

Revamping REVOLVE: Bridging the Gap Between Innovation and Inclusion

Group 8: Alice Mollet, Meara Sullivan, Sanjana Nambiar, Seungyeon Chang, Summer Reid

Since its founding in 2003, REVOLVE has emerged as a leader in online fashion retail. Under Michael Mente and Mike Karanikolas' data-driven leadership, the brand disrupted the fashion industry by catering to Millennial and Gen Z consumers. A key driver of success is its influencer partnerships, generating 70% of its revenue (SARAI), and cementing its status as a digital-first fashion powerhouse.

However, REVOLVE falls short on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). Despite highlighting DEI on its social impact webpage, gaps in size inclusivity, Black-owned brand representation, and diverse model casting persist, alienating socially conscious consumers. Additionally, its once-ground-breaking influencer marketing has lost some of its novelty in a saturated market.

Recommendations:

1. **Strengthen DEI Initiatives:** Improve accessibility to Black-owned brands, diversify models, and expand size inclusivity to build consumer trust and reflect evolving values.
2. **Expand Pop-Up Stores & Experiential Marketing:** Invest in physical experiences to enhance brand visibility, engagement, and loyalty, fostering deeper customer connections.

These adjustments will help REVOLVE align with consumer expectations and ensure long-term success in a competitive market.

REVOLVE's Business Model Analysis

Since 2003 REVOLVE has carved a unique space by blending fashion-forward curation with cutting-edge digital strategies. The company's adept use of e-commerce platforms, influencer-driven marketing, and a data-informed approach highlights its competitive edge in an ever-evolving marketplace.

Value Proposition

REVOLVE's value proposition lies in delivering curated collections of high-fashion (through FWRD), on-trend clothing, and accessories at accessible price points, blending style with affordability. By sourcing the latest fashion trends from both established and emerging designers, the brand ensures customers stay ahead of style curves. Its seamless online shopping platform, featuring high-quality product visuals, detailed descriptions, and intuitive navigation, enhances the customer experience. REVOLVE also prioritizes personalized styling through curated outfit suggestions and responsive customer service with flexible return policies. What is also a key differentiator for REVOLVE is its ability to resonate deeply with its target demographic, primarily Gen Z and millennials, through authenticity and inclusivity. This focus matters because younger consumers increasingly expect brands to reflect their values, such as sustainability and representation, in both marketing and product offerings. For instance, McKinsey & Company (2024) notes that 73% of Gen Z consumers favor brands that take a clear stand on social issues. REVOLVE's emphasis on DEI and its promotion of diverse influencers who connect authentically with their audiences underscores the brand's alignment with these values. Through its commitment to DEI and diverse influencer promotion, REVOLVE builds emotional bonds that drive loyalty, repeat purchases, and long-term advocacy.

Revenue Model

Complementing its consumer-focused approach, REVOLVE's revenue model demonstrates a mastery of direct-to-consumer (D2C) strategies. By circumventing intermediaries, REVOLVE maintains robust profit margins and gains critical insights into consumer preferences. The D2C approach allows the company to integrate real-time feedback into its operations, creating an agile framework for trend adaptation. This model is particularly effective in addressing Gen Z's affinity for social commerce, where 60% of these shoppers report making purchases directly from social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok (EcommerceDB, 2024). REVOLVE has harnessed this shift by integrating shoppable posts and influencer partnerships that resonate with the scrolling habits of digital natives. This agility ensures that REVOLVE not only stays relevant but thrives in a competitive e-commerce landscape that demands both speed and innovation.

Competitive Advantage and Environment

Technological innovation is a key differentiator for REVOLVE, setting it apart from competitors like SSENSE and Reformation. By leveraging predictive analytics, REVOLVE anticipates purchasing patterns and optimizes inventory management, reducing overstock and markdowns—a challenge both SSENSE and Reformation address differently. While SSENSE often discounts excess luxury inventory, potentially diluting brand prestige, Reformation's slower eco-conscious production cycle limits its responsiveness to demand. Furthermore, REVOLVE employs artificial intelligence to deliver personalized shopping recommendations, a strategy Statista (2023) highlights as essential in modern retail. The company's unique approach can be traced back to its founders, Michael Mente and Mike Karanikolas, who, leveraging their technical expertise and lack of fashion knowledge, initially focused on building software to predict inventory trends. As the LA Times *"How two friends built Revolve into a fashion empire with Instagram influencers"* notes, this allowed them to optimize buying and selling decisions, laying the foundation for the brand's e-commerce success. By blending tech-driven strategies with fashion, REVOLVE has not only enhanced the customer experience but also secured a competitive edge in operational efficiency and profitability, positioning itself as a leader in the industry.

Market Opportunity

As the global marketplace continues to evolve, REVOLVE is strategically expanding into international markets and luxury segments. Grand View Research (2024) projects the global e-commerce market will grow by 10.4% annually through 2027, fueled by increasing smartphone penetration and rising disposable incomes. REVOLVE's premium segment, FWRD, is strategically positioned to capitalize on this growth by targeting affluent consumers seeking curated luxury offerings. Furthermore, the rebound of global travel post-pandemic creates avenues for REVOLVE to engage with international consumers through targeted campaigns and localized product offerings.

Market Strategy

The marketing strategies employed by REVOLVE underscore its role as a digital pioneer. The brand's reliance on influencer marketing, complemented by an omnichannel approach, is a masterstroke in appealing to digitally savvy audiences. McKinsey & Company (2024) reports

that 58% of Gen Z and millennial consumers are influenced by social media content when making purchasing decisions. By hosting exclusive events like #RevolveFestival, documented by WWD (2023) as impactful to brand equity, the brand extends its reach beyond digital spaces, fostering community while enhancing brand visibility. REVOLVE capitalizes on this by partnering with micro-influencers who drive high engagement rates, creating aspirational yet relatable narratives around its products.

REVOLVE's sustained success can be attributed to its ability to integrate fashion with technology and align its operations with shifting consumer dynamics. From leveraging predictive analytics to adopting omnichannel marketing strategies, the company consistently demonstrates an ability to innovate while staying true to its core audience. As the e-commerce space evolves, REVOLVE's agility and commitment to authenticity position it as a model for digital-first retail brands.

REVOLVE's Innovative Approach to Market Strategy

REVOLVE originally stood out amongst digitally native marketspaces because of its innovative approaches to marketing through social media influencers. Today, REVOLVE continues to be a pioneer in the online retail sector, slowly incorporating pop-up spaces and continuing to adapt its influencer approach to present-day pressures. At the time of REVOLVE's founding in 2003, influencer marketing and digitally native marketspaces were not nearly as ubiquitous as they are today. Within REVOLVE's investor site, the brand describes itself as a pioneer in the influencer marketing space, citing that its historic success has lied in its "first-to-market influencer marketing strategies and trips." Hubspot found over half of the marketers in 2024 work with influencers. This demonstrates both the importance of influencers throughout all sectors and the foresight REVOLVE had over 20 years ago. REVOLVE began influencer partnerships before the creation of Instagram when these individuals were simply called bloggers. REVOLVE found that celebrities were not necessary nor as effective as a trusted 'influencer' with a small circle of followers, but high engagement rates. REVOLVE further emphasized trust between the brand, influencers, and their consumers with the inception of brand trips and events in 2014. REVOLVE's heavy reliance on influencers from the start was not common but has proven to be extremely beneficial. According to SARAL, 70% of REVOLVE's revenue comes from influencers, meaning REVOLVE heavily relies on its influencer relationships to fuel the company.

REVOLVE diversifies itself through many unique influencer (i.e. ambassador) marketing tactics and campaigns. One notable example is its dedicated ambassador landing page. Most brands invest in searching for talent that aligns with their brand. As demonstrated in the case of Glossier (an innovative, GenZ/Millennial-focused beauty brand) finding individuals who effectively promote a product on social media is difficult. Influencers can feel too distant or ingenuine, while dedicated consumers often need to be more skilled at creating content. A Harvard Case study on Glossier explains, "not everyone wants to be a content creator or is not a good content creator." The REVOLVE ambassador landing page gives power to REVOLVE and eliminates the investment in searching for talent. Anyone can apply to be a REVOLVE ambassador. The basic premise of an ambassador program is that individuals receive personalized links that can be shared with followers. When a purchase is made using the link, the ambassador receives a percentage of any purchases. Along with these links, ambassadors can

create custom shopping pages of their favorite products. These landing pages feel authentic to each ambassador, appealing to individual style. Lastly, REVOLVE rewards well-made content with reposts to their own social media accounts that boast millions of followers. These tactics attract ambassadors which promote and grow brand awareness tremendously. To retain these ambassadors REVOLVE recognizes the necessity of long-term relationships, which are essential for brand longevity.

By 2014 REVOLVE understood more had to be done to attract both consumers and ambassadors and create these long-term ambassador relationships. In response, since 2014 REVOLVE has boasted more than 130 trips around the world with individuals who are deemed successful ambassadors. In 2015, the now well-known REVOLVE Festival was created. The event occurs in Coachella Valley every year during the Coachella Music Festival. The REVOLVE Festival hosts ambassadors and celebrities, such as Kendall Jenner, Timothee Chalamet, and the Spice Girls. Often the brand sponsors luxurious accommodation, fit with the REVOLVE logo, to receive organic exposure when content is created. Because of REVOLVE's luxurious trips and events, the brand is synonymous with cool, and both ambassadors and consumers want to be associated with its ethos. By 2021, the company turned to a data-driven approach, once again differentiating its brand by creating in-house technology that evaluates each ambassador and their success based on a number of metrics. The technology can match the ambassadors with certain campaigns and helps to evaluate whether the ambassador will be a successful long-term partner. This allows REVOLVE to use data-driven analysis to more accurately create effective campaigns, meaning higher sales.

Today the influencer marketing tactics Revolve uses are omnipresent. Most brands in the fashion and beauty sector utilize short-term influencer marketing tactics, some have emulated REVOLVE's long-term tactics as well. Raissa Gerona, REVOLVE's Chief Brand Officer, has worked with REVOLVE for 15 years and has been a large part of the growth strategy. Going forward, however, Gerona feels change is necessary. Gerona explained on the *Glossy* podcast that she wants to deprioritize influencer trips citing, "[REVOLVE was] probably the first to do it. But now, everyone is doing it. And so, we've really put that on the back burner, quite frankly. The content feels dated, to me — just because we've been doing it for so long. Our customers always challenge us to do better, to think outside the box, to excite them, and to inspire them." REVOLVE is successful because instead of following the blueprint for a successful marketing campaign, REVOLVE creates its own. The excitement and allure once felt from viewing ambassadors on branded trips now feel stale. Gerona's statement emphasizes consumer excitement and inspiration. REVOLVE cannot foster that same excitement and inspiration through its ambassadors when the influencer economy is oversaturated. REVOLVE Festival and brand trips will carry on, but on a smaller scale, accompanied by a new tactic on the horizon.

In the past five years, REVOLVE has experimented with pop-up stores in Aspen, New York City, and Los Angeles. In 2024, REVOLVE opened its first permanent store in Aspen. The store marks a historic moment in REVOLVE's history and provides consumers with a new method of connecting with the brand. For the 2024 holiday season, REVOLVE has opened a holiday-themed pop-up in Los Angeles's The Grove. Moving forward, these decisions will aim to grow REVOLVE's brand. REVOLVE will continue to hold on to the tactics that have brought its annual revenue to 1 billion while incorporating fresh ideas and concepts.

Evaluating REVOLVE's Current DEI Practices

REVOLVE identifies DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) as one of its core values. Based on this ideal, REVOLVE has dedicated a section of its website to black-owned brands resulting in a 45% increase in the number of Black-owned apparel brands appearing on REVOLVE at year-end 2022, as compared to year-end 2020. They have also expanded diversity across marketing channels by photographing women of color in 37% of all female styles across their website. Despite their notable efforts, there are inconsistencies in the way they preach and approach DEI.

REVOLVE claims to prioritize diversity and inclusion, but its Black-owned brands page is hard to find. It's not listed on the main site or mobile app. Instead, users must access a separate company page via desktop, navigate to the 'Diversity and Inclusion' section, and click a nearly invisible link that blends into the text. Without prior knowledge of the black-owned category's existence and a determined effort to find it, accessing this category is virtually impossible.

Then customers are met with a neglected section page that is not fully managed or up-to-date. A significant number of the products are out of stock with no signs of restocking, and the items displayed are outdated for at least two seasons. At the time we checked the website there were only sold-out bathing suits presented on the page. In the fast-paced fashion industry, it is critical to stay current with trends and seasons. Given this industry standard, offering items that are even two seasons behind the current fashion trend further highlights the neglect and lack of attention the black-owned category actually receives. This shows a mismatch between what REVOLVE claims are their core values and what they put into practice, and this lack of authenticity can be devastating for their appearance to customers.

REVOLVE also emphasized the diversity of its models as one of the implementations for its core values. However, a closer examination of image usage on their online shopping website reveals noticeable gaps with what they claim in their execution. While REVOLVE claims to incorporate a variety of black models in their visuals, the photos featured in their categories predominantly assign lighter-skinned models or utilize intense white lighting to make the model's skin appear significantly lighter, thus blending in with their caucasian models. In contrast, images used for hidden black-owned categories are limited to models with distinct and bold colors. This stark differentiation in models and their image usage can be interpreted as a preference for white-like lighter tones in main categories and darker tones in obscured categories, which is inconsistent with REVOLVE's ideal implementation of model diversity.

Moreover, REVOLVE's choice of models implicitly exhibits a strong bias toward standardized beauty ideals, favoring tall and slim physiques. There is an evident lack of selection for models with curvier or shorter body types. This uniformity is further underscored by the rigidity and monotony in the model's poses within product images. Most photos feature stiff, mannequin-like poses without backgrounds, which contrast sharply with the natural, lifestyle-oriented appeal captured in REVOLVE's category thumbnails. The unique charm of each product fails to be conveyed effectively in the stiff product images. This can reduce the customer's reliability towards the quality of the product and make them hesitant to purchase it, which could result in a reduction in sales.

This discrepancy poses a significant issue as it contradicts REVOLVE's ideal toward DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion). However, REVOLVE's current practices suggest a superficial adoption of DEI principles, with an implicit reliance on societal biases in beauty standards and an apparent lack of genuine effort to embrace diverse skin tones and body types authentically. It appears that REVOLVE allocated a section on its main shopping website to enhance interest and accessibility for black-owned brands as part of its DEI initiatives. However, ironically, the current state of the category is in stark contrast to REVOLVE's original intent for DEI. The existing towering entry barrier, which makes it difficult for customers to easily access and engage with this section, undermines the core purpose of promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion, positioning the current approach far from the values REVOLVE seeks to embody. The poorly managed products within the category and the equalized model images hinder the conversion of potential purchase intent into actual purchases for a diverse range of consumers visiting the REVOLVE website. The lack of variety in the visuals and the overall disorganized presentation reduce the appeal of its products, preventing the brand from fully engaging its target and potential demographics and addressing their specific needs and preferences. This not only affects customer satisfaction but also limits the sales opportunities of the company.

Valuing DEI and embodying authenticity when implementing it is important. Ensuring that brand actions genuinely reflect their values fosters trust and deepens engagement with the customers, who highly prioritize transparency and ethical alignment. According to a McKinsey report, one of the trends that define the current global consumer market is sustainability. Sustainability, in broader terms, emphasizes inclusive growth as part of DEI, ensuring that all individuals, regardless of background, have opportunities to thrive in both economic and social spheres. This concept resonates strongly with Gen Z and millennials, who tend to value corporate efforts to promote social equity. These younger consumers are increasingly aware of the social implications of their purchases and actively seek out brands that embody inclusive practices. This is evident in survey results from McKinsey, which show that young consumers prioritize sustainability when making purchase decisions. For instance, 48% of millennials and 49% of Gen Z responded that they would pay more for sustainable products in the survey. This trend is particularly significant as Generation Z and millennials continue to influence global consumer behavior, showing a growing interest in personal care, sustainability, and value-driven consumption.

Another trend that defines the current global consumer market is authenticity. The State of the Consumer 2024 report by McKinsey highlights the increasing importance of authenticity in consumer engagement. The report emphasizes that authenticity is no longer just a 'nice-to-have' but a critical factor influencing purchasing decisions. Brands seen as authentic have a better chance of building trust and loyalty, particularly among younger consumers, who value sincerity and are quick to call out brands they perceive as insincere. Thus, McKinsey notes that companies must align their messaging with real actions rather than just marketing slogans. A significant portion of consumers, particularly in advanced economies, want brands to prove their sustainability claims with tangible actions. It also underlines that as global consumer habits continue to evolve, businesses that fail to maintain an authentic image risk losing consumer confidence, especially in a digital landscape where transparency is easily scrutinized. The data provided in the report reinforces McKinsey's argument. It shows that around 60% of Gen Z and millennials consider brand authenticity crucial in their buying decisions, and this number is steadily increasing across both mature and emerging markets. Brands that integrate sustainability,

corporate social responsibility, and ethical practices are more likely to see continued consumer engagement, particularly as social media amplifies consumer voices.

Therefore, it is crucial to instill authenticity in its DEI efforts for REVOLVE, especially given that the company's primary customer base consists of Gen Z and millennials. These demographics represent the core of REVOLVE customer base, accounting for around 79% of its net sales being made at full price, according to the REVOLVE Investor Relations website. This data reflects the strong interaction and engagement of Gen Z and millennial demographics with the company and its pricing strategy, offering products that appeal to its key customer segments. As previously stated by McKinsey, DEI initiatives must be authentically done to resonate with young consumers. Implementing DEI without authenticity may lead to a loss of trust and engagement from this core demographic. If REVOLVE does not align its DEI strategies with authenticity, it may result in significant declines in sales. This would not only damage REVOLVE's revenue but also weaken the company's position in a highly competitive marketplace.

Emphasizing the Pop-Up Experience for the Future of Revolve's Market Strategy

REVOLVE capitalizes off of the current fragmented state of consumerism in the same way that SSENSE does, by operating as an e-commerce website that holds inventory for all things mid to high-end luxury fashion. Their versatility in inventory and style choices can be attributed to their many brand partnerships and curators for style. However, it takes more than the digital experience to maintain significant cultural relevance and keep the brand on the tip of everyone's tongue. SSENSE has expanded upon the streetwear personality that comes out of New York City, creating articles on fashion history and clothing, making them more of a cultural voice for the fashion underground and mainstream aesthetic in New York and beyond. REVOLVE should capitalize off of their influencer reach and high-end experiences like the REVOLVE Festival to create more in-person experiences centered around exclusivity with excellent customer service in real life, making the REVOLVE brand appeal to the customer archetype who wants to be led into the REVOLVE club on a red carpet with their name on a bottle of champagne.

The REVOLVE website itself is extremely plain, their inventory images appear like stock photos to keep the focus on the clothes. Every single model is posed front-facing with a white background. While this keeps the website inoffensive concerning the individual brands they carry, it tarnishes their effort to create an identity for the REVOLVE brand. Browsing through the website feels like looking through the inventory of a high-end drop shipping label. In this effect, the brand itself has nothing to offer other than the products it carries as opposed to its competitor SSENSE, which has leveraged its clout within the streetwear community to turn its website into a hub of articles, style edits, and interviews from the hottest vintage resellers and voices of the streetwear community and beyond. On the SSENSE homepage, there are articles about tailoring, lookbooks from the top sellers on Grailed, and the history of fashion in the greatest metropolitan cities. REVOLVE needs to create experiences around the brand that extend beyond the world of high-profile influencers and include their average customer to build brand identity. Since they already have built a following around the REVOLVE Festival, they should extend their reach into the real world with themed pop-up events to create real-life touch points

for consumers to attach positive sentiments to, and use the content generated from these events to build their identity on their own website.

In order to increase the chances of virality, these events should be themed and directly aligned with the major cultural events of the fashion cycle. REVOLVE pop-ups should happen in multiple metropolitan cities around the times of New York Fashion Week, The Met Gala, Cannes, and in late May when most luxury brands drop their resort lines. Opposite to the REVOLVE festival, these events should utilize influencer power by hiring influencers to appear alongside the customer with the purpose of making content. The influencer should not be the main event, instead, they should just post about going and show up to bring their audiences to REVOLVE. The shopping experience should be extremely photogenic, and feel luxurious by way of proximity to fashion bloggers and culture producers on social media. There should be several Instagrammable moments within the temporary stores, in a similar manner to Glossier pop-ups. Pop-up partners should also include diverse representation with an emphasis on marginalized founders.

A met gala REVOLVE pop-up should be centered completely on the theme of the year. This year's theme, "Superfine: Tailoring Black Style" will focus on the expressions of black dandyism, a cultural shift that points to the metamorphosis of Black men turning into style giants in the late 19th century. This theme happens to directly coincide with the proposed initiative to keep up with their DEI principles and will allow them to expand upon their relationship with their black influencers and market alike. The Met is largely focused on archival pieces as it references fashion history through themes. A REVOLVE experience around this should avoid feeling patronizing with black fashion history and there should be a social media campaign launched along with the pop-up to teach their audience about the importance of black dandyism to the history of fashion. This is where the influencers can come into play with style edits based on the theme, and appear at the events to make content. Fans of these influencers will enjoy finding their favorite creators at the event, REVOLVE should organize a few elevated meet and greets, where influencers actually do in-person style edits on willing fans throughout the event, making it feel like a personal experience. REVOLVE should also utilize these pop-ups to pilot new in-house collections with the proposition of limited exclusivity, strengthening their own label by driving sales toward the REVOLVE brand clothing.

Millennials and Gen Z have proven to be a consumer base that is digitally native, and the best viral moments are driven by real-life experiences. The Lioness Group are consultants that serve as experts in creating pop-up experiences for digital brands. According to Melissa Gonzalez, manager of TLG, "an average pop-up store in the USA enjoys an increase of 35 % in sales from the opening to six months after the closing. Moreover, half of the stores experience a 30 % increase in social media activities" (Haas and Schmidt). The overall expense to host a pop-up event is normally a point of contention for large brands, with large pop-ups in NYC costing anywhere from five to fifteen thousand dollars in a day for real estate and promotional expenses, but the opportunity to experiment with their customer archetype in order to attach some relevance to the REVOLVE name easily justifies the cost. Research indicates that "rather than simply selling merchandise, pop-up shops primarily serve as promotional initiatives that help firms launch new products, generate brand awareness, create marketplace buzz (e.g., using pop-ups to promote collaborations between retailing organizations and product designers),

experiment with new products, technologies, and formats" (Haas and Schmidt). Not only will themed temporary stores serve as touchpoints for customers to engage with their brand in real life, but it would also be a unique approach to pop up events, as hardly any mid-level brands host pop-ups that correlate with the current events in fashion, and so bloggers and smaller influencers will be commenting on its execution which it will bring more eyes to any collection they plan on producing under the REVOLVE name.

Enhancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Through Authenticity and Size Inclusivity

REVOLVE's commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) is a core value of the company; however, as highlighted, its current practices fall short of meeting consumer expectations. To expand its customer base and achieve sustained growth, REVOLVE must realign its operations to reflect its DEI principles authentically. Addressing key areas such as the accessibility of Black-owned brands, the representation of diverse models, and the inclusion of broader size ranges is critical. By implementing these targeted improvements, REVOLVE can build greater trust, engage socially conscious consumers, and position itself for long-term success in a competitive market.

One of REVOLVE's most significant shortcomings lies in the accessibility and management of its Black-owned brands section. Despite the company's stated commitment to diversity, customers encounter substantial barriers in locating this category on both desktop and mobile platforms. The section is buried within the website, requiring navigation through multiple links, and is further hindered by an outdated and poorly managed inventory. This neglect not only undermines REVOLVE's DEI principles but also erodes customer trust. To rectify this, Black-owned brands should be prominently integrated into the main navigation menu, ensuring they are easily accessible across all platforms. Such visibility would underscore the brand's commitment to inclusivity and make customers feel welcomed and well-represented. Additionally, REVOLVE should collaborate closely with Black-owned businesses to maintain a regularly updated inventory that reflects current and seasonal fashion trends. Without trendy, on-season styles, customers are less likely to engage with the brand, leaving them feeling excluded. Marketing campaigns that celebrate these brands would further emphasize REVOLVE's authentic commitment to diversity, fostering long-term customer loyalty and driving revenue growth from previously underperforming sections.

In addition to these accessibility challenges, REVOLVE's approach to model diversity and photography practices reveals implicit biases that conflict with its DEI goals. The overrepresentation of lighter-skinned models in main categories, contrasted with darker-skinned models in the less visible sections, reinforces societal biases and alienates key demographics such as Gen Z and Millennials. These groups value inclusivity and authenticity, and REVOLVE's reliance on outdated beauty standards fails to meet their expectations. Brands like *Savage X Fenty*, founded by Rihanna, have successfully championed diversity and inclusion from the start, featuring models of all ethnic backgrounds and sizes. Rihanna herself states, "We do not believe in excluding anyone." Such a strategy is not only morally aligned with REVOLVE's DEI goals but also economically prudent. According to a 2018 Brookings article, *The US Will Become 'Minority White' in 2045, Census Projects*, by 2045, white Americans will make up less than 50% of the population, with Hispanics, Black Americans, Asians, and multiracial populations growing significantly. A more recent *Time* article projects that the purchasing power of Black

Americans will reach \$1.7 trillion by 2030, while Hispanic Americans already contribute \$3.2 trillion annually to the economy. Ignoring these demographic shifts provides competitors with ample opportunity to capture market share, a risk REVOLVE cannot afford to take.

To address this, REVOLVE should diversify its model selection to reflect a range of skin tones, body types, and ethnicities across all product categories. This inclusivity should be so evident that even a brief visit to the website conveys the brand's values. REVOLVE could also launch campaigns that feature models from diverse ethnic backgrounds, ensuring that inclusivity is a visible and integral part of its identity. Furthermore, natural, lifestyle-oriented photography with visually appealing backdrops can enhance product storytelling and foster relatability. Conducting audits of current model usage will help identify and eliminate biases, ensuring equitable representation. By embracing these changes, REVOLVE can build a more inclusive and authentic brand image, fostering trust, increasing engagement, and driving higher conversion rates.

Another critical area for improvement is REVOLVE's lack of size inclusivity, which significantly limits its appeal to a broader demographic. The current focus on slim and tall models excludes a large portion of potential customers, including plus-sized and petite individuals, alienating an increasingly socially conscious consumer base. In contrast, brands like *Djerf Avenue*, founded by Swedish influencer Matilda Djerf, set an excellent example of size inclusivity and model diversity. *Djerf Avenue* offers clothing in sizes ranging from XXS to 4XL and includes an innovative "choose model size" feature on its platform. This option allows customers to view products on models of varying sizes, fostering a more inclusive shopping experience where consumers feel represented and connected to the brand. To capture these underserved markets, REVOLVE should expand its offerings to include a comprehensive size-inclusive clothing line prominently featured across all platforms. Implementing inclusive sizing filters on the website would further simplify the shopping experience, enabling customers to find items suited to their body types effortlessly. Collaborating with influencers and models of diverse body types to promote these collections will also enhance relatability and visibility. These efforts will broaden REVOLVE's customer base, strengthen its reputation as a forward-thinking and inclusive brand, and drive significant revenue growth from previously overlooked segments.

Finally, REVOLVE must ensure that its DEI marketing and execution are perceived as authentic. Today's consumers are quick to spot inconsistencies between a brand's claims and its practices, and superficial DEI initiatives can erode trust and credibility. REVOLVE should create a dedicated "Inclusivity and Sustainability" microsite to highlight its progress, goals, and initiatives transparently with data-backed updates. Partnering with external DEI consultants can further ensure alignment with best practices and eliminate implicit biases. Additionally, storytelling highlighting the success of Black-owned brands and inclusive fashion collections will reinforce REVOLVE's genuine commitment to its values. By adopting these measures, REVOLVE can deepen consumer engagement, increase advocacy on social media, and solidify its position as a trusted brand in a highly competitive market.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the market strategy we have created for REVOLVE focuses on capturing the attention of their Gen Z and millennial audience by creating physical experiences to help

with brand recall and awareness in the digital space. Despite the positive engagement and strong fan base made of many influential ambassadors, REVOLVE is currently missing a strong personality within their brand, and in turn, misses the mark on influencing the actual culture beyond their yearly festival. In addition to this, pop-up experiences designed around creating a stronger brand personality are a great opportunity for them to reinforce their values around their DEI initiatives and they can expand upon their influencer relationships to drive new audiences towards their products. The brand has plenty of potential to future-proof itself and improve cultural relevancy by leveraging its differentiators as well as implementing new strategies to increase brand loyalty and engagement.

Works Cited

- 2024 State of Marketing. HubSpot, <https://www.hubspot.com/hubfs/2024%20State%20of%20Marketing%20Report/2024-State-of-Marketing-HubSpot-CXDstudio-FINAL.pdf>.
- Avery, Jill. *Glossier: Co-Creating a Cult Brand with a Digital Community*. Harvard Business School, 2019, <https://hbsp.harvard.edu/download?url=%2Fcourses%2F1187660%2Fitems%2F519022-PDF-ENG%2Fcontent&metadata=e30%3D>.
- “Buying into Sustainability.” McKinsey & Company, <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/sustainable-inclusive-growth/charts/buying-into-sustainability>
- Danziger, Pamela N. "Revolve's Raissa Gerona on Deprioritizing Influencer Trips: 'The Content Feels Dated.'" *Glossy*, <https://www.glossy.co/podcasts/revolves-raissa-gerona-on-deprioritizing-influencer-trips-the-content-feels-dated/>.
- Djerf Avenue. “Everyday Pants in Brown.” *Djerf Avenue*, <https://djerfavenue.com/en-us/everyday-pants-brown/>.
- “Diversity and Inclusion.” *REVOLVE*, <https://investors.revolve.com/Social-Impact/Diversity-and-Inclusion/default.aspx>.
- Ecommerce and Gen Z: Insights into Social Shopping. *EcommerceDB*, 2024, www.ecommercedb.com.
- Forbes. "How Predictive Analytics is Changing Retail." *Forbes Technology*, 2023, www.forbes.com.
- “Global E-Commerce Market Growth Trends.” *Grand View Research*, 2024, www.grandviewresearch.com.
- Haas, Sandra, and Lisa Schmidt. "What Drives the Success of Pop-Up Stores?" *Wissenschaftliche Beiträge*, vol. 20, no. 1, 2016, pp. 89–95. doi:10.15771/0949-8214_2016_1_12.
- Indigo9 Digital. “Fenty's Diversity and Inclusion.” *Indigo9 Digital Blog*, <https://www.indigo9digital.com/blog/fentydiversityinclusion>.
- Lam, Thuc. “How Revolve Became the Instagram Fashion Brand That Took Over E-Commerce.” *Los Angeles Times*, 23 Aug. 2019, www.latimes.com/business/story/2019-08-23/revolve-clothing-instagram-influencer-ecommerce.
- Mark S. Rosenbaum a, et al. “The Benefits and Pitfalls of Contemporary Pop-up Shops.” *Business Horizons*, Elsevier, 24 Oct. 2020, www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0007681320301385.
- “Meet the Savage X Fenty Model Squad.” *Vogue*, <https://www.vogue.com/article/meet-savage-fenty-model-squad>.
- “REVOLVE Ambassador Program.” *Saral Academy*, <https://www.getsaral.com/academy/revolve-ambassador-program>.
- REVOLVE Investor Relations. *REVOLVE*, <https://investors.revolve.com/why-revolve/>.
- "REVOLVE Launches Brand Ambassador Program Leveraging In-House Proprietary Technology." *REVOLVE*, 2021,

<https://investors.revolve.com/news/news-details/2021/REVOLVE-Launches-Brand-Ambassador-Program-Leveraging-in-House-Proprietary-Technology/default.aspx>.

- "REVOLVE Pioneers First-Ever AI-Generated Billboard Campaign." *REVOLVE*, 2023, <https://investors.revolve.com/news/news-details/2023/REVOLVE-PIONEERS-FIRST-EVER-AI-GENERATED-BILLBOARD-CAMPAIGN/default.aspx>.
- Sherman, Lauren. "The History of Revolve Festival." *Women's Wear Daily (WWD)*, <https://wwd.com/feature/revolve-festival-history-1236312684/>.
- "State of the Consumer 2024: What's Now and What's Next." *McKinsey & Company*, https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1BNPmvQjmQrpMZDOPF5_V-ETuKQrsgxkg.
- Statista. "Impact of AI on Retail Personalization." 2023, www.statista.com.
- "Superfine: Tailoring Black Style." *The Metropolitan Museum of Art*, www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/superfine-tailoring-black-style. Accessed 12 Dec. 2024.
- Ssense. "Meet the Man You'll Want to Be." *SSENSE*, www.ssense.com/en-us?ranMID=41610&ranEAID=jXNTGICLCKU. Accessed 12 Dec. 2024.
- "The State of Fashion 2024." *McKinsey & Company*, 2024, www.mckinsey.com.
- "The US Will Become 'Minority White' in 2045, Census Projects." *Brookings*, 2018, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/the-us-will-become-minority-white-in-2045-census-projects/>.
- Time. "Diversity, Minorities, America, and Economic Future." *Time*, <https://time.com/7177856/diversity-minorities-america-economic-future-purchasing-power/>.
- WWD (Women's Wear Daily). "Revolve Festival's Impact on Brand Equity." *WWD*, 2023, www.wwd.com.

Exhibits

Exhibit 1 Absence of black category in main category lists & Hidden hyperlink

Black category not on the REVOLVE website main category		
Shopping by category		a trendy product
Shop All Clothing	a matching set	Quiet Luxe
Shopping for Best Sellers	Pants	holiday necessities
sweatpants	Romper	Black Tie
denim	Shorts	holiday dress
One-piece	Skirt	The Fall Shop
Jacket & Coat	Sweater & Knit	Date night.
a jumpsuit	Swimsuit & Cover Up	Work Outfits
lingerie & pajamas	consultation	Vacay Dresses
Homeware	The Kids Shop	a wedding guest
		The Bridal Shop
		Cotton shop.

Hidden Hyperlink

DEDICATED SECTION OF THE REVOLVE WEBSITE FOR BLACK-OWNED BRANDS:

In 2021, we launched a dedicated section of the REVOLVE website to highlight Black-owned brands and we plan to expand the assortment to include BIPOC brands in the future. Moreover, we have highlighted individual Black-owned brands on the REVOLVE site and in our social channels.

Exhibit 2 Black-owned category filled with outdated & out of stock items



Exhibit 3 Model color difference in each category

