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## **Cablevision Signs Up High-Profile Brands for its New Optimum Select Interactive TV Advertising Service**

By Tracy Swedlow

--Unilever, Gillette, Century 21, Benjamin Moore Participate in Service's Launch

New York-area MSO, Cablevision, said Tuesday that its new interactive TV advertising service, Optimum Select (see the article published on [itvt.com](http://itvt.com), September 16th), is proving popular with advertisers--attracting such brands as Unilever, Gillette, Century 21 (the retailer, not the real estate company) and Benjamin Moore, which are using it to provide samples, coupons and gift cards to viewers who interact with their ads. "We're extremely pleased by the initial response from leading national brands to Optimum Select," David Kline, president of Rainbow Advertising Sales Corporation, Cablevision's and Rainbow Media's advertising sales unit, said in a prepared statement. "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."

According to Cablevision--which has not disclosed how much it is charging advertisers for Optimum Select campaigns, but whose officials have stated that it is charging a "premium" over regular ad campaigns--each Optimum Select advertiser is being featured across 25 major cable networks during the roll-out of the new service. Gillette is using the service to offer consumers a bottle of its 2 in 1 face/body wash (Cablevision says that Gillette's campaign gave away 30,000 bottles within about a week to viewers who interacted with its ads); Benjamin Moore is using it to offer a two-ounce color sample; Century 21 to offer a \$10 gift card; and Unilever to offer a sample of its Degree Fine Fragrance Body Mist product. "Unilever has been enhancing our television ad spend with interactivity whenever possible, and it's a proven element in our overall marketing mix," Rob Master, Unilever's director of media, North America, said in a prepared statement. "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."

The Optimum Select service presents the viewer with a blue bar that appears at the bottom of the TV screen during an advertiser's 30-second spot and invites them to press the "SEL" button on the remote for more information. If a viewer presses "SEL," the program they were watching is shifted to the top-right corner of the screen, allowing continued viewing, and additional

information about the product or service advertised in the commercial appears in the rest of the screen. From this screen, the viewer can then use the remote to request a sample, coupon or gift card, depending on the campaign.

Later this year, Cablevision--which this week is demo'ing Optimum Select and its other advanced advertising capabilities to media buyers in New York City--plans to add a feature called Optimum Select Content Saving, which will allow viewers to save VOD content, such as a full-length movie trailer or a video of a Thanksgiving recipe, from a 30-second spot. It says that the saved content will be available to viewers immediately through a personal Optimum Select folder that will be accessed from the main iO TV menu "with the push of the iO button" and that will also be accessible online. In addition, Cablevision says that early next year it will launch an Optimum Select Commerce feature that will allow viewers to make purchases directly through the TV.

A video of a Cablevision promotional spot for Optimum Select is embedded above.