



# Fueling the Market— Fragrance Observations

With so many fragrances on shelves, brand owners must distinguish their brands in ways that resonate with consumers. Connecting with consumers through a variety of innovative methods will fuel the fine fragrance market.

BY AMY MARKS-MCGEE

## IMPACT POINTS

- New and exotic ingredients can be leveraged to create enticing marketing concepts.
- Packaging aesthetics have been heavily leveraged as fragrance brand differentiators, and portable fragrance delivery applications such as rollerballs and solids are additional opportunities for points of differentiation.
- In fragrance, certain popular social media platforms have been relatively underutilized, but it is only a matter of time before fragrance brands and suppliers better utilize social media sites to reach a wider, younger audience.

**D**espite the poor economy, women's and men's fine fragrances continue to launch and store shelves continue to be cluttered. According to the NPD Group, "Up to 1,000 new fragrance lines launch every year." Brands seek to differentiate themselves, and consumers continually seek new and unique products. As fine fragrances jockey for position, new ingredients, innovative packaging and applications, hip celebrity figures, technology, and education are key drivers that brands capitalize on to engage consumers and capture their attention.

### Ingredients, Oud and Peppercorn

Brands and fragrance houses alike continually search for new and exotic ingredients to create interest and enticing marketing concepts. The woody category is one of the newest and most exciting fragrance directions to gain acceptance in the past few years. Oud wood is a rare and precious resin found in agarwood formed in the *Aquilaria* tree from Southeast Asia. It is the hottest fine fragrance ingredient used in the past year and a half and

continues to emerge. In 2009, oud appeared in numerous prestige and artisan brands such as *Tom Ford Private Blend Oud Wood*, *Kilian Pure Oud*, *Le Labo Oud 27*, *Al Oudh* by *L'Artisan Parfumeur*, and *Bond No. 9 Signature Perfume*, which is based on a 30% concentration of oud. Bath & Body Works *Twilight Woods* features base notes of cypress, oud wood, skin musk, vanilla milk and warm woods, while *Citron for Men* highlights base notes of white woods, oud wood, tonka bean, sandalwood and musks. The significant woody oud introductions of 2010 include *Jo Malone Oud & Bergamot* under the Cologne Intense Collection, *Henri Bendel Rose & Oud*, *Kilian Rose Oud*, *1001 Nights Armani Privé Oud Royal* and *Wonderwood* by *Comme Des Garçons*.

Spicy nuances often accompany woody accords. Peppercorn, particularly pink, is experiencing a renaissance. While it was used in *Hummer for Men* (2004) and *Just Me For Women* by Paris Hilton (2005), it is currently a popular ingredient in both women's and men's fine fragrance. Avon *Aromadisiac For Her*, *Chopard Brilliant Wish*, *Givenchy Play for Her*, *Gucci Guilty*, and *Viktor & Rolf Flowerbomb La Vie en Rose* are a few examples of many recent women's launches that include pink peppercorn notes. Men's fragrances

that use pink peppercorn accords are Chanel *Bleu de Chanel for Men* and *Lolita Lempicka L'Eau au Masculin*. Marc Jacobs *Bang* highlights black, pink and white peppercorns, Jacomo de Jacomo *Deep Blue* uses white peppercorn, and Kenzo *Homme Eau de Toilette Boisée* features black peppercorn.

## Innovative Packaging and Applications

Aesthetics of the bottle and packaging are significant components used to differentiate products in an intensely competitive marketplace. In addition, there has been a plethora of activity for newer, portable applications that deliver fragrance—such as roller balls and solids. Innovative iconic bottle designs that mimic the brand's image, eco-friendly products and products that support a cause are all tactics used to stand out.

Portable fragrances are good for on-the-go consumers. In addition to convenience, it allows noncommittal consumers to try multiple products before making a larger investment. A few recent roller ball examples are: Kate Spade *Twirl Eau De Parfum Rollerball* sold exclusively at Nordstrom; Victoria's Secret *Life is Pink Shine Pink* with a collectable two heart charm; and Lilly Pulitzer's *Squeeze/Beachy Rollerball Duo*, which uses a dual-ended wand to offer two scents. Solid rings and other spill proof jewelry accessories

are trendy, with a multitude of products available. For example, Michael Kors *Very Hollywood* solid is housed in a fashionable emerald cut cocktail ring while Kat Von D's solid perfume ring is an oversized gun metal rose with a skull. Sarah Jessica Parker's *SJP NYC* solid is available in a gold bracelet cuff with a faceted gem, and Leslie Blodgett's *Perfume Diaries* are contained in a pocket-watch compact displayed on a necklace. Fragrance pencils sold with a sharpener is another solid application. Tova's *Signature Platinum Fragrance Pencil* is sold through QVC, and Clean offers the limited edition *Perfume Pencils* in Ultimate, Fresh Laundry and Provence variants.

Eco-friendly products and products that support a cause continue to gain popularity. A *Perfume Organic* line is “vegan, certified as animal-friendly by PETA and as officially organic by the USDA.” Each fragrance bottle is enclosed in an illustrated “flower seed-embedded box that can be planted after use.” The Thierry Mugler *Womanity* fragrance bottle is refillable, and the carton is made from recycled paperboard. To create *PureDKNY*, Donna Karan sourced vanilla from Uganda through a partnership with CARE—a humanitarian organization focused on fighting global poverty, with an emphasis on helping women.

There are a variety of innovative, memorable bottles that reinforce the image of iconic brands on the market. In women's fragrance, bottles that stand out are *Miss Pucci* by Emilio Pucci, Givenchy *Play for*

*Her* and Benefit Cosmetics *Second Story Crescent Row* trio collection.

The curvaceous *Miss Pucci* bottle was designed by Ora Ito. It mimics the vibrant Pucci prints with the use of orange, coral and rose colors, and the designer wanted to capture “a kaleidoscopic, stained-glass window” effect. Givenchy *Play for Her* is the counterpart to the 2008's men's *Play* scent. The bottle is designed to look like an MP3 player, but is pink (eau de parfum) and violet (eau de parfum intense). Benefit Cosmetics *Second Story* is a follow up to the *Crescent Row* trio collection. The new trio of scents—*Garden of Good and Eva*, *Lookin' To Rock Rita* and *So Hooked On Carmella*—follow the same format as the earlier trio. The company used the cocktail-shaker inspired bottles and the outer row house cartons that fold open to create a home interior.

Notable men's bottle designs are *Only The Brave by Diesel*, featuring a bottle shaped like a fist with a silver Diesel ring; Marc Jacobs *Bang* fragrance, which is packaged in a silver and black bottle that looks crumpled; and Ralph Lauren's *The Big Pony Collection*, with four fragrances each numbered and packaged in a different brightly colored bottle to represent the unique fragrance directions and styles.

## Interaction and Education

Industry organizations and fragrance and flavor houses are creating fragrance workshops, exhibits and events to educate the public and connect with consumers

about this secretive segment of the industry. In January 2010, The Fragrance Foundation initiated the One Drop Changes Everything ad campaign, and used a variety of multimedia platforms—including the Internet, social media, print, billboards, in-mall digital screens and retail Web links. According to Rochelle Bloom, president of The Fragrance Foundation, the campaign was created to entice consumers back to the pleasures of fragrance. Sniffapalooza, founded by Karen Dubin and Karen Adams, often partners with fragrance houses such as Symrise and Firmenich to create intimate events for “fragrance aficionados.” These fragrance aficionados, non-industry individuals, get an inside look behind the scenes, and frequently get to preview new fragrance releases. In conjunction with Parisian retailer Printemps, Givaudan designed Perfume Workshops in April 2010, to “educate the wider public in the history and creation of fragrances.” International Flavors and Fragrances (IFF) partnered with Parsons The New School for Design, The Museum of Modern Art and Coty Inc. to present *HEADSPACE: A Symposium on Scent as Design* on March 26, 2010 [covered in the June issue of *GCI* magazine’s sister publication *Perfumer & Flavorist* and, in brief, in the July issue of *GCI* magazine]. The event was a one-day symposium on the conception, impact, and potential applications of scent.

The most significant fragrance collaboration to date is Longwood Garden’s *Making Scents: The Art and Passion of Fragrance* exhibit, on view through Nov. 21, 2010. Several fragrance houses—including Givaudan, IFF and Robertet—and fragrance brands such as Chanel, Guerlain and Annick Goutal helped create this exhibit. Longwood Garden describes it as “the first major exhibition, an intersection of flora, fashion and science.” To coincide with the event, Olivier Polge, an IFF perfumer, created the *Always in Bloom* fragrance.

## Technology, Mobile Apps and YouTube

Mobile phone fragrance applications and the use of *YouTube* are the latest technologies being used for fine fragrance. In June 2010, Givaudan introduced the *iPerfumer* application for iPhone and Estée Lauder launched its *Ascent* iPhone

application. Both apps provide fragrance recommendations to help consumers sort through the crowded marketplace and make their shopping experience easier. In August 2010, Sephora announced *SephoraMobile*, its new mobile application. Similar to *iPerfumer* and *Ascent* iPhone, *SephoraMobile* will provide personalized recommendations and it will allow consumers access to their own beauty purchasing history.

Besides fragrance advertisements and a handful of self-proclaimed perfume critics, *YouTube* is relatively unused for information from fragrance suppliers. In April 2010, Arylessence, launched a *YouTube* channel ([www.youtube.com/user/Arylessence](http://www.youtube.com/user/Arylessence)) to introduce its new rose collection. The company featured various interviews with perfumers and fragrance experts discussing these new rose fragrances. Katie Puckrik—a broadcaster, journalist and performer—pioneered the use of *YouTube* to give perfume reviews. In 2008, she launched *Katie Puckrik Smells* ([www.youtube.com/user/KatiePuckrikSmells](http://www.youtube.com/user/KatiePuckrikSmells)), and, as this issue goes to press, has 14,000 subscribers.

In July 2010, Kylie Minogue released her seventh fragrance, *Pink Sparkle*. To promote her fragrance prior to launch, Minogue posted the “Kylie *Pink Sparkle* Video Message,” which had more than 22,000 views by September 1 ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=vnYk63-QAI&feature=youtuve\\_gdata](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vnYk63-QAI&feature=youtuve_gdata)). It is only a matter of time before fragrance brands and suppliers better utilize *YouTube* and other social media sites to reach a wider, younger audience.

## Celebrity Figures

Somewhat surprisingly, celebrity fragrances, which seemed to be a fad a decade ago, are now an established segment of the fine fragrance market. The power of celebrities is alarming. The public has an insatiable appetite for new celebrity fragrances, and continues to welcome these launches. For example, Beyoncé Knowles’ first fragrance, *Heat* from Coty, launched in February 2010, and, according to Macy’s CEO Terry Lundgren, the Macy’s chain sold \$3 million between February and March. During the one hour Beyoncé was in store signing autographs, the retailer sold 72,000 bottles. Mary J. Blige and Carol’s Daughter created *My Life* perfume, and a sales program aired on HSN July 31, 2010.

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According to *Peoplestylewatch.com*, “It became the network’s biggest-ever single-day fragrance launch, with over 60,000 units sold over six hours.”

Upcoming fall women’s celebrity introductions include *Rihanna Route 22*, *Katy Perry Purr*, *Sean John Empress*, and *Queen Latifah’s Queen of Hearts*. Even the men’s market follows the trend with celebrity launches. Antonio Banderas released his seventh scent *The Secret, McGraw Silver* by Tim McGraw is the country signer’s third scent and Bruce Willis is the newest player to join the trend (though the scent is not available in North or South America). In addition, rapper Kanye West inked a deal with Parlux, and a fragrance is expected in 2011.

## Final Observations

With so much of the same on store shelves and fragrances that smell alike, brand owners need to distinguish their brands in the competitive landscape and resonate with consumers. Brands and fragrance suppliers will continue to educate the consumer and fuel the fine fragrance market with new ingredients, innovative packaging and applications, up-and-coming celebrity figures, and technology to engage consumers, capture their attention and, ultimately, gain market share. ■ **GCI**



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