

# A NEW DIMENSION FROM FRAGRANCE SNIFF TEST



Access to a powerful **EMOTIONAL DIAGNOSIS** and **SCORING** thanks to spontaneous verbalization (only 3 WORDS)

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## BACKGROUND

Emotion measurement is a key need of the fragrance category and particularly difficult to assess. A fragrance is more than just a scent: it stimulates complex, emotional and unconscious universes. Traditional quantitative tests are mainly based on rational responses and often lack discrimination or understanding (go/no go tools). So how to combine emotional and rational measurement in fragrance sniff tests ?

## OBJECTIVES

- For the particular segment of fine fragrances, Takasago wanted to implement:
- a more qualitative, luxury and gamified way of evaluating fragrances compared to classical blind sniff test
  - including an emotional measurement, which should be simple, international, and cost effective, but still rich in wording

## METHOD

- A scenarized protocol, with a very short questionnaire



In 4 different countries (USA, France, Middle East, China), 40 consumers were asked to evaluate 12 fragrances blind on ceramics placed in luxury jars. The idea was to invite respondents to discover fragrances like in a boutique, taking their time, and enjoying the moment.

Consumers completed on a tablet a short and playful questionnaire (only 2 questions per fragrance) :

- 3 SPONTANEOUS WORDS  
Q1. What are the first 3 WORDS that spontaneously come to mind when smelling this fragrance?
- OVERALL LIKING (classical scale)  
Q2. Please indicate your OVERALL OPINION of this fragrance  
Poor Fair Good Very Good Excellent

- Only 3 WORDS to measure EMOTIONAL activation  
Very quick and easy to implement, spontaneous language avoids convenient responses, bias and suggestion. It allows respondents to be less rational, more subconscious and thus to be closer to emotional activation (closer to brain system 1 -cf Daniel Kahneman: Thinking, Fast and Slow).

- A well-proven ALGORITHM based on 3 words

The algorithm, based on more than 3 years of R&D, takes into account language structure: beyond their meaning, words are analysed according to their NATURE and CONTEXT:

### WORDS NATURE & VERBALIZATION CONTEXT

**LEXICAL CATEGORY**  
Is it an adjective, a verb, a noun?

**RANK**  
Cited 1st? 2nd? 3rd?

**ENUNCIATION LOGIC**  
Am I judging?  
Am I describing the effects on me?  
Am I describing the stimulus?

**ASSOCIATION**  
How are the 3 words linked to each other?

**VALENCE**  
Is the word positive, neutral or negative?

**CONSENSUS**  
Is the word shared by the rest of the sample?

Fig 1: Criteria taken into account in the R3m score © algorithm

## FINDINGS

Emotional score and spontaneous verbalization help Takasago to go beyond rational liking and the description of its fragrances. Reducing and making the questionnaire more playful, this new qual & quant way of questioning proved to be relevant and powerful:

### 1/ Better discrimination thanks to the emotional SCORE

With only 3 words, calculation of 1 score (R3m score) = a new quant KPI with a wide scale (-150 to +100) for more discrimination

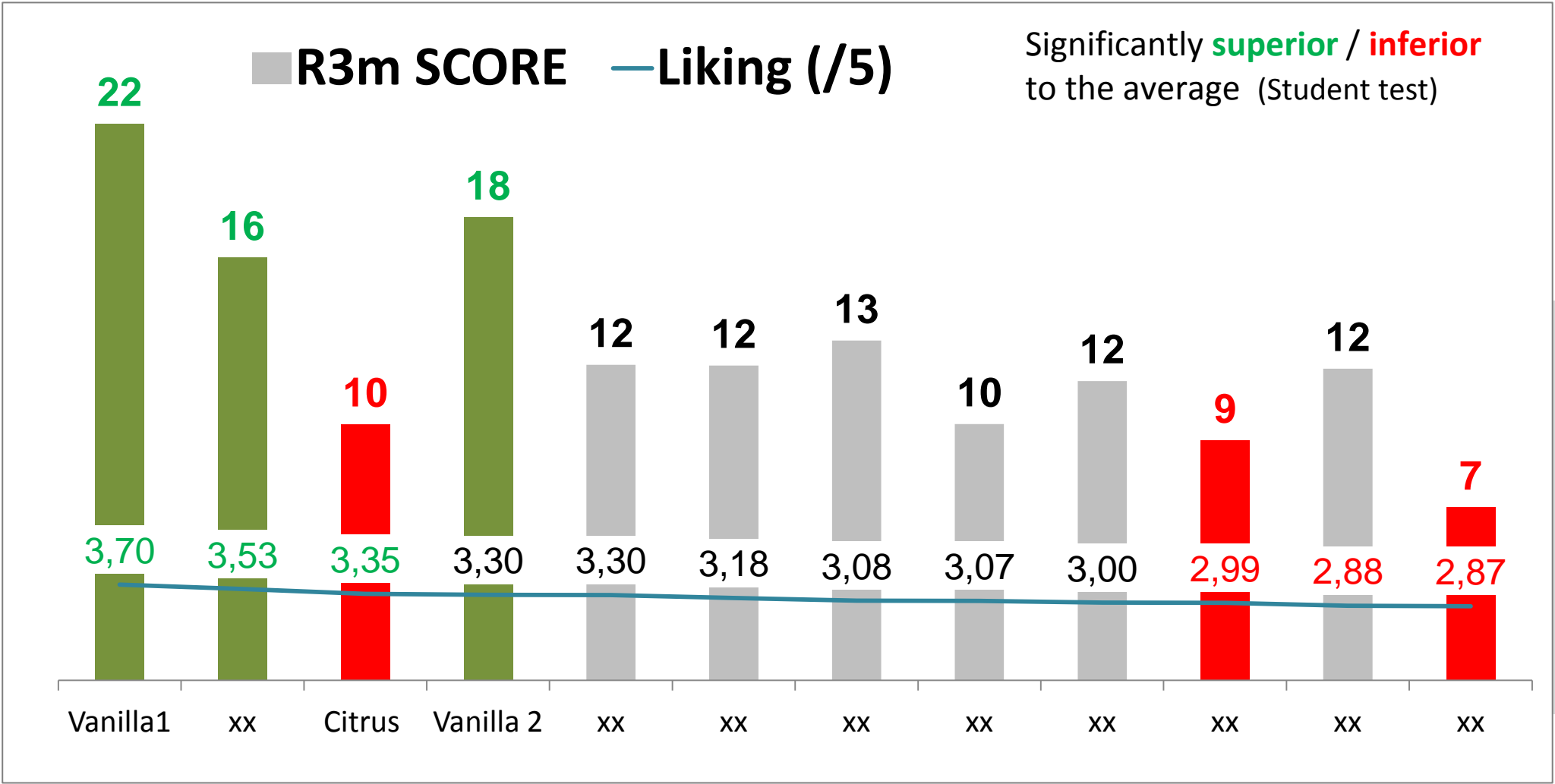


Fig 2: Comparison of Overall liking and R3m score of the 12 fragrances

- + Consistency in the overall hierarchy
- + Bringing discrimination to help the decision-making

### 2/ In depth understanding thanks to the spontaneous WORDS

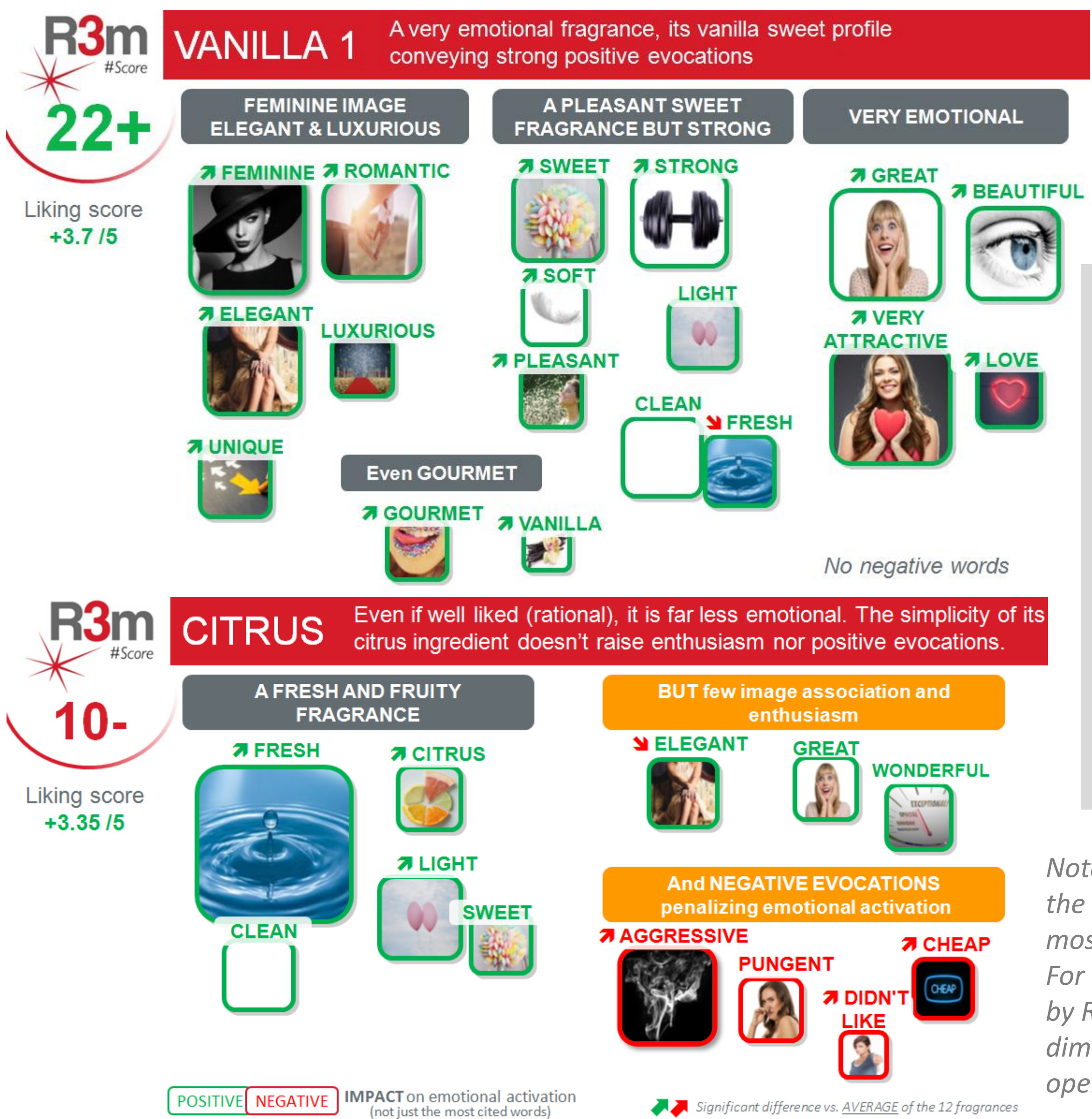


Fig 3: WORDS contributing the MOST to the emotional activation score for each fragrance (positively or negatively)

- + Very rich and precise diagnosis, to understand the strengths and weaknesses
- + In-depth diagnosis of each fragrance in itself, and compared to other fragrances, other targets, countries etc...
- + Easy and relevant learning for olfactory experts

Nota: Image size is proportional to the weight of the word into the emotional activation score = most impactful dimensions  
For the illustration, an image has been chosen by Repères, in order to reproduce the analogical dimension of the spontaneous association and open-up the imaginary of the reader.

### 3/ Fragrance learning

- In terms of ingredients:
- Vanilla notes generated more emotional activation than more direct (but still very qualitative) citrus notes
  - Floral notes (rose or white flowers) were both liked and emotional
  - Over-spicy fragrances were difficult to appreciate in blind, with poor emotional scores
- In terms of regions:
- Middle East consumers emotions were directly correlated with liking, whilst French and Americans' emotions were more linked to memories...
  - At this stage, we observed less emotion from Chinese consumers

## CONCLUSIONS

This method allowed a quick and translatable across different countries. Thanks to R3m score©, Takasago was able to: **QUANTIFY** the emotional activation via a new key performance indicator, **QUALITATIVELY UNDERSTAND** the strengths and weaknesses of each fragrance thanks to the richness of the spontaneous words.

Providing this level of insight quickly during early stage of investment on a new fine fragrance category offers greater clarity for future international developments.