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Final Research Paper

“You can never be inclusive enough” – Rihanna

My research project paper topic will be on a company that I believe is founded on the initiative of broadening inclusivity in the beauty industry, Fenty by Rihanna. Best known for being one of the most famous entertainers and musicians of our recent times, Rihanna first found success within the music industry, becoming one of pop's biggest icons and a true living legend. After accumulating all the accolades and successes that the music industry could provide, Rihanna decided to step into her next phases of life. She decided to strive away from her currently successful route but instead focused more on what really mattered to her and what her next mission in life would be. In the fashion industry, Rihanna one of the biggest entertainers and celebrity of her time, was regularly courted and dressed by the biggest names in haute couture. Her vision and sense of fashion was always admiring and stunning, it was a natural attribute that Rihanna had for finding beauty in fashion and in all the arts she encountered. From the commencement of her company, Rihanna inspired to fill the void of representation of color, sizes, genders all those that are underrepresented in beauty and fashion. It's genuinely one of the leading cosmetic brands that embodies inclusivity in beauty for all skin tones races and genders. “From using plus sized models to creating gender neutral products a wide range of consumers feel like the brand truly understands their wants and needs. “We don't believe in division. We do not believe in excluding anyone,” says

Rihanna. “That's been our message from day one and it's not going to change now because everyone is having that realization.” (McKinnon) Growing up and blossoming into stardom in this new diverse society has served Rihanna greatly as she has used this status to further endeavor into her life's purpose and goals. Being an immigrant, and embodying someone who the beauty and fashion industry traditionally would overlook and not cater to, Rihanna has a personal devotion to bringing about change and creating a culture that better represents our multi-cultural, super diverse society.

Robyn Rihanna Fenty, is a Barbadian singer, song writer, actress, fashion designer and businesswoman. Best known for her rise to fame in the pop music industry as Rihanna, having had major hit records such as “Umbrella” and “Love on the Brain”, Rihanna quickly became a prominent figure within the fashion and celebrity industries. Rihanna conquered the music industry and became one of the leading faces of the pop female artists, amassing one of the biggest fanbases and wealth to great levels before finding her next phases of life, becoming an actress, before another step in her career where she ultimately creating her latest legacy, Fenty empire. Now a billionaire, Rihanna has used her famous status and great wealth to change and revolutionize the fashion and beauty industry, breaking away from traditional standards and barriers that restricted or neglected a vast number of consumers that also wanted to be accounted for. She and her brand stand on the message of being inclusive and representing the diverse society that we live in. Being a star in America also allowed for Rihanna to further install this message into her mind and really carry out this mission to be more representative of what America really resembled. She was able to see the rise of immigrants within the United States, and the power and importance that they have as well. She shed a light on the divisiveness that our current beauty industry really

showcased, and instead wanted to innovate and invent a new method to reach and resemble the real representation of America, beautiful in every shape and form.

The start of her Fenty empire starts with her first brand of Fenty Beauty. Expanding into her next lane has led Rihanna to venture into the fashion industry with Savage x Fenty as well as further into the beauty sector with Fenty Skin. “You can never be inclusive enough” – Rihanna, this quote from Rihanna embodies that message that’s symbolized and personified by her company. The consumers or audience that is grasped by this message through her creative marketing instantly feels welcomed and represented by this brand. It’ll include clothing in all sizes, fitting for all shapes, sizes and individuals. Her beauty and skin lines also evoke this same feeling of unity and inclusivity, allowing for each consumer to find their perfect blend of colors and products. From using plus size models, men, women, disabled individuals, older people or even pregnant women, Rihanna’s marketing approach involved using the diverse make up of our society and trying to represent this image by using nontraditionally models that normally wouldn’t even be entertained by the old standards. It’s a new marketing approach that better represents our society and shows that beautiful comes in many different forms. No longer are we bounded to this standard Eurocentric look that customarily only catered to a particular group of crowds and disregarded the bigger mass. When evaluating the results of Fenty’s approach, we can easily see the support and growth that her brand has earned in just a couple of years.

Underrepresentation within the fashion and beauty industry has been a “problem” that rarely was spoken on or even addressed. Being that the beauty and fashion industry were traditionally very exclusive, they prioritize Eurocentric and American developments and perspectives, it neglected a great number of individuals who didn’t fit into the image that was being sold and marketed, but also felt alienated in society, being that these industries weren’t labeling

them as beautiful. Traditionally, beautiful has been represented as being light in skin tone, skinny in size and hourly glassed shaped. As discussed in lecture this beautiful image comes from the old and outdated ideas of the European especially the royals and their families were the ones that were “beautiful” in their times and others endeavored to be similar to their appearances, as well as society labeling them as beautiful and making them the image to represent. As times changed, and society progressed, societal views also progressed and daunting and dissocializing views such as racism and homophobia have disappeared as society continues to move towards love and unity for all. The views from the European days are not the preferred and desired views in today’s society, and especially not the only representation of beautiful that should be portrayed when marketers and the beauty industry try to attract and pursue consumers. As Rihanna found out with her business, and the industry later realized, being true and authentic, and being inclusive of the whole of the society will give a bigger outlet and population to gain consumers and true supporters for brands and companies.

Rihanna’s interest in entering the beauty industry first was to address this problem of not representing the colors and shades of females and humans in general. The beauty industry had stuck to its traditional Eurocentric view of what was beautiful, lighter skin tones and a very basic and broad representation of shades within the other skin tones and shades. Rihanna no longer wanted to stand by the strict unwritten rules of the industry, catering to one image while disregarding anything that appears otherwise, and instead she decided to stand for those who can’t speak and aren’t being represented, creating as many shades as possible within these traditional colors, to further include the missing colors that were being represented in society. Her message being authentic to her story, and to the brand, resonated with a lot of individuals who felt left out of these sectors prior this recent wave of inclusion. This wave, a testament to Rihanna’s beautiful

strategy, shifted both the beauty and fashion industry into following her route to include more people, if not all, to better represent and provide for all people in society. It's a tough ask, to even conceive of this idea in this strict business world, where change doesn't really happen if something is working and profitable. Trying to create products and images that are representative of all also includes challenges in itself because as Rihanna stated, there's never enough inclusivity, someone or some people out there will not be accounted for or addressed and this continued mission to provide for all will continue to let Rihanna rise and grow within beauty and fashion.

“The beauty mogul debuted Fenty Beauty in 2017 with 40 foundation shades that catered to all three undertones — cool, neutral and warm. The colors fall between 498, the deepest shade for melanin-rich skin, and 100, the fairest shade in the line. Rihanna garnered praise from the beauty community in reaction to this notable range. In 2019, she expanded the foundation line to include 50 shades along with 50 concealer colors.” (NBC) From the deepest shade of melanin rich skin to the fairest shade in the line, Rihanna decided to include all in her product line, without being prejudice or suppressing to any shade or race. This embodiment of inclusivity couldn't have been marketed in any better form as Rihanna shook the industry by finally catering to the individuals who have long been excluded from the beauty industry. Centering in on creating new colors and options for people to truly find their true matching shade. Consumers no longer had to settle for a color that was close to their skin tone, and instead could single out the particular color that actually matched their preference better, they created a great new range that was inclusive to all individuals. ““there needs to be something for a dark-skinned girl; there needs to be something for a really pale girl; there needs to be something in-between.” One key difference is in how Rihanna marketed Fenty Beauty which Time magazine noted as being part of the genius behind the success of the brand. Fenty Beauty uses models from many ethnicities allowing the brand to

become known as “the new generation of beauty”. Rihanna focuses on all women and now all women want her products. Within Fenty Beauty’s first 15 months in business it made \$570 million in revenue.” (NBC)

Consumers instantaneously resounded and felt included with her brand and her message. The fan base that she had created prior to this journey also followed her into this new step, allowing for her to start off with a great foundation to provide great products for the people she cared most about. In merging into her next phase of Fenty, Savage x Fenty, Rihanna once again stepped into a familiar lane now of creating a product that the industry needed and desired. “In comparison to brands like Victoria’s Secret, which is known for its roster of svelte spokesmodels called Angels, Rihanna’s SAVAGE X FENTY line promotes body and racial diversity as well as models with disabilities, including Mama Cax.” (NBC) Rihanna entered the lingerie clothing sector, and inclusivity was the first message as is the case with anything Fenty. All sizes are represented as well as men having undergarments and sleepwear as well. The most important initiative in launching her very first clothing was being inclusive to all sizes and body shapes. Apart from bringing her fashion sense and vision to life with her clothing brand, Rihanna was also focused on representing and creating sizes from the very smallest to biggest. “Her collection features bras in sizes ranging from 30A to 46DDD and XS to 4X in underwear. “When I imagine something, I imagine everyone I know and love being a part of it. I want to make stuff I can see on the people I know, and they come in all different shapes, sizes, races, and religions,” (McKinnon) It’s her mission to include and count for the voices and individuals who have long been ignored by these industries. They never cared for the value of these underrepresented groups and individuals because the bigger part of the pie, the more lucrative and bigger sector always seemed like the only group to target. The surprising result that Rihanna found through her initiative was that these

smaller parts of the pie really did matter, and they were important and needed to be accounted for to gain the best results possible. It's also great how Rihanna decided to address the bigger concern of sizing not being stuck to the normal XS-XL range, but instead trying to accommodate as many people as possible by extending this to sizes that normally wouldn't be made. It's beautiful because in our society we know, especially in the USA, that a lot of our society is labeled as overweight, and a lot of these individuals normally would be left out after the XL sizing, hindering them from truly tapping into their fashion or beauty senses as the traditional markets have made it seem as if they couldn't be beautiful as well. Rihanna and her brand have stuck to the message that all and everyone is beautiful, no matter the way that you look or appear, we are all beautiful in our own unique ways. As the article from NBC spoke on, other brands such as Target have seen rapid success from the implementation of this inclusive marketing strategy. After adapting to this view, Target decided to expand its All in Motion active clothing brand line to include sizes of XS-4X, a great decision as the department exceptionally thrived even under the constraints of COVID and the toll it took on the retail industry. Target had an easier method to attract and resonate with more American consumers. Another revolutionary approach in Rihanna's way of changing stigmas within the fashion industry was her use of the age, especially older models, in breaking down stereotypes that after a certain age, people do not wear lingerie. So, most companies have mainly only catered to the 20-40 year old age range as their main target, but not Savage x Fenty. Centering in on creating new colors and options for people to truly find their true matching shade. In her latest example of inclusivity, Rihanna paired Bella Hadid, a beautiful 25 year old model with Demi Moore, a 59 year old actress to model her lingerie collection and showcase the beauty that is in us at different stages of life. No longer was this age group excluded from being able to represent themselves as beautiful in society, having clothes, lingerie and products also accommodating their

life experiences was a great way for Rihanna to continue to spread her reach into consumers and continuously knock down the barriers that have restricted and neglected these social groups.

“Rihanna launched her eponymous skin care line last July with just three items: cleanser, toner and sunscreen. At the time of her beauty brand’s release, Rihanna said Fenty Skin is her “vision of the new culture of skincare” with a lens toward creating “easy to use” products “everyone can apply.” (NBC) In sticking with her theme and message of inclusivity, Rihanna’s skin beauty brand was centered on creating one product type for each skin cleansing phase that worked for all skin types and individuals. Just as with other parts in the beauty industry, a lot of the products are catered to reach one particular look, typically the traditional Eurocentric looks and seemingly disregarding any other desired looks. With marketing, the industry has long stuck to the idea that this perfect image of the woman will bring in the most consumers and resonate with the audience best. As Rihanna found out from her first Fenty brand, inclusivity and authenticity is a much better platform to attract real consumers and their connection for the brand. The skin brand in particular deals with a science that isn’t truly understood in our society as a lot of people have different skin types that react differently to chemicals or products. Traditionally the sector has found it profitable and a better business and marketing decision to actively treat or cater to the different types of skin types with creating a product for each individual instead of trying to create a product that works for all that is also comprehensive in being able to work for everyone. Instead of just focusing on the main sector or part of the skin and beauty industry, Rihanna shifted the culture in drawing inspiration and creativity from creating for these underrepresented groups. It also gave Rihanna a head start into tapping into the undiscovered powers, profits and connections that can be made with reaching out to this new crowd. The products provided by her beauty line

are essentially made to be used by both genders and making it non gender based to attract and connect with as many consumers as possible.

Creating a new space and a new strategy to market and strive away from the traditional unfair practice of using marketing in a biased way was a great approach. In reality the images that was being portrayed by the marketers of beauty and fashion was outdated and didn't resonate with the culture and society of today. The traditional message from marketers easily exposed underlying feelings such as divisiveness and excluded too many individuals who mattered and were disregarded by this approach. She's envisioned an atmosphere and culture that is accepting and welcoming to all. The era and outdated visions and norms of excluding anyone is out of style in today's society, and instead the successful and working message is instead inclusivity and diversity, led by the likes of Rihanna and her Fenty brand. It was a revolutionary and fresh take on the approach of marketing in trying to gain and attract as many consumers as possible instead of focusing in on the group that may be more profitable or familiar.

Her brand has grown to be three different sections within Fenty, having launched Fenty x Beauty, Savage x Fenty and Fenty Skin. All three parts of this Fenty empire embody this same message of inclusivity and showcasing diversity. She strove to include all in her company's clothing and products from the onset, an authentic message that was received wonderfully by the mass as her company has now been valued at around \$3 billion dollars. Her focus and desire of including and aiming to represent these underserved, undervalued and underutilized consumers also changed the way in which beauty and fashion thought about their approach in marketing. No longer was this image of the perfect light beautiful woman or man the only desired or working method that would draw in consumers who related or strove to be like that image, but instead more power in being valued as you are and as humans has grown Fenty into the power that is it today.

Being inclusive represents more of what our world really is, beautiful in many shapes, forms and colors. Our society has kept progressing and striving towards unity and all being equal, this new wave of inclusivity in the beauty and fashion industries keeps on going with this theme to make everyone feel included and not left out any longer.

Rihanna shook up the beauty and fashion industries with her creative new vision. It was a successful marketing approach that has now forced other competitors and bring brands to revise their business plans and instead focus on this message of inclusivity and diversity. In being representative and really resembling our society, Rihanna have given her audience and consumers a much bigger option into using beauty products or fashion, enabling these individuals who were normally forgotten about and never addressed, to channel their inner Rihanna and endeavor to be as beautiful as possible. It created a natural connection for most consumers as they finally felt as if the beauty and fashion industry cared about their significance and existence. The approach also creates a much larger pool for possible consumers, as it no longer stands by the traditional forms of excluding and pursuing specific targets, but instead choosing to target the majority and relate with most. This new marketing strategy was one of the best initiatives and innovation within the beauty industry as of late, it gave a refreshing take on the way for businesses to create better connections with their consumers as well as creating a new approach to please and deliver to these needs of these markets. Rihanna has succeeded in bringing about change and creating lasting results, using her voice and brand to broaden inclusivity within the beauty and fashion industry. Her creativity and drive will only allow for Rihanna to continue to break barriers and continue to innovate and entrepreneur new visions onto this world to continue to strive towards a more united, beautiful and peaceful world.

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