

Hipster Barbie shows us that 'plastic is not fantastic' on social media

 By Adam Hunter, issued by Hook, Line & Sinker

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I had a laugh at Gareth Cliff's Facebook post this week about Instagram's #socialitybarbie. This clever, brunette doll takes the mickey out of our social media community about living authentically and how narcissism can be tough to distinguish among today's clutter of hashtags.

Cliff's post was an article which appeared on the popular website, called BuzzFeed. The story illustrates some of the hipster's best Instagram selfie shots, along with her quirky humour, and how she displays the change and evolution of social media culture, leading one to question - *to what extent are we actually portraying ourselves (authentically) online?*



With her messy hair and beanie hat, she is the cool girl who describes herself on Instagram as an adventurer and coffee-drinker, dedicated to "Authentic Living."

According to *Vogue*, the alter ego of Malibu's most famous blonde, has left Southern California for the picturesque wildlife of the Pacific Northwest, traded in her stilettos for a beanie hat and wide-frame glasses, and has even said goodbye to her pink convertible - because she prefers to head out into the unknown on foot.

Now taking social media by storm, thanks to her super #deep travel shots, her flawless styles in fashion, and her #inspiring messages; "Be Real. Be Unique. Be Authentic. Be Humble", the *real* and #blessed character was created by a mastermind US wedding photographer - who wishes to remain anonymous.

Included in BuzzFeed's article was a quote from the mastermind herself, saying "I decided to start the account to show how ridiculous social media has become. I was getting tired of people taking the same pictures, in the same places, and using the same captions while hashtagging 'Live Authentic'".



The anonymous creator also told Wire.com in a recent interview about picture authenticity in social media, "I get it, it's pretty to look at", but it's so dishonest. Nobody actually lives like this. And it's so overdone that it's becoming boring."

The message is loud and clear. Some of #socialitybarbie's top Instagram posts include a picture of her brewing coffee at the top of a mountain after a hike, as one does, with the caption: *'I just "happened" to bring all my coffee gear on this hike. Might as well make a cup on this mountain top like any normal person would do'*, to an all-natural shot of her standing on the beach in the morning with tousled hair and "minimal" makeup, titled: *'Waking up at 10am was so worth it to get that perfect light & fog.'*

Jokes and laughs aside though, perhaps the creator of Instagram's latest phenomenon actually has a point and the message should be taken seriously? Bearing in mind that the millennial generation is even bigger than the baby boomers and quickly becoming the most important market segment for advertisers.

This generation craves authenticity and is one of the most difficult groups for us PR and marketing professionals to target. It's easy to see since they have been inundated with ads their whole lives. They've watched and seen television sitcoms and blockbuster movies jam-packed with product placement, and they know they're being manipulated with every piece of marketing material they see, so they tend to build a wall and tune out of anything promotional.



Yes, heightened perfectionism due to all the visibility and exposure we have on social media is understandable, and, naturally we all want to put our best foot forward and present ourselves in the best light. However, by only showing or commenting on our glowing moments - we play into what can unfold as the higher digital ego.

From millennials, to Generation Z, or Baby Boomers - as human feelings, and not just 'beings', we all crave and seek some

sort of authenticity. We understand that social media can be artificial by nature to some extent, but we still want our brands, friends and acquaintances, and society at large to be authentic within context.

To me, there's something about seeing a plastic doll in a scenic photo that seems so familiar, it makes one question just how #authentic we really are.

What do you think? Follow this new-age hipster's adventures on Instagram and see for yourself [@SocalityBarbie](#).

ABOUT ADAM HUNTER

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