

TECHNOLOGY

CVS goes high-tech with BeautyIRL campaign

WOONSOCKET, R.I. — CVS Pharmacy has gone high tech to market its new BeautyIRL (in Real Life) concept. The retailer launched an interactive 360-degree ad campaign to promote the new in-store experience in partnership with virtual reality platform OmniVirt.

BeautyIRL is a “shop in shop” experience, where customers can try on makeup and hair products and receive walk-in and on-demand salon services through a partnership with Glamsquad. It is being piloted in stores in New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Florida.

To promote the concept, CVS is using interactive 360-degree content to transport customers virtually to BeautyIRL stations so they can get as close to “in Real Life” as possible, says an OmniVirt blog. The ad campaign features interactive 360-degree photos of BeautyIRL stations with clickable

hot spots that link to more information about Glamsquad and other BeautyIRL offerings such as Wonder Wall, a wall full of miniature beauty products.

The in-store application is a departure for OmniVirt, which

creasingly see their power, according to product marketing manager Ara Parikh. OmniVirt’s research has found that completion rates for 360-degree videos are 46% higher than for regular videos, and almost nine in 10

The ad campaign features interactive 360-degree photos of BeautyIRL stations.

in the past has marketed real estate, travel destinations and cars from Nissan and Toyota, as well as crafting behind-the-scenes promotions for Netflix, Universal and NatGeo. OmniVirt did have a promotion for Home Depot on Pinterest, showing how DIY products from the chain could refashion rooms in a house.

The concept of 360-degree or virtual reality videos in advertising is still uncommon, but it is gaining traction as people in-

users interact with the videos. Visitors roam around for an average of 31 seconds, which fits with CVS’ objective of having shoppers browse BeautyIRL.

Other partners working on the initiative with CVS were creative agency Standard Black and media agency Universal McCann.

The chain has never looked at BeautyIRL as just a new merchandizing strategy — considering that its beauty team put a lot of thought into how they



The department seeks relevance for Millennials and Gen Zers.

could make customers feel inspired and have fun, says Maly Bernstein, vice president of beauty and personal care at CVS Health. “Our approach is always to test and learn, and that’s what we will do with these stores, with the goal of expanding in 2019 and beyond,” said Bernstein.

BeautyIRL allows the retailer to interact and connect in a way that’s most relevant and most impactful for its growing base of both Millennial and Gen Z customers. The chain is also looking for ways to engage with new, emerging brands with a strong social community and to help make them even more accessible to beauty enthusiasts nationwide.

A key element of BeautyIRL is CVS’ exclusive retail partnership with Glamsquad, a technology-driven beauty services company and community of beauty professionals. The partnership reflects the chain’s commitment to providing a next-generation beauty experience, Bernstein said.

“Glamsquad is a leader in on-demand beauty services, and this partnership means we can

unlock their expertise and capabilities to create new beauty experiences for our customers,” she said. Services in BeautyIRL stores include express hairstyling, makeovers and mini services. CVS is testing ways to ensure a seamless customer experience at each store, including both walk-in service and “book in advance” digital options.

“I think our partnership with Glamsquad also uniquely positions us in the market, allowing us to give our customers personalized access to professional makeup artists for beauty expertise and product recommendations,” added Bernstein. “It’s a tremendous opportunity for us to deliver an omnichannel service experience to customers.”

Since its launch in 2014, Glamsquad has disrupted the beauty industry by using technology to deliver personalized and convenient beauty service experiences to customers, making it an exciting partner for CVS. The partnership with Glamsquad underscores the importance of retail’s evolution into offering differentiated services and experiences, including within the beauty space, noted Bernstein.

Analytics elevate out-of-home ads

NEW YORK — Expanded measurement and analytics technology for out-of-home (OOH) advertising is enabling retailers to better compare OOH campaigns to digital initiatives, reenergizing the category and providing a new perspective on the marketplace.

As the retail industry gears up for the holiday season, OOH advertising, including billboards, will be promoting deals. OOH is acknowledged to play a significant role in foot traffic and consumer purchasing behaviors.

The question is how can retailers better leverage OOH advertising in the digital age. Geopath, a nonprofit organization that analyzes OOH advertising inventory using audience location data and media research, has recently expanded the behavior and demographic profiling of consumers within its Insight Suite, enabling advertisers for retail to precisely profile and target desired audiences across a variety of formats. As such, retailers and brands alike

can more exactly pinpoint OOH inventory that reaches their target audience, as well as more deeply analyze the impact of their OOH campaigns.

Available across all devices, the new platform incorporates state-of-the-art audience insights, market research and location-based data to inform national campaigns, hyperlocal campaigns and custom geographies. The data set is continually growing, and it will include tens of thousands of demographic details and insights drawn from consumer behaviors, purchase history and psychographics in addition to specific points of interest including shopping centers, airports, restaurants and movie theaters.

“Our Insights Suite provides brand marketers, agency buyers, planners and media owners with the most comprehensive insights for over 1 million pieces of OOH inventory,” says Geopath president Kym Frank. “The deep analysis and insight into various markets will allow

for users to more effectively plan and analyze their OOH campaigns, while also providing owners with deeper insights about their inventory.”

Insights Suite aggregates anonymous data from hundreds of millions of mobile devices, connected cars and GPS sources, allowing for audience segmentation across various OOH media channels. These enhanced data points allow buyers to more accurately target and purchase specific geographical locations, including mobile fleet and place-based advertising. For media owners, deeper demographic and behavioral data enhances audited ratings and selling capabilities.



Outdoor advertising can now be compared to digital marketing.

Toshiba gives CVS digital upgrade

RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, N.C. — Toshiba Global Commerce Solutions and CVS Pharmacy are partnering to expand CVS’ in-store digital experiences.

The retailer selected Toshiba to improve retail operations and distribute capabilities to new and emerging touchpoints within and outside the store via Toshiba’s TCx Elevate digital commerce platform and professional services.

Toshiba’s TCx Elevate is a digital commerce platform that supports consumer self-scanning experiences and visual tools that can be used across store departments, including pharmacy.

“CVS Pharmacy is committed to enhancing the customer experience through continuous

innovation,” said Ray Auger, senior vice president of retail systems for CVS Health. “With that in mind, we’ve chosen to leverage the retail expertise of Toshiba through their TCx Elevate platform.”

The solution also will enable CVS to collect actionable insights needed to facilitate checkout and help the company’s “commitment to enhance the customer experience through continuous innovation,” Auger said.

TCx Elevate enables CVS Pharmacy to focus on rapid development and deployment of new capabilities through a modern platform and tools, including the WebPOS thin-client, multiplatform interface, according to Toshiba. This opens the door for CVS Pharmacy to deliver leading-

edge consumer self-scan experiences, associate mobile point-of-sale and seamless visual integration across store departments.

“Retailers today face increasing demands to respond quickly to both heightened market pressures and evolving consumer expectations,” said Bill Campbell, vice president and head of Americas at Toshiba Global Commerce Solutions.

“We are excited to work with CVS Pharmacy to support their long-term vision of continued innovation through our TCx Elevate digital commerce platform. With our joint commitment to innovation, we are confident that the brick-and-mortar retail evolution is on the path for continued success.”