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Dollars and Sense: The Impact of Multi-Sensory Marketing

Multi-Sensory Marketing—the benefits of marketing to all senses.

The soft clack of your computer keyboard, the jangle of a slot machine, the crunch of your morning cereal, the muffled heft of your car door closing—these are all product elements companies have spent considerable time and money optimizing.

Your brand may be associated with a sound experience. From our ambient surroundings to a product-produced noise, sound influences our ideas and judgments about the goods and services we buy.

Sound isn't alone. Savvy brands are finding ways to engage all consumer senses to strengthen the brand experience.

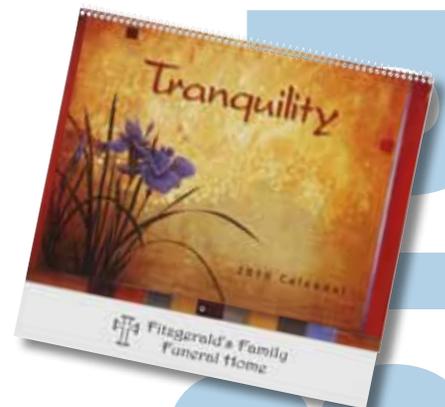


The approach is called sensory marketing, integrating all of the senses into the marketing program. It's about capitalizing on what we know about our sensory links to recall emotion and leveraging that information to strengthen brands and increase sales.

Sensory branding is based on the idea that we are most likely to form, retain and revisit memory when all five senses are engaged. By going beyond the traditional marketing media of sight and (sometimes) sound, brands can establish a stronger and longer-lasting emotional connection with consumers.¹

In studies, groups exposed to multi-sensory environments always outperform those in uni-sensory environments. Their recall is better all around—in quantity of information retained, clarity and duration.² What's more, sensory information can affect consumer habits, such as restaurant turnover or purchasing. Marketers are taking heed.

For brands struggling to compete in today's crowded marketplace, strategic use of sensory information can provide a critical advantage. When we appeal to multiple senses, our efforts are multiplied, creating powerful brands with lasting consumer connections.



¹ "ScentAir." ScentAir. 14 July 2009 <<http://www.scentair.com>>.

² Medina, John. *Brain Rules 12 Principles for Surviving and Thriving at Work, Home, and School*. New York: Pear P, 2008.

Let's begin with ...

Sound

Sound, for example, has the power to impact our mood and sway our buying habits. Researchers have found that the pace of background music affects customer perceptions of wait time, spending and turnover in stores and restaurants.

Fast music decreases spending in a retail environment, but increases turnover in restaurants.³ For restaurants more concerned with increasing the spend-per-customer ratio, slower music creates longer dining times, leading to a 29 percent increase in the average bill according to one experiment.⁴

Tempo aside, companies choose music congruent with their brand identity. Abercrombie and Fitch™ uses loud upbeat music with a heavy bass and eliminates gaps between tracks, creating a youthful nightclub-like atmosphere in its teen-focused clothing shops.⁵ Victoria's Secret™, on the other hand, plays classical music to evoke a sense of upscale exclusivity for its brand.⁶

The Gap™, Eddie Bauer™, Starbucks™, and Toys “R” Us™ are just a few other retail chains that invest in music programs customized for their brands.⁷ JC Penny™ takes a different approach and adjusts its music selection based on customer demographics, playing more Latin American music in stores with a high percentage of Hispanic customers, for example.⁸

When sound is directly linked to the product itself, consumers may interpret it as a sign of quality or familiarity. Kellogg's™ takes full advantage of the sound element. Its Rice Krispies™ have the classic “snap, crackle, pop,” but did you know the crunch of the Kellogg's cornflake was carefully developed in sound labs?⁹ By introducing a distinctive sound to its breakfast cereal, the company integrated four senses into its product: taste, touch, sight and sound.



³ Lindstrom, Martin. *BRAND sense Build Powerful Brands through Touch, Taste, Smell, Sight, and Sound*. New York: Free P, 2005.

⁴ Lindstrom, Martin. *BRAND sense Build Powerful Brands through Touch, Taste, Smell, Sight, and Sound*. New York: Free P, 2005.

⁵ Hulten, Bertil, Niklas Broweur, and Marcus Van Dijk. *Sensory Marketing*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

⁶ Lindstrom, Martin. *BRAND sense Build Powerful Brands through Touch, Taste, Smell, Sight, and Sound*. New York: Free P, 2005.

⁷ Hulten, Bertil, Niklas Broweur, and Marcus Van Dijk. *Sensory Marketing*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

⁸ http://www.usatoday.com/money/industries/retail/2006-09-01-retail-cover-usat_x.htm

⁹ Lindstrom, Martin. *BRAND sense Build Powerful Brands through Touch, Taste, Smell, Sight, and Sound*. New York: Free P, 2005.

Sound marketing has as much to do with the absence of noise as its presence. Car manufacturers make untold investments to remove outside noise from a vehicle, but sound elimination isn't the designers' sole object. At the end of the 1990s, Daimler Chrysler created a 10-engineer department whose sole task was to create the ideal sound for the opening and closing of a car door.¹⁰

Likewise, vehicle manufacturers work hard to optimize other sounds, from the click of the turn signal to the sound of the seat belt warning. Harley-Davidson™ has even tried to patent its raucous roar.

Removing a familiar product noise can backfire, as several manufacturers have discovered. Take the BellagioSM Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, for example, which replaced its slot machines with new cashless models, minus the satisfactory clank of falling coins. Revenue dropped dramatically and the original machines were quickly put back in service.¹¹

In the 1970s, IBM launched a silent typewriter that was rejected by users who felt uncomfortable with the new quiet machine. As a result, IBM added electronic sounds to replace the natural noise it had worked to eliminate.¹²

The same phenomenon occurred in recent history, when camera developers added an artificial shutter click so photographers could feel sure it was working. And in the Camera Phone Predator Alert Act, introduced in the House in January 2009, one legislator even suggests that camera phones should be required by law to sound a tone to prevent surreptitious picture taking.¹³

We expect certain sounds from certain products ... and from certain brands.

Stop and imagine for a moment the sound of a McDonald'sSM... and, now the sound of a Starbucks. We have distinct sound expectations for these environments.

Starbucks has made a careful study of its sound; its cafes combine a carefully selected playlist with the quiet whoosh of steaming milk, bean grinders and clicking dishes to create the "Sound of Starbucks."

Now consider a McDonalds. In Martin Lindstrom's Brand Sense study, a quarter of those affected by noise in restaurants said McDonald's gave them a negative feeling, associating



¹⁰ Lindstrom, Martin. *BRAND sense Build Powerful Brands through Touch, Taste, Smell, Sight, and Sound*. New York: Free P, 2005.

¹¹ Lindstrom, Martin. *BRAND sense Build Powerful Brands through Touch, Taste, Smell, Sight, and Sound*. New York: Free P, 2005.

¹² Lindstrom, Martin. *BRAND sense Build Powerful Brands through Touch, Taste, Smell, Sight, and Sound*. New York: Free P, 2005.

¹³ Camera Phone Predator Alert Act, H.R. H. R. 414, 111th Cong. Library of Congress. thomas.loc.gov

the fast food behemoth with the sound of screaming kids and the pinging of the fry oil timer.

Perhaps, we speculate, McDonald's is trying to combat that impression by offering large glass-walled (sound muffling) play rooms with plenty of dining space for patrons with children. By segregating the noise of playing children, McDonald's can enhance its brand and appeal to a wider, older demographic.

Now, imagine what would happen to the ambience if Starbucks chose to change any of its delivery methods—paper plates and plastic forks for the bakery, for example, or automatic coffee machines that eliminated the need for steam-frothed milk. Customers would not only see and feel the changes, they would hear them. The ambience would be perceptively changed and incongruent with the brand's upscale image.

Like sight, certain sound elements are part and parcel of traditional marketing efforts. We, of course, have a long history of companies using music in their advertising. The claim for the first jingle is often given to General Mills™ for its "Have You Tried Wheaties™?" sung advertisement, released in 1926. Later well-know jingles include Brylcreem's™ "A little dab'll do ya," the Army's "Be all you can be," and McDonald's recent short "I'm lovin' it.SM"

These little tunes get trapped in our heads and help consumers remember a product. But advertising slogans come and go. Less traditional, but perhaps even more integral to a brand are sound trademarks.

In 1950, NBC™ successfully registered the first sound trademark for its signature musical notes G, E, C played on chimes. Other seminal sound trademarks include the MGMSM lion roar, the spoken letters AT&T™, the American AirlinesSM 'ding,' the Pillsbury™ doughboy's giggle, and Microsoft's™ start-up sound for Windows™.

Some of these sounds achieve trademark-worthy status by chance, becoming part of our familiar sound culture after years of use. Others, like the four chord progression that plays at Windows Vista™ startup, are painstakingly developed (over a reported 18 months in the case of Vista¹⁴) as purposeful, definitive brand marks.

Sound trademarks have been a part of the U.S. marketing and legal landscape for decades, and are now gaining solid traction in international markets. Notably, India granted its first sound trademark as recently as 2008, awarded to Yahoo for its distinctive three-note yodel.



¹⁴ Hulten, Bertil, Niklas Broweur, and Marcus Van Dijk. *Sensory Marketing*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

As a marketing tool, sound is a messenger of sorts, often reaching us before we reach a product or even have a visual image. We have little ability to block out sounds, except by artificial means such as earplugs, which are impractical for day-to-day living.

Sound, then, is an effective brand cue, particularly when stretched beyond the bounds of traditional broadcast advertising. It can evoke a sense of quality, increase consumer relevance, boost recall, and impact purchase intent.

Now a discussion of ...

Touch

We kick the tires on a car, lie down on mattresses in a store, and finger fabric as we walk by racks of clothes. The urge to pick up, touch and test things is huge, and retailers count on that in their display strategies.

Our hands are an important link between our brains and the world. In fact, as humans we have more tactile receptors in our little fingers alone than we do on our entire back.¹⁵ These receptors help us explore objects in our surroundings. When we encounter a pleasant touch, the brain releases a hormone called oxytocin, leading to feelings of well-being and calm.¹⁶

In research terms, this sense of touch is referred to as our haptic sense. Researchers have found that shoppers who touch a product are more likely to purchase, even as it relates to impulse buys.¹⁷ They've also found, logically, that the ability to touch a product increases our confidence in the item's quality.

So even if packaging prevents a product from being accessible (think sealed bags of socks for example) retailers should find a way to make it accessible to consumers.

Peruse the down comforters at Bed Bath and BeyondSM, for example. Small sample boards allow you to touch each item, feeling the heft, loft and fabric. The same goes for women's hosiery in a department store, where hanging sample tags allow you to touch and feel each item, testing color and opacity.

In a classic example, Britain's ASDA grocery chain took the wrappers off several brands of toilet paper, inviting consumers to feel for themselves. The result was increased sales

¹⁵ Hulten, Bertil, Niklas Broweur, and Marcus Van Dijk. *Sensory Marketing*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

¹⁶ Hulten, Bertil, Niklas Broweur, and Marcus Van Dijk. *Sensory Marketing*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

¹⁷ Brick & Mortar Shopping in the 21st Century (*Advertising and Consumer Psychology*). Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2007.



for its own store-brand product, leading to a 50 percent increase in shelf space for the line.¹⁸

When it comes to sensory marketing, our touch experience includes material, surface, temperature, weight and form.¹⁹

The original glass Coke™ bottle is a quintessential example of form marketing, becoming an instant icon when it was first released. Swiss chocolate company Toblerone™ distinguishes its candy bar with a unique triangular/pyramid-type shape. Likewise, Pringles™ stands out in the snack aisle for its canister packaging.²⁰

Coors™ is the rare company to capitalize on temperature marketing with its innovative temperature indicator. When a Coors bottle hits the optimum degree of coldness, mountains on the label turn from white to blue.



High-end electronics company Bang & Olufsen™ carefully selects its materials to underline the importance of craftsmanship and robustness in its product design. The company's universal remote has been described as "heavy, solid and quite distinct"²¹ and marketing materials highlight the product's heft and balance, aligned by a tungsten weight inside. While technology has evolved to enable ultra-light electronics, Bang & Olufsen focus groups have shown that customers equate some measure of heft with quality.

Although exceedingly rare, the International Trademark Association does register non-traditional trademarks (or "touch marks") for form and feel. Wholesale Wine & Spirits has a touch mark on a velvety texture used to cover wine bottles. Likewise, Apple™ has a trademark on the three-dimensional design of the iPod™,²² and Kleenex™ has one for an oval shaped tissue box.²³

Clearly every product has some sort of tactile feel, as do our point-of-purchase environments. The question is how much energy marketers put into optimizing the feel of a product, both to deliver a brand message and appeal to consumer desires.

And once the product itself has been designed for greatest haptic attraction, the next challenge is to make those products accessible in a way that encourages consumers to reach out and touch.

¹⁸ Brick & Mortar Shopping in the 21st Century (Advertising and Consumer Psychology). Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2007.

¹⁹ Hulten, Bertil, Niklas Broweur, and Marcus Van Dijk. Sensory Marketing. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

²⁰ Hulten, Bertil, Niklas Broweur, and Marcus Van Dijk. Sensory Marketing. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

²¹ Lindstrom, Martin. BRAND sense Build Powerful Brands through Touch, Taste, Smell, Sight, and Sound. New York: Free P, 2005.

²² Hulten, Bertil, Niklas Broweur, and Marcus Van Dijk. Sensory Marketing. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

²³ Baird, Steve. "Touchy Trademarks." Weblog post. Duets Blog. 26 Mar. 2009. 11 July 2009 <www.duetsblog.com>.

Moving on to ...

Scent

Smells stimulate certain areas of the brain responsible for creating emotions and memories. The human nose can identify and recall as many as 10,000 scents²⁴ and as much as 75 percent of our emotions are generated by what we smell.²⁵

Out of all the senses, smell is the only one with a direct link to the brain. As Dr. John Medina explains in his bestseller *Brain Rules*, "Every other sensory system must send a signal to the thalamus and ask permission to connect to the rest of the brain ... Smell signals bypass the thalamus and go right to their brainy destinations."²⁶

Moreover, these smells instantly trigger messages in the limbic system, the part of the brain that contains keys to emotion, lust, perception and imagination. As C. Russell Brumfield, author of *Whiff!* writes, "The result is immediate: When we smell, we feel."²⁷

Using scent, then, to enhance a brand is nothing to sniff at. When selling a home, we are encouraged to bake cookies just before an open house or light scented candles to generate positive feelings from prospective buyers. Midwest AirlinesSM certainly understands the olfactory benefit of freshly baked cookies as do trade show participants with those "come-hither" wafting portable cookie ovens.

Marketers have been leveraging the power of scent for decades. We can divide their most common strategies into three categories:

- 1) product scenting
- 2) environmental scenting
- 3) advertising scenting

Let's take a look at how each is used to strengthen or extend the brand experience.

Product scenting

Product scents go far beyond the obvious shampoos and candles. By now, most of us understand that the rich scent of a new car is actually fabricated and applied. CadillacTM uses a focus-group tested signature scent called Nuance, launched in 2003. Similarly, Rolls-RoyceTM has worked to reconstruct the scent of its classic 1965 Silver CloudTM, now sprayed under the seats of new automobiles.²⁸



²⁴ Brumfield, C. Russell, James Goldney, and Stephanie Gunning. *Whiff!* New York: Quimby P, 2008.

²⁵ Lindstrom, Martin. *BRAND sense Build Powerful Brands through Touch, Taste, Smell, Sight, and Sound.* New York: Free P, 2005.

²⁶ Medina, John. *Brain Rules 12 Principles for Surviving and Thriving at Work, Home, and School.* New York: Pear P, 2008.

²⁷ Brumfield, C. Russell, James Goldney, and Stephanie Gunning. *Whiff!* New York: Quimby P, 2008.

²⁸ Brumfield, C. Russell, James Goldney, and Stephanie Gunning. *Whiff!* New York: Quimby P, 2008.

Product scenting is also common in toys, evidenced in the early 1980s with scented Strawberry Shortcake™ dolls and more recently with strategic aromatherapy scented toys designed to enhance learning or engender feelings of calm and tranquility.

Environmental scenting

Environmental scenting has become increasingly common in retail spaces. ScentAir™, for example, an ambient scent provider, counts brands such as American Eagle™, Hallmark™, Sony™, Hilton™ and Saks Fifth Avenue™ among its marquee clients.

Retailers and service providers use smell to create a particular brand experience. These scents can enhance brand recall and/or drive purchasing behavior.

In a 2006 study conducted by Dr. Eric Spangenberg of Washington State University, he found that specific scents, selected for their appeal to men or women, could nearly double sales.²⁹

“Scents containing vanilla were dispersed in the women’s department and an aroma called rose maroc was diffused in the men’s section of the store. Both sexes browsed for longer periods and spent more money when in the presence of these specifically gender-targeted scents.”³⁰

Electronics company Sony infuses its stores with notes of mandarin origin, vanilla and cedar. The company studied more than 1,500 aromatic oils and chose this combination for its appeal to women—ostensibly to entice women into purchasing more items.³¹

Thomas Pink™ is a British high-end men’s clothier that uses a signature linen scent in its store environment. During the holiday season, promotional products that carry the store’s signature scent fly off the shelves.³² As one online reviewer wrote, “The scent of this store is intoxicating. I wish they sold it as a candle.”³³

Bloomingdale’s™ uses different essences in different departments: baby powder in the baby section, suntan lotion near the bathing suits, lilacs in lingerie, and cinnamon and pine scents during the holidays.³⁴

Food vendors, of course, have an inherent understanding of the value of scent marketing. At Starbucks, employees are forbidden to wear perfume because it would interfere with the natural coffee aroma.³⁵ Notably, humans have the ability to detect



29 Brumfield, C. Russell, James Goldney, and Stephanie Gunning. *Whiff!* New York: Quimby P, 2008.

30 Brumfield, C. Russell, James Goldney, and Stephanie Gunning. *Whiff!* New York: Quimby P, 2008.

31 Hulten, Bertil, Niklas Broweur, and Marcus Van Dijk. *Sensory Marketing*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

32 Brumfield, C. Russell, James Goldney, and Stephanie Gunning. *Whiff!* New York: Quimby P, 2008.

33 C., Eva. *Rev. of Thomas Pink stores*. Yelp. 1 Sept. 2006. 11 July 2009 <www.yelp.com>.

34 Fetterman, Mindy, and Jayne O'Donnell. "Just browsing at the mall? That's what you think." *USA Today* 1 Sept. 2006. Web.

35 Medina, John. *Brain Rules 12 Principles for Surviving and Thriving at Work, Home, and School*. New York: Pear P, 2008.

the direction of an aroma.³⁶ Ah, the lure of Cinnebon™ down a mall hallway! At the Hard Rock HotelSM in Orlando, management took full advantage of our scent directives, pumping the smell of waffle cones to direct patrons to a hard to find ice cream shop located in the basement. Sales subsequently increased by 45 percent.³⁷

And in one temporary study, a chocolate scent was deployed around a vending machine, increasing sales by a whopping 60 percent.³⁸

Advertising scenting

Scent has also been incorporated into advertising. Magazine perfume ads are, of course, the logical application. But Pepsi™, Kraft™, McDonalds, and Domino'sSM are other example of companies incorporating scent into their print materials.³⁹

Scented inks, scent strips, and Rub'nSmell™ technology are some of the various ways marketers are leveraging scent in magazine advertng and direct mail.

In 2006, the California Milk Board used scent in its Got Milk?TM advertising campaign, incorporating a cookie scent into five bus shelter installations in San Francisco. The theory was that consumers would smell the scent of cookies, associate the scent with milk, and crave a glass of dairy.

Controversy abounded. Harald Vogt, co-founder of the Scent Marketing Institute, said the effort didn't make sense in light of brain research, suggesting the campaign was more likely to trigger cravings for sweets.

"Scent marketing works because it targets the part of the consumer's brain responsible for memories," Vogt said in an interview with *Forbes*.⁴⁰ Likewise, the organization was targeted with aggressive protest from groups representing people with environmental allergies, asthma, chemical sensitivities, diabetes and obesity.⁴¹



It is important to note that individual experience plays a role in scent associations. While the smell of leather may entice many people to buy expensive furniture, it will have a negative impact on anyone who has had a traumatic experience linked to the smell. Likewise, culture plays a role. In one study, the three scents Germans identified the

³⁶ Brumfield, C. Russell, James Goldney, and Stephanie Gunning. *Whiff!* New York: Quimby P, 2008.

³⁷ Hoppough, Suzanne. "What's that Smell?" *Forbes*. 2 Oct. 2006. Web. 11 July 2009. <www.Forbes.com>.

³⁸ Duncan, Leigh. "Scent Branding: Smell of Success?" *Marketing Profs* 30 Jan. 2007. 13 July 2009 <www.marketingprofs.com>.

³⁹ Brumfield, C. Russell, James Goldney, and Stephanie Gunning. *Whiff!* New York: Quimby P, 2008.

⁴⁰ Weiss, Tara. "Marketing Milk." *Forbes* 1 Dec. 2006. 13 July 2009 <www.Forbes.com>.

⁴¹ Duncan, Leigh. "Scent Branding: Smell of Success?" *Marketing Profs* 30 Jan. 2007. 13 July 2009 <www.marketingprofs.com>.

greatest dislike for (cypress oil, fermented soybean and dried fish flakes) were all indigenous to Japan, while the three most displeasing scents to Japanese (church incense, sausage and blue cheese) were all German in origin.⁴²

Scent marketing should be used with care—care for the environment, consumers and employees, and ethical application. [The Scent Marketing Institute](#) is developing guidelines and standards for ethical use.

Just a few last words on ...

Taste and sight

We're glossing over the last two senses with just a few obligatory comments. Sight, of course, is the most common marketing medium. Color, architecture and graphic design theory are all well-studied in the marketing industry and fill countless professional texts. In fact, you can read our own [Blue Paper on Color Choices](#).

And taste, while of utmost importance to edible brands, doesn't fit well into the multi-sensory branding programs of other products. (Customers, however, may not protest a UPS signature chocolate left with its packages!)

Even brands built on taste are hard-pressed to include that sense in any mass marketing effort. Edible advertising is making slow headway, overcoming what one advertiser called the "ick" factor.

That being said, there are still some clever uses that we should note.

In 2007, CBS marketed its series *Cain* by adding flavor strips to ads in *Rolling Stone*TM magazine, giving readers a taste of lime-flavored mojitos, the fictional rum brand central to the show's plot. About six months later, Welch'sTM improved upon the concept in an ad in *People*SM. The ad included a one-time use, peel-off taste sample using dissolving flavor strips.⁴³

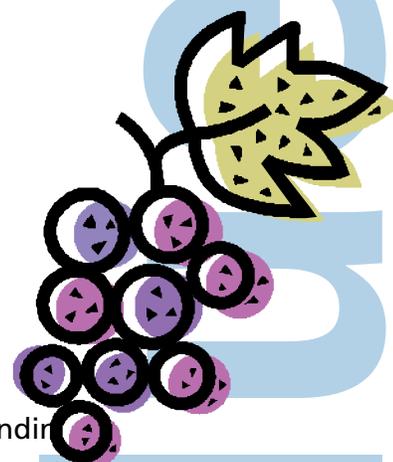
The Welch's ad had the highest brand recall of all ads in the issue and generated viral buzz. Most importantly, of the people who tried the flavor strips, 59 percent said they were more likely to purchase Welch's Grape Juice after interacting with the ad.⁴⁴

The Peel 'n TasteTM flavor strips used in the Welch's promotion are a patent-pending

⁴² Brumfield, C. Russell, James Goldney, and Stephanie Gunning. *Whiff!* New York: Quimby P, 2008.

⁴³ "Beyond Scratch 'n' Sniff: Edible Advertising?" Weblog post. Ask the Whiff Guys. 23 Oct. 2008. 11 July 2009 <askthewhiffguys.com>.

⁴⁴ Dobrow, Larry. "Anatomy of The Consumer: Taste." *MediaPost*. 1 May 2009. 14 July 2009 <<http://www.mediapost.com>>.



product of First Flavor Inc., which has developed similar promotions for Old Orchard™, Arm & Hammer™, and Skyy Vodka™, including a point-of-purchase coupon dispenser for Campbell's™ with the dissolvable flavor strips.

Sensing the future

Sensory marketing is exploding. It stands to reason that as technology makes sensory integration more practical and affordable, marketers will be looking to it as the logical new frontier.

As companies diversify their product offerings, new sensory marketing tactics will better allow consumers to trial a new product before purchasing. Likewise, sensory cues such as sound and smell will help companies develop greater emotional connections to their brands.

Sound is perhaps the easiest point of entry for brands looking to experiment with sensory marketing. Listen to your environment at several times throughout the day. Could disruptive sounds be muffled with acoustic material? Should the music selection be changed at different parts of the day? Is your goal rapid turnover or do you want customers to linger? To learn more about the impact of sound on customer perceptions, check out *Sonic Branding: An Introduction* by Daniel Jackson.

Companies have relatively easy access to scent marketing as well, thanks to a number of vendors, such as ScentAir, Prolitec, Air Aroma, and ScentScope, selling turnkey environmental scent solutions. These vendors offer a variety of scent solutions—from point of purchase scent samples to integrated HVAC systems and product scenting. C. Russell Brumfield's book *Whiff!* offers several chapters that guide you through the initial steps of scent marketing, including the process to identify your own signature scent.



Touch, too, can be integrated into the marketing experience, without investing thousands in engineering studies. Consider your packaging or displays and think about whether a change would better invite people to reach out and touch. Once people handle a product, they feel a small sense of ownership and are more likely to buy. Does the product lend itself to sampling or “try me”-type displays? The more access you can provide, the greater your opportunity for connecting with the customer.

All in all, the senses influence our emotions and decision-making. Touch, smell, taste, sound, and the look of a product all play an important role in our perceptions, attitudes and consumption of a product. Understanding those roles provides a valuable advantage in today's marketplace.