

Reflection

My name is Vanessa Renslow and I decided to choose a beauty and lifestyle magazine as my media project. Starting this project, I immediately knew that I wanted to do a beauty magazine to express my love for all things beauty and fashion and share my opinions and thoughts about topics related to women. I am currently a working freelance makeup artist and I have always wanted to be able to express my thoughts about beauty through some sort of platform, whether through a video or written platform, and this project gave me the opportunity to express myself through creating and writing a magazine.

Everything featured in this magazine was curated by me and I fully stand behind my work. I fully believe in everything I've written and published and I hope this magazine makes you as happy as it makes me. I want every woman who reads my magazine to feel empowered and confident to achieve anything she wants. Thank you for following me on my journey of creating this wonderful project!

Starting out my project, I wanted to challenge the conventions of a fashion magazine by having it focus mostly on beauty. Currently, there are not any full-blown makeup/beauty magazines, so by creating this magazine focusing specifically on beauty, I was already challenging the conventions. Not only will my magazine be focusing on fashion, but makeup, beauty, and lifestyle as well. Besides challenging the content conventions of fashion magazines, I also challenged magazine mastheads. Mastheads are large, and usually cover the whole upper area of the cover, however, I chose to do something a bit different. I chose to have the masthead be medium sized and located at the upper left-hand corner. However, the actual name of my magazine "REN" follows the genre conventions of fashion magazines. When first starting to name my magazine I was bouncing back and forth between different feminine adjectives because many fashion magazines use this as their name, like 'Cosmopolitan' and 'Allure'. However, that just seemed very basic so I wanted to possibly use a person's name as the title of the magazine, like 'Marie Claire' or 'Elle', and that's when it hit me! I wanted to use my last name 'Renslow', but instead of using my whole name I would only use "Ren". I wanted my magazine to be sophisticated and I thought this name was succinct, easy to say, it sounded classy and it fell under the genre characteristics of names for female magazines. And an additional side note you probably didn't know: ren actually doesn't mean anything in the English language but in China, it means love or goodness, while in Japan, ren is the name of the lotus or lily flower. After I found this out, I thought about how beautiful that sounded and I knew that that was exactly what I wanted my magazine to be named after. While looking through my magazine, there is usage of the colors white, light pink and hot pink. The colors I used on the cover were representative of the Pantone Color Institute colors of the year 2019. I was in love with all the colors of 2019 and I, of course, love pink so I was glad to see that Dusty Rose and Peacock Pink were chosen as this year's colors. I wanted to incorporate these colors throughout my entire Spring issue of REN.

Continuing on, the front cover of my magazine features a close up of a model looking directly at the camera and well, the audience and basically inviting them to open the magazine and find out more information. Additionally, when it comes to makeup magazines I think it's extremely important that the subject looks directly at the audience because it draws the viewer's attention to the eyes and therefore the makeup, which is obviously significant in a beauty magazine. This feature is very present in most fashion magazines. Furthermore, most of my cover lines follow the characteristics that draw in the interests of the readers by having succinct phrases about topics that could interest our target audience: females ages 16 to 35 in the middle

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class. After doing research I found that Vogue's target audience was similar to what I wanted but they target women with higher incomes. However, I wanted to avoid doing this because I wanted my beauty magazine to be accessible to more than just the higher upper class, but to all women. Not to mention, most younger women ages 16 to 25 are those who mostly use makeup and follow current trends and products.

Moreover, on to the table of contents, I wanted to do something really different and I wanted to make sure it stood out from the traditional contents. I knew I didn't want to make a basic table of contents that was boring and full of small letters, I wanted to do something fun, colorful and girly. I decided to go with the hot pink from the Spring 2019 colors to use throughout my magazine. I thought this pink was a great pop of color and I just love pink! I wanted to include many colorful pictures and have very few words or paragraphs. As a beauty lover myself, I like to see more visuals, bright colors and pictures that almost look 3D, which to me are all just really visually appealing.

Lastly, we have my actual double page spread which is very near and dear to my heart. If you know me, you know that I am very girly and I love beauty and fashion, but that's not all. I love to vouch for women's rights and I think women empowerment is an essential topic to cover this year and all the many ahead of us. As it is known, women were treated as less and unequal to men in the past, but that ends now, at least for me. I want to make sure that women stand up for themselves and be the most powerful and confident females they can be, which is why I chose to write this article. Although this topic may not be too traditional for an all makeup and beauty magazine, this topic is very common in women's magazines. Everything written in this article was curated by me and these are all tips I have learned along the way of growing up into a woman in the 21st century and I would love to share with my female peers and even those who may be older and not raised in this generation. So, this article includes 5 tips on how to be the perfect girl boss: confident, beautiful and powerful.

While actually creating my magazine I used a website called Joomag, which I think was the perfect website to create this magazine. The website software had so many different fonts, you could use any colors you wanted, manipulate texts and photos, and I thought it was very user-friendly once I got the hang of it. The website itself already has templates based on the genre of your magazine, but I chose to start from scratch. In Joomag, I was easily able to manipulate photos and place them wherever I wanted, and not to mention, when actually creating my project it had a real magazine format and there were even sounds of pages flipping as you went through the magazine. It actually felt like a real print magazine, so I was really happy using this software. By using Joomag it really expanded my creative abilities and made me think outside the box. I had to create the whole layout and pick fonts and colors all on my own. The next set of software and websites I used were LunaPic, SnapSeed, and Facetune. I, unfortunately, don't own the Photoshop or Lightroom and I don't own a fancy camera or lighting equipment, so I had to improvise. I took the photos on my iPhone 7 plus and used natural lighting for all my photos because I find that works best when photographing makeup. I stood in front of my window for hours taking pictures of myself for the cover. I take makeup photos for the blog I already have, therefore, I already had a set of backgrounds to use for the cover. Instead of spending hundreds of dollars on paper backgrounds with a stand, I did a little DIY project last year and created something amazing. I bought a \$10 clothing rack from Ikea, some colorful fabric, and some heavy duty clips from Home Depot. The whole background probably cost me

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\$25 as compared to other backgrounds that could run for hundreds. I took my cover photos with this background, but for my other photos, I just used a white poster board as the background. The photography process was more difficult than I anticipated. I had a hard time with lighting and shadows and I was very concerned about how I was going to edit my photos without Photoshop or Lightroom. However, I did a little digging and found this free app called SnapSeed, that has very similar features to Lightroom but for free on an app. I used SnapSeed to edit the lighting of my photos, and I used Facetune to edit more in-depth by manipulating colors, shapes, and sizes. However, I was still concerned about how to remove the background of my images to make them transparent and basically convert the photo into a png.

However, I did get lucky because I found a free website called Lunapic that lets you edit backgrounds, but this website was horrible and really difficult to use. It took me about 1 hour to edit the background on a photo when I know that on photoshop it could take me about 5 minutes. However, I did what I had to do to complete my magazine. But when looking back at all my work, I've come really far and have definitely learned a lot in the field of editing and photography, but I have also learned about all the hard work that comes into play when publishing a magazine, whether in print or electronically. It took me weeks to develop and create a 5-page magazine, I have no idea how difficult it could be to produce a magazine with over 50 pages! I came into this project with basic knowledge and skills in editing, designing, and photography, but after finally completing my project, I can say that my technological and creative skills have developed tremendously. I have been able to grasp the importance of lighting and shadows in photography and the extreme importance of editing. I always knew that editing was important in a magazine, but I never realized what a big part it plays. Not to mention I have discovered a new app, SnapSeed, that has shown me all the different ways to manipulate lighting, shadows, saturation, sharpness and much more. I can definitely see myself using this app in the future.

Additionally, something important to mention, is how I would be distributing my magazine if it were real and actually being published. I would want to distribute my magazine online and in-store. I would want my magazine to be featured at book stores and popular beauty stores like Sephora and Ulta where most makeup lovers go. Besides actual print, it's essential to also have an online presence where our younger audience can access the magazine through an app or website. I want to make sure that REN has its own social media accounts with direct access to REN's new magazine issues. I want to have a website for REN where they can fully access the magazine online through a computer, tablet, and smartphone. And lastly, I would like to have an app where our customers could view our magazine where ever they are, as long as they have a smartphone. The app will not only include the magazine, but other small articles, interviews, and quizzes.

I am so happy and proud of my magazine! Thank you for giving me the opportunity to express my opinions and creativity with this project.