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Our Top 20 CEOs Under 40

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A Pre-CPNA Q&A With Its Execs





Top 20 CEOs Under 40

With blazing energy and business savvy, these young CEOs are leading the beauty industry into a new era.

by Malena Jaime

ONE THING IS FOR SURE: THE BEAUTY INDUSTRY has transformed drastically in the last 10 to 15 years. In that time, some new faces—and products—have appeared on the scene, as well as technological innovations that have transformed the way we market, discover and share new products with the world.

We spoke with 20 of the industry's most successful young entrepreneurs to tap into their keen insights on this new age

of beauty. Unsurprisingly, social media was largely credited for affording start-ups the opportunity to market great products without the costs that bring down many new businesses. To our surprise, however, many of these businessmen and businesswomen credit a certain entrepreneurial spirit for their success—rather than concrete decisions or strategies. Discover what the future of the industry holds, according to a few bright individuals who show us, it's safe in their hands.

"My family owned a store that supplied a lot of famous makeup artists in the United Kingdom," Manning says. Indeed, not only was she raised in a family whose business was cosmetics; but Manning would go on to receive her training at the Bobbi Brown Program of Makeup Artistry at Emerson College. After working as a professional freelance artist, Manning decided to merge her early experiences and formal education to launch her own brand: Velvet 59.

"I created the brand two years ago and officially launched in July of 2015," Manning says. "The biggest challenge I faced was people not taking me seriously because of my age. I'd go into meetings and no one would listen to me, or they would try and tell me to get another job in something that suited my age."

While some young entrepreneurs are admired for their extraordinary success, Manning's age has, most often, been something to be overcome rather than celebrated.

"Age plays a huge role in this industry," Manning says. "You [must] have a wealth of knowledge on both sides—the makeup-artist side and the business side, which takes time and dedication. Not many people will dedicate that to a business. But if you want to win, you have to know how to play the game."

Manning has figured out how to win at that game by focusing on creating bulletproof, quality products. "My vision for Velvet 59 was to have a brand that women could rely on and know they weren't wasting their money on, and know that they were buying beautiful, good-quality products they could wear every day," she says. With those goals in mind, Manning created a line that was completely vegan, cruelty-free, and paraben- and gluten-free.

Some of Velvet 59's most successful products have included the Matte to the Max Liquid Lipsticks and The Exotic Lotus Palette. The overall feedback—especially from fellow makeup artists—has been overwhelming.

"Watching some of the world's most famous makeup artists use something I created and love it [has been a major milestone]. One of my favorite makeup artists, Mario Dedivanovic, used my products in his master class and called me out from the stage in front of hundreds of students to openly praise the brand," Manning recalls. "It was a huge moment for me because those artists are people I really respect; to have them praise my products is incredible."

As for the future of Velvet 59, Manning is currently working on opening the brand's first flagship store in California, which she says is a dream come true.

BE TEACHABLE

Having experienced so much success at such a young age, Paris Manning has had to endure it all—learning a few valuable lessons in the process. "Always be open to learn from other people, never think you know it all, and always treat everyone the way you want to be treated in return."

Mireya Villarreal

Founder/Designer, Pink Pewter

Age: 40

pinkpewter.com

IG/Twitter: @pinkpewter

FB: facebook.com/pinkpewter



"I don't feel that age matters, and it's more about the passion you have. Some find it earlier than others, but it's the passion that is going to push you forward."

"Put your heart into your product and what you believe. Try to make people happy, and you'll always be successful," says Mireya Villarreal, who lives by this quote on a daily basis. Given the extraordinary success of her accessories line, Pink Pewter, it's clear that passion has paid off.

"My roots are as a stylist," she says. "Even though I initially received my degree in communications, the beauty industry has always had my heart, and I couldn't deny my passion there," she says. When she became a full-fledged stylist, Villarreal took joy in making women beautiful—whether it was via a blowout or a fresh set of highlights. However, she observed something was missing.

"These women feel so beautiful once they leave the salon. But I felt that I wanted to offer more in between our appointments," she says. "On the flip side, I loved wearing hair accessories and putting them on my daughter; but I couldn't help but remain frustrated that they hurt or gave me a headache or just outright broke on me!"

Combining her love for couture hair accessories, and her passion for making women feel beautiful, Villarreal launched a line of fashionable hair accessories that women could use to transform their hair on a daily basis.

"It was definitely tough in the beginning, especially when creating a product that can, by the fashion world,

be defined as a 'trend,'" she says. However, Villarreal had already developed a knack for identifying trends and, ultimately, defying them with universal styles. "This was something that made women feel beautiful, and to create that feeling is to create something timeless."

Beginning with a small collection of headbands and clips, Pink Pewter soon grew to encompass all types of accessories and jewelry products. And they were instantly beloved by customers all over the map.

"I'd have to say, seeing the look on women's faces [as they wore] Pink Pewter, realizing that it's so easy to do, is something I am still awestruck by every day," Villarreal says. "It's what drives me to constantly challenge myself to think outside of the box and keep creating new innovative designs."

With its reputation growing in positive feedback every day, and its product line expanding to include hairstyling products, such as a combo dry shampoo/volumizer, Pink Pewter is primed for rapid growth.

"With our website [pinkpewter.com] now available to all consumers, there's no limit to getting Pink Pewter products in the hands of creative stylists and fashionistas alike! Having these women rocking Pink Pewter can only mean one thing—we're taking over the industry!"

PASSION PROJECTS

Mireya Villarreal runs her business with passion first—which she says defies all kinds of challenges, even age. "I don't feel that age matters, and it's more about the passion you have. Some find it earlier than others, but it's the passion that is going to push you forward. Having a background and experience in the beauty industry definitely helped me relate to the market. As long I continue to challenge myself and be 'in the know' of what customers want, it will remain beneficial. Then, at that point, age is simply a number!"

Raychel Harrison

CEO, Nuvuo Haircare

Age: 34

nuvohaircare.com

salonnuuvo.com

IGs: @raychelharrison, @nuvohaircare, @salonnuuvo



“The focus for me is teamwork, education and philanthropy: a hairdresser’s line of product created by us.”

Raychel Harrison made her mark in the haircare industry as an elite stylist and successful salon owner long before she launched Nuuvo Haircare. However, it was her bulletproof background in professional hairdressing that afforded her the foundation to successfully launch a new product line in what can only be described as a saturated, tough market.

Before she even launched her widely successful Salon Nuuvo, Harrison completed training at the Vidal Sassoon Academy, and was mentored by industry icon Robert Cromeans, (global artistic director for John Paul Mitchell Systems), among others.

After 20 years of professional hairdressing, Harrison had solidified her reputation as a top stylist and colorist in the industry. It was then that she decided to solve a need she’d long observed in the market.

“Nuuvo Haircare was born on the salon floor in 2015. As a salon owner and hairdresser, my team of master stylists and I felt a need in the market for a lightweight moisturizing line that [could] be used everyday to nourish, transform and style hair,” Harrison says.

That’s not to say the perfect formula came easily. “Creating the line had its challenges. The right formula with clean, natural ingredients and performance were key factors,” she says. To lock in a formula that would gain the stamp of approval from both consumers and stylists, Harrison tested her products right in the salon.

“We used customer and stylist feedback to help shape and create the formula of each bottle,” Harrison says. “We had mystery bottles and labeled them 1, 2 and 3. We gave our guests questionnaires about smell and performance.”

While Harrison makes launching a haircare line in a saturated market look easy, half the challenge, she says, was building a brand while simultaneously running her own salon.

“Creating the haircare line and maintaining the salon’s growth are my biggest achievements thus far. Most product companies are able to focus solely on the line. I felt it was necessary to have the salon as our foundation and heart of the product line—truly creating a culture around the lifestyle of the brand. The focus for me is teamwork, education and philanthropy: a hairdresser’s line of product created by us.”

QUALITY FIRST

Needless to say, as an expert stylist, Raychel Harrison wouldn’t be satisfied with less than excellence when it came to product quality. “It’s easy to get wrapped up in the design of the bottle, lids and all the extras, but we had to stay on budget and not compromise the quality

of the product. We put our budget toward what was in the bottle, not on the bottle itself,” she says.

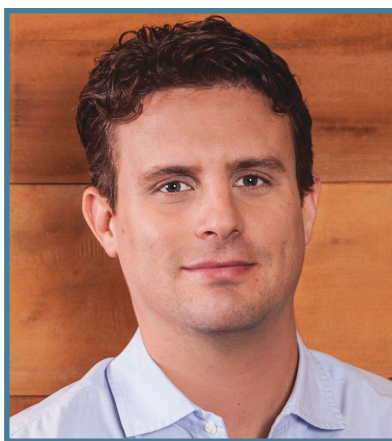
Michael Dubin

CEO/Founder, Dollar Shave Club

Age: 37

dollarshaveclub.com

IG/Twitter: @DollarShaveClub



“While we celebrate our wins, we get back to work because we know there’s always someone working to take it all away.”

He started with the goal of creating solutions. But today, Dollar Shave Club leader Michael Dubin says his mission is to create a lifestyle.

“I started Dollar Shave Club out of my Venice Beach apartment. I wanted to solve the frustrations of purchasing razors: You have to go to the drugstore, find someone to unlock the razor fortress, then shell out \$20 for a four-pack,” Dubin says. “After the company launched, I didn’t want to stop at solving problems in the razor aisle. [I] set Dollar Shave Club’s goal of owning the men’s bathroom and becoming the easiest place for guys to buy the grooming and skincare products they use every day.”

The simple, yet novel idea was to take a mundane and often frustrating in-store task, and turn it into a seamless, tailored online experience that delivers quality shaving products directly to the customer’s door.

“I kept thinking there had to be a better way. So I created one.”

In less than four years, Dollar Shave Club has grown to 3 million members and has become the No. 2 seller of men’s razors—right behind the long-standing shaving brand Gillette. Despite the company’s meteoric rise, Dubin’s main strategy is to keep his eyes firmly on the next goal.

“We are focused on the next goal, and continuing to create a memorable and engaging experience, as well

as more great products.” The next goal, he says, is to aid his customers in more than just grooming.

“I want to create the Starbucks equivalent of a grooming and lifestyle company. Starbucks is more than a cup of coffee; it’s a lifestyle. My goal is to continue evolving the lifestyle and emotional connection our members have with Dollar Shave Club.”

Even today, Dubin’s success comes from continuing to solve problems—and that means listening to his core customer, he says. “Keeping the member at the forefront of everything we do ensures that our premium grooming products will be something that solves a problem.”

But more than solving men’s immediate grooming concerns, Dubin wishes to influence the way men discuss grooming in general. “Men are now openly talking to their friends about their grooming routines and what products they use; whereas before, they’d keep that behind closed doors. We like to think that we’re contributing to these changes in behavior by the authentic way we talk to our members about the things they do in private.”

KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE PRIZE

Having experienced so much success at an early age, Michael Dubin never stops pushing forward and even makes it a point not to linger too long on his victories. “It’s important to not take too much time to pat yourself on the back. I set a precedent early on that a ‘big launch day’ is just another day in the office. While we celebrate our wins, we get back to work because we know there’s always someone working to take it all away.”

Kelley Dawn Baker

Founder/Owner, Kelley Baker Brows

Age: 37

kelleybakerbrows.com

IG: @KelleyBakerBrows

