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09 Aug 2022

OGBFF Profile - Fashion Journalism

Professor Minkoff

OGBFF On the Internet, Success, & Learning to Communicate on Social Media

Since 2021, BFFs Angela Ruis and Lauren Schiller have been making their internet presence known, with their viral clothing brand OGBFF. The pair met on the set of a music video and became fast friends. Anyone with an Instagram account knows these two or at least knows them as the Original Best Friends. Starting as a joke, Angela and Lauren made shirts to tell the world about their friendship and unexpectedly received high demand for the shirts they created. The LA-based brand hasn't been in business for long but skyrocketed into success. Celebrities and influencers cannot stop raving about the pair's designs. Angela and Lauren primarily promote their brand on social media and just recently started doing collaborations with brands. The pair have always been open about their brand and how it started. They never anticipated the success and viral popularity they've gained. Angela and Lauren are changing what it means to be a business through the internet. They are one of many few brands that solely exists through the internet and social media and in an era where every industry is moving towards bigger online platforms, brands like OGBFF already have a head start.



OGBFF started on accident. Meeting by chance, Angela and Lauren's friendship shirt, originally posted on Instagram, sparked demand online. "We were making shirts casually, we made that first friendship commemoration shirt, and then we made another one, and then we made one more and we would always post them on Instagram. And our friends and friends and friends would buy them just through DMing us. And the demand just grew so quickly that we were like 'Okay let's just like make this official, start a brand and see what happens,'" Lauren says when recalling how the brand came to be.

Lauren and Angela soon realized they couldn't meet the demand at which they were receiving orders. "We were thrifting every blank at one point. We would get an order, we'd go to the thrift store, look for white baby tees, get home and print it and send it out. That's how we started. And then the demand just grew so much that we were like man, we're gonna have to like figure out a way to, you know not have to go to the thrift store every time we need to fulfill an order. That's how we grew. Like 'Oh this is happening now and how do we meet this?' It was just like us figuring it out," Lauren recalls the early days of OGBFF.

Even though OGBFF started in 2021, while the pandemic was still in full swing with outbreaks everywhere (especially in LA), the girls said that a post-lockdown industry never affected them as a start-up. The pandemic never got in the way of their creativity and success. They described minor setbacks, such as when both Angela and Lauren got covid and couldn't do certain things with the brand when they were sick.



Lauren attributes the internet as their best tool when branding a small business. “We were posting fake billboards on Instagram and like everyone thought they were real. It's just easy to like play the game, you know.”

Lauren mentioned she was working at a record label before OGBFF. Angela was already making clothes and using the internet to interact with people. “I was just learning how to do a bunch of different things, which definitely served me, you know after I left, for OGBFF because I had all these random skills and then like Angela has all the ones I didn't,” says Lauren about their prior skills.

Angela and Lauren have used the internet to their advantage. “I feel like over time, you learn how to naturally communicate with people. It's not like, you know. When we made the shirts, it was literally just meant for us, and we just posted a picture in it and people were like “we want that.” It wasn't like an ad for like “Do you guys want this?” It was us just posting an Instagram photo. I had learned how to communicate with people” Angela notes.

Lauren and Angela are just normal girls who grew up in the early age of social media. They learned how to communicate through the internet. “It [communication over social media] was so natural and I saw so many other people doing it.”

As far as the influence and inspiration that makes OGBFF...OGBFF, the girls profusely reject the “Y2K” label they’ve been given. “We totally don't accept the Y2K assignment a lot of people do try to give us. We both grew up in the early 2000s so it is totally something that subconsciously influences us. We make sure that our graphics and the message that is in our graphics, is not specific to any trend or to any—if anything they are extremely current. It is easy for people to understand us as a Y2K brand because of the style of text printed on our baby tees.

The internet is way more influential to our like style than shirts from the early 2000s are” says Lauren.

Even though baby tees, hot pink, low-rise, and mini skirts are trending now, OGBFF has been selling the trends before they could even be called that. No one was selling baby tees or mini skirts at the time. “It’s just what felt good at the time too. I was thrifting a lot. You like the tighter fit” says Angela.



The thing about OGBFF, is they're not like other brands. Their whole business is built off cheeky graphics that catch people's eye. A recent drop reads “Tits for brains.” Influencers like Charli Damelio have been seen wearing their “Unironically Hot” tank, while Julia Fox has worn their discontinued design “Cancelled Adjacent.” Fashion influencer/TikToker Clara Perlmutter, better known as @TinyJewishGirl, wore their first low-rise mini skirt with “Mini Skirt” printed on the front and back

of the piece.

When asked about where these ideas, logos, and sayings come from Angela answered “They all come in different ways.” One of their best sellers is a simple white shirt, available in a baby tee or a t-shirt fit, reading “Hot Person At Work.” “We had a flea market sale, and the day before we were like, “we need shirts” and Lauren was like “Hot Person At Work.” It was literally intended to just like genuinely wear. And everyone there was like “Dang! Those are cool we want them.”

Starting a business that has a platform online isn't exactly easy. OGBFF has many avenues of sale: Instagram, their website, and Depop. Their website is where they receive most orders. Lauren says without her friends and people believing in OGBFF, they would've experienced more hardships. Thanks to their advice Lauren and Angela were able to avoid many missteps along the way in the early days of OGBFF. "People like that [friends who lent advice] have been so essential to the success of our brand. And even to speak to like micro-influencers and larger celebrities, people for some reason, really believed in us and had respect for the brand. We had Emma Chamberlian, DMing us first, then posting and tagging, for free without us asking. That was very typical of famous celebrities to do that for us. That's because they had believed in us and our vision and had a level of respect for us."

The way Angela and Lauren think of designs is so relevant because their humor and the way they go about business is relevant. Lauren mentioned how most ideas come from a simple conversation the two have either with each other or in general. "There's defiantly a collective sense of humor that our catchphrases speak to. Like, it's funny to us, and it feels like it's just funny to us but our sense of humor was developed through— online. That's the feeling our shirts carry."



Angela and Lauren never expected their current rate of success. They never expected to go viral or have celebrities and influencers wear their designs. “I think we were definitely shocked at the rate at which things took off. We absolutely did not anticipate success at this level or this quickly. Our goal was never to be like as popular as possible, but it happened so we were like, how can we use this attention and make sure we’re still having a laugh? We just have a larger audience to speak to” Lauren attests.

Pertaining to the fashion industry, and the atmosphere of LA, Lauren says there is nowhere else to be except Los Angeles. She says it's easy to exist as a solely online brand because she, herself, lives online. “It’s easy to extend further than just the LA fashion scene because of existing online. And everyone just feels like a message away, honestly.”

Lauren says the fashion industry's push to be geared toward social media is beneficial to their brand. Angela and Lauren do everything over the internet, over email, and zoom. “Everything is just done digitally. Communicating through social media and images on the internet is our whole thing. It’s making things easier for us for our brand specifically because that's what we’re good at. Communicating online, on the internet” says Lauren.

Existing as a brand online is never easy. While OGBFF is taken seriously in the industry, some current community guidelines on apps such as Depop and Instagram won't allow them to promote certain products with certain language on them. Depop even reaches out to OGBFF for ads or different promotional opportunities, but they say sometimes their products don't fit with Depop rules. “We are blocked from running ads on Instagram, which we are trying so hard to repeal because apparently, we aren't abiding by their community standards” Lauren expresses. Even though Angela and Lauren are their own bosses and have to go through no one to get approval, they say Instagram's block may be their way of trying to censor the brand.

Fashion and small businesses are online now more than ever. Social media gets bigger every day. Angela and Lauren are two young women paving the way for a true internet business. Though they never planned for OGBFF, with their joint skills in business branding, communication, and design, they quickly became a viral internet sensation.

All Photos are taken from @ogbff_ on Instagram.