

# The Sweet Smell of Success



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## National Speaker & Author Toni Blake

Do you know which of your senses has the greatest influence? Even though many of our evaluations and judgments are based on sight, it is the sense of smell that is the most impressionable. Imagine a richly decorated environment filled with the most expensive décor, ornate touches, colors and furniture. No matter how visually attractive your clubhouse and models are - no matter how much you spent on decorating - burn some popcorn and people are no longer impressed. Scent is the only one of the five senses that is directly connected to the cerebral cortex of the brain and is the more powerful image builder. The right scent can influence sleep, romance, and mental focus. It is also proven to make both people and environments more attractive - and that's nothing to turn your nose at!

### Environmental Fragrance & Big Business

Environmental Fragrance has been a phenomenal commercial success as a mood enhancer and aromatherapy. The home fragrance industry estimates \$3 billion in annual sales, according to the Fragrance Foundation. The who's who of international businesses have joined the home fragrance business including Calvin Klein, Estee Lauder, Donna Karan, J Crew, Banana Republic and Old Navy. We've heard of designer water, but designer air? Aromatherapy has become an everyday part of many people's lives - bergamot oil to "jump start" the day or lavender lotion before a meeting to "calm and relax". Origins, a successful division of Estee Lauder, sells a product called "Peace of Mind" which contains peppermint oil and produces a "cool cloth" feeling when rubbed on the back of the neck. It can help reduce stress and ease tension headaches. You can't walk into a mall or even an airport today without passing a retail storefront full of self-help "aroma" products. In the future we may have an alarm clock that will spray a scent that will make you more alert 10 minutes prior to waking you up. You'll go to the kitchen, where an odor will be released to increase or suppress your appetite. Your office may be scented to make you more productive, and at bedtime . . . you can choose an aroma that encourages relaxation—or more amorous activities.

### Aromatherapy & Apartments

With billions of dollars in sales, and millions of mainstream Americans educated about "aroma" . . . how is the multi-family housing industry using this data? Frankly - we stink! Out of 100 communities surveyed, 97% experienced revenue loss from increased vacancy down time due to odor. 100% had replaced carpets simply due to a pet odor and only 12% were familiar with

products that could successfully neutralize the odor. We are still expecting people to rent and live with residual odor left behind by the previous occupant including their cooking, personal body odor & loving family pet! Trend watchers and sophisticated management companies are looking for solutions to our odor problems.

Our make-ready procedure doesn't address making the apartment smell good - most management teams simply clean it and pass on the keys. 19% of the complaints from New Residents included comments about odor. In your portfolio - how many carpets, still in good condition, were replaced due to odor? How much revenue was lost due to odor problems in vacancy? If we accurately calculated how much odor problems are costing us, it would be thousands of dollars per community and millions as an industry. 100% of the communities we surveyed have odor problems - with no known solution - until now.

Today there are very affordable chemicals that can completely neutralize all odors and leave the apartment completely odorless. There are foggers containing the same chemical micron as "Fabreez" that travel through the air along the same pathways as the odor and eliminate all organic caused odors for the commercial cost of about \$8.50 for 800 square feet or 6000 cubic feet. Special chemical warfare is required when it comes to problems created by pet residue and bacteria. Many of the properties we surveyed relied on the carpet industry to clean their carpets and apply the pet enzyme. I heard many stories about how it didn't work after a \$35.00 - \$45.00 service fee. They are still forced to replace the carpet. There is a chemical product that will completely remove the residual pet bacteria causing the smell and leave the carpet as good as new. Its' effectiveness depends on the dilution and saturation of the product. Most of these products only cost around \$12.50 a quart. You could save the \$45.00 carpet service fee and the carpet by simply having your own maintenance team add water to the chemical and spray in the area. The chemicals will do the job in about 24 hours.

### Industrial Deodorizer vs. Home Fragrance

Once you have your apartment odor free - how about a positive fragrance? There are a lot of industrial deodorizers on the market. The only problem is that low-quality synthetics tend to have a sharp smell and a very short lifespan. Many industrial deodorizer programs sell you an additional electric distribution device that continues to deliver the deodorizer in the room. Now you are paying for equipment and electricity to make your beautiful home environment smell like an industrial bathroom. Our product is the "home" and we should understand our customer wants "home scents" in the home environment. Home fragrance products are typically more expensive i.e., Crabtree & Evelyn's room spray sells for about \$12 for 3.5 oz.

### Is Clean Good Enough?

I was amazed by the results of our survey concerning "fragrance" and apartment management. Frankly, most properties simply don't address the problem of odor or scent at all. Even though it has the potential to devalue their product much more quickly than the visual impact, it simply is not a priority. Most had nothing on their shelves and the office staff sometimes used industrial/commercial products similar to those used in gas station restrooms. The make-ready process tends to involve only whatever fragrance was already blended into the cleaning products. Why isn't clean good enough? Does the "scent of clean" simply make me think about the fact that the apartment had to be cleaned? Most fragrances have a masking effect - was it to add scent or cover odor? Does this really qualify as marketing, merchandizing or packaging? I think not! We have to be clear about the variety of choices available to the sophisticated renter. We need the "marketing" make ready procedure I call "The Store".

## Freshen your "Store" with Paint SCENTsations

I have been working with my clients to begin to see their available product as a "Store". Each new available apartment becomes a part of our "Leasing Inventory" to be marketed by the leasing team. Management and Maintenance have completed the scheduled make-ready and now it is time to add it to our Store! As a part of our Store we have a plan to merchandize each apartment. The quickest way to improve the impression and fill a vacant is with scent, sound and light! I like to recommend that they have a plan for each.

Scent is the most important and I am excited to introduce you to a brand new product. Finally someone has made a simple, long lasting, and great smelling product for apartments. Simon Distributing has added scent to PAINT!!! Just pour a small amount of Paint SCENTsations into your standard make-ready paint and transform the apartment with fragrance that endures through the make-ready, leasing and move-in. I have personally tested it and have found it to be effective, affordable and a great new "best practice" for make-readies. Increasing the appeal of our apartment homes with smell has always been a smart choice, now it is easy and affordable. With \$6 & six seconds you transform the environment with fragrances that include Fresh Air, Citrus Squeeze, Vanilla Bean, Sea Breeze and Clean & Crisp. Property management teams love Paint Scentsations because it's a one step process. It not only provides a long lasting scent, but it also eliminates odors very effectively, including pet odors, smoke odors, cooking odors, and the smell of the paint! There's no need to use other methods, such as sealers, to eradicate the odor.

As a consultant, I am constantly searching for new ways to make our industry more professional and successful. I am proud to introduce to you a great marketing partner, Simon Distributing Company of Lakeville, MN, your commercial distributor of Paint Scentsations. Simon Distributing has 10 years of experience serving the paint and decorating community with unique products. Paint Scentsations comes in one ounce packets and 10 ounce bottles and mixes easily into any latex paint. The suggested ratio of one ounce per gallon of paint provides a subtle, pleasant fragrance for up to 6-12 months for smaller areas and 4-6 months in larger areas. Purchase on-line at [www.paintscentsations.com](http://www.paintscentsations.com) or by calling 888-771-9065.

After you have painted with Paint Scentsations I like to add a plug in radio to a light switch and a stand-up halogen light to rooms with no overhead light. Flip a switch and add light and music to your well-scented apartment home and you have merchandizing MAGIC.

It is said that great success is often found in the simplest of ideas. Little things do mean a lot. The competitive advantage today is in our ability to find people who understand that we manage a multimillion-dollar product and we have to take advantage of every opportunity for income. Odor management is one way to maximize your potential. Breathe deep and see if you are experiencing the sweet smell of success!



Toni Blake is a nationally recognized expert in customer service, sales and marketing. She travels to over 60 cities annually speaking to over 30,000 management professionals each year. Toni is known for her innovative concepts and is an industry trendsetter. She has been involved with Multifamily Housing since 1979 and currently resides in Greeley, Colorado. For more information contact her office toll free 866-889-6600 or 1-970-378-6784. [totallytoni.com](http://totallytoni.com)

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4945 West Eighth Street • Greeley, CO 80634  
TOLL FREE 866.889.6600 • 1-970-378-6784