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Saks' beauty department overhaul to emphasize experience, relationships

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Exterior of Saks Fifth Avenue. Image credit: Saks Fifth Avenue

By STAFF REPORTS

Department store Saks Fifth Avenue is revamping its approach to the beauty category by investing in experiential retail.

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Per WWD, Saks has announced plans to relocate its beauty and fragrance department from the ground floor of its flagship location to the second story. Expected to be inaugurated in May, Saks' "Beauty 2.0" is not just a physical relocation of the beauty department, but a restructuring of how the retailer sells personal care and interacts with consumers.

De-departmentalizing the department store

By moving the beauty department upstairs, Saks' Beauty 2.0 will be about 40 percent larger than its current ground floor selling space. The new department's footprint will measure 30,578 square feet with an escalator for ground floor access, WWD reports.

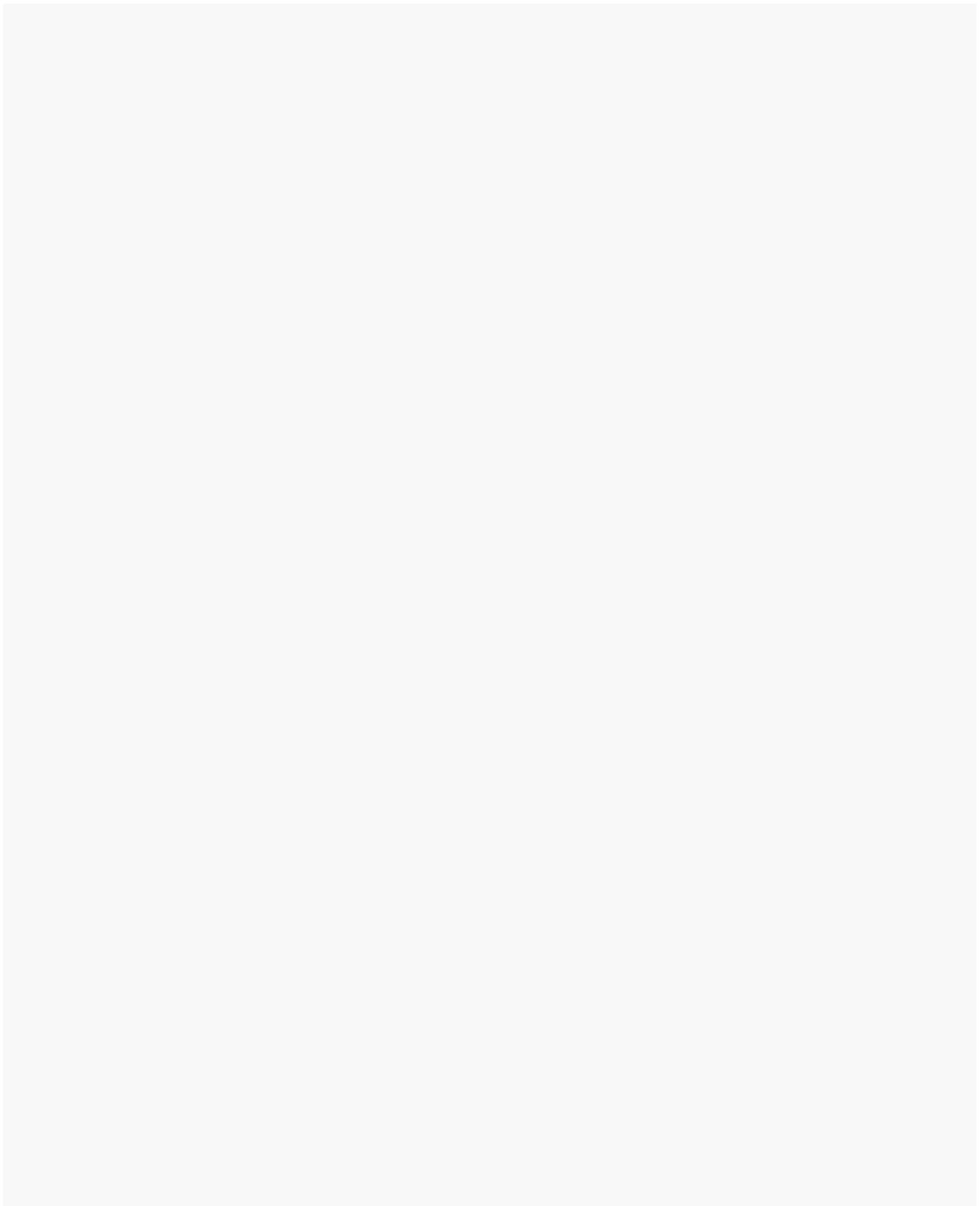
In addition to counter selling space, Beauty 2.0 will include an on-demand beauty concierge and 15 spa rooms. The spa rooms will offer a mix of complementary brand services and paid treatments.

Saks' department will also have an apothecary and offer exclusive brands and services.

The latter includes a Gucci beauty space designed by creative director Alessandro Michele, a florist by perfumer Eric Buterbaugh and the first United States location of FaceGym, a noninvasive facial workout trainer.

Beauty 2.0 will offer Saks consumers approximately 100 personal care brands, 35 of which are new to the department store.

The apothecary will be what welcomes consumers to the department, while treatment rooms will line the walls. Saks has also outfitted the space with 13 brand boutiques along with shops by Tom Ford, Dior Makeup, Chanel, La Mer, Gucci, Givenchy Beauty, Kiehl's and Aesop.



Tonight, we're going with the two-toned lip for our #FridayNightFilter with the help of @ysl. #SaksBeauty

A post shared by Saks Fifth Avenue (@saks) on Feb 2, 2018 at 1:52pm PST

Saks' fragrance offerings will also be relocated to the Beauty 2.0. The beauty department concept will include specialized boutiques for 22 niche brands including Floraiku, L'Artisan Parfumeur, Bond N 9 and Ex Nihilo.

Beauty 2.0's floor plan will also include counter spaces with customized tester units and a general fragrance station.

Speaking to WWD, Marc Metrick, president of Saks Fifth Avenue, said, "Our focus is on the new luxury, and luxury right now is about being bold, stepping out, de-departmentalizing the department store.

"It is not transaction. Today you need to create environment, experience, relationship and an emotional connectivity

with the consumer," he said. "The most intimate part of the shopping experience is beauty.

"It is where we touch the customer, when we can build the relationship between the customer and Saks. This is not just a fresher version of what we've done – it's something no one has done before."

The last time Saks reconfigured its beauty department was in 2013 when the flagship's fragrance space was redesigned ([see story](#)).

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