept of causality in research implies that certain attributes will have some degree of inter-connectedness and temporal priority over them. Causality is focused on such occasions where the first attribute is independent of the second one, while the latter is dependant of the first. For us, causality has been of less importance compared to the similar concept of relationship. The difference between the two is that in a relationship several different parts affect each other; while causality, as explained, is a one way effect. In the relationship we identified how end consumers, hair salons and supplying companies affected each other in a cycle of constant change. If we were to study only one or two of these dimensions we would have missed the full picture. It was important to recognize that, because of this relationship to each other; a phenomenon found in one dimension did not necessarily belong entirely to that dimension. It could instead be resulted in changes in another one. It is this connection that we attempted to analyze and our purpose of the thesis was built around it.

3.4.3 Generalization

In order to draw conclusions which can be generalized Neuman (2006) explain that it is essential to make sure that the collected data is of a high quality, scientifically relevant, easily accessible and applicable regardless of the time perspective. We have firstly used sources directly related to our purpose and immediate focus; secondly in our empirical research we sought to receive our respondents’ general view and not short-lived opinions. This was achieved through questions formulated to receive our respondents’ general view rather than in connection to a recent specific action such as a newly undertaken purchase or service.

Bryman & Bell (2007) explain how, even if a generalization can be properly drawn from a sample of the population, it might still be difficult to further generalize outside the immediate organization, city or society which the sample has been taken from. In our case this could refer to the town of Linköping which could not be necessarily applicable in other research studies.

Regarding the qualitative aspect of our research Bryman & Bell (2007) show how a generalization of our findings would be even harder to evaluate. This was most evident when our respondents and others alike, were not supposed to be representatives of the
population. Because of this common issue with qualitative research the authors further simplify it by explaining how researchers should “generalize to theories, not populations”.

On discussing the abductive research method we mentioned the possibility for future articles to utilize our data and conclusions as secondary data or as a hypothesis. This could of course, if successful, create a stronger generalization of the claims proposed in this thesis. The abductive research in itself, as used here, did prohibit a generalization to other markets because of bringing new theory from one or a few empirical observations.

3.4.4 Objectivity

Our interpretations of the views, models and claims of the authors have been undertaken in the context of their writings in relation to our own context. Theories we have applied in our research represented different eras, the historic definitions of beauty facing the contemporary modern theories on marketing aesthetics. As a result, we were provided with some interesting clashes and which made us to carefully consider the meaning of beauty and its relation to, and representation in, the modern society.

On a more specific level our interviews have been carefully executed in order to let our own possible bias affect the outcome as little as possible. We have been aware of the complicated structure of qualitative interviews and the importance of open questions and a calming environment (Starrin & Renck, 1996) that was free of emotionally biased questions and vague formulations. This is not to say that we believed that our findings would reflect an objective reality. As Lantz (2007) explains it is neither possible nor desirable to perceive our findings from interviews as reflecting an objective reality or truth. Instead it is the individual’s subjective view of the phenomenon that we were studying.

3.4.5 Summary

In this chapter we described our research approach and the study design. We would like to remind the reader that we focused on analyzing the complicated relationship between P&G SP, hair salons and end consumers. We will further examine how and what message P&G SP sends to the end users who consume their hair care products. Also, how hair salons interact with their clients and examine the importance of the highly placed goals to sell the products. Yet, the most interesting aspect is how end consumers
are persuaded by the promises of improved physical appearance and if their subjective view on beauty and aesthetics influence and can be influenced throughout this process. Because of this complex relationship we feel that it is essential to have the whole picture in mind but also critically analyze and combine empirical results.
4 | Empirical findings

In this chapter we provide the reader with information from our empirical studies. First we present the results from our interviews with P&G Salon Professional representatives and end consumers. The chapter ends with a presentation of our survey findings. For a copy of survey questions see Appendix 1, likewise, for interview questions see Appendix 2 and 3.

4.1 Interviews

4.1.1 Company introduction

P&G is one of the world’s leading companies manufacturing and selling branded consumer packaged goods according to the company’s homepage. As P&G’s annual report of 2009 state, in 2009 the company has positioned as the 20th largest company in sales and the 9th largest corporation in profit among the companies listed on the Fortune magazine’s top 500 companies-list.

It is made up of Three Global Business Units (GBUs), which altogether are responsible for overall strategic development of the brands and development of new product innovations. P&G is leading in the beauty and grooming segment of the market with its 13% share (P&G Annual report, 2009). The circle diagram below shows that the beauty segment (24% if the grooming segment is excluded from it) consists of female beauty products such as cosmetics, fragrances and deodorants, personal cleansing, skin care and hair care (both Retail and Salon Professional). The most popular brands here are, among others, Head & Shoulders, Pantene, Wella and Olay in skin care segment.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{2009 NET SALES} \\
\text{(\% of total business segments)}
\end{align*}
\]

![Figure 16: Net sales for the Beauty and Grooming GBU (2009).](image-url)
The company has been operating in Western Europe since 1930 and today the region markets over 100 brands and include around 20% of the P&G total business share. In 2004 P&G acquired Wella, a German hair care firm and in 2005 took in Gillette in order to sustain a competitive advantage. Procter & Gamble Sweden AB is divided into two divisions, P&G Salon Professional and P&G Retail.

The Swedish hair care market accounted for approximately 800 billion SEK last year according to the Chemical-Technical Association (KTF) and P&G Salon Professional total market share was 17.5% of the Swedish hair care industry. According to P&G, other key players in the professional hair care segment are L’Oreal, Goldwell, Schwarzkopf and a few other smaller companies.

P&G Salon Professional brands such as Lifetex, System Professional (SP), Graham Webb, Wella, Sassoon and Sebastian among others are sold exclusively in the hair salons. Wella Sebastian and Sassoon are brands which are distributed to the customers by 28 sellers. Customer service and hairdresser shop takes care of the rest of the orders.

4.1.2 Interviews - P&G Salon Professional

The first two of our three interviews, with a brand manager and an ER-assistant, were conducted at P&G’s office in Stockholm on the 15th of March, 2010. The third interview was made over the phone the week after on the 22nd with a second brand manager.

The questionnaire used for the first two interviews was structured around brands, products and the importance of beauty and the presence of aesthetic experience, were the main reason behind the choice of a purchase of professional hair care products, the role of the hairdresser, creation of sensory experiences and much more. In all interviews questions were developed with the follow up-questions and a discussion on the subject rather than a strict question-answer structure. This was partly because of the somewhat tacit nature of the subject of our interest since we wanted to receive as much valuable information as possible.

4.1.2.1 Interviews with Aurora and Callidora

We implemented an initial interview with Aurora followed by an interview over the phone with Callidora. Due to similarities in their answers we chose to present Callidora’s answers in connection to Aurora’s. Interview with Aurora was longer and
used for clarification regarding much of P&G SP reasoning. Callidora interview was conducted in a way to provide verification on many of the answers we received from Aurora and further confirm that the information was correct.

Both Aurora and Callidora have worked in the company for ten years and are employed as assistant brand managers. Aurora describes her job as “fun, stimulating and demanding. The market is incredibly fun to work in and the hairdressers are an enthusiastic group of people that like glitter and glamour”.

Aurora describes the qualities of working in a large business but does find some problems regarding the unusual structure of the hair care industry where hair salons keep their business on a small scale. As both Aurora and Callidora describe them, they are “artists, not businessmen”. The structure in the P&G SP segment stands in strong contrast to the retail market in which P&G is a supplier for 50 larger customers, whereby each of them might order four “stools” with products compared with the few boxes hair salons may order.

Nevertheless any customer interested in their products has to sell them in connection to a hair salon. The main reason behind this is that the products are aimed for professional use and require someone who the end consumer can consult with to ensure that they get the right product. For instance, 200 SEK might be seen as a major cost for a shampoo and obviously the buyer wants it to really work. If a retail-alternative is purchased for 25 SEK the buyer will in most cases not expect tremendous results. It is interesting to note that the sales figures for P&G SP did not drop notably during the financial recession experienced by the majority of industries in the past year and Aurora puts forward her explanation that consumers may want to still have something luxurious that makes them feel good in hard times.

Aurora remarks that hair colouring is P&G SP strongest business segment in which they are also market leaders with a long history of providing hair dressing schools with colouring products. Besides the valuable brand exposure the company also provides the students with an opportunity to get accustomed to companies specific colours and improve the product usage skills.

When launching new product lines and brands the success largely depends on providing merchandise, commercial material to be used in the store, newest information about the
products, storage space as well as a clean and good looking packaging design. The package needs to stand out somewhat or even be “disruptive” in a group of similar looking products placed on a shelf since it is, according to Aurora, an effective way to draw attention to the particular brand. If products disappear they do not generate any sales.

P&G SP do, according to Aurora, mostly focus on the female representatives of the society simply because of their higher tendency to buy beauty products. Especially colouring and hair styling are closely related to the female gender. Male customers, who she believes are increasing in numbers, are more accustomed to using styling products such as wax or gel. Looking at age differences Aurora believe the price is the largest factor in deciding which products the consumers choose. Older customers tend to buy high premium products because they can afford the higher price. Younger people are more prone to buy the trendier products.

P&G SP’s sales-people are essential since their job is to continuously visit hair salons in their pre-determined districts to pick up orders or advertise new products; new marketing campaigns are done six times a year. The relation between P&G, sales staff and the hair salons are according to Aurora and Callidora extremely important. The most significant factor contributing to the success of a new brand is the involvement and actions of a hairdresser since no advertising is done on TV and in magazines; something that Callidora explains is decided on a higher level in the organization.

Without the hairdresser’s recommendation about the product and haircut, sales are hard to increase. Having the hairdresser to apply and show the company’s product is an invaluable way of receiving positive exposure. Because of the hairdressers’ importance P&G SP works hard to constantly educate them. Aurora explains that in Stockholm their division have four hairdressers working full time on teaching the correct usage of their products; what colours to use and mixing different colour combinations. Likewise a great number of seminars and shows are conducted in different locations each year. All together great care is put into educating hairdressers both in P&G professional products but also in how to conduct sales with consumers visiting the hairdressers. Callidora explains that hairdressers lack knowledge in, pointing to the previously mentioned statement that hairdressers are more artists than salespeople.
When asked about the largest benefits from professional hair care products as opposed to cheaper retail alternatives Aurora first mentions the product itself, which consists of concentrated substance in comparison to products available in a retail markets. Second she brings up the advisory role of the hairdresser. The complete process of visiting the store, chatting with the hairdresser, seeing on site the usage of different products and learning about them largely contribute to convincing the consumer to actually make a purchase. It is rare to see people who visit a hair salon only to buy a product. Aurora also adds that it is important that the visitor does not feel as if being pushed into making a certain purchase. The hairdresser has a “double” role, both as a service provider but also as somewhat of a friend or even as a “mini-psychologist”.

P&G SP closely follow trends and Aurora says that they like to think that they are the forerunners in the business. When a new hair colour is launched into the market, the company attempt to benefit from it months in advance. In today’s market people are becoming more trend conscious which leads to the increase of the amount of new fashion styles making it easier for P&G and others alike to uphold their sales numbers. Calcidora mentions the global level trends are created at and all actions P&G SP do in product development are reactions to global trends. The Trend Vision Collection\textsuperscript{3} P&G releases every year is based on new trends spotted on the market. In connection to this is the International Trend Vision Awards\textsuperscript{4} which both Callidora and Aurora mention as an incredibly large and competitive show where hairdressers from all over the world compete in interpreting and developing contemporary trends.

Aurora also explains how P&G SP can provide furniture and equipment for new hair salons as well as interior design, colours and such. This is another example showing the importance of improving and also creating new relationships with their customers. The aesthetic look is another factor contributing to the overall success of the hair salon, how clean is and what furniture, décor and display signs that are used, among others. A luxury environment is needed to match the expensive products. The message P&G SP

\textsuperscript{3} The Trend Vision Collection is presented every year by P&G Salon Professional where usually four stand-out trends are being presented to the public and translated into different hairstyles.

\textsuperscript{4} International Trend Vision Awards is an event held every year where hairdressers get an opportunity to interpret the latest Trend Vision directions and gain positive exposure.
try to create around their products has to be visible in some way and processed down to the end consumer.

4.1.2.2 Interview with Belita

Belita is an ER-assistant for P&G SP. Her position is fairly new to this division and it has been created due to changes one year ago in the way the company deals with their media channels. The contact with journalists and magazines was earlier maintained through advertising agencies. The change from this outsourced alternative to internal PR-responsible was done to easier keep a closer relation to the journalists and give them a personal treatment and improve service availability. Important in her work process is to determine what segment and thus which media channels that might be interested in different products and to market them in the correct way.

We have mentioned earlier that no advertising is done by P&G; instead Belita takes care of P&G SP exposure in magazines and newspapers by a release whenever a new product is launched or sent out for implementing comparisons between diverse brands for the readers with the hope of receiving a recommendation. Such praise from an objective evaluator does, according to Belita’s convincement, receive higher credibility than any advertisement. Therefore, to Belita, beauty journalists play a trustworthy role similar to the role Aurora pins to the hairdresser.

When asked about the reason behind P&G’s choice to spend money on any regular advertising Belita points to what Aurora brought up in our previous interview - that professional products such as those sold in hair salons are purchased in a dialogue with the hairdresser who, with a role of being a professional, can take care of the visitor’s hair and decide what would be the most fitting choice. Retail alternatives give a buyer little idea about the outcome of final result because it is, as a respondent calls it, a bit of a gamble if the right choice has been made based on a hair type and personal needs. On another hand, by purchasing professional products end consumer has equally high expectations on the final results similar to the look which has been created before leaving the hair salon. As Belita states, no one is going to stop a buyer in the retail store and say “Excuse me, is this for you? You are supposed to use this for your hair!” As a result P&G intend to create an image around their products as if they were luxurious and exclusive. The image is extremely essential, together with the latest technology, the
newest ingredients and mixtures, by selling them in clean and fresh looking salons with the help from a professional.

Regarding the consumers, Belita strongly believes that a distinction can be made between two kinds of people when it comes to the visual characteristics of any product: one group of people who always know exactly what they need and pay little attention to the bottle while another group remains largely undetermined and impulsive. This latter might be more prone to base their choice partly because of the aesthetic attributes of the packaging. To further expose a product to those users who are less aware of the alternatives the hairdressers can use a product while working on the hair and put the bottle right in front of the customer, the combined effect of seeing the bottle and the fantastic new hair creates a need for the product. We are, as Aurora jokingly added, “as fixated on the appearance of the product as we are when we choose a date”.

4.1.3 Interviews with end consumers

Our interview questions with consumers took place outside five hair salons in Linköping on the 26th April 2010 and collected immediately after the dialogue which approximately lasted fifteen minutes. The questions, which can be followed in Appendix 3, were divided into three parts. The first category was structured in a way to receive information on our respondents’ habits regarding hair salons and service personnel. The second section aimed at the specific products our respondents use, why they use them and how they came to buy them. The final section asked about our respondents views on beauty and ugliness, in other words how they defined the two concepts and how they viewed and were seen by others.

4.1.3.1 At the hairdresser

Most of our respondents described that they very rarely change the hairdresser they go to. The underlying reason is that they prefer the security provided by their regular hairdresser, “it feels safe to go to the one I know” as one of our respondents put it. Those who answered that they change where they get their hair done once in a while described a feeling of excitement and fun that came together when visiting a new hairstylist and receiving a new look. The price was also of importance for a third of our respondents, both as a reason for staying with one hair salon or as something that could make our respondents inclined to change to another. The appearance of the salon is of a lesser importance when compared to the individual hairdresser and styling skills. The stylist
has to be first and foremost a good listener, able to understand and recognize personal needs but also kind and fun to talk to. All more or less agree with this - the hairdresser has the delicate job of being both a professional in his work but at the same time a friend or acquaintance that you can talk to about everyday matters. All respondents explain that they often talk to the hairdresser during the service, sometimes to much according to two respondents. The appearance of the hairdresser splits our answers into two distinctive sides; one is not paying much attention to the hairdressers’ appearance; the second side describe how they do put this into consideration. For example out of fear for receiving a similar hairstyle and look.

The large majority of people asked described how they had at one point regularly bought products recommended by their hairdresser. Even if there seemed to be a high degree of commitment to a specific hairdresser the relation was of a delicate nature. Almost all of our respondents described how they simply changed hair salon once they received a dissatisfactory service or purchased a product from their previous hairdresser. To change hair salon because of a disappointing result is not directly related to the hair salon but, as one of the consumers explained; “I received promises that the product would do wonders for my hair but it looked the same as it did with my usual products.” Still, the majority has never felt forced to buy any certain products by the hairdresser, however a slight majority had at one or several occasions bought products they had no real use for.

4.1.3.2 The products

Very few of our respondents could be considered frequent shoppers of professional hair care products. Instead many replied how they buy certain professional hair care products on a regular but not frequent basis. It could be a shampoo, balsam or styling product that they find highly effective for their hair. It was much more common to buy cheaper retail alternatives which were more often used on a day to day basis. More advanced styling products were used by all our respondents but less frequently than shampoo or balsam.

On deciding which product to buy the most significant aspect to consider was what the product claimed to do for the hair and if it was designated for their type of hair, but several respondents also mentioned how the only buy brands they are accustomed to and trust or that they pay close attention to how expensive or cheap the product is.
However it was not common to mention this and only a small amount of respondents regularly sought to buy products that were on sale. Many also took the recommendations of the hairdresser or friends into consideration with the former slightly outnumbering the latter. One respondent emphasized on how the hairdresser should have good knowledge on the subject, another respondent was of the opposing opinion that they just try to sell their most expensive products. Fashion magazines were not frequently read and mostly seen as advertising and not as objective recommendations. Very few of our respondents felt that they followed the latest trends in hair styles or products and they rarely changed their hairstyle in any major way.

The aesthetic qualities of the product (aroma, design, colours and product placement) were all thought of as vital before the purchase by almost all respondents. Moreover it was the importance of the smell of the product which one respondent described as having to be “discreet and fresh”; another expressed how he was “drawn to good looking packages”. This was mostly related to impulsive, one person explained how she now simply buys the products she is used to, without inspecting the aesthetic qualities of similar alternatives.

4.1.3.3 Beauty

On questions regarding beauty and ideal the answers were divided into two categories; inner beauty (“confidence”, “wellness”, “happiness”, “openness”, “personality”, “humour”) and visual beauty (“thin”, “fashionable clothes”, “body language”, “nice hair”, “white teeth”). Both sections were important in the overall perception of a person. Without inner qualities the appearance has fallen flat, likewise, it gave the personality a chance to shine through. Several respondents also had some trouble with defining or accepting that there was some kind of ideal that people could live up to, instead it was more important to accept and believe in yourself and your appearance.

On ugliness the answers were more focused on appearance. For many ugliness was associated with people who try too hard and receive an artificial look or just come around as to be over the top. One respondent explain it as a lack of taste which results in copying others appearance. For many others ugliness was instead seen in a more classic way for instance sloppy look, unhygienic hair or skin and tasteless clothing.
Further, the great majority felt that appearance could be improved with the help of beauty products, through creating the same look that media and fashion regard as “correct”. Several respondents also felt that they were highly aware of their own look and that their hair was very important to them. However, a so called “bad hair day” was not too disastrous even if few of our respondents mentioned how they were interrupted by it and thought about it a lot during the day. On the appearance of others all respondents felt that they noticed if a friend or colleague has received a new haircut. Regarding whether they were bothered if someone around them had messy or dirty hair people were less declined to notice or complain.

For almost all of our respondents the environment (media, other groups of people) affected how they should look and many of them believed that by possessing good looks one could be received with confidence owning a fresh and fashionable appearance. Regarding beauty as being constant or changing over time, many explained how they felt that their style, just as other’s changed over time together with their personal evolvement, media’s influence and the fashion industry.

4.2 Survey

The survey was handed out on the 16th of March, in the opening hours. From the 25 survey questionnaires that were handed out we collected 20 fully completed survey forms on the following day. Out of the remaining five, four were not filled out due to a shortage of time; one was only very partly answered for unknown reasons. The survey was divided into five sections; customers, products, brands, aesthetics and supplying companies.

4.2.1 Customers

First we asked our respondents to give an estimate on the number of first time visitors as opposed to returning visitors and also how many of the customers that were female (the choice of using the female rather than the male form was random). The results to the two questions indicated first that the majority of the participants had 21-40% of their customers belonging to the first time visit-category; the rest stated a lower degree of 0-20%. Secondly they showed that in general the salons were visited by a slightly larger degree of female customers.
In addition we asked the hairdressers to rate the importance of a number of attributes when attempting to build a long term relation with the customer. The attributes were graded on a five point scale spanning from “agree completely” to “do not agree at all” with an option to answer “no opinion”. The graph below shows the question categories as well as the average score they received.

![Graph showing average scores for various attributes.

Table 1: Importance of certain attributes when strengthening customer relations.]

All scores were generally high with the quality of the service itself reaching a top score together with customer approach, the latter being largely similar to communication which received the third highest score. Less important aspects were marketing, window display and price. The answers we received later in the survey made it apparent that few hair salons paid much, if any, attention to marketing in television or newspapers. The last question in the customer-section was phrased as to what extent the hairdressers’ attempted to encourage the customer to buy any products during the visit, the answers here indicated that it indeed was common practice to attempt to make a sale.

4.2.2 Products and brands

When asked if hair salon customers visited a particular hair salon due to the availability of the professional hair care products, we received strong indications that this was the case. With the same measurements we asked if the hair salon customer was influenced to make a purchase from what the hairdresser says and uses and received an equally
high indication that they in fact do so. The scores were noticeably lower regarding the influence consumers friends have on what product they purchased.

Regarding the ability of brands to affect the consumers’ product choice we received indication that while the brand was of some importance it was not of the highest priority compared to the hairdressers’ opinion or the price of the product. The next question regarded the relation between the brand and the store, formulated as “it is important for your store to offer a wide range of brands”. This was seen as less important and received a lower score.

4.2.3 Aesthetics

In this segment we asked our respondents on the aspects regarding the choice of a hair style. Firstly, “customers often ask about the most recent hair trends and styles” (yes, agree). Secondly, “you have a great influence on which hair style the customer chooses” (strong yes, strongly agree). Thirdly, “women are pickier when they choose which hair colour or hair style to get” (somewhat agree).

Stylists were also asked to rank and choose from different alternatives the top three attributing aspects in their customers’ choice of a luxury product. These included: your opinion, friends’ recommendation, advertising, price, brand, design and product placement. The results are presented below with dark blue columns representing the first rank position, light blue the second rank position and green the third one. An overwhelming amount of respondents chose their own opinion as the most important.

![Bar chart showing the importance of aspects when choosing a product.](chart)

*Table 2: Important aspects when choosing a product.*

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5 We were inclined to believe that females are more trend-conscious and especially aware of their hair-does compared to men when choosing their hair styles. Thus the question was formulated with this in mind.
The following graph shows the results to the next question where the importance of a number of attributes relating to the product was rated. As opposed to the previous question we sought individual scores for each variable, focusing on the more closely related attributes of the brand. The utilitarian property did reach a very high score in comparison to the three remaining options: design, brand and price that received a lower score.

![Graph showing importance scores for Utility, Brand, Price, and Design]

**Table 3: The importance of various attributes.**

Next we wanted to find out how respondents ranked the aesthetic attributes in comparison to each other from a scale 1 to 4 with 1 being the highest rank. The categories scent, visual design, size and consistency of the content of a product are presented below.

Lastly the respondents we asked to agree or disagree with the statement “customers choose product mainly based on their aesthetic rather than practical attributes”. There was a consensus in the answers with a majority heavily leaning towards the don’t agree-answer.

![Bar graph showing importance scores for Scent, Consistency, Size, and Visual design]

**Table 4: Importance of aesthetic attributes.**
4.2.4 Suppliers

Hair salons had regular contact with between three and four suppliers. Whether such contact was important or not for their relationship the great majority thought that it indeed was.

Further, on average three of the supplying companies that the hair salons had contact with also provided education, a bit less offered events or contests which hairdressers could participate in. Lastly, between two and three companies attempted to influence how the hair salon conducted their business and presented their products.

As an example of how they did this we present a short extract of respondents answers presented below:

- Representative salon for their products and brands (twice)
- Information meetings, advertising material, “transfer their company values” (twice)
- Workshops “make us believe their products are superior” (twice)
- Evening seminars, product info and expos.
- Window displays and campaigns.
The aim of this chapter is to analyze and interpret the findings drawn from our interviews with P&G and end consumers together with survey findings from our hair salons. We have structured our analysis on the basis of the end consumers’ perspective. For a person to return to a hair salon there has to be an initial relation and bond between him and the service provider. The client has to care about his appearance and the aim with the visit is to satisfy a certain need. The overall experience, the service performance and the products result in a purchase.

5.1 Relationships

First of all we feel that it is essential to illustrate for the reader the importance of a close relationship between the parties we have investigated. The picture below shows how P&G, the company supplying the products and hairdressing equipment; end consumers who actually utilize the product or service and hairdressers, acting as an intermediate, interact. Even though we have not investigated the society in our research closer we are aware that it controls us and we are influenced by it.

Beauty is perceived differently depending on the kind of experience it arouses. Also the way beauty is observed rules the outcome of the decisions made by others which can hence easily change our perception of it. Although the views of beauty and aesthetics are different we have identified that there has to be a consensus on what is pretty and common understanding in order to enjoy the aesthetic benefits of beauty.
In the theoretical introduction we explained that organizations act as artifacts, (Gagliardi, 1996; Rafaeli & Vilnai-Yavetz, 2004) and by signalling the positive image to the environment they create meaning for their customers. Retaining a competitive advantage towards the competitors, inspiring the employees and key customers can be more than enough for maintaining a business success. Interviews with P&G showed that it is vital to move forward by constantly improving and developing not only the professional hair care products but also by creating a strong emotional link with help of social interaction. Therefore building on long-term customer relationships is essential for our investigated company in order to keep their customers happy and make sure that the positive image is transferred further into the market.

Brand manager Aurora explained that P&G is a market leader in the P&G SP segment of colouring products and that the company’s customers are more like “artists, not businessmen”. She also stressed the importance of adapting to and satisfying their clients’ needs due to the nature of their business where the service experience is combined with product sales.

Callidora consented with Aurora, by emphasizing on the absence of ordinary advertising alternatives, apart from their salespeople marketing and hairdressers’ direct marketing of P&G’s products further to their client. The selling abilities of a hair salon employee are essential for increasing sales and brand awareness. Besides that, maintaining a close
relationship with the media and thereby receiving positive exposure in fashion magazines and newspapers is undeniably increasing the brands credibility. This was stressed by Belita, who highlighted that it was the most effective way of both introducing new products as well as giving an extra push needed for the less popular ones. When compared to the end consumers’ answers, the response was different. Several people viewed this exposure as a publicity stunt and the rest stressed the importance of instead actually choosing the right colour or styling product just for their type of hair. In other words they emphasized on the close and trustworthy relationship with the service provider instead of the generic advice of the fashion magazines.

We also received confirmation from the hair salon respondents that having a close and frequent relationship with the supplier made it easier for them in their effort to be updated with the latest trends and styles, colouring and grooming products, as well as possibilities for extending their skills in hairstyling. A majority of the hairdressers explained that they only sold products from just few suppliers, in some cases as few as a single one. Suppliers seemed to be centred on certain hair salons in order to stand out and take up as much exposure space as possible. This was also evident in our interviews with P&G SP respondents who heavily focused on this concept in which they attempted to get the customer as bonded to their brand as possible.

5.1.1 The bond

Bonding and building a relationship with the P&G product supplier, purchasing their furniture and equipment on a leasing contract has been proven to be a successful recipe for retaining and improving a long-term relationship. This strategy (Aaker & McLoughlin, 2007) was implemented in order to create dependence and binding hair salons to their brand and consequentially make it harder to switch to another supplier.

By doing that P&G made sure that the company’s positive attitude and constant involvement in the hair salons’ business was shifted to improving the key relationship with the end consumer.

Since there are several different alternatives to choose from in the hair care industry, including both the professional and retail products as well as multiple different service providers, it has been necessary for the companies to adapt to diverse customer needs. P&G SP and hair salons alike have incorporated new marketing methods in order to get
the clients’ attention through direct marketing strategies, giving free gifts and samples, discounts and to raise brand awareness through alternative social media channels.

The relationship between P&G SP, the hair salons and end consumers can thus be related to Gummesson’s (2002) theoretical summary of different business relations. Beauty salons are dependant of P&G as a provider and educator of the products end consumers demand. P&G similarly depend on hair salons as the hairdressers work to put forward an extend P&G’s message and the sales persuasion that is needed to make the customers inclined to buy their products.

To sum up this section, our empirical findings indicate that trust, direct communication, with the company and its clients. It is vital for both those who are eager to venture a successful business and consumers who believe in the company and the quality of their products and hence choose to buy them.

5.2 Consumption experience

5.2.1 The looks

It has been pointed out by our respondents - P&G representatives, hairdressers and their clients - that it is essential to choose the right look, colouring and hair-styling products to improve one’s appearance. In addition, the role of hairdresser is important for the selection of the right hairdo or even to recommend the latest trends and styles. From this reasoning evolves the need for being not only unique but gaining confirmation and approval from the nearest surroundings; to belong and to fit in within the norms of society.

Subsequently, when our consumer respondents were asked about what was beautiful many answered that both inner and outer beauty is essential. However if a person lacks inner qualities then the appearance stands alone and the overall beauty suffers. The view of beauty as more than meets the eye can be related to the concept of Sophrosyne – the virtue, harmony and goodness inherent in people.

We agree with the answers we received, namely that beauty is not only in the looks but it also arouses from within. It is here we return to the paintings by Dante Gabriel Rosetti shown in the opening chapter, “Soul’s Beauty” and Body’s Beauty”, the opposites which still are so similar.
Nevertheless having pretty hair was important for almost all the end consumers who provided us with an answer with several of them showing an admiration of beautiful hair. Additionally, several of our hair salon clients pointed out that they paid attention towards how the person, performing the service, looked like.

It feels like we have received somewhat contradictory answers, even though both inner and outer beauty is important, hair salon clients still heavily emphasized on their appearance. End consumers, when asked to define what was ugly or disturbing to them, mainly commented on the visual features in a person. Thus, if someone was too unique in a “weird” way then that was seen as disturbing or even ugly.

It is here we can return to the discussion on beauty and aesthetics. As we mentioned before there is a thin line between beauty and ugliness. If an object is pretty or disturbing it depends on the observers subjective interpretation of the qualities it signals. This object must have some objective features in order for the viewer to identify some kind of prettiness hidden in the object. People deal with the same reasoning regarding the appearance. A person can be seen as ugly for one person and attractive for the other, depending on the personal subjective opinion and aesthetic perception.

Another aspect might be interesting to take into consideration when talking about personal preferences. Taste is actually different from liking, as Kant (1790) has expressed it. If liking is involved in judging the object then it might be difficult to see its real beauty. Taste is something one either has or not. We have not asked our end consumers to define taste or style but we received indications that it is possible to change how people dress or what products they like. What was unfashionable a year ago might be “in” this year. The majority of our respondents said that they are influenced by trends and new styles. If they were not influenced than the fashion would not change as fast as it does now.

5.2.2 The needs
Beauty as an objective truth, perceived differently from person to person, creates a need to improve the physical appearance, become more attractive and good-looking. Particularly, when the appearance is a characteristic feature can be highly improved and highlighted in a person to start with. Human beings have always had the need to reach unsatisfied goals and higher wishes as we showed in Maslow’s (1943) hierarchy of
needs. It is in our nature to wish something more, something we do not have that could make us special and unique. If there is a more developed product compared with the one already owned, a new edition with improved design or technology, then there is a need for us to buy it to improve our social status. The same reasoning can be applied for the hair care market. Not everyone has pretty and thick hair, but by going to the hairdresser and actually applying the products and even getting a wig or hair extensions one can hopefully achieve the results which he/she wished for before entering the beauty shop. And by doing that, to increase the self-image and the way one is perceived by the environment. Of course the whole experience must be worth the price paid.

5.2.3 Self-esteem

From the results of our empirical research we have distinguished that self-esteem plays a vital role in determining the way a person acts and which image he or she wants to express towards others. The level of self-esteem contributes to the way consumers act in a purchasing situation as well as it decides how pre-occupied a person is with looking pretty and attractive. Few hair salon customers, when asked how many times they looked in the mirror on a single day, replied that it occurred too often or too many times to admit to themselves. It shows that beauty is important for everyone, and that it influences our every day life in one way or another.

Regarding the opposite, lack of self-esteem, confidence and self-fulfilment, we argue that that in order to compensate for the shortage of inner or outer qualities a person can actually shift towards over-consumption in form of impulsive purchasing behaviour (Baumeister, 2002) or self-gifting (DeMoss, 1990) in order to substitute and prevent the personal setbacks (Vohs & Faber, 2007). This brings us back to the ugliness argument. Regarding the hair care industry not everyone is actually aware of the negative effects of extensive colouring packed with chemicals and overuse of hair appliances. Beauty has a price and by extensively faking it and wishing to preserve it, it gets more costly. The companies operating the beauty industry see an opportunity to enhance the need for beauty products. Hair grows out all the time which means that there will be always people willing to buy the hair care products.

All, apart of one salon customer, have admitted that they bought the products which were applied on their hair during the service. Nevertheless answers among hair salon customers varied when they were asked whether they have been persuaded into buying
a hair care product which they had no intention to purchase. And when asked if they did something about the purchase of a product that did not deliver what was promised or when they were dissatisfied with a haircut, the majority confessed that they did not do anything about it. This is as if they experienced a moment of weakness at the time of the purchase of product where they did not want to spoil the pleasant holistic experience, built up during the service, or simply it was just self-denial. Although, P&G SP have pointed out that it is very rare for people to go to the hairdressers only to buy a product and it is therefore vital to make sure that they do not feel as if they are pushed into making a purchase. We have also mentioned that P&G SP saw hairstylists as artists, and the sale of the products was not really important but the service provided by them.

5.2.4 The experiences

Emotional experiences are impulses that heavily affect human behaviour, which in turn can be influenced by marketing strategies (Franzen & Bouwman, 2001). We assume that hair salon clients react both to the explicit and implicit memories created by the external surrounding. In our case, regular customers, visiting the same salon every time they need a haircut, are frequently exposed to the same procedure, evoking the memories of past pleasant experiences. Our research results show that hair salon clients rarely change which hair salon they visit. The personal relation and trust with a service provider, as well as positive emotional memories create a feeling of belonging and safety. As one of our respondents pointed out “it feels safe to go to the one you are happy with and [you] know what you get”.

We assume that the implicit memories have also a great influence on consumer behaviour on the subconscious level even though it has been hard for us to draw any clear conclusions on the subject. Nevertheless we can interpret it, based on our own experiences after visiting beauty shops during our empirical research. What we know for sure is that hair salon clients react to the atmosphere they are in, through their sensory perceptions of the space, which subconsciously sends a message to the customer about the status and position it wants to project (Kotler 1973). The majority of end consumers agreed that clean and fresh looking hair salon was essential in order for them to go inside. One respondent said though that it is wrong to judge exterior and interior, less modern salons usually have very skilled employees.
Pine & Gilmore (1998) in their model presented in the theoretical framework have emphasized on the importance of not only delivering a high quality service but to stage the experiences in order to sell. The competition is fierce in the beauty industry where a buyer can choose either retail alternatives or purchase professional products on internet, in beauty stores and in hair salons.

There are numerous attributes in the atmospheric space that influence the client, either consciously or not. Consumers react to both tangible and intangible qualities of a product. Through their senses such as smell, hearing, design, texture and taste (Hultén, Broweus, & Van Dijk, 2008) together or separately contribute to the creation of sensory experience. In our study we could not verify that all the senses influenced the consumer behaviour when choosing a product since the buyer might have reacted to them unconsciously but forgot to mention it or associate with it when we asked about their influence. Nevertheless when hair salon clients were asked about which aesthetic product attributes influenced their choice the majority consented and included the smell and the package design. This answer indicated that at least smell, touch and sight where influential factors. We could also read off that that the hairdresser’s opinion and the actual usefulness of the product where key factors in the moment of decision. P&G SP also emphasized on the importance of a need for a product to stand out from the numerous amount of different alternatives in order to draw the buyer’s attention.

We argue therefore that what hair salon clients experience is not only aesthetic but also symbolic. However, it might be difficult to see the results because hair is a growing tissue and the transformation lasts only a short time. Also it might be difficult for others to acknowledge it especially if they have not observed the person before the makeover. The main reason for a purchase of professional styling products might be seen as an attempt to preserve and extend the results achieved in the hairdresser’s chair, the same opinion, expressed by P&G SP.

5.3 Products and services

5.3.1 The brands

It has been argued (Franzen & Bouwman, 2001) that the professional hair care products can evoke feelings in buyers through the recognition of logos, names and colours which in turn can create a personal meaning. We agree with Donius (1984) who in figure 7
explained in the theoretical framework that a brand can awaken different feelings and can be associated with different experiences. With these benefits it is only natural for P&G SP, as a market leader in the colouring segment, to be heavily focused on creating and maintaining strong brands through high brand awareness and recognition. It has been emphasized on the importance of a disruptive design and strong brand name and how these draw customers to the product. From our findings we distinguished that people were indeed affected by it and regularly purchased products of their favorite brand. Hair salons were on the other hand less inclined to rank the brand as a major contributing factor to a purchase and did not consider it very important to maintain a wide selection of brands.

All parties have first associated the choice of a brand with its functionality. As explained in our theoretical chapter there is actually a need for usefulness in the products to start with in order to further build intangible values around them. Both usefulness and price were major factors in deciding which products to choose from. We have received an indication that people were inclined to more frequently buy cheaper retail products for everyday use. In addition, that there was a difference in consumption patterns and purchasing behaviour based on age and thus financial situation. For middle aged consumers with a better financial situation P&G SP provided more expensive alternatives while less expensive product lines were more focused on the younger audience. For that reason we assume that younger people can see professional hair care products as luxury products that they cannot afford to buy on a daily basis. Also we assume that companies have to work harder to keep younger people as clients since they are more willing to follow latest trends, change hairstyles and hairdressers. On the contrary seniors are more inclined to stay faithful towards the brands and products which deliver what they expected them to do.

However there was a general consent among people we asked, that latest trends are something they do not follow. The difference in opinion on the consumers’ behaviour may come from a difference in the formulation of our questions. While the hairdressers explained that they are often asked about the newest in hair trends the end consumers were asked if they follow the latest trends. In other words, consumers do not claim to follow trends however it is possible that they show some momentary interest once they are at the hairdressers eager to receive a new haircut.
5.3.2 The purchase

Few people only buy products that hair salons provide but rather do it in combination with a service. Because of this P&G SP work hard in order to teach their customers not only about their products but also to how sell and incorporate them into the service. The selling skills and persuasion of the hairdresser are essential when completing the sell. Our empirical results have revealed that quality of a service, kind attitude towards clients, an extensive knowledge on latest trends and customer specific hairstyles are essential for success. Moreover building on trust and commitment to achieve a pleasant experience, is vital in order to make a good impression.

When hair salon customers are being drawn into the aesthetic world of hair care, where pleasant service experience, together with the enjoyable relationship with a hairdresser and appealing atmosphere result in a purchase. Therefore it might be difficult for a person to say no to the hairstylists persuasion to purchase an expensive hair care product in order to not to ruin the built-up experience.
6 | Conclusion

In this chapter we will present our final conclusions. We will answer the initial questions formulated in the introductory chapter and purpose of our thesis.

People consume exclusive hair care products in faith that these will fulfil the ageless want of preserving their beauty and youth. Our research results show that people are highly aware of their looks and how their physical appearance influences others. Therefore their main goal is to satisfy a need for beauty and achieve recognition from the environment. This acceptance from the society and true feeling of actually being beautiful fulfils another need, that of self-esteem.

Hair salons and P&G SP work hard on building relationships with their clients in order to create a feeling of security and trust. Hair salon clients should feel joy and excitement during the service and after the purchase of a hair care product. Additionally, the impression of social fellowship and belonging will hopefully insure that the combined service and purchasing experience will be appreciated and shared with other people.

Our initial idea of writing a master’s thesis on this delicate subject of beauty and aesthetics expressed in the professional hair care industry came from the observation that people are spending money on expensive products and that they do not really provide a clear explanation why. We have shown from our empirical research results that consumers act in a socially constructed world in which products are shaped around impulse and feeling rather than their rationality.

In order for the object to arouse an aesthetic judgement it has to possess beauty in itself to start with. Similarly a tangible value is required in a product to make use of its intangible values. In other words there is no significance without substance and the objective beauty cannot be separated from the subjective. The positive aesthetic experience will take place only when the product or service creates a feeling of desire and social belonging.

When people buy professional hair care products they receive much more than the actual product itself. End consumers improve not only their physical appearance but
also feel beautiful from within. While the utilitarian function is basically the same in both professional hair care and retail products, the former contributes to higher degree of satisfaction. Therefore we cannot say that the money paid on these products is wasted.
7 | Discussion

This final chapter presents concluding remarks on our study and further implications for future research.

Due to the complexity of the phenomenon we chose to explore we have had to take many aspects into consideration. It was essential for us to gain a broad perspective on the subject which affects many parties involved. Firstly we had to identify what was the major driving force behind the actions of organizations operating in the hair care industry as well as what motivated the hairdressers to provide a high quality service. Moreover we wondered what made people to buy expensive products where there were cheaper alternatives available. It was extremely difficult to define beauty and how it is being perceived and interpreted.

Our study was also facilitated by the extensive theoretical outline and our chosen methodological approach which combined different scientific perspectives which hence helped us to correctly reflect the reality.

We believe that our findings could serve as a foundation for further research in the markets where aesthetic and symbolic values are important as well as creating positive emotions and feelings can be contributing factors in influencing consumer behaviour. Looking forward into the future it would be still appealing to study why we beauty is being awarded on the expense of the useful. Here are some suggestions for future research opportunities:

- Study how female and male purchasing preferences have evolved in the beauty industry and how market should adjust to these changes in demand.
- Investigate whether companies through their advertisements of beauty products are able to correctly deliver the message and reach the consumers.
- Apply the visual research techniques to document and explain ulterior reasons of certain human behaviour.
Bibliography


**P&G Company information**

[www.pg.com](http://www.pg.com)
[www.se.pg.com](http://www.se.pg.com)
[www.pgbeautygroomingscience.com](http://www.pgbeautygroomingscience.com)
[www.wella.se](http://www.wella.se)
Appendix 1 | The survey

1. BAKGRUND OCH ALLMÄN INFORMATION

Vi är två studenter vid Linköpings Universitet som skriver en D-uppsats om estetikens betydelse vid köp av produkter och tjänster. Vi ska utföra en enkätundersökning vid 25 slumpmässigt utvalda hårsaloner i Linköping och undersöka hur estetiken påverkar ert arbete samt om det är viktigt vid köp av professionella hårvårdprodukter.

Senare kommer vi intervjua nyckelpersoner hos de större producenterna utav hårvårdprodukter för att se hur deras marknadsföring påverkar försäljningen.

Hur länge har du arbetat i hårvårdsbranschen?

Antal år: _____

Hur många besökare har er salong under en dag?

Ange ungefär sigga: _____

Säljer ni hårvårdsprodukter som inte säljs i vanliga butiker?

☐ Ja  ☐ Nej

2. KUNDER

Hur många av era kunder är förstagångsbesökare?

Ringa in ett alternativ: 0-20% 21-40% 41-60% 61-80% 81-100%

Hur många av era kunder är kvinnor?

Ringa in ett alternativ: 0-20% 21-40% 41-60% 61-80% 81-100%

Det är viktigt att kommunicera med kunden under klippningen för att skapa en framtida relation.

Instämmer helt  Instämmer inte alls
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Era kunder besöker hårsalongen för er... (ange för varje alternativ nedan):

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Anser du att det finns andra faktorer som påverkar valet av frisörsalongen? Skriv i så fall vilka samt hur viktiga de är för er salong.

Under klippningen försöker du uppmuntra kunden att göra ett visst produktköp.
## 3. PRODUKTER

Vilka är era fem mest sålda varumärken?

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Kunder kommer till er specifikt för att ni säljer hårvård Produkter som inte finns att köpa i vanliga butiker.

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Kunden påverkas till köp under klippningen utifrån vad du säger och använder.

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Det är vanligt att kunden väljer att köpa en viss hårvård produkter utifrån era rekommendationer.

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Det är vanligt att kunden köper en produkt någon annan har rekommenderat.

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Uppskatta hur många av dina klippningar som även leder till ett produktköp.

Ringa in ett alternativ: 0-20% 21-40% 41-60% 61-80% 81-100%

Finns det andra sätt ni marknadsför era produkter på där det producerande företaget inte har någon påverkan?

☐ Tidningar  ☐ TV  ☐ Radio

Övrigt:

Produkternas placering i hyllan har en påverkan på vilken produkt kunden väljer.

Instämmer  Instämmer  Ingen åsikt
helt  inte alls
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

4. VARUMÄRKEN

Varumärket är viktigt vid kundens val av hårvårdsprodukt.

Instämmer  Instämmer  Ingen åsikt
helt  inte alls
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Det är viktigt för er att kunna erbjuda ett brett sortiment av välkända märken.

Instämmer  Instämmer  Ingen åsikt
helt  inte alls
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Flera professionella hårvardsmärken har börjat säljas även i vanliga butiker. Detta påverkar er försäljning negativt.

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5. ESTETIK

Kunden frågar ofta efter senaste säsongens hår/styling-trender.

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Du har en påverkan på vilken frisyr kunden väljer.

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Kvinnor är noggrannare än män vid valet av frisyr.

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Utifrån följande sju alternativ, rangordna de tre viktigaste aspekterna vid kundens val av produkt (1, 2, 3).

( ) Din åsikt  ( ) Vänners rekommendation  ( ) Reklam  ( ) Pris  ( ) Märke  ( ) Design  ( ) Produktp Bacering

Övrigt: __________________. __________________. __________________
Följande varumärkes-egenskaper är viktiga för kunden vid deras val av hårvårdsprodukt.

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Utifrån följande alternativ, rangordna efter hur pass viktiga de estetiska egenskaperna är för kunden vid val av hårvårdsprodukt (1 mest viktig, 4 minst viktig).

(     ) Doft
(     ) Utseende på flaska
(     ) Storlek (mängd)
(     ) Konsistens (innehåll)

Kunderna väljer era hårvårdsprodukter främst för deras estetiska aspekter hellre än deras praktiska egenskaper.

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6. FÖRETAG

Hur många producerande företag har ni direkt kontakt med?

Ange antal: _____

Om kontakt med något företag: Det är viktigt för er relation att ha regelbunden kontakt med det/de producerande företaget.

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Om kontakt med något företag: Har ett eller flera producerande företag utbildningar om sina hårvårdsprodukter som ni kan delta i?

|Ja, ett|Ja, flera (ange antal): _____| Nej|

Om kontakt med något företag: Har ett eller flera producerande företag tävlingar/events som de anställda på er salong kan delta i?

|Ja, ett|Ja, flera (ange antal): _____| Nej|

Om kontakt med något företag: Försöker ett eller flera företag påverka hur ni representerar dem och deras varumärken?

|Ja, ett|Ja, flera (ange antal): _____| Nej|

Om ja på föregående fråga: På vilket vis sker detta?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Tack så mycket för er medverkan i denna studie!
Appendix 2 | Interview questions, P&G SP

Vi är två studenter vid Linköpings Universitet som skriver en D-uppsats om estetikens betydelse för professionella hårvårdsprodukter som säljs i hårsalonger. Vi ska utföra en enkätundersökning vid 20 hårsalonger i Linköping och intervju nyckelpersoner vid P&G:s kontor i Stockholm. Vårt syfte är att få reda på hur olika företag, med hjälp av marknadsföring och strategiska beslut, kan påverka på vilket sätt produkter blir förmedlade till kunderna.

Vi hoppas att du skulle vilja hjälpa oss genom att svara på våra frågor. Du kan förstås vara anonym.

Observera att dessa frågor utgör grunden för vår kommande intervju med syfte att underlätta densamma för såväl dig som oss.

**Kort introduktion**

Skulle du kunna berätta lite mer om dig själv och företaget du jobbar på? Hur många år har du jobbat här och inom hårvårdsbranschen?

Vilka är dina arbetsuppgifter?

Vilka fördelar/nackdelar kan du se med fusionen av före detta Wella?

**Varumärket**

Vilka varumärken säljer ni i Sverige och hur många kunder har företaget inom professionell hårvård?

Vilket varumärke/en anser du vara ert starkaste inom det professionell hårvårdsegmentet?

Vilka andra märken konkurrerar ni med på den svenska marknaden inom detta segment?

Vilka egenskaper tycker du har betydelse när ett nytt märke ska introduceras på marknaden?
Anser du att visuella egenskaper, såsom produktdesign, lukt, färg eller produktplacering är viktiga för att varumärket ska lyckas inom denna industri?

Vad gör ni om varumärket inte säljer så mycket som ni har beräknat? Vilka åtgärder genomför ni (exempelvis speciella erbjudanden/kampanjer)?

**Kunder**

Hur många frisörsalonger är era kunder i Sverige?

Era kunder är utspridda över hela landet, både såväl relativt stora hårsalonger som små. När det gäller marknadsföring, delar ni upp era kunder i särskilda grupper/segment och genomför olika kampanjer gentemot dem?

Är det viktigt att ha en kontinuerlig, nära relation med era kunder?

Genom vilka kommunikationskanaler förmedlar ni företagets budskap?

Vad tror du era kunder uppskattar mest? Är infoträffar/utbildningar/särskilda produktmässor viktiga för fortsatt framtida samarbete?

Är kundernas åsikter viktiga för P&G Professional i Sverige och anser du att er image/uppfattning om företaget har betydelse vid val av era produkter?

Om era kunder skulle bli tillfrågade vad tror du att de associerar P&G:s varumärken för professionella produkter med?

**Konkurrenter**

Vilka, anser du, vara era största konkurrenter i Sverige inom professionell hårvård?

P&G Beauty & Grooming inom P&G skall 2010 ändra strukturen till Female Beauty och Male Grooming segment. Kommer det påverka P&G Professional ur ett konkurrensperspektiv?

Vad är era styrkor i jämförelse med era konkurrenter?

**Estetiska produktegenskaper**

Vilka anser du vara de största fördelarna med produkter avsedda för professionella hårvårdsmarknaden i jämförelse med produkter sålda i vanliga affärer?
Vilka huvudfaktorer avgör varför slutkonsumenten köper professionella stylingprodukter?

Spelar upplevelsen som hårfrisörsalongskunden får med sig roll vid köp av produkten?

Är de sensoriska egenskaper viktiga vid den totala upplevelsen som slutkonsumenten får? Doft, hörsel, smak, syn, känslor.

Säljer estetiken?

Tycker du är viktigt att de budskap som ni förmedlar till salongerna även förmedlas vidare till slutkonsumenten?
Appendix 3 – Interview questions, end consumers

Hos Frisören

Hur ofta besöker du en hårsalong?

Byter du din frisör ibland, varför?

Vad tycker du gör en bra frisör?

Varför har du valt denna hårsalong idag?

Anser du att du har blivit påverkad av hur hårsalongen och frisören ser ut vid ditt val?

Vilka egenskaper hos en frisör är viktiga tycker du för att få så bra service som möjligt?

Brukar du prata med frisören under servicen?

Har du någonsin köpt en produkt som frisören använder på dig under klippningen?

Anser du att hur salongen ser ut utvändigt/invändigt spelar roll?

Har du någonsin varit besviken på en frisyr eller produkt? Hur agerade du?

Produkten

Hur ofta köper du professionella hårvårdsprodukter?

Hur ofta köper du hårprodukter som säljs i vanliga affärer?

Hur ofta använder du styling produkter?

Brukar du läsa modetidningar?

Tänker du på att du vill testa/köpa en viss produkt som beskrivs där eller som fått bra rekommendationer av experter?

Brukar du läsa vad som står på förpackningen på produkten du överväger att köpa?

Vad tittar du på när du väljer en hårvårdsprodukt?
Anser du att förpackningens utformning, lukt av innehållet, färg eller placering påverkar ditt val?

Följer du frisörens råd vid val av en produkt?

Lyssnar du på vad andra rekommenderar vid val av framtida produkt, frisyr eller frisör?

Har du känt någon gång att du blev påtvingad att köpa en produkt i salongen?

Har du känt någon gång att du har köpt en professionell hårvårdsprodukt som du egentligen inte behöver?

Brukar du köpa en produkt som är rabatterat, eller under en kampanj i salongen?

**Estetiken**

Hur anser du en idealmänniska ska se ut? Vilka egenskaper anser du är viktiga?

Vad är skönhet för dig?

Vad anser du är fult när det gäller utseende?

Ställer du höga krav på ditt utseende?

Anser du att du blir medveten/omedvetet påverkad av din omgivning om hur du ska se ut?

Hur pass mycket påverkar en bra eller dålig hårdag dig i din vardag?

Hur viktigt är håret för dig?

Följer du senaste trenderna inom hårfärg, nya produkter eller vilka frisyrer andra har?

Hur ofta byter du din frisyr?

Anser du att man blir bemött på ett positivt sätt om man är fräsch och modemedveten?

Under dagen tänker du många gånger på hur du ser ut?

Anser du att utseendet kan förbättras med dagens skönhetsprodukter?

Brukar du märka om din vän/kollega på jobbet kommer nyklippt eller med en ny hårfärg?
Brukar du störa dig om någon i din omgivning går med okammat eller smutsigt hår?

Tycker du att man lätt kan påverka din uppfattning om vad som är vackert eller fult?