



Past Fragrance Successes— What Does the Future Hold?

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What is a successful fragrance? Fragrance is part of the entertainment industry. Past successful fragrances have captured the imagination of the public just like popular songs and popular movies. What will capture the public's fancy in the future? Perhaps seeing what worked in different eras of the past will give a hint of what will work in the future.

In 1969, Norell set the scene for the fragrance revolution in America. Before Norell, fragrance was really a gift item. Women seldom bought it for themselves. They saved fragrance for special occasions and then applied it drop by precious drop. Norell changed that. Women bought fragrance for themselves and used it everyday. Norell marked the beginning of the fragrance era as we know it today.

Norell was introduced as "The First Great Perfume Born in America." The ad continued, "Each Time is the First Time With Norell." The bottle was elegant and classical. The very complex fragrance was exciting, with floral-green notes that never had been popular before in the United States. It was very diffusive. Women who wore it often received compliments from strangers.

Product Introductions—the 1970s

The late '60s and early '70s were fraught with turmoil and change in the US. In 1972, fragrance

marketers responded to new opportunities that resulted. Jovan innovatively introduced Musk Oil. The tag line read, "In a world filled with blatant propositions, brash overtures, bold invitations and brazen proposals—Get your share!" Musk became a "trend" that still hasn't died down.

That same year Revlon unveiled Charlie which it called "A Most Original Fragrance." The tag line continued, "Charlie's a gorgeous, sexy-young smell. (*Concentrated!*) And full of surprises. Just like you." Charlie had a lower price point than upscale perfume, but a higher fragrance level than the typical eau de toilette. It created the popular priced fragrance segment as we know it today.

Charlie was not completely original. It was a takeoff on Norell in a more floral, less sophisticated way. This was a very savvy move. If women were buying Norell at \$50 an ounce because they liked the fragrance, why not offer it to a wider audience?

The Charlie image was terrific. It typified the aspirations of young working women. The Charlie girl strode through life, wearing a pant suit. She was daring and self-confident and didn't rely on a man. No men appeared in early Charlie ads. But the Charlie girl was "Gorgeous and sexy;" she had the best of all worlds.

By 1975 more designers had entered the fra-



grance arena. Halston was a big success. The bottle was unique and memorable. The tag line read, "Wear a Halston Original" linking the fragrance to his successful fashions. The fragrance was a creative, original floral-woody accord using new wood notes. It was unusual and striking.

The next outstanding success came that same year: Chloe by Karl Lagerfeld, then an unknown designer. The bottle was elegant. Lagerfeld cautioned, "A woman does not put on my fragrance. She enters it." Fragrance had become a fashion accessory, a fashion necessity. The scent, a startling one-note, tuberose dominated floral captured women's tastes. Women sought it out wherever it was sold. Word of mouth, as much as advertising, made Chloe a huge success.

The late '70s saw more designers joining the fragrance foray. In 1977, Oscar de la Renta promised "Oscar Knows What Makes a Woman Beautiful." His bottle stopper resembled a delicate flower. The fragrance, a classical, floral-Oriental blend, was based on orange flower with sweet amber resins in the background. The Oscar image embodied continental sophistication and romance.

Next, in 1978, Yves Saint Laurent's Opium burst on the scene. This was a daring move since the

name is derived from an infamous drug and the controversial word addicted was used in ads. No TV commercials could be considered because the name had to be reviewed by the Television Code of Ethics Board.

The Opium bottle was special; a flacon inspired by the Japanese Inro, with a silken cord and tassel resembling the "ceremonial sash worn by Samarai." Yves Saint Laurent invited women to "the wilder shores . . . where enchantment is commonplace and dreams, most certainly, come true."

The scent was a spicier version of the classic Youth Dew. It fit splendidly with the image and the bottle. Opium, with intense publicity, quickly became a top seller.

1978 also saw the introduction of Lauren, a fragrance exactly the opposite of sensual, romantic, mysterious Oscar and Opium. Lauren depicted casual, active, stylish country manor life. The tag line read, "If it is possible for a fragrance to capture a way of living—a certain timeless style—Ralph Lauren has done just that." The innovative floral scent had diffusive green notes and a wonderful use of natural marigold. The rich burgundy-red bottle motif suggested understated wealth.

Finally, Estee Lauder's White Linen was the fourth big hit of the late '70s. Youth Dew, introduced in 1953, had been their best seller. Estee, Aliage and Private Collection were well received, but White Linen became the new star. Introduced in 1978 with two sister fragrances, Celedon and Pavillion, White Linen soon outsold the other two. Was it the fragrance? Was it the image? What made White Linen so outstanding?

The scent was a very creative aldehydic floral, using new rose notes in an extreme way. It complimented the daytime, lifestyle image of White Linen, described as "a crisp, refreshing fragrance to live in all year long."

Product Introductions—the 1980s

The next big turning point in fragrance history was made in 1982 with the launch of Georgio. Georgio started out very quietly, reaching women mainly through mail order. The fragrance was very different. It aggressively filled a room with a strong, heavy tuberose-green floral accord. Women who wore Georgio were noticed. The glitzy Beverly Hills image was reenforced by bright yellow striped packaging.

Georgio had a profound effect on fragrance creation. It started a trend toward stronger, pervasive scents that were always noticed, if not always appreciated. Georgio "scent strips" revolutionized fragrance sampling.

1985 marked another big fragrance milestone.



Calvin Klein's Obsession took center stage. The concept was daring and risky. Fellini-like television commercials marked a new twist in advertising. The message: "In the kingdom of passion the ruler is Obsession. Ahhh . . . the smell of it!" Controversial print ads showed four nude bodies, intertwined. It captured America's fantasy.

The fragrance was a non-controversial sexy, vanilla-Oriental accord, accented with fresh, green topnotes. The bottle supported the avante-garde, artistic image. Amid a flurry of debate and controversy accompanied by enormous publicity, Obsession was the talk of the town and immediately a smash hit.

Many promising new fragrances have brightened the late '80s. Passion and Cher are the first celebrity scents that seem to have taken off. Perhaps it is the strong personalities of Elizabeth Taylor and Cher that stimulate public interest. Passion invites one "to be touched by the fragrance that touches women." Cher is "Uninhibited. Bottled, but not contained."

Poison, Bijan and Eternity have been well received. Knowing and Beautiful seem to be growing steadily in popularity.

Fragrance in the 1990s

Will life return to a simpler, less complicated style in the '90s? I think not.

As a nation we are becoming more multi-dimensional and complex. We have more choices and options than ever before. There used to be two or three magazines—*Look*, *Life* and *The New Yorker*—to read in a doctor's office. Now there is a magazine for every interest: *Gourmet*, *Working Woman*, *New Woman*, *Self*, *Us*, *Parents*, *Money*, and many more.

Three networks used to dominate the air waves. Today cable television has given viewers many exciting, new alternatives.

Shopping used to be done in large department stores. Now local and regional specialty stores and mail order businesses are thriving.

Fortune 500 corporations used to be the mainstay, the rocks of stability that would go on forever. Today the small, adaptable entrepreneurial companies are growing in strength.

Today, women can feel free to choose whatever fashions they like. There is no one, "right" fashion look. Many styles are popular. Women are choosing clothes that work for them. Whatever feels right for them is "in."

No one hairstyle is popular. Whatever women feel comfortable with is fashionable. No makeup style has to be copied; whatever colors work for the individual are right. This freedom, that it's all right

for you to be you, is exciting for the fragrance industry.

What types of fragrances will appeal to women in the '90s? Women have become more complex. It will be impossible to devise one fragrance that appeals to women 18 to 80, in all income brackets, in all walks of life. But that concept never before worked anyway.

Fragrance can help women express their many dimensions. Our wardrobe of lifestyle fragrances can be expanded to include a wardrobe of mood swing fragrances. Fragrance concepts and images can cover a wide range in the '90s. There will be no need to stick to only designer and personality images.

Great original ideas that don't take themselves too seriously, like Jovan's Musk Oil and Calvin Klein's Obsession, have tickled the fancy of the public. They have been very entertaining. Perhaps this is the key to success. If we can convey something pleasurable to others, something beautiful, something exotic, something exhilarating or something funny we will have done our job.

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