



SMELL OF SUCCESS: Brand consultant Simon Faure-Field says that a scent can create an emotional connection between consumers and a brand.

Using scents to earn more dollars

He believes smells & sounds can be used in branding

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WILL smelling something nice put you in the mood to spend? Brand consultant Simon Faure-Field, 38, of Equal Strategy is a firm believer that smells and other sensory experiences can influence consumer buying decisions, so much so that his business is centred around this idea.

"Smell is a tool which businesses can use for branding purposes," said Mr Faure-Field, who creates custom scents for clients to use on their customers.

He explained that the purpose is for consumers to form an emotional connection to a brand and to remember it better.

Smells are just one aspect of a new trend called multisensory marketing, in which companies engage consumers through all five senses.

Luxury boutique hotel Naumi at Seah Street engaged Mr Faure-Field's firm to produce a signature scent of ginger and lime to fill its lobby and to provide programmed music to create an ambience in line with the image of the hotel.

Mr Faure-Field, who was trained in interior design, has also studied marketing. His charges vary according to the size of the space and can start from \$20 a day for scents or music.

He works with perfume and scent companies to produce scents specially for filling environments.

By using vials of specially concocted fragrances installed in air-conditioning units, it is possible to control the intensity level of the scent.

Naumi hotel manager Hament Rai, 37, said: "We wanted to project a unique and chic image that is outstanding and different from other hotels."

And it seems to work. According to Mr Hament, guests comment on the pleasant fragrance of the lobby and lounge area daily.

Hotel guest Manish Law, 34, on a visit from Kuwait, said the scent had made an impression on him.

"I noticed it when I walked in. The smell lends character to the place and helps me remember my experience here. The lounge music also matches the surroundings," he said.

"I won't choose a hotel just because it smells nice, but it definitely adds to the overall package."

Multi-sensory

At the Mercedes-Benz Centre in Alexandra, part of the business strategy is to make car-buying a multi-sensory experience on its own.

Said Miss Dawn Pan, 33, a senior marketing manager at Mercedes-Benz: "We want to give our clients an extraordinary experience rather than being another premium car showroom."

"When the client feels relaxed in our environment, he is more willing to test drive more cars and maybe buy a higher-end model."

They also engaged Mr Faure-Field to provide the music selection for their showroom. The songs are not played at random.

Said Mr Faure-Field: "In the morning, more low tempo music is played. In the late afternoon, more

"When a place smells nice, people want to linger on, order more drinks and spend more."

—Mr Hament Rai, manager of Naumi hotel which hired Mr Faure-Field to fill its lobby with the right fragrance and music.

up-tempo music can be played to keep the mood upbeat."

Said Ms Cynthia Lim, a sales manager: "The ambience and music made me feel good. I felt I was buying a lifestyle projected by the image of the showroom."

Assistant professor of marketing Jane Wang at the Singapore Management University said there has been limited research on the effect of sensory branding on consumer choice.

Despite this, she said using sensory stimulants such as music and fragrance to enhance the environment in which consumers make purchase decisions has a wide appeal.

Brand consultant Jorg Dietzel, 47, who also lectures at the Lee Kong Chian School of Business at the Singapore Management University and the National University of Singapore School of Business, said:

"Appealing to the senses of the consumer with the use of scents and music is a serious part of branding and something that businesses in Europe and the US have been using for 10 years," he said.

According to him, this trend has also caught on in Asia over the last five years.