

# IMCD and Fragrance Science *embark on a 'scentsational' collaboration*

In 2021, Fragrance Science established a contract with the IMCD Group for the distribution of its fragrances in South Africa, in various industrial segments. The partnership brings a personalised customer-centric approach, honest and open communication and the capability to provide flexible solutions for evolving fragrance challenges and to meet the specific needs of the local market.

**F**ragrance Science has been "creating feelings through a world of scent" since 2004. The international fragrance manufacturer is based in Barcelona, Spain, where it specialises in the creation, development and production of fragrance solutions. Its solutions are used in a wide range of segments and categories worldwide, including fine fragrances, home care, laundry/fabric care, air care and personal care.

Approximately 95% of its business is exported, mainly to non-EU countries. Fragrance Science works with a global network of specialised distributors and agents.

"In everything we do, we apply our core values of passion, creativity and technology," the team comments. "Our goal is to maintain the perfect balance between creative development and technology."

## SCIENCE AND SMELL

For a long time, science paid very little attention to the most mystical and emotional of human senses – smell. Yet, the sense of smell is becoming more and more important. Catapulted by the pandemic, the loss of/inability to smell (known as anosmia) was pinpointed as a symptom of coronavirus. Interestingly, people have been unaware of the

### Did you know?

The way we associate (and prefer) scents is down to culture and experiences. Powdery, floral and sweet scents are intended for women, and aromatic woody scents for men. But this is shifting. Generally speaking, all perfumes are unisex. Lately there are more gourmand and floral notes in men's perfumes while many women wear fragrances that are classified as masculine – and that is okay.



A smelling session hosted by the Fragrance Science team

importance of smell, until they lost the sense, which leaved them terrified.

At the beginning of the pandemic perfumes and cosmetics were the hardest-hit categories with plummeting sales. During lockdowns consumers saw little to no need to apply perfumes (or makeup). Instead, consumers prioritised cleanliness and hygiene, and as these concerns rose, so did safety fears.

As the pandemic evolved, consumers started to invest more in themselves, mainly due to video conferences and virtual meetings while working from home. Home fragrances and scented candles grew in popularity. Research from NPD showed that 89% of consumers reported to use home scents in 2021.

Comfort also became a top priority, as well as the need to escape. Consumers around the globe started to crave travel and exploration, discovering new cultures and making new memories from the comfort of their homes.

Instead of a way to seduce and attract, consumers began using fragrances as a form of self-care and way of feeling good. Being

attractive lies in confidence and uniqueness, and fragrance can help to achieve this.

## SCENT-CENTRIC WELLNESS TREND

Despite the uncertainty, the pandemic didn't discourage consumers' interest in fragrance. Over the past two years, Fragrance Science saw major increases in the scent-centric wellness trend, mainly driven by consumers who were looking for products and fragrances designed to deliver stress relief.

Fragrances with a clean, almost antiseptic aroma provided consumers with a sense of peace of mind and safety as the pandemic progressed. Consumers turned to softer, neutral, light fragrances, or to the traditional old-faithful fragrances. Especially in times of uncertainty consumers look for comforting fragrances that trigger nostalgic, happy and relaxed feelings. For many of us the most comforting feelings come from traditional scents and those familiar to us since childhood, which have always made us feel safe, at peace and at home.

Although these scents differ from one person to the next, there are some that



transcend regions and cultures. One example is clean fragrance concepts, which evoke the sensation of freshly washed linen, baked goods or coffee brewing. Lavender, vanilla and green herbal notes are also universal scents.

### SCENTS TO STRENGTHEN MENTAL HEALTH

During the pandemic, clean, soft, musky and enveloping scents were in continuous circulation as well as gourmand sweet notes and creamy desert-like scents. This is because consumers turn to these scents when needing reassurance or wanting to feel good.

While looking good is essential to many consumers, considerations of longer-term physical, mental and emotional health benefits of fragrances are becoming equally important. As stress is increasingly recognised as a health concern, the emphasis is on brands and organisations to help consumers deal with the root causes.

The Fragrance Science team explains: "We have seen a growing interest in essential oils and mood-boosting or aromatherapy concepts with relaxing notes like lavender, ylang-ylang and sandalwood. Energising and invigorating notes such as citrus, spice and turmeric have also become popular."

The beauty and cleaning routine has also been elevated to a more sensorial and pleasurable experience. In this instance, consumers are encouraged to relax, put their senses at ease and enjoy the moment. The whole concept of self-care has been extended to total relaxation or simply doing nothing, as people make more mindful decisions about what to do with their time. As a result, consumers will continue to be drawn to scents that strengthen their mental health.

### AROMAS MEETING THE NEED TO ESCAPE

Pre-pandemic we already saw the escapism trend, with experiences favoured over possessions.

"We saw a focus on older traditions and celebrations that are centred on heritage and nostalgia," the team says, adding that "the pandemic increased consumers' need for escapism. We saw lots of happy solar, bright, fresh and fruity notes used in products. These remind us of our favourite destinations from the past or the present. The more enveloping notes, from floral and fruity to gourmand, are reminiscent of places we cannot go to physically."



The Roxane robot in the Fragrance Science laboratory

More recently this trend has translated into natural, aromatherapeutic ingredients inspired by the earth and mother nature. These scents, such as the smell of recognisable outdoor elements like tomato, fresh-cut mint, spring grass, the ocean, forests, fir balsam, grounding cedarwood and even dirt, are designed to bring consumers closer to nature.

### THE IMPORTANT ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY

Creating fresh, lasting fragrance is the goal of every brand. Developing a technology that delivers a full, fresh fragrance in a range of scenarios and for anything from 24 hours to weeks on end demands the ultimate in creative and scientific thinking.

**"Fragrance Science offers a wide variety of fragrance technologies designed to maximise the olfactive experience"**

Fragrance Science offers a wide variety of fragrance technologies designed to maximise the olfactive experience. Through encapsulation, odour control, blooming, scented plastics, or headspace that capture the most beautiful smells from nature and bring them into our lives without destroying the source.

"We use fragrances daily to scent ourselves and our home. They affect our emotions,

moods and relationships. Fragrance use has become multi-purpose," the team comments.

Indulge, feel, escape, cocoon, energise, or relax – as you wish. Or "scent-design" yourself and your home as you wish. With Fragrance Science, brands can create feelings through a world of scents.

Readers are invited to discuss their next fragrance challenge with the Fragrance Science team. ■

### A SNAPSHOT OF FRAGRANCE SCIENCE'S MILESTONES

The history of Fragrance Science is marked by various highlights, all indicating growth.

**2019:** The inauguration of Roxane robots in the Fragrance Science laboratory and production plant considerably improved the company's traceability, productivity and accuracy.

**2020:** Fragrance Science invested in a 1 000m<sup>2</sup> laboratory plant with an increased number of technical facilities and staff.

**2021:** The ongoing expansion and growing demand for fragrance ingredients resulted in the opening of a fourth site for Fragrance Science. This same year, the company increased exports from 26 to 32 countries.

**Fragrance Science –**  
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