

September 23, 2014 Publication

Topics

Food, Beverage & Hospitality
Intellectual Property

Related People

Paul D. Swanson
swansonp@lanepowell.com

Related Practices & Industries

Food, Beverage & Hospitality
Intellectual Property Litigation
Litigation

The Power of Smell: Scent Marketing Meets the Future of Gaming and Internet Surfing

Seattle Business

Lane Powell Shareholder Paul Swanson authored an article in *Seattle Business* magazine's October 2014 issue titled "The Power of Smell: Scent Marketing Meets the Future of Gaming and Internet Surfing." In the article, Swanson discussed scent marketing, which is the use of scents to set a mood, promote products or position a brand, and how it is being applied to add an olfactory "virtual reality" to gaming and Internet experiences.

Sony is also seeking scent technology patent rights. In a published 2013 application, it filed a patent application to "Overlay Non-Video Content on a Mobile Device," U.S. Patent No. 12/554,958. This invention will allow olfactory content to be overlaid onto the content of video games. As published in the application, it will permit the user "to smell what the actor smells at that point in the movie."

Injecting smells into the gaming experience is not without its complications, residual scent being one of them. As described in "Method and Apparatus for Computer Controlled Scent Delivery" (filed as a Patent Cooperation Treaty application on January 7, 2010): "Residual scent is particularly problematic in the case of individual computer gamers, which (sic) often play in undisturbed spaces, where scents easily linger. ... The residual scent further contaminates additional scents, which may need to be rapidly emitted in line with progress of the game."