

FRAGRANCE AND PERSONAL CARE

Penhaligon's reopens, celebrates the luxury of fragrance

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Penhaligon aims to energize customers with in-store fragrance campaign. Image credit: Penhaligon

By NORA HOWE

British perfume house Penhaligon is inviting guests to embark on an in-store olfactory journey after reopening its doors.

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To celebrate the nationwide reopening of retail after months of restrictions in the United Kingdom, Penhaligon has released a number of short videos promoting its exclusively in-store services, aiming to excite affluent customers about shopping again. As enforced closures have had a detrimental impact on retail, brands are hoping to bring customers back into stores and spark an economic recovery.

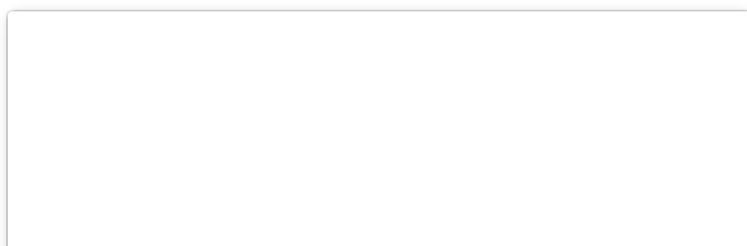
"Fragrance was the surprise success story of 2020," said Aleni Mackarey, chief operating officer at **Base Beauty Creative Agency**, New York. "While haircare, skincare and makeup all took massive dips in search volume in March, the decrease in fragrance search was comparatively small.

"Consumers associated it with candles, meditation and self-care which were extremely important during the past year."

In-store offerings

According to **Reuters**, retail spending is key to Britain's post-pandemic recovery as 2020 was the worst year for its economy in more than 300 years.

British Retail Consortium reported that U.K. stores have lost around 27 billion pounds, or more than \$37 billion at current exchange, in sales between the three lockdowns. In 2020 alone, 67,000 U.K. retail employees lost their jobs.



[View this post on Instagram](#)

A post shared by Penhaligon's (@penhaligons_london)

Penhaligon is reminding shoppers about the appeal of in-store experiences

However, now that restrictions on nonessential retail have been lifted in England, market researcher **Kantar** predicts that consumers will spend 3.9 billion pounds, or \$5.3 billion, on high streets this week.

To increase the probability of this forecast, Penhaligon is focusing on promoting its in-store services such as fragrance profiling, gift wrapping and leather personalization.

"I suspect perfume and other personal care products to see a surge in sales as people start safely socializing and wanting to look, feel and smell confident and beautiful," Ms. Mackarey said.

Through a carefully curated series of questions, Penhaligon's fragrance profiling service takes guests on a journey of scent discovery, ultimately providing expert advice on the fragrances that best suit them.

The brand is also celebrating the pleasure of giving with its in-store gift wrapping service, which includes securing products inside Penhaligon labeled boxes with scented tissue paper and held together with a ribbon tied in a traditional coachmen's knot.

Penhaligon's in-store leather personalization program allows customers to add their own personality to their perfume by choosing from colorful hues of leather fragrance sleeves, fonts, symbols and enameled brass charms.

While the Covent Garden Wellington, Canary Wharf and Islington boutiques in London remain closed, the majority of the retailer's regional boutiques are open for business, including five other locations in London.

Penhaligon's Fragrance Profiling

To further elevate the in-store perfume experience, Penhaligon's parent company **Puig** introduced a virtual fragrance preview system in September 2020. AILICE enables fragrance customers to preview the scent of a perfume in real-time without actually testing or smelling it.

The company hopes this will narrow down the offerings available at perfume counters to those which correspond to customers' personal tastes without feeling overwhelmed by too many options.

Uniting physical and digital

Digital technology in the retail space was not only popularized during the pandemic, but practically became a survival tactic. However, instead of trying to replace the in-store experience with digital developments, brands and retailers should begin examining ways to incorporate new technology in their stores to elevate the bricks-and-mortar experience.

During the opening virtual session at the Vogue Business and TikTok inaugural **Technology Forum** on March 18, founder and CEO of Farfetch Jos Neves examined the critical role of technology within the fashion retail space, and offered his perspective on the future of fashion and retail.

He noted that neglecting the customer-facing opportunities in-store, where the majority of sales are being conducted,

would be detrimental to the business, suggesting that brands create a relationship between physical and digital to meet the customer's realistic shopping experience ([see story](#)).

In an effort to mitigate fitting room fatigue and help brands and retailers minimize waste, Modern Mirror is digitizing the retail experience.

Modern Mirror's consumer-centric, virtual fit technology services aim to elevate personalization by virtually showing how products look and fit an individual using interactive 3D imaging both in-store and online ([see story](#)).

"Many consumers have missed experiential shopping," Ms. Mackarey said. "We have seen so much innovation in virtual adaptations, but when shopping for fragrances, the option to spritz and smell cannot really be digitally duplicated."

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