

Responses provided by Mara Segal, Founder/CEO, Utique Inc.

- Name a few beauty products that U*tique carries: We carry Bliss Sinkside Six Pack- all the faves in travel sizes, Smashbox and Stila and emerging must-haves, like GlamGlow mud masks – great for post-travel beauty regimens
- Does the machine tempts with a chocolate bar is that the case? Yes, we feature chocolate that can be easily gifted, like Vosges Haut Chocolat’s mini exotics library, or for self-indulgence – we currently feature San Francisco chocolatier, Poco Dolce’s artisinal tiles which are a great size for a treat...
- What was your vision for U*tique? What inspired you to start this company? I formerly was a global brand consultant and I listened to women around the world speak of the increasing demands on their day and the frustrations around trying to navigate through the sea of choices at the beauty counters. It seemed that shopping could be made simpler and more convenient if it were in a user friendly “on-the-go” format...I thought to myself, if the one stop she makes in the day is the gym (if she is lucky), then why can’t she (or I!) pick up her (my) mascara, or a hostess gift there...why compromise because you are busy?!
- I read that you see U*tique as "automated retail," not a "vending machine." What do you see as the chief distinction between the two? Technological advancement and a unique store experience. Automated retail includes robotic delivery systems (vs. gravity drops) and sophisticated software to enable information to be presented about the products, provide secure transactions and essentially make the machine “smart” with real time data, key product attributes, etc. U*tique’s version of automated retail emphasizes store experience - We are not just about getting a product to the consumer instantly, we are about responding to the consumer’s needs and brand partner’s needs with premium content, sensitive merchandising and presentation, and a user experience that we will continue to update with the ever changing retail landscape.
- How, do you think, is shopping for beauty products at a U*tique store different/better than shopping for them at, say, a traditional department-store beauty counter? How do you want the shopping experience to feel different? With only 56 products, we can handpick and put each product to the test – and we don’t just say that. We rigorously test and discuss each item that we present, or “curate” into our Shop. This is a promise that retailers with hundreds or thousands of SKUS just can’t keep! We like to say that *we cut through the clutter* on behalf of our customers and provide “retail on demand”, carefully tailoring the product to the moment and location.
- Do you see this as the future for retail in some ways? I see it as an exciting new way to shop and a new channel that has emerged because of the changes in how we live and shop. There is always a role for high-touch retail and staffing, however, there is also a new generation of consumers who are self-directed, do their own research and may just want to “grab-and-go”. In a crowded retail landscape, we need to understand his/her lifestyle and be where they need us, not wait for them to come visit us – I say, “retail on demand” vs. “destination retail” as a new paradigm for delivering products to busy consumers. I think this has relevance for the future, but I think the future will be most interesting with multiple channels working together to enhance the shopping experience. I see automated retail as fitting nicely into a

multi-channel landscape as digital and physical are brought together in a unique format, vs. as an afterthought.

- What is your fantasy for U*tique? (Are you hoping, to launch in Asia, for instance? It would be very exciting if U*tique had global potential and the initial indicators are there. I my ultimate desire is that we are providing consistent, excellent service with a unique point-of-view, and that our customers come back to us for those reasons, no matter where we are in the world.