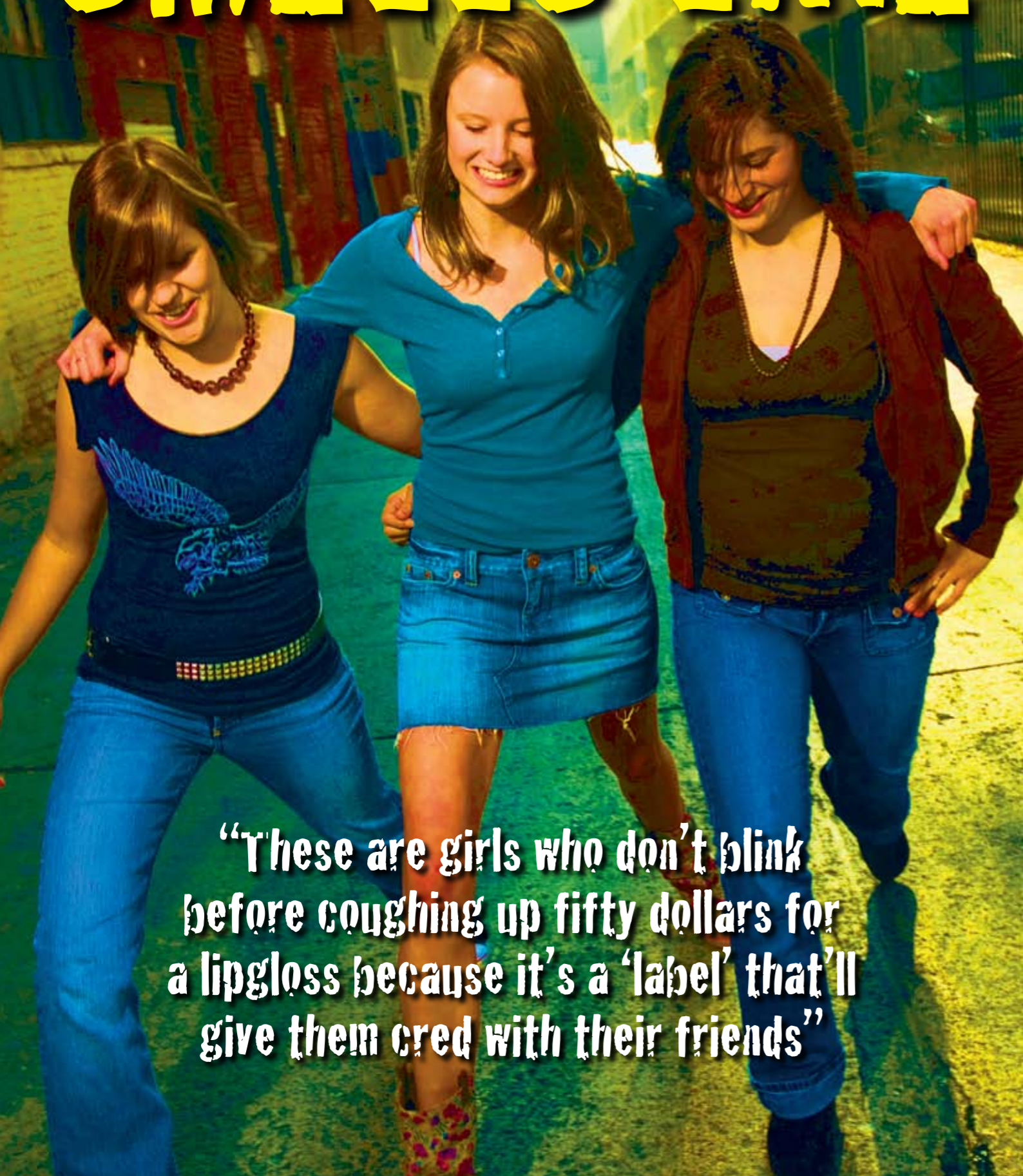


# SMELLS LIKE

# TEEN SPIRIT

## Getting in – and staying in – with the teen market



**“These are girls who don't blink before coughing up fifty dollars for a lipgloss because it's a 'label' that'll give them cred with their friends”**

If you're over the age of 25, you'll remember the 'good ol' days'. You know the ones – where teenagers got around in Sportsgirl logo tee's, where mixed lollies cost 20c and Dunlop Volley's weren't iconic. It was also a time where a teen's beauty collection consisted of Chapstick, a bit of concealer, and if she was really edgy, some mascara.

Now take that idea of 'how it was' and trash it. Because like MC Hammer and his cringe worthy pants, that vision is most definitely a thing of the past.

Carrying this snapshot of the past is the first mistake people make when dealing with teens. Their world is just not the same anymore – and we have technology to thank for that. Twenty years ago, computers were a novelty and mobile phones resembled bricks. If you wanted information, you had to go and research it. In a library. Using real life books.

Now, all the information you want (and plenty you don't) is one click away. There's thousands of You Tube clips, offering every sort of beauty advice, which can leave you feeling a little redundant. But, believe us, yours is not a lost cause – it just needs a Gen Y style adjustment.

### SHOW US THE MONEY

The first thing you need to know about teens is they've got the money. According to Roy Morgan they collectively earn \$2.8 billion a year. On an average month, over \$2million of that is spent on beauty products. They live at home, have no expenses, and no better person to spend on than themselves. And that's precisely what they do. These are girls who don't blink before coughing up fifty dollars for a lipgloss because it's a 'label' that'll give them cred with their friends. Thinking that they're relying on a ten-buck handout from their parents is a big mistake. Huge.

### SPEAK TO THEM, NOT DOWN TO THEM

Herein lies the golden rule of teendom: do not patronise! And don't ever, ever tell them what they can't have. Their idols are designer clad twenty-something's famous for being famous (think; the Geldof sisters, Nicole Richie, Cory Kennedy, Alexa Chung). If Peaches Geldof can have it, why can't they? This is the most

influential time in a girl's life – they're forming opinions, preferences, and most importantly for all of you – brand loyalties. If you capture their hearts now, you'll have them forever. And you won't just have one of them either. The best thing about this group is that they hang in packs. Packs that like to exchange information – and pass on their amazing finds. If you capture the interest of one, every girl in their group, every 324 of their Myspace friends will know about it, generating the best kind of advertising: word of mouth.

### TRANSLATING TEEN

Now you know what not to do, here's some tips on how to make it into their top friends (or at least spark their interest!).

Speak their language: Nothing will produce epic eye rolling more than an adult trying to be 'cool'. Words like 'funky', 'cool chicks' or anything you'd see scrawled on a novelty mug gets the thumbs down. Remember, this is the generation of text speak – grammar need not apply. OMG, TDF, LOL, ROFL, (oh my god, to die for, laugh out loud, rolling on the floor laughing) replace actual words and save on character space. You have your bestie and your 'rents, and the latest ep of GG (Gossip Girl) is totes ridic. When supermarket brand 10.0.6 re-branded last year it was with packaging and language that spoke to teens, making an old brand relevant to the new gen (and themselves a huge success). Pick up a teen mag, read some blogs and know their lingo.

Make them feel important: One thing that hasn't changed in the generation shift is the desire to be heard and noticed. The difference with this gen is they've been exposed to insta-fame via reality shows and the Internet. So, not only do they want fame, they believe they can attain it.

Obviously you can't offer them a Top Model stint, but what you can offer is exclusivity. The kind that makes them feel important (like a celeb). This could translate to teen only specials, student card discounts, creating an exclusive teen club, or group specials. Initially 'bring a friend' style events work well to generate interest because it's less confronting. The key is finding something that is created especially for them.

Know their world – and be in it: The O.C? So five years ago. Harry Potter? Um...Harry who? The biggest thing on teen radar right now is vampires. The Twilight series is so huge it's spawned groups, groupies (Twi-hards) and it's very own language. We're not suggesting you join the Stephanie Meyer fan club, but knowing what's big in their world, will help them come into yours. You could theme treatments according to big movie releases, time a 'stress free facial' offer with exam-cram time, or offer formal packages. The other key point is to be tech-savvy. Do you have a Myspace page? A Facebook group they can join? Or at the very least a decent, appealing website? If you're not on the web, you may as well not exist in their world.

The freebie factor: Finally, and probably most obviously, teens love a freebie. If there's a chance they can win anything (even a sachet), they'll enter a competition. Offering an incentive, sampling, or gift with purchase will get their attention and make them feel special.

### HIT REPLAY

Getting them in is the hard part. Keeping them is all about maintenance. Again, use technology combined with a sense of importance and offers keep them coming back. Make them feel like their business is important to you, use Facebook or text messaging to let them know of specials, offer birthday treats, (you turned 16! Come in for a free lash tint!) or offer discounts if they recommend a friend. If you treat them well, make them feel good – and most importantly your service is good – you may just find yourself with a new BFF.



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