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## 5 NEWBIE FASHION BRANDS THREATENING TO SHAKE UP THE RETAIL GAME

THESE NEWBIE NAMES IN FASHION AND RETAIL ARE PULLING IN YOUNG CONSUMERS THANKS TO NEW APPROACHES TO MARKETING, MANUFACTURING, MERCHANDISE AND MORE...

How much have indie brands shaken up the retail world? Enough that some major retailers are stocking them instead of fighting them. According to [Business Insider](#), not only is Nordstrom selling Instafamous brands like Allbirds, Everlane, and Reformation, those “strategic” brands account for about 40% of their current revenue. And that figure is only expected to grow. They’re not the only one to try to align with relative newcomers to the fashion world. In 2017, Walmart [purchased](#) online fashion womenswear darling Modcloth, and shortly thereafter, continued their e-commerce buying binge [by buying](#) men’s fashion site Bonobos. Of course, Amazon [has also been rumored](#) to be eyeing innovative fashion startups like Le Tote and Everlane.

It’s no wonder big brands are scrambling to figure out a startup strategy. [We’ve pointed out](#) that indie brands are taking big bite out of the market for young consumers. According to [GO](#), indie fashion brands are upending the fast fashion industry by reaching young consumers on Instagram, and undercutting original designers with knockoffs. While H&M and Zara’s sales shrink, brands like Represent and MNML are taking new trends and turning them around for public purchase [at hyper-fast speeds](#), often producing eerily similar pieces to authentic, higher-end work. A wandering eye is built into young consumers’ shopping preferences. According to [our most recent shopping and fashion survey](#), 52% of 18-36-year-olds tell us they like to buy things from smaller, less known brands, and 88% say they don’t care about what brand an item of clothing is, as long as they like it.

So what are they going to like next? These five indie brands are earning major buzz and gaining big followings by rethinking everything from marketing to merchandise:

### 1. FASHION NOVA

If you haven’t heard of Fashion Nova yet, it’s time to get familiar with the “the Millennial clothing brand” Googled more than Chanel. According to [Google’s 2017 report](#) detailing top searches, Fashion Nova beat out some big brands with its low-cost, fast-fashion favorites. How? [The Influencer Effect](#). Not only is Fashion Nova extremely active on social media (always interacting with customers, re-posting 30 customer looks a day, etc.), but they’re getting shout-outs from [Millennials’ and Gen Z’s favorite celebrities](#). This year, [they’re partnering](#) with Cardi B, who is working on a fashion collab with the brand in the wake of her new album launch. It’s a match made in social media marketing heaven. But they’re not stopping there. According to [The Cut](#), Fashion Nova is branching into beauty with their new line, Nova Beauty. Basically, Fashion Nova wants to be a lifestyle brand, and they’re coming for big brands’ customers with everything they’ve got.

### 2. CHOOSY

Choosy is using AI to copy influencers’ style and get it to the customer in under two weeks. The

move will [speed up fast fashion](#), challenging retailers like Zara and H&M. [Racked](#) reports that the company's algorithm analyzes what styles are trending on social media, looking for clues in the comments like "Where can I buy this?" Style scouts will also help cull the web along with customers who can comment #GetChoosy on posts they want the company to recreate. Their beta test collection featured favorites worn by the Hadids—and sold out within hours.

### 3. REVOLVE

Revolve's is an ecommerce site built for Millennial women—using data, not fashion expertise. According to [Inc](#), the site's two founders used their business and data science backgrounds to compile over 600 brands into one retail platform, many of which are too niche to be found at department stores. They then analyze what's selling and what's not to find out which trends are worth telling designers to make more of, customizing their supply chain to create exactly what their customers want. Finally, they associate the brand with an aspirational lifestyle [via influencers](#), going so far as to send them on vacations—dressed in Revolve merch of course. Despite a [very recent scandal over a sweatshirt](#), we're pretty sure they'll only be growing.

### 4. LIVELY

Lively has taken a unique approach to intimates by blending the [everlasting athleisure trend](#) with comfortable, size-inclusive lingerie, calling it "Leisurée." The brand "definitely born on Instagram" is also getting an edge on competitors by leveraging social media learnings to create new products based on fans' feedback and requests. When [we spoke to Lively's CEO](#), she explained, "One of the things that we're most proud of is that our best-selling products were innovated based on conversations with our customer. From the beginning, we said we would look at trend lines that we see in customer service, Instagram comments, and Facebook or community conversations." Lively also recently opened an in-person store to connect with consumers IRL, focusing on building a community through succulent workshops, workout classes, and more.

### 5. PRIMARY

According to [Ypulse's research](#), 73% of Millennial parents agree with the statement, "I want to raise my child without being influenced by traditional gender norms." That's why so many brands are [appealing to the next generation of parents](#) by going gender neutral in their products. As we [called out last year](#), gender-free clothing is a major trend in kids' fashion, and there's a young player in the category that's making it their focus. Retail startup Primary reportedly more than doubled their customer base in 2017, according to [Fast Company](#). They offer clothing staples in plain colors (including black, for that super-fashionable baby) or simple stripes for [the Genreless Generation](#). Primary's ecommerce site has also simplified the search for buying new clothes as children age up by letting parents easily reorder their go-to basics in larger sizes, appealing to Millennial parents' desire for easy shortcuts.

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