

# HEAVEN SCENT

Renaud Boisson was happily working his way up the ladder at YSL Beauté and was due another promotion. That was when Interparfums came calling, and Renaud hasn't looked back since.

**RENAUD BOISSON** / CEO (Asia-Pacific) Interparfums

If there's one man that understands what success smells like, it's Renaud Boisson. With a 20-year career under his belt that spans stints at some of the world's largest cosmetic and perfume multi-brand giants, he certainly has a nose for business.

The Interparfums Asia-Pacific CEO began his journey as an Area Manager at YSL Beauté (then part of the Gucci Group and now owned by L'Oréal), where he looked after international domains such as the Middle East and Africa. These were difficult markets, by all accounts, and Renaud was tasked with securing the company's portfolio in stores - an essential step in the company's expansion and one that brought him closer to one of his long-term goals of working in the luxury products market. Before long he was recommended for an internal

promotion but, fortunately, Interparfums managed to lure Renaud over to them before this took place.

As Renaud explains: "I'd always kept an eye on Interparfums. I knew what a good company they were; they enjoyed a great reputation and had a very dynamic identity. When they called me to discuss a move I was interested, despite the fact I knew I was about to be promoted at YSL. Interparfums initially offered me a position in the Middle East but having covered much of that region already, I was keen for a new challenge and had been interested in working in Asia Pacific for some time. There was an immediate fit between myself and Interparfums - we just clicked - so it was agreed to tweak the recruitment and hire me to open an arm of the business in Asia."

The travel retail market is particularly strong in Asia and when he joined the Interparfums →





team, Renaud recommended that they work directly with the various duty-free operators. A key directive of the Asia-Pacific launch became developing travel retail as the next growth target and thanks to Renaud and his team, Interparfums now has a dedicated travel retail team in place in Singapore.

“It required more people and more attention, but over the last 13 years it has proven a huge success with even further scope for development. We’ve come from nothing to a very sizeable business,” says Renaud.

In the medium to long term, growth remains the name of the game for Renaud and his team in Singapore, helped by the dynamism of the region. There are some exciting changes already underway this year, including a logistics platform to deliver to duty-free customers direct from Singapore rather than France.

“We worked on the launch for a year and started in earnest four months ago,” says Renaud. “As ever, we are looking to maximize cost and offer a better service to customers. Additionally, we have also

“ Our perfumes deserve their place in the stores “

been working on a takeover for China travel retail. This was handled by our domestic market partner for many years, but to optimise the full potential of this fast-developing network, we decided to handle it directly. It is now official, and we started operating China travel retail from January 2019.”

Korea is Interparfums biggest market, with both Japan and China growing rapidly. Other smaller markets that represent exciting opportunities include Australia and Singapore, along with emerging markets such as Indonesia and Malaysia. According to Renaud, no matter how much potential Asia-Pacific offers, this market also presents the biggest challenge for the company. Perfumery represents a very small sector of the cosmetic market in Asia, approximately 5-10 per cent of business, in comparison to the dominant skincare category and booming make-up market. To put this in perspective, in France, for example, the figure for perfumery is significantly higher at 40 per cent.

“The most difficult challenge for us is to retain and increase our visibility in existing stores, per-



fumeries and department stores. Retail is shrinking the shelves allocated to perfume every day: with every renovation comes a blow for our category. We are dedicated to maintaining and enlarging this space and proving that our perfumes deserve their place in the stores and the industry as a whole,” Renaud enthuses.

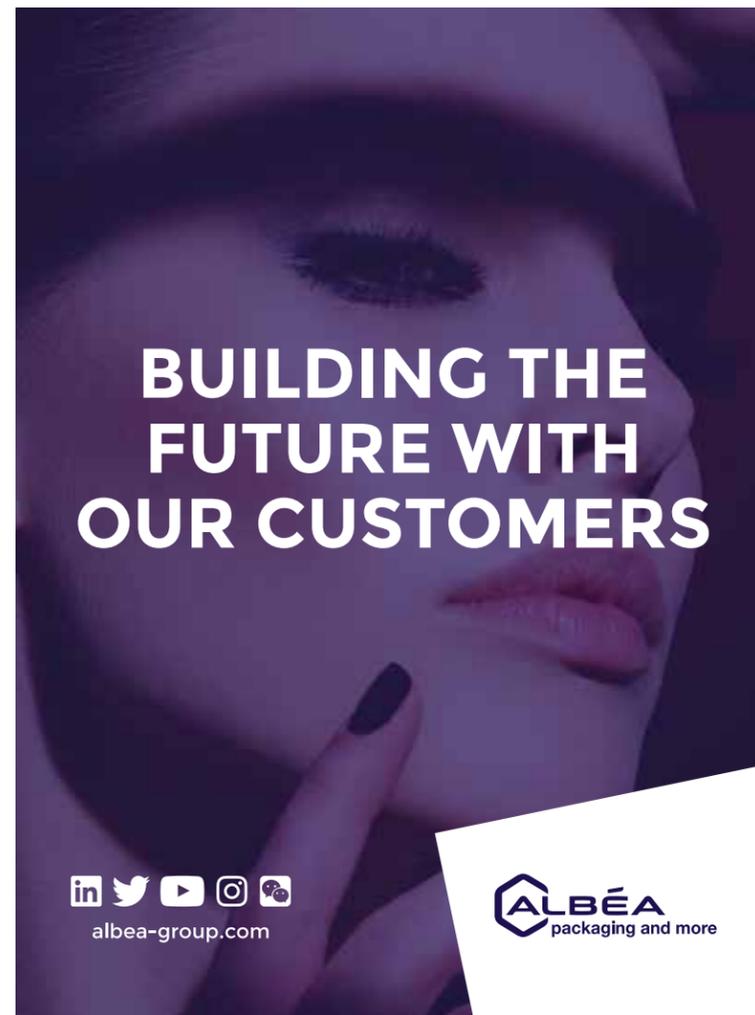
The rise of e-commerce presents another challenge, but also an opportunity, with advertising budgets being repurposed to cope with weakened print media. While print made up around 60-70 per cent of Interparfums’ spend on advertising 10 years ago, it has now decreased to around five to 10 per cent. Renaud believes the path to success in e-commerce lies in linking it with traditional retail by basically tying the retail customer and e-commerce together in a 360-degree approach. “Perhaps the future of retail will exist as a showroom rather than a shop, but it will always be important to have some sort of physical store,” insists Renaud.

One area where Interparfums does not need to prove itself is HR. As Renaud points out: “We

are renowned for being a great place to work. The wellbeing of our employees is of paramount importance to us and has been ever since we launched some 30 years ago. It will always remain a key point of difference for us.”

Indeed, the Singapore office is expanding so quickly that the team has already outgrown its current base and is now on the lookout for bigger premises. Renaud acknowledges that Interparfums may be “one of the smallest big players” in its industry, but it still drives a handsome turnover of around 650 million USD, if you include its sister US company.

“We do not believe that simply increasing the number of positions is the key to success,” says Renaud. “Instead we value each and every member of our organisation. We have a very happy, efficient group of people and we are both flexible and fast in our decision making. This is a markedly different approach to our competitors and, as a consequence, we are more agile. Every member of the company has some power of decision making and we believe this is integral to our success.”



*La technologie au service de l'innovation*

FOLDING CARTONS - RIGID BOXES - LABELS - POS



FRANCE GERMANY NETHERLANDS  
BELGIUM SWITZERLAND ITALY SPAIN PORTUGAL USA CHINA

[www.autajon.com](http://www.autajon.com)