

FRAGRANCE AND PERSONAL CARE

## Sephora puts focus on real peoples' individual style

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*Sephora's employees for its holiday campaign*

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

LVMH-owned beauty retailer Sephora is celebrating how an interest in beauty brings all kinds of individuals together, no matter their interests, for this year's holidays.

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Sephora's "Reach Out and Gift" is the beauty retailer's holiday campaign featuring 10 new spokespeople, which takes an interesting step by using unique individuals. Sephora is hoping to forge personal connections with consumers, whether they know each other or not.

"Diversity is hugely important to Sephora," said Deborah Yeh, senior vice president for marketing and brand at Sephora. "The 11,000 North American employees that we invited to apply for inclusion in this campaign come from all different backgrounds and cultures, and their differences are what makes us who we are as a company.

"That is why it is so important to us that both our employees and our clients see themselves in what we produce," she said. "For the Reach Out and Gift holiday campaign, we were very deliberate in choosing talent who represent individuality in beauty, both inside and out.

"We're proud to say that the campaign also supports Sephora's initiative to build a diverse beauty community and to connect with all clients and their own unique beauty preferences and styles."

### Sephora celebration

For Sephora's campaign, the brand is tapping into its own pool of real employees to act as brand ambassadors for the holiday campaign. These "Cast Members" are an extremely diverse group of people, meant to exhibit how beauty can unify anyone, no matter how different.

Each beauty look is special to the individual and strives away from the typical campaign of supporting one certain product that is trending.

While each look is special to the individual "model," each product and look is available at a Sephora store.

A significant number of employees around North America applied to be a part of the campaign through a video

application. Ten were chosen from those that applied, with a range of individuals including a man from Beverly Hills with dreadlocks, a Muslim woman with a hijab, a woman with alopecia and another with blue and green hair.



*Sephora cast member for its holiday campaign*

The video application had each applicant discuss what beauty means to him or her. The selected winners traveled to New York for the photoshoot, which will be featured in store window displays.

There will be unveiling celebrations in the stores of which the winners are from.

Sephora will likely work with some of the participants for digital and YouTube content.

**Sephora strategy**

The beauty retailer is always looking to the future, whether that be diversifying its marketing or using technology to forge connections.

Sephora's last two endeavors previous to the holiday campaign are highly indicative of this concept.

For instance, Sephora recently encouraged peer-to-peer communications through the launch of its new Beauty Insider Community.

Instead of spurring a dialogue between brand and consumers, as many marketers often work towards, Sephora is taking a different approach to generating conversation among its enthusiasts. The beauty industry relies heavily on peer recommendations, and consumers often put more stock into influencers and friends' opinions rather than brands themselves, making Sephora's Beauty Insider Community an accurate read of current trendy ([see more](#)).

Sephora also just highlighted some of its advanced retail innovations on a small scale with the opening of its smallest, but most feature-rich, storefront.

The Sephora Studio concept opened July 21 on Newbury Street in Boston, a high-end shopping district in the city. Sephora Studio features a small, intimate setting, but with a major focus on providing above-average consumer tools to find the products cosmetic lovers want ([see more](#)).

"We've been having the conversation about unique perspectives in beauty and celebrating diversity in our marketing for a number of years," Ms. Yeh said. "But this is our first opportunity to really show it in such a demonstrative way, by elevating real people from the real Sephora beauty community."