

# Undone

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FACETUNE  
TO FACELIFT

editor's edition  
(not for publication)

40 IS THE  
NEW 22

EXPOSING THE TRUE  
COST OF BEAUTY  
OVERCONSUMPTION





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### Team MUSE

For centuries, women have been inspiring men to create masterpieces of all forms, yet, society tends to only remember the men, the artists behind these works. Team MUSE wants to change that. Serving as our own muse, we craft creative, groundbreaking work without being the eye of someone else's craft. A bold fusion of feminine energy and power, MUSE is taking charge and changing the advertising scene with its groundbreaking work.

### What is MOJO?

MOJO Ad is a full-service agency at the University of Missouri that not only specializes in all things young but is also staffed entirely by young adults. Specializing in the 18- to 24-year-old market, also known as the youth and young adult (YAYA) market, we are certified experts because we are them. Our unique position in this sought-after demographic grants us the ability to act as a liaison between the YAYA and the professionals seeking to reach them.

### YAYA

Originally coined by MOJO Ad, "YAYA" refers to 18- to 24- year-olds. These consumers are at a pivotal life stage in which they are developing their identities and embracing their reality. At 31 million strong in the United States and earning an aggregate income of \$463 billion, these consumers are choosing whether to stick with the brands they know or try new ones. If marketers fail to reach them, they might never catch up.

### State of the YAYA

The State of the YAYA is an annual report that provides marketers with an in-depth look at the trends and activities of the 18- to 24-year-old market. Created by MOJO Ad staff, the report presents exclusive data on the YAYA demographic to help marketers connect with them on a deeper level. The report not only highlights who they are as consumers, but individuals as well, by providing an extensive look at attitudes and behaviors toward beauty and skin care products, cosmetic procedures, beauty standards and men in makeup.

### Methodology

To best understand the YAYA market, we crafted a 60-question survey that was distributed nationwide through Qualtrics. This resulted in 850 completed responses from YAYA consumers. The sample was representative of the U.S. Census Bureau data for 18- to 24-year-olds related to race, ethnicity and gender. Our qualitative research consisted of 14 focus groups and 11 in-depth interviews with 82 total participants across the United States.

In addition to our extensive primary research, we utilized a variety of secondary, including CNN, Mintel, Ad Age, WARC and Forbes as well as previous State of the YAYA reports to get a complete understanding of the ever-evolving YAYA market.





# Undone

Dear Beauty Insider,

I am a 21-year-old entering adulthood, and I need your help! I used to love the way I felt when I put on makeup and got ready but, to be honest, nowadays it makes me feel tired and stressed. I don't feel beautiful anymore. I feel like I'm constantly trying to achieve a look I'll never reach. I've tried everything to look like the models and influencers I see on social media, but nothing works. I've bought all the serums, the newest eyeshadow palettes, Makeup by Mario's blushes and concealers. I have even gone as far as to set up a consultation appointment for Botox and weight loss pills. I've spent way too much on products and procedures, but I still look the same.

Will you please tell me your models' secrets to looking sooooo thin and beautiful? They are all so perfect and put together. Who wouldn't want to look like them??? Who wouldn't want to be them? I'd sell one of my organs to look like them. Actually, I would kill for their looks. What products are they using? How do they deal with wrinkles? Do they dabble in Botox and fillers? I've really thought about it, but I'm nervous about the permanent part of it all. I guess I can maybe reverse it. I'll just put it on my credit card because there is such a thing as good debt, right?

I look in the mirror and just see wrinkles, the 5 pounds I need to lose, thin lips and eye bags that remind me of my grandma's. I used to see a happy, confident person who was ready to take on life, but I don't see that anymore.

I'm feeling broke, broken and blemished.

Sincerely,  
YAYAs

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pretty face, not the right body lose the weight



# Small Waist, Full Lips and a Bright Smile

Mediocre, but fine. Send to print

The checklist to be beautiful is ever-growing, and the pressure is too.

Pretty eyes. Check. Thin waist. Check. Wrinkle-free. Check. No signs of freckles and moles. Check. It seems difficult to fit into the ever-changing beauty standards, right? Well, get used to it, because the pressure to be beautiful, attractive and perfect isn't letting up anytime soon, especially in the ever-changing and trendy Beauty and Personal Care (BPC) industry. The need to present a perfect outward appearance leaves 50% of YAYA individuals feeling stressed when participating in the beauty industry. While 44% of YAYAs agree "I feel my best when I am my natural self," the idea of what is truly natural is constantly being redefined as beauty trends come and go. Along with that, 59% feel like they are never going to fit into the ideal beauty look, meaning all their beauty efforts are going to waste.

The fast-paced, trend-centric BPC industry certainly is not helping. Our data showed that 41% of YAYAs keep up with the latest makeup trends and 51% feel like they have to keep up with the latest trends just to stay/be attractive. The feeling of not fitting into an unrealistic standard is affecting YAYAs' confidence and poses the threat of lasting effects as 57% of YAYAs feel that unrealistic appearance/beauty standards have impacted their mental health. When asking YAYAs what they are very concerned about 50% of YAYAs choose acne, 46% are concerned about gaining weight and 29% are concerned about sun damage. One participant said, "Women are taught from a young age that they have to wear certain beauty products and they have to present the best way all the time, when that's just, like, not realistic."

Trends are not the only perpetrators in crafting the conflicting relationship between YAYAs and the BPC industry. YAYA consumers turn to beauty authorities, such as social media influencers and beauty brands themselves. While YAYAs might go online to search out the latest eyebrow look, 52% feel less attractive after scrolling through social media. Even the trusted

influencers that YAYAs follow are fostering negative feelings around beauty, as 52% are frustrated when they can't replicate the look of an influencer. All of this ends up with a shopping splurge with 49% feeling pressure from social media and peers to constantly buy new beauty and personal care products. Even the trusted influencers that YAYAs follow are fostering negative feelings around beauty, as 52% are frustrated when they can't replicate the look of an influencer. As if influencers and social media are not enough pressure, now consumers are looking to artificial intelligence as 17% of YAYAs expressed interest in personalized solutions such as AI-powered beauty recommendations.

Beauty brands themselves are furthering this emotional distress with the advertisements they curate to sell products. Over-edited and unrealistic advertisements leave 52% of YAYAs claiming that beauty and personal care product advertisements make them insecure. One participant said, "The beauty industry will always cater to skinny girls with big boobs and tall guys with big arms. Brands hire as many 'real' bodies as they can, but it doesn't matter when people still don't consider that beautiful." However, not all YAYAs feel this way as 53% also say that beauty and personal care product advertisements empower them.

To fit the societal standards of beauty that are being amplified by brands and social media, YAYAs feel the pressure to slim down and shape up as 61% prioritize weight management. Exercise alone isn't cutting it for most YAYAs and they turn to other solutions with 34% having taken prescribed medication and 43% vitamin supplements for weight management purposes. Beyond these options, 51% of YAYAs have followed a specific diet with the hopes of losing weight. One participant said, "I feel like all of us can at one point relate to feeling insecure about weight or the way we look online." YAYAs are exhausting their efforts to not only look like beauty icons but also fit into their mold.



send to retouch immediately



# Embracing Real Beauty

YAYAs are looking for brands that make them feel good, but the solution may not be on social media. Therefore, marketers should look to encourage YAYAs to be themselves rather than trying to fit society's ideal standard of beauty.

One brand that excels at supporting YAYA consumers through the ever-changing beauty industry is Billie, a personal care brand. In their latest ad, Ten Things I Hate About Body Care, the brand takes a stance against the negative stigma surrounding the personal care industry. The advertisement features actress Jameela Jamil reading a poem that has a powerful message about the way brands negatively impact consumers' mindset toward their appearance. Billie

is making it a priority to empower their consumers by ushering in a "new era in body care."

Furthermore, YAYA consumers have negative feelings regarding their weight and the weight management process. This leaves them feeling insecure and self-conscious about how they compare to their peers' standards of beauty. To combat this, marketers should consider eliminating buzzwords from their messaging and be transparent about the effects of their products. More truthful advertising will educate YAYA consumers about healthy weight management practices, and empower them to take a more holistic approach to living a healthy lifestyle.







is it even worth it to include men?

# The Men's Aisle Is In Need of Some TLC

Where can men turn to find moisturizer, makeup and more to fit them?

completely missed the mark

Browsing for men's BPC products? Won't be hard to choose since there are only about four products to pick from. Then again, do men even participate in the BPC industry? The answer is a definitive "yes" as 64% use personal care products as part of their daily routine. This growth isn't limited to just personal products, but is also seen in makeup products as 40% of YAYA men wear makeup for special occasions, 36% of YAYA men wear makeup every day and 45% of YAYA men would consider using makeup in the future. One participant said, "Men are never given any way to try and present their best self outside of like cologne and, like, getting a haircut."

With men entering the BPC industry, they are struggling to find a guiding light to help them navigate all the serums, moisturizers and other products they need. Being lost in the men's beauty aisle isn't a foreign feeling

with 46% of YAYA men feeling stressed when participating in the beauty industry. To make informed decisions, 22% of Gen Z men use products recommended by social media influencers, with celebrities and athletes being the ones they follow the most<sup>1</sup>. YAYA men are looking to connect with brands as 66% prefer beauty and personal care brands they can relate to. Ultimately, YAYA men want to be able to look on the shelf and automatically know the product is for them with 59% feeling that cosmetic makeup packaging and 57% that skincare product marketing should be gendered. One participant said, "If brands were to have more specific advertising towards a male demographic, that would help us feel included." Catering to men as they enter the market, means not only making products for them, but educating them on what they need.



horrible makeup. reshoot with female model



# Redefining Masculinity

YAYA men are frustrated with the lack of product offerings that are made and targeted to them. Marketers should put effort behind highlighting the function and technical benefits of beauty and personal care products that men can connect with. Brands need to leave behind hypermasculinity and transition to promoting influential sources of positive male representation.

One brand that has accomplished this is CeraVe and their 2024 collaboration with Michael Cera for

the Super Bowl ad<sup>2</sup>. CeraVe is No. 1 on the list of Gen Z's top skincare brands, and their collaboration with Cera helps bridge the gap between YAYA men and women in the industry<sup>3</sup>.

Milk Makeup is also working to make the beauty industry more inclusive. Emphasizing a message that makeup is for everyone, their Blur the Lines campaign is challenging gender norms. Their campaign partnered with David Yi, who created the men's beauty site Very Good Light to encourage brands to stop gendering makeup products<sup>4</sup>.



maybe more makeup will make him hotter???



# It's 2024 - What Even Is Authentic Anymore?

When every brand claims to be transparent, how to tell which ones are fake or FR. ←

No!! Rewrite this

Initiative this and initiative that. Any time a BPC brand backs a good cause or increases its product lines, it feels like a money grab instead of genuine care for its consumers. That doesn't even touch on the lack of transparency when photos in advertisements are edited. Get used to it though, because fake is the new real.

we ~~CANNOT~~ publish this!!

YAYA consumers are improving their ability to see through advertisements that only target them for their money, as 73% claim sponsored posts seem fake and 74% believe advertisements are only authentic if they show achievable results. This frustration doesn't just fall on the brand, but also on the influencers they choose to work with. A quarter of YAYA consumers feel that content from beauty brands and their corresponding influencers "feel fake."<sup>5</sup>

While Photoshop fails and authentic recommendations push YAYA consumers away, the inclusive products reel them back in as YAYA consumers applaud BPC brands for creating products and representation for more specific needs. A staggering half (48%) of YAYA consumers surveyed struggle to find diverse ranges of products that match their skin tone, while 43% struggle to find products suited for their skin type<sup>5</sup>. One participant said, "I think [shade range] should just be standard. It shouldn't have to be praised. Every single brand has every single tone or every single shade." That said, 70% of YAYAs appreciate skincare or beauty brands that showcase diversity in their product representation, featuring a range of skin tones, types and concerns.

Why can't they just be happy with the shades we have?

YAYAs crave transparency at every level, as 72% believe that a beauty and personal care brand that is transparent about product ingredients is more authentic. Being truly transparent will bridge the gap between skeptical YAYAs and BPC brands.



## Walking the Walk

YAYA consumers feel stuck in the middle of buying into what brands say they represent and how they show it. Brands need to stop wavering between social causes and sales. YAYAs want to see real action taken by brands in their efforts to be authentic and will look deeper into the brand to see if what they claim to be is true. If brands claim to be authentic, this needs to be shown throughout every aspect of the brand, such as product lines and messaging, as well as model

and influencer selection. One brand that is trusted by YAYA consumers is Selena Gomez's Rare Beauty. This brand helps consumers achieve their natural makeup look while having authentic marketing efforts. Thanks to Gomez's honesty and transparency about her own mental health struggles, the brand's support of initiatives like The Rare Impact Fund feels authentic to YAYA consumers<sup>6</sup>.



# Exposing the True Cost of Beauty

# ~~Overconsumption~~

bad for our brands. send back to copy desk ASAP

Top 10 products influencers say are worth going into debt for  
50 your next paycheck

Beauty has a price, and it isn't a cheap one. The once five-step skincare routine has evolved into a 15-step routine, where every product is needed just for an "everyday" look. What happens though, when there isn't enough room on the vanity and the bank account is empty?

but it's worth it

YAYA consumers are in a love-hate relationship when it comes to purchasing BPC products. On one end of the spectrum, 57% of YAYAs claim buying the newest beauty and personal care products makes them feel happy. Yet, 48% of YAYAs are disappointed in themselves for spending so much money on skincare products that didn't make a difference, and 54% of YAYAs are embarrassed by the number of products they've bought and didn't use.

don't make it seem like they'd regret buying it Money is also a factor in YAYAs deciding to purchase BPC items, with 55% saying BPC products motivate them to earn an additional income. BPC products have made a place for themselves in YAYAs budgets, as 60% on average spend more than \$50 a month on beauty and personal care products and cosmetics, along with related services and treatments. With rising inflation

and pressure to consume more products, YAYAs are witnessing a gap between wanting these products and actually being able to afford them. Higher than the general population, 63% of YAYAs have already changed out BPC products and brands due to product price<sup>1</sup>. This leaves YAYAs with negative emotions toward the BPC industry with 55% of YAYAs frustrated that they can't afford the beauty products they want. One participant said, "There's a lot out there about, like, a five-step skincare routine, but each step is [easily] \$50, right? It's so unnecessary, unrealistic and unattainable."

Maybe it's time to make some sacrifices

BPC overconsumption is a never-ending cycle that YAYAs are trapped in, but there is a shift occurring. YAYA consumers are starting to see through the influencer recommendations and realize the impact their content consumption has on them. In fact, 58% agree that shopping hauls are a gross display of consumerism. This is also seen with the growing amount of de-influencing content, which offers cheaper alternatives to pricey, overhyped products to consumers experiencing financial pressure<sup>7</sup>. The de-influencing trend has gained momentum, with nearly 730 million views on TikTok alone, and is here to stay<sup>8</sup>.

beauty isn't cheap, SUCK IT UP



new model NOW unflattering pose and puffy face



Who let her on set with this lipstick? needs a touch up



# Quality Over Quantity

YAYA individuals acknowledge their role in mass production and overconsumption and that they fuel the fire. They recognize the dissonance between wasteful and tasteless PR hauls and simultaneously turning to social media influencers to learn more about the category. YAYA consumers don't want to contribute to the 'live in excess' culture of the industry, but they feel pressured by brands to constantly consume the next best thing. BPC brands will draw in respect, loyalty and the precious budgets of YAYA consumers by creating meaningful, practical partnerships with experts in the industry, and product lines that focus on quality over quantity.

stop being so stupid → One example of an influencer and situation marketers should shy away from is Darcy McQueeny, who is known for her outlandish PR hauls. In one viral video, McQueeny shows a room overflowing with boxes of PR gifts that she claims had been awaiting her attention for months. McQueeny's landfill-like room of PR gifts received critiques from the YAYA demographic as a prime example of overconsumption, and brands were called out for sending so much to one individual.

Another example marketers should steer clear of repeating the infamous and ever-so-scandalous 2024 Tarte Bora Bora Trip hosted by Tarte Cosmetics. Although Tarte Cosmetics positions the annual trip as a way to build buzz within the cosmetics industry, many consumers are critiquing the brand's promotion as glamorizing the overconsumption habits of brands in the beauty space<sup>9</sup>. The content of luxury rooms and gifts posted by the trip's influencers, such as Emilie Kiser, only fueled YAYAs' anger over the excess consumption habits.

With all of that said, some marketers are prioritizing quality over quantity and making sure they stay in a realistic price range for YAYA consumers. Brands like Hawthorne, Babe Original, Lime Crime and others have actually lowered their prices in order to still be an option to consumers as inflation grows<sup>9</sup>. Others, like E.L.F., specialize in dupes, otherwise seen as more affordable duplication of an expensive product, which leaves a lasting impression with YAYA consumers that E.L.F. is looking out for them<sup>1</sup>!



18

~~40~~

# Is the New ~~22~~

70

~~10 tips to keep your baby face wrinkle free.~~

tone should shift here ↑  
make them afraid of aging

Who the hell  
wants smile lines?

There is no such thing as aging gracefully anymore. At the age of 18, individuals are past their prime and look it. Features that once were considered marks of a fulfilling life now have a negative connotation and should be hidden from the world. Smile lines aren't years of laughter, but something to be ashamed of. Wrinkles don't display years of hard-earned experience, but should be filled and covered to look young and attractive again.

good, they don't  
want to be a  
wrinkled old hag

YAYA consumers are desperate to slow down the aging process, as 44% use products to prevent aging/wrinkles, 58% want to prevent themselves from aging and 42% believe that if they use anti-aging products they can prevent themselves from aging. Gen Z has even popularized prejuvenation procedures that focus on prevention, which has grown significantly in cosmetic dermatology in the past two decades<sup>12</sup>

YAYA individuals aren't just putting this pressure on themselves to stop the aging process, but also feel it from their peers. Giving into peer pressure, 35% said they use anti-aging products because their friends do. One participant said, "Literally tell me why I'm 22 and feel like I look like I'm 40 and have smoked a pack a day for years. The wrinkles are there and I hate feeling like people can see them. I guess it's just a sign of how stressed out I am." No one is praising YAYAs for aging, just pointing out how many wrinkles they have.

She looks f\*\*\*\*\* 80!  
Where did we find this model??  
bring in someone younger now!!!





how does this model have wrinkles at 21?  
Find a new photo



# Youthful Obsession

BPC industry caters to. YAYA individuals are flocking to creams, serums and treatments that will tighten, lift and brighten their already youthful complexion. Marketers should acknowledge YAYA individuals' apprehension toward aging and educate them on the positive AND negative effects of using retinol and other active ingredients in aging products at a premature age; giving them recommendations on alternative products that fit their individual needs. This transparency will foster loyalty with YAYA consumers that continues throughout their lives.

One brand that is a role model for being upfront with YAYAs is Kiehls, which emphasizes ingredient awareness.

if they really looked youthful they wouldn't need it, but they do

Their 'know your formulas' promise made them "one of the first companies to proudly list ingredients on its product labels — even before the U.S. government mandated it — to help customers make more informed and confident purchasing decisions."<sup>13</sup> Their new campaign We Skincare About You Since 1851 educates consumers on their skincare needs through in-store diagnostic experiences where levels of skin aging and individual skin concerns are addressed<sup>14</sup>. This will be an avenue for marketers to continue to explore as 20% of YAYAs expressed interest in personalized solutions such as virtual skincare consultations, illustrating an interest in finding out what truly works for them either in-person or online.

does she have a younger sister?  
she might be a better fit for the young look





*\*tone needs to shift here\**  
*here to push products not make people feel good*  
**Facetune to Facelift**

Trends come and go, ~~but what happens when the latest is a permanent body alteration?~~  
*but big lips and even bigger asses never go out of style*

Don't worry about being another basic ~~botched~~ bitch, because the risk is worth the reward of bigger asses, lips and breasts. Needles full of filler and Botox will be as normal as putting on ChapStick. There is never enough when it comes to Botox and filler. Needless to say, no price or alteration are too much to be attractive.

YAYAs are no strangers when it comes to participating in cosmetic procedures and have even begun to normalize the act of editing themselves with injections, fillers, lifts and more. In fact, 41% of YAYAs agree it's natural for people their age to get plastic surgery and use Botox and fillers. YAYAs fully believe this, as 45% of YAYAs would consider having a cosmetic procedure in the future. One participant said, "We are all getting Botox as a preventative, 20 years before my mom ever even thought about needing it. It's addicting and unnecessary, but I know I'm going to do it anyway."

With that being said, 62% of YAYAs have no interest in having a cosmetic procedure. Cosmetic procedures are making a big impact on the YAYA demographic, but not everyone is ready to go under the needle or the knife. *delete this! we have to make them think they need it*  
 As YAYAs continue to feel pressure through social media and their peers, the idea of cosmetic surgery will drift away from being thought of as medical and become more a part of the fashion and BPC industries<sup>15</sup>. The need to fit in has encouraged YAYAs to make these decisions, as 37% of YAYAs have considered altering their appearance to meet current beauty standards. Influencers are also pushing these alterations, as 42% of YAYAs claim social media is contributing to their growing interest in plastic surgery and injectables. One participant said, "I have lip filler, and I don't think I probably ever would have gotten it if pop culture wasn't a thing, I don't think."

*PERFECT! We need them addicted*

40% of YAYAs have had an elective cosmetic procedure:

- 60% - I have not had any cosmetic surgery procedures.
- 18% - Teeth whitening
- 9% - Laser hair removal
- 7% - Skin rejuvenation
- 6% - Lip injections
- 6% - Liposuction/CoolSculpting
- 6% - Botox
- 6% - Hair transplant/implant
- 6% - Breast augmentation/reduction
- 6% - Buttock augmentation
- 5% - Rhinoplasty/ nose job
- 5% - Collagen injection
- 5% - Facelift
- 1% - Other

60% of YAYAs would have a cosmetic procedure if money weren't an issue:

- 39% - I would not be interested in any cosmetic procedure
- 31% - Teeth whitening
- 17% - Laser hair removal
- 13% - Breast augmentation
- 12% - Lip Injections
- 11% - Rhinoplasty
- 10% - Skin rejuvenation
- 9% - Buttock augmentation
- 9% - Liposuction/cool sculpting
- 9% - Botox
- 8% - Hair transplant
- 8% - Facelift
- 7% - Collagen injection
- 1% - Other

*too high to be believable*







looks completely different than his headshot??  
only so much photoshopping we can do



# Injecting Beauty

YAYA individuals don't view cosmetic procedures as the taboo topic that previous generations once did. They openly express interest and desire to change certain features of themselves through surgery or injection. They crave transparency in results and are dissuaded when brands or personalities aren't upfront with them. Brands that recognize this shift in attitude can focus on being a partner to YAYA consumers and adopt a nuanced approach, catering to both those interested in procedures and those who prefer non-invasive beauty regimens. By doing this, marketers can stand by consumers who participate in cosmetic treatments and emphasize the importance of safety and self-confidence.

don't make it sound dangerous when it's not

One influencer who has walked the fine line between accepting YAYA wants for cosmetic procedures, while also understanding should not be a need, is Dr. Miami. Having gone viral on TikTok, Dr. Miami is a cosmetic surgeon who has real conversations with his followers regarding the seriousness of cosmetic procedures while also using humor.

is he paying us for this?

Another influencer who has been well-received by the YAYA demographic is Alix Earle. Earle has had cosmetic procedures done before, but what makes her different is that she has been open and honest about how she feels she has ~~gone too far~~. This honest approach made YAYAs realize the full impact of cosmetic procedures.



# Undone

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i've been looking at this picture for hours and can't find one positive thing to say.







I specifically asked for GORGEOUS models  
These three are a joke!  
Can't see what made you pick these models?  
Skinny, sexy, stunning models  
are what I requested.  
This is the opposite!!

Clear out your desk. I already have your replacement





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