

G L O S S Y



Hair-care brand **Briogeo** launched this week its first influencer product collaboration with Kathleen Fuentes (@KathleenLights) to spotlight its B.Well wellness-focused products.

B.Well launched in January 2019 with two products and has since expanded to five products including a natural deodorant and biotin supplement. Fuentes' contribution includes a set of three aromatherapy roller balls that will sell through Sephora and Briogeo.com for \$38. It is an experimental move for both parties since this is Fuentes' first hair-care collaboration. She has previously worked with cosmetics brands like Colourpop and Morphe.

“This collaboration will bring more awareness to B. Well,” said Nancy Twine, Briogeo founder and CEO. “[Customers] are excited by launches that are less predictable, but still important for their beauty routine. Hair, to me, is just like skin care, in that it is also a wellness category.” Essentially, self-care is now comprised of these categories and a premise of modern wellness is that if you look good, you’ll feel good.

Twine declined to break out sales of B.Well. The Briogeo brand earned roughly \$40 million in 2018 retail sales and received in July a minority investment from private equity firm VMG.

Collaborations have taken on an increasingly important role in generating sales in beauty, but they have largely been restricted to the realm of makeup. According to Glossy research, 38% of executives at fashion and beauty brands said they saw collaborations as their greatest marketing opportunity last year. Consumers have come to rely on influencers for beauty recommendations, and subsequently, influencers have used collaborations to reinforce their own personal brand, said Holly Jackson, Traackr lead strategy consultant.

“Collaborations are an interesting way to leverage an influential voice beyond endorsement and a way for influencers to move more into being experts,” she said.

Since Fuentes is not a hair-care or wellness influencer, it is unclear what kind of reception this collaboration will receive. The social media machine can be quick to call out brands or influencers for inauthentic partnerships, as was the case when Kendall Jenner began endorsing Proactiv. But Fuentes has already included Briogeo in several YouTube videos, collectively earning 3 million views for posts that included the brand, according to Traackr. Briogeo expects to find out if its customers trust and are loyal to Briogeo when a launch involves products they are less familiar with, while Fuentes will understand if her audience will buy non-cosmetics products, said Twine.

To support the collaboration, the beauty brand created one master video with Fuentes that it will break up into 15 short-form videos for social media platforms. Outside of that, approximately 100 gifted sets of product will be sent to other brand collaborators and influencers for marketing awareness purposes. Fuentes will promote the collaboration with an in-person Sephora appearance at the Aventura Mall in Aventura, Florida, on Saturday, Jan. 11.

Jackson said that because influencers are trying to establish themselves as authorities and create longer-term relationships with brands, there could be room for this trajectory outside of color cosmetics. Briogeo is open to future collaborations but does not have any planned, Twine said.

“Often, makeup tends to lead the way in trying new things with influencers, and other categories might pick up on that,” said Jackson. “I’m curious to see if that will be a trend, but each of those categories is more niche, and brands want to make sure that an influencer has authority in the space.”