

Payless Is Betting Big on Omnichannel Retail with Relaunch

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Payless ShoeSource is relaunching its brand with a new brick-and-mortar concept and ecommerce site, after filing for bankruptcy last year.

“We saw an opportunity for the brand to relaunch into the US market at a time when value couldn’t be more critical,” Jared Margolis, CEO of Payless, told eMarketer.

This time around, Payless is hoping to elevate the customer experience by investing in technologies that elevate the in-store experience. Smart mirrors, touchscreen wall displays and an augmented reality (AR) foot comparison chart are some of its digital efforts to drive traffic to physical retail locations.

“We’re integrating [the stores] with data and technology,” Margolis said. “We’ve revamped our omnichannel approach and created new floor plans that are designed for social distancing.

“Because of the pandemic, we launched Payless.com earlier than planned,” he said. “Our full brick-and-mortar rollout was always slated for 2021, and our new concept is now even better positioned for the new normal.”

The first new concept store will launch in November in Miami. Payless also plans to open 30 to 45 stores in Texas and the southern border states by 2021, according to Margolis.

The footwear retailer is also looking to unveil, within the next five years, roughly 300 to 500 more free-standing stores across North America.

“Consumers expect to have a seamless shopping experience whether they are in a store, online or on a mobile device,” Margolis said.

“Consumers vote with their dollars, so we would be remiss not to offer them the best shopping experience possible.”