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Changing times in the fragrance industry

As trends go, perfumery is more enduring than other beauty sectors like colour cosmetics or skincare. This area is less fickle and changeable and more inclined to embrace classic sophistication. Nevertheless, change does happen and is happening now, much of it driven by the new generation of consumers.

Isabelle de Maistre, Quadpack's Perfumery Category Manager explains:
Millennial fragrance
This younger target is more interested in change than their more senior counterparts. They are looking for the perfect fragrance, not content with choosing one from the selection they find on the shelf. It is common for this demographic to use four fragrances simultaneously. Self-expression through scent means matching their perfume to their mood, even creating something entirely new.

Layering is a trend that is rapidly taking hold, where consumers combine different products to produce a unique blend. The industry is responding with new formats that are smaller than the traditional 100ml, allowing the purchase of several products which with to experiment. Roll-ons are popular here, as they offer a convenient way to apply fragrances in layers on pulse points. Metal roller balls offer a cooling effect, too, for a more sensory experience that turns their use almost into a ritual.
Niche players
Niche brands are attempting to woo old and new generations alike with discovery kits, offering three to five fragrances, often in mid-sized bottles of around 10-30ml. These allow consumers to try out a new range without the investment of a standard size or the annoyance of running out quickly.

Beautiful collection cases are used to present these ranges at the high end of the market. These bespoke creations are almost as precious as the products they contain, with a use long beyond that for which they were originally intended. These have a life as a collector's item, used to decorate shelves or to house jewellery, and so are very effective in keeping the brand foremost in mind.

Contact Details
Mariam Khan
Quadpack Group Press Office
Summit Media Services
Tel: +34 93 265 4463
E-mail: summit_media@compuserve.com

Gender-neutral fragrances are another new entry being brought to market by these niche labels, with a good measure of success. As purchase is normally made in the first month of a launch, brands soon know if they are onto a winner or not.

Miniatures, flankers and one-shots

Having said that, miniatures are seeing something of a revival, representing 10% of retail sales. Flankers, limited editions, duty-free formats and one-shot projects – these all satisfy the younger generation's need for new options. These variants use the same primary packaging as the range to which they belong, but with the packs differentiated by colour, decoration and accessories.

Their sales are boosted by special promotions. It's a well-known fact that people tend to buy when there is a promotion and brands are currently taking full advantage, though only 10% of flankers survive beyond the first year.

And it's not just fragrance brands – there are many new entrants from many different industries. Fashion, car and watch brands are entering perfumery with a bang. With distribution channels already in place, these companies are well-placed to bring new products to market successfully. Hugely successful, these new entrants are adding to an increasingly crowded market.

New horizons

Time will tell which fragrances are here to stay and which are a momentary trend. What is sure is that the industry is changing, with a new generation of consumers rewriting the rules. While they are unlikely to affect the very premium segment, they are altering the way perfumes are used in general, opening doors to new ideas and new concepts. All in all, these are exciting times in the fragrance sector.

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About Quadpack Industries SA

Quadpack Industries is an international manufacturer and a provider of enhanced packaging solutions for beauty brand owners and contract fillers. With offices and production facilities in Europe, North America, and the Asia Pacific region and a strategic network of manufacturing partners, Quadpack develops bespoke and customised packs for prestige, masstige and mass market customers. For more information, please visit www.quadpack.com.

Contact Details

Mariam Khan

Quadpack Group Press Office

Summit Media Services

Tel: +34 93 265 4463

E-mail: summit_media@compuserve.com

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