

FRAGRANCE AND PERSONAL CARE

Saks tackles retail evolution head on

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Saks new Beauty 2.0 department. Image credit: Saks

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

Department store chain Saks Fifth Avenue's flagship is undergoing a major renovation to make way for more accessories on its ground floor, but its new execution of the beauty department could be indicative of an emerging trend.

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Saks' uptown New York store has undergone significant refurbishment beyond a simple facade uplift, with a makeover in fundamental methods of business. The retailer's newly opened beauty department, named Beauty 2.0, has been moved to the second floor and offers a new strategy toward cosmetics buying to compete with retailers such as Sephora and Ulta.

"By moving our beauty department to the second floor, we were able to add additional space and create an environment where people would want to stay and have a meaningful shopping experience," said Tracy Margolies, chief merchant at Saks Fifth Avenue. "We added 15 treatment rooms and an event space, as well as 58 new brands, and services like FaceGym facial workouts, Skinney MedSpa CoolSculpting, Martine de Richeville slimming massage, Blink brow and lash styling and EB Florals hand-tied floral arrangements."

A new look at beauty

The age-old design strategy has always seen beauty stores on the ground floor of almost every heritage department store.

Retail as a whole has been completely transformed, with more department stores having to shrink in size every year. Elements beyond online shopping are fundamentally changing the way consumers shop, affluent or not, forcing these traditional stores to change their ways.

For the cosmetics industry, retailers such as Sephora and Ulta are drawing in beauty fans and building communities surrounding their stores, making experience a part of the shopping experience.



A new look at beauty. Image credit: Saks Fifth Avenue

Saks is harnessing this idea and building a beauty haven on the second floor for its affluent cosmetics customers.

With 32,000 square feet, Saks is adding 58 brands to its arsenal of product offerings.

The additional square footage is a 40 percent increase in size for the beauty department, and offers space for 15 spa rooms for special services. More than just offering products, Saks is providing medi-spa treatments, facials, massages, manicures, brow services, a flower shop and more.

Saks is working with FaceGym, an exercise program for the face, to provide in-store classes.

Chanel, Cl De Peau Beaut, Dior, Kiehl's, La Mer, La Prairie, Martine De Richeville, Skinney Medspa and Sisley Paris all have their own dedicated spa room.

Blink Brow Bar London will also feature brow and lash styling, while Skinney MedSpa will provide CoolSculpting and laser hair removal. Sundays will offer manicures and meditation.

The signature slimming, deep-tissue massage Rmodelage by Martine de Richeville is offered, as well as hand-tied floral arrangements by EB Florals.

Gucci has also created its first concept store in the United States for the Saks beauty department, and Beauty 2.0 also features a Guerlain Parfumeur boutique.



The beauty department moves to the second floor. Image credit: Saks Fifth Avenue

In addition to these services and offerings, Saks will host a series of events in a dedicated 850-square-foot space such as master classes, public appearances, small private gatherings and visual installations.

Custom agglomerate white stone flooring from Italy lines the entire department to create a luxurious atmosphere, along with restored original windows facing Fifth Avenue, 49th Street and 50th Street for natural light.

Innovation in Saks shopping

Saks' new interpretation of its beauty store comes amongst a series of innovations from the retailer.

The department store chain recently helped to usher in a futuristic payment solution using augmented reality.

Mastercard has worked with Osterhout Design Group and Qualcomm Technologies to develop an AR payment program debuting with Saks. The solution allows for shoppers to gain greater insight on products and recommendation but also authorizes payments through eyeball scanning ([see more](#)).

Saks Fifth Avenue also acted on its belief in a strong future for the jewelry sector with a flagship renovation.

The retailer at its flagship location in New York unveiled a newly design jewelry department. Much like the future of its beauty section, its jewelry will be moved off of the first floor ([see more](#)).

"Shopping for beauty should be an interactive experience and we are committed to creating a destination for our customers," Ms. Margolies said. "Through our event space, we are able to host a variety of master classes and speaker series, and even house pop-up shops.

"Our Beauty Concierge is well-versed in all the brands and services offered throughout the store and can help facilitate the booking of treatments," she said. "With the additional space on the second floor we have so much opportunity to enhance the Saks brand and continue to provide world-class service."

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