

Nyx Professional Makeup, the millennials' brand, makes its international play

*Textes et photos mis librement à disposition des médias pour diffusion journalistique*



## **WHERE IT ALL STARTED: AMERICA'S PRO MAKEUP ARTISTS & BEAUTY JUNKIES**

“Nyx Professional Makeup was founded by Toni Ko, a young Korean-American female entrepreneur who sold her first product lines in professional beauty supply stores and at professional trade shows in the Los Angeles area” explains Nathalie. So Nyx Professional Makeup was born into the world of Californian makeup artists and beauty junkies towards the start of the 2000s. News got around through word of mouth. “Young makeup artists were looking for professional grade, affordable colour products. Nyx Professional Makeup met their needs, and they were the first

Nyx Professional Makeup, the millennials' brand, makes its international play

ones to spread the message." But it was with the arrival of YouTube, Instagram and other online social media in the 2000s that Nyx Professional Makeup's reputation really took off.

## **ORGANIC TIES TO BEAUTY BLOGGERS**

"Creativity forums started springing up on the web from 2005 as women began posting their own makeup video tutorials on YouTube. Many of them used Nyx Professional Makeup's products, well before they were known. This started the brand's cult following. " So she set out to harness the organic growth potential of the digital realm. "We were one of the first brands to connect with these online beauty influencers by sharing our new products, inviting them to events and so on." Nyx Professional Makeup has a straightforward communication strategy - "0% traditional media, 100% organic content" - relying entirely on social media and its ties to the online beauty community. It has paid off: the brand now sells over 2,000 products, boasts over six million followers on Instagram, and millions of organic videos covering Nyx Professional Makeup products have been posted online. Google recently acknowledged that Nyx Professional Makeup is the second most visible makeup brand online.

"Last year's winner saw her social media following skyrocket from 8,000 to one million followers after her victory"

The brand devised its own unique strategy to attract the most celebrated vloggers. "We don't pay our vloggers to post, instead we feature and celebrate them like no other brand" says Nathalie. She sees this visibility swap, and the brand's authentic relationship with them, as the main reason why the brand is so successful among web influencers. Nyx Professional makeup set up an annual *Face Awards* contest five years ago to award the Beauty Vlogger of the Year. In 2015, more than 2,500

Nyx Professional Makeup, the millennials' brand, makes its international play

people took part in the huge live event staged in LA, with hundreds of thousands more following the live event online. "The Face Awards offers participants an amazing springboard. Last year's winner saw her social media following skyrocket from 8,000 to one million followers after her victory". If the brand works tirelessly to attract these vloggers, it's because in the space of a decade, they have come to wield real influence in the world of cosmetics, with the best known counting fans in the millions. "They are internationally recognised opinion leaders, so you have to know who they are and be able to speak their language."

"Our partner vloggers are involved in product development"

These influencers do not just raise the brand's profile. They also help Nyx Professional Makeup to spot the latest online trends. "Our partner vloggers are involved in product development. One vlogger has even come to work for us full-time". This approach enables the brand to keep its ear to the market and stay one step ahead of its rivals. "To give an example, we recently identified an emerging online trend involving the use of bright eyeshadow-type tones for lips. In less than six months, we had created an entire product line, ranging from turquoise green to fluorescent yellow lipsticks. Those quickly became hot sellers."

## **INTERNATIONAL AMBITIONS**

Buoyed by its US success, the brand is expanding internationally. "Beauty vlogging has a global reach, so Nyx Professional Makeup has set its sights internationally too." The brand is present in 70 countries and is in the process of rolling out its distribution network. "L'Oréal's purchase will enable us to structure our offering internationally" explains Nathalie. The company currently distributes its products through professional networks, and specialty beauty stores including Ulta stores in the USA, Sephora in South Asia, Douglas in Germany and Boots in the UK. "We

Nyx Professional Makeup, the millennials' brand, makes its international play

need to be wherever the beauty junkies are.” “We operate nimbly, using small teams attached to L'Oréal subsidiaries that reach out to local influencers, as we have successfully done in the Middle East with the #nyxarabia community.” In every country, the brand is developing strong e-commerce presence where customers have access to the large offering of Nyx Professional Makeup products.

“hundreds of fans braved the cold to crowd in front of the doors on opening day”

The brand also has a network of its own stores, which it uses to serve existing markets, such as the USA and Canada, but also to move into new markets, including Spain (Madrid), Italy (Milan) and, shortly, France (Toulouse). New store openings are big events. In the San Francisco area, a local news station compared the lineups surrounding Nyx Professional Makeup store openings to an Apple product launch. Or take the example of the store opening in Milan, where “hundreds of fans braved the cold to crowd in front of the doors on opening day”.

To speed up its international growth, Nyx Professional Makeup is again relying on its close ties to influencers, who act as beachheads in each country, creating buzz.

In Madrid, for instance, they hosted meet & greets with fans at the store opening. Nyx Professional Makeup also puts influencers front and centre by featuring them in video tutorials at the Beauty Bar in stores, where fans can recreate the latest makeup looks. These stores are packed with digital features, including technology that allow users to scan products and instantly pick up user-generated content, or be featured on an Insta- feed digitally-connected screen in stores. All this to create the ultimate brand expression in a physical space and to help fuel the larger distribution network being built. Nyx Professional makeup's story is just beginning.