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International designer: Donatella Versace

Donatella Versace business journey:

Donatella Versace is an Italian fashion designer who served as Vice President and artistic director at her brother's Gianni, Versace SpA. Her business and creative skills helped to advance the Versace brand's high-end, upscale reputation (Kautz, n.d.). Her mother, a dressmaker, and her brother Gianni Versace, a fashion designer, are two family members that had an impact on her work in fashion. ("Donatella Versace", 2020). As a teenager, Donatella Versace started creating her signature style by dyeing her hair platinum blonde and applying thick eyeliner ("Donatella Versace", 2020). She had a special bond with her brother Gianni, who dressed her up and took her out at night to showcase his designs. In the late 1970's, she served as her brothers' inspiration and advisor for the Versace brand ("Donatella Versace", 2020) Gianni highly respected his sister, Donatella's thoughts and opinions. She was responsible for organizing many Versace fashion events and marketing initiatives ("Donatella Versace", 2020). Donatella Versace worked for the company's versus line as its chief designer (Kautz, n.d). Midway through the 1990s, when she assumed a more significant role to help her brother while he battled Cancer, she learnt much more about the fashion industry. Due to her brother's health issues, the siblings worked on the company's succession plan ("Donatella Versace", 2020). Gianni beat cancer but later lost his life by being shot outside his home. Donatella Versace was appointed artistic director of Versace in 1997, following the death of her brother, Gianni ("Donatella Versace", 2020).

What makes her an Icon?

Donatella Versace is regarded as an icon because of her significant and positive contributions to the fashion industry and influence that transcends the business itself (Olita,2018). She created exquisite designs that were like no other. Donatella Versace had elevated the Versace brand in terms of both creativity and commerce (Natale, 2019). The 2000 forest green Versace dress with the never-ending neckline is one of her most renowned outfits. It was worn by Donatella Versace at the met gala, which had a rock styled theme and made Versace the center of attention (Gomez, 2022). When Jennifer Lopez wore that same dress to the Grammy's, it quickly gained popularity. There were many people looking for that garment, which led to the development of Google images (Gomez, 2022).

What are the highs and lows of the business journey?

Lows

After the passing of her brother Gianni, she had trouble managing the Versace brand while still working there. Donatella Versace also suffered a setback. She turned to Cocaine because she was

unable to take the pressure. She was always scared that she would let her brother and Versace clients down (“Inside the Iconic Versace Family’s journey through fame, tragedy and Resilience”, 2019). Nobody was interested in purchasing clothing from a weak, unstable and insane designer, Donatella Versace claimed (“Inside the Iconic Versace Family’s journey through fame, tragedy and Resilience”, 2019).

Highs

The Versace brand was revived by Donatella Versace when it nearly went out of fashion following Gianni’s passing. Donatella Versace expert PR strategies and assured creative guidance improved the company’s reputation (Rani, 2021). She also enhanced marketing efforts and the company’s visibility in international markets. She has worked on the Versace fashion line with celebrities including Madonna, Jennifer Lopez, and Lady Gaga (Rani,2021). Being connected to those individuals elevated her status which helped in the growth of her business.

What are the differentiating characteristics (USP) of this designer?

The Versace brand’s USP Is that it provides products with the ideal fusion of glitz, style, and high-end fashion (Versace SWOT analysis, competitors & USP, 2020).

What would one piece of advice you would give to the marketing director of this brand?

Due to Versace’s Italian heritage, Versace is more familiar with European fashion trends. I would advise the marketing director of this company to become more familiar with cultures and taste in different regions of the world. They need to promote in a way that would be appealing to people from all over the world as a way to increase growth of the business.

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