

# Shopper Marketing

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## In-Store Eye Exams

Kiosk tests vision, suggests related products

By Mindy Long

DULUTH, GA - SoloHealth, the maker of EyeSite vision-testing kiosks, is partnering with retailers to provide free and easy eye exams for shoppers while giving retailers the opportunity to enhance the in-store experience and boost sales of eye-care products.



Privacy panels and the word "Free" in a larger font were added to the EyeSite kiosks based on user feedback. The vision-testing kiosks include ads for eye care products and services on the results printouts.

By answering a series of lifestyle questions on a touchscreen and viewing various sized letters, shoppers receive an assessment of their near and distance vision in about three minutes. Each user receives a customized vision report that shows an assessment of their vision and lists eye care professionals and offers from vision care partners.

The kiosks are in 50 retail locations, including Wal-Mart, the EyeStore and Kroger. Since September, Schnuck Markets, St. Louis, has installed EyeSite kiosks in 30 of its stores.

"More and more of our customers are taking an active role in their own health care and are looking for information they can use to help their families stay healthy," Paul Simon, senior communications specialist for Schnuck Markets.

So far, shoppers are responding. "In the short time we've offered this service to our customers, we've already had well over 10,000 of them use it, and we are receiving some great feedback," Simon adds.

Users received printouts of their results, which feature listings for eye care professionals and relevant product information. The printouts also have barcodes so they can be tracked back to user sessions if an offer is redeemed. However, the kiosk does not store specific user data.

While users are waiting for their results to print out, they see a short ad, which can be changed remotely.

Transitions Optical, Pinellas Park, FL, is one of the companies advertising on the kiosks through its Transitions Healthy Sight for Life Fund video that draws attention to the importance of vision throughout life. The kiosks also play a Transitions lenses product demonstration, and printouts feature a call-to-action directing people to Transitions Optical's eyeglass guide website.

Renee Himel, business manager of channel marketing at Transitions Optical, says, "Their software is such that we are able to update new ad content remotely, and we plan to update our ads around key Transitions events."

While the kiosks target anyone ages 15 to 75 and older, the core users are between 16 and 49, and advertisers like to reach consumers in their mid-to-late 30s. The average age of the users varies based on where in the store the kiosk is located. "We tested it by pharmacy, in the front of the store and on the far end of the store, and we found that users' ages vary by location. For our advertisers, the people they wanted to reach were in the pharmacy," says Bart Foster, SoloHealth founder and CEO.

Schnuck's has placed two-thirds of the kiosks near the pharmacy. "We think that the pharmacy area is the ideal location for the kiosk, much like the blood pressure kiosks that we offer at all pharmacies," Simon says.

Retailers benefit from increased over-the-counter eye care products and pharmacy sales as more and more shoppers visit eye care professionals, Foster says. For Schnuck's, it is still early to tell how the kiosks are affecting sales, but Simon says the retailer will continue to work with SoloHealth to cross-market products.

Prior to launching the kiosks, SoloHealth conducted two major focus groups with various ages and demographics to determine whether or not consumers would actually use the kiosk, and the company continues to conduct research to refine the marketing. "Initially we learned things like people were concerned about privacy, so we added privacy panels to the side," Foster explains.

SoloHealth combines focus groups with in-store research and intercept surveys. Three hundred users and non-users were surveyed as part of the intercept testing. The most common reason non-users gave for not using the kiosk was that they thought there was a fee. In turn, SoloHealth changed the signage to make the word 'free' much more prominent.

"The next wave of market research is about the call to action and putting various messaging in front of users to see what works the best," Foster says. **SM**