

Impact of anosmic people on sniff tests

Sniff tests are carried out before launching new fragranced products or to optimize current products. These tests allow to collect the consumer perceptions and preferences towards market products and developments.

The aim of this research is to measure the olfactory performances of screened consumers, in order to evaluate their impact on results accuracy and product discrimination. By “olfactory performances”, it means the detection of the anosmic and hyposmic consumers to only accept the capable ones to take part in the survey.

A sniff test on several fragranced products is conducted in some European countries on a significant sample of women. The target is wide on purpose to be representative of the population.

All the users assess all the products and after a short break, they are asked to submit to an olfactory test, the ETOC (European Test of Olfactory Capabilities). It is based on a combination of supra-threshold detection and identification tasks. This test is composed of 16 sets of different fragrances. Each set is made up of four flasks, three are blank and only one is fragranced.

First, the consumers are asked to detect the one among the four which is fragranced and then to identify each odour. The consumers check the descriptor among the suggested odors, which is the correct answer according to them. This procedure enables to highlight the anosmic and hyposmic consumers versus the normosmic ones.

What is the part of anosmic and hyposmic people in a sniff test? Do they have a real impact on the results?

In the future, checking olfactory capabilities of the respondents could be part of the recruitment to select only the capable respondents.

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