



Sephora

We Belong to Something Beautiful.

Group 1

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Background

What's happening:

New criticism has emerged from indie founders and creators in the beauty media that is questioning our commitment to supporting new and upcoming brands.

Why it's happening now:

This perception is being driven by social media where creator narratives and viral moments that can increase certain brands visibility faster than ever.

Why it matters to Sephora:

This creates a credibility gap between what Sephora is actually doing and how the public is perceiving the brand. If not addressed appropriately, it could weaken our reputation as a place for inclusivity and discovery and impact the trust we've built with our indie partners.



Situational Analysis

Current Situation

- Indie founders and beauty communities claim Sephora favors large, corporate-backed brands
- Brand is being framed as “talks indie but favors scale”
- Narrative is driven by creators, spreading quickly and shaping perception in real time

Challenges

- **Limited ability to respond due to:**
 - Confidential brand agreements
 - Proprietary merchandising decisions
- **Must balance expectations across:**
 - Indie brands (fairness & support)
 - Large brands (stability)
 - Consumers (authenticity)

Key Insight

- Sephora invests in indie brands (e.g., Accelerate program), but
- → these efforts are not translating into trust at scale

Strategic Priority

- Reinforce credibility
- without damaging partnerships or escalating the conversation

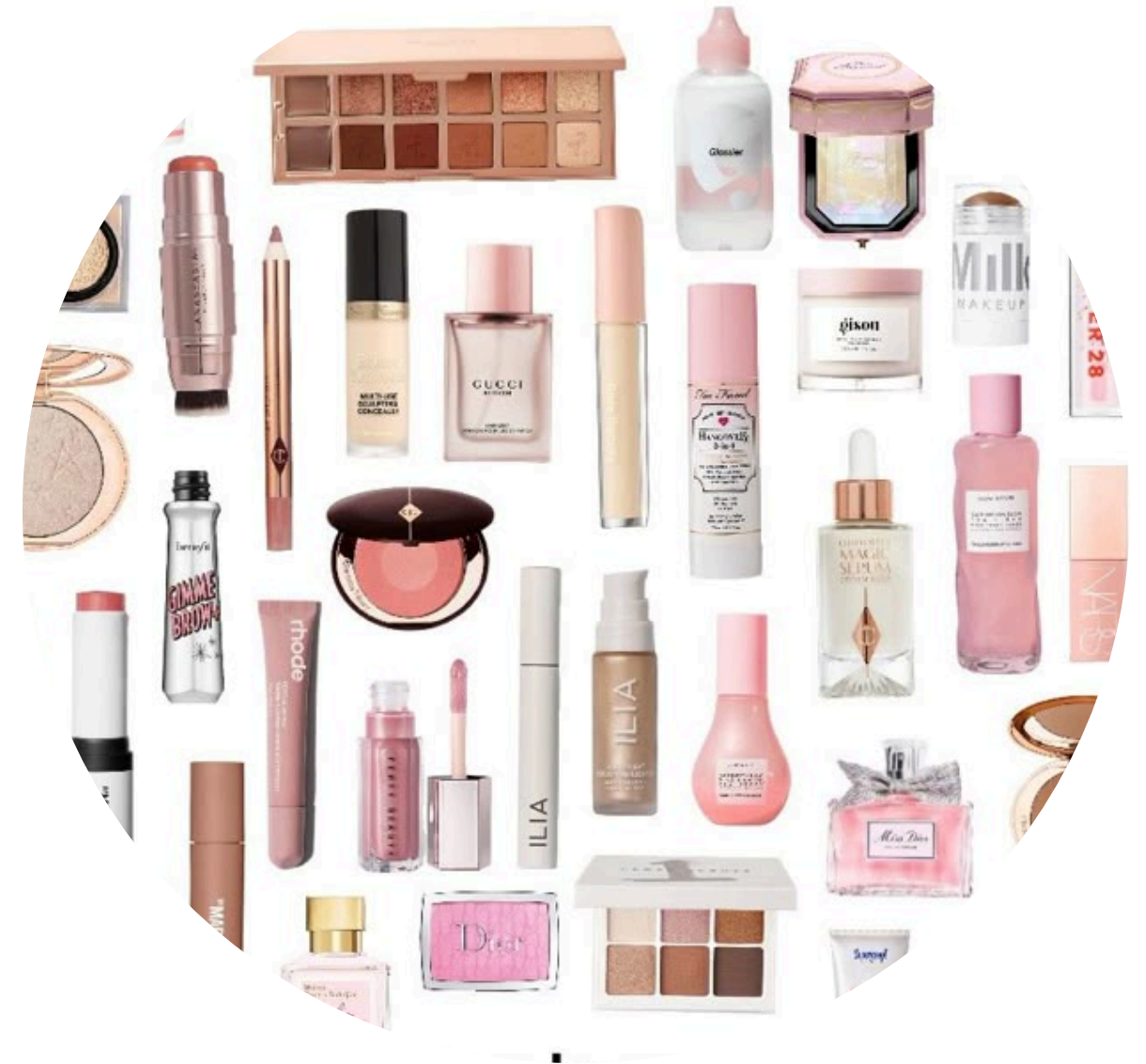


Core Problem

Sephora is **experiencing a credibility gap**, it is **expected to be an indie ally** while **functioning like a scale-driven retail platform**.

Opportunity

If Sephora handles this with discipline, it can **reinforce its leadership in indie beauty** by **increasing trust without undermining its business model**. In this case Sephora has the opportunity to really define what “indie ally” means at scale.





Goal

Ensure that Sephora is seen as a platform for **discovery and acceptance**, not solely a corporate retailer.



Objectives

- Within the next year improve Sephoras earned media coverage, creator commentary, and consumer feedback referencing Sephora and their Indie Partnerships by 20%
- Within the next 12 months increase indie brand renewal rate by 15% year over year, measured through partnership and contract date.



Key Publics



Public 01

Indie Founders



Public 02

Creators / Beauty Media



Public 03

Consumers





Big Idea

“Aiding your discovery, driven by our variety”



Primary Message

→ To indie founders:

Sephora is committed to helping emerging brands grow by providing resources, visibility, and long-term partnership opportunities



→ To creators & beauty media:

Sephora remains a platform where innovation and new brands are discovered, supported, and scaled.

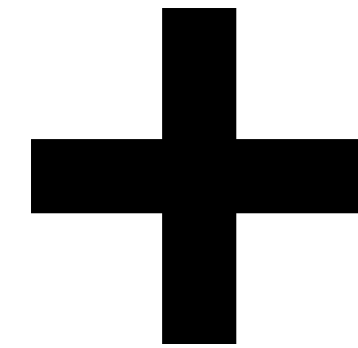


→ To consumers:

Sephora continues to bring customers exciting new beauty brands alongside the brands they already love.



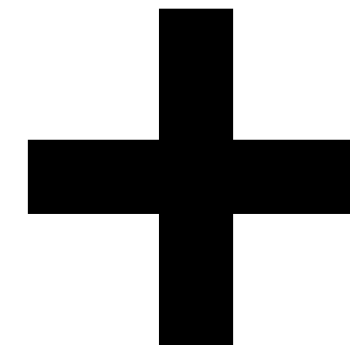
Strategy



Shift perception among indie founders and beauty communities by **reinforcing Sephora's role** as the platform where **emerging brands scale**.



Tactics



- Launch new programs and campaigns.
- Showcase founders journeys on Sephora's website.
- Reinforce Sephora as a fair and supportive partner.



Calendar

Phase 1:

Internal Alignment (Weeks 1–2)

- Define “indie growth platform” positioning
- Align leadership + comms messaging
- Complete legal/internal review
- → Prevents mixed messaging early on

Phase 3:

Stakeholder Engagement (Weeks 6–10)

- Open dialogue with indie founders
- Engage creators + media
- → Build trust through conversation and feedback

Phase 2:

Visibility (Weeks 3–6)

- Highlight existing indie support (programs, success stories)
- Make efforts clear and easy to understand
- → Focus on proof, not reacting to criticism

Phase 4:

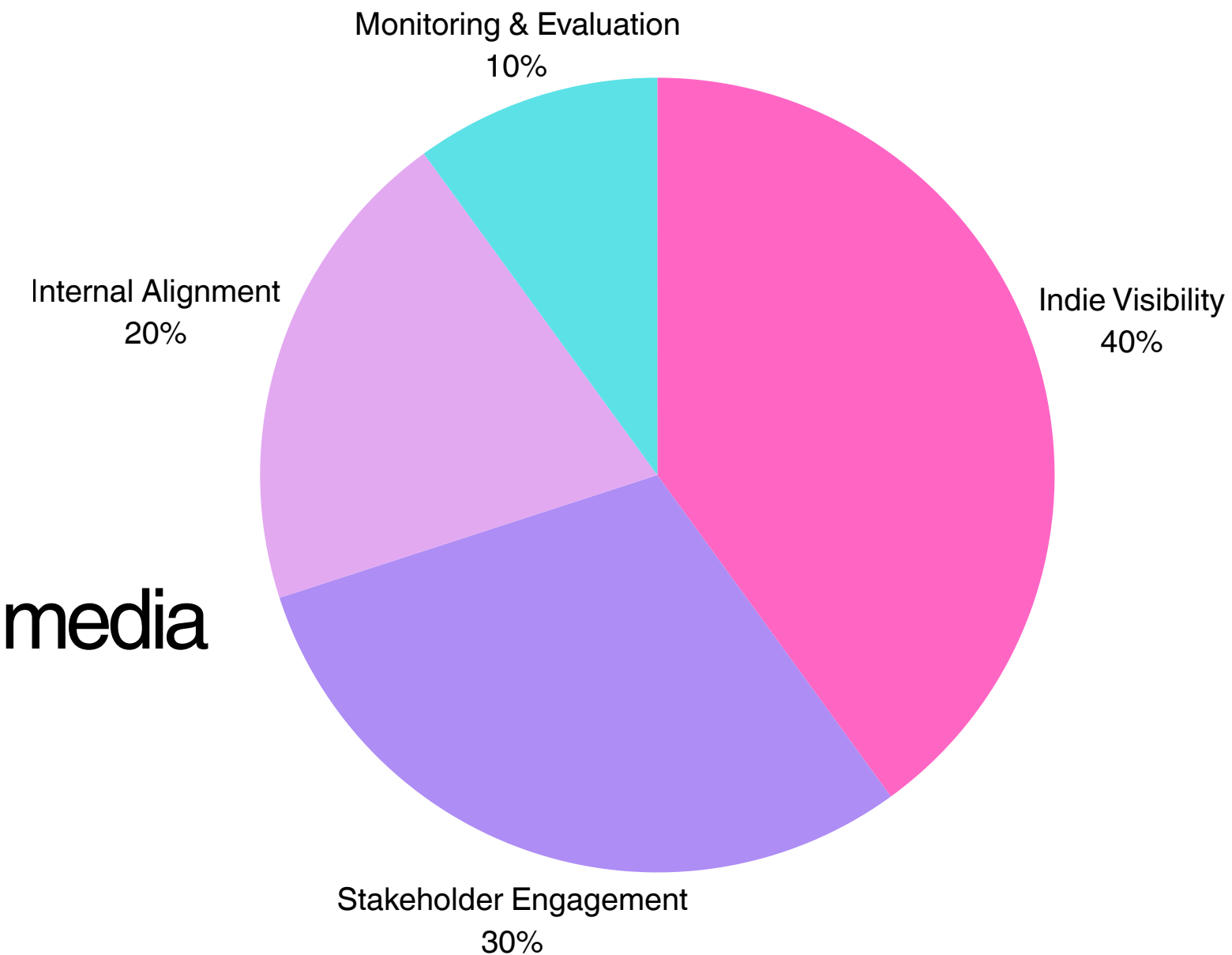
Reinforcement (Ongoing)

- Maintain consistent messaging across channels
- Continue showcasing indie growth
- → Supports long-term credibility



Budget Priorities (Total: \$500,000)

- **40% (\$200K)** – Indie Support Visibility
 - → Highlight proof of indie brand growth
- **30% (\$150K)** – Stakeholder Engagement
 - → Build relationships with founders, creators, media
- **20% (\$100K)** – Internal Alignment
 - → Ensure consistent, approved messaging
- **10% (\$50K)** – Monitoring & Evaluation
 - → Track sentiment and adjust strategy



Budget

Implementation

Third-Party Validation

- Partnering with independent beauty experts & micro influencers.

Consistency across all channels

- Maintain consistent messaging on all social platforms.

Transparency +Story-telling

- Increased transparency in how Sephora selects indie brands.

↑ Indie brand partnerships ↑ Founder Trust ↑ Positive Perception



Founder trust & Perception

- Surveys and in-depth interviews.

Brand Adoption & Retention

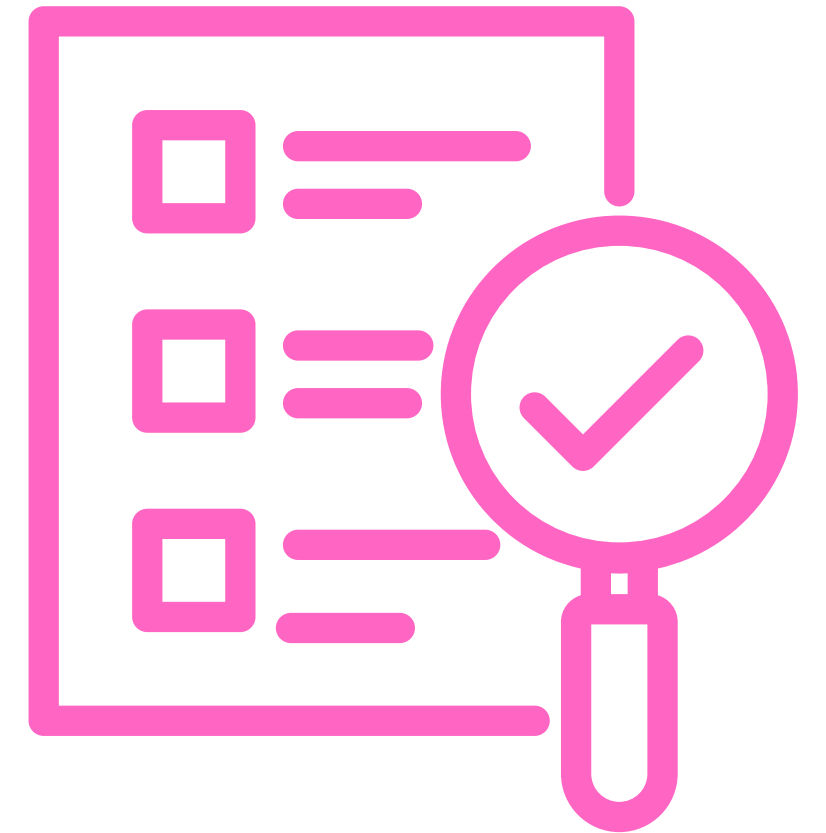
- Monitor increases in partnership interests.

Third-Party Partnerships

- Collect founder-specific feedback on collaborations.

Renewal rate measures real behavior.

Stakeholder trust measures founders ability to enter, stay, and grow in Sephora's ecosystem.



Evaluation



Thank you.

Resources

<https://adage.com/article/digital-marketing-ad-tech-news/sephora-debuts-tiktok-training-program-emerging-beauty-brands/2479321/>

<https://www.themarketingish.com/disruption/sephora-tiktok>

<https://www.beautypackaging.com/breaking-news/apply-to-sephora-accelerate-2025-brand-incubator-program/>

<https://wwd.com/beauty-industry-news/beauty-features/indie-beauty-tariffs-economy-investment-small-brands-1238274603/>

<https://www.beautyindependent.com/niq-projects-indie-beauty-continue-eat-conglomerate-market-share/>