

RESEARCH PROPOSAL

HALF MAGIC

Client: Half Magic Beauty

Researcher: Sara Badura

BACKGROUND:

This research proposal is for [Half Magic Beauty](#), which is a beauty brand founded by the makeup artist Doniella Davy who is known for her work on “Euphoria.” The brand focuses on creating unique, bold and imaginative beauty products that encourage self-expression. With a range of eyeshadows, highlighters and innovative products designed to allow users to experiment with their looks, Half Magic Beauty has gained popularity for its vibrant and inclusive offerings.

I’ve selected this client because I’m personally interested in the beauty industry, particularly in how brands combine artistry and self-expression. I have also purchased from this brand before and really enjoyed the products I tried out. I admire how Half Magic Beauty has gained attention by offering products that cater to a wide range of skin tones that encourages creative expression. As a consumer, I find their approach refreshing in the beauty space, which often emphasizes conventional beauty standards. I am also a huge fan of the makeup on the show “Euphoria,” which makes me even more interested in this brand and the owner’s journey in the makeup industry.

For this research proposal, I will research strategies to help Half Magic Beauty expand its target audience while preserving its brand identity. Currently, the brand appeals to a niche market, such as makeup artists and “Euphoria” fans, but there is potential to attract a broader audience interested in creative, inclusive beauty products. As trends shift, consumers are increasingly drawn to self-expression and vibrant makeup, values that Half Magic embodies. My research will focus on understanding the motivations and preferences of potential customers, helping the brand broaden its appeal through targeted marketing and product

strategies without compromising its unique essence.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE:

To identify strategies for expanding Half Magic Beauty's target audience while maintaining its brand identity and appeal to its current customer base.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

1. What factors influence potential customers' purchasing decisions in the beauty industry, particularly when it comes to bold, artistic makeup products? What are the motivations and preferences of these customers?
 2. How do consumers perceive Half Magic Beauty compared to competitors in the beauty space, and what unique qualities or aspects do they find appealing or unappealing?
 3. What marketing strategies would resonate with a broader audience while maintaining Half Magic Beauty's brand identity?
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SECONDARY RESEARCH:

My key takeaways from my secondary research include several important things related to the makeup industry, but something I found very revealing was that the makeup industry largely [revolves](#) around social media, influencers, and current trends. Not only are consumers looking for influencers to share what to buy, they are also looking for '[de-influencers](#)' who will direct them away from products they don't deem useful or successful. I also learned that Although the brand name and application largely influences what makeup brands people Purchase from, there is a shift in the market where consumers are searching for [skin-beneficial](#) Ingredients. Another important marketing trend in the makeup industry right now is the usage of collaborative pop-culture [partnerships](#) that can utilize consumers' nostalgia. Finally, as one of my most important findings, I discovered that Half Magic Beauty is relatively unknown. I was unable to find the brand on two different reputable [ranking](#) sites, which shows me that although it may be a great brand, it heavily lacks in its notoriety and influence in the industry. (Part 1)

The limitations of the secondary research I conducted are that it only provides a general overview of trends in the makeup industry without specific insights into

consumer preferences or behaviors towards Half Magic Beauty. Secondary research relies on existing data and may not capture real-time shifts or nuanced opinions from consumers. Given that Half Magic Beauty is relatively unknown, primary research is now necessary to gather direct insights from consumers and industry experts. This will help me understand the reasons behind its lack of notoriety and identify opportunities for brand growth, while also maintaining its brand identity and appeal to its current customer base, based on actual consumer feedback. (Part 2)

PRIMARY RESEARCH METHODS

The type of research that will be employed will be a combination of exploratory and descriptive research. Since this is the earlier stages of this campaign, exploratory research would be useful to explore Half Magic's lack of reach in its marketing and garner responses from real people. This would allow me to hear real responses from makeup consumers rather than just employing my secondary research. As for descriptive research, this will help me understand more the key demographics of Half Magic and how this brand can better reach this audience. I will also collect both qualitative and quantitative data to ensure the best possible conduction of primary research. The specific methods of primary research that will be employed will include in-depth interviews, focus groups, and a survey. In-depth interviews will allow me to pick the mind of a makeup consumer and get fully-fledged, real answers that tell me what influences the subject to purchase beauty products, specifically products that relate to Half Magic's items. A focus group would allow me to get inside the minds of a group of Half Magic Beauty consumers, or even makeup consumers who have not purchased from this brand. I would be able to ask questions pertaining specifically to their perception of the brand and see exactly what they find appealing or unappealing and what they seem to find works versus what they think is lacking. As for a survey, this tactic would let me compile questions that are more specific to marketing strategies. I could ask questions that pertain to what marketing tactics consumers enjoy seeing in the makeup industry and what they don't like. I could also make some questions more specific to how

responders enjoy seeing other makeup brands other than Half Magic market to large audiences while still maintaining their unique identities.

FOCUS GROUP REQUIREMENTS

Sampling statement: My sample includes a demographic of younger, inspired makeup artists. This range will fall between the ages of 15–35 and include individuals, both male and female, that enjoy trying new, bold makeup looks. This group will also include individuals who identify as gender non-conforming or nonbinary to reflect the inclusivity of Half Magic Beauty. The sample of people participating in the focus group look to influencers and celebrities to back makeup brands, making them more likely to purchase from certain companies. Although it is not a requirement, some of the sample may be familiar with the television show “Euphoria,” and took much makeup inspiration from the makeup used on the actors.

I suggest recruiting 20–30 people and conducting 3–4 focus groups, having roughly 6–7 participants in each group. I would recruit people by pasting flyers around town, distributing them at local beauty retailers, makeup classes, and the art school at UNL in addition to online outreach. I would also create a virtual flyer that I could share via social media, encouraging my friends and colleagues to do the same. Targeted social media ads on Instagram and TikTok will also be used to reach users interested in beauty, artistic expression, and makeup trends.

I would incentivize the participants with a participation payment, maybe looking at a price of \$20–\$50, depending on the length of the focus group. Another idea is to actually offer Half Magic’s products to participants, including smaller items that would not be too costly to give away for free. I would ensure that these items are usable for any participant, thus excluding any skin tone-based products. This approach not only encourages participation but also creates initial product engagement and familiarity.

Focus Group Moderator Guide

Introduction: Hello everyone! Thank you so much for taking the time to participate in this interview. I’m conducting research on behalf of a beauty brand called Half

Magic Beauty, and your input will help shape future marketing and product strategies. My role is to guide this conversation, and your role is simply to share your honest opinions. There are no right or wrong answers, and your responses will remain anonymous. I encourage you all to be open-minded and respectful to one another throughout the process. The goal is to understand what drives your beauty product purchases, what brands resonate with you, how you would like to see our brand's products marketed and how you perceive creative and expressive makeup brands like Half Magic. You can skip any question you're not comfortable answering. This should take around 45 minutes to an hour.

Ice breaker activity: To get us warmed up and thinking creatively, let's do a quick round of sharing: I'd like each of you to share the boldest or most creative makeup look you've ever tried — or wanted to try — and tell us what inspired it. Maybe it was a character, a social media trend, or something completely your own.

[Moderator note: Encourage enthusiasm and creativity here. If someone is shy, prompt gently with "It could even be just a bold lipstick or a cool eyeliner look!" Maybe share that I'm not always brave enough to do bold looks, but I've always wanted to try.]

[Notetaker note: Jot down recurring themes. Ex: inspiration sources, comfort with boldness, celebrity/style references, favorite makeup products that go with the look (such as lipstick, eyeliner, etc.)]

Open-ended questions:

1. When you think of bold or artistic makeup brands, which ones come to mind? Why those?

[Moderator note: Let this set the tone for understanding brand perceptions. Listen for how participants define 'bold' and what aesthetics or messaging they associate with those brands.]

[Notetaker note: Highlight mentions of Half Magic or competitors.]

2. Have you ever heard of or tried Half Magic Beauty? If so, what was your impression? If not, what assumptions do you make based on the name or vibe?

[Moderator note: Allow for honest reactions. If some aren't familiar, encourage them to react to the name and visuals you'll share in the activity (maybe some sort of presentation). If some are familiar, explore what they

liked/disliked.]

[Notetaker note: Record language participants use to describe perceptions.]

3. What encourages you to try a new beauty brand? Is it about the product itself, the packaging, influencer reviews, or something else?

[Moderator note: Let participants speak from experience. Don't interrupt. If needed, transition into values like self-expression, inclusivity, or aesthetics.]

[Notetaker note: Document overall impressions of Half Magic, both positive and negative. Pay attention to any specific references to "Euphoria." Look for perceived uniqueness or inclusivity.]

4. Do you feel that mainstream beauty brands allow for authentic self-expression? Why or why not?

[Moderator note: Keep this open and personal. Don't steer the answers; let them share experiences or frustrations.]

[Notetaker note: Focus on how participants view mainstream beauty's role in self-expression. Take note of any criticism or praise for the industry's inclusivity and authenticity.]

5. How do you discover new makeup brands, and what catches your eye first?

[Moderator note: Listen for channels (social media, television, influencers, etc.), but also tone, visual identity and community perception.]

[Notetaker note: Track the discovery channels (Instagram, YouTube, word of mouth). Note if visual identity or online presence is mentioned as an attention-grabber.]

Focus group activity:

Step 1: Introduction to the activity (2 minutes)

Moderator: Now we're going to do an activity where you'll reimagine Half Magic Beauty's brand to make it more engaging. You'll have 10 minutes to brainstorm ideas about how the brand could evolve, but still keep what makes it unique. You can work on things like packaging, messaging, social media campaigns, etc. Let's have some fun with it!

[Moderator note: Keep the tone relaxed and creative. Make sure everyone understands the task, emphasizing the goal is to brainstorm and have fun.]

[Notetaker note: Capture key changes suggested (ex: packaging, taglines, campaigns, etc.). Watch for patterns in preferences (ex: bold designs, inclusivity).]

Step 2: Distribution of materials (5 minutes)

I'll give each group a set of cards that include elements of Half Magic's current brand (product visuals, taglines, etc.). Look them over and think about how you would remix the brand to make it more appealing or inclusive. You can make sketches or notes to show your ideas with the paper and pens I have provided.

[Moderator note: Distribute the cards. Ensure each group has the materials they need and that everyone is engaged. Don't influence the ideas yet.]

[Notetaker note: Pay attention to how the participants are reacting to the cards. Do they express disgust, enjoyment, or love?]

Step 3: Group work (10 minutes)

Now work together as a large group. Think about how you would change Half Magic's brand. Here are some things to consider:

- Would you change the product packaging?
- What tagline would you use?
- How would you market the brand on social media?
- How can you make it more inclusive?

[Moderator note: Walk around, check in with groups, but avoid suggesting ideas. Encourage everyone to contribute. Keep track of time.]

Step 4: Presenting ideas (10 minutes)

Now, we will all share the ideas you have come up with. Tell us what you changed, why and how you think those changes would help the brand. Feel free to show any sketches or notes you made.

[Moderator note: Allow each group to present. Keep the tone supportive and let everyone speak.]

Step 5: Group reflection (5 minutes)

Let's reflect on the ideas shared. What stood out to you from other participants' opinions and ideas? What would you keep from Half Magic's brand, and what should change?

[Moderator note: Encourage feedback and open discussion. Probe for deeper insights about why participants feel a certain way.]

[Notetaker note: Record key findings the group discusses. Note any disagreements or agreements that the group makes. Record any emerging themes around brand values, marketing strategies, or the overall appeal of the brand.]

INTERVIEW REQUIREMENTS

Sampling statement: The interview sample will consist of beauty consumers between the ages of 15 and 35, inclusive of all genders and ethnic backgrounds, who identify as makeup enthusiasts or casual beauty buyers with a tendency toward expressive or creative looks. This psychographic targets consumers who value self-expression, artistic beauty and follow makeup trends or influencers.

I plan to conduct 10-12 one-on-one interviews in order to obtain in-depth qualitative responses. These interviews will take place via Zoom or in-person, depending on participant availability and location.

Recruitment will be done using a combination of social media outreach, beauty forums and sampling through my own personal networks. I will screen for participants who are either familiar with Half Magic Beauty or have a general interest in vibrant, expressive makeup. Participants will be incentivized with a \$20 gift card or a free Half Magic Beauty sample product, depending on their preference and availability.

Interviewer Guide:

Introduction: Hi! Thank you so much for taking the time to participate in this interview. I'm conducting research on behalf of a beauty brand called Half Magic Beauty, and your input will help shape future marketing and product strategies. My role is to guide this conversation, and your role is simply to share your honest opinions. There are no right or wrong answers, and your responses will remain anonymous. The goal is to understand what drives your beauty product purchases, what brands resonate with you, how you would like to see our brand's products marketed and how you perceive creative and expressive makeup brands like Half Magic. You can skip any question you're not comfortable answering. This interview should take around 20-30 minutes.

Open-ended questions:

1. Can you describe your general makeup style and routine?
2. How would you describe your relationship with beauty products – functional, artistic, expressive, etc.?
3. What do you look for when choosing new beauty products?
4. Which beauty brands do you currently love, and why?
5. Have you heard of Half Magic Beauty? What do you associate with the brand?
6. What would make you more likely to try a new beauty brand?
7. Do you feel beauty marketing is inclusive? Where could brands do better?
8. How do you usually hear about/find out about a certain makeup product or brand?

Probing questions:

1. Can you tell me more about that?
2. Why do you feel that way?
3. What made that brand/product stand out to you?
4. How do you define 'authenticity' in a beauty brand?
5. Would a brand's connection to pop culture (like a show or influencer) influence your opinion?
6. Would you say you usually hear about products outside of makeup from _ source? Or do you think it is a mixture of different outlets? (_ is the participant's answer to question 8).

SURVEY REQUIREMENTS

Sampling statement:

This survey will target beauty consumers between the ages of 15–35 who regularly engage with beauty-related content online and are open to expressive or artistic makeup. Psychographics include consumers who value creative self-expression, follow influencers and are influenced by pop culture. The estimated target population size is 1,000,000 based on the active U.S. Instagram users within the age range who follow beauty brands. For this study, the target population size is estimated to be 370. The sample will be 370 respondents. At the 95% confidence level, this study will have a margin of error of $\pm 5\%$. The sampling technique will be non-probability convenience sampling, primarily using social media platforms like

Instagram, Reddit, and TikTok to target individuals who already show interest in beauty content. This approach is ideal for reaching niche beauty consumers who align with Half Magic Beauty's creative brand identity.

Survey instrument:

Introduction: Thank you for participating in this survey! We're conducting research for a beauty brand that focuses on bold, artistic self-expression. Your responses, which will be kept anonymous, will help us understand how to better market to beauty consumers like you. Your responses will remain anonymous, and the survey should take no more than 5 minutes to complete. Please complete this survey by May 1.

Screening questions:

1. Do you use makeup regularly?
 - a. Yes
 - b. Occasionally
 - c. No
2. Are you familiar with any of the following brands? (Select all that apply)
 - a. Fenty Beauty
 - b. NYX
 - c. Half Magic Beauty
 - d. Urban Decay
 - e. I've never heard of any of these

Screening criteria explanation: The screening criteria ensure that only respondents who match the target audience for Half Magic Beauty participate in the survey. This helps gather accurate and relevant insights

Survey questions:

1. How often do you purchase new makeup products?
 - a. Weekly
 - b. Monthly
 - c. Every few months
 - d. Rarely
2. What's most important to you when choosing a beauty brand? (Choose up to 2)
 - a. Price

- b. Product quality
 - c. Inclusivity/diversity
 - d. Brand aesthetic
 - e. Influencer recommendations
 - f. Skin-friendly ingredients
3. On a scale from 1–5, how much do you care about the visual creativity or packaging of a beauty product?
- a. 1 – Not at all
 - b. 2 – Slightly
 - c. 3 – Somewhat
 - d. 4 – Very much
 - e. 5 – It's one of the most important things
4. What kind of makeup styles do you usually go for? (Select all that apply)
- a. Natural/No-Makeup Look
 - b. Classic/Polished
 - c. Bold/Colorful
 - d. Experimental/Artistic
 - e. Glam/Full Coverage
5. Have you ever heard of Half Magic Beauty?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
6. [If yes] What words or feelings do you associate with the brand?
- a. Open response
7. What kind of marketing content are you most likely to engage with?
- a. Influencer reviews
 - b. Tutorial videos
 - c. Pop culture collabs
 - d. Product giveaways
 - e. Behind-the-scenes content
 - f. Other (please specify)

Demographic questions:

- 1. What is your age?
- 2. What pronouns do you use?
- 3. Where are you located? (city/state)
- 4. Do you identify as a makeup professional, hobbyist, or casual user?
