

THE CORRECT SCENTING OF COSMETICS*

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THE CREATION of a combination of odoriferous material in order to produce a pleasing scent calls for a great amount of technical knowledge and artistic ability. To become a competent perfumer even when the artistic ability is present takes many many years of study and practice.

It is therefore not my intention to discuss here that technique or art, but the question of what type scent will suit your product best.

Once the formulation of your product is satisfactorily completed, the choice of a scent must be decided upon. Either your own perfumer or your supplier will submit one or more products for your consideration, and whether your cosmetic will be correctly scented or not will largely depend on the decision you make at that time.

As the meaning of the word cosmetic is not too clearly defined, I am taking for the purpose of this discussion all toilet preparations with the exception of perfumes, eau de colognes, toilet waters and such

products which have the imparting of a pleasant odor as their sole purpose and function. By and large the products which we are discussing today have other functional duties; the accomplishment of which should always have prime consideration. It is unnecessary for me to point out to this gathering what those prime functions are. Beyond a doubt you are better informed on this subject than I am.

I first want to discuss with you those cosmetics which are used for corrective or cleansing purposes, in which case the products do not form an integral part of the woman's make-up. They may be completely removed before the make-up is applied; they may be used to remove the make-up or they may be used as a treatment after removal of the make-up. The first function of scent in such corrective or cleansing cosmetics is the enhanced sales appeal created by the pleasing odor when your customer picks up and smells at the cosmetic counter, the bottle, box, or jar containing your product. Many a sale is made right at that moment by the appealing scent.

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That same pleasing scent will also make the use of your product more agreeable, and prevent the chance of losing your customer, even if your product is fundamentally right, on account of her displeasure caused by a non-agreeable odor.

The time of day at which your preparation is used and the length of time it must stay on the skin should receive special consideration. Any cosmetic applied before retiring and supposed to stay on during the night should only impart a faint, pleasant, luxurious scent. Exhilarating odors such as Carnation, Musk, or Heliotrope types will interfere with sleep and should be avoided. Heavy clinging odors have a disturbing effect and should also be eliminated.

Be sure not to overperfume any cosmetics applied before retiring for even the correct type of odor when present in too large a volume becomes disturbing during the hours devoted to sleep.

By far the largest number of cosmetics fall into another group; namely those which form part of the woman's make-up. They too have to be scented to increase their sales appeal, and of course to cover any disagreeable odors, but the most important thing to consider is that your customer, after applying her foundation cream, face powder, rouge, lipstick, eye shadow, etc., will use her favorite perfume or toilet water as the finishing touch to her toilette. That perfume or toilet water is her particular choice of scent and something which is be-

yond your control. Whether the scent of your particular cosmetic is going to harmonize with the perfume of her choice is something about which you can do a great deal, and a problem which should receive your fullest attention.

It is logical that this problem does not exist to the same extent for those of you who are producing a co-ordinated line of Perfume, Toilet Water, Rouge, Lipstick, Talcum Powder, Bath Soap, Bath Oil and/or Salts, for in those lines the odor theme of the perfume is carried through all those different preparations.

Many of you, however, manufacture only one or a few of those products and then you can imagine the chaotic effect that may result when a customer uses bath oil or bath salts, bath soap, dusting powder, face powder, rouge, and lipstick all-scented with different fragrances, and finally your customer adds her favorite perfume.

Regardless of how beautiful the scents used in those preparations may be individually, the user will present a discordant, jarring odor picture unless there is an underlying harmony.

Many a woman will admire a hat, dress, shoes, or handbag but refrain from buying it on account of the fact that that particular item does not go well with the rest of her wardrobe. She is fully conscious of the fact that a beautiful hat, a beautiful suit, beautiful shoes, and beautiful accessories that do not match may make her appear a sight instead of a symphony.

Women are very conscious about any impressions conveyed through their eyes. Their likes and dislikes as far as odors are concerned, however, are completely subconscious; nevertheless very definite.

A woman may not say that she does not use Jones' bath oil on account of the fact that that particular scent, regardless of how pleasant it is by itself, does not blend with her perfume. In all probability she never consciously became aware of the fact, but subconsciously she is aware of it and as a result does not continue to use Jones' bath oil. Therefore, the beauty of a scent as such is not the only requirement which should guide you in your choice.

Unless that beautiful odor at the same time possesses the ability to blend well with practically every perfume type, you are not doing full justice to your product. Light flowery bouquets and odors such as Rose, Jasmine, Lily of the Valley, Ylang, Sandalwood, and Heliotrope are good blending scents. They will go very well with practically any type perfume your customer may wear. Carnation, Lavender, Lilac, Tuberose, Narcissus, Patchouly, Hyacinth, Vetivert, Leather, and Oakmoss types, on the other hand, are scents which may clash with other perfumes.

The products of most importance as far as their need for a blending scent are concerned are face powder, talcum powder, soap, and bath preparations. They impart more odor volume to the user than lip-

sticks, eye shadow, mascara, and similar preparations.

The manufacturer who uses only one scent for a particular cosmetic should therefore use a scent which will blend with practically any of the accepted perfume types. There are only about eight main groups:

- The Flowery perfumes.
- The Aldehydy perfumes.
- The Oakmoss types.
- The Amber Oriental types.
- The Woody types.
- The Leathery types.
- The New Mown Hay types.
- The Spicy types.

I advise you to take the time to study how a scent which you are considering may blend with those different accepted perfume types. If it clashes, drop it from your consideration. Such a study will pay you off very handsomely.

The manufacturer who is producing a cosmetic which he offers in more than one scent should have one which is of the blending type so that the customer who uses different perfumes can use this cosmetic with any of the perfumes she may use on a particular day. Do not choose as your other odors for that same cosmetic, other blending scents. Why have a Rose, a Lily, and a Jasmin as the scents for, let's say, your dusting powder? Any one of the three will do as a blending scent. Choose for the others, scents which will accentuate a certain one of the accepted types of perfumes. Whether that is an Aldehyde type, an Oriental type, or a Woody type makes no difference. The advantages that you

then have are a cosmetic which not only has one scent which blends with all perfumes, but two more which will accentuate certain popular type odors and have a definite appeal to the woman who is using that particular type of perfume. It gives your sales girls as well as your advertising an additional and valuable talking point.

I now come to the last point of consideration when choosing a scent for cosmetics. We all know that there are good, medium, and poor quality cosmetics, but we also know that the difference in the ingredient cost of a good face powder and an average quality face powder is a small one. The difference in cost of basic ingredients of a good toilet soap and the very finest will not be more than 10 per cent and the same holds for practically all cosmetics. Against this small difference in basic ingredient cost, we know that there is a very great difference in the selling prices, and that difference has to be justified.

Unless your formulation is so outstanding that your particular cosmetic is doing a better job than your competitors, a much higher price is not justified. You will admit that many of the low-priced cosmetics are as sound and efficient from a functional standpoint as the higher priced ones. The higher priced ones, therefore, have to justify that difference in selling price by giving additional value to the customer, and the most effective increase in value is accomplished by increased odor value. I lay particu-

lar stress on odor value. It shouldn't be confused with odor volume. Let's take as an example a low- or medium-priced cleansing cream scented with Rose. The job of formulation as well as the scenting of the cream has been well done. Nevertheless there is no question of doubt that a far finer Rose odor employed in the higher selling cleansing cream would warrant that higher price to those women who are willing to pay for the additional luxury in odor value received.

Simply increasing the quantity of the Rose scent used in the lower priced cream would not accomplish that effect. As a matter of fact, it would defeat the purpose as the cream would then be overscented and disagreeable.

Too many high-priced toilet soaps fail to gain and keep the sales volume they should be able to obtain because the manufacturer has overlooked this point. Unless the additional odor value is present, the final results can be expressed in two words "no sales."

One therefore should never have a preconceived idea of how much odor value should be added to cosmetic preparations. It should be in direct relation to their selling price. The low priced ones may possess excellent odor value in their price field but the high priced ones in order to be successful should have infinitely greater odor value.

The customer who wants extra luxury and exclusiveness and who is willing to pay the price for it should get value received.