AIR CARE – CHINA – 2024

The rigid demand for air fresheners is stable, and scented air care products can capitalise on Chinese aesthetics and the DIY trend to attract consumers.

Tina He, Analyst, China Insights

Report Content

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Key issues covered in this Report

- Definition
- What you need to know

The Market

- Market Size and Forecast: the waning spending momentum on scented air care products is leading to a slowdown in the growth of the air care market
- Market factors: practicality and affordability are preferred, with Chinese aesthetics driving category development
- Market segmentation: growth in most segments is stable, while growth rates in scented candles/incense decline
  - Graph 1: retail value of the air care market, by segments, 2018-2023
  - Graph 2: retail value growth rate of the air care market, by segments, 2019-2023

Companies and brands

- Market share: despite low market concentration, Miniso and NetEase Yanxuan lead due to active innovation and affordable prices
- Marketing activities: the trend of Chinese incense lore drives the growth of incense, while innovation in offline experiences deepens the brand impression
- New product trends: oriental scents like gardenia, jasmine and sandalwood are on the rise, while sterilisation features enhance the practicality of products
  - Graph 3: mainstream fragrance components in air care product launches, 2019-2023*
  - Graph 4: mainstream claims for air care product launches, 2019-2023*
- Product examples: oriental fragrances become a core selling point, while sprays with odour-removing and anti-bacterial features enhance practicality and effectiveness

The consumer

- The usage of air fresheners and incense increases, while the usage of scented candles declines
  - Graph 5: product usage, 2022 vs 2023
- Long-lasting effect and mood improvement are the most important claims for air fresheners
  - Graph 6: interested claims of air fresheners, 2022 vs 2023
- Scented air care products continue to prioritise providing emotional value, while air fresheners focus on freshening the air
  - Graph 7: reasons for using different product types, 2023
- Safety concerns and complicated usage are barriers to increasing the popularity of scented candles
  - Graph 8: usage barriers of scented candles, 2023
- Floral is the most common choice, with woody, citrus and oriental scent types also being popular to varying degrees
  - Graph 9: preferred scent types by product types, 2023

- Both online and offline channels are crucial, as lifestyle brand retailers and short video platforms see increased usage
  - Graph 10: purchase channels, 2022 vs 2023
  - Graph 11: purchase channels, 2023
- On-site comparisons/sampling are the main motivations for offline purchases
  - Graph 12: offline purchase motivations, 2023

Issues and insights

What we think

THE MARKET

Market size and forecast

- The overall growth of the air care market is slowing down due to a lack of momentum in the penetration of scented air care products

Market factors

- Amid intentional spending, the penetration of scented air care products is slowing down, while air fresheners are becoming more attractive
- Consumers favour lower-priced products
  - Graph 13: average price range per item for air care products on Tmall, 2022 and 2023
  - Graph 14: average price range per item for air care products on Douyin, 2022 and 2023
  - Graph 15: average price range per item for air fresheners on Tmall, 2022 and 2023
  - Graph 16: average price range per item for scented air care products on Tmall, 2022 and 2023
- The admiration for Chinese aesthetics drives the development of the air care product market
  - Graph 17: mentions and engagement of 'incense' (熏香*) on social media**, 2022-2023
  - Graph 18: mentions and engagement of 'incense lore' (香道*) on social media**, 2022-2023

Market segmentation

- Spray air fresheners are keeping pace with slow-release products, while scented candles and incense slowed down significantly
  - Graph 19: retail value of the air care market, by segments, 2018-2023
  - Graph 20: retail value growth rate of the air care market, by segments, 2019-2023

COMPANIES AND BRANDS

Market share

- Market share: despite low market concentration, Miniso and NetEase Yanxuan lead due to active innovation and affordable prices
- The concentration of the air care market is low, particularly among air freshener manufacturers, whose market shares are similar

- Miniso solidifies its leading position in the scented air care sector
- NetEase Yanxuan experienced a larger increase in market share in 2023
- To Summer leads the premium scented air care market
- Online-only brands have also gained more market share
- Lao Guan Jia and Kobayashi have achieved market share growth by focusing on specific channels

Marketing activities

- Chinese aesthetics catalyse the spending trend of scented air care products
- Experiential brick-and-mortar stores offer a platform for brands to engage with consumers
- Introducing household air care products into public spaces through IP-based collaboration

New product trends

- Floral, citrus and fresh & clean scents are common, while oriental elements like gardenia, jasmine and sandalwood are emerging
  - Graph 21: fragrance component groups for air care product launches, 2019-2023*
  - Graph 22: mainstream fragrance components in air care product launches, 2019-2023*
- Oriental fragrance concepts are increasingly featured in new products
- Anti-bacterial and time/speed claims are gaining popularity, while refillable features demonstrate sustainability
  - Graph 23: mainstream claims for air care product launches, 2019-2023*
- Anti-bacterial feature permeates different types of air care products, while instant effects are also capturing attention
- Air care products demonstrate sustainability through the use of eco-friendly ingredients and refillable features
- Plant and natural ingredients are becoming more popular
  - Graph 24: mainstream ingredient claims for air care product launches, 2019-2023*
- Natural ingredients and simple formulas are now key selling points for scented candles and incense, enhancing product safety
- The expansion of practical features enhances the functionality of scented candles

THE CONSUMER

Product Usage

- The usage of air fresheners and incense is on the rise, while the popularity of scented candles is declining
  - Graph 25: product usage, 2022 vs 2023
  - Graph 26: selected product usage, 2021-2023
- Females and consumers aged 25-39 are active users of scented air care products
  - Graph 27: product usage, by age, 2023
  - Graph 28: selected product usage, by gender, 2023
- The increase in the usage of spray air fresheners is driven by women and lower-income households
  - Graph 29: User profile of spray air fresheners, 2022 vs 2023
  - Graph 30: user profile of solid/gel/liquid air fresheners, 2022 vs 2023

- The decrease in the usage of scented candles can be attributed to men and lower-income households
  - Graph 31: User profiles of scented candles, 2022 vs 2023
- Incense is favoured by men and consumers aged 50-59 for its embodiment of traditional Chinese aesthetics
  - Graph 32: user profiles of incense users, 2022 vs 2023

Interested Claims of Air Fresheners

- Long-lasting effects and mood improvement remain key claims, while practical features like removing pollutants and odours are gaining popularity
  - Graph 33: interested claims of air fresheners, 2022 vs 2023
- Consumers aged 25-39 are more interested in anti-bacterial properties, while those aged 18-24 are attracted to unique scents
  - Graph 34: selected claims that interest consumers in air fresheners, by age, 2023

Reasons for using different product types

- Air fresheners and scented air care products play distinct roles
  - Graph 35: reasons for using different product types, 2023
- Consumers aged 18-39 have specific emotional value demands for air fresheners
  - Graph 36: selected reasons for using air fresheners, by age, 2023
- High-income families prioritise the odour elimination and masking functions of air fresheners, as well as their ability to improve mood
  - Graph 37: selected reasons for using air fresheners, by monthly household income, 2023
- Consumers aged 25-29 use scented air care products to enhance their mood and freshen the air
  - Graph 38: selected reasons for using scented air care products, by age, 2023
- Men's understanding of the functional positioning of different types of air care products is ambiguous
  - Graph 39: selected reasons for using scented air care products, by gender, 2023
  - Graph 40: selected reasons for using air fresheners, by gender, 2023

Usage barriers of scented candles

- Safety concerns and complicated usage are barriers to increasing the popularity of scented candles
  - Graph 41: usage barriers of scented candles, 2023
- Safety concerns also pose a barrier to the use of scented candles for potential target consumers
  - Graph 42: selected usage barriers of scented candles, by age, 2023
  - Graph 43: selected usage barriers of scented candles, by gender, 2023
  - Graph 44: selected usage barriers of scented candles, by monthly household income, 2023
- Users of incense, scent diffusers and scented sprays prefer these products over scented candles because the latter is perceived as less convenient
  - Graph 45: selected usage barriers of scented candles, by product usage, 2023

Preferred scent types by product type

- Floral scents are the most common choice, with woody, citrus and oriental fragrances also being popular to varying degrees
  - Graph 46: preferred scent types by product types, 2023
- High-income families prefer household air fresheners with oriental scents
  - Graph 47: selected preferred scent types for spray air fresheners, by monthly household income, 2023
  - Graph 48: selected preferred scent types for solid/gel/liquid air fresheners, by monthly household income, 2023

Purchase channels

- Online and offline channels hold equal significance, with an increased penetration of lifestyle brand retailers and short video platforms
  - Graph 49: purchase channels, 2022 vs 2023
  - Graph 50: purchase channels, 2023
- Consumers aged 18-39 favour buying from emerging online platforms, including short video sites, brand channels, and social ecommerce platforms
  - Graph 51: selected purchase channels, by age, 2023
- Purchase channels for scented air care products are becoming more diverse, while incense users prefer group buying and short video platforms
  - Graph 52: selected purchase channels, by usage of product categories, 2023
  - Graph 53: selected purchase channels, by usage of scented air care products, 2023

Offline purchase motivations

- On-site comparisons/sampling are the main motivations for offline purchases
  - Graph 54: offline purchase motivations, 2023
- Sampling or comparing scents in offline channels is particularly important for active users, including women and consumers aged 25-39
  - Graph 55: selected offline purchase motivations, by age, 2023
  - Graph 56: selected offline purchase motivations, by gender, 2023
- High-income groups prefer immersive experiences, instant buys, and custom gift boxes, while shoppers in smaller cities value recommendations from shopping assistants
  - Graph 57: selected offline purchase motivations, by city tier, 2023
  - Graph 58: selected offline purchase motivations, by monthly household income, 2023
- Lifestyle brands and home furniture chains offer easier consumer experiences and comparisons, while specialty stores excel in gift box packaging
  - Graph 59: selected offline purchase motivations, by purchase channels, 2023

ISSUES AND INSIGHTS

- Chinese lifestyle aesthetics can unlock the development potential of incense products

- Oriental fragrances can draw upon Chinese aesthetics to enhance their appeal and contribute to creating a home ambiance
  - Graph 60: growth rate of mentions of various fragrances in scented air care products* on social media**, 2022 vs 2023
- Scented candles struggle to grow their customers, and tapping into the DIY trend could help solidify their user base
  - Graph 61: mentions and engagement of 'handmade candles' (手工蜡烛)* on social media**, 2022-2023

APPENDIX – MARKET SIZE AND FORECAST, RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND ABBREVIATIONS

- Market size and forecast
- Methodology
- Abbreviations

Disclaimer
This is marketing intelligence published by Mintel. The consumer research exclusively commissioned by Mintel was conducted by a Chinese licensed market survey agent (See Research Methodology for more information).

Terms and Conditions of use
Any use and/or copying of this document is subject to Mintel's standard terms and conditions, which are available at http://www.mintel.com/terms

If you have any questions regarding usage of this document please contact your account manager or call your local helpdesk.

Published by Mintel Group Ltd
www.mintel.com

Help desk

UK	+44 (0)20 7778 7155
US	+1 (312) 932 0600
Australia	+61 (0)2 8284 8100
China	+86 (21) 6386 6609
India	+91 22 4090 7217
Japan	+81 (3) 6228 6595
Singapore	+65 (0)6 818 9850