



#SQUADGOALS

Meet the BFFs who are dominating the beauty world, one privileged face at a time.

BY MERIAM AHARI

It seems that flipping through a fashion magazine nowadays is akin to watching episodes of *Keeping Up With Kendall Jenner*. Just try scanning five pages without running into images of the reality television star-turned-model sprawled across an ad campaign spread. The "Instagirl"—as she's been dubbed—is undeniably one of the industry's hottest commodities. 'One of', being the key words. Because when Kendall Jenner is in tow, her #girlssquad isn't too far behind.

When it comes to appointing a new brand ambassador, cosmetic companies are swapping Hollywood's A-listers for today's more obvious choice: It-girls—and more explicitly, the It-girls of Kendall Jenner's clique. It all started in 2014, when Estée Lauder decided to revamp their image as being your mother's go-to maquillage, by signing on Kendall Jenner as the new face of their campaign. Seemingly overnight, Estée Lauder transformed its image by featuring Kendall in ads promoting Modern Muse Le Rouge Gloss Perfum and Double Wear Nude Cushion Stick. The brand instantly broadened its reach by appointing the media darling who embodied everything millennials seem to aspire for in life: beauty, fame, and overnight success while living a glamorous life full of Instagrammable moments. Flash back to 2005, when Estée Lauder sought their quintessence in America's sweetheart and GOOP founder Gwyneth Paltrow—who at the time was 32 years old and a mother of one, a far cry from Kendall's profile—to represent the brand. All of a sudden, mothers who had been loyal to their trusted makeup—that they also grew up with—are able to bring their daughters along, giving them both something to peruse.

It can't hurt that Kendall also uses her personal social media account to promote her campaign. But were post-endorsement sales enough to prove that what she touches turns to gold? Estée Lauder's CEO Fabrizio Freda told *Fashionista* he's seen "very encouraging results," due to "Kendall and her enormous following."

It's rare to find Kendall leaving a nightclub or Sunday brunch without her right-hand woman in tow—Gigi Hadid, who just so happened to snag a contract with Maybelline in 2015, a year after Kendall scored her gig. At only 19, the Malibu-born model replaced former spokeswomen for the brand such as late nineties/early noughties actress Sarah Michelle Geller and *Sex And The City*'s Kristin Davis. Maybelline revealed their decision to *Us!* Weekly, "As the fashion industry's newest 'it' girl, Hadid is known for her confident, fun, seductive spirit. She reflects our brand values and represents Maybelline New York women all over the world who are smart, sexy, optimistic and full of life."

Shortly after Kendall and her BFF made waves as makeup brand ambassadors, it wasn't long before Kendall's closest sister Kylie Jenner nabbed a contract of her own. Interestingly enough, it wasn't for a cosmetic brand, but an anti-aging skincare line called Nip+Fab who felt Kylie's influence could make baby-faced Gen Z'ers second-guess the elasticity and smoothness of their complexions. After all, at the budding age of 16, Kylie had work done (those infamous lip fillers) that most women just begin pondering in their '40s. But after seeing the major increase of liquid lipstick sales everywhere after Kylie's post-surgery selfies, it seemed a no brainer to link up with the teen. Nip+Fab's founder Maria Hatzistefanis released a statement, "I am thrilled to be working with Kylie Jenner as the Nip+Fab ambassador, she is cool, edgy and an international beauty icon. I am proud to say that Kylie has been a fan of the brand for the last year and has supported us not just on her Instagram but by making the trip to London to meet her fans."

So, who else is part of Kendall Jenner's "Super Natural Friend Group?" Yes, that is what they actually refer to their posse as—which Kendall begrudgingly revealed to *Allure* magazine, agreeing that it's "super lame." Kendall found a kindred spirit in Cara Delevigne (they've shared not only magazine covers, but also runways together), so much so that they formed their own mini nickname CaKe (a standard bestie move of creating a shortcut of both their names combined). They've not held back on professing their affection for one another via Instagram—with selfies of nights out or special birthday shout outs to each other. In April of last year, Cara brought her strong personality and edgy style to British makeup brand Rimmel.



“Whether designating these It-girls as the new force behind bolstering makeup sales makes brands more relatable or gives us yet another unrealistic aspiration of the kind of lifestyle we want to lead is up for debate. But it is indeed the way the industry is gravitating.”

1. Gigi Hadid's Maybelline campaign for NYFW. 2. Cara Delevingne's Scandaleyes Reloaded Mascara campaign copy. 3. Kendall Jenner for Estée Lauder Modern Muse Le Rouge. 4. Bella Hadid for Dior Pump'n'Volume. 5. Kylie Jenner's Nip + Fab beauty campaign. 6. Hailey Baldwin at L'Oréal Paris Red Obsession Party.

fronting their Scandaleyes Reloaded Mascara campaign. Past celebrity endorsers of the affordable drugstore brand were Zoëe Deschanel in 2010 and Rita Ora in 2014. What made Rimmel step away from the usual actress or pop singer? “Famed for her strong look and trend-setting style, Cara is a natural choice to represent Rimmel,” the London-based brand announced. Although a recent report from *Ok!* Magazine stated that CaKe had a recent falling out over the name of their clothing line (apparently Kendall’s ‘momager’ Kris Jenner was pushing to copyright the name to CaKe by Kendall Jenner and Cara Delevingne...and Cara wasn’t too happy about it).

Another member of this girl gang who also happens to be on makeup’s most wanted list is Bella Hadid. Bella and Kendall have been spotted everywhere together from a girl’s night out in a Paris strip club to courtship at basketball games, with or without Bella’s sister Gigi. Shortly after Rimmel announced they would be recruiting Cara Delevingne as their newest spokesperson, Dior followed suit by teaming up with Bella for their cosmetic line featuring their Diorshow Pump ‘n’ Volume Mascara. Last June, the breakthrough model appeared in the luxury brand’s online video series in collaboration with makeup creative director Peter Philips. This was the first move in a while that the French company decided to break away from appointing their usual movie starlet of the year. Previous Dior ambassadors have included the likes of major Hollywood actresses such as Charlize Theron, Jennifer Lawrence, Natalie Portman and Marion Cotillard. Philips called Bella the perfect Dior ambassador for speaking the same

digital jargon as her peers. “She has a spontaneity with social media. Give David Beckham a [soccer] ball—that’s the same as her with social media. It comes naturally. It’s a talent,” he told *WWD* backstage at Paris Fashion Week.

The sixth member of the brat-pack—Hailey Baldwin—is so tight with Kendall that they even have matching BFF finger tattoos of a shattered heart. Hailey, who is the daughter of actor Stephen Baldwin, recently lent her face to L’Oréal Professional to promote their Pro Fiber and INOA It Looks By Vanessa Bruno. Choosing Baldwin as their spokesperson was a rather surprising move for the brand who has a long history of enlisting the big screen’s esoteric few like Penelope Cruz, Blake Lively, Freida Pinto, and Jennifer Lopez to appeal to the masses. So why feature Hailey who isn’t exactly what you’d call a household name? According to L’Oréal Professional general manager Marion Brunet, Hailey Baldwin embodies “a new generation of women that is both addicted to fashion and ultraconnected, women who express their personality through hair color and style to transform themselves just as they would with makeup.”

So what initiated this palpable shift in selecting Kendall Jenner and her posse over Tinsel Town’s starlets? Perhaps, it is the incessant shrewd

objective of every company worth their salt to resonate with today’s youth. After all, millennials prove to be important players in the game of consumer demand and the dissemination of all that is relevant in today’s world, largely due to their unique reality of not knowing a world without social media. There’s even a lot to be said of the fact that this article you’re reading in a printed magazine includes several hashtags, even the title has one.

Last year, Maybelline Vice President Steven Waldberg revealed to *WWD* why they chose Gigi for the brand. “She’s young. She’s beautiful. She’s very motivated. She has created a true career for herself. She’s someone that I think a lot of young girls relate to and look up to.” Really? How much can Gigi, Kendall and the rest of the girl gang have in common with today’s youth? At quick glance, it’s clear that this crew has more in common than long legs and glowing skin. Each girl boasts an Instagram following in the millions (Kylie actually surpasses her sister, leading the gang at over eighty-eight million followers), have grown up in the spotlight thanks to famous family members, and together combined, have a net worth of approximately over 100 million US dollars. Seems like a stretch to say young girls can relate to this girl gang, but look up to, sure. The entire world is so easily able to peer into the private lives of these It-girls via social media, that it’s hard to feel as though you don’t know them. When they share every intimate moment like their makeupless morning selfies in bed, their glamorous nights out together, and their opinions on everything from the feminist movement to their thoughts on the latest matte lip—it’s

hard not to feel like you’re in with the cool kids. One of the most notable characteristics of Gen Y and Z is their “slasher” status—meaning they prefer the freedom of freelancing, hopping from multiple gigs to fulfill whatever creative juices need flowing or to ensure they have the funds and time to do some traveling when a break from the grind is needed. Similarly, Kendall and her crew are all “career slashers,” with lengthy titles like model/spokesperson/actress/entrepreneur/personality on their resume. Not to mention this bevy of beauties are considered style icons, never hesitating to rock the most daring looks and even create contentious trends of their own. For example, we were confident trackuits were left to die after the ‘80s, but Kendall revived the frumpish trend by making the two-piece her airport fashion uniform.

Whether designating these It-girls as the new force behind bolstering makeup sales makes brands more relatable or gives us yet another unrealistic aspiration of the kind of lifestyle we want to lead is up for debate. But it is indeed the way the beauty world is gravitating. If anything is for sure, it continues to give us major #friendshipgoals, because what would be more fun than working alongside your best friend and attending the most fashionable affairs? Watching Kendall Jenner and her crew frolic around New York and Paris in designer duds is the closest gratification we’ve attained since *Sex & The City* last aired. Now that all the members of Kendall’s crew have been tapped for an endorsement, who will be next? Will they adopt a new member into their group? We’ll just have to wait and see who Generation Z decides is worthy.