

## Body Image Re-Boot

### Needs and Benefits

What people see in a mirror and how they react to that reflection varies by sex, age, ethnic group, sexual orientation, mood, what they've been watching on TV, what magazines they read, what kind of childhood they've had, what kind of relationship they're in, where they've been shopping and what they've had for lunch!

It has been estimated that young women now see more images of outstandingly beautiful women in one day than their mothers saw throughout their entire adolescence. Standards of female beauty have become progressively more unrealistic during the 20th century. In 1917, the physically perfect woman was about 5ft 4in tall and weighed nearly 10 stone. Even 25 years ago, top models and beauty queens weighed only 8% less than the average woman, now they weigh 23% less. The current media ideal for women is achievable by less than 5% of the female population – and that's just in terms of weight and size. If you want the ideal shape, face etc., it's probably more like 1%.

There is a proven user need for products in this space, with 58% of 16 – 24 year old women wanting to increase their body confidence.

Studies show up to 80% of women over-estimate their size, while increasing numbers of normal, attractive women with no weight problems or clinical psychological disorders look at themselves in the mirror and see ugliness and fat. The latest surveys show very young girls are going on diets because they think they are fat and unattractive.

(Social Issues Research Centre Study <http://www.sirc.org/publik/mirror.html>)

### Approach

C4 has an outstanding reputation in female lifestyle programming. Gok's Fashion Fix, How to Look Good Naked, 10 Years Younger, My Big Fat Diet Show and the Ugly Face of Beauty are all geared towards making women feel better about their body image and enabling them to take control of making positive changes to improve how they feel and how healthy they are. Over the summer Channel 4 will launch a new website, 4Beauty, which will have the same positive, fun and realistic approach to health and beauty.

4iP now wants to spread the positive body image message even further. We're seeking '4'-flavoured digital products/services/content which help people deal with body image issues, food, health and real beauty in ways which are enjoyable and which don't preach or sell them snake oil!

We're after fun ideas which capitalise on some of the unique opportunities enabled by the Internet; products can be personal, collaborative, interactive and cross-device.

This isn't about hubs or portals, it's not about aggregating existing content. It's about finding fun and social ways of helping people engage meaningfully with their body image.

## **Competition and Opportunity**

Products and services related to body image are part of a huge and growing global market which in the UK alone is worth £4.8bn per year (oxygen Mintel.com January 2010).

The majority of women (85%) use the internet daily with most going online more than once a day. The 25-34 age group are the most frequent users. 59% of women use the internet for health and wellbeing and 58% for beauty products and services.