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Review of Aroma Marketing in Selected Areas: Case of Fashion Stores¹

Fashion shops nowadays more and more use the sense of vision to persuade their customers to stay longer and spark an interest in their merchandise, many special offers and other things. Many more of these scientific studies have to be done to find the exactly perfect scent in fashion place that has all the advantages for businesses. After the business owners and marketing specialists have found the perfect and most interesting fragrance that they would like to apply to their store, they also have to find the perfect location for the diffusers to work effectively. This depends of course on how big the fashion store is, how many and how big diffusers are needed, and the question of how much of liquid scent is needed is also important. The diffuser location would be some place with high customers traffic, for example doorways, any narrow places, where customers have to get closer to the products and of course, near the product you would like to sell more of. Also, important thing is making sure there is enough ventilation in the shop, so the air gets always pushed and making sure there are no air flow going outside, like opened windows for example, doors are necessary evil in this case. The main objective of submitted paper is to point out on aroma marketing using directly in fashion retail stores and its impact on customers based on available theoretical literature sources.

Keywords: aroma marketing, aromatization, emotions, fashion, scent

Introduction

Scent marketing is defined as the aroma usage of mood setting, products promotion, or brand placement. Retailers place the fragrances to create the positive emotions for customers and ensure their satisfaction. Certain positive smells are also connected to bringing mood up, making more relaxed even when human is in a rush or is stressed

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out. 'A pleasant scent can appear to improve quite effectively the relatively bad mood of hurried customers' (couponsinthenews.com 2016). Survey says that the customers are more prone to turn around and leave your store. This can sometimes be hard for the shop owner, but not to worry, there are many scent and aroma making businesses which can do analysis and mix up the perfect scent to match the merchandise and appeal to various customers (Cachero-Martínez-Vázquez-Casielles 2017; Gottschalk 2018; Leenders et al. 2016; Orvis 2016). The smells in general can generate affective responses because they are first processed in the human brain limbic system that is the center of emotions and memory (Doucé et al. 2014). According to Randhir et al. (2016), Bradford and Desrochers (2009), Lindstrom (2005) fragrances let down certain parts of the brain that are responsible for creating the emotions and memories. Human nose can recognize and memorize up to 10,000 aromas, and up to 75% of our emotions come from what we feel. From all the senses, a smell is only one with a direct connection to the brain. Researchers say that people remember 35% of what they smell, compared to only 5% of what they see, 2% of what they hear, and only 1% of what they are touch. For this reason, the fragrance makes a unique brand identity, strengthens the customer loyalty and enhances the perception of quality (Schutte 2016). We, humans have five senses. They are touch, vision, hearing, taste and smell. The last, smell, is the strongest among them and it takes the shortest route to our brain, going straight to our amygdala, which is the center for our emotions and memory, so you can act before you even think about it, unlike the other four senses, which take longer route, going from the part of our brain called brain stem to thalamus and finally to cerebral cortex (Sweeney 2009). Thalamus then behaves like clutch, shifting the information forward, finally to the part called cerebral cortex which is responsible for higher thinking, attention, logical thinking and getting things together, basically everything that sets us apart from mammals. So, in the case of the four other senses, you first have to think, even if for a split of a second and then act, says Pam Scholder Ellen, Georgia State University marketing professor (Vlahos 2007).

Materials and Methods

The main objective of submitted paper is to point out on aroma marketing using directly in fashion retail stores and its impact on customers based on available theoretical literature sources.

In the process of following of our main goal of this review paper, we systematically gathered information by searching and reviewing available *secondary sources*. All the

processed information is based on available scientific papers, publications or verified online articles.

In the introduction part, we defined scent marketing and we stated specific facts and the use of aromas in marketing. In Results and Discussion, we aimed directly on aroma marketing application in practice based on the research results from various authors. Except all of that, in this section of our article, we mention specific examples of studies realized in the realm of aroma marketing in chosen fashion stores.

In the conclusion part, we mention the summarized results based on the secondary sources we examined and we also submit our own recommendations, process and methods of the planned research.

Results and Discussion

From Aroma Definition towards to Aroma Marketing Application

Berčík et al. (2016) present that besides the fact that aroma affects memory, emotions, satisfaction, customer preferences, but it also influence the time spent in a particular store. It also can make them stay longer and behave more like unhurried shoppers, significantly increasing shopping times of this group (Leenders et al. 2016). In addition, it claims that the aroma is an element that belongs to visual merchandising tools. The environment in which consumers buy, consume, and the like, may induce by themselves the different moods and emotions, and on the contrary, these feelings can influence the attitudes and behavior of consumers themselves (Gault 2007). Although, retailers have considered the importance of fragrances and their impact on consumer behavior, it is still difficult to determine the suitability of aroma in retail in relation to age, culture and other personal qualities. Another type of scent used in retail shops is juicy-fruit scent, like lemon and orange. They help with fatigue and tiredness and promote energy boosting. Lemon is also known for its health benefits, so you may decrease the risk for your staff to catch a flu, because of its anti-bacterial properties (Holmes 2017; Helmefalk–Hultén 2017). For example, in Japan, scientists and marketing specialists have found that when they spread a lemon-oil scent down the halls of offices, the typing mistakes of those employed there lowered by 54%, they also plummeted by 33% with jasmine oil and 20% when inhaling lavender (Card 2014). Regarding to the research of Rimkute et al. (2016) a scent positively influences the attitudes to the environment and increases the memory of a particular brand, which ultimately leads to an increase in purchases. Chebat and Michon (2003) guest, retailers should apply the

'ambient scents' in their applied marketing tools. The authors also state that this is one of the cheapest techniques that enhance shopper's perceptions. Grybś-Kabocik (2018) in his survey identifies, that consumers perceive aroma marketing as a positive form of marketing communication and argue that scent marketing can be an effective tool in influencing consumer decision-making. Holland et al. (2005) within his research found that flavor can affect people's knowledge and their behavior without conscious knowing its influence. Spangenberg et al. (2005) present, in order to achieve success, the *'olfactory cues'* should be enjoyable for the customers and at the same time they should be interconnected with other components of the environment in which they are dispersed. If a case that the olfactory cues meet the environment and do not fit into the context of the shop they are in, consumer behavior can be affected to such an extent as to hinder the formation of consumer attitudes. Gagarina and Pikturniene (2015) researched in their experiment, that, peppermint flavor and high aroma environments should be useful to induce the consumer behavior in potentially risky decisions such as insurance, lottery tickets, gambling, or generally uncertain and expensive purchases, because the risks were perceived lower, with higher price offers in these environments. Marketing specialists know this, that is why the stores are implementing artificial scents in their shops, because a sense of smell cannot be turned off, so they are trying to develop the best strategies and make as much as possible of it. Studies show us very impressive results from the stores, which are using scents as an enhancement to improve customer's mood, stretch the time they spend shopping and make them buy products they did not anticipate buying in the first place. One particular study found that getting the customer to extend his/her well time in the store by just 1% corresponds to an increase in the sales made by him by 1,3%. Artificial scenting then became double gun, affecting not only the customers and their overall spending habits and techniques but also the staff and their working schedules, improving the numbers of their mistakes and their whole efficiency. There is also a gender difference when talking about using the scent in the business (O'Keefe 2015; Phillips 2012). Scent marketing can have an enormous effect on the stores profit, taking into account that customers affected by nice smell in the shop stay 44% time longer than they would within the pleasant fragrance (Conick 2017). The ultimate quest for market specialists and shop owners is to find the right kind of scent and the right volume of it. It cannot be too weak, because then, it would lose the fight with the other, natural smells of products sold in the store. It has to be perfect, good enough to beat the other fragrances, high in intensity but not too much so the customers do not feel insecure and do not leave. In the condition with high scent intensity, the aroma has a significant positive effect on shopper's store evaluations, time

spent in store and store level sales (Leenders et al. 2016). A 2007 study by Department of Oral Physiology, Meikai University, Japan found out that these two scents - lavender and rosemary dramatically decrease the hormone cortisol in the salivary system. These findings clarify that lavender and rosemary enhance FRSA (Free radical scavenging activity means an antioxidant, that helps protect the cell from the damage done by free radicals, which are unstable molecules that are made during normal cell metabolism due to chemical changes within the molecule) (Atsumi et al. 2007). As Warrenburg (2005) stated, International Flavors & Fragrances Inc. (IFF) has developed a self-report method called Mood Mapping™ that reliably measures the mood associations of aromas, whether simple ingredients or finished fragrances in consumer products. The Mood Mapping provides that a clementine aroma, a citrus aroma and vanilla are equally pleasant, but the former is more stimulating and vanilla more relaxing.

Case of Fashion Segment

Spangenberg et al. (2006) tested the impact of *'ambient scent'* on consumer purchasing decision in a store with fashion, and he has confirmed the pleasure influence among gender and product based scent associations. As Orvis (2016) adds the large retailers, such as Nike have found, that aroma marketing in retail stores has increased their purchasing interest by up to 80%. Additionally, thanks to the placing of aroma in retail space, customers have stayed longer when shopping, while viewing more products, improving their sense of perception of quality and aroma to create a warm feeling of home. Dalton (2017) presents the study, which was done by *'The Smell & Taste Treatment & Research Foundation'*. In this study, Nike shoes were placed in two separate rooms. One room had unscented air and the second room was aromatized with a floral scent. It shows that most people in the room with a floral scent were willing to pay in 10 USD (8.81 EUR) more for shoes. Khan (2016); O'Keefe (2015) shows the study managed by a psychologist and academic Eric Spangenberg, in which he was found, that in a local store with fashion, the sale of female dresses was doubled. This store was aromatized with *'female fragrance'* as vanilla. A similar result was found in the relations with male clothing when the fragrances such as *'rose maroc'* were placed. Studies have found that when women bought less when the store smelled masculine and, on the other hand, men bought less when the store smelled feminine. But, when the right choice of scents has been made, so the men's area smelled masculine and women's area smelled feminine, the sales doubled, both genders bought twice as much. Morrison et al. (2011) also investigated in his survey the influence of vanilla flavor on

the behavior of young customers in the selected clothing shops. This store focuses on youngsters aged between 14–25, but for ethical reasons, the survey was attended by respondents over the age of 18. Its results show the significant influence of vanilla aroma on emotions and customer satisfaction. His further analysis suggests that the excitement caused by a pleasant aroma leads to an increase in the level of pleasure that also positively influences the buyer's behavior, the time spent in the store, and the amount of money spent on the purchase of clothing, as well as overall satisfaction. The beneficial scent is vanilla. It has been scientifically proven that when participants of the scientific study in 2004 inhaled vanilla scent, they tested positively on more relaxed feelings and joy. This was done by mind mapping of the participants for many feelings, like feelings of happiness to feelings of apathy and irritation. According to Günther (2017) aroma marketing is just one part of the overall concept of the business. It is important not to consider the smell only as '*fragrance*', but simply as something that we accept as part of the concept within the space without any further thought. That's why 'ambient scenting with overwhelming scents', as Abercrombie & Fitch or Hollister did, was wrongly chosen, given that customers prefer clean and fresh air.

Conclusion

The modern neurologic and behavioral researches are developed based on the development of smart technological opportunities, which are able to change the quality and speed of physiological and neurological data obtaining. It can influence the perception, positive feeling and customer economics decision, thanks to the life quality is closer to the center of interest in advanced society, as well as research institutions. The main objective of submitted paper is to point out on aroma marketing using directly in fashion retail stores and its impact on customers based on available theoretical literature sources. Presented paper recent several findings regarding the influence of odors on the human activities with special reference to special aromas inhaled in the stores and their impact on customers. Submitted paper presents the theoretical overview about aroma marketing in selected areas, especially focused on fashion stores. In the future, we recommend to examine the research of aroma marketing placing in fashion stores regarding to current experiments done by other authors, who are quoted in the paper reference list. This topic was conducted only a few authors in the world and we would see a huge potential in the application of fragrances to such stores as well. It is necessary to process the complex background and to prove an impact of various scents on consumer behavior regarding to the gender, age, culture etc.

For the purpose of performing the practical research of aroma marketing, the following procedures of survey are planned as:

- obtaining/summarizing the available knowledge on the properties and chemical composition of the aromatic compounds and examining the influence of selected aromatic compounds on human emotions and on sensory, affective and cognitive processes of people,
- testing the effect of aromatic compounds under different air quality conditions,
- testing the effect of aromatization on other sensory perception of probands (taste, sight, hearing).

The main data needed to explore marketing flavor in selected segments are:

- *primary*: data from the chemical composition testing of flavorings, data collection regarding to the impact of flavorings on humans in the ‘*Laboratory of Consumer Studies*’ at Faculty of Economics and Management, Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra primarily focused on aroma testing, questionnaire research, biometric and neuroimaging devices used in modern marketing – in neuromarketing,
- *secondary*: a theoretical overview of aroma, marketing aroma, aroma placement in sales surveys, and an overview of the practical use of flavorings from available sources.

Obtained research data used in research will be, in addition to traditional methods (such as selection, comparison, brainstorming, interview, focus group discussion, questionnaire, A/B testing). Except these, in our research we will apply the neuroimaging and biometric methods.

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The main goal of APPV is to complexly reveal how are aromatic compounds sensed based on an interaction between explicit (sensoric) and implicit analysis through

consumer's neuroscience in real conditions of manufacturing plants, shops and in the sphere of services. The project is in its first year and it will last until the year 2022.

Kega is a project aimed to establish a unique laboratory, which does not have a competitor in the Slovak Republic, and also to contribute to the basic teaching process with samples, tests, seminars and studies in sensoric, consumer's and neuromarketing fields. It also aims to gather new, useful findings concerning the customer's behavior, senses and effective ways of implementation of marketing communication tools, broaden reality and visual merchandising. The project ended on 31. 12. 2018.

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