

FRAGRANCE AND PERSONAL CARE

## Augmented reality beauty experiences extend to targeted promotions

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*Sephora Virtual Artist Looks. Image courtesy of Sephora*

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By SARAH JONES

Sephora and Estée Lauder are among the beauty marketers leveraging facial tracking technology to lift conversions.

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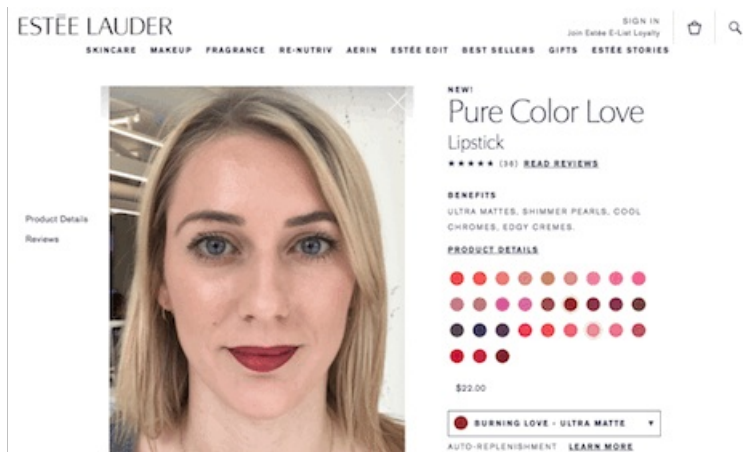
ModiFace, which creates augmented reality solutions including real-time virtual makeup application, has launched a software development kit for iOS and Android devices, enabling marketers to use the technology in their own apps. In the beauty world, face tracking has become a way to spur more confident purchase decisions away from the beauty counter, but ModiFace also sees the potential of face tracking to guide consumers along a relevant purchase path.

"Brands can utilize the eye gazing technology to know where on the screen a user is looking and provide timely advertising or a UI element," said Parham Aarabi, CEO of **ModiFace**, Toronto. "This increases the likelihood of a consumer purchasing a product."

### Real-time response

ModiFace's face tracking allows consumers to see virtual makeup on their faces in real-time. This technology is being used in everything from digital mirrors in the in-store environment to live video feeds on mobile applications or Web sites.

Estée Lauder uses the technology to provide virtual try-on for certain color cosmetics, allowing shoppers browsing its ecommerce site to know what a particular lipstick or eyeshadow will look like on their skin tone ([see story](#)). Meanwhile, Sephora's Virtual Artist allows users to try on full beauty looks created by makeup artists, as ModiFace's technology overlays the cosmetics in 3D ([see story](#)).



*Estée Lauder augmented reality try-on experience. Image credit: ModiFace*

Being able to test-drive products from anywhere has helped boost conversions up to 84 percent.

The tech company's tracking engine can detect facial features down to skin texture. It can also track eye gaze, something that ModiFace identifies as a boon to marketers.

For instance, if a consumer's eye rests on a particular product name or swatch, the brand can then deliver targeted marketing based on their perceived interest. This could be a banner ad, or a prompt or message to learn more about a particular item or make a purchase.

In a test on the MakeUp application for iOS, click-throughs to purchase rose 27 percent when gaze-based messaging was used.

Both Sephora and Estée Lauder are planning to add eye gaze tracking to their augmented reality experiences in the coming months.

#### Targeted approach

Beauty brands have brought augmented reality from an interesting idea to an effective marketing tool on mobile this year by tapping into its ability to drive trial, a strategy which other marketers could benefit from following.

Retailers and brands such as L'Oreal and Sephora have connected with their audience more closely through augmented reality pushes in which users were able to test out and interact with products without having to enter stores. With many believing that this is just the beginning for the technology, brands should jump aboard now and focus on creating a convenient experience for consumers ([see story](#)).

Beyond beauty, augmented reality has enabled marketers to offer customization in real-time.

Ferrari Australasia is changing its consumers' showroom visits with an augmented reality application that allows immediate customization and an in-depth look at the vehicles.

Consumers will be able to see the car in a specific color, with certain rims and more options that complete the new showroom walkaround. Integrating digital into a showroom allows frontline sales people from Ferrari to provide more detailed information and connect with consumers through more mediums ([see story](#)).

"It is not impossible to imagine future Snapchat or Facebook lenses or filters to employ eye tracking to let advertisers know what users looked at," Mr. Aarabi said. "There are also significant implications in medicine, for tasks such as pupil dilation estimation."