

Consumer Behavior

Final Project: Female Bodybuilders

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Introduction

In this research, we examine female bodybuilders as a subculture. Bodybuilding is a distinct activity that aims to develop one's musculature by the use of intensive resistance exercise (Mark Anthony, LeAddelle, 2001). These individuals, known as bodybuilders, aspire to maximize vascularity and minimize unnecessary body fat through intentional diet as well as dehydration (Lamar-Hildebrand, Saldanha, & Endres, 1989). The beginning of female bodybuilding can be traced back to the 20th century, when the first competition including women was held in 1977, and featured contestants sporting high heels (Marcia, 2001).

Over the past seven years, the percentage of women in the US who engaged in sports and exercise has increased from 15.6% in 2010 to 19.2% in 2016 (Statista, 2017a) (Exhibit 1). Additionally, among affluent households whose incomes are \$200,000 or more, 10.9% of US household members participated in bodybuilding for more than 48 days in 2016 (Statista, 2017b) (Exhibit 2). The growth of fitness and bodybuilding indicates a potential market to engage female bodybuilders. While most lifestyle and sports brands choose men as their target audience, marketers should not ignore the opportunity to target the distinct subculture of female bodybuilders as well.

This research aims to understand members of the female bodybuilder community and to unveil their primary motivations, lifestyles, beliefs and behaviors so as to better target them as consumers. Through both primary and secondary research, deeper knowledge will be gained about this subculture, both in terms of demographics and psychographics. For primary research, twelve in-depth interviews will be conducted to gain further insight into the values, beliefs and consumption patterns of female bodybuilders.

Additionally, based on the information gathered, we will identify a lifestyle brand that could market itself to appeal to female bodybuilders. In light of the increasing number of members in fitness clubs (Statista, 2017), we plan to choose a fitness brand which most bodybuilders would embrace. We will then create message and marketing strategies for our chosen brand to better target this specific community.

Preconception

When people typically think of female bodybuilders, the images of physically powerful women with masculine features often come to mind. While men are typically associated with strength and large muscles, women are thought of as comparably weak and passive. Because of these stereotypes, the mainstream public associate female bodybuilders with masculine women. There is a preconception that through the embrace of strength and muscle definition, female bodybuilders are in turn rejecting traditional views of femininity. Further research will reveal whether this preconception is accurate and if the public's perception of female bodybuilders mirrors the ways in which female bodybuilders see themselves.

There is also a preconception that female bodybuilders rely on steroids and other supplements to achieve their physical goals. Although female bodybuilders are recognized as being very muscular, the general public is skeptical that their physiques are achieved without the assistance of steroids and other drugs. Therefore, female bodybuilding can be viewed as an extreme and unhealthy sport which does not prioritize health and well-being. Additional research will evaluate both preconceptions and will determine whether such preconceptions accurately define the community or further promote inaccuracies about the sport.

Literature Review

Environmental Analysis

While female bodybuilding has been the subject of previous research, it has yet to attract substantial mainstream attention. As the bodybuilding industry has grown and expanded to include multiple divisions, each with different judging criteria and standards, it is important that current research reflects these shifts within the sport as well. Female bodybuilding has evolved since its first competition in the late 1970s (Bell, 2008).

The Introduction of Female Bodybuilding

The First Women's World Bodybuilding Championship was held in 1979 (Boyle, 2005), followed with the Ms. Olympia competition in 1980 (Kochan, 2017). In the 1980s, female competitors attempted to make their muscles as large as possible (Boyle, 2005). However, this look no longer represents the vast majority of female bodybuilders today. Promoters ended the Ms. Olympia competition in 2015 (Romano, 2015), and at the same time began introducing other bodybuilding divisions. The International Federation of Bodybuilding and Fitness introduced women's fitness in 1996, women's bikini in 2011 and women's physique in 2013 (IFBB, 2017).

These divisions each had a different standard of ideal muscular aesthetic, and judging was no longer based solely on having the largest muscles possible. Additionally Boyle (2005) found that the popularity of non-natural female bodybuilding competitions (those that do not require drug-testing) has declined. With more than 15 bodybuilding federations (Bodybuilding.com, 2017), female bodybuilders can choose to compete in a division that reflects their ideal physique. Further study will be beneficial to further understand this subculture, the multiple divisions and the various beliefs that exist within it.

Female Bodybuilders as a Challenge to Traditional Norms

Of all the themes present in past research, the discussion of femininity is most prominent. As women began entering sports, even before the rise of bodybuilding, they met obstacles from their male counterparts who considered sports to be a male domain (Shea, 2001). Despite the resistance from men, there has been an increase in female participation in strength and combat sports in recent years. This is one way that women reject the pressure to conform to artificial standards and gendered body image norms (Watch, 2010). In some ways, female bodybuilding rejects the traditional understanding of femininity. For female bodybuilders, being "feminine" rejected societal norms because their bodies proved that muscular features were not exclusive to the male body.

Female bodybuilding was also viewed as a threat to traditional masculinity (Shea, 2001) because it contradicted cultural expectations (Baghurst, Parish & Denny, 2014). The focus on having strong and muscular bodies was a direct contrast to the meek and demure bodies expected of women. Specifically, there was a "glass ceiling placed on female muscularity whereby too much implies a deviance by mainstream audiences" (Dworkin, 2010). The strong muscles of female bodies represented cultural rebellion and a challenge towards patriarchy (Bolin, 1998). Female bodybuilders challenged the Western view that regarded women as a "the weak sex" and showed a feminine character that embodied power, thus becoming a "provocative" body (Bolin, 1998).

Female Bodybuilders as a Reflection of Traditional Norms

However, bodybuilding can also reinforce traditional gender roles. Bodybuilding's governing bodies, the media and the athletes themselves all also play a role in both enforcing and rejecting such roles (Boyle, 2005). For example, the federations that govern bodybuilding have

struggled to promote muscularity while still appealing to mainstream audiences. Wayne DeMilla, the Vice-President of the International Federation of Bodybuilding changed some of the judging criteria to include a femininity category when he realized that the female competitors had become so muscular that the audiences no longer found them appealing (Boyle, 2005).

The New Definitions of Femininity

Female competitors also had to negotiate their own definitions of femininity. A previous study (Ricker, 2006) indicated that while women viewed bodybuilding favorably, they did not want to appear less feminine. Moreover, female competitors preferred natural (drug-tested) competitions to competitions without drug testing because they believed that their femininity would not be sacrificed if they only built muscle through natural means (Boyle, 2005).

The trend of health and fitness indicates that female bodybuilders are an important subculture for marketers to study. According to IHRSA (n.d.), the number of members at health and fitness clubs in North America from 2009 to 2016 increased from 53.2 to 62.87 million people (Statista, 2017c)(Exhibit 3). Additionally, the revenue (both actual and projected) of the fitness and health club industry in the United States from 2007 to 2021 predicts that there will be an increasing revenue trend in the next five years, from 27.83 billion dollars in 2017 to 31.53 billion dollars in 2021 (Statista, 2017d)(Exhibit 4). The revenue rate is projected to substantially grow in the future. This also shows that greater numbers of people are placing a high value on exercise and becoming healthy.

Overall, a deeper understanding of motivations, femininity and body image could help marketers better understand how to market products and services to this group. Being able to segment the subculture by category type will also help marketers discern the differences and beliefs among the subculture.

Consumer Analysis

The fitness, health and exercise industries hold value in today's society. This fact is illustrated by the bombardment from media, technology and consumer culture about body size, health and appearance, and the creation of an ever-increasing array of products designed to modify the body. As a result, more and more people are willing to sculpt their bodies and become healthier.

Demographics

The average daily participation rates in sports and exercise increased by 3.6% between 2003 and 2015. People were more willing to exercise in 2015 compared with 2003, especially women, whose participation rates rose by 2.3% (Exhibit 6). Based on the Sport and Exercise report, data shows that adults aged from 15 to 24 are most likely to exercise regularly than those aged 25 and older (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017)(Exhibit 7). Moreover, based on statistical evidence, people with higher levels of education were more likely to participate in sports and exercise. From 2003 to 2015, people who have a bachelor's degree or higher (24.3%) were more than twice as likely to participate in sports and exercise activities on an average day compared with people who have a high school diploma or less (12%)(U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017)(Exhibit 8). People who earned more money were more likely to participate in sports and exercise as well. The statistics show that 86% of people in the highest income level (\$150K+) are regular exercisers compared to 62% of those in the lowest income level (<\$25K) (Mintel, 2016) (Exhibit 9).

Motivations

Normally, women have different motivations for working out and bodybuilding. The statistics indicate that 78% of survey respondents stated that they work out to stay healthy. Other

respondents worked out for the purposes of reducing stress, losing weight and having a good-looking body. (Statista Survey, 2017)(Exhibit 5). Such motivations may lead women to further control their diets or go to the gym more often. However, the previous research centered on women has different motivations to regarding the pursuit of bodybuilding. The most frequently stated motivations were emulation (27%), followed by self-esteem and empowerment (24%), previous participation in sport (22%), health (17%), and other (10%) (Baghurst, Parish & Denny, 2014).

Value & Benefits

Previous research has also examined female bodybuilders' beliefs regarding their body image and if the sport helps or detracts from their ability to build a positive body image. Baghurst, Parish & Denny (2014) found that self-esteem and empowerment were some of the primary factors that motivated women to begin bodybuilding. However, bodybuilders can become their biggest critics as well (Peters & Phelps, 2001). Female bodybuilders are more prone to binge eating, bulimia and anorexia than the general population due to their highly disciplined diet and quest for specific goals (Goldfield, 2009).

Primary Research

Method

To better understand the female bodybuilder community, we conducted primary research through in-depth interviews with 12 participants. Five of the noncompetitive participants are students, while the remaining four work as a marketing assistant, model, recruiting & partnership development manager, and personal trainer at a fitness center respectively. Since bodybuilders vary based on training goals, we divided our participants into three segments: professional competitors, amateur competitors and non-competitive participants. Our interview questions

consisted of six parts, from general bodybuilding information to the values and lifestyles of this community. Through this primary research, we are able to generate insights about this subculture in terms of background, motivation, beliefs, lifestyle and buying behaviors. Our participants consisted of 9 non-competitive bodybuilders, 2 amateur competitors and 1 professional. All participants are between 23 to 50 years old. We used pseudonyms to conceal the participants' actual identities.

| Pseudonym | Age | Marital status | Competitor Type | Occupation |
|------------------|------------|-----------------------|------------------------|--|
| Hanna | 24 | Couple | Non-Competitive | Student |
| Carina | 25 | Couple | Non-Competitive | Marketing Assistant |
| Angel | 26 | Couple | Non-Competitive | Student |
| Laura | 24 | Single | Non-Competitive | Student |
| Emma | 23 | Single | Non-Competitive | Student |
| Emily | 27 | Single | Non-Competitive | Model |
| Ann | 24 | Couple | Non-Competitive | Personal Trainer |
| Ruby | 28 | Couple | Non-Competitive | Recruiting & Partnership Development Manager |
| Alice | 23 | Couple | Non-Competitive | Student |
| Ashley | 39 | Married | Amateur | Personal Trainer |
| Katie | 28 | Single | Amateur | Personal Trainer, Chef, Business Owner |
| Teresa | 48 | Married | Professional | Fitness Coach, Personal Trainer |

Primary Research Findings

Fitness Background

We interviewed a total of 9 non-competitive participants. All of the non-competitive participants liked to go to the gym or fitness center to train, and frequented the gyms at their schools or facilities such as Boston Sports Club (BSC). Two of them not only worked out at the gym, but also trained at home by watching YouTube videos and using personal workout equipment. Furthermore, every non-competitive participant had taken personal training classes before. Currently, four of them still have personal trainers or coaches. Four other non-competitive participants still follow training plans from their previous trainers or train with friends who are professional bodybuilders.

Among the noncompetitive bodybuilders, we also found that they usually went to the gym on an average of 3-4 times per week and spent an average of 2 hours per day training. The three competitive bodybuilders interviewed also had backgrounds in fitness; in fact all three of them work as personal trainers. These participants stated that they went to the gym regularly to maintain fitness in their off-seasons. However, when training for shows, their workouts occurred between 5-6 times per week. The workouts consisted of weightlifting as well as some cardio and posing exercises. While some of the non-competitors went to the gym on their own or watched workout videos on YouTube, all of the competitors enlisted a trainer to assist them achieve their fitness goals.

Motivations

Many of the participants started bodybuilding because they wanted to lose weight and shape their body. After their initial training, they became passionate and enjoyed the process of training. Working out became a habit and a way to remain healthy and build additional muscle.

Alice, a master student in Boston, said “I really wanted to have a good body shape in the beginning and now it has become part of my life.”

The competitors also enjoyed the process of sculpting their bodies, but were motivated to pursue bodybuilding much earlier. Competitor Ashley was initially influenced by track and field athletes, especially Jackie Joyner-Kersey.

They’re track stars or whatever but their bodies are just as great. That’s where it started for me and it just kind of went from there. Like when I was 14, that was my costume, a bodybuilder, for Halloween.

Competitor Teresa became enthralled with bodybuilding when she saw the sport televised, and began weightlifting at 15 years old. Furthermore, some of the participants began training because they were influenced by friends who already had experience working out. “I started to workout with my boyfriend and I became more and more interested in bodybuilding,” Ann said. After that, she took some related classes, searched online for training information and became a personal trainer. Similarly, Katie was encouraged to begin competing by friends who told her that she had the right physique for the sport. Moreover, some of the interviewees started training after sharing their workout experiences on the Internet or after becoming inspired by weight loss videos on YouTube.

Beliefs & Values

The participants value female bodybuilding because it helped them gain more confidence, become powerful and remain healthy. For example, Teresa felt empowered by bodybuilding competitions.

One of the reasons I take pride in what I do is because I’m natural and I’m all about being natural and being a strong, fit woman and I don’t think getting on stage in a bikini is objectifying my body.

Working out not only changed their shapes and empowered them, but also influenced their lifestyles. Emma, a master student, said “At the beginning, I only wanted to lose weight, but now I[’ve] learn[ed] the true meaning of self-discipline over time.” Katie also took pride in the discipline that she was able to demonstrate through the sport. “It’s a discipline thing,” she said. “I know what I’m doing is extremely hard.” Female bodybuilding was not only about building a physical shape, but also impacted their attitudes toward managing the pace of life.

However, despite their positive opinions regarding female bodybuilding, every participant agreed that female bodybuilding was perceived negatively in mainstream society. The participants believed that the mainstream perception about bodybuilding was that women would begin to resemble men and would become unattractive. Angel stated that muscular bodies were not accepted in her culture.

In Taiwan, we call it like golden Barbie, something like that...because I have the concept of people in Taiwan, they prefer skinny girls like really skinny with big boobs and stuff like that. Yah so for women who build their bodies to like really muscular, boys don’t like that...yah, I don’t care actually.

However, because workouts have become more popular for women nowadays, most interviewees believed that these kinds of stereotypes could gradually change in the future.

Lifestyles

Most of the participants are students, four of them are personal trainers/coaches, and two of them are young professionals. Despite their different backgrounds, they all have similar lifestyles. Their lifestyles encompass good health, whether through physical activity, cooking, or outdoor activities. Most of their hobbies are related to bodybuilding. For example, Laura said, “I would like to figure out some new healthy and delicious recipes.” The interviewees who liked

cooking may believe that cooking by themselves could help them have a healthier diet and help them keep fit.

The hopes and aspirations of the participants greatly varied between the non-competitors and the competitors. While all participants wanted success in the future, the non-competitors planned to seek success in their full-time jobs, while the competitors wanted success within bodybuilding. Non-competitors such as Carina said, “I think I need to have some accomplishment in my job and accumulate as much professional experience as possible. To make money to support my own life.” Additionally, non-competitor Ruby stated, “I want to be balance on my job and workout. Make a good time management for my life.” This is a contrast from the competitors’ primary goals. Ashley was working to get her pro card and wanted further sponsorship, while Teresa wanted to remain a title holder in her category.

Unique Market Behaviors

Nutrition also played an important role in two aspects of training: fueling of sport-specific and strength training and recovery from this training. While multi-vitamins and protein supplements are very popular among most of the bodybuilders, they also used additional products such as endurance drinks, glutamine, caffeine and fish oil. While the bodybuilders who did take supplements often took multiple supplements and spent hundreds of dollars, not all of the participants opted to use supplements. Three of the bodybuilders believed that it was not necessary to take supplements for bodybuilding.

Another unique behavior was the use of fitness equipment or facilities. Some of the participants supplemented basic weight equipment with resistance bands, yoga mats and additional dumbbells. The majority of bodybuilders claimed to buy their supplements and equipment online, especially on Amazon. They also visited athletic apparel stores like Nike,

Adidas and Under Armour, and supplement stores such as GNC and the Vitamin Shoppe to purchase products.

The final unique marketing behavior of the female bodybuilders was the financial investment that they were prepared to spend on the sport. Ashley said, “You really do have to love it to put the money out for it,” while Katie likened the cost of competing to a niche sport like horseback riding. The data that we collected indicated that the participants spent an average of \$30 to \$500 per month. Especially if preparing for a competition, the costs spent increased significantly. Ashley outlined some of her spending prior to one of her shows.

Supplements, at least \$300-\$400 a month and then you have your competition shoes which cost you about \$50...\$150 for tanning. Whoever your hairdresser is, it's whatever she's gonna charge you, but if you're getting it at the show, it may be another \$100 on top of that cause they're gonna do your hair and your makeup. My friend did my makeup so I only paid her \$25 which was good. (laughs) You got to cut costs somewhere. But it really adds up big-time. And you're getting your nails done, so that's just average price on nails-\$50 bucks? And gym membership, depending on where you go, you take an average LA Fitness membership, that's \$35.

Reflection on Preconception

Prior to conducting primary research, we stated multiple preconceptions about female bodybuilders. The first preconception was that muscular women would be affiliated with being masculine. While mainstream society may continue to possess that belief, the participants seemed intent on emphasizing their femininity. The competitors wore heels and bikinis during competition as one way to retain traditional objects of femininity. Additionally, the competitors all spoke of competing in divisions that wouldn't demand that they become too muscular and lose their femininity. Competitor Ashley even spoke of considering a breast augmentation to more effectively compete and appeal to judges. The non-competitors also made statements indicating that they wanted to become strong, but without sacrificing their feminine qualities.

The second preconception was that female bodybuilders relied on steroids and other supplements to reach their physical goals. While many of the female bodybuilders spoke of using supplements, none of them seemed to condone steroid use. The competitors spoke of seeing others using drugs, but disagreed with that method of performance enhancement. Based on the interviews conducted, steroid use did not play a role in training recreationally or preparing for a competition.

Marketing Implication

Our research provided valuable insights about the female bodybuilder community. Based on our primary research, we found that nutrition, supplements, and training apparel are very important to female bodybuilders. Three quarters of interviewees mentioned that they would use supplements on a daily basis. This could be a marketing opportunity. Food products could be another opportunity because apart from supplement use, bodybuilders received their nutrition from food. Developing a diet plan is very important for bodybuilders; it can more accurately and efficiently plan their nutritional intake, and it is one of the most important strategies to promote muscle growth and reduce body fat.

Moreover, during the interviews, we also found that female bodybuilders are willing to pay for training apparel that is functional, stylish and comfortable. Marketers can create advertising messages that feature those attributes and therefore attract consumers in this subculture more effectively. At the same time, advertisements should also reflect the spirit behind bodybuilding because it's not just an interest but a lifestyle. In addition, marketers can use social media as a tool to reach target audiences. Platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, and related blogs and bodybuilding websites would be most effective to capture our target audience.

Brand Choice

According to our primary research and analysis, sports apparel will be the best product category to target female bodybuilders. Nike, as an innovative and global brand, would be the best brand to target female bodybuilders. In addition to having a complete product line of sports apparel including women's sports bras, tops, shorts and leggings, the company is known for its messages of empowerment. Nike would be the best brand choice because it encompasses both the functional qualities in products that female bodybuilders desire as well as the emotional attributes of determination, strength and empowerment. While Nike has highlighted many sports throughout the brand history, bodybuilders have been absent from such spotlight. This is Nike's opportunity to continue to be an innovative brand and to reach out to a new type of athlete.

Based on the questions that we asked the non-competitive participants, most of them valued clothing that absorbed sweat and fit their bodies. Nike has multiple product choices, so it is likely to fit the demand of target consumers. Furthermore, professional competitors and amateur competitors may be swayed to shop exclusively at Nike if Nike sponsored competitive bodybuilders or used these athletes in advertisements to sell products.

Marketing Communication Strategies

Creative Message Strategies

After analyzing the beliefs and needs of female bodybuilders, it was determined that Nike was the best company to market to this target audience. The creative campaign "What I Build" will specifically appeal to female bodybuilders and encourage them to purchase Nike apparel instead of competitors' product lines. There were several advertising objectives for this campaign. The first objective was to create a campaign that would appeal broadly to both competitors and non-competitors. The campaign focuses on the similarities between the two

groups, namely their motivations in participating in the sport and their achievements in building their bodies into stronger physiques. As a result of this wide appeal, the apparel could be sold at both bodybuilding competitions as well as Nike retail stores.

The second advertising objective is to distinctly target female bodybuilders and recognize them positively. While Nike currently sells t-shirts that state that “Strong is Beautiful”, there hasn’t yet been a campaign to address this segment of athletes. The purpose of the “What I Build” campaign is to highlight women’s strength. Since all of the female bodybuilders interviewed indicated that the sport was widely misunderstood, Nike’s campaign could highlight the positive attributes and feelings of empowerment that the female bodybuilders believe are often misrepresented and misunderstood in mainstream society. If Nike represented female bodybuilders positively, female bodybuilders would be more inclined to purchase Nike apparel over other competitors. This could create a new loyal segment of customers for the company.

The final advertising objective is to serve the needs of female bodybuilders. The female bodybuilders interviewed stated that they wanted apparel that was superior at wicking away sweat and remaining comfortable during their workouts. The purpose of the advertising is to show bodybuilders working out in Nike apparel, and to appeal to women who also plan to participate in the sport or similar activities.

Executional Styles

The purpose of the “What I Build” campaign is to emotionally appeal to consumers. The campaign relies on Nike’s reputation as a superior sports apparel company, and specifically showcases different pieces of apparel that athletes can use while lifting weights or participating in rigorous workouts. More importantly, the women in the ads all have muscular physiques, illustrating a different type of body shape from what is often shown in ads.

Through this campaign Nike is positioning itself as a superior brand who values and encourages strength in women, as well as understands the practical needs of female bodybuilders. In the future, Nike may consider using professional female bodybuilders as celebrity ambassadors to the brand. Through this creative messaging, Nike will continue to shape the attitudes about how women feel about its brand. Even though all of the members of the target market are likely already familiar with the Nike brand, the campaign will lead them to feel more connected to the brand.

The campaign will be executed by using emotional and self-esteem ads. The ads will showcase women participating in training activities and weight-lifting to help build their physiques. Each ad will also focus on the various motivations that lead women to participate in bodybuilding. Targeting female bodybuilders will differentiate Nike from other competitors. Even though there are functional reasons to purchase Nike apparel, the ads are meant to focus on the emotional benefits. These empowering ads will positively show muscular women and will help other women see muscular women in a positive light.

Media Strategies

According to the primary research, most of the non-competitive female bodybuilders started learning information about bodybuilding from videos on YouTube channels. They also acquired training skills, got recommendations about sports outfits and learned about other women's workout experiences from social media. Therefore, we would like to focus on placing advertisements on YouTube and have decided to use emerging media, such as Facebook, Instagram and the interactive apps on mobile devices to promote Nike to female bodybuilders.

However, most of the amateur or professional competitors interviewed also exchanged information about bodybuilding from fitness centers or female bodybuilding competitions.

Hence, we would like to use direct marketing to target this segment of female bodybuilders. For example, we would use print advertising via flyers or brochures and showcase the ads in gyms and sports facilities such as Boston Sports Club (BSC). Handing out flyers at the International Federation of Bodybuilding and Fitness (IFBB) or National Physique Committee (NPC) competitions is another effective way to reach our target consumers, especially some of the female bodybuilding competitors.

YouTube is the most popular platform among female bodybuilders. Many use tutorial videos to learn training techniques or poses. By placing Nike's advertising on YouTube and partnering with influential YouTubers who post training videos, these YouTubers are likely to recommend Nike's products in their videos. These are two ways to maximize the YouTube platform and reach a large number of female bodybuilders. Additionally, the values of Nike can be expressed through words, images and hashtags on Facebook and Instagram to let female bodybuilders realize that the Nike brand not only symbolizes "Just Do It." Nike is also the brand that represents "What I Build". Nike can assist female bodybuilders not only to build strong physiques and muscles, but also to build their attitudes about creating a healthy lifestyle. By using the hashtag "What I Build", as well as ads that state "Build Strength," "Build Balance," "Build Confidence," "Build Cooperation," "Build Health," "Build Persistence," and "Build your Life" emphasize the different core values of Nike, and connect both to the brand and to female bodybuilders.

Emerging media also fits the lives of female bodybuilders, as all of the bodybuilders interviewed had busy schedules which included school or work. Because of their busy lifestyles, the most suitable platforms to reach them are apps on their mobile devices. Mobile is one of the best ways to reach busy, distracted consumers since the device is always on and always with the

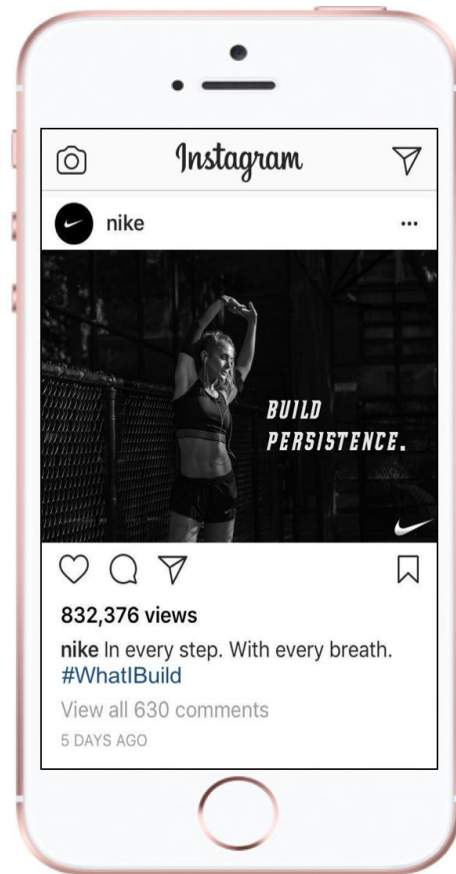
consumer. Because Nike has its own apps, we would like to continue using the app as well as add more interactive options such as QR codes and augmented reality (AR) for showing the texture and styles of the products. Female bodybuilders can gain more knowledge about the products with this new technology and it might encourage them to shop in Nike's retail stores more often.


Finally, distributing print ads on flyers or brochures in gyms and at female bodybuilding competitions is the most direct way to reach our target consumers. Women like to gather in gyms or competitions because of their training, so they would be interested in Nike's print ads. Word of mouth via flyers is another good method to build brand awareness to female bodybuilders. When female bodybuilders like Nike, they might pass positive information from person to person by oral communication in gyms and competitions. Having satisfied customers share information is the most effective way to connect Nike with female bodybuilders.

In conclusion, using an assorted media mix combined with traditional (print ads via flyers or brochures) and digital advertising tactics (image or video ads via YouTube, Facebook and Instagram) are the best methods to expose female bodybuilders from different segments to the Nike brand and introduce its products to the target market.

Advertisements








搜尋


自動播放



Nike #WhatIBuild

觀看次數：289,216

1,813 406 分享 更多

 Nike 發佈日期：2017年5月6日 訂閱 69.8萬

即將播放

Nike #Breaking2: The Innovation
觀看次數：15.5萬

Nike Sport Research: The Art of Science
觀看次數：72萬

NIKE: IMPOSSIBLE STAIRS
觀看次數：2,000萬

Nike #Breaking2: Conquering the 2-Hour Marathon
觀看次數：8.2萬

Want It All (Full Length)
觀看次數：720萬

Conclusions

In this project, we examined female bodybuilders as a subculture. Based on primary research and secondary research data collection, we have a deeper understanding of female bodybuilders. The research illustrates the motivations, beliefs, values and lifestyles of female bodybuilders.

Recently, the percentage of women engaged in sports and exercise has increased quickly, and the fitness and bodybuilding market is one of the faster-growing trends. The literature review shows that an increased number of people are placing a high value on exercise and becoming healthy, reducing stress and losing weight. However, the most important motivations for female bodybuilders are self-esteem and empowerment.

After interviewing nine non-competitive female bodybuilders and 3 competitive female bodybuilders it was found that bodybuilding is not just an interest for them but a lifestyle, impacting many of their daily behaviors such as diet, habits, purchase behaviors and routines. Many of the bodybuilders mentioned shopping online to buy supplements and gym equipment, but buying apparel in stores. Additionally, they also spent a large amount of money on gym memberships and supplements. Most of them used social media platforms to help them work out, especially YouTube and related blogs. Based on the interviews, it was determined that female bodybuilders are strong, hardworking, confidence and persistence individuals.

For the advertisements and campaign, the main idea should focus on women's strength. At the same time, the brand should be well-known and appeal to consumers as well. The findings showed that most of the interviewees liked Nike. Nike also fit the concept of athleticism, strength and empowerment so it was chosen as the brand choice. The advertisements showed several characteristics of the target audience, such as their determination to achieve self-esteem,

to express how they felt misrepresented and misunderstood in mainstream society, and to show empowerment. Advertisements should run on Nike platforms and apps, as well as social media and online platforms like Youtube.

As a result of the interviews, it was clear that many female bodybuilders interested in the sport are not just preparing for bodybuilding competitions. The women also have their own careers such as being business owners, students and marketing assistants. After completing this project, we have a different understanding of female bodybuilders. Prior to starting, our image of female bodybuilders was limited to the image of women with large muscles. Now, the meaning of female bodybuilders are women who like to challenge themselves, stick to their dreams, and insist on gender equality.

Appendix

Exhibit 1

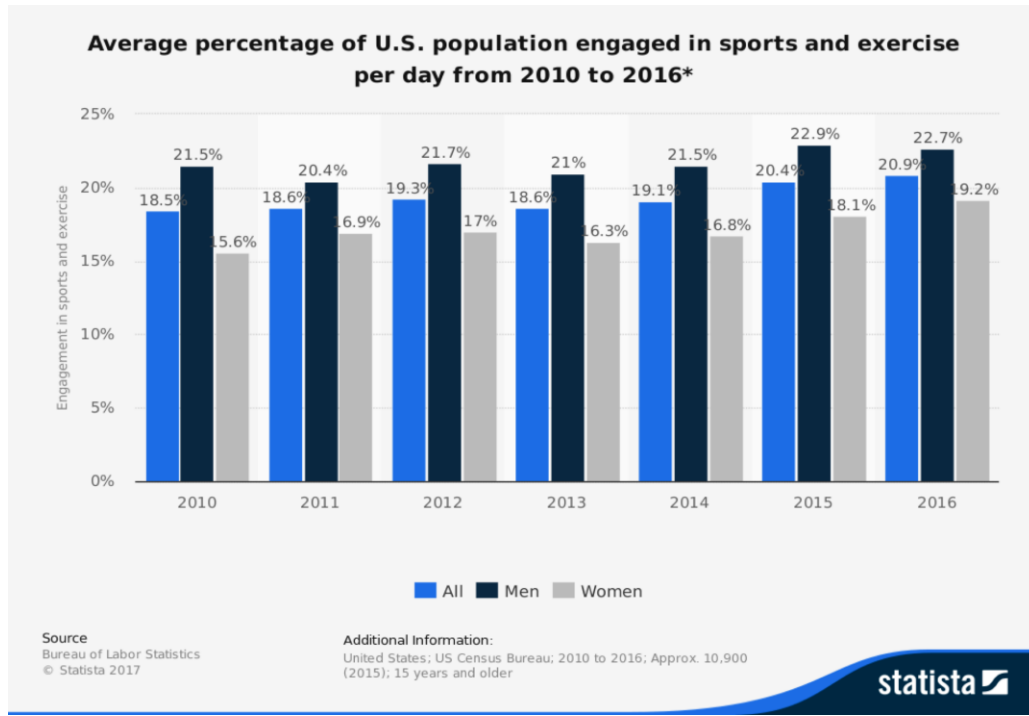


Exhibit 2

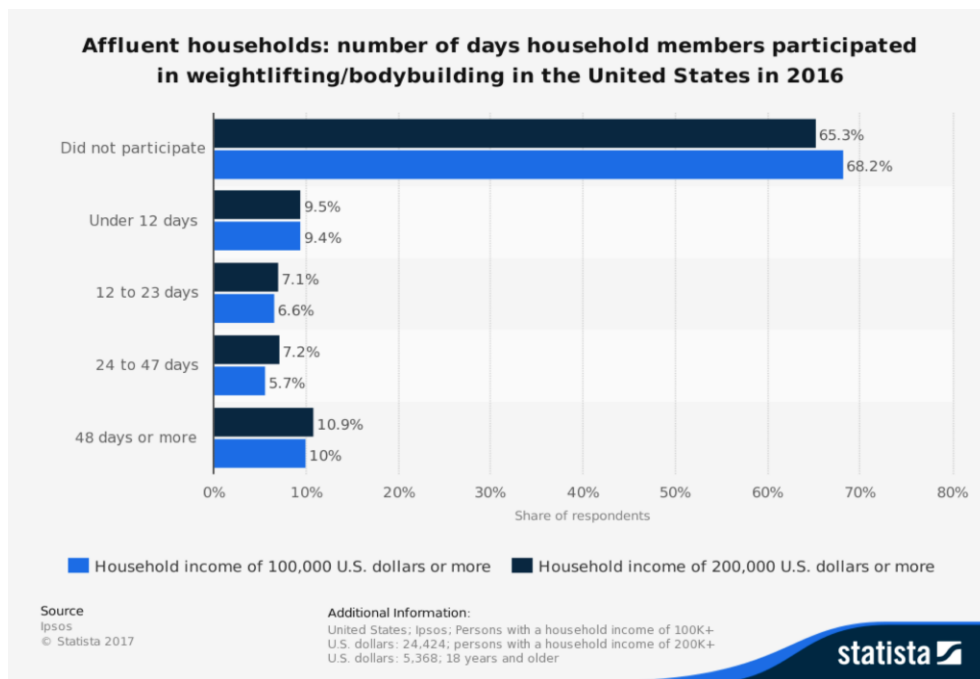


Exhibit 3

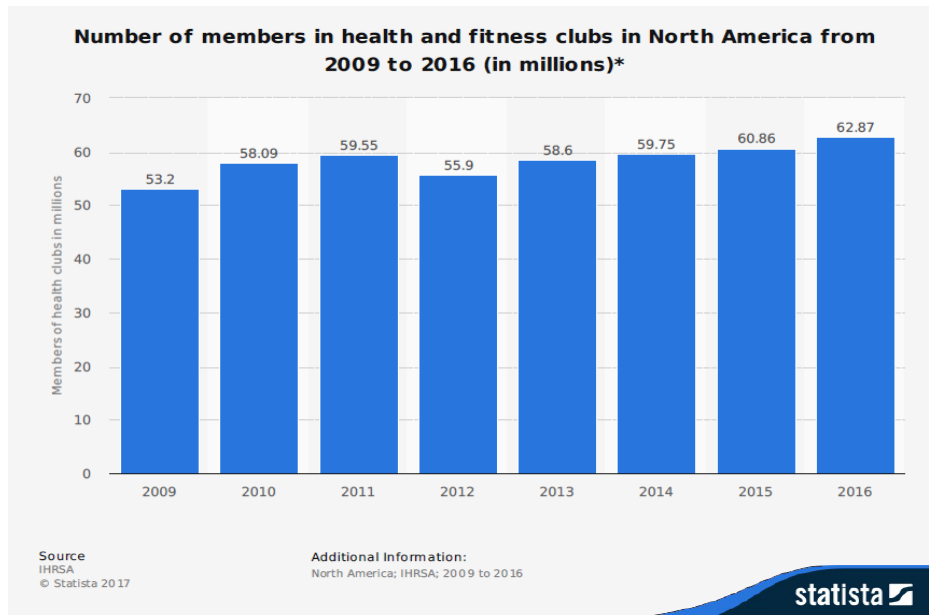


Exhibit 4

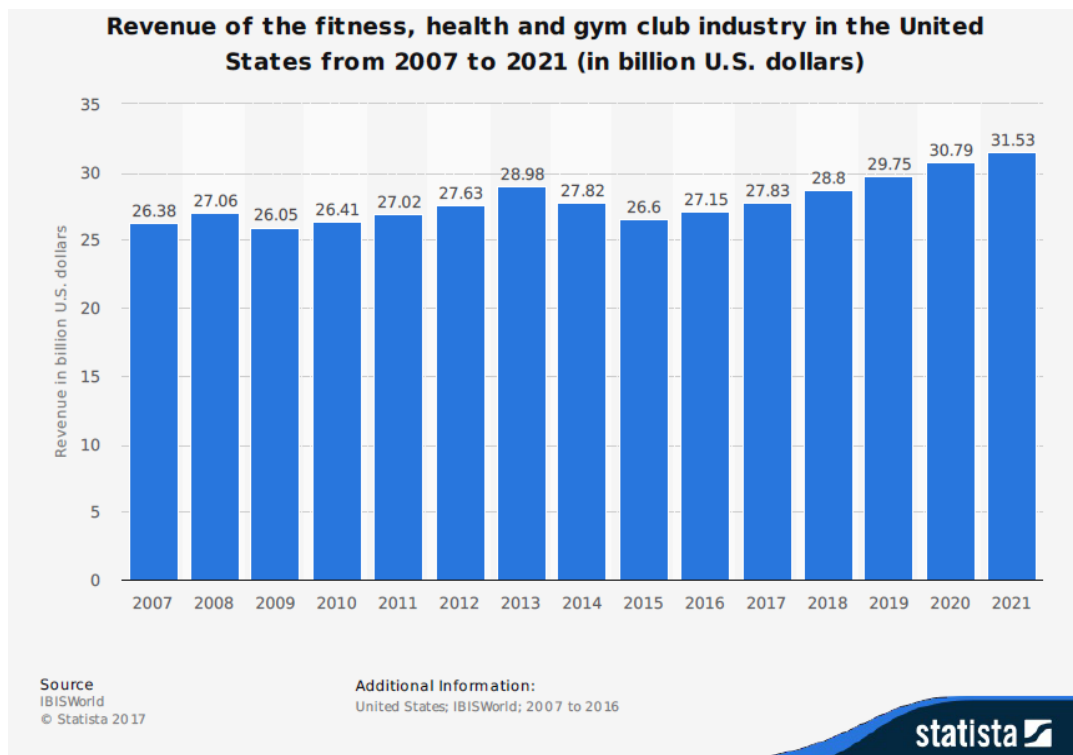


Exhibit 5

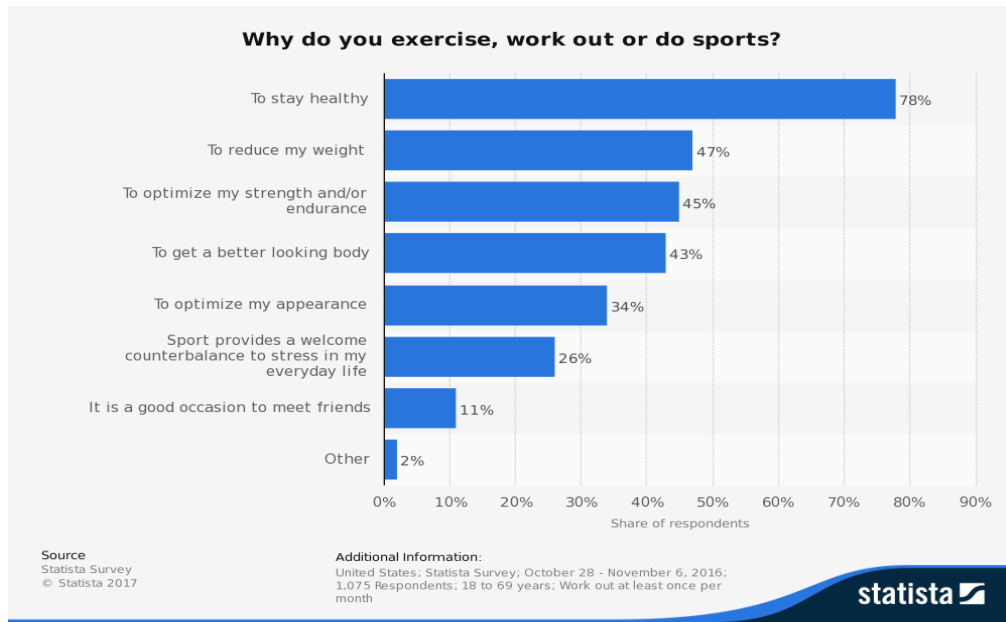


Exhibit 6

Percentage of population engaged in sports and exercise on an average day, by sex, 2003–15

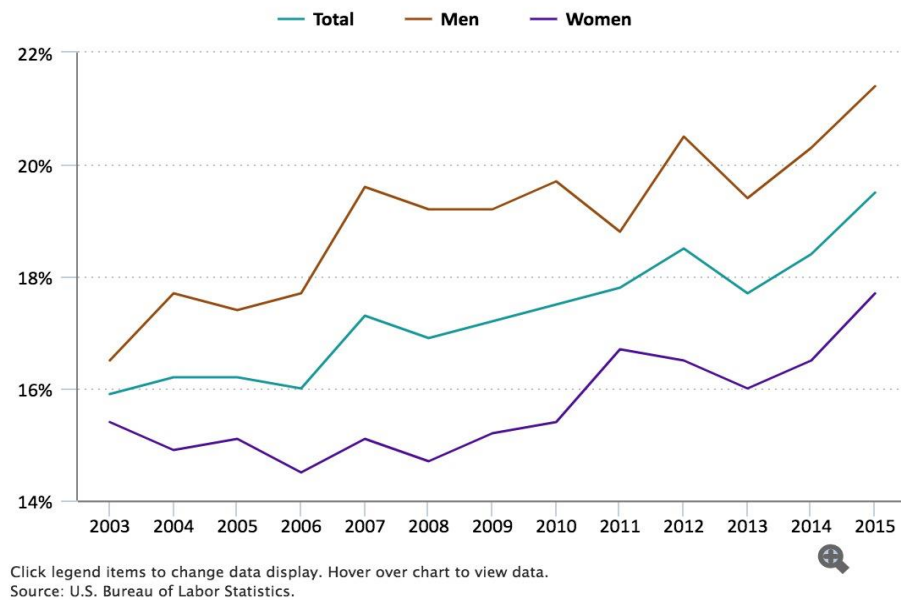


Exhibit 7

Percentage of population engaged in sports and exercise on an average day, by age, 2003–15

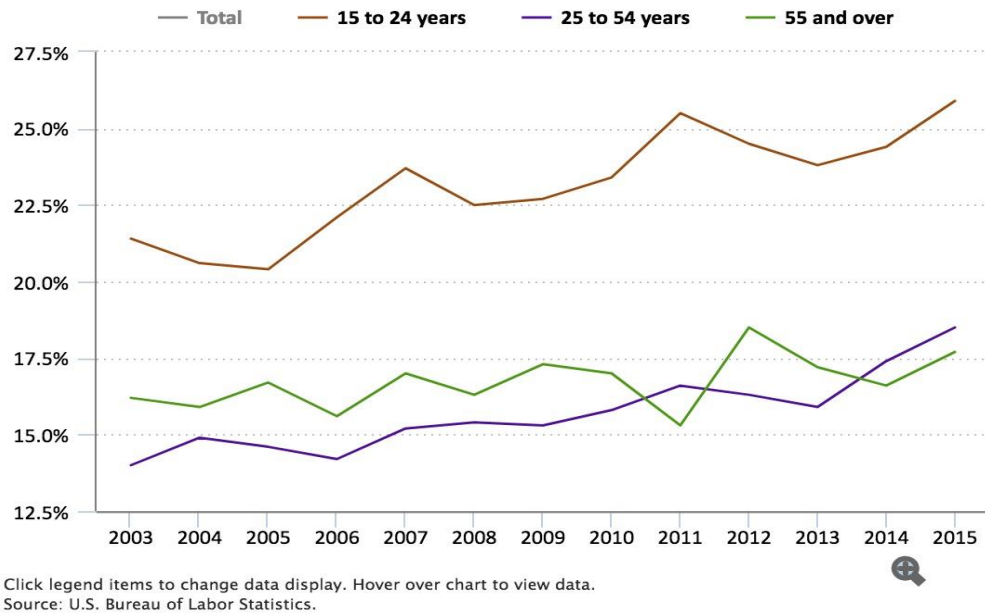


Exhibit 8

Percentage of population engaged in sports and exercise on an average day, by educational attainment, 2003–08 and 2009–15

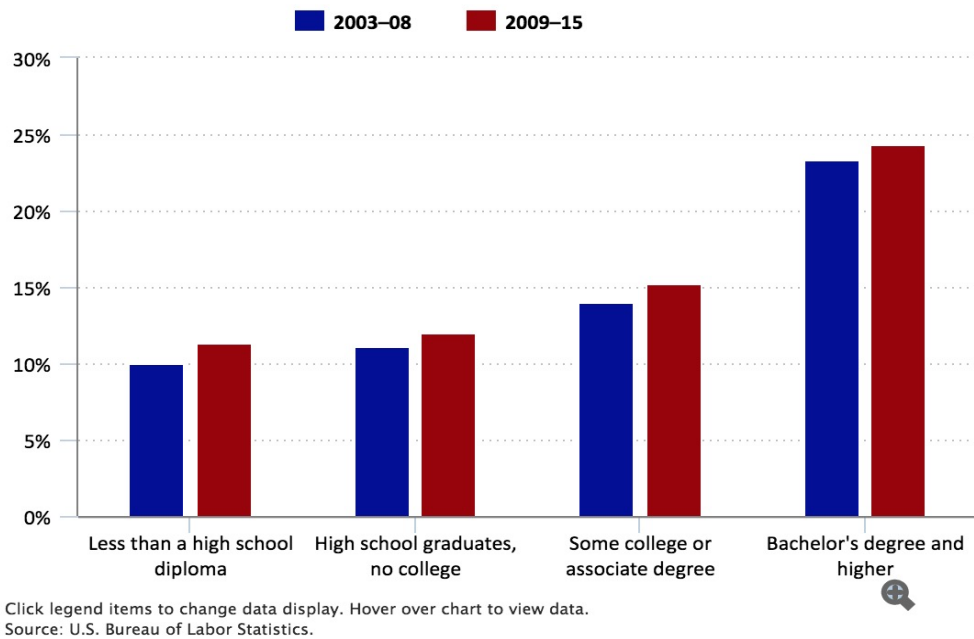
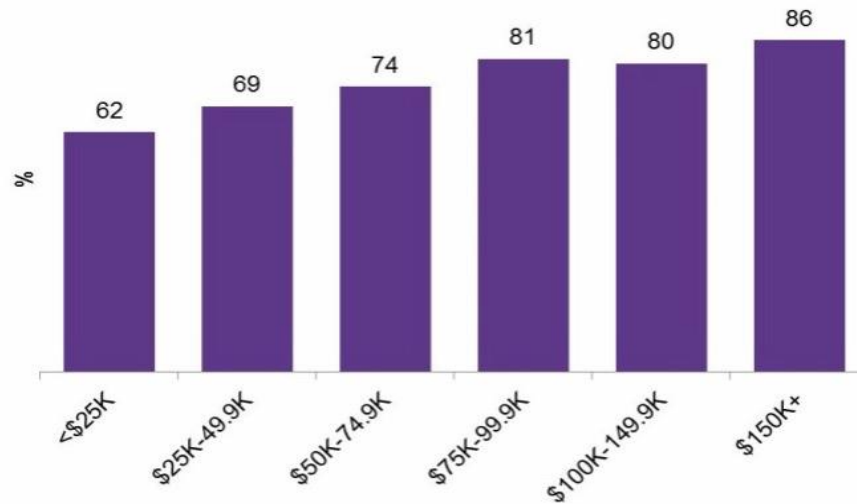


Exhibit 9

Figure 33: Exercise frequency– At least once a week, by household income, July 2016

Base: 2,000 internet users aged 18+

"How frequently do you exercise?" [At least once a week]



Source: Lightspeed/Mintel

[Click here to zoom](#)

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