

# VICTORIA'S SECRET & Co.

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IMC CAMPAIGN

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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In recent years, the fashion industry has witnessed a significant shift towards inclusivity and diversity, driven by changing societal norms and consumer expectations. One notable example of this shift is evident in the efforts of Victoria's Secret, a renowned lingerie brand, to adapt to these evolving trends. Historically criticized for its narrow representation of beauty standards and lack of inclusivity, Victoria's Secret faced mounting pressure to reassess its approach to marketing and product offerings. In response, the brand introduced adaptive wear in its 2023 fashion show, signaling a commitment to inclusivity and representation. This paper explores Victoria's Secret's journey towards inclusivity, focusing on the introduction of adaptive lingerie, the harsh criticism faced by the brand, and its implications for the broader fashion industry.



# COMPANY BACKGROUNDER

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## **Company History**

Roy Raymond had an uncomfortable trip to the department store to buy underwear for his wife, so he wanted to create a place where men would feel comfortable shopping for lingerie. "He wanted to create a women's underwear shop targeted at men" (Hanbury, Cain, and Mayer, May 2023). That is when he developed Victoria's Secret. The name itself was inspired by the historian era, which can still be seen today in their Dream Angels collection.

## **Products and Services**

Victoria's Secret collections include Very Sexy, Body By Victoria, as previously mentioned Dream Angels, and the T-Shirt Bra. They all meet different needs based on the woman's lifestyle and priorities. The store also carries an ever-evolving collection of fragrances, including mists, lotions, and award-winning perfumes. Two colognes have been added to the collection to cater to the male audience. The store's sister brand, Pink, caters more to young adults, prioritizing style, and comfort with inclusivity through not just their undergarments, but their clothes.

## **Mission Statement/Values and Target Audience**

Inclusivity for all was not on the agenda until recent years. Now, the company values loving the customer, diversity, equity & inclusion, passion with purpose, and working together (About Us, VS&Co). Because of this, its target audience has changed over the years with the demands. Going from their usual modern wife and appealing young woman seeking sex appeal and the pressure to maintain a slim body, now the store caters to a more realistic beauty standard, the everyday woman, allowing her to feel confident in her skin no matter the size, shape, and color of her skin. On the other hand, Pink went for gender neutrality and young adults who are confident in their identity. Recently, Victoria's Secret did something that its competitors have



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not: creating lingerie adaptive to people with disabilities. They ensured proper marketing by creating a fashion show showcasing the new designs.

### **Current Marketing Strategies and Financial Analysis**

Aside from throwing a marketing campaign for the reopening of the Victoria's Secret fashion show in 2023, the brand has used other forms of marketing to stay on top of its sales. The brand's current marketing also includes YouTube commercials, billboards, magazine ads, their very own website, their social media accounts on all channels, their YouTube channel, email marketing, digital newsletters, annual sales/discounts, promotional events, customer rewards/loyalty programs, and direct mailing. Still, these attempts have not been as successful as they should be for the company to stay on top. From personal experience, most customers either show up twice for clearance sales or are regular customers shopping either way. In other words, the store needs to drive in new guests to increase their conversion rates. It was reported on their website that in 2023, the company made a net income of \$109 million compared to the \$348 made the previous year (Press Release, 2024). This does not come as a surprise due to the rise of new competitors.

### **Competitor Analysis**

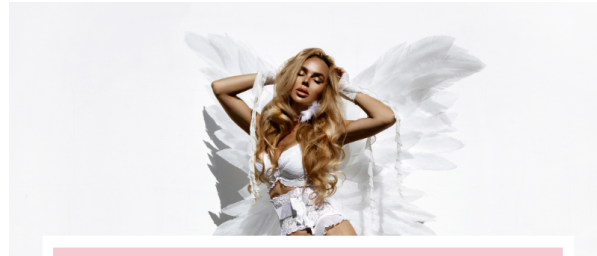
Victoria's Secret, while it may be the staple name for the lingerie industry, does have some strong competitors who came about when they went under fire in the late 2010's including Aerie, Savage X Fenty, and even Target. With the Aerie Real campaign, young girls across America were getting the message that their bodies were worthy of being represented. It created tense competition with the Victoria's Secret "A Body for Everybody" ad and pushed the company altogether to change. This was around the time body positivity had a huge impact on social media and consumers were learning about health and wellness. Savage X Fenty shook things up as they saw an opportunity in Victoria's Secret backlashes and lack of representation, especially when they stopped their famous annual show. Created by the widely known singer Rihanna, Savage X Fenty provided the ideal lingerie for the confident, including an annual fashion show. Savage X Fenty stood out with her perfectly tailored designs that stayed true to her vision and expression of art. The fashion show portrayed just that, with her unique style and search for the

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perception of sexy that breaks out of the norm (Prime Video, 2023). Rihanna created a brand that not only stood out but also created a new standard for lingerie design and embraced confident consumers across. As Pink changed its sense of direction due to the demand and criticism, Target launched a lingerie section that looked almost identical to the classic early 2000s pink store. Consumers all over social media wanted the Victoria's Secret brand to expand on their vision, and other companies gave them just that. Unfortunately, it took Victoria's Secret a long time to come around, and it was too late. While the company has adhered to the changes, it may need to put more trust in the buyer's opinion, or it'll keep missing the mark.

# COMPANY BACKGROUNDER

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## Victoria's Secret SWOT Analysis

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### STRENGTHS

- #1 Brand for lingerie wear
- Strong rewards program
- Signature boutique design
- Inclusive with size and colors
- Adaptive designs

2

### WEAKNESSES

- Pricing
- Perception of Exclusivity
- Competitive market
- Controversies and PR Issues
- Changes in consumer demands

3

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Inclusivity and Diversity
- Styling Workshops
- Stronger social media presence
- Beauty Services
- More efforts towards sustainability

4

### THREATS

- Increased competition
- Changing consumer demands
- Digital Disruption
- Cultural and social backlash
- Rising costs

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# TARGET AUDIENCE OVERVIEW

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## Selected Audience:

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Data on consumer behavior collected by Afterpay reveals that Millennials and Gen Z collectively account for 32% of total retail spending in the United States. Specifically for Millennials, spending is projected to increase by 48% (Afterpay). Millennials' spending rebounded the fastest from the COVID-19 pandemic, while older generations opted for the safer approach of cutting back on expenses. Purchases made through credit cards have decreased, while those made through buy now, pay later (BNPL) services have increased. Millennials are the primary users of BNPL services, with Gen Z following closely behind, demonstrating rapid spending growth that may eventually surpass Millennials. Top brand preferences within the fashion industry for Millennials and Gen Z include online pure-players, budget-friendly women's fashion, and sportswear.

These generations differ due to their early exposure to recessions, extensive use of mobile and digital technology, and lifelong immersion in social media platforms such as Instagram via smartphones. Both Millennials and Gen Z were the first to experience various digital advancements, including internet connectivity, omni-channel experiences, and brand promotion through social media platforms.



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As these generations have weathered multiple recessions, they tend to be more financially responsible and place greater emphasis on the source and quality of their purchases. This makes them an ideal target audience for companies like Victoria's Secret, which emphasizes eco-friendly materials and offers a rewards program that allows customers to save while shopping.

### The Outlook:

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Additionally, Victoria's Secret has been gradually adapting its brand to align with the concerns of the new generations, particularly focusing on inclusivity. Millennials and Gen Z are deeply invested in political and social issues, seeking brands with which they can forge meaningful connections. These generations have actively supported social movements such as LGBTQ rights, body positivity, Black Lives Matter, and transgender rights. Millennials, now adult women, college graduates, and mothers, prioritize community and open-mindedness. Millennials and Gen Z have found themselves in an evolving relationship with Victoria's Secret as the brand too evolves with the times. In line with these preferences, many of these women prefer to reside in suburban areas, doing so "at higher rates than Gen X and baby boomers did at that age" (Frost & Airgood-Obrycki, 2024).

## Customer Profile – Millennials and Gen Z

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Meet the Gonzales mother-daughter duo. Patricia is 40, and her daughter Jennifer is 13. The Gonzales live in a suburban neighborhood in Killeen, Texas, a small town an hour away from the city of Houston. They reside in a 4-bedroom home with a yard, inside a gated community.

Patricia has a bachelor's degree in Human Resources and earns \$44,998 a year. Her wife, Bianca, holds a bachelor's degree in business management and earns \$53,149 a year.

Bianca and Patricia are both heavily involved in their daughter Jennifer's volleyball team and their son Daniel's baseball team. They enjoy spending their weekends going on bike rides as a family in national parks and greenways, where they conclude the day with a picnic. Sometimes, they venture to the nearest beach or river during the summer. They lead an active lifestyle as a family. Bianca and Jennifer met at a yoga class years ago, and they still attend once a week.

They are passionate about human rights, the planet, and their local community. As a family, they volunteer with a local charity organization that assists the homeless.

Their favorite season is summer, which is when they tend to shop the most, especially since they enjoy taking annual family vacations. Their daughter Jennifer is particularly excited to try bright pink fashion pieces and loves going back-to-school shopping, or any excuse to shop in general.

Patricia and Bianca are mindful of the brands they invest in, as they prioritize inclusivity, equality, respect for all living beings, and respect for the planet. Nevertheless, the Gonzales dynamic duo loves shopping, while Bianca and Daniel bond better over sports.

# MARKETING CAMPAIGN GOAL, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

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## **Marketing Campaign Goal Objectives and Strategies**

**GOAL:** Establish clear brand values and a compelling mission statement that resonates with millennials and Gen Z.

### **OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES:**

#### **1. Increase social media engagement and influence by 30% in 12 months.**

- Leverage the influence of respected individuals to enhance brand credibility and increase website traffic by 30% in 12 months.
- Create a meaningful Instagram marketing campaign that involves the audience in participation, using hashtags and storytelling.
- Introduce a weekly social media video story segment featuring women like Samantha Jade Duran, also known as @adisabledicon on Instagram, where she and other influencers can provide fashion styling advice on adaptable wear.
- Launch a weekly journal column on social media platforms from Victoria's Secret website discussing the latest VS & Co. fashion campaigns, providing information on the models, designers, and the inspiration behind the collection.

**2. To increase customer retention rate and lifetime value by 20% in-store visits in 12 months.**

- Reintroduce the original Victoria's Secret soft glamour aesthetic, as it is what customers love most about the brand, while maintaining inclusivity and representation of the everyday woman.
- Revive the iconic Victoria's Secret annual fashion show with a new group of angels featuring diverse ages, body shapes, nationalities, and abilities, while staying true to the company's original soft glamour style.
- Implement special discounts for federal employees, healthcare workers, students, teachers, and the elderly to express gratitude to customers.
- Introduce a new men's underwear collection and update colognes to enhance the shopping experience for families.



## VS & Co. Creative Strategy

### Rational

- Large assortment of lingerie and body care collections in a boutique style, store layout.
- Product diversity includes; adaptive wear, gender-neutral fashion, a wider range of sizes for all body types made from sustainable materials.
- In-store experience comes with technological integration for faster service, personalized bra fittings for customer comfort and satisfaction.
- The store values having diverse representation for beauty standards.

### Emotional

- Feeling confident and sensual in your own skin without the pressure of a specific beauty standard.
- Feeling excited to treat yourself to an outfit or accessory that makes you feel free to be you.
- Trusting that the store provides fashion pieces that fit just right, for any last-minute occasion.
- Feeling satisfied with how long a bra lasts and provides just the right support you need.

#### Tag Line:

"Inclusivity Redefined, Luxury Reinvented"

#### Creative Strategy Statement:

Victoria's Secret provides a wide range of luxury lingerie for all shapes and sizes so that you can feel supported.

#### Rejected Statements:

Victoria's Secret offers a variety of products with comfort and inclusivity at its forefront so that you can feel empowered to be you.

Find the right bra, for the right occasion, with the right scent, at Victoria's Secret.

Embrace a luxurious shopping experience at Victoria's Secret, with the latest technology and our bra fitting experts.

Victoria's Secret redefines what it means to feel confident in your skin.

#### Creative Brief:

##### What are we advertising?

Victoria's Secret, the number one boutique store for lingerie, skin care and apparel.

##### Whom are we talking to?

Millennials and Gen Z individuals aged 29-44, who value comfortable and supportive, high-quality lingerie. These individuals not only care for their bodies, but they also care about inclusivity and the planet placing value on luxury lingerie made with sustainable materials

##### What do they currently think?

Finding the right bra on your own, in-store, can take a couple of hours, and buying it online can make that experience last days on end.

##### What would we like them to think?

Finding the right bra does not have to be difficult when you step into Victoria's Secret. With the help of a bra fit expert, you will notice an instant decrease in time and hassle, not to mention that by using the latest technology inside the changing rooms, you get the convenience of seeing the stores available products for faster turn-around from the associates.

##### What is the single most persuasive idea we can convey?

At Victoria's Secret, we can make your bra shopping experience convenient and exciting due to our new fitting room technology and experienced bra fit experts.

##### Why should they believe it?

With 30 seconds fitting room wait time, multiple bra fit experts on demand, and carefully curated products that embody diversity and inclusivity, Victoria's Secret values the comfort of their guests.

##### Are there any creative guidelines?

All marketing materials should emphasize empowerment, inclusivity, diversity, and luxurious comfort. Visuals should be clean, modern elegant, feminine, and should communicate sensual confidence for all.

# PROMOTIONAL MIX

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## Billboards

I chose to create a billboard for Victoria's Secret featuring the new tagline "Inclusivity Redefines, Luxury Reinvented" for the ad campaign because it "increases the frequency in which people see the ad" (Finch, 2017). I am considering using the new Victoria's Secret models, women who embody what it means to not fit into the old beauty standard. This will make a clear statement about what the new tagline means. I want the billboard to be placed right outside the malls and on the highways of major Texas cities: Houston, San Antonio, Dallas, and Austin. Placing the billboard outside the malls will reach more people who would otherwise shop in other lingerie stores. VS&Co. needs as much exposure as possible now that other stores have taken over the intimate apparel industry. The highway serves as an excellent way to inform travelers of the nearest store, encouraging them to choose Victoria's Secret as their next destination. Additionally, it only costs \$3 on average for the billboard to be seen 1,000 times, which is higher than the returns of TV and print advertising, which come in at \$2.43 and \$2.41 respectively (Finch, 2017). The drawbacks to this marketing strategy would include the startup cost of the design and finding the right location. Fortunately, I already have the design (super simple and straight to the point) and the locations in mind, saving myself the cost of research and design services. Another potential issue is the maintenance fee. I am willing to invest the money needed for replacements, which are typical due to weather conditions. Finally, maintenance is important because if neglected, it could make it difficult for people to notice the billboard, especially those who are visually impaired. Despite these challenges, choosing a billboard as my traditional marketing tool is still worth the effort.

## Influencer Marketing

With social media being the main source of marketing for many companies, it was a no-brainer that I would choose this for Victoria's Secret. I considered paying for ads, but then it would be easy for people to dismiss them. Instead, I thought about what works best for me as an online consumer. Usually, companies pique my interest the most when someone famous talks about them and demonstrates what the company's product is all about. I am so excited to pick this as my main form of digital marketing tool because of how effective it is. Full Sail University Week Three Promotional Mix Integrated Marketing Victoria's Secret I would choose two high-profile celebrities and two social media influencers since they are both famous for different things. My picks specifically include Khaby Lame (for Pink's gender-neutral clothing line), Selena Gomez (for VS& Co.'s Body By Victoria Lingerie Collection), Chiara Ferragni (for VS& Co.'s accessories collection), and Kylie Jenner (for VS& Co.'s beauty and body care collection). I am choosing to demonstrate this through an Instagram post that should capture the audience's attention. Marketing through Instagram with mega influencers (500,000+ followers) costs, on

average, \$10,000+ per post (Hitchcock, 2021). This form of marketing is risky yet effective due to its incredible reach.

## **Podcast Marketing**

For my final post, I have chosen podcast marketing. A popular podcast will cost around "\$1,000 to purchase a post-roll ad on a podcast that generates 100 listens" (Acast, 2024). Despite the low listener return, when it comes to a podcast, it is not about the quantity, but about the quality. Unlike TV and radio, where people use it as background noise, podcast listeners were found to do the opposite. Podcast listeners make sure to reduce the noise so that they can pay attention to what they are listening to, and this makes sense as people typically choose to listen to specific content that is of their interest, on their way to work. According to Acast research with Nielsen, 60% of listeners said that they pay attention to the ads in a podcast, and 25% said they pay attention to every or most of the podcast advertising they hear. I would choose the podcast of Financial Feminist, by Tori Dunlap, and if I had the numbers, I would like to investigate how much it would cost for her to talk about the company's past scandals and its change towards inclusivity. This financial feminist is all about women empowerment. Her topics range from being a feminist, to women's impact in the economy, to how ADHD affects finances, and much more. Tori Dunlap is breaking chains by empowering women to take hold of their finances; not only that, but she also gets personal, and what is more personal than lingerie. This will help her audience get in touch with the brand once again, despite the challenges it's had in the past, emphasizing the progress it has made towards creating a safe environment for the everyday woman, the empowered woman.

# CREATIVE PIECE – INFLUENCER MARKETING

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# CONCLUSION

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In conclusion, Victoria's Secret's introduction of adaptive wear in its 2023 fashion show represents a significant step towards greater inclusivity and diversity within the fashion industry. While the brand faced harsh criticism in previous years for its lack of representation, the introduction of adaptive lingerie reflects a willingness to adapt to changing societal norms and consumer expectations. Moving forward, Victoria's Secret and other fashion brands must prioritize inclusivity and diversity in their marketing strategies and product offerings. By embracing diversity and representation, brands can not only meet the needs of a broader range of consumers but also contribute to a more inclusive and equitable fashion landscape. Victoria's Secret's journey is a compelling example of the power of adaptation and transformation in response to evolving societal values.

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