

Vogue: Diversity & Inclusion

In celebration of Vogue's 125th anniversary, the magazine published its first "diversity" issue. The cover featured seven models, all of whom had light or medium skin tones and six of whom wore sample sizes. Behind the closed doors of Vogue's offices, seven of their nine editors are women, and all nine of them are white. Since issues of diversity and inclusion have entered conversations in the fashion industry, Vogue has made a few half-hearted attempts to be involved in what they seem to consider to be a fad of diverse representation. However, a quick scan of the masthead and a look into the publication's structure reveal systemic issues that need to be addressed if Vogue wants to maintain its legacy as a premier fashion publication.

As a company, there is no evidence that Vogue has any initiatives in place devoted to encouraging practices of diversity and inclusion. If Vogue is serious about changing this, however, they should start by hiring someone whose role is to spearhead these issues of diversity within the company and the magazine. That person should themselves have a diverse perspective and hold experience in corporate diversity. A diversity editor, or the like, could do research into the areas of the business and the publication that lack diverse viewpoints, in addition to developing strategies regarding how to enact them. Vogue is currently experiencing some unexpected changes, as its fashion director and executive fashion editor have both recently stepped down, both of whom are white women. Though it was unplanned, this shift in executive power welcomes the acceptance and adoption of inclusive practices from the inside, if these positions were to be filled by people of different races, sexual orientations, or ages.

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Vogue's target audience is women who are interested in fashion and culture. The fact that the magazine boasts 23 international issues should be evidence enough of the range of people who are consumers of Vogue. Clothing plays a role in every person's life, regardless of their gender, race, age, sexual orientation, religion, or socioeconomic status. Aside from ethical implications, Vogue's lack of diversity is bound to have negative effects on the company's reach. In an era when consumers are inundated with content at all times, as well as when young generations are more engaged with issues of inclusion than ever before, people will be more inclined to interact with publications that align with their values. If Vogue's goal is to obtain as many readers as possible, it would certainly behoove them to have all kinds of women depicted and discussed throughout the issues. Their content would also be inherently multidimensional if the staff was more diverse; right now, Vogue's executive editorial team all look essentially the same, and many of them come from similar backgrounds, often not even from the country they are writing from the voice of. Social media has caused many of Vogue's loyal readers to realize that the publication has consistently lacked a sense of authenticity, as they ignore the fact that fashion and beauty do not need to be attached to a single look or definition. As publications like Nylon and Glamour incorporate inclusion into their central missions, Vogue visibly lags behind, pushing consumers away from publications that fail to align with their morals. Considering itself a "cultural barometer for a global audience," Vogue should consider the audiences they are alienating by continuously proliferating a single, narrow definition of feminine beauty.

Site: www.vogue.com

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