



Television Business Report

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Cablevision launches Optimum Select

Cablevision Systems announced the successful launch this month of Optimum Select, a new interactive television ad product that transforms the :30 commercial into a gateway for longer engagement with a brand, and allows digital cable customers to take action through their TV remote. The initial slate of ad partners that are providing samples, coupons and gift cards to consumers through Optimum Select, include Unilever, Gillette, retailer Century 21 and Benjamin Moore.

“We're extremely pleased by the initial response from leading national brands to Optimum Select,” said David Kline, president of Rainbow Ad Sales, Cablevision and Rainbow Media’s ad sales unit. “Advertisers recognize the extended brand experience enabled by Optimum Select, where direct marketing meets TV and transforms the traditional ad model to offer qualified lead generation, brand engagement, enhanced measurement, insight and learning.”

Each advertiser will be featured exclusively across 25 major cable networks during the launch campaign. These campaigns include a bottle of 2-in-1 face wash/body wash from Gillette; a coupon for a free 2 oz. color sample from Benjamin Moore; a \$10 gift card from the retailer Century 21, and Degree Fine Fragrance Body Mist from Unilever.

“America’s paint and color authority for more than 125 years, Benjamin Moore has always been a leader in innovation, from research and development to sales and marketing, and our current partnership with Cablevision reflects this,” said Dan Calkins, New York Metro GM at Benjamin Moore. “With Optimum Select, Benjamin Moore is able to place Color Samples in the homes of highly-targeted audiences, as well as engage them in discussions on color and design in an innovative way.”

“Unilever has been enhancing our television ad spend with interactivity whenever possible, and it’s a proven element in our overall marketing mix,” said Rob Master, director of media North America for Unilever. “We applaud all new developments that add further scale and consumer involvement to the existing iTV footprint. The ability to click the remote during commercials to receive free samples is a very attractive component of our campaigns, and we look forward to seeing it now roll out to the additional homes in the New York regions that Cablevision serves.”

RBR-TVBR observation: This is somewhat similar to Backchannel Media’s offering, where advertisers’ info is delivered online while viewers click on the remote. It works over the air with an over the air converter box in the home. It will work also on cable, so these are competing technologies for the iTV ad dollar.