

#MyCalvins

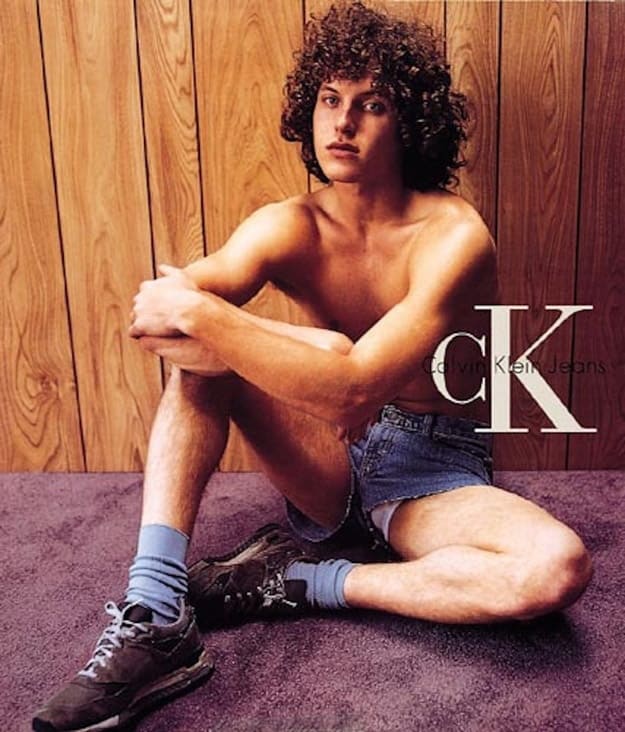
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**Who is Calvin Klein?**

Calvin Klein is a brand that envisions itself to be bold, progressive, and seductive. This vision began back in 1968, when Calvin Klein and his business partner Barry Schwartz began to create what they thought were new, inventive, and aesthetic styles of clothing (**Calvin Klein. 2017).** The first shop opened in New York City and featured it’s “Youthful, understated coats and dresses,” collection, which later helped Klein be featured on the September 1969 cover of Vogue, only a year after opening the company’s first store. Jumping ahead to the 1980’s, Klein’s began to branch out from strictly woman’s dresses and coats by tapping into the underwear and fragrance market, having developed a strong brand presence by then. It wasn’t until the 1990’s that the company began facing major financial problems. They company was later bailed out by Klein’s close friend David Geffen. Skipping ahead to the year of 2000, a lawsuit was filed by Calvin Klein Inc. against its licensee Warnaco Group for breaching contractual agreements and trademark laws, the case later settled out of court. After creating numerous licensing agreements over the course Klein and Schwartz ownership of the brand, they decided to sell their company for $430 million to Van Heusen Corporation back in 2003. As of 2016, Raf Simons has been appointed to chief creative officer for Calvin Klein Inc. (Claire Haynes. 2016).

**Underwear and Controversy**

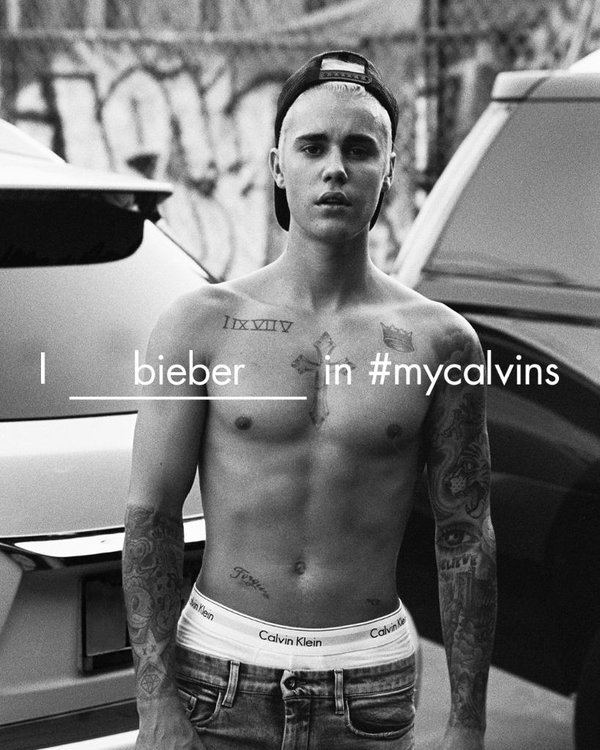
 Throughout the years, Calvin Klein has generated high amounts of publicity for their advertising campaigns, usually due to their sexually provocativeness being marketed towards younger consumers having been accused of promoting “gang rape, violence, child pornography and drug use.” These accusations were heighten during 1995 when a series of commercial and print ads featured young models posing in either the brand’s underwear or jeans (Kariz Sanchez. 2016.) In fact, Sanchez goes on to discuss the ad featured to the left, which features a model who was shot by Steven Meisel, writes about how this particular ad campaign was one of the most controversial in the brand’s history. Many organizations such as the American Family Association and individuals such as Bill and Hilary Clinton, who were President and First Lady at the time, were outraged at the print ad and began to speak out against them, raising the question of the age of the models featured. This later forced the Justice Department to investigate the company and the photographer, which was later dropped once the company was able to prove that all models involved in this particular ad campaign were legal adults that consent to their photos being taken. Although being cleared of all charges, Calvin Klein was required to pull some of its “suggestive” commercials and print ads from being featured to the public (2017).

**The Use of New Age Media**

Calvin Klein’s brand has developed a major following over the years. The company’s Instagram features 1, 910 post of celebrities and models wearing their designer clothes, as of May 7, 2017, which is seen by over nine million active accounts (C. Klein. @CalvinKlein. 2017.). Now taking a look at the brand’s Twitter, the account is has shared about 4,269 tweets, or posts, with over 3.38 million followers, as of May 7 2017 (C.Klein. @CalvinKlein 2017). Calvin Klein also takes advantage of using social sites such as Tumblr and Pintrest, popular blog sites, to feature it’s collections as well as campaigns to the public.

**#MyCalvins**

The #MyCalvins campaign is an interactive campaign targeted to those individuals who use social media. The campaign centers around this idea of what an individual does while wearing the brand’s clothing; in fact in many of the photos posted to with the statement, “I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in my Calvins,” to encourage the public to participate. The company also developed the hashtag My Calvins (#MyCalvins) to urge its consumers to post a photo of themselves on their social media accounts to take part in the festivities.

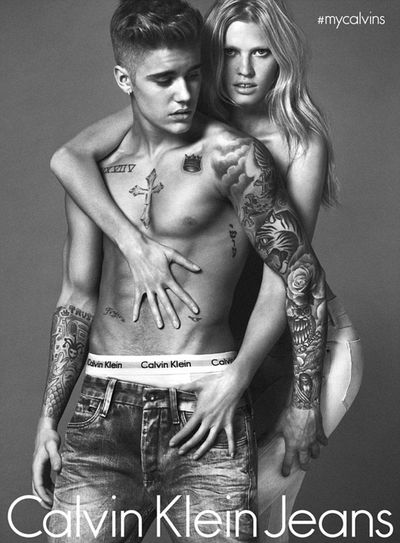
 In order to promote the campaign, Calvin Klein hired musical sensation Justin Bieber, who has over 81.6 million follower on Instagram (J. Bieber. @JustinBieber. 2017) and over 93.1 million of follower on twitter (J. Bieber. @JustinBieber. 2017). to be featured as a lead model for their ads. The company created various advertisements that aired on television, as well as their social media accounts, of Bieber doing things such as lounging around with other models or playing the drums. The ads had become so popular that even the hit television show Saturday Night Live, SNL, poked fun at them, having Kate McKinnon portray Bieber in multiple skits that look similar to the actual ads themselves, which actually went viral. This attention helped the company grasp a larger audience. In the hopes that #MyCalvins could continue to reach a larger audience, the company collaborated with other celebrities that have a large influence as well to continue to attempt to reach a large audience.

Calvin Klein worked with major celebrities such as Kendall Jenner, a reality television star from the hit show “Keeping Up With The Kardashians,” and a model, who has over 80.2 million followers on Instagram (K. Jenner. @KendallJenner. 2017) and 21.8 million follower of twitter (K. Jenner. @KendallJenner. 2017). These photos worked in the same manor in which the celebrity would strip down to their to reveal their Calvin Klein underwear and fill in a the blank portion. These photos were not only posted to the company’s social networking accounts but also to the many celebrities that were Calvin Klein had featured in their campaign.

 This enabled #MyCalvins to begin to trend with over 490,000 individuals parting in the interactive campaign on just Instagram alone (C. Klein. #MyCalvins. 2017). Many of these individuals are assumed to be involved simply because of the star power brought the campaign, as well as those who are considered brand loyal. The #MyCalvins posts from the public acted as unpaid advertising for the company causing it the brands following to increase massively.

**Why does #MyCalvins Work?**

Calvin Klein strategically used Bieber to similarly recreate pervious successful Calvin Klein advertisements. The creation of nostalgia works because many already have connected the Calvin Klein brand with luxury and sex appeal, so when the ads are recreated its easier for the mind to connect the two. In fact, Calvin Klein went to the extent on helping Bieber create a “bad boy” persona by having him slowly strip down in each of his posts and for other projects in which he was wear the brand’s clothing line, even before he was announced as the new face of the company (Fumo N. Unpacking Calvin Klein’s Wildly Sucessful #MyCalvins Campaign. 2015). The more he striped down on his own social networking accounts, the more people acknowledge, evening making several of them viral, and pushed Bieber’s audience to subconsciously put sexy and Bieber with the brand Calvin Klein.



The involvement of major celebrites with a large fan base has helped the company with it’s own following helping it increase by “2.2 million followers on Facebook, 1.8 million on Instagram, and one million on twitter” (S. Leo. #MyCalvins campaign takes over the internet. 2016).

**The Designer with Some Criticism**

Although the company has found that using celebrities with a major following to be featured as part of the brand, Calvin Klein, the founder of the company and former owner, has questioned why the company has chosen to select by stated, “it’s just not my cup of tea.” For example when asked what he though about Jenner, amongst other stars,

during a presentation on the campus of Savannah College of Art and Design, Klein explained that he felt that the different “represent the essence of the designer” and are only being featured because the massive audience they have (C. Kreatofil. “The Actual Calvin Klein Isn’t Impressed with Kendall Jenner’s Calvin Klien Ads.” 2016). His comment made headlines, some of which featured in magazines like Vogue where Calvin Klein is often advertised. Despite Klein’s feelings toward Jenner and her fellow colleagues, the brand Calvin Klein has decided to keep their formula and continue to allow these celebrities to represent the brand.

**New Found Success**

The company’s tremendous amount of success with the #MyCalvins campaign has pushed the company to keep the trend going by including using it promote newer collections the company has released. In fact, the company decided to use it for their 2017 Fall collection. It does seem like the company has found an approach that allows them to interact with their consumers more often as well as increase their brand awareness, which in terms increase sales.

**In Conclusion**

#MyCalvins has allowed the company the succeed in brand awareness and seems to come across as inclusion to it’s consumers. Calvin Klein has found a gem and has constructed the perfect formula for their brand to continue to “break the internet,” meaning it’s advertisement will continue to go viral. The campaign encourages the public to take part of the trend, because no one likes to feel left out, and work as free adverting for the brand. The company does seem as if it will continue to use this approach to appeal to younger generations.

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