

BEAUTY BRAND GROWTH THROUGH GENERATIONAL EXPANSION

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Troy Ayala

Key Takeaways:

- Multigenerational campaigns drive stronger growth for beauty brands.
- Influencers remain beauty's most powerful visibility engine.
- Brand relevance now spans five consumer generations.

Beauty has always been competitive, but today's market is uniquely complex. Gen Alpha, Gen Z, millennials, Gen X, and baby boomers are all active beauty consumers simultaneously, each with distinct values, channels, and expectations. As competition fragments across generations, the stakes are rising.

According to McKinsey & Company, the sector grew 7% annually between 2022 and 2024, but it is now projected to slow to 5% through 2030. In a decelerating market, organic growth is no longer enough to sustain momentum. Instead, brands are increasingly competing for market share, often by taking it directly from one another.

That pressure is already driving strategic change. Having overindexed on Gen Z in recent years, many leading brands are now shifting toward more multigenerational strategies designed to broaden relevance and protect long-term growth.

A recent report from AI-powered brand data company Launchmetrics analyzed the brand performance of companies marketing to multiple generations using its proprietary Media Impact Value (MIV) metric, which assigns a monetary value to media placements, influencer content, social posts, and brand coverage to measure visibility and impact.

Over the past year, the top 20 brands across skincare, makeup, fragrance, and haircare generated a combined \$22.7 billion in MIV. Within that dataset, brands that actively targeted multiple generations

in at least one campaign saw MIV growth of 42% from Q4 2025 to Q1 2026, compared to 36% for those with less inclusive approaches.

The data points to a clear shift: Generational reach is becoming a measurable driver of brand performance in an increasingly saturated market.

MIV provides that benchmark, assigning a monetary value to every piece of coverage and content a brand generates. Behind the figure is voice mix analysis, which tracks influence across celebrities, traditional media, influencers, partners, and owned media to show where attention is being won. For example, La Roche-Posay generated \$561M MIV year over year (YoY), with 59% driven by influencer voice, underscoring the continued power of creator-led discovery in skincare. Category leaders, including Nivea (\$593M), CeraVe (\$366M), and Neutrogena (\$241M), highlight the intensity of competition across dermocosmetics, while SkinCeuticals recorded \$186M MIV. Owned media MIV also rose 83% vs. the prior period, signaling growing investment in brand-owned ecosystems and direct audience engagement.

Makeup: A Highly Competitive Power Category

The makeup category remains one of beauty's most competitive segments, spanning mass-market staples, prestige houses, and digitally native disruptors. It continues to reflect where cultural attention, creator influence, and consumer spending are most concentrated.

The latest rankings show a tightly contested top tier, with four of the top five brands exceeding \$990 million in MIV: MAC (\$1.09B), Maybelline (\$1.08B), Huda Beauty (\$1.03B), Dior Beauty (\$992M), and L'Oréal (\$979M). They are followed closely by Charlotte Tilbury (\$864M), NYX (\$787M), YSL Beauty (\$774M), and Nars (\$671M), underscoring the intensity of competition across prestige and mass channels.

Digitally native and social-first brands continue to gain traction, with Rare Beauty (\$547), Fenty Beauty (\$544M), Sheglam (\$515), and e.l.f. Beauty (\$408M) reinforcing the strength of creator-led business models in driving visibility and growth.

Creator influence dominates the category, with 76% of makeup MIV driven by the influencer voice, around 10 percentage points above the wider beauty industry average. Instagram remains the platform, generating approximately 42% of total MIV across brands.

L'Oréal recorded the strongest growth in the category, up 48% YoY, while influencer Lenka Lul delivered standout impact across Lancôme, Armani Beauty, and YSL Beauty, averaging \$10.6 million MIV per brand.

MAC Cosmetics delivered one of the category's biggest moments of the year, reaching \$116 million MIV in September 2025 with I Only Wear MAC. The multigenerational campaign featured talent spanning five decades, including Kris Jenner, Kristen McMenamy, and Doja Cat, alongside emerging Gen Z creators, all unified by the MAC foundation. A staged "leak" featuring Kris Jenner generated \$3.5 million MIV alone, with the full campaign reaching \$4.9 million within 48 hours.

The data highlights a category increasingly defined by creator-driven visibility and cultural moments, where performance is shaped as much by influence as by product.

Top Makeup Brands:

1. MAC \$1.09B
2. Maybelline \$1.08B
3. Huda Beauty \$1.03B
4. Dior Beauty \$992M
5. L'Oréal \$979M
6. Charlotte Tilbury 864M
7. NYX \$787M
8. YSL Beauty \$774M
9. Nars \$671M
10. Rare Beauty \$547M

11. Fenty Beauty \$544M
12. Sheglam \$515M
13. Chanel \$512M
14. Armani Beauty 494M
15. Benefit \$484M
16. Makeup By Mario \$476M
17. Lancome \$465M
18. Makeup For Ever \$425M
19. e.l.f. Beauty \$408M
20. Anastasia Beverly Hills \$397M

Haircare: Broad Reach, Fastest-Growing Category

Haircare sits at the intersection of personal care and self-expression, spanning repair, treatment, and color, with needs that vary significantly across generations. This makes it one of the most commercially diverse categories in beauty.

The rankings reflect a broad mix of mass, professional, and prestige brands. Kérastase leads at \$255M MIV, followed by L'Oréal Paris (\$249M) and Garnier (\$159M). Other key players include L'Oréal Professionnel (\$148M), Pantene (\$146M), Olaplex (\$128M), Redken (\$102M), Dove (\$99.3M), and K18 (\$81.6M), alongside Gisou (\$52.8M) and Color Wow (\$49.2M).

Haircare was the fastest-growing category in the dataset, with the top 20 brands up +50% YoY in MIV. Dove recorded the strongest growth at +129%, driven by a strong owned media strategy, which accounted for 49% of its total MIV.

As with makeup, the influencer voice remains the dominant driver of visibility across the category, highlighting the continued importance of creator-led discovery. Nicole Wallace generated \$5M MIV for Kérastase, making her one of the most impactful voices in the category.

“Brands with genuine multigenerational appeal focus less on marketing to age groups and more on evolving human needs,” said Michael Nolte, SVP Creative Director of Beautystreams. “Loyalty comes from making consumers feel understood across their entire life journey.”

Top Haircare Brands:

1. Kérastase \$255M
2. L'Oréal Paris \$249M
3. Garnier \$159M
4. L'Oréal Professionnel \$148M
5. Pantene \$146M
6. Olaplex \$128M
7. ghd \$108M
8. Redken \$102M
9. Dove \$99.3M
10. K18 \$81.6M
11. Tresemmé \$77.2M
12. Schwarzkopf \$65M
13. Living Proof \$58.7M
14. Oribe \$58.1M
15. Gisou \$52.8M
16. Amika \$51.7M
17. Wella Professionals \$51.3M
18. Color Wow \$49.2M
19. Moroccan Oil \$41.8M
20. Head & Shoulders \$38.5M

Skincare Wins Across Every Generation

Unlike makeup or haircare, skincare remains one of beauty's most fragmented categories, with mass-market, dermatologist-backed, luxury, and digitally native brands all competing for consumer attention. That diversity is reflected in the rankings, with L'Oréal Paris (\$446M MIV) leading, followed by La Roche-

Posay (\$411M), Garnier (\$383M), and Nivea (\$318M). Across the top 20 brands, skincare generated an average YoY MIV growth of 28%.

The category also highlights the growing importance of regional digital platforms. Chinese social platform RedNote emerged as the top-performing channel for brands including Clarins, Estée Lauder, Lancôme, La Mer, and SkinCeuticals, accounting for an average 43% of total MIV across those brands.

Several brands demonstrated how multigenerational storytelling can drive growth. Garnier climbed ten places in the skincare rankings over the past two years, supported by 57% YoY MIV growth, while La Roche-Posay leveraged tennis star Jannik Sinner's broad appeal through its Shadow Sponsor sun protection campaign, generating more than \$1M in MIV during the 2026 Italian Open.

Lancôme delivered one of the category's strongest examples of cross-generational marketing with its What if You Could Choose Your Age campaign for Absolué Longevity MD. Featuring ambassadors spanning multiple generations, from 22-year-old Ella McCutcheon to 63-year-old Demi Moore, the campaign generated \$6.5M in MIV in a single month. Rather than tailoring different messages to different age groups, Lancôme centered the campaign on a universal theme of longevity, adapting its storytelling across influencers, celebrities, medical experts, and traditional media to reach consumers wherever they engage with beauty content.

Top Skincare Brands:

1. L'Oréal Paris \$446M
2. La Roche-Posay \$411M
3. Garnier \$383M
4. Nivea \$318M
5. Lancôme \$270M
6. CeraVe \$249M
7. Kiehl's \$225M
8. Clarins \$212M
9. Dove \$205M
10. Estée Lauder \$201M
11. Medicube \$197M
12. Dior Beauty \$197M
13. La Mer \$195M
14. rhode \$194M
15. Laneige \$186M
16. Tatcha \$157M
17. SkinCeuticals \$154M
18. Shiseido \$153M
19. Chanel \$150M
20. L'Occitane \$148M

Fragrance: The Power of Cultural Relevance

More than any other beauty category, fragrance sits at the intersection of celebrity, fashion, and culture. That positioning continues to drive performance, with Dior Beauty leading the category at \$340M in MIV, followed by Chanel (\$243M) and YSL Beauty (\$229M).

While influencer marketing remains important, fragrance stands apart from the other beauty categories in its reliance on editorial and cultural storytelling. It was the only category in which media emerged as a leading voice for multiple brands, with Byredo, Chanel, Diptyque, Guerlain, and Le Labo generating an average of 52% of their MIV through media coverage. Instagram remained the dominant channel overall, accounting for 39% of total MIV across fragrance brands.

The ranking also highlights the value of balancing heritage with relevance. Valentino Beauty recorded the strongest growth in the category, with MIV rising 81% YoY. In contrast, category leader Dior continued to drive visibility through a multigenerational ambassador strategy spanning Rihanna, Johnny Depp, Jisoo, Willow Smith, and Anya Taylor-Joy. The approach reflects a broader shift across fragrance, where brands are increasingly building cultural cachet by appealing to multiple generations simultaneously rather than targeting a single age group.

Top Fragrance Brands:

1. Dior Beauty \$340M
2. Chanel \$243M
3. YSL Beauty \$229M
4. Armani \$154M
5. Jo Malone \$135M
6. Tom Ford Beauty \$132
7. Sol de Janeiro \$126M
8. Guerlain \$121M
9. Prada \$118M
10. Lancôme \$111M
11. Valentino Beauty \$111M
12. Kayali \$105M
13. Diptyque \$82.6M
14. Carolina Herrera \$78.8M
15. Dolce & Gabbana \$77.7M
16. Gucci \$74.4M
17. Kilian Paris \$68.3M
18. Byredo \$67.6M
19. Le Labo \$66.7M
20. Maison Margiela \$67.6M

The New Competitive Advantage

The report's findings suggest that beauty's next growth opportunity is not choosing between Gen Alpha, Gen Z, millennials, Gen X, or baby boomers but learning how to engage them simultaneously. Brands that actively targeted multiple generations within a single campaign saw MIV grow 42% between Q4 2025 and Q1 2026, outperforming brands that maintained a narrower approach.

Importantly, success is not simply about casting a wider net. The highest-performing campaigns paired a consistent brand message with channel, creator, and ambassador strategies tailored to different audiences. Whether through MAC's multigenerational I Only Wear MAC campaign, Lancôme's longevity-focused ambassador strategy, or Dior Beauty's diverse fragrance roster, the strongest performers demonstrated that relevance can be expanded without diluting brand identity.

As beauty growth slows and competition intensifies, the industry's focus is increasingly shifting from short-term sales to long-term brand share. The brands best positioned for future growth will be those that understand not only who their consumers are today, but which generations they are winning, losing, and cultivating for tomorrow. In an increasingly crowded market, multigenerational relevance is becoming less of a marketing trend and more of a business imperative.

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