

FIT'S BEAUTY THINK TANK REVEALS THE DISRUPTIVE FORCES PAVING THE WAY FOR BEAUTY'S NEXT FRONTIER: THE MEDICALIZATION OF BEAUTY, AI, AND GENERATION "NEXT"

NEW YORK, NY, June 25, 2025—Today, graduate students from the Fashion Institute of Technology's (FIT) prestigious master's program in Cosmetics and Fragrance Marketing and Management (CFMM)—widely recognized as the "Beauty Industry's Think Tank"—unveiled strategic recommendations to address how brands and organizations can confidently navigate "Beauty's Next Frontier." Their findings, delivered before a live audience of 700+ industry executives from leading global beauty brands, represent the culmination of international field study—across India, Finland, and Sweden—and qualitative research, including expert interviews and focus groups conducted at The Beauty Center at FIT, a dynamic hub for research, industry events, and alumni engagement. The event was sponsored by Beauty New York, a new consumer event that will take place in New York City in October 2025.

"This year's capstone research truly pushed boundaries by offering transformational imperatives for the beauty industry," said Dr. Brooke Carlson, interim dean, School of Graduate Studies, FIT. "The students' recommendations reflect extensive research with currency and a deep understanding of how consumer trends, AI, and demographics will shape the future success of the industry."

"Part of the strength of this year's research by the class of 2025 is the original quantitative research and focus group work conducted at the new Beauty Center at FIT," said Professor Stephan Kanlian, chair, Cosmetics and Fragrance Marketing and Management MPS program, School of Graduate Studies, FIT. "In its first year, The Beauty Center has quickly become a dynamic hub for research, sharing all student research projects with industry, alumni engagement, industry events, where we have also opened residencies for entrepreneurs and research experts, and built a podcast studio for the sharing of ideas. The center has truly sparked new ideas across the beauty community based on cutting-edge research from the master's program."

The class of 2025 delved into research on three transformational themes shaping the future of the beauty industry: (1) Generation "Next," (2) Artificial Intelligence, and (3) The Medicalization of Beauty. Each presentation was grounded in six months of comprehensive global research, featuring a blend of quantitative and qualitative consumer insights, and outlines strategic pathways for brands to adapt, innovate, and lead in a rapidly evolving landscape.

Part One: Generation "Next" Beauty's Youngest Disruptors

Generation Alpha, aged 1–15 and 2.8 billion strong, is entering the beauty category as early as age 6 and wielding \$28 billion in direct spending power**. Raised on TikTok, Roblox, and kitchen-table Zoom calls,

*Rubin DC, Berntsen D. People over forty feel 20% younger than their age: Subjective age across the lifespan. *Psychonomic Bulletin & Review*. 2006;13:776–780. - [PMC - PubMed](#)

^Scott, N. (2025, April 14). DNA-coded skincare, wearable nanobots: The beauty products of tomorrow. *Vogue Business*. <https://www.voguebusiness.com/story/beauty/dna-coded-skincare-wearable-nanobots-the-beauty-products-of-tomorrow>

***Anticipating generation alpha*. Numerator. (2024). <https://www.numerator.com/blog/resources/report/generation-alpha/>

these “beauty natives” are positioning themselves as both primary household influencers and future high-value customers. While Gen Alpha’s beauty journey is just beginning, the companies that help shape it today will reap rewards for decades to come.

Opportunity: Become Gen Alpha’s lifelong beauty companion.

Get the fundamentals right and your brand graduates from trend-chasing to being Gen Alpha’s trusted companion for decades to come. Capturing this audience hinges on three imperatives: meet them in the VirtuReal space, refresh products as fast as their biology changes, and guard your narrative before algorithms rewrite it. Brands that implement this framework today will win Generation Alpha and cultivate the insights and agility that Generation Beta, born as of 2025, will treat as table stakes.

Part Two: Artificial Intelligence

Catapulting Into a New Era

Artificial intelligence (AI) is no longer on the horizon, it’s here, and it’s moving faster than most brands can comprehend. Consumers aren’t just curious, they’re demanding smarter, faster, and more personalized experiences—and they’re already using AI to get them. From predictive reorders to personalized recommendations, AI has quietly embedded itself into daily routines, shifting expectations across industries. And yet, while usage skyrockets, most brands still hesitate to leap forward and adopt AI.

AI Opportunity: Learn. Deploy. Future-Proof.

This is a wake-up call. Brands no longer have the luxury of waiting. To lead in the age of intelligence, you have to **learn** how AI works, **deploy** it across your value chain, and **future-proof** your organization for what comes next. AI is compressing development timelines, optimizing content at scale, and enabling real-time, personalized consumer experiences. But this isn’t just about automation, it’s about amplification. The brands that will win aren’t those with the best five-year roadmap. They’re the ones taking action now.

Part Three: The Medicalization of Beauty

From Clean to Clinical to Medical

Consumers aren’t just aging—they’re optimizing longevity. In fact, people today feel 20% younger than their real age*. Beauty is increasingly intersecting with medicine, where the demand for science-backed, preventative solutions is on the rise, and expectations extend beyond aesthetics with focus on performance data, hyper-personalization, and holistic health. *Vogue Business* recently released an article stating that 68% of consumers would consider using a product that works at the genetic level for long-lasting beauty effects^. The medicalization of beauty reframes beauty and wellness as a long-term strategy for feeling good and looking better, longer.

Opportunity: A Medicalized Beauty Ecosystem

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To lead in this new era, brands must intentionally choose which path they'll take to engage in the more medicalized beauty space. The entry points to each path start with strategic portfolio management, a new approach to innovation, and a reimagination of retail—all grounded in medical credibility. Success will favor brands that no longer just keep up with the trends, but also integrate beauty as a biological expression, playing a vital role in the consumers' lifelong wellness journeys to look and feel younger.

[Medicalization of Beauty Infographic](#)
[Gen Beauty Infographic](#)
[Artificial Intelligence Infographic](#)

Research white papers are available upon request.

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About FIT and the Cosmetics and Fragrance Marketing and Management MPS

The Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT), a part of the State University of New York, has been an internationally recognized leader in career education in design, fashion, business, and technology for more than 75 years. The college offers nearly 50 majors and grants AAS, BFA, BS, MA, MFA, and MPS degrees, preparing students for professional success and leadership in the creative economy. The FIT Master of Professional Studies (MPS) in Cosmetics and Fragrance Marketing and Management (CFMM) program, one of seven advanced degree programs in FIT's School of Graduate Studies, was developed in collaboration with industry as a leadership development program for outstanding mid-career executives. Global luxury firms, including Chanel, Estée Lauder, LVMH, and Shiseido, and global consumer packaged goods companies, including Coty, L'Oréal, and Unilever, nominate talented emerging executives to participate in the two-year program. The CFMM program has become the beauty industry's recognized think tank, producing high-level research presented to industry executives and organizations, and during specialized panels, symposia, and forums in both academia and industry. Visit fitnyc.edu/cfmm. For more information on FIT, visit fitnyc.edu.

Beauty New York is a groundbreaking, multiday event coming to the heart of the beauty world—New York City. From **October 16–18, 2025**, this transformative experience will unite beauty consumers, industry leaders, influencers, and beauty brands for the biggest week in beauty. With an exciting mix of **brand activations, cutting-edge product showcases, hands-on masterclasses, and a launch party for industry leaders**, **Beauty New York** is designed to drive growth, elevate the beauty industry, and shape its future. Beauty New York is a Cosmoprof North America event, organized by USA Beauty LLC, a joint venture between Informa Markets, BolognaFiere, and the Professional Beauty Association. For more information visit beautynewyork.com.

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