

Follow your nose to great marketing

Gas stations have a problem: Consumers want to be able to pay quickly at the pump, but the items they sell at their convenience stores carry much higher margins. If consumers don't have to go inside to pay, they probably won't buy coffee either.

Carmine Santandrea thinks he has a solution. His company, ScentAndrea Multisensory Communications LLC, has developed small fans that emit the smell of freshly brewed coffee. He said he's close to finalizing a deal to put them at gas pumps across Canada.

Marketers who aren't selling food can also use scent, he says. For example, Verizon Communications Inc. used chocolate ScentAndrea machines to sell LG Chocolate cell phones in the United States.

Using your sense of smell is the new rising marketing tool of 2007. Companies are now connecting aromas to products. "There're visuals up the wazoo...People are walking around with their iPods trying to block out sound. Fragrance is the only thing left. You cannot turn off your nose. You have to breathe," says institute founder of The Scent Marketing Institute.

David Van Epps, CEO of Charlotte, N.C.-based ScentAir Inc., says scent marketing is as old as telling people to stick a pie in the oven when selling a home. "Scent is linked to your memory, emotions and mood in a way that people are really starting to be able to understand and harness," Mr. Van Epps says.

His company scents large Las Vegas casinos and Sony Style stores. Its scent machines permeate U.S. Bloomingdale's stores, pushing baby sleepers with the smell of baby powder, lingerie with lilac and bikinis with coconut. ScentAir machines also pump out the smell of PlayDoh in toy stores, trying to trigger nostalgic memories for parents and grandparents.

Advertising Age, the influential U.S. magazine, has named scent marketing a trend to watch in 2007.

FoodWise Group is closely monitoring the growth and potential of this scent-related market. For more information contact the FoodWise Group at www.foodwisegroup.com.

*Sources Include: Keith McArthur From Tuesday's Globe and Mail
Scent Marketing Institute*