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Fragrance goes natural

The world is changing. New generations have new priorities, driven by an acute awareness of the need for sustainability. As the Millennials grow up, so their influence grows. While this generation does not have great spending power (yet!), these youngsters are demanding products and practices that respect the planet. Fragrance brands are quick to recognise this demand, understanding that their own efforts at sustainability can only benefit by meeting their needs.

Trends with a positive impact

It all starts with the juice. Natural fragrances are booming. They may not all be organic, but instead favour natural molecules. Of course, to achieve certain scents, artificial ones cannot always be avoided, as they might replace animal molecules. Thanks to IFRA legislation, all perfume is now animal cruelty-free and allergy sufferers are taken into account. Nevertheless, natural fragrances are on the rise, with some brands using only natural molecules.

At the same time, 'eco/eco' products are coming out that are ecological and economical at the same time. It's all about achieving a good balance. This means they are affordable for the Millennials of today and they answer to their demands for environmentally-friendly practices. In other words, they are good for you and good for the planet. A classic win-win situation.

Packaging: the great enabler

Both trends are linked in great part to packaging. A natural fragrance needs a natural look. The use of simple, sustainable materials allows a product to be dressed in an attractive way that is earth-friendly and visually conveys the eco message. Wood, aluminium, glass and even cork and ceramic are all natural materials being used for primary packaging. All can be recycled, while wood from sustainable sources is endlessly renewable and aluminium can be reused forever without degradation or loss of quality.

New techniques are being developed to incorporate and decorate these materials, with spectacular results. Mix-and-match combinations of wood, metal, ceramics and other materials can produce some amazing looks. Wood in particular offers great opportunity for creative expression. Quadpack is enlarging its own swatch book with new wood deco techniques like ink layering, driftwood effect, patinas, pearlisation, metal/stone effect, rust, chameleon and many more.

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All this means that sustainable packaging is no longer limited to niche or mass market. It is being embraced by premium natural brands like Cristallerie des Parfums, as well as mass natural brands like the highly-successful 100bon.

Refill, reduce, recycle

Refill concepts are also gaining ground, particularly for eco/eco products. New, 'jumbo' formats of around 200ml are being proposed as refills by fragrance houses across Europe. Bigger means not only more affordable, but also less packaging. Replacing crimp necks with screw necks allows the bottle to be detached by the consumer to make it possible.

At the same time, small, portable formats allow the fragrance to be carried in handbags or vanity cases. These, too, can be refillable, perhaps from the original jumbo pack. Quadpack is working on a new nomad purse spray designed precisely for this purpose, with a screw neck, small capacity and a fun shape to engage the consumer.

Such 'eco-conception' goes beyond a product's life. The packaging can be made in a way that allows easy recycling. Component parts may be dismantled by the consumer, with the materials each disposed of in the corresponding recycling container.

The manufacturer can carry the use of sustainable materials even further than primary packaging. Secondary packaging can, of course, be made of wood or recycled cardboard, for example. Beyond the pack itself, the material used for transportation can be sustainable, too. After all, great deal of packing material is involved in transport.

A sustainable future

The shift towards sustainability has been happening for some time now. The 'virtuous circle' has long been pushing the trend. Now, we are starting to see real results. Initial greenwashing practices are recognised for what they are and some brands like Guerlain have embraced the concept wholeheartedly throughout their business model. Now, as the Millennials' influence grows, there will be no turning back. This generation will help to achieve that much-needed balance and truly make the world a better place.

– Isabelle de Maistre, Quadpack Fragrance Category Manager

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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.



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