

FRAGRANCE AND PERSONAL CARE

How Givaudan sniffed out success in China

July 28, 2021



For Givaudan, China remains a key growth market for innovative and high-use fragrance products. Image courtesy of Givaudan

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Throughout history, fragrances have been celebrated for the role they play in uplifting consumers' moods. With this in mind, it will not be hard to dig into the sole function of fragrances, which, for the most part, is to make people feel good and confident in themselves.

Fragrances are also known to enhance social status, another important facet for consumers today. After all, there is an overwhelming, [emotional connection at the heart of scents](#).

It is no wonder then that [Givaudan](#), the world's largest producer of fragrances and flavors, has created bliss for so many consumers globally. And now, Givaudan's fragrances have become extremely popular with Chinese consumers, whose desires for fine fragrances have been rapidly changing.

In an exclusive interview with *Jing Daily*, we caught up with Maurizio Volpi, Givaudan's head of fragrances and beauty, and Yaling Li, Givaudan's head of fragrances for China and Korea, who told us what new steps it has taken to strengthen its foothold in China, how important it is for the company to cater to Gen Z consumers' rising demand for unique fragrances in China, and more.

Which fragrances produced by Givaudan are most popular around the world?

Mr. Volpi: Givaudan has created iconic perfumes like Opium by YSL, Angel by Mugler, 1 Million by Paco Rabanne, Le Male by Jean-Paul Gaultier, Armani Code, and Gucci Guilty.

But the most recent ones making waves are Versace Eros, Carolina Herrera Good Girl, Prada Infusion d'Iris, Montblanc Explorer, and many more.



Gucci Guilty is among the most popular fragrances produced by Givaudan. Image credit: Gucci

We also create scents for many of the hygiene products that have been so important in the wake of the pandemic, which makes me proud to work for Givaudan.

And, since 2014, we have also been present in cosmetic ingredients for fermentation products that target the skin microbiome.

I can say that the **self-care trend** has boosted the demand for our products, which was already high.

What do you think Chinese consumers love most about Givaudan fragrances?

Ms. Li: Consumer products perfumed with Givaudan are beloved by Chinese consumers for their powerful performance, best-in-class quality, cutting-edge technology, and their positive impact on **health and wellbeing**.

Fine fragrances crafted by Givaudan's perfumers keep delighting Chinese consumers with their olfactive richness, creativity and constant innovation.

What prompted Givaudan to open its fragrance production facility in Changzhou, China, last year? What are the goals for it?

Ms. Li: Expanding our manufacturing capabilities builds on our creative centers and production facilities in Shanghai and Guangzhou, thus giving Givaudan an **unparalleled footprint in China**. It also better positions us to offer our Chinese customers comprehensive end-to-end solutions for the creation, development, and production of the fragrances they love.



Givaudan's production facility in Changzhou will substantially increase the company's existing manufacturing output, which includes prestige perfumes, to serve customers in the Asia Pacific. Image courtesy of Givaudan

Consistent with all Givaudan's manufacturing processes, the production facility meets the highest global and local standards in fragrance manufacturing, including advanced environmental, health and safety features.

The facility has also substantially increased the company's existing manufacturing output, spanning personal, home and fabric care fragrances through to oral care flavors, encapsulated fragrances and prestige perfumes that serve customers in China and the Asia Pacific. So, it is a win-win situation for us.

How did the COVID-19 pandemic affect Givaudan globally?

Mr. Volpi: From day one, we focused on the safety of our employees, followed by our intense focus on supporting our customers.

Despite having to be quite acrobatic, we successfully managed to deliver for all of our customers. For this reason, we are very proud of our team.

And in terms of demand, we are lucky we work for such a resilient and essential sector that contributes so much to human health and wellbeing.

Ours is also a balanced sector. So even if a segment is in low demand for a moment, others typically bounce back immediately and gain a higher demand. It makes our life intense, but it allows us to continue our different strategies with greater stability.

In terms of segments, apart from the obvious growth of the segments related to hygiene and **home fragrances**, we are now seeing a rebound of the fine fragrance division and a huge demand for cosmetics driven by self-care.

Tell us about your collaboration with Tmall Innovation Center. How significant is this partnership, and in what way will it benefit Chinese consumers?

Ms. Li: The **T-Lab source innovation laboratory** will leverage Givaudan's leading creative fragrance solutions and production capabilities in China, powered by Tmall's consumer behavior data capabilities and partner ecosystem.

Collaborating with Tmall in China is an exciting step forward in our commitment to drive digital innovation across the fragrance industry.

Such initiatives are integral to **Givaudan's 2025 strategy**, which is all about expanding and deepening strategic relationships with suppliers, start-ups and partners while enhancing collaboration and co-creation with customers to develop innovative solutions for the future.

As Tmall's inaugural fragrance innovation partner, Givaudan will receive fragrance opportunities at the ideation stage, gain access to Tmall's brand ecosystem, and tap into data-led capabilities like the Tmall Innovation Center's online research module.

This unique offering will shorten end-to-end product development for fine fragrances from 40 weeks to only four weeks. And our T-Lab partnership enables us to pre-empt consumer trends by using behavioral data to innovate new, unique, and timely product offerings.

How vital is the bricks-and-mortar store for Givaudan?

Mr. Volpi: More than **brick and mortar**, I would say that it is vital to be omnichannel in the same way as our customers.

In particular, it is inspiring to see how, after an initial period of disarray in the spring of 2020, many brands found ways to promote and sell perfumes online successfully. That is why we acquired a start-up like **Myrissi**.

By associating colors and images with perfumes, we can connect customers with something visible and create a more tangible online experience, especially with something "invisible" like perfume.

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