Fenty Beauty's Marketing Strategy in Current Cosmetic Industry and How It Can Achieve Further Development

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Abstract:

In current global market, the cosmetic and beauty industry has experienced rapid growth driven by globalization, digital marketing and the influence of social media. This paper uses case study method and Fenty Beauty as an example to illustrate the current situation celebrity brands are in. Fenty Beauty, one of the top celebrity brands in the cosmetic industry, founded by Rihanna in 2017 is one of the most representative celebrity brands worldwide, known for its inclusivity, diverse shade ranges and reasonable pricing. Fenty Beauty uses digital marketing strategies such as having Rihanna herself post about the products on social media, paying influencers to test and promote the new arrivals. However, as celebrity-driven cosmetic and beauty brands flourished in recent years and are becoming consumers first choice when purchasing makeup, the competition for Fenty Beauty have increased. To further expand its competitiveness, sustain its customer base and popularity, Fenty Beauty can develop products with limited edition packaging designs, expand offline accessibility with exclusive themes, and broading its international presence to regions like Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Keywords: cosmetics, beauty industry, celebrity brands, Fenty Beauty, digital marketing.

1. Introduction

The cosmetic and beauty industry has always been a huge market and driven by globalization and digitalization, the evolution and competition cosmetic brands has become intense. With the rise of social media and e-commerce, consumers' purchasing habits and aesthetical preferences have shifted significantly. Beyond that, the choices for beauty products has also increased for emergences of celebrities and influencers brands, with Fenty Beauty serving as a prominent example. Fenty Beauty has gained considerable public awareness and are considered as a first choice when consumers are in search for beauty products. Most of the celebrity brands have similar prices and target the same audiences, mainly the z generation. This caused the expansion of the cosmetic field as well as the increase of competition. Most of the celebrity driven brands uses social media as a

mains source of their promotion of the brands. Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and later TikTok provided unparalleled opportunities for direct consumer engagement. Beauty brands leveraged these platforms to not just advertise products but to create communities, share user-generated content, and collaborate with influencers. This paper will examine Fenty Beauty's digital market strategy by stating its development history and current status, analyzing its marketing strategies including both its digital promotion and online and offline retailing, and finally discuss the potential issues of its current situation in the market and provide solutions for sustainable growth and market size expansion.

2. Fenty Beauty's Current Product Line and Marketing Challenge

Fenty Beauty was founded by pop music singer and entrepreneur Rihanna, a celebrity cosmetic brand officially launched in September, 2017, in partnership with the luxury conglomerate LVMH's subsidiary Kendo brands [1]. The brand had gained publics' awareness since establishment and takes up a considerable market share since.

Fenty Beauty was one of the earliest and most well-known celebrity makeup brands for its founder Rihanna had a huge fan base and customers. Fenty Beauty's target audience were mainly females age 15-40 [2]. The brand provides both set combos and single cosmetic products with a price range of 18-49$. The products and best-selling portfolios includes lip glosses highlighters blushes and foundations consisting of over 50 shades [3]. Although Fenty Beauty was not the first in the industry to make broad shade ranges, it was the first to prioritize inclusivity and diversity, this promised competitive powers in the cosmetic industry back then, for it provides customers more accurate choices when choosing foundations to match different skintones especially for the darker skinned consumers which were usually overlooked in cosmetic productions [4]. Rihanna created Fenty Beauty "so that women everywhere would be included," focusing on a wide range of traditionally hard-to-match skin tones, developing formulas that work for all skin types, and pinpointing universal shades [5].

In addition to the broad shade ranges, with a reasonable price comparatively low to other well-known brands like Chanel, which would charge 50$ per lipgloss instead of 18$ by Fenty Beauty, and the popularity of its founder, Fenty Beauty instantly attracted various consumers, especially the younger generations including students and Rihanna's existing fan base. However, despite the fact that Fenty Beauty was one of the first pioneer celebrity brands in the cosmetic industry, competition had begun to grow rapidly in recent years. The beauty industry has become saturated with celebrity brands and influencer brands, such as Kylie Cosmetics by Kylie Jenner, Rare Beauty by Selena Gomez, Huda Beauty by makeup artist and blogger Huda. These brands flourished rapidly for the founders like Rihanna, also have a existing loyal fandom and customer base which made their brands viral due to the spreading of social media promotion and celebrity effect. These new yet hot-selling cosmetic brands comes in all varieties of packaging and visional creativity, making Fenty Beauty no longer the almost monopoly in the field of celebrity cosmetic brands. Lots of makeup consumers tend to try new brands with more intriguing designs founded by other celebrities and influencers with the same pricing, reducing the frequency of purchasing Fenty Beauty instead of seeing it as a long-term and steady purchase choice.

3. Fenty Beauty's Current Marketing Strategies

Fenty Beauty operates both online and offline sales, launching in malls in Sephora and Harvey Nicoles offsite and being available on both Sephora's and Fenty Beauty's official websites, which immediately provided global access and distribution in most countries.

Fenty Beauty also uses digital marketing to increase sales. Fenty Beauty official account on has 13280000 followers on Instagram and over 3m on TikTok and Rihanna's personal TikTok account has over 16m followers. Celebrities and influencers have a major advantage in relation to brand promotion since in current society, TikTok's influence is undeniable and is not just used simply as entertainment and social media, but is considered more to be a search engine for decision making and choosing products [6]. The huge fan base and popularity of Rihanna is a comparative advantage to new brands whose founders are not concerned as famous celebrities. Fenty Beauty's official account posts promotions and photos of their new or best-selling product on the new arrivals. Besides, Rihanna's iconic status and authentic connection to the brand elevated Fenty Beauty's brand value, drawing in consumers who admired her artistic vision and commitment to diversity [7]. Rihanna herself would post Fenty Beauty's products in her own personal account as a form of promotion, like a post of selfies of herself holding her lip gloss and mentioning Fenty Beauty's new launch. This directly informs her fans and followers of the update of their icon's brands, a large amount of which would be motivate to purchase the same ones Rihanna uses as in a form of fan economy. In other words, Rihanna herself would be the most influential ambassador of Fenty Beauty.

Another usage of fan economy, is to collaborate with social media influencers and makeup vloggers. Research

indicates that influencers play a pivotal role in shaping beauty trends, with 74% of American Gen Z consumers citing influencers as a key factor in their purchasing decisions [8]. The strategic use of celebrity endorsements and influencer collaborations allowed Fenty Beauty to tap into a vast audience of loyal fans and beauty enthusiasts [9]. With the popularity of Fenty Beauty and the appearances of Fenty Beauty's products in the videos of the influencers and vloggers, social media users, especially young make-up consumers and trend following Gen-z populations, would be more like to be aware of the products and make purchases. By asking them to post reviews of their new product, the influencers' followers would also be attracted to the products and willing to buy the same ones [10]. Rihanna's iconic status and authentic connection to the brand elevated Fenty Beauty's appeal, drawing in consumers who admired her artistic vision and commitment to diversity.

4. Current Challenge and Recommendations for Potential Growth

To sustain and increase its competitiveness, Fenty Beauty must improve its product designs and diversity as well as its market size. While Fenty Beauty's original theory was about inclusivity and has a rather mature and steady customer base over the past years, the social media trend is more dedicated to the concept of "clean beauty". Gen-z makeup consumers positively follows the hottest trends and style, willing to try new brands with creative packaging and influencer recommendations which enables increasing brands with ideas and designs related to the concept "clean beauty" to thrive and gain consumers. Therefore, with the rapid increase of competition, Fenty Beauty faces the challenge of keeping consumer interests and long term purchases while attracting new customers. One of the most efficient ways to achieve this is by developing products with limited-editioned packaging the collaborating with influencers of different fan bases. By seeing the limited products in all kinds of videos and makeup tutorials, consumers especially the gen-z generation would think of the product as rare and unique for the reason of their purchase of other new brands is mainly due to their young and fancy designs on the looks. That means the gen-z cosmetic product consumers prefers visually distinctive and "social media worthy" products and are often willing to pay a premium for aesthetically appealing packaging rather than focusing just on the ingredients and texture of the cosmetic products [11]. On the basis of better designs on the looks, Fenty Beauty would gain more market competitiveness if it adds themes related to the on-going trends on TikTok. For instance, presenting a seasonal theme of clean makeup that goes with the new

limited edition designs would raise more public attention compared to the new celebrity and influencer brands for Fenty Beauty were considered by consumers to be a relatively more trustworthy, safe and long termed brand.

Secondly, opening Fenty Beauty's own exclusive offline store rather than just being available at Sephora is also crucial for raising public awareness. The newly flourished brand over social media have opened stores in malls and shopping centers to attract customers. For instance, Glossier as a trending makeup brand on social media recent years, also has offline pop up stores with iconic building designs of pink walls and inner decoration, provides not just shopping experience but also displays their ingredients of the cosmetic product to engage with the concept "clean" and natural. Glossier also provides customers to try on every product they are interested in, take pictures for their social media, this greatly increase the chance of purchases just due to the appealing designs and vibes of the store. Thus, Glossier created a community blog called "into the gloss" which allows individual consumers to make blog posts about the experiences of using glossier products; this further increased the popularity of the brand and tightened customer loyalty. Into the Gloss discovered what consumers wanted and developed a business model that attributes 90% of its revenue to its fan following [12]. In addition to their digital reliance, gen-z exihibits a strong preference for brands that align with their social and environmental values [11]. Therefore, having the brand's own store and fan community does not only contributes to the direct sales of products but is more useful for elevating brand identity and popularity, enhancing social media awareness and community engagement. For instance, every time the customers mention the glossier off line stores, the huge pink building would come to their mind, forming a strong brand image, attracting them to purchase the brand's product. As for glossier, the posts online by the customers are the best free promotion of the brand for it is real and trustworthy with reviews by random ordinary customers. Thus, opening similar offline pop up stores and online blog community with Fenty Beauty's own brand proposition and vision would attract both customers who already made purchases of Fenty Beauty's product online and new customers to stop by and make purchases.

Finally, expanding global market is also a potentially huge chance for Fenty Beauty to raise awareness not just on social media but worldwide. At present, Fenty Beauty have strong presence in north America and Europe, but is not considered to be one of the first choices in other regions like Asian and Latin America countries for the brand is not present in local Sephoras nor does the online official stores supports shipping to these regions, but the brand and it founder has enough awareness in these Asian countries, so significant marketing opportunities remain in emerging markets like Asia, Latin America and Africa.

Expanding into local Sephoras, providing online shipping and establishing offline pop up stores would greatly increase the accessibility of the brand, enhancing its worldwide recognition and boosting the sales.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study examines how Fenty Beauty exemplifies the success and high achievements in the highly competitive cosmetic market and beauty industry with a clear brand status of inclusivity, effective digital market using the popularity of its founder Rihanna and collaboration with influencers. However, as more celebrities and influencers started establishing their own cosmetic brands recent years, Fenty Beauty faces increasing pressure and competition for the new brands might conform better to the trends their main consumer group--gen-z--are following. To address these problems, this paper suggests three key strategies: developing visually distinctive limited-edition packaging, establishing exclusive offline stores with iconic store designs and opening an online Fenty Beauty fan community, expanding into emerging markets such as Asia, Latin America, and Africa to expand its market power and enhance its brand image and awareness.

This research uses case study method with Fenty Beauty as a main case to demonstrate how a celebrity brand can maintain long-term sustainability in a market of increasingly high competition by balancing the original theory with trending themes on social media, innovating designs and packaging that suits the preference of the z generation and increasing accessibility offline and worldwide. Nevertheless, this study is limited by its focus on secondary sources and the lack of quantitative data on consumer behavior, which may reduce the generalizability of its conclusions. Future research should incorporate consumer surveys or case comparisons across different celebrity brands to further validate and expand the findings.

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