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How Augmented Reality Is Changing The Beauty Game

Enterprise

From roller coasters to video games, new virtual reality technology seems to be the new hip thing in tech. But while VR literally transposes you into the experience through special goggles or a headset, augmented reality apps (think Pokemon Go!) seem to be equally on the rise, especially since they too change how we experience reality.

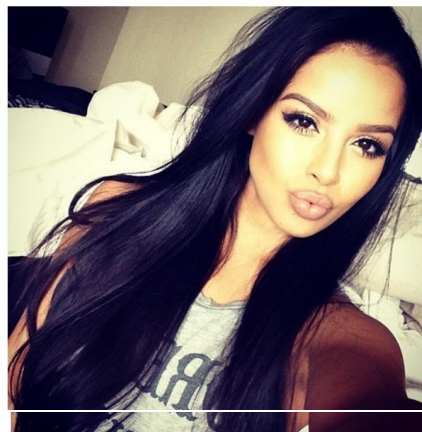
Augmented reality apps are relatively a new and budding concept, so it's no real surprise that beauty giants like Shiseido, Sephora, and OPI want in on the action. These innovative apps usually allow consumers to make better buying decisions through interactive technology, allowing them to try on virtual makeup and nail polish shades before they actually buy in stores.

"Augmented beauty technology is definitely revolutionizing the beauty industry," says Parham Aarabi, CEO of augmented beauty app [ModiFace](#). "This comes in the form of apps that show makeup on your live video, or through technology that appears as mirrors in stores."

Now, if you're curious to know just how augmented beauty reality works, Shiseido's new Telebeauty app proves to be a good example. Partnering up with Microsoft Japan and Skype For Business, the revolutionary app takes makeup application to next level, by applying non-straying virtual eye shadow, foundation, (bye bye blemishes and dark spots) and lipstick to the user's video image during teleconferences. This supposedly takes away the frustration of finding (and applying) the right makeup before Skype calls.

Augmented beauty reality also comes in the form of anti-aging simulators, as Modiface has created an app that allows users to track and monitor any skin health changes through smart phones. Similarly, [Map My Beauty](#) uses augmented reality to become the world's first "selfie-powered beauty coach." This works by providing users with how-to lessons on creating the perfect selfie, helping bridge the gap between beauty education in-store and online.

"There is a lot of quality beauty content out there, (YouTube tutorials, Instagram gifs, online editorials) but none of it is personalized to unique consumers features. Even professional makeup courses online are powered by tutorial videos alone," says Daily.



"With our selfie-powered beauty coach technology, consumers can learn about makeup essentials and trends right through their selfie."

But while these apps definitely take beauty to the next level of technology, some believe that they can have the opposite effect on mental health. According to the Dr. Lisa Strohman, clinical psychologist and founder of the [Technology Wellness Center](#), augmented beauty apps are causing adult women to experience higher levels of anxiety, making it harder on their confidence and self-esteem levels.

"While these apps can help women make better buying choices, they also create an unrealistic expectation of body image," says Dr. Strohman. "Continuously altering how we look through these kinds of apps can make women feel like they aren't good enough, encouraging self-harm and eating disorders."

However, app founder Annabella Daily believes augmented beauty reality can have an empowering element to it, as her brand focuses on consumers celebrating their uniqueness, and gaining control over their self-image.

"We are really focused on serving the teen consumer, and letting them know how hard it is to feel confident and beautiful when you are growing up," says Daily.

"We give our users all of the tools they need to gain control over their image and their purchasing decisions."

While augmented reality apps may have some setbacks, we can't help but be in awe about how such apps are starting to revolutionize the industry. Sure, we've all tried those fun snapchat filters, but augmented reality is something industry professionals think is the future of the beauty sphere.

"I think augmented reality is all about how you bring the one-on-one element to the online experience," says Daily. "This allows consumers to learn, discover and experiment on their own time, wherever they are. Besides, AR video, messaging, and gaming will be key elements in capturing the next generation of beauty consumers."

We want to know: Would you try virtual makeup? What augmented reality apps do you want to see going forward?