



## II. Bloomingdale's Men's Fragrance

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In preparing these thoughts, I spent time in Bloomingdale's Men's Fragrance Department in Washington, DC, White Plains, Boca Raton, and 59th Street, New York City. The question "What's new?" is being asked by men more and more.

Women are still the major purchasers of men's products. The percentage varies by market, but in all markets, men are definitely interested in scent and grooming products. The days of slapping cologne on the face are gone, and products are available to make men look and feel better. Men seem to like taking care of themselves. They realize that treatment products improve their skin and that hair regimens produce healthier looking hair. They like the idea that they can create moods by wearing certain fragrances. As an example, for three years I have been giving the parking attendant at my building samples of fragrance. He would thank me and that was it. This past September, he was very excited because of the reaction his girlfriend had to Obsession for Men. There's one guy that's convinced scent causes emotions.

Men no longer wear one scent. Most men choose at least two fragrances and many men have a wardrobe of fragrances—for business, sports and evenings. The man who wears many scents is the sophisticated customer, current in fashion, who reads *New York* magazine, *Gentlemen's Quarterly* and *Time*. But men in all walks of life are willing to try.

My favorite example is this: I would walk down 60th Street to work every morning and chat with the construction workers on Third Avenue. I always told them about men's fragrances, products and promotions in the store. One afternoon as I was walking through the department, I saw a burley construction worker in his boots and plaid shirt having a mini-facial and loving every minute.

For years men have been using their mother's or sweetheart's cream, but men need their own products that solve problems such as razor burn: they need aftershave with aloe. The male consumer is ingredient oriented. He wants to know what type of fragrance it is—sporty or animal, how long the scent will last and what could he do to maintain the scent longer. So he's willing to try the soap and body lotion. Therefore, new products are essential to the life of a fragrance.

Women like to layer their fragrance. Men are discovering the technique. They need the new products to indulge themselves with body rubs, body bronzers and fluid body talcs.

Men also like to shop in certain atmospheres where the product is presented in a high-tech fashion—strong clear visuals, video support if available, and promotions with electricity. Most important is the right approach by a well-groomed and knowledgeable sales consultant.

Men and women respond well to simple post card mailings that offer a free bonus upon presentation. This creates an urgency for them to come to the counter where they may be converted to customers.

Although costly, a media campaign is essential for consumer awareness—continuous advertising through print, television and direct mail creates a demand for the product. Advertising also creates a certain image to which different men will relate.

So on the selling floor, I found that men want to know about new products; they want to feel good about themselves. They want to be helped properly to have that sharper image.

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