

Social media killed the runway star

 By [Maroefah Smith](#)

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Social media has completely changed the modelling industry. A model's origin story is now based on Instagram, where a scout found them in their glorious selfie-dom.

Large brands and fashion houses now take a model's following on social media into account when booking them for a show or campaign. Marissa G. Muller dubbed it the [Kendall Jenner effect](#) and noted how this way of casting relies on an already established following and fame.

The influencer wave

Dolce & Gabbana mostly cast digital influencers for its [2017 fall men's show](#) and even [included the influencers' Instagram handles](#) in its spring/summer 2018 ad campaign; Dior named Bella Hadid as the [face and ambassador of its beauty range](#) and makes use of Hadid in images and video clips showing off the newest products across its social media channels; and the entire [Kardashian-Jenner clan was named the face of Calvin Klein's new Jeans and Underwear](#) advertising campaign.



[Dolce & Gabbana included influencers' Instagram handles in its spring/summer 2018 ad campaign](#)

While Jenner may have flourished in the modelling industry as a result of her social media presence, it's also where it may have faltered. After Jenner was named the face of Pepsi's ad campaign, it seemed that she had added another accomplishment to her list as the digital age's supermodel.



Pepsi drops ad accused of mocking 'Black Lives' protests

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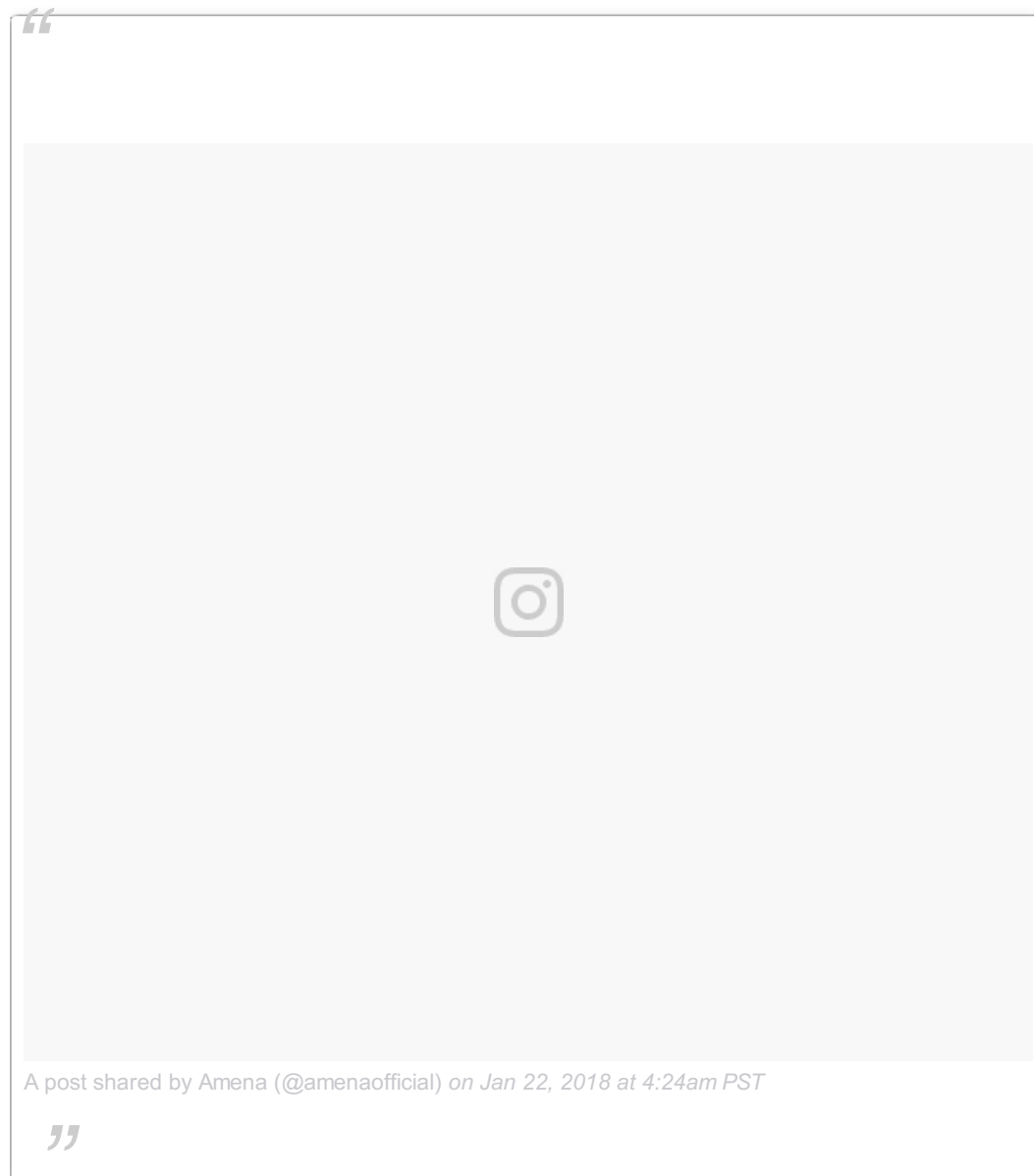


But, following major backlash on social media, [Pepsi pulled the ad](#) and Jenner was made to bear the brunt of the entire commotion. The ad was seen in poor taste as it seems to trivialise police brutality during protests; in the ad, Jenner offers a police officer a can of Pepsi at a rally and it seems to lighten him up.

Inclusively exclusive

Scouting models on social media may also allow for more diversity with brands being more inclusive with their choice of model, albeit iffy. L'Oréal had made a groundbreaking move by appointing Munroe Bergdorf as the brand's first transgender representative for its True Match foundation. However, after Bergdorf commented on race relations in the United States on Facebook, [L'Oréal ended the partnership](#) by saying that it supports diversity and tolerance of all people regardless of their race, background, gender or religion.

In a similar fashion, Amena Khan was set to be the beauty brand's first hijabi model for a haircare campaign, but she soon apologised and [stepped down from the campaign](#) after a website in the US unearthed old tweets in which she criticised former British prime minister David Cameron regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. L'Oréal welcomed Khan's decision by rehashing its values as a supporter of diversity and tolerance.



Social media also has an impact on the ways in which a regular, non-aspiring model may book a job. According to *Bustle*'s Rachel Krantz, personal branding is an important factor in building a career in the digital age. Krantz lists [21 ways in which you can improve your personal brand on Twitter and Instagram](#) to ensure that you're on the right track; from being authentic and taking good pictures to replying to every single comment and using a number of hashtags on Instagram posts. Give it a whirl and perhaps you may book the next major gig.

ABOUT MAROEFAH SMITH

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