



Case study by
StudentBeans

elf.

In 2018, e.l.f Cosmetics was the talk of the beauty industry. Over the previous three years, they had doubled sales to \$270 million, and the company had recently gone public. They had experienced unprecedented growth for an online cosmetics business, and they weren't about to stop there.

e.l.f Cosmetics had doubled revenue over three years to \$270 million

e.l.f's founders Alan and Joey Shamah took inspiration from the fast fashion model to launch a brand new take on beauty retail. They understood that in order to capture the young, stylish demographic that made up the fast fashion consumer base, they needed to emulate its key advantages. This means producing the products young consumers want at a fast pace to meet demand, and an affordable price to achieve mass market appeal. Similar to fast fashion, their products are inspired by the high end items beauty lovers lust after, recreated for shoppers on a budget. The business also appeals to Gen Z's ethical values with a 100% vegan and cruelty-free pledge.

Summary

Challenge

- e.l.f Cosmetics had doubled revenue over three years to \$270 million.
- They needed an edge over competitors as the online beauty industry expanded.

Solution

- e.l.f integrated our student verification technology and promoted their offer on-site.
- A boosted discount created extra buzz around the launch of their student program.
- They capitalized on student media opportunities during Cyber Week.

Result

- Website header promotion drove a 197% uplift in monthly revenue.
- Cyber Week activities delivered a 113% increase in sales.

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Following their fast rise to the top of the beauty business, e.l.f faced a new challenge: How would they ensure that their fast growth rate continued and that customers would not defect to the increasing number of competitors who were now emulating their successful business model? Since their brand was already resonating so well with the Millennial and Gen Z audience, it was natural that the student market came to mind. Combined with their commitment to keeping their products affordable for young consumers, launching a student discount program was the clear answer.

Solution

As of August 2018, e.l.f Cosmetics had highlighted US college students as a crucial target market and decided that offering a student discount would be the key to securing the loyal custom of this valuable consumer group. They came to us at Student Beans to take advantage of our powerful combination of student verification technology and marketing reach, which together enable our brand partners to retain and attract new student customers.

We worked with e.l.f to quickly get their discount live on both our website and theirs. We provided them with access to our student verification solution, which enables customers to prove their student status and redeem their discount without leaving the retailer's site. To raise awareness of the new student offer, e.l.f added a link in their website's header which directed students to more information on the discount and how to access it.

**A boosted discount results in up to
5x uplift in discount codes
generated and student revenue**

e.l.f chose to offer a standard, year-round student discount of 15%, and upped this to 20% to celebrate the launch of their new student loyalty program in September 2018. Typically, a boosted discount results in up to 5x uplift in discount codes generated and student revenue, so launching with a larger discount is an effective way to ensure news of the new offer goes viral among the student community.

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Once their student discount was up and running, it was promoted throughout the year across both e.l.f and Student Beans marketing channels. In November 2018, e.l.f seized the opportunity to take part in our Cyber Week activities, securing media placements including features in our weekly newsletter and on-site carousel. This put the brand front of mind during one of the year's most important shopping events, when students are purchasing gifts for friends and family, putting together their holiday wishlists, and picking up some treats for themselves along the way.

Also during Black Friday and Cyber Week, we worked with e.l.f to run a paid social campaign over five days during that crucial student spending period. This helped raise awareness of their student discount to a targeted group of consumers, serving as a well-timed reminder of the brand to beauty fans, and driving impulse buys.

Result

A combination of cross-channel promotion and timely, targeted student marketing campaigns has ensured the success of e.l.f Cosmetics' student discount program from the start. Placing a link to their discount in their website header following the launch of our partnership had a substantial impact on sales, with a 197% increase in revenue compared to the previous month. This prominent placement served as a reminder to students already aware of the offer and caught the eye of those considering making a purchase, boosting conversion rate, and inspiring more impulse buys.



Website header promotion drove a

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Features in our newsletter and website carousel during Cyber Week delivered a

113.17%

increase in sales

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“Students are one of the key demographics for e.l.f. Student Beans is a great partner that helps us verify students for unique offers as part of our loyalty program. We look forward to building on the early success of the program with Student Beans.”

Director of Digital Media, e.l.f Cosmetics

e.l.f.’s participation in Student Beans marketing activities also resulted in impressive stats. For example, their features in our newsletter and website carousel during Cyber Week delivered a 113% increase in sales from the week prior, accompanied by a dramatic rise in conversion rate from code redemption to purchase. Taking part in these campaigns helps to keep brands like e.l.f front of mind with consumers at a time when they are making key spending decisions.

targeting students with a special offer that demonstrates how much this consumer group is valued is what sets them apart from competitors

As a brand that was already a favorite among young beauty consumers, e.l.f entered its partnership with Student Beans with a goal to secure its place in the hearts of college students, and it has clearly succeeded. e.l.f recognized that focusing on the youth demographic as a whole was not enough, and targeting students with a special offer that demonstrates how much this consumer group is valued is what sets them apart from competitors in the health and beauty space.

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