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Brand Building Proposal for Dolls Kill

Objective

Enhance awareness and increase brand recognition and sales for Dolls Kill.

Summary Overview

Headquartered in San Francisco, [Dolls Kill](#) is the “online boutique for the misfits and miss legits.” It is a direct-to-consumer brand, with only two recently opened [brick-and-mortar stores](#), that carefully curates themed closets, pulling pieces from an array of fashion and beauty brands. Offering styles from [Kawaii](#) to goth, festival to punk-rock, and others, the site assigns representatives or “Dolls” to these themed closets. Citing the Dolls as “the essence of our magic,” Dolls Kill encourages visitors to “choose the elements from each of the Dolls that strike you the most within this moment, within this outfit.” The six Dolls, [Coco](#), [Willow](#), [Kandi](#), [Mercy](#), [Darby](#) and [Mia](#) come with their own story and mood board. Named the “[Fastest Growing Retailer](#)” by *Inc.* magazine in 2014, this dynamic brand offers an expressive niche for all walks of life.

Defining Brand Values

Dolls Kill “emphasizes change and experimentation” through the edgy fashion and beauty brands it chooses to feature, empowering people to express individuality. Using a wide variety of models, regardless of race, ethnicity, body shape and size, gender, and sexual orientation, among other identifiers, the brand values inclusion and praises what makes us different: “To be a Doll is to be in complete control, dictating yourself on your own terms.” The brand’s heavy influencer-marketing and strong brand identity showcased through its social platforms, particularly [Instagram](#), humanizes Dolls Kill and connects it with its misfit consumers.

Providing an outlet for the misfits, Dolls Kill not only radiates the positivity of the “we’re all different” mantra on its e-commerce website, but also on its various, highly popular social media platforms. Encouraging every person, no matter his, her or their identification, to embrace the uniqueness of their own personal brand, Dolls Kill is a one-of-a-kind brand for the one-of-a-kind types.

Concept Recommendation

The concept has two components:

- Dolls Kill Interactive Closets: “Let’s Get Dolled Up”
- Annual Featured Doll Contest: “Shiny New Doll”

Both concepts include a charitable component that will further define the brand in a

meaningful way to consumers and offer evergreen earned-media opportunities for multi-year engagement. According to [Mintel](#) research, a company's charitable giving affects 73% of Americans' purchasing decisions. Additionally, 61% of millennials say they would switch to a company or brand that supports their same cause.

Dolls Kill Interactive Closets: "Let's Get Dolled Up"

Create an experiential brand event that features the six Doll closets for fans to play dress-up. Held on the fashion-obsessed coasts, one in Dolls Kill's headquarter home, San Francisco, one in LA and the other in New York City, consumers can experience their favorite e-commerce brand in real life. Moving through the various highly designed closets, everyday Dolls are encouraged to pick from the curated clothing racks assigned to each theme and get dolled up for their own personal photo shoot. Any "fits" tried on can be purchased at a post-dress-up pop-up shop at the conclusion of their experience. The interactive event will require a ticket, and all proceeds will benefit a charitable organization. See below for recommended charitable partner. Visitors will get to live the photo shoot experience oftentimes limited to celebrities and influencers. Concept components include:

- Closets designed by a variety of interior and fashion designers, inspired by the mood boards associated with each Doll on the site
- On-site stylists and makeup and hair artists to assist with the creation of comprehensive looks
- Visitors will not necessarily receive an entire makeover which would be time-prohibitive, but rather quick and fabulous makeup and hair enhancements as well as fashion consulting, all from professionals in the field
- Professional photographers for personal photo shoots, complete with lighting and "fashion fans" for that effortless blown-out model effect
- Pull-through on Dolls Kill social media platforms with select visitors being featured in social content
- Cause-related marketing element with ticket proceeds going to a charitable partner

Charitable Partner

What better cause to link the online boutique for misfits and miss legits than the charitable foundation of the patron of misfits herself, Lady Gaga? Lady Gaga's [Born This Way Foundation](#) amplifies the performer's constant message of loving your inner-monster and parading your individuality. "Committed to supporting the wellness of young people, and empowering them to create a kinder and braver world," Gaga has used this platform to bring awareness to issues including sexual assault, the struggles of a young closeted gay, the harmful effects of bullying and the overall importance of mental health.

Partnering with this nonprofit brings validity and a deeper meaning to Dolls Kill's mission and further engages its target audience, whether they are personally affected by or passionate about the same issues Born This Way aims to support.

Rationale

Live events and experiential marketing agency [Hyphen](#) conducted a study on the effect of engaging a consumer's senses, [finding](#) that 47% of people engaged by a brand event had a more positive opinion of the brand as a result, 89% of consumers agree that live events are the most effective medium to increase their product understanding, and 96% of consumers were more inclined to purchase following participation at a brand event.

This idea is comparable to the fast-growing brand Glossier which has a singular retail store and has built a reputation of exclusivity available to all with its online business. As evidenced by the long line, wrapped around the building of its only store, comprised of head-to-toe millennial pink customers, brand fans are eager to experience in person the brand they support online. Another example is the success of other immersive provisional experiences such as Refinery29's annual [29Rooms](#) selfie playground or [2018's Dream Machine](#). These event-based experiences have one major element in common — their Instagramability. The often-quoted "I'll do it for the 'Gram," is a driver for those who want to show off their experiences, and especially their fashion. This social responsibility marketing initiative capitalizes on consumers' desire to capture professional, photo shoot-worthy pictures for their feed.

Annual Featured Doll Contest: "Shiny New Doll"

Dolls Kill will sponsor an annual contest for a new Doll that will be featured in a year-long campaign. In tandem with the Interactive Closets, this concept will support the Born This Way Foundation with an opportunity for people to make a donation to the charity in conjunction with their entry. The donation will be purely voluntary so that it is not a violation of lottery/contest rules. Concept components include:

- The new, featured Doll will be unveiled at the Interactive Closets event
- The winning contestant will be flown to the event location of their choice to experience "Let's Get Dolled Up"
- In conjunction with the Born This Way Foundation partnership, the selection criteria will encourage creativity and inclusion
- Evergreen earned media and consistently fresh social media content opportunities

Target Audience

Because Dolls Kill is for anyone who identifies as a misfit or is drawn to the quirky collection of brands and goods featured on the site, the target audience for these campaigns is not limited by gender, identification or sexual orientation, but it is defined by age. People belonging to millennial and Generation Z classifications are the primary target, recognizing that this Insta-worthy experience will more likely attract young women as well as male members of the LGBTQ+ community.

Media Outreach

These proposed public relations campaigns will offer a multifaceted opportunity for brand growth, garnering media coverage that varies in story content and angle. The multiple elements of this campaign, including the charitable aspect, the annual contest that engages consumers and the one-of-a-kind experience the Interactive Closets provide, can be showcased with customized pitches to a variety of media outlets. There are multiple visual news opportunities with the Interactive Closets and the annual contest concepts, and importantly, the human interest element that the charitable partnership aspect provides, all offering newsworthy angles that various reporters can explore. Proposed media outlets and possible reporters include:

- Print and Digital Outlets:
 - [Elite Daily](#); Reporter: [Margaret Blatz](#)
 - [Glossy](#); Reporter: [Katie Richards](#)
 - [NYLON](#); Reporter: [Erika Harwood](#)
 - [Bustle](#); Reporter: [Ari Bines](#)
 - [Vox](#); Reporter: [Eliza Brooke](#)
 - [Allure](#); Reporter: [Marci Robin](#)
 - [Refinery29](#); Reporter: [Eliza Huber](#)
 - [Cosmopolitan](#); Reporter: [Rachel Torgerson](#)
- National Daily News Outlets:
 - [New York Times](#); Reporter: [Vanessa Friedman](#)
 - [Washington Post](#); Reporter: [Robin Givhan](#)
 - [Wall Street Journal](#); Reporter: [Christina Binkley](#)
 - [Los Angeles Times](#); Reporter: [Kavita Daswani](#)
 - [LA Weekly](#); Reporter: [Shirley Ju](#)
 - [San Francisco Chronicle](#); Reporter: [Carolyn Zinko](#)