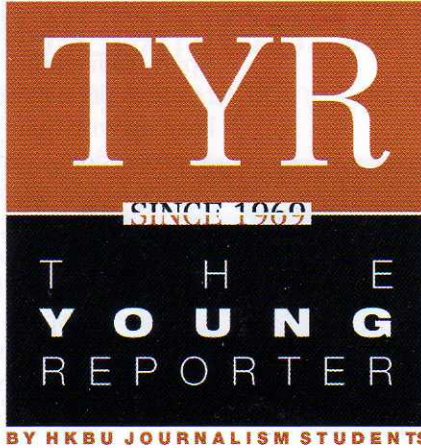


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## BEHIND THE TROPHY

The insecure career path of Hong Kong's retired athletes





# SCENT MARKETING IS

*An enchanting fragrance that brings up beautiful memories for business, even though its effect won't last a lifetime*

Scents are everywhere, but only particular ones will pull up the memories, either sweet or nasty, of those with discerning noses.

It is their links with personal emotions and experiences that make the scents meaningful and easily be recognizable by people for the rest of their life.

According to the perfume brand Demeter, which boasts a collection of 200 kinds of scents, scents of snow, paint, glue, dust and firefly are popular among its customers as they remind them of the most innocent memories of childhood.

Ms Yao Pai-wen, a Taiwanese customer of Demeter, said on the internet that the Taiwanese like the scent of straw as it could remind them of the big pieces of rice paddies in the old times.

The same recalling power of smell applies also in businesses.

Scent marketing is the use of smell to enhance a brand image, attract customers and build their long-term loyalty through the brand-recalling effect: customers may subconsciously remember the tailor-made

scent and will relate it to the corresponding brand whenever they come across the same scent.

Sky Work Design, opened in March this year, is one of the design houses that provide clients with this scent strategic solution in Hong Kong.

By selecting and mixing at least 50 to 60 scents, a unique scent is found to suit its client's image. For example, the fashion chain "2%" adopts a sweet and spicy scent, said Mr Daniel Fong Ming-san, 46, Marketing Director of Sky Work Design.

Surveys have found that scent marketing is an effective sensory tool to boost sales or promote new products as consumers would stay longer and were more likely to consume in a scented environment.

The whole thing work automatically. "You can avoid listening to or watching advertisements, but you just can't avoid breathing in the scent," said Mr Fong.

The strategy is commonly used nowadays in boutiques and events. But apart from simply spraying the scent in the air, Mr Fong



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also uses it in various means to reinforce the impacts. For example, there are scented leaflets, name cards, stickers, souvenirs, and even scented garments like bra.

While some people think the memories

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Mr Daniel Fong Ming-san,  
Marketing Director of SkyWorkDesign

brought by scents could last forever, others have doubts about the idea.

In an essay published in 1996, psychologists Rachel Herz and Trygg Engen say that olfaction

(smell sense) is the slowest of all senses to transmit messages to the brain.

Professor Ken Yung Kin-lam, 45, said memory brought by scent may not last the longest period of time, compared to that of other senses like visual and audio.

He said humans use classical conditioning – a behavioral learning theory that explains how things occur with the associations between an environmental and a naturally occurring stimulus – to associate scents with memories. So how long the memories can last actually depend on how far-reaching the incident is on that person, he said.

Yet, he admitted that scents can help people memorize complex things. “Scent is a mixture of chemical signals,” said Prof Yung. “Perhaps because each type of scent has more than 1,000 combinations, different stimulated neuro cells are competent to distinguish among them.”

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