

Exploring The Influence Of Scent Marketing On Consumer Behavior

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Abstract: The aroma of food cuisine in the kitchen might evoke many pleasant memories of eating that cooking. Scent marketers employ this equal impact to warmly connect with consumers of things other than food. Therefore, in addition to citing specific examples, the current work attempted to examine earlier research on the application of Scent Marketing where the method is being used. To gain a sense of what is already known in this field and what more can be done in the future, the current study reviewed and analyzed earlier publications and papers. It was revealed that during the previous 20 years, sellers have been attempting to determine the linking between the use of various fragrances and their results in diverse settings. It was noticed that the behavior of the consumers present was greatly enhanced when the ambient aroma was in harmony with the surroundings. Similarly, using fragrances to manipulate customers' moods altered their approach-avoidance behavior. As a result, it can be stated that consumers now evaluate things not just on the basis of their intrinsic value but also on the quality of the context in which they are bought. The study's method of examining how people behave in reaction to fragrance and how technology is used to scent the surroundings is unique. Furthermore, the study offered a few theories that might be investigated further.

Keywords: Scent Marketing, Consumer Behavior, Olfactory Cues, consumer behavior, Fragrance and Mood

INTRODUCTION

The five senses—taste, smell, touch, sight, and hearing—are how people perceive the world (Lindstrom, 2005). These five senses have a connection to memory and consequently affect an individual's emotions. The other senses were overlooked in favor of visual marketing techniques in the past. 75% of our emotions have been scientifically demonstrated to be triggered through smell. It serves as a guarding sense and is the strongest of all human senses.

mechanism from an array of health risks, such as spoiled milk or gas leaks. The limbic system is the part of the human brain which processes smells and is in charge of memory and emotional reactions. Only two senses are used in almost all of marketing today: sight and sound. Perhaps in addition to any other sense, one's sense of smell has a substantial impact on mood. Humans may recall up to 10,000 various odors, and they encounter thousands of smells every day. This fact can be exploited and used to the benefit of marketers. According to Swanson (2014), "using scents to set a mood, promote products, or position a brand" is the definition of scent marketing.

The present article explores the current state of research on scent marketing and makes some suggestions for further investigation. A thorough keyword exploration of the literature was conducted utilizing publishers such as Emerald, Taylor & Francis, Elsevier, Indian Journal of Marketing, and Sage in order to collect information for the review. At first, a lot of articles for review were produced using the keywords "olfaction," "sensory marketing," and "scent marketing." High-quality articles in the core fields of management were searched for any articles that addressed a scent marketing concept in order to guarantee the legitimacy of the review. Only those publications that specifically explored how scent marketing affects consumer moods and behavior were reviewed out of the 45 that were chosen. The study was focused on how mood functions as a mediator between consumer behavior and fragrance. It is unique in how it assesses the way individuals behave in response to aroma (avoidance, time spent, purchase choice) and how technology is used to scent both physical and virtual retail spaces (odour diffusers, sniff dispensers, etc.). Additionally, the study looked for gaps in the literature on smell marketing that may be investigated further.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

(1) **Ambient Fragrances in Retail Spaces:** Retailers can no longer rely entirely on the value of the products and services they offer due to growing rivalry among them. The goal at present is to offer an inviting A storefront atmosphere that appeals to consumers. Shukla (2007) highlighted in an article the transition from conventional marketing to the new experiential marketing paradigm. Owing to the author, the goal of experiential marketing was to stimulate all five senses in order to provide a satisfying consumer experience in which each sense was essential. Due to its direct influence on human emotions, fragrance is becoming increasingly prevalent among the five senses. This is the result of numerous investigations, and there is no longer any uncertainty concerning this technique's efficacy. In one study, Chebat and Michon (2003) investigated the impact of ambient odors in an outlet mall environment. The authors utilized two competing models. The first model, which was taken from the field of environmental psychology, emphasized on the utilization of atmospheric signals to elicit emotions of happiness and excitement and, as a result, an approach or avoidance response. The second model that was looked at was based on cognitive theory and emotions. In the second model, the impact of ambient fragrance cues on emotions and purchasing behaviors was mediated by customer evaluations of the store environment and product quality. The study found that the existence of ambient aroma affected mall customers' perceptions of the space, resulting in positive assessments of the setting and merchandise quality and subsequently in higher expenses.

The findings of this study were recently confirmed in the Indian setting by Alex and Menon (2018). They used a reputable department store that sold clothing in South India to test the models. According to their study's findings, both models outlined how perfumes affect consumer spending. Additionally, Teller and Dennis (2012) looked into the benefits of applying ambient smell in a regional mall. In order to do this, the investigators used before-and-after surveys and simulations of various experimental designs to poll randomly chosen shoppers who were subsequently separated into control and experimental groups. The impact of numerous unrelated variables was obvious in a shopping center, and the distinction between the pre-experiment design and the most advanced design—which specifically took into consideration the influence of various environmental stimuli—was easily recognizable. Significant distinctions were seen between the two groups in terms of the variables that are dependent, which seemed to be linked to substantial variations in five perceptual variables and one affective variable. By incorporating ambient fragrances into store spaces, Yun and Yazdanifard (2013) increased awareness of the advantages obtained. Compared to other atmospheric variables, ambient fragrance had the greatest impact on improving consumer behavior in terms of assessment, emotion, and cognition; willingness to return to the store; and purchasing intention. Businesses may be able to convert window shoppers into buyers by using ambient fragrances as a tool to alter the window-shopping experience in order to motivate clients to spend more money in the same business. These favorable consumer behaviors were precisely the result of ambient smells, and this result could be achieved by providing shops with benefits at a low cost and with little effort.

Parsons (2009) developed the idea of related fragrances for retailers, which were generally odorless. In keeping with earlier research, the presence of a nice aroma can increase favorable sales behavior. To boost customer loyalty, this study showed how obtaining favorable reactions for a store that is typically odorless relies on the aroma being viewed as associated to the store type. Additionally, the study found that even a nice but unrelated aroma can cause adverse behavioral reactions. In a similar vein, Lunardo (2012) argued that, in contrast to a number of beneficial impacts, consumers would become skeptical of retailers' intentions if they were exposed to an ambient aroma in an unexpected setting. The results indicated that pleasure was adversely affected by customers' cynicism. The study showed that customers' mistrust might also serve as an example of how surroundings negatively affect enjoyment. The results undoubtedly demonstrated that the atmosphere would be less enjoyable if it fostered skepticism.

(2) **Congruency Effects:** In an initial investigation, Knasko (1995) discovered that when participants looked at slides of different items while two distinct, pleasing scents (chocolate or baby powder) were present, they discovered that baby slides were dissimilar to the scent of chocolate and consistent with the scent of baby powder. They also discovered that the relaxing odor had certain impacts (i.e., longer viewing duration, improved mood, and reduced hunger ratings) when compared to no odor. Later, by comprehending the

utilization of smells, Goldkuhl and Styven (2007) made improvements to services marketing. The presence (or lack thereof), the scent's harmony or fit with the genuine service, its pleasantness (or unpleasantness), and the connection between scents and memory are the four main factors that the authors felt ought to have taken into account when using scents for services marketing. Leenders, Schmidts, and El (2016) conducted a recent study to examine the impact of a picked out, simplistic ambient fragrance that was appropriate for a real-world retail environment. The results demonstrated that the aroma had a considerably positive impact on store level sales, time spent in the store, and customers' assessments of the business in the sections where scent intensity was high. The authors presented evidence that the impact of fragrance on positive assessment was strongly controlled by mood. Additionally, it was discovered that aroma worked particularly well as a way to improve mood for customers who were pressed for time. Regarding overall mood induction, it was intriguing to see that consumers tended to underestimate the amount of time spent shopping at greater scent intensities and exaggerate the amount spent at lower intensity levels.

In a similar vein, Chaturvedi (2013) revealed that an array of in-store elements had a major impact on impulsive buying. The retail business environment was one of these elements, and it also played a role in impulse buying. Mitchell, Kahn, and Knasko (1995) had previously examined the role of odor's numerous effects on cognitive variables that affected decision-making. The authors discovered that subjects were more holistic in their processing, spent more time processing data, and were more likely to rely on self-references and inferences when the item in question class was congruent with ambient odor as opposed to incongruent. More recently, the stimulus organism-response model has been employed for analyzing perfume purchases in Malaysia by Azeema, Jayaraman, and Kiumarsi (2016). According to the authors, habit served as a mediating factor in the decision to buy perfumes. In a French flower shop, Jacob, Stefan, and Guéguen (2014) investigated how customers responded in two distinct scenarios: one in which the scent of lavender was diffused, and another in which it was not. The results showed that atmospheric scent had a beneficial impact on both the quantity of purchases and the number of patrons. The beneficial impact of lavender may account for the congruence of this scent with items that surfaced in the context of retail.

(3) Varied Behavioral Responses to Scents: Different Behavioral Responses to Aromas: Gulas and Bloch (1995) examined ambient fragrances as a significant aspect of the surroundings in an early study. Using a model they developed, the authors explained how ambient scents affect customers. In contrast to scent preferences, ambient scents were suggested as an environmental cue that influences affective reactions and approach-avoidance behaviors. Aggleton and Waskett (1999) discovered in a study conducted inside a museum that the existence of an undesirable aroma that is emotionally arousing may serve as an efficient retrieval signal because of the close connection between memory and emotional arousal. Studies have demonstrated that participants experienced the museum visit in real time when certain scents served as powerful recollection signals. Morrin and Ratneshwar (2003) investigated how ambient smell affects brand recognition and recall based on two investigations in a noteworthy study on the role of scent on memory. According to both experiments, ambient smell enhanced brand recognition and recall for both known and unknown products. Ambient fragrance improved respondents' attention in relation to extended stimulus viewing periods of time, despite changing their claimed mood or arousal levels. Further investigation also showed that stimulus viewing time acted as a mediator in the improvement of brand memory. The effects of ambient fragrances in a restaurant setting were examined by Guéguen and Petr (2006). The results supported the theory that restaurant customer spending is influenced by fragrances. The study discovered that the quantity of funds spent and the amount of period spent were both positively impacted by lavender. However, it was discovered that the scent of lemon had no influence on either of the two variables mentioned above. It was shown by De Lange, Debets, Ruitenburg, and Holland (2012) that smell exposure could be a useful strategy for changing behavior. Compared to travelers in unscented sections, those who traveled in cleaner-scented compartments littered less (as measured by the weight and quantity of objects left behind). Toncar and Fetscherin (2012) examined respondents' expectations by contrasting their responses to print commercials with the subsequent evaluation of the product in light of scent advertisements' aesthetic exaggerations.

These findings suggested a further development of visual puffery since they suggested that the images and visual cues in the fragrance advertisements led to product expectations that were higher than the actual

product assessment. In addition, the researchers verified that, as compared to real product evaluation, expectations were much lower for more concrete descriptions of the commercial and considerably greater for more abstract ones.

In addition to the impact of ambient fragrances on customer responses, Bouzaabia (2014) concentrated on the moderating role of customer category and his or her state of corresponding. Based on the results, a pleasant ambient scent improved customers' cognitive (quality of services, assessment of store environment and merchandise), affective (level of stimulation, level of pleasure), and conative (customer spending and intention to return) responses. Doucé, Janssens, Swinnen, and Van Cleempoel (2014) evaluated if a variety of pleasing aromas may mitigate the negative impact of a disorganized business on patrons. Evidently, the writers looked into how customers' perceptions of a clean versus a dirty store were affected by pleasant smells that are (un)related to neatness.

Although the opinions of the participants did not differ greatly across the scent conditions in the case of a tidy store, they rated the products more adversely in a messy store when there was an appealing scent unrelated to neatness than when there was none.

Based on the type and intensity, Gagarina and Pikturniene (2015) found a relationship between ambient fragrance and decision-making when hazards were taken into account. The subject variables of intensity (8 sprays (1 mg) vs. 16 sprays (2 mg) of smell and ambient scent type (vanilla vs. peppermint) were changed. It was discovered that the peppermint condition had substantially higher bidding than the vanilla aroma.

(4) Scent and Technology: Emsenhuber (2009) offered a basis for exploring the significance of olfactory communication for interaction between people and computers and ubiquitous advertising, as well as insight into the psychological causes of smell marketing and contemporary air design technologies. The advancement of psychology research on olfactory perception, improving intensity control and evaporation, and being sensitive to individual customer preferences featured among the current concerns of computer scientists and air designers. Herz and von Clef (2001) investigated the possibility that olfactory illusions could be created in a linguistic setting. Through an experiment, the authors demonstrated how the existence of a verbal label may be utilized to reverse the cognizance of an odorant, which is an invariant physical stimulus. The study clarified that equivalent physical odor stimuli could elicit different meanings based on the verbal context presented. As stated by Swanson (2014), feeling and Neuro-evolution had a fundamental connection to smell. Despite the abundance of visual and aural cues offered by video games and the Internet, the digital environment is now devoid of fragrance. However, the same technologies that enable ambient smell marketing are also used to give an olfactory "virtual reality" to the online and gaming experience. The author explained how to use a fragrance generator to selectively release scents, preferably employing a headset or a cell phone. Through dispersion, the fragrance reaches the customer's nose.

Bradford and Desrochers (2009) made an effort to research the moral dilemmas and raise awareness in the fragrance marketing sector. The writers particularly shed light on topics of relevance concerning the use of scents to attract consumers and the potential for this to expose them to marketing messages. Given that this is a novel Particularly for those working in marketing, the writers first explained how the sense of smell differed from other senses before describing how fragrances are currently used in marketing. Similar to traditional retail settings, Vinitzky and Mazursky (2011) found that when customers were exposed to fragrances, they exhibited a strategy behavior in online settings as well. The findings suggested incorporating cognitive thinking style as a mediator to the stimulus-organism reaction paradigm. Table 2 lists the various technologies used for scent marketing according to the kind of merchant.

Examples of Retailers Utilizing Scent Marketing Strategies

Retailers have employed scent marketing strategies in their stores on several different occasions. Baristas utilize freshly ground coffee to entice onlookers with its fragrant appeal. Bakers use the oven fans to blast the expectation of arousing appetites—they are aware that scent has the power to entice the senses and captivate customers into taking a brief break from their hectic shopping schedule. Another old-fashioned method in real estate is to bake fresh bread or cookies right before a house is put up for sale. According to the notion, it will boost the property's marketability more than another coat of paint or being close to nearby businesses. Another example is cinnamon rolls, which are always attractive to everyone and everyone enjoys the odor of freshly cooked cinnamon buns. The president of Cinnabon, however, asserts that this is an elaborate strategy

and not a coincidence. The stores use the tactic of positioning the ovens precisely in the front so that the aroma will drift out in order to disperse the smell across the malls and airports where they are typically found. The vendors purposefully employ subpar oven lids and ventilation equipment to assist trap the pleasant scents within. Natural aromas are used by this successful chain to attract customers and increase sales (Nassauer, 2014).

The M&M World store used a chocolate scent that was developed by a scent marketing firm and spread around the Leicester Square, London, establishment that held pre-packaged treats. Starbucks enhances the aroma of coffee in its retail outlets by introducing coffee scents straight into each one. The concept behind the extra coffee scent is to create a seductive scent consumers anticipate in a specific setting (Chakravarty, 2015). Another American ice cream restaurant, Emack & Bolio's, increased sales by creating a "aroma billboard" that lured customers to its locations with the aroma of waffle cones. Select City, one of Delhi's upscale shopping centers, boasts a diverse array of scents at each of its gates. Customers are drawn to every area of the mall by the aroma of freshly brewed coffee, caramelized pear and toasted nut ice cream, freshly baked cookies, and cheese melting over sun-dried tomatoes. Yadav (2010) Abercrombie & Fitch was arguably the initial businesses to make ambient scents an integral component of their brand. Anyone who happened to stumble into its stores in the early 2000s would not be surprised by this fact. Employees used to manually spray Fierce, the brand's distinctive smell and men's cologne, inside the stores, albeit this was not the best way to administer it. The best practice of placing faint scents was rejected by several businesses, such as Abercrombie & Fitch. These merchants have strong, even overbearing, scents in their stores. These companies adopt a tactic known as "billboard scents," since the odd scents they picked out to connect with their brand are as ubiquitous as a billboard. Even though the Kumho Tyre Company's lavender-scented tires can cost up to \$330, they are nonetheless quite popular both in Australia and abroad. The Ecsta DX Aroma tire was made for "trend-setting, fashionable drivers," according to business representatives. Within ten meters of a car, one may detect the aroma of lavender with hints of mint, white musk, and iris. The smell is most evident shortly afterward when the tires are heated after regular driving, and it lasts for nearly a year. A Customers of Apple computers, iPhones, and other gadgets are very acquainted with the smell of a new gadget. Although some have suggested that this extremely odd smell is caused by the packaging, it is also said to originate from internal devices.

Impact of Scent on Moods

People's thoughts and behaviors can be strongly influenced by scents. A person's overall attitude, behavior, and avoidance tendencies can all be affected by scents (Bone & Ellen, 1999; Spangenberg, Crowley, & Henderson, 1996). Odor cues have such potent recollective effects that in one investigation, Knasko, Gilbert, and As opposed with people who had been subjected to a pleasurable ambient odor, Sabini (1990) discovered that respondents who were informed that the odor was either neutral or bad failed to mention feeling happier. Feelings are transferred toward pleasing scents that evoke a feeling that is carried over to the product being evaluated (Bone & Jantrania, 1992). Odors have the power to influence people's moods, even when they are communicated subtly. In contrast to respondents in a no-odor condition, people self-rated their effect as greater and positive when exposed to pleasant ambient scents (Castellanos, Hudson, Haviland-Jones, & Wilson, 2010). Similarly, utilizing pleasant ambient smells in a mall setting has improved the moods of customers (Chebat & Michon, 2003). Knasko (1995) demonstrated that a pleasant aroma was linked to a positive mood in the context of a museum visit. According to Herz (2007), creating a nice atmosphere with pleasant smells could lessen the severity of nearby interruptions. If consumers' mood states are altered by ambient smells, state-dependent memory systems may be affected, which could affect the recall of stimuli. When an individual's internal state (such as their mood) at the moment of encoding is restored at the point of retrieval, state-dependent memory refers to the observation that memory for the stimulus in question is likely to be improved (Morrin & Ratneshwar, 2003). In their 2016 study, Rimkute, Moraes, and Ferreira analyzed the main themes in the literature on fragrance in the fields of marketing and psychology. Exposure to scent was observed to improve brand recall and attitude toward service surroundings, leading the authors to propose that scent experience might raise the likelihood of purchase.

Young individuals' food choices, levels of physical activity, and mood were all affected through citrus exposure. On the other hand, only vanilla exposure had an impact on projected emotions (Wijk & Zijlstra,

2012). In general, perfumes are thought to produce these effects by activating the olfactory system with odorant molecules, which results in mood shifts. Examples of the various ways that perfumes can influence people's moods include attributing a product's pleasant scent to its high quality, turning around to seek out a beautiful woman after inhaling a lovely scent (Van Toller, 1988), and applying perfume or aftershave because it makes the wearer "feel good" and may boost their sense of self-worth. Another instance is when a customer finds a flowery fragrance that aligns with their priorities, which lifts their spirits. Marketing experts are fully aware of how scent influences mood, emotions, and purchasing choices (Cross, Lin, & Childers, 2015), and scent marketing is currently thought to be a billion-dollar industry. Customers may already be feeling well, so if the fragrance is meant to lift their spirits, the intended results could not materialize. Other customers who might be feeling down because of stress or time constraints may find that the ambient aroma lifts their spirits. This ultimately results in a more comprehensive evaluation of the environment and products.

What Does the Future Hold?

The body of study on scent marketing that currently exists is like a few drops in a huge ocean that hasn't been fully explored. The customer experience can be profoundly impacted by the interaction of ambient scents and personal olfactory abilities, with enormous ramifications for marketers in terms of browsing or loitering time, purchase orders, product selection, and shopping location. According to Yun and Yazdanifard (2013), ambient fragrances have the power to convert a perusing customer into a buyer. The presence of an ambient aroma improves the mood among stressed-out or hurried shoppers (Cross et al., 2015; Leenders et al., 2016).

Proposition 1: When consumers are in a rush to choose a retail location, scent marketing influences their decision. Scent experts react differently to ambient fragrances than do laypeople, therefore businesses need to be aware of this in order to use ambient scents to enhance the shopping experience. adverse responses may occur when the aroma is inconsistent with the product being evaluated. Subjects spent more time processing data while the ambient odor corresponded with the product class rather than inconsistent. However, experts' and laypeople's responses should be comparable as long because the store's offerings and the ambient scent are compatible (Adams et al., 2014 ; Douc e et al., 2013 ; Jacob et al., 2014 ; Mitchell et al., 1995). According to another study, behavior when approaching may be more affected by ambient and ambient odor congruence in congruent situations than in incongruent ones (Knasko, 1995).

Proposition 2: Customers provide favorable evaluations to stores that have enticing ambient fragrances that blend in with their surroundings. Ambient smells are especially beneficial to retail businesses and service providers who want to improve brand identification and memory while also enhancing consumer sentiments toward their offerings and the surroundings. which would ultimately result in consumers making wiser purchases. Both known and unknown companies are easier to recognize and recall when surrounded by pleasant aromas. Since consumers cannot turn off their sense of smell and many may not even be aware of its influence in a retail setting, the employment of scent might be considered a sort of subliminal nudging (Herz, 2007 ; Morrin & Ratneshwar, 2003 ; Rimkute et al., 2016).

Proposition 3: Because signature scents evoke positive memories of past purchases, they stimulate repeat business. There is a dearth of research on the impact of ambient fragrances in digital service environments, according to Roxana and Ioan (2013). According to experiments, the verbal label that is provided with an unchangeable physical stimulus (such as an odorant) can cause its cognizance to reverse. In other words, the identical physical smell stimulus may be perceived differently depending on the verbal context (Herz & von Clef, 2001). Consequently, the following idea is put forth.

Proposition 4: When making purchases online, verbal descriptions of fragrances could potentially be used in place of real fragrances.

CONCLUSION

As the reviewed research makes clear, scent marketing has been shown to be advantageous for both consumers and marketers. It has been demonstrated to have a significant impact on mood, which in turn affects customer behavior and, eventually, raises the appraisal of goods and services. The congruency effect is an enormous effect that predominantly influences the results of scent marketing. Most research has demonstrated that

when a congruent scent is present, people behave and feel happier than when a scent is incongruent. Scent marketing works well for drawing consumers and enhancing the allure of a product.

The various situations examined demonstrate how fragrance may be employed in a variety of ways to draw in and retain clients. The aroma may be an authentic product scent or a synthetic fragrance that is released into the surrounding air to produce the intended effect. Food brands were the majority of the instances provided, although they are not the only ones. Scent marketing is used by a wide range of products, including clothes, mobile phones, shoe brands, and auto brands. Scent has a broad and diverse impact on humans. People's moods can be affected by scent in different ways, ranging from having them stay in stores longer to simply relieving the stress of shopping. Depending on the situation at hand, scent marketing can have a variety of implications and be used in different ways. When customers are in a good mood, it can encourage them to spend longer time at a restaurant or retail establishment. Therefore, in order to advance our understanding of this quickly developing approach, we have proposed a few ideas that may be explored in subsequent research.

Managerial Implications

The current study offers managers some insights. There have been numerous successful instances of scent marketing in the modern world, as demonstrated by the examples provided in the study. Therefore, managers may safely rely on this technology to give customers a comfortable environment. According to the study, fragrance has a significant impact on moods, which can be quite useful for managers in creating an inviting atmosphere for patrons. Finally, using the newest developments in technology, such as odor diffusers or smell generators, can be used instead of relying solely on natural scents and smells.

Limitations of the Study and Scope for Further Research

Some of the hypotheses made in this study have not been empirically tested in this paper. Consequently, experiments or other survey techniques may be employed to evaluate these hypotheses in future studies. Some studies with conflicting findings have been included in the review; they can be investigated further to determine generalizability. Shopping via the web is another emerging area where a number of different solutions, such as verbal expressions of smell, might be tried to overcome the loss of smell and prevent it from serving as a barrier for online businesses.

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