CREATING FRAGRANCE APPEAL

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A fragrance is not an academic project. It is a commercial product made to be sold directly (perfumes, colognes, powders etc.) or to help sell another product (cosmetic creams, lotions etc.). The question of whether it will be "good" or "bad" in the sense of sales success, constantly faces the perfumer. Each time he designs or recommends a new fragrance to his company, he puts his professional reputation at stake. His company can easily risk a quarter of a million dollars in basic promotion costs in the support of his decision. With this great responsibility in view, the individual perfumers have naturally tried to determine the characteristics that distinguish a "good" fragrance from a "bad" one.

It appears that there are ten factors which contribute to the success of a fragrance. If a group of the famous and successful perfumes are closely studied, it can be seen how carefully these ten factors have been considered in the design of all of them. The primary factor is a matter of decision in the selection of the basic fragrance type, from two general classifications. Another is related to its sexual (animal) nature. Four pertain to its esthetic aspects. The remaining four concern its practical performance.

Selection of The Basic Fragrance Type

Fragrances can be divided into two general groups: the "straight florals" and the "fantasies."

As the name implies a "straight floral" is designed to represent (and often named after) a specific, familiar flower. For example: Rose, Violet, Gardenia, Lavender etc.

In contrast, a fantasy is strictly a figment of creative imagination. It is not intended to represent or even recall any existing flower or fragrance situation. The fantasies comprise about 80 per cent of the fragrances that have achieved lasting, spectacular success.

A straight floral fragrance immediately invites an unfavorable critical comparison. Each individual has some sort of memory impression of the odor of the common flowers. It may be distorted and inaccurate, but nevertheless it is his personal impression and the standard he will always use for comparison.

Panel tests often show that a definite customer approval of a straight floral fragrance may run as low as 25 per cent with the remaining 75 per cent being indecisive or negative, because of the complication of the interfering comparison element. Promotional devices may temporarily sway a majority of this 75 per cent in favor. But, when their novelty wanes, the basic comparison influence revives, and the customer acceptance reverts to its original status.

A fantasy fragrance, by the imaginative nature of its design, can have no standard for comparison, and therefore cannot suffer from the handicap of critical comparison.

Panel tests frequently show that the initial customer acceptance of a fantasy design may run as high as 75 per cent, depending on the ingenuity of this design. With this kind of head start, and no critical comparison to constantly fight, it is quite understandable why fantasies as a group are so successful.

The straight floral group, on the debit side, has the shortest sales life, and the highest percentage of mediocrities and outright failures of the two classifications. On the credit side it usually responds the quickest to advertising pressure. The straight florals are generally most effective in the seasonal and "one-shot" sales promotions. For example: Muguet, Lilac and Violet for Spring and Easter colognes. Rose and Carnation for summer.

In contrast, the fantasy group usually enjoys a long and consistent sales life. Once a fantasy promotion has been successfully launched, it lasts until the customers physically tire of it, simply because there is no constant critical comparison present to undermine its appeal, as is the case with a straight floral.

Occasionally there are some fantasies that require a rather prolonged induction period before they respond to their advertising, and hit their stride in sales. This situation is reminiscent of a big ocean liner being maneuvered into her pier berth. The little tugs snort and puff about her as they strain to get her under way. But once the big ship starts moving, she doesn't stop until she is docked.

When the perfumer is required to produce a new fragrance, he must decide in which of these two

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groups he will work. The fantasy group is by far the safest "investment" in design, to assure sales success. However, circumstance may compel him to chose the straight floral group. In this case he should (1) Endeavor to obtain as high a material cost allowance for his work as possible, since he must incorporate every conceivable bit of "showmanship" and quality into his fragrance to counteract the "comparative-resistance" noted in the previous discussion. (2) Make certain that his sales-management recognizes the short sales life and specialized exploitation technique of this straight floral group, as a precautionary measure to protect himself. Failure to establish a mutual understanding of these points is a frequent cause for criticism of the perfumer by his management for his efforts in this straight floral group.

The "sex" of a fragrance should conform with that of its wearer. If it does not, the resultant clash can practically nullify the attractiveness.

For example: A woman's fragrance should be definitely feminine, with all the perfumery equivalent of "lace and frills" coupled with the subtle use of the animal notes (musk, civet etc.) having a known sex attraction to the male. A man's perfume should reflect masculinity in its vigor (aldehydes), clear freshness (citrus notes) or its association with masculine sports or customs (leather, tobacco, forest etc.). In a masculine fragrance a discreet use of the animal product of Castoreum will usually produce the touch of sex appeal equivalent to the animal notes indicated above for a feminine perfume.

Even to the most untrained observer it is quite apparent that a woman's perfume is not suitable for a man to use, nor a masculine fragrance suitable to a woman. Yet it is amazing to see how many times this obvious rule of compatibility is violated.

One has only to recall the number of mediocre and unsuccessful men's colognes and shave lotions that have been put on the market in recent years, for examples. Most of these products apparently tried to create a forest theme, but succeeded only in producing a sweet, green effect, distantly reminiscent of the classic woman's perfume "Chypre." They all had a too-feminine character—too much floweriness, sweetness or muskiness.

For further examples, one has only to look at the flagrant "modern" fragrances that have been offered from time to time for so-called sophisticated women. Many of the fragrances have been atrocious combinations of leathery notes and pungent aldehydes more suggestive of a man's well worn hunting jacket, than a lady's boudoir.

It is puzzling as to why perfumers and their sales executives continue to fall into this obvious pitfall of the incompatibility of their fragrance with the sex of its potential users. Yet the fact is that they do.

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ally desirable as a possible means of avoiding such entanglements, or, if they should occur, of improving one's position by having been the first to file, thus being awarded a constructive reduction to practice by the patent law. However, it is essential to realize that prompt patent application filing is in no sense a *substitute* for the maintenance of good research records; instead, prompt filing is to be considered as an adjunct to an adequate record system.

The court said in Senkus vs. Johnston (9): "We think it is a matter of common knowledge that . . . research scientists are 'patent-wise'; if they are not they should be." And if they should be, it is clearly the company's responsibility to see that they *are*. Procedures for the maintenance of invention records should be legally acceptable. Management would do well to sit down with its patent counsel and the appended references, and evolve or modernize pertinent policies.

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Without exception, every famous and successful fragrance shows clearly that careful thought was given to the construction of sex appeal during its design. Conversely, improper handling of this sex factor is one of the common reasons for lack of appeal

in, or outright failure of, a fragrance.

THE "ESTHETIC" AND "PRACTICAL" FACTORS OF A FRAGRANCE

The "esthetic" factors are:	The "practical" factors are:
(1) Pleasantness	(1) Persistence
(2) Elegance	(2) Intensity
(3) Originality	(3) Balance
(4) "Recall"	(4) Chemical stability

Pleasantness

A good fragrance should be pleasant. This statement may seem so obvious as hardly to warrant discussion. Actually, it is not. A surprising number of perfumers in their constant search for original ideas, tend too frequently create fragrances so exotic that they can be appreciated only by a very limited number of individuals. This may appear to be a fine artistic achievement to the individual perfumer, but it seriously reduces the general appeal of a fragrance by restricting the range of its appreciation. The establishment of a "common denominator" of pleasantness is necessary to create a high level of fragrance appeal.

Elegance

The word "elegant" means graceful, well-rounded, polished in workmanship, and in fashion. All these words are instantly descriptive of a good fragrance. But from the success viewpoint, the most important is fashion.

A good fragrance should be in harmony with the trend of fashion when it is being presented to the public. It should be *appropriate* but *not too topical.* As simple as these two factors of elegance may seem it is surprising to see how many times they are ignored, with unhappy results.

An illustration of inappropriateness would be the presentation of a "Lavender-and-Old-Lace" type of fragrance at a time, when the general trend of fashion was in a futuristic mood. Such a presentation would be as out of place as hoopskirts at a modern ball game.

An illustration of the risk of a too topical tie-in would be the King Tut fad of a number of years ago, when there was a craze for Egyptian items. It had immense popularity, but many people who had made heavy investments in Egyptian styles were caught when the fad collapsed almost as quickly as it rose.

If the reader will examine a number of the noted fragrances he will see how carefully they have been designed to produce a style of fashion compatible with a wide range of situations, times, and persons. Consider the superb "Arpege" (Lanvin) for example. It can be used in the daytime as a sports of informal fragrance. Yet in the evening it will reflect the consummate elegance of formal wear. It can be worn by debutante or dowager alike, with equal effectiveness. It is as completely in harmony with contemporary fashion as it was twenty years ago. And, there is excellent prospect that this can be said twenty hence.

Originality

In the designing of a new fragrance it is impera-

tive to incorporate some original idea or new product to create a special or striking nuance that will capture and hold the public's fancy.

Illustrating the "new product" approach is the bold and dramatic use of the aliphatic aldehydes in "Chanel No. 5." and the host of subsequent imitators and patterns.

For the "original" approach we have the adaptation of the bizarre leather effect to high class fragrances, which gave rise to the "Cuir de Russie" (Russian Leather) sequence of fragrances.

It should be observed, that without exception, all of the famous fragrances which have achieved a high degree of *spontaneous* sales success, have been those with notable originality of ingredient or thought.

Recall

By "recall' is meant that the fragrance will evoke pleasant associations from past experiences. Of the four "esthetic" factors it is the least discernible, but nevertheless as important as any of them, perhaps the most important. To a limited degree it is dependent on the choice of theme, but mostly it is a matter of creative imagination.

One of the oldest "recall" factors is incense. The fragrance of incense, and its association with the emotional feelings and beauty of worship is one of the earliest odor memories of great numbers of people. Consequently fragrances incorporating incense characteristics in their make-up, have a good chance of popularity because of the significant, and beautiful recollections they can evoke.

The Oriental religions use heavy, sweet odors in their incense. This use is reflected in the Oriental preference for this class of perfume effects. So great is this preference, that it has given rise to a subdivision of perfumery known as "Oriental."

In the Western world, the classic Biblical incense based on Frankincense (modern word: "Olinbanum"), Myrrh and Sandalwood is better known. Many famous French fragrances employ this incense type (or variations) in their background, and their success in countries where the Church ritual uses incense, is well recognized by perfumers.

"Old Spice" (Shulton) is one of the spectacular American illustrations of this "recall" factor. It was originally created in simulation of the fragrance of the old-fashioned procelain jar of dried rose petals and spices, that was a traditional mantelpiece in every home, from Colonial times to the early part of this century. The fragrance of this mixture is one of the very few odors that can be described as characteristically "home-like." The enormous recall power (and success) of "Old Spice" apparently is due to its evocation of the sentimental memories and associations of early home life.

The knack of building "recall" into a new fragrance, is to weave a familiar theme (incense, forest, garden etc.) into the background so that it cannot be identified, yet will contribute a nuance to the total perfume bouquet. Their "recall" will then be more dependent on the subconcious memory than direct recognition, but none the less effective.

Persistence

A good perfume must be persistent. By this is meant that the odor bouquet should continue to diffuse from the skin or clothing of the wearer for at least a few hours. It is desirable, but not absolutely necessary, for the odor to remain unchanged during this period. However, it is imperative that the odor remain pleasant until completely evaporated.

Intensity

A good fragrance must be intense, that is, have impact. A woman selects a fragrance primarily to call attention to herself. The beauty and delicacy of its odor are very close, but none-the-less secondary considerations. The prime function of a fragrance is to attract. A fragrance without impact is lifeless, and obviously cannot satisfy this cardinal requirement, no matter how much subtlety and ingenuity are worked into it.

From the practical sales viewpoint, a fragrance must have sufficient intensity to be instantly and completely recognizable without physical effort, even under such adverse conditions as smelling directly from a bottle. If the potential buyer must make a definite effort to smell a fragrance when appraising it, it is not powerful enough, and therefore low in "first impression" sales appeal.

Balance

A good fragrance should be balanced. A properly balanced fragrance is clear and clean-cut in its effect. Balancing does not mean the blending together of a complicated mixture of pleasant odors. The balance fragrance is organized after the pattern of the musical choir. It consists of an assortment of voices covering all the tonal range. Some voices are brilliant soloists. Others comprise the soft choral background of accompaniment. All the voices sing in harmony to produce an overall effect of beauty and depth.

One of the peculiar problems encountered in balancing a fragrance, is a tendency to over-polish the work. Europeans tend to do this more than Americans, largely because their clientele is more appreciative of finer shadings than Americans.

The American fragrance taste in regard to balance, is comparable to their preference in liquor. They want "punch" even to the extent of it being on the "raw" side. The subtleties are not especially appreciated. In fact it is often desirable to slightly "edge" a fragrance for the American consumption.

Stability

A good fragrance should be chemically stable within itself. Chemical instability shows itself in two principal ways:

(1) Change of the fragrance odor on standing.

(2) Discoloration of the fragrance on standing. Either of these occurrences can cause serious customer criticism and heavy returns of merchandise with charges of being defective.

Item #1 is illustrated by the chemical reaction between Indole (or Skatole) and the Anthranilic esters. The use of these chemicals in a fragrance formulation often results in the slow formation of a complex Schiff's base that affects the fragrance by withdrawing these materials from the formulation as a condensation product (Schiff's Base) with a lower and somewhat different odor level.

#2 is illustrated by the intense color conbinations possible by condensation reactions between a material like Tetra Hydro Quinoleine and various aldehydes on long standing. Tetra Hydro Quinoleine is a civet-like material with considerable structural resemblance to Indole.

In general, successful fragrances are designed with regard to their stability, so that they may be repeated through the "line" as colognes, sachets, powders, soaps etc. without requiring substantial alteration of the odor bouquet, and without encountering difficult technical applications.

It is quite true that there are some exceptions to this statement, and notable ones at that. But, if these exceptions are closely examined, it will be observed that one or two items of the "line" are outstandingly successful, and that the remaining items "ride" along on the prestige of the successful ones without any special regard for the accuracy of their odor relationship.

FINAL APMA MEETING

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Mr. Sedgewick said that from a knowledge of the pharmaceutical industry he felt that its attitude was this: "It (the industry) wants the laws to be interpreted fairly for both consumer and manufacturer. If the manufacturer is careless in manufacturing a product, the industry agrees there should be liability. If for any reason a product is not properly manufactured or tested there should be a liability for the harm that results. But where a product is manufactured without negligence and is properly developed and tested in accordance with the best scientific knowledge then available and all applicable government regulations are fulfilled, the manufacturer should not be held to blame solely by the application of implied warranties."

Some industry leaders expressed the thought that if the Cutter verdict is not reversed on appeal, progress in pharmaceutical and medical research will be slowed to a walk. "Who will dare to introduce new products with the threat of implied warranties—and damage suits—constantly a jeopardy to such advances?" one leader asked.

Mr. Sedgewick quoted Austin Smith, editor of the