

Vizio Gets Into Advertising, Boosts Smart TV Sales

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Eighteen years is usually the leap into adulthood, and that description is about right for Vizio Inc. The Irvine firm is growing up as it undergoes a transformation from that of the largest flat-screen TV maker based in the U.S. to a full-fledged media company. **The change is taking place as Vizio comes off an active past few weeks, with Black Friday-level TV sales from stuck-at-home consumers and remote office workers during the pandemic. It's also made a series of new hires of late, aimed at bolstering its expertise in marketing and media.**

A New York office in the Empire State Building will place the firm closer to Madison Avenue and the advertisers there—once it opens; it was delayed due to the pandemic. **Vizio is looking to reinvent itself in the eyes of potential corporate partners, said Chief Executive William Wang.**

“Currently, people have known Vizio as a TV hardware device,” Wang told the Business Journal.

“It’s our goal to make sure we cover not just TVs, but we also help TV content makers, to get their quality content into people’s homes ... we’re helping them by using our SmartCast [TVs] as a distribution system.

“So we need to understand media better,” said Wang, explaining the new outpost in New York.

Consumers who buy a Vizio SmartCast-enabled TV also have access to the company’s WatchFree app, unlocking more than 150 channels for free, upon which Vizio then sells advertising.



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