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US Ink getting 'scents' of market

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US Ink is developing **Spectra Scented Inks**, a product that also uses scented capsules that can be dispersed into inks, coating or varnishes, according to Todd Wheeler, marketing manager.

Wheeler said the fact that the product can run right through the newspaper web is helping make this once too-expensive technology attainable for newspapers and advertisers.

“The core technology behind scented ads is the relatively expensive scented capsules,” Wheeler said. “For economical reasons, it is recommended that the dispersed capsules be applied directly to the targeted ad.”

US Ink has made scented inks for many decades, Wheeler said, but the company is seeing a renewed interest in the technology fueled by the desire to offer advertisers more choices for their spend and the potential new revenue stream it opens up for newspapers.

“Newspapers are also looking for new ways to stay relevant to both advertisers and readers.”

In the past, scented advertising in newspapers was not a growth area for several reasons including the high cost of the micro-encapsulated fragrances, the additional expenses of extra press runs, the fact that the often strong odors of traditional scratch-and-sniff inks were unpopular with press crews and many newspaper readers, and the fact that USPS regulations required that scented surfaces be covered or contained within the mailed piece.

Although Wheeler would not identify publishers, he said several large newspaper groups are currently testing Spectra Scented Inks.

“The value of scented ad technology for newspapers will ultimately be measured by the profits it generates for adopters,” he said.

Wheeler said the technology should not require separate press runs given the proper press configuration with targeted ink and plate capabilities. ROI, he said, depends on various factors specific to the business, such as advertising rates for the ads, frequency of runs and print sites involved.

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