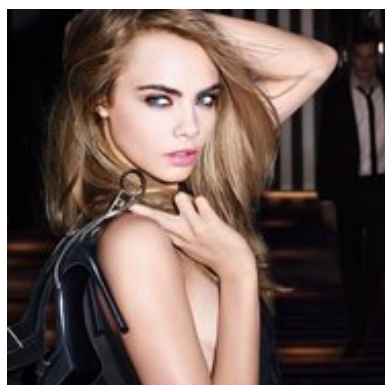


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YSL Beauté creates bespoke tutorials using Google Glass

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Cara Delevingne for YSL Beauté

By JEN KING

French atelier Saint Laurent Paris' beauty brand YSL Beauté is enhancing product demonstrations at its cosmetic counters with the introduction of Google Glass tutorials.

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The beauty brand has rolled out Google Glass tutorials at retailers such as Bloomingdale's and Selfridges to temporarily personalize the in-store experience through technology. Brands and consumers alike have struggled to incorporate Google Glass into everyday life, but the functionality of the technology in an in-store setting is hard to dispute.

"Selfridges has a long history of creating unique and innovative experiences for their customers and this is a wonderful example of how this is coming to be in the 21st century," said Dave Rodgeron, a retail business development executive at [Microsoft Canada](#), Toronto. "At first the idea of having your makeover done by a make-up artist seems like a cheap gimmick by the retailer to show how cool and innovative they are.

"Before we are too quick to lay this on Selfridges it's important to consider the perspective of the customer involved," he said. "It is indeed an interesting experience to participate in a process that involves such cutting edge technology.

"At the very least, the customer now has a unique story to share with their friends. There is a very practical element involved as well. While most people can certainly appreciate the look that has been created, many of them would be hard pressed to recreate that look without a great deal of practice and coaching."

Mr. Rodgeron is not affiliated with YSL Beauté, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

YSL Beauté was unable to respond by press deadline.

Google looking glass

Tutorials housed on branded Web sites and on YouTube are commonplace for beauty marketers with brands demonstrating product applications and full looks. By allowing the consumer to follow along at home, an educational relationship is established, but personal touchpoints are lacking.

In September, YSL Beauté held a two-day demonstration at department store Bloomingdale's to introduce the concept to consumers in New York. The brand invited its makeup artists Dell Ashley and Armando Ramos to participate in conducting the Google Glass tutorials.



Banner promoting YSL Beauté and Google Glass at Bloomingdale's Sept. 4-5

"Here's where the value of Google Glass comes into play," Mr. Rodgeron said. "As the artist is applying the makeup, they are able to not only record the visual aspects of the process, they can add an audio element that the customer can use as the guide when they themselves attempt to recreate the look."

"The data, both visual and audio is recorded through the Google Glass device and shared with the customer for their later reference," he said.

YSL Beauté launched its Google Glass tutorials in the United Kingdom at British retailer Selfridges Dec. 8 with the brand's head European makeup artist, Fred Letailleur. YSL Beauté plans to continuously introduce the concept to consumers around the country throughout the year.

When a consumer sits down at the YSL Beauté counter for an in-store tutorial a beauty consultant will wear a pair of Google Glasses to film a 45-minute makeover. The end video will be through the eyes of the beauty consultant, allowing for a professional perspective of how to apply YSL Beauté products.

The steps seen in the video content are more fluid than what is typically shown on Web-based tutorials. The consumer can watch how the beauty consultant's eyes dart from their own face to a product to their hand as she prepares cosmetics to be applied.



YSL Beauté's Fred Letailleur wearing Google Glass, as seen on Twitter

After the tutorial, YSL Beauté will send consumers an email with a message reading, "You've just received your bespoke makeover by Yves Saint Laurent. Learn how to recreate your look by watching your personal make-up lesson." In addition to the video content, the consumer will be sent before and after photos and a list of products used to create the beauty look with links to purchase.

In a statement given to **The Telegraph**, YSL Beauté said that it "is committed to encouraging consumers to elevate their skills. This multi-touch point approach is an exemplary initiative where both technology and customer service is brought together."

"Technologies like this are making it a more fun and exciting experience for customers," Mr. Rodgeron said. "They can use these tools to train themselves, to experiment with new looks, and share the fun with their friends."

"Retailers that embrace technologies like this are going to establish themselves as those who implemented technology not for its own sake, but in the more meaningful way of creating a more compelling experience for their customers," he said. "That is what distinguishes best in class retailers, they create an experiences that entertains and engages the customer and that is one of the key drives that builds loyalty."

Glass houses

The jury is still out on whether fashion brands can help Google Glass reach a level of popularity, but online retailers Net-A-Porter and Mr Porter are doing what they can to promote a favorable outcome.

Both online retailers released videos and other promotional content to guide the consumer reaction to Glass' debut on their Web sites June 23. Meanwhile, Diane von Furstenberg is leading the charge among luxury brands for the adoption of the new technology (**see story**).

The most promising use of Google Glass may be in-stores and used by sales associates rather than general consumers. While Google Glass became a sure reality and less a futuristic vision, Swiss watchmakers such as Alpina and Frederique Constant worked the technology into their marketing strategies.

As part of the Official Google Glass Explorer Program, both watchmakers will use Google Glass to reassess their training programs, communication practices and overall merchandising approach.

Most importantly for brand image, Google Glass will be used in more than 2,800 watch boutiques around the world to ensure that Alpina and Frederique Constant displays are presented to consumers in accordance to branded guidelines. Sales associates take photographs using Google Glass that are then uploaded to a shared database via an in-house iPad/Android application ([see story](#)).

While other brand and retailers have introduced virtual mirrors, this approach enhances the interaction between a sales associate and an individual, rather than just a consumer with a product.

"This is not the first example of new technology to be applied in the cosmetics industry, but it is certainly the most instructive," Mr. Rodgeron said. "Other companies, notably [E-Z Face](#) from Israel and the Microsoft business partner [Face Cake](#) have both created solutions that allow the customer to 'try on' cosmetics products through a virtual mirror.

"The customer's face is digitally recorded and becomes a canvas upon which new looks can be tested without the time and mess of actually using the product," he said. "A customer will, for example, want to see how several different colors of makeup compare. By scanning the barcode of the product, their image is altered to show how they would look with each color.

"Customer[s] can then share the new look with friends through social media through the same device to seek their input. The solution also provides the ability to see how you would look with a new hair color."

Final Take

Jen King, lead reporter on Luxury Daily, New York

Embedded Video: [//www.youtube.com/embed/-2QG4kje1V0](http://www.youtube.com/embed/-2QG4kje1V0)

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