



FRAGRANCE IN SKINCARE

Presented by Michael Nordstrand

PURPOSE



A close-up, high-angle shot of a woman's face, tilted slightly to the right. Her eyes are closed, and her expression is serene and peaceful. The lighting is warm and soft, highlighting the contours of her face. The background is blurred, showing some bokeh light effects. The text "CONSUMER EXPERIENCE" is centered over the image in a clean, white, sans-serif font.

CONSUMER EXPERIENCE

PRIMARY CONSIDERATIONS



Sensory Benefit

Fragrance can impart pleasant or memorable scents that improve user satisfaction with skincare products and can increase likelihood of continued use.



Malodour Defence

Fragrances can mask undesirable odours, both from ingredients found in product matrices that have unpleasant associations and those produced by the body.



Multifunctional Product

Fragrance ingredients can offer benefits beyond their smell, meeting increased consumer demand for multifunctional products and simplified skincare regimens.



SKIN MICROBIOME

Numerous studies have demonstrated that ingredients generally considered to be 'for fragrance' can have benefits for the skin, and there is overlap in raw materials traditionally used as actives, preservatives, stabilisers, etc.

Some ingredients (including natural, naturally derived, and synthetic) have been extensively researched for prebiotic benefits, antimicrobial activity, skin barrier maintenance and repair, and balancing the diverse microbial community found on our skin.

This presentation makes no claims to the efficacy of any single ingredient or the claimed benefits. Please see the final slides for links to reference materials for further information.



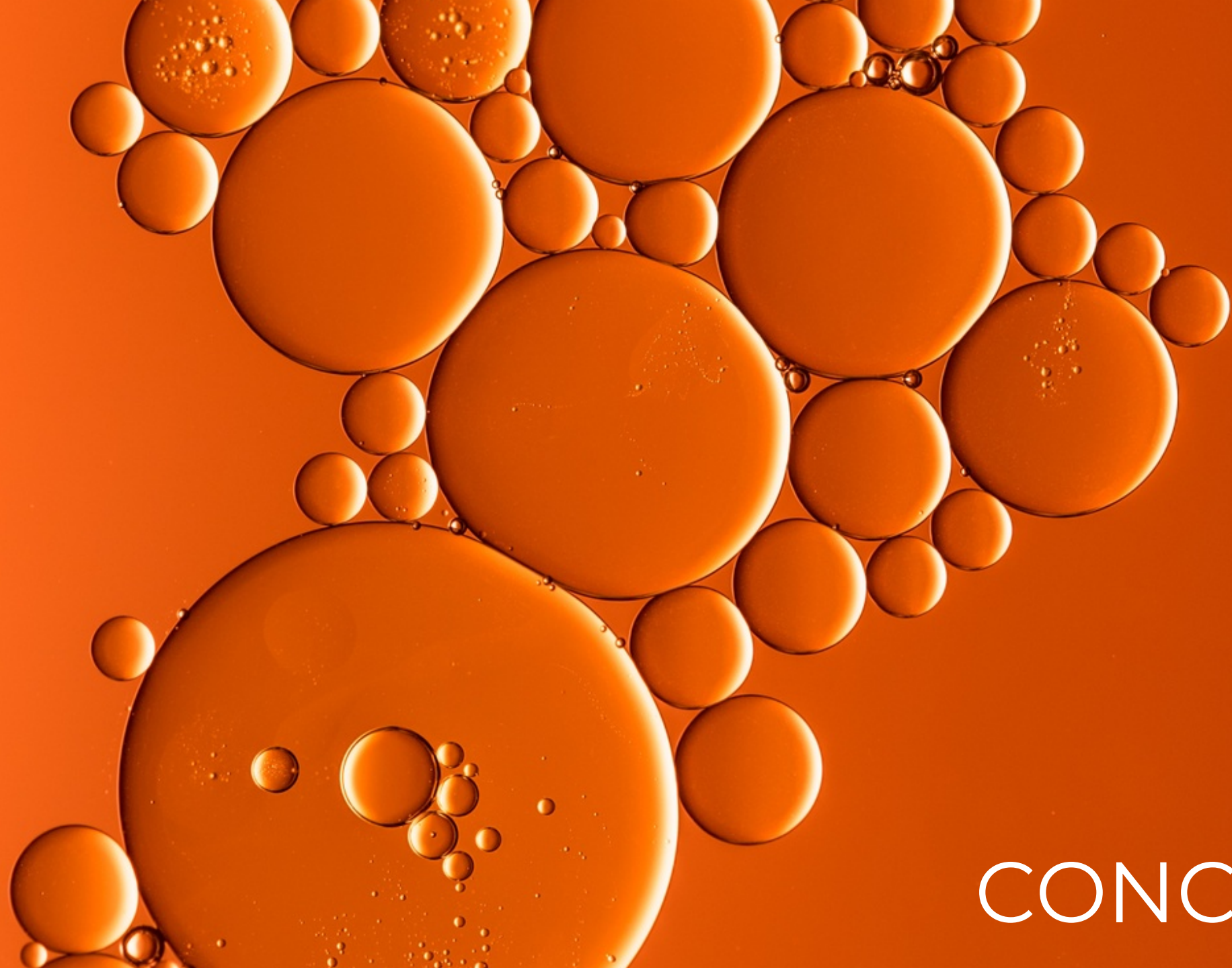
MOOD MODULATION

Research demonstrates that fragrances can influence mood.

Extensive research and development has centred on these scientific principles, resulting in entire teams focused on scent and wellness.

Everyone from scientists within their respective fields to perfumers, brands and beyond have moved to quickly capitalise on this idea and demonstrate the efficacy of their ingredients.

Using raw materials that can effect positive changes in mood, such as promoting relaxation and reducing stress, also speak to secondary benefits that more consumers have begun to expect.



CONCERNS



THE ENVIRONMENT

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT



IT AIN'T EASY BEING GREEN

Too often, brands use various words and phrases that are nebulous, like 'green', 'sustainable', 'clean', etc. Many of these claims are unsubstantiated, though they may represent a true part of a brand's ethos. In the worst cases, they are completely false, sometimes due to lack of education on the brand side but often due to marketing efforts to make claims that sell product.

Having a brand that produces a skincare product is not 'sustainable', but steps taken by brands can demonstrate commitment to being as sustainable as possible. It's an important distinction.



CLIMATE CRISIS

The largest players in the fragrance industry publish annual reports delineating their plans to reduce and eventually eliminate carbon emissions.

Many have also created a component for their digital raw materials compendiums that rates or scores each material in terms of how eco friendly it is (or isn't).

It is far from perfect and perhaps too little too late, and the catalyst for this is tied up closely with the EU Green Deal legislation.

The fragrance industry does a poor job of educating the consumer generally and their past reputation lingers.



FACT CHECK

Fragrance comes under fire most frequently when ingredients are thought to be unsafe for the consumer, but occasionally environmental concerns do come up. It's important to be aware that many components in skincare can (and do) have an impact on the environment in numerous ways but fragrance is generally only about 0.5% - 1% of a skincare product's formulation. When compared to the volume of fragrance entering the environment from laundry detergents and household cleaning products, fragrance for skincare represents a far more minimal impact.

EDUCATION



DISPELLING MYTHS

- **FRAGRANCE-FREE PRODUCTS ARE BETTER FOR SENSITIVE SKIN**

There are many different types of skin and many varieties of skin sensitivities and allergies that may have nothing to do with the common allergens in fragrance. Many active components in skincare can cause adverse reactions; e.g., retinol, salicylic acid, peptides, and other biologic therapeutics.

- **NATURAL FRAGRANCES ARE SAFER**

Both natural and synthetic raw materials (and the products that utilise them) undergo rigorous safety and stability assessments to ensure market viability & efficacy. Also, as secondary and tertiary metabolites of plants, volatile organic compounds form the basis of intra- (and inter-)plant communication and often are used for defence. Numerous plants (or their components) can be extremely toxic, even fatal. Not that you will find them in a skincare product, but it's important to know nature is not necessarily tantamount to nurture.

- **NATURAL = SUSTAINABLE**

In a number of cases, the effects on the environment from growing, harvesting and extracting naturals, such as consumption of energy, generation of waste, and reduction of biodiversity, can be significantly higher. Consumer perception that what is good for them is good for the environment is one of the most widespread pieces of misinformation currently in the market.

- **'FRAGRANCE FREE' MEANS PRODUCTS HAVE NO SCENT**

Nearly all product matrices in skincare have a smell, even if mild. Many consumer products labelled 'fragrance free' are actually mislabelled because a preservative or stabilising agent may in fact have quite a pronounced odour. Common examples are Benzyl Salicylate, a common UV protectant, and Phenoxyethanol, a preservative and inhibitor of microbial activity, which smells of rose. 'No Fragrance Added' would be better as a designation but it's less catchy and less black and white.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

- **FASHION NEW NARRATIVES**

The fear-based marketing concept is a proven road to success, but it isn't the only way. Many brands focus on what their products do and what they contain instead of beginning with the negative. As industry professionals, we have the ability to reach consumers in new ways.

- **BE SELECTIVE**

Every time you select an ingredient, you are making the choice to do so, creating more demand for a given raw material to be created and sold. It's the same with products of every kind. We are essentially voting to keep or discontinue these things on a regular basis.

Our usage rationale for each ingredient is something we should always consider, not just for its efficacy in formulation but also for its impact on the environment, value chain, and the consumer.

- **ASK QUESTIONS**

If a company makes an unsubstantiated or problematic claim, or an influencer offers misguided advice on how to use a product, ask questions. Give them the chance to connect with you at a human level and debate their position. Ask for research, results of studies, etc. Connecting claims with factual evidence where possible is beneficial to everyone.

- **CREATE TRUST**

Much of the relationship between consumer and product is built at the brand level. How a brand communicates on their product, engages with their audience, and connects to consumer concerns all factor heavily in brand loyalty. It is amazing to have a product that works well and is backed by research but the first step is providing potential customers with a certain degree of comfort that they can trust your formulations are mindful of their concerns, not just with their skin but also their safety and that of the environment.

CONSUMER SAFETY



Fragrance Safety Regulation

International Standards

IFRA, with help from RIFM, provide industry standards and guidelines for fragrance safety.

Labelling Rules

Regulations by governments mandate listing of ingredients on product labels, including allergens.

Continuous Monitoring

Agencies attempt to regularly update assessments and address evolving concerns.

Stakeholder Collaboration

Engagement with industry, consumers and experts does exist; access to resulting research is largely confined to employees of larger companies.

Risk Assessments

Skincare undergoes more rigorous testing than fine fragrance both for stability and for skin safety due to the nature of the products themselves and their intended use.

Good Manufacturing Practices

GMP enforcement makes efforts to assure quality and safety through the supply chain.

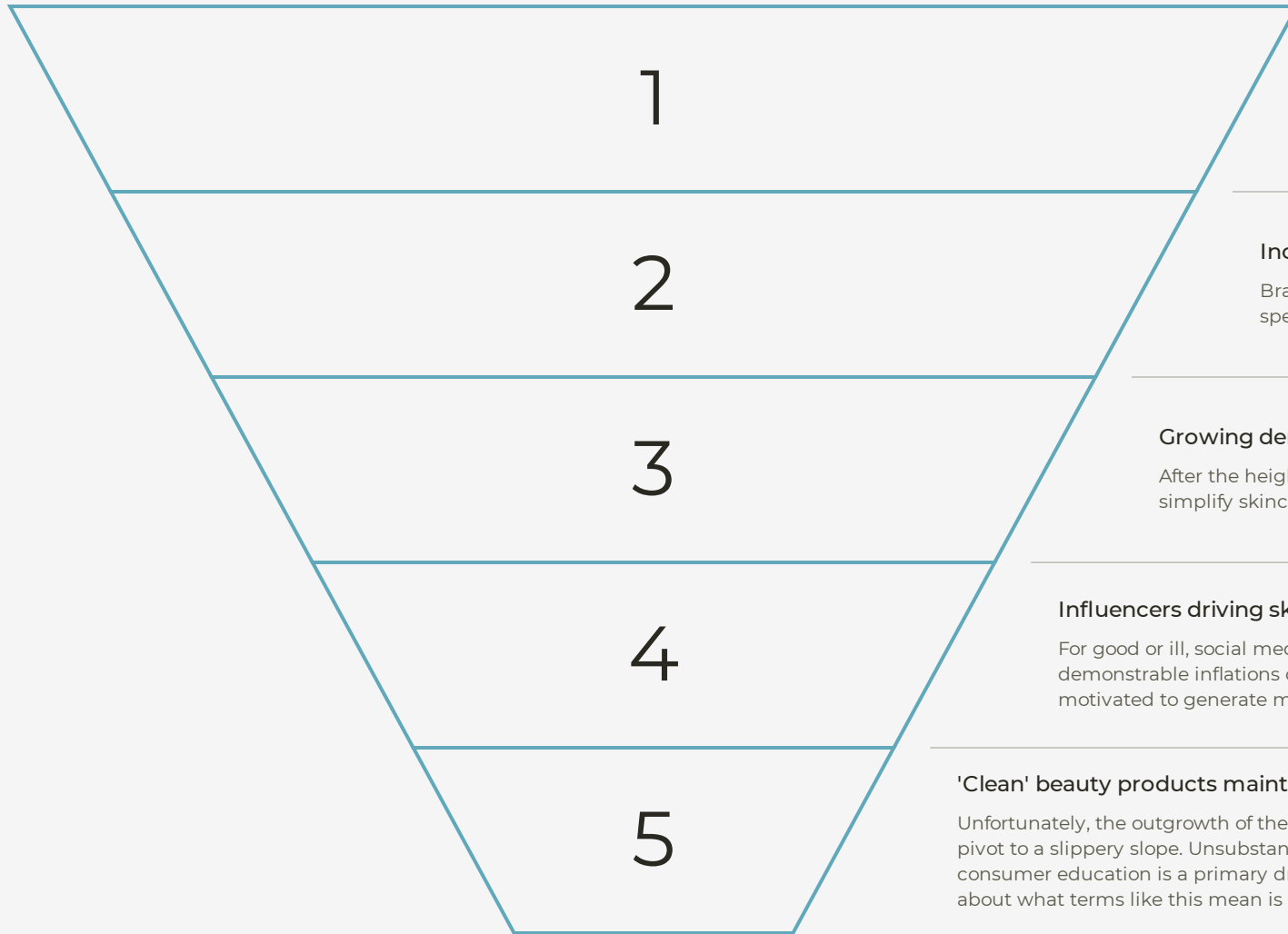
Global Harmonisation

Efforts are being made to harmonise fragrance standards globally, usually with IFRA and the EU Commission as 'gold standard'.

A top-down photograph of a hand holding a small green jar filled with white cream. The hand is positioned in the center-right of the frame. To the left of the hand is another green jar with a black lid. In the bottom-left corner, there is a notebook with a green leaf illustration on its cover. The background is a plain white surface. The text "MARKET CONSIDERATIONS" is overlaid in white, uppercase letters across the middle of the image.

MARKET CONSIDERATIONS

CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR



1

Rising preference for natural and organic skincare products.

This 'trend' is currently at its apex, largely fuelled by fear-based marketing and growing consumer anxiety around personal safety and the global climate crisis.

2

Increasing e-commerce sales for skincare, largely fueled by social media.

Brands have moved to increase availability of their products via online channels with a special focus on direct-from-social buying platforms.

3

Growing demand for multifunctional skincare products.

After the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and return to work, consumers have consistently sought to simplify skincare regimens.

4

Influencers driving skincare purchasing decisions.

For good or ill, social media influencers are at centre stage and the products they use and recommend have demonstrable inflations of sales. This trend is currently on the rise and expected to continue as influencers are motivated to generate more content in a saturated environment to stay relevant.

5

'Clean' beauty products maintaining a substantial foothold.

Unfortunately, the outgrowth of the 'clean' beauty movement from expectations of naturality and sustainability represents a pivot to a slippery slope. Unsubstantiated, broad claims like 'clean' technically have very little real meaning and a lack of consumer education is a primary driver of this. Many consumers' first and only touchpoint to learn and understand more about what terms like this mean is from the brands whose products they are buying.

THANK YOU

A PDF of this presentation as well as a 16-page resource document with bite-size bits of information and references will be sent to everyone following the summit.

IN THE MEAN TIME, STAY IN TOUCH!

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