

## Sensing fragrant success



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Nabeel Perfumes smelling like a rose with ambitious expansion, sales growth



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**Asghar Adam Ali (Al Attar)**

The outlook for the UAE’s fragrance industry is promising due to stable economic conditions in the country and Nabeel Perfumes Group will capitalise on growth opportunities by expanding its presence across the region, its top official says.

The Sharjah-based firm sees good business ahead and has evolved an aggressive expansion plan to double its retail outlets this year by opening 30 more stores in the GCC region.

“The UAE is a hub for fragrances and with many leading international firms entering the fray; the growth potential is unbelievable. Perfume is no more a luxury item, but has become an essential commodity,” Asghar Adam Ali (Al Attar), founder and chairman of the Nabeel Perfumes Group of Companies, told Khaleej Times in an interview.

Nabeel Perfumes is amongst the top manufacturers of perfumes in the Arabian Peninsula and the pioneers in traditional Arabian Bakhoor and Oudh manufacturing. The company, which established base in the Sharjah International Airport Free Zone, or Saif Zone, is largest incense manufacturer in the Arabian Peninsula and is amongst one of the largest perfume manufacturers with a capacity to produce over 60 million bottles annually at its fully-automatic filling plant.

Adam Ali, who relocated to the UAE in 1989 from Aden, Yemen, shared his golden memories and said he joined the family business at the age of 19 and set up his first manufacturing unit of 5,000 sqft in Sharjah in 1990.

“I am a very determined person, committed, ambitious and a naturally-gifted perfumer. My father was also a perfumer and his talents have been passed on to me. The secret to success is hard work, sincerity and honesty.”

“It is also about having a loyal and dedicated team. I have a son who has joined the business and is the managing director, and a daughter who is married and settled in the UK successfully managing the Chris Adams and Nabeel brands for the UK and Europe.”

### **Sales growth, expansion**

Nabeel Perfumes established base in Saif Zone in 2002 and a semi-automatic plant was set up. The next nine years resulted in consistent and steady business growth, paving the way to develop an additional 30,000 sqft for a fully-automatic plant in 2011.

“Today, we have a 200,000 sqft set up with more than 550 staff members. We export our branded products to more than 100 countries in six continents,” he said.

### **Industry to grow by 10%**

An aficionado of quality perfumery and creative packaging, Adam Ali said the UAE perfume industry is set to grow by approximately 10 per cent annually to reach Dh1.12 billion by 2017 due to stable economic conditions in the country.

He said 2014 looks very promising for the industry despite competitive market with multiple players. He paid rich tribute to visionary leadership of the UAE and said the government provides an excellent, very open and flexible environment to businesses in the country.

“We are targeting a 20 to 30 per cent growth in sales. Our main project will be the launching of a very international niche level perfume product range under the Nabeel brand,” he said.

About plans to expand the brand’s presence across the GCC region, Adam Ali said the group is investing heavily in capacity expansion and increasing its retail footprint. Under the plan, he said the group will add more than 50,000 sqft of production and storage facility as well as boost its retail presence in the region.

“We currently operate 29 outlets and our major business activities are conducted through wholesale and distribution channels to all retail outlets. By the end of 2014, we plan to open around 30 stores in GCC that will attract niche clientele and propel the brand image to new heights,” he said.

“We believe 2014 will be a promising and transformational year for the group. With a plan to open 30 outlets by year-end and a strong product innovation calendar, the brand looks forward to increase sales growth and intense market penetration across the globe,” he added.

Adam Ali, who has an impeccable vision of becoming a global leader in the fragrance industry, said the group has a wide product portfolio which ranges from concentrated oil perfumes, eaux de parfum, eaux de

toilette, air fresheners, deodorants, roll on deos, hair gels, mukhamaria, beard oil, soaps, cosmetics and toiletries, gift sets to incense products like Bakhoors and Oudh. He said the group's brand portfolio comprises of Nabeel, the heritage brand specialising in Oriental fragrances; Chris Adams, the brand focusing on French line fragrances; and Creation de Paris, the brand offers trendy, hip fragrances in mass range.

“Nabeel thrives on exquisite customer service and high quality products. Lots of foreign tourists, especially from the GCC, travel to the UAE to buy oil-based perfumes, incense and Oudh.”

“The UAE is a major destination for multinational tourists and that way, we also contribute to the retail and tourism sectors. Lots of Europeans, British, Americans, Asians and Africans are buying bulk quantity of Oudh and Bakhoors from our outlets all over UAE,” he said.

### **Excellence award, challenges**

Adam Ali said Nabeel Perfumes secures ISO certifications and consistently offers the best quality products at value for money prices. It is the silver winner of Sharjah Economic Excellence Award 2013 under the large companies category.

“I was thrilled and honoured to receive the award from Shaikh Sultan bin Mohammed bin Sultan Al Qasimi, Crown Prince and Deputy Ruler of Sharjah. It was an emotional experience for me,” he said.

To a question about challenges ahead for the industry, he said there are so many tests to go through and limitations and one has to maintain the set standards.

“Market conditions are very important, we have to be alert, active and check what the customers need, the trends and constantly monitor the market in order to stay ahead,” Adam Ali concluded.