



In this edition of Quarterly Insights, Michael Edwards & his team report:

- Fragrance launches are down 42% on last year, with some brands pivoting to diversify their product offer in response to COVID-19.
- Fragrances of the World launches a new, feature-packed data visualisation tool with its latest database upgrade.
- Michael's Perfume Legends II receives the Perfumed Plume Award for Fragrance Book of the Year.



Fragrances of the World assesses the impact of the pandemic on fragrance launches globally.

COVID-19's impact on fragrance launches. What the data tells us.

Year-to-date, fragrance launches are down 42% compared to last year. A complete picture of COVID-19's impact on our industry is still forming and retailers are reporting slowing sales for bricks and mortar retail while online sales increase.

At this time of the year our database statistics would usually include fragrances launched at Esxence in Milan, the Tax-Free World Association exhibition in Singapore, and new launches brands have briefed us on. Pitti Fragranze would have happened in Florence and we'd be on our way home from Cannes after the final tax-free exhibition of the year.

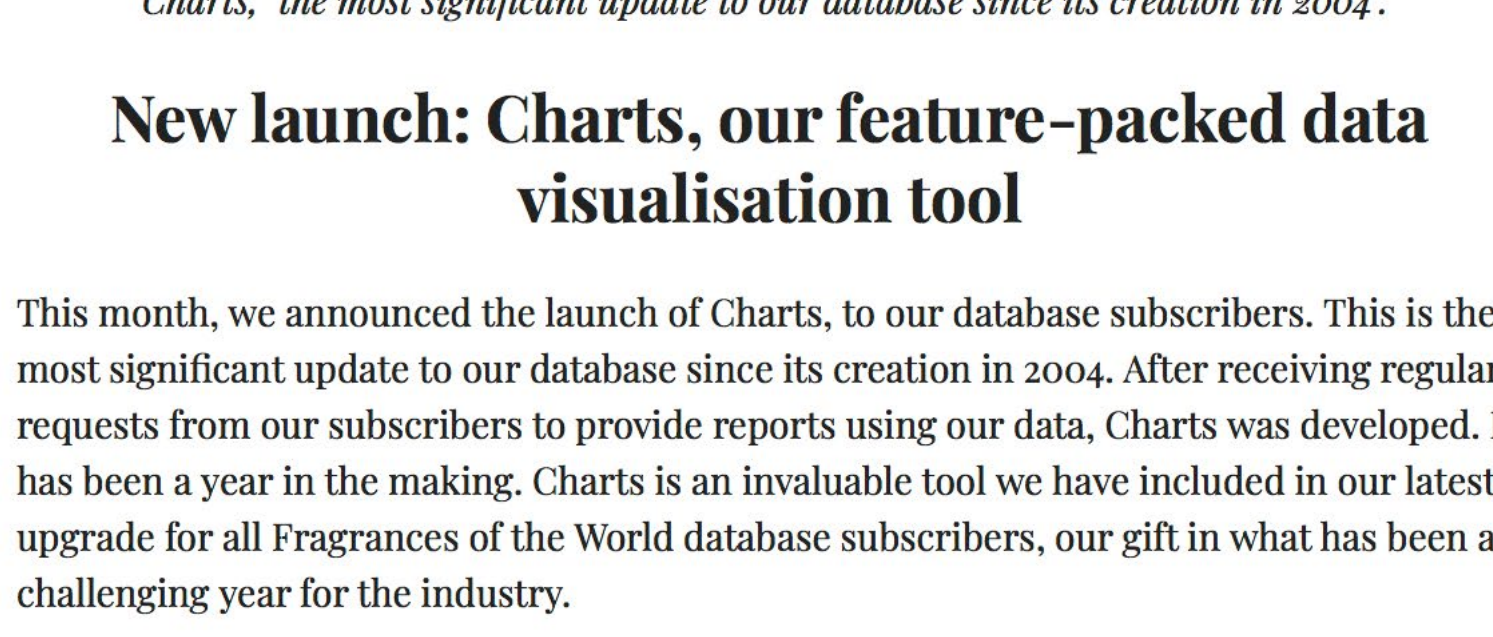
Cancellation of this year's events hasn't

resulted in launches coming to a grinding halt, and our team had a busy quarter, with briefing meetings taking place online. Virtual launch events are the new norm. Still, the numbers show the reality of the current situation.

As the end of the year approaches, we are seeing launches increasing with larger brands returning to their usual rhythm and small, independent brands increasing activity.

Entering the final quarter, we are seeing launches increasing and larger brands are returning to their usual rhythm.

Understandably, small independent brands have faced tougher times, which may account for the steep decline in Italian fragrance launches this year as shown in our data below.



Charts, 'the most significant update to our database since its creation in 2004'.

New launch: Charts, our feature-packed data visualisation tool

This month, we announced the launch of Charts, to our database subscribers. This is the most significant update to our database since its creation in 2004. After receiving regular requests from our subscribers to provide reports using our data, Charts was developed. It has been a year in the making. Charts is an invaluable tool we have included in our latest upgrade for all Fragrances of the World database subscribers, our gift in what has been a challenging year for the industry.

User-friendly in its design, database subscribers can plot fragrance launches from a period of time and visualise the data in a range of visuals including bar charts and trend graphs. A range of filters can be applied to divide the data by gender, fragrance families, distribution, brand, corporate group and oil house.

CHARTS: A case study

Fragrances of the World's Clayton Ilolahia shares his experience using CHARTS.

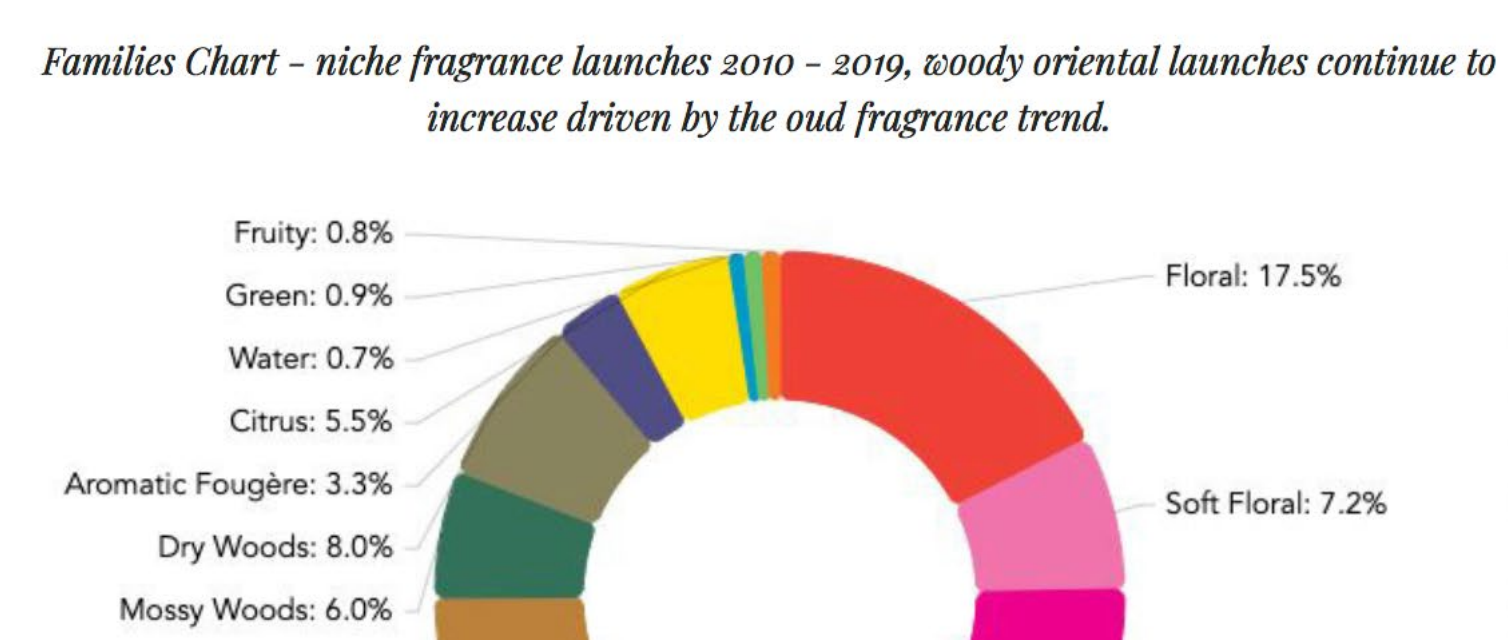
"It's no secret that data is powerful. But data lacks influence when it's not translated in a way that connects with viewers. It's not easy to get clear takeaways just by looking at stats and numbers on a spreadsheet. The brain processes visual information far better than it processes text, which is why the new CHARTS feature is a useful storytelling tool that brings data to life in presentations and reports.

To give you an example of how CHARTS can be used, I compared launches from two ten-year time periods, 2000-2009 and 2010-2019. Trends charts for these two periods illustrate the growth of launches very clearly. It's an astounding growth of 181% between the two decades. In 2006, the number of new fragrances launched exceeded 1,000 for the first time in history. Last year, we tracked over 3,000 new fragrances.

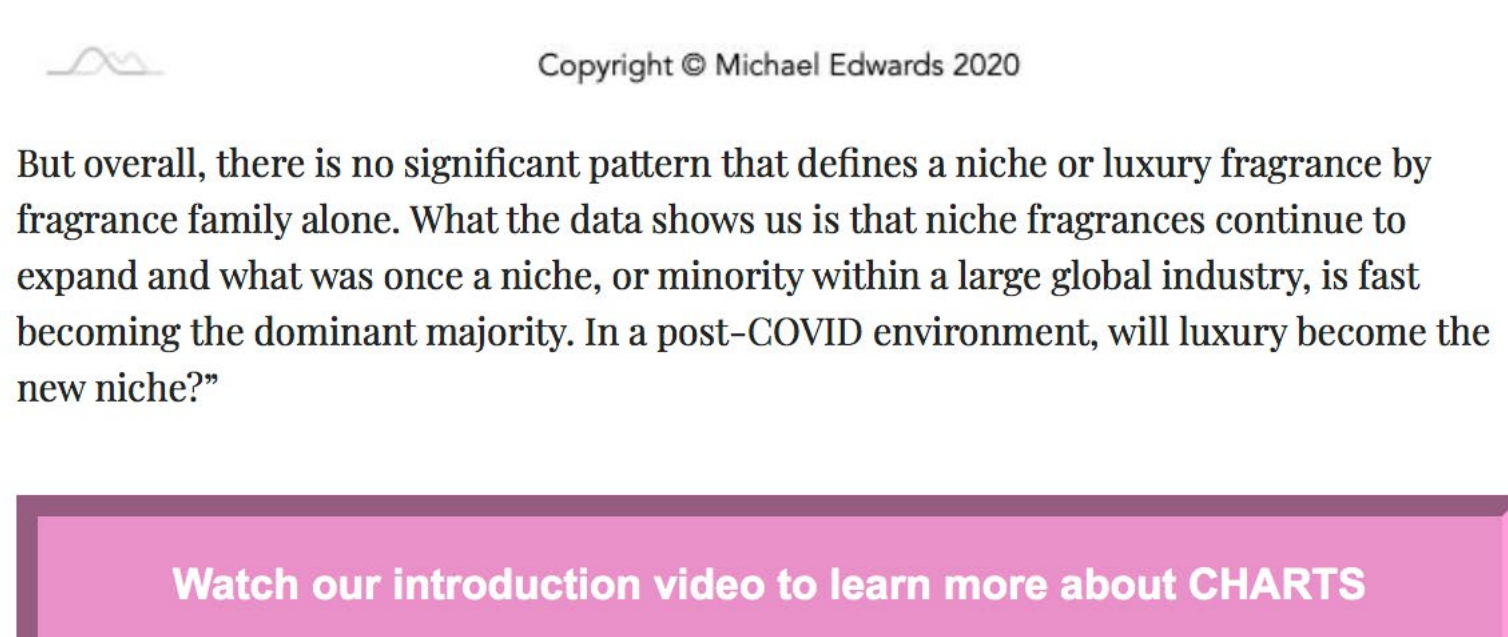
CHARTS' filters allow users to drill down or dissect the data in different ways. I was curious to see if the data backed my assumption that the rise of niche in the mid-noughties was the main reason for the exponential increase in launches. The trends chart illustrates both the rapid growth of niche over the past 15 years and increase of shared, unisex fragrances.

Check too, the growing trend of luxury fragrances, which experienced the same growth between the two time periods (luxury increased 387%, niche increased 386%), that's twice as much compared to the industry's average.

All fragrance launches 2010 - 2019 (trends chart) demonstrates the growth of shared fragrances.



Comparison chart 2010-2019 of niche (A), luxury (B) and prestige (C) launches demonstrates the growth and increasing market share of niche.



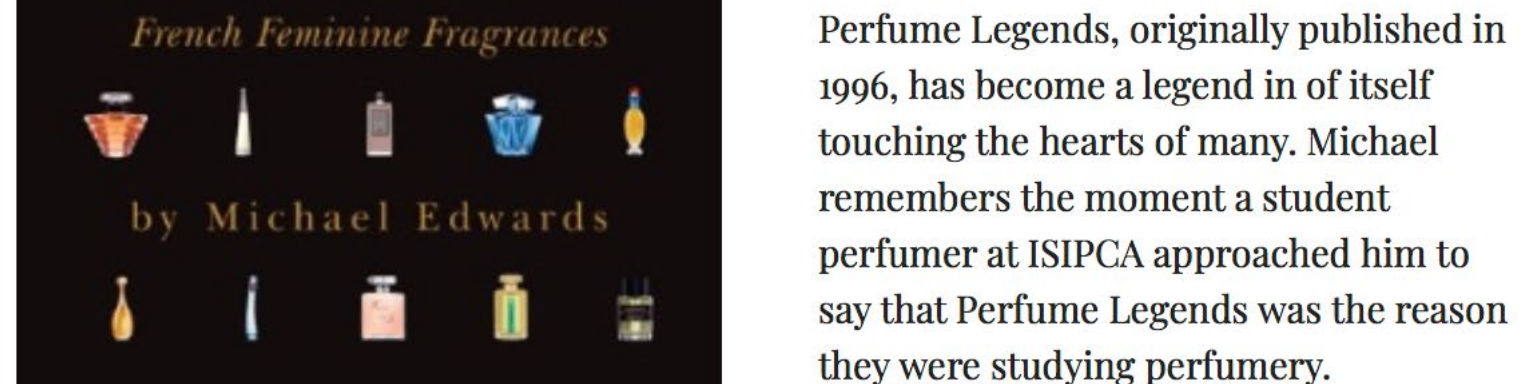
The relationship between niche, luxury and prestige fragrances is an interesting one. To explore further, I used the fragrance families filter in CHARTS. I was interested to see the evolution of the fragrance families over the two time periods and whether the families provide any data we can use to define a typical niche, luxury or prestige fragrance. While some families prevailed, for example fruity prestige fragrances grew while niche and luxury steeply declined, backing the perception that niche and luxury brands steer away from fragrances that flourish in the prestige and mass market. Woody Oriental niche fragrances grew significantly as the niche trend for oud fragrances dominated. This can be seen by clicking on the details tab in CHARTS, which provides a list of fragrances in the data set.

Families Chart - niche fragrance launches 2010 - 2019, woody oriental launches continue to increase driven by the oud fragrance trend.



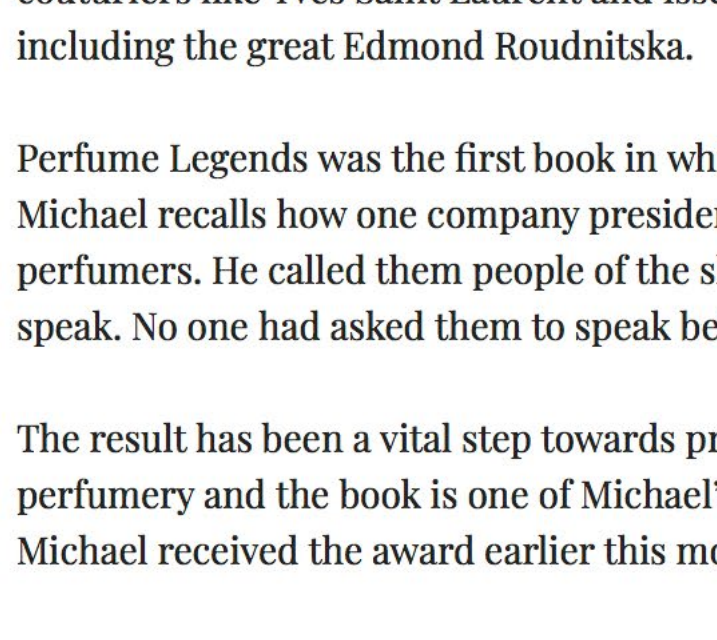
But overall, there is no significant pattern that defines a niche or luxury fragrance by fragrance family alone. What the data shows us is that niche fragrances continue to expand and what was once a niche, or minority within a large global industry, is fast becoming the dominant majority. In a post-COVID environment, will luxury become the new niche?"

Watch our introduction video to learn more about CHARTS



Michael Edwards signing copies of his award-winning Perfume Legends II.

Perfume Legends II named Fragrance Book of the Year at Perfumed Plume Awards



The Perfumed Plume Awards "talented writers and visualists who bring to life the craft, the inspiration, the emotion and the sensory journey that are at the heart of fragrance creation." This year Michael Edwards is honoured to receive the Perfume Plume Award for Perfume Legends II, Fragrance Book of the Year.

Perfume Legends, originally published in 1996, has become a legend in of itself touching the hearts of many. Michael remembers the moment a student perfumer at ISIPCA approached him to say that Perfume Legends was the reason they were studying perfumery.

Last year we published Michael's revised version, Perfume Legends II, which added eight new legends. The most recent legend being Portrait of a Lady by Editions de Parfums Frédéric Malle.

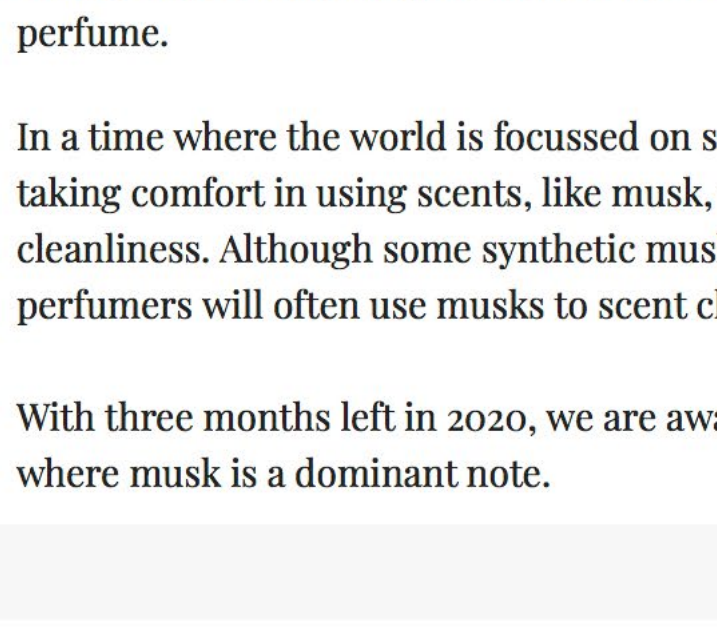
The book is a curation of stories on each "legend" told by those involved in creating it. In completing his research, Michael spoke to over 150 people, from brand executives to couturiers like Yves Saint Laurent and Issey Miyake to bottle designers and perfumers, including the great Edmond Roudnitska.

Perfume Legends was the first book in which perfumers spoke openly about their work. Michael recalls how one company president questioned why he wanted to speak to his perfumers. He called them people of the shade, but to Michael's surprise, they wanted to speak. No one had asked them to speak before.

The result has been a vital step towards preserving the history of modern French perfumery and the book is one of Michael's life achievements. It is with great pride that Michael received the award earlier this month.

Michael Edwards' award-winning Perfume Legends II is available from our website and Amazon in the US and Australia.

Attention Worthy New Releases



Arquite Responds to COVID-19 by Diversifying Offering

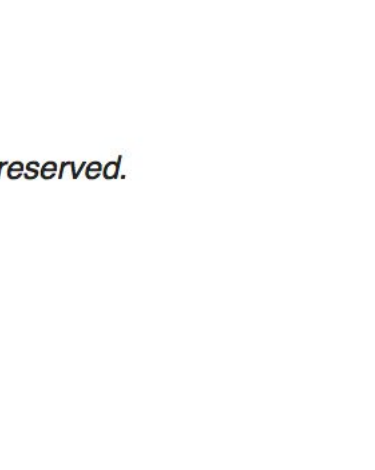
Brands are using their ingenuity to respond to the disruption caused by the pandemic. Take Arquite for example. The niche fragrance house has introduced its Orange Blossom & Iris Hand Sanitizer to meet the global demand for hand sanitizers. Founder, Carlos Huber, drew inspiration from an experience he had inside the Limonaia of the Boboli Gardens in Florence, Italy.

He recalled the scent left on his hands after holding lemons and orange blossoms in the garden. He worked with Givaudan Master Perfumer Rodrigo Flores-Roux to create a scent around refreshing Italian essences, orange blossom and Tuscan iris. Made in accordance with OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens Standard 1910.1030 and CDC handwashing recommendations in the absence of water, this product turns practical hygiene into a luxurious scent experience. We also love the inclusion of glycerin, which helps prevent dry hands.

Musk as the Scent of Hygiene

We are seeing a revival of musk fragrances, which proliferated in the swinging sixties and seventies from the back of classics like Jovan Musk. This month Frédéric Malle's Muscs Ravageur was inducted into the Fragrance Foundation's Fragrance Hall of Fame, and niche brand Juliette Has A Gun launched Musk Invisible.

Our head of evaluation, Erica Moore, recalls her obsession with the synthetic musk Galaxolide, when she worked as a fragrance evaluator at Drom. To her, it smelled clean and like a fragrance on its own and had a lab blended dilution of pure Galaxolide that she wore as perfume.



In a time where the world is focussed on sanitization, we are not surprised that people are taking comfort in using scents, like musk, that are typically associated with the idea of cleanliness. Although some synthetic musks smell like their animal origin, functional perfumers will often use musks to scent cleaning products.

With three months left in 2020, we are aware of a number of upcoming 2020 launches where musk is a dominant note.

From Comfort Eating, to Comfort Smelling

Taking moments throughout the day to exercise self-care has become essential to mental wellbeing while living through the pandemic. Most of the retailers we speak with recognise an increase in fragrance sales from people wanting to indulge in small luxuries to help cope with living in lockdown. We know about comfort eating but now we are hearing more about comfort smelling.

Gourmand fragrances is not a new trend, but our data shows continual year-on-year growth of this sub-note from niche to mass.

Something new we have noticed this year is the diversification of edible themes in fragrances. Maltol no longer holds monopoly over gourmand with savoury notes trending with more traditional sweet notes like Trussardi's Aperitivo Milanese Porta Nuova, which has an amaretto note at its heart. Perfumer H has launched two savoury scents, Cucumber and Salt. Ellis Brooklyn also has a fragrance called Salt as well as Sweet, which smells like pears and marshmallows.