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## GEN Z & MILLENNIALS' 15 FAVORITE ONLINE CELEBRITIES

AS FAME CONTINUES TO FRAGMENT, WE ASKED 1000 13-35-YEAR-OLDS TO TELL US THEIR FAVORITE ONLINE CELEBRITY. FIND OUT WHO MADE THE LIST...

In the months since we released the [Ypulse Quarterly report](#) that took a deep dive into The Influencer Effect, influencer marketing has only gotten bigger—and more amorphous. While the online-famous are making big bucks (for themselves and brands) and companies are [clamoring to strike partnerships](#) in an effort to reach the elusive ad-skipping Millennials and Gen Z, The Influencer Effect is further fragmenting another youth mainstay: celebrity. We've covered the [redefinition of fame](#) plenty in the past, but the lines between what constitutes a celebrity and what doesn't are getting even blurrier. It has everything to do with social media: today's young consumers prefer online content and prioritize an intimate connection with their idols over the top-down inaccessibility of the celebrities of yore. And while this means that an Instagram personality with a million followers is as much of a celebrity as the actor du jour in the eyes of 13-35-year-olds, it also means that those more classic celebrities—the pop icons, film starlets, and rock stars—are better received when they maintain a strong social media presence.

That's making the question of fame even more complicated. In each of our quarterly [social media tracker surveys](#), we ask 1000 13-35-year-olds, "Who is your favorite online celebrity?"\* We clarify that this could be a blogger / vlogger, social media star on YouTube, Vine, Instagram, Twitter, Tumblr, etc. and let them tell us their top pick. This time around, Millennial and Gen Z respondents listed upwards of 700 stars, the majority of which had just one vote, confirming that the days of a reigning handful of celebrities are dead and gone. But more than that, survey respondents listed everyone from YouTube stars to Rihanna to—wait for it—Donald Trump. When the president is listed as a favorite online celebrity, you know the definition of fame is getting hazy. That said, here are the top 15 favorite online celebrities among Gen Z and Millennials right now:

\*This was an open-end response question to allow us to capture the full range of online celebrities that Millennials and Gen Z consider their favorites—without our preconceived ideas shaping their responses. As with any qualitative question, the responses include those that are top of mind and those that are most popular. The list is ordered according to number of responses received, and alphabetically when ties occurred.

### Who Is Their Favorite Online Celebrity?

13-35-year-olds

1. Pewdiepie
2. Jenna Marbles
3. Beyoncé
4. Markiplier
5. Chrissy Teigen
6. Justin Bieber
7. Selena Gomez
8. Jackie Aina
9. Kim Kardashian

10. Philip DeFranco
11. Taylor Swift
12. Casey Neistat
13. Cristiano Ronaldo
14. Lilly Singh
15. Shane Dawson

Let's start with the obvious: This list is a nearly even split between what we would call "celebrities" and "online celebrities." And while this could prove that the distinction between the two categories of fame no longer applies, it's interesting to note that when we asked 13-35-year-olds "Who is your favorite celebrity?" last year, none of their [top 15 answers](#) included online celebrities. In fact, the list was dominated by musicians. So while the bastion of classic celebrity is still somewhat upheld among 13-35-year-olds, the definition of online celebrity is up for debate. After all, Beyoncé is known for maintaining a [low profile](#) on social media and is, of course, an international pop icon above all else. However, her [less is more social media philosophy](#) doesn't stop young consumers from engaging with her online presence. Bey's famed pregnancy photos quickly became the [most-liked post in Instagram history](#) with over 10.8 million likes, dethroning previous record holder Selena Gomez, who pulled in 6.6 million likes. (Although [Kylie Jenner just stole](#) the coveted crown). [According to D'Marie Analytics](#), one influencer post from Beyoncé—if she were ever to partake—would be worth \$1 million. So while Beyoncé—and Justin Bieber, Selena Gomez, Taylor Swift, and other conventional stars on the list—is not what we would classify as an online celebrity, the fact that her online presence is so monumental among young consumers makes the distinction more troublesome.

It's also important to note that the vast majority of our respondents couldn't name an online celebrity. When asked why, the majority said they don't follow or don't like online celebrities, but several respondents said "online celebrities don't exist," throwing another level of mystification onto the fragmentation of fame.

For those who do follow online celebrities, the top slots were snagged by arguably the most well-known YouTubers: the superstar Felix "PewDiePie" Kjellberg, who holds the record for the most followers on the platform at 60 million, and Jenna Marbles, the vlogging comedian who ranked number one on our list [last year](#). In fact, most of the list is dominated by long-standing top YouTubers, with one less known name breaking into the top ten: Jackie Aina.

With two million followers, Aina has the smallest following of the list, but the vlogger is making waves in the hugely trending realms of beauty and skincare. With the tagline, "Changing the standard of beauty, one video at a time," Aina isn't afraid to get real about inclusivity in the beauty industry, appealing to [the most-diverse generation](#) to date—the generation that made Rihanna's inclusive makeup line [Fenty Beauty go viral](#). "She is the only 'popular' beauty blogger that is black and discusses issues within the makeup world that impact black women," one 28-year-old female respondent said. And as a 20-year-old female put it: "She is one of the realest beauty vloggers on the internet. She calls out inequities in the beauty industry, especially when it comes to darker toned women." As social media influence continues to define contemporary fame, we can expect to see more stars like Aina climb their way up the favorites list in the future.

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