

## **Strategies of Neuromarketing - Knowing their techniques of persuasion**

### **Estratégias do Neuromarketing - Conhecendo suas técnicas de persuasão**

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#### **ABSTRACT**

This article consists of Neuromarketing and research strategies. Designed from references and analyses of recent scientific articles, from 2015 to 2017. We used the method of review and verified the opinion of major references in the field of Neuromarketing. Throughout the article is informed how did this tool, the importance she has nowadays for companies conquer your target audience, the parts of the human brain that is related, the main strategies used, the methods of persuasion, techniques such as calls to action, color psychology, emotional senses, subliminal messages, among others.

**KEYWORDS:** Neuromarketing; Target audience; Strategies; Neuroscience; Emotional directions.

#### **RESUMO**

Este artigo consiste na pesquisa sobre o Neuromarketing e suas estratégias. Foi projetado a partir de referências bibliográficas clássicas e análises de artigos científicos entre os anos de 2015 a 2017. Foi utilizado o método de revisão bibliográfica e verificada a opinião de grandes referências na área de Neuromarketing. No decorrer no artigo é informado como surgiu essa ferramenta, a importância que ela tem atualmente para as empresas conquistarem seu público-alvo, as partes do cérebro humano que está relacionada, as principais estratégias utilizadas, os métodos de persuasão e técnicas como chamadas de ação, psicologia das cores, sentidos emocionais, mensagens subliminares, entre outras.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Neuromarketing; Público-alvo; Estratégias; Neurociência; Sentidos emocionais.

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

There are many ways to attract audience, either with colors, smells, sounds, images or any other factor that awakens emotional senses of consumers, causing them to buy out of psychological means and not only out of necessity.

The consumer's behaviour in relation to those senses that bring some memory or affinity, causes the customer to relate with the product and also with the brand, creating approximation and, in some cases, transforming them into a propagator of the brand. In these cases, the purchase is not finished by the necessity factor, but by the emotional factor. Neuromarketing is a Neuroscience tool that consists in understanding consumers mind. It's a necessary study for companies because it discovers emotions, pleasures, necessities and influencers. This factors take consumers to relate with the brand and, each time those senses come back to their memories, also comes the brand (<http://queconceito.com.br/neuromarketing>).

People are moved daily by consumerism. The planet has become consumerist and, nowadays, people work to achieve something, whether to meet it's basic and physiological needs or to meet their desires as consumers, such as having new and fashion clothes, electronic devices with advanced technology, bigger and more comfortable homes, faster cars with greater engines, confort and benefits.

In the old days, it was simpler to win over consumers because it didn't exist as many brand options on the market, the customer wanted to buy a product and he only needed to say the brand's name that sold it (for example Q'boa, Omo, Maisena, Coca- Cola) but, competition between brands increased and consumers then had more options of different products to buy, making them more and more confuse at this point. It was questionable if the new brand was as good as the consumer's favourite and some decided to try on this new products.

After this point, a dispute between brands started to keep it's consumers, make them loyal and impress new audiences, this was the main goal. With the passing of the years, this fight for the targeted audience has gained more obstacles, since there was always a new brand, launching the same product and even giving new features to them, but with a much more affordable price.

Realizing the customers movement and feeling that they no longer were loyal to the brand, companies began to seek their audience's need more intensely. It has taken years, and although it has not yet been presented in many studies, the great tool of companies to find out the reason for buying by impulse of the consumer is Neuromarketing.

## 2 NEUROMARKETING

Marketing interprets consumer behavior to understand and meet their needs and desires. It analyzes each part of the buying process (who, what, why, when and how often to purchase), this way is possible to understand the characteristics of consumers and also attract new ones.

Some factors influence consumer behavior and must be understood in order to analyze the buying process:

- Cultural factors: one observes the personality of the society, what the region is accustomed to buying, what are the costumes, the typical foods and the lifestyle of the population in question;
- Social factors: the reference groups are observed as family, friends, public figures and what they like. The individual buys what is fashionable, which pleases the majority;
- Personal factors: one observes the personal taste of each consumer, characterized by their beliefs and appreciations, not always what is fashionable is admired by all;
- Psychological factors: they use memories of childhood, motivation, desire for the sensation of fulfillment.

These factors are present in all clients, some with more evidence, others with less, but in fact, they influence the decision of the public in a more rational way.

Neuromarketing brings a vision that, in addition to the natural purchase, the consumer also buys in an emotional way, in which the purchase decision is not always out of necessity or desire but for some reason that made him feel good to see, feel or touch the product or even know a particular brand. Neuromarketing awakens impulse buying in the consumer.

## 2.1 What is it and how it was discovered?

According to the "Que Conceito" website, Neuromarketing is a marketing tool that uses Neuroscience to understand consumer behavior and what goes on in the minds of the target audience during decision making. With the help of the studies of Neuromarketing, it is possible to discover the reason of each consumer when buying a product.

There may be several reasons, but what makes the customer take exactly that product? From that brand? In that shop? The answers to these questions can be found from the Neuromarketing studies. According to Kotler, Kartajaya and Setiawan (2010), this tool helps to identify that 95% of decisions are made unconsciously or emotionally, and only 5% of them are rational decisions.

The first research was conducted in the United States in the early 1990s. The term "Neuromarketing" was nominated by Dutch Marketing Professor Ale Smidts, but it was Gerald Zaltman, a physician and researcher at Harvard University who began to use magnetic resonance imaging machines to explore marketing studies, these devices that until then were operated only for medical purposes, began to assist in the evolution of Marketing.

For Lindstrom (2009), when making a decision about a product, our brain searches for a lot of memories, events or emotions and compacts them in a very fast reaction. The author concludes that Neuromarketing is "an intriguing marriage of Marketing with Science". It's like entering the mind of the human being through a window and discovering all that it takes to conquer it.

## 2.2 Better understanding the consumers brain

According to Brandão (2016) to understand the consumer's brain, it is necessary to know some parts of it. In 1970, the neurosurgeon Paul Maclean released a theory known as the Trine Brain, in which he argued that the brain is divided into three systems and the main system would be used in Neuromarketing researches:

- Reptilian: in this part we find the aggressiveness of the human being. It is the primitive system that approaches with those existing in animals, because it is focused on survival;
- Emotional or Limbic: this is where the main emotions of the human being are, such as joy, sadness, surprise, disgust, fear, anger, etc. It is totally focused on feelings;
- Neocortex: responsible for the logic of actions. The rational part.

This division may not influence Neurosurgery so much, but Marketing is very important because recent studies have been able to prove how these parts of the brain act at the time of purchase.

These three subsystems are responsible for consumer actions and can be influenced by Neuromarketing strategies, especially when methods of persuasion are used.

Research shows that 95 percent of the time the buying decision occurs in the reptilian brain and in the emotional brain. Contrary to what was imagined, the rational brain does not act in the purchase, because when initiating a purchase decision, at the rational level, customers realize that the purchase is not so interesting. Knowing this, Marketing experts use this strategy to reach the emotional part of the brain.

## 2.3 Neuromarketing Strategies

In Neuromarketing, strategies are used to understand the logic of consumption, focusing on analyzing the public's behavior. Scientific studies of each part of the brain helped to understand how

consumers think and act when acquiring a product. These studies found ways to "get" into people's minds and make them assimilate a characteristic or reminder presented by the brand, causing it to affect their behavior and motivate them to buy.

### 2.3.1 Analyzing five main strategies

Other than the words that may encourage the customer to buy, the VCI Model (2018) questions about some strategies that influence in a more subtle way, but have a high persuasive power, bringing much result in the purchase decision moment. Following:

- Emotions: When a customer feels a special emotion the moment he sees a brand advertisement, this makes him remember it as a good moment, generating customers affinity with the brand. It also happens when you smell or hear a song that marked an important moment in your life;
- Tangibility: By encouraging the client to have a sense of ownership, to be able to have such a product, to buy something that can be exchanged or sold later, the client keeps that feeling as a sense of achievement. Making him feel good when acquiring it;
- Contrast: Presenting the "Before x After" product makes the customer feel secure in what they are buying. In addition to showing the benefits of the brand, it brings the confidence that it will be useful;
- Attention: when the customer feels exclusive and unique. The brand makes the consumer feel supported, understood and offers something to satisfy their desires or needs. This conquers the customer and helps make it a brand spreader;
- Visual: This strategy is what makes the consumer stop what they are doing and pay attention to the brand. An image that makes an impact, attractive sentences or texts, based on the pain of the customer or with colors that alert you about what is being exposed. All these characteristics make the consumer to notice the brand and to be attracted to it.

## 3 FEATURED STRATEGIES

The strength of Neuromarketing is to focus on emotional strategies and sensory marketing, using the five senses of the human body (sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch). "The goal of Sensory Marketing is to make consumers feel comfortable at the point of sale and to spend a great deal of time in the store, which creates a greater possibility of purchase" (Camargo, 2010, p. 79).

It makes perfect sense when you notice that when you pass a store and smell a pleasant perfume, the customer receives a kind of warning and, even if unconscious, he stops and looks at least the name of the establishment, because that aroma called their attention for a few seconds and that stays in their subconscious.

Another similar situation is when the store offers a small amount of a food product and, at the first bite, one remembers that grandmother's seasoning and the memories of childhood. These types of feelings and emotions are the ones that hit the client in such a way that the client ends up sharing their experiences with other people and also returns to take new consumers.

### 3.1 Psychology of colors

As mentioned earlier, colors influence consumer behavior a lot, being one of Neuromarketing's biggest strategies. It has been proven that it is possible to use one color for each type of sensation and emotion of the consumer:

- Red Color - One of the most common in commercials, it transmits energy and vigor. It increases attention, blood pressure, as well as being stimulating and motivating. Indicated for use in ads that indicate heat and energy, fitness products, etc.;

- Orange Color - Indicated for the same applications of red, with slightly more moderate results. It is stimulant and is more related to edible products;
- Yellow Color - It is a more intellectual color, it can represent either the heat, because it looks like the sun, or also the power, because it remembers the gold. However, it is the most contradictory color, and can symbolize intelligence, communication, strength, joy or also envy, anger, cowardice, betrayal and arrogance. It causes a strong impact on the public by also being used on traffic signs. It can be used in articles for people seeking triumph and power;
- Green Color - Stimulating, brings sympathy and renewal. It is considered the color of balance. But commercially, it has little strength because it offers a feeling of rest. Indicated for ads that characterize the cold, oils, hope, nature, vegetation, health, logic, freshness, growth and youth. They can also advertise products that are apparently organic or peppermint flavour;
- Blue Color - Has a great power of attraction and is neutralizing. It calms the person and his circulatory system. Suitable for ads that feature cold product or services. It also refers to intelligence, deep and eternal emotions. For what it represents, blue is the color most used by technology companies and is also used to pack frozen food, as it gives the impression that they are cold;
- Pink Color - It is the color of the woman, shows kindness, tenderness, good feelings, love and nobility. It is related to women's products, maternity products, as well as those aimed at the pre-adolescent and infant segment;
- Purple Color - It is the color of prudence, it refers to wisdom, philosophy, sophistication and contemplation. Linked to the emotional, the spiritual and conveys depth and experience. It is used to communicate melancholy, royalty, pain, intense feelings, religiosity, magic and sophistication. It is used in advertisements for religious articles, funeral accessories etc.;
- Coffee Color - It is a masculine and comfortable color that gives the impression of gravity and balance. It associates with the earth. In commerce, it is widely used to advertise fall season products;
- Black Color - Elegance and sophistication, yet also represents evil, death, darkness, mystery as well as power. Many products in this color are for people who like exclusivity. It is used to advertise and stimulate the purchase of expensive and luxury products. Brands must avoid using this color excessively, because it tends to generate frustration. It is an expressive color but, at the same time, agonizing.

As presented, each color generates a different emotion in each individual's brain and those feelings are what determine the purchase.

### **3.2 Call to Action (CTA)**

To attract the public and turn them into customers, Siqueira (2016) comments that Call to Action (CTA) is also very used by brands in their strategies. It refers to the person just watching your ad (mainly in social media) and, in the same image, there are informations that urges you to click on a button, enter a link and make a purchase, performing the next step in the buyers journey.

Customers who enter a page or find an ad go through a few steps until they decide to move on. It is the so-called AIDA, where attention first comes on the Advertisement, conquered by something that makes that customer stop there; then comes the Interest, in which the person will have an opinion about what he is seeing and will decide whether it is interesting to her or not; then comes the phase of Desire, the client begins to research the benefits that product / service offers and to be sure that is something that satisfies. Finally, the stage of Action arrives, that is when the conversion takes place.

For CTA to work you need to put together some tactics of positions, sizes, quantity and colors, all of which will depend on where the call is being used. Some phrases and words are placed strategically in these CTAs. It has an effect that demonstrates characteristic of urgency or facility, for example: "Make your registration", "Only today for R \$ 19.90", "Buy now", "Access the link and do not miss!".

All these phrases make the person believe that they can not miss the opportunity to purchase the product/service.

### **3.3 Subliminal messages**

Subliminal messages have been part of our daily life for years, always with some images hidden, but understood by our subconscious or to express some subtle characteristics, but that are there to make us reflect whether it was purposeful or not.

Many brands attribute these messages mainly to their logos and they go unnoticed by most people. Other brands already make them a little more evident. Some want to show something simpler, such as the city or some history of the brand, others include it to give some meaning to the service or product offered, informing, in the image, some attribute that is not highlighted, but it is part of the sales objective.

### **3.4 Other persuasion strategies**

Urgency, technique of scarcity, herd effect, reciprocity through brain reward, exclusivity/personification, influence of colors, positive emotions and credibility (trust) allied to the management of expectations are some of the techniques used in the use of Neuromarketing.

#### **3.4.1 The Pigmalião Effect**

According to Ferris (2016), a study by the psychologist Robert Rosenthal found that in the 1960s, if teachers expressed positive expectations about some students and treated them differently, they eventually met expectations and obtained better results. Analyzing this research, companies started to treat the client in a way that makes them realize the treatment offered. For example: being very kind and making the client believe that the company deserves return for having a differentiated service.

#### **3.4.2 Somatic Markers**

Consumers become loyal to certain brands not only for the product, but also for the good service and shared values. Involuntary associations are made by the happy memories that people passed in contact with the brand. Memories become somatic markers since birth, an example is advertising campaigns with day-to-day situations that can awaken the relationship of somatic markers with their consumers.

#### **3.4.3 Mirror Neurons**

When you look at someone yawning it is almost inevitable to yawn as well. This is a result of mirror neurons acting. A campaign with someone using the product or service tends to be more effective, evidencing this biological strategy. People sneak up on that ad and unconsciously find themselves consumed, like the involuntary imitation of yawning. Generally, in these types of ads there is some media person, influencing the audience.

#### **3.4.4 Challenging the brain**

The brain does not try to decipher messages. Therefore, it is not recommended to put too much information in the advertising campaigns. Agility and objectivity are always necessary. Consumer don't have time to rationalize and perhaps, if they do, they'll give up the purchase.

### **3.4.5 Halo Effect**

Created in 1920 by psychologist Edward Lee Thorndike and refers to the prejudice of evaluating something without knowing it first. The concept continued to be studied later and was increasingly linked to physical attraction: the more one is attracted to the first sight, the more likely it is to assign positive characteristics. In Marketing, the attractiveness of a person is conveyed to the quality of the product.

### **3.4.6 Goggle Effect**

The term Goggle means "diving mask" and alludes to the distortion of reality. For example, before offering a service or product, something is offered as a courtesy for the customer, making it easier for him to understand that he is getting something positive.

### **3.4.7 The Bandwagon Effect, or Arrasto**

Similar to the Herd Effect, it is the willingness to follow what others also follow. It is widely used in advertising, mainly to show the customer that if someone has it, they can also have it.

### **3.4.8 Fear of losing (Urgency)**

For humans, the loss is something painful. In this strategy, one uses the sense of urgency ("If you do not buy today, you will lose the promotion!"). The brain enters the loss zone and the consumer does not want this to happen. In that case, the less time the consumer has to make the decision, the more he becomes emotional and influential. If he thinks too much about it, he will end up in rational mode again and will not make the purchase.

### **3.4.9 The Calling Effect**

This method is used to make one product look more advantageous than another, prices are usually changed. When consumers are in doubt between two products, the hypothesis of a third product with characteristics inferior to the first option, but higher than the second in some aspect, will make the most expensive product become the customer's choice. For example: in a restaurant, between the options of a larger portion of potatoes for \$ 35 and a smaller portion for \$ 20, will probably be chosen the cheapest. But, you can present a third option, the decoy that, in this case, could be an intermediate amount for \$ 30, the first option will seem more advantageous and the customer ends up taking the more expensive.

## **4 NEUROMARKETING X ETHIC**

It has been much questioned whether it is ethical to apply Neuromarketing tools. Some people claim that it is something that makes the product or service unconsciously enter the client's brain and, therefore, is not something done clearly, disrespecting the consumer who is left without the right to choice. On the other hand, Marketing only uses some tools to understand, in fact, what the consumer wants at the moment. "The most important thing is to predict where customers are going and get there first" (Kotler, 2002, p.181)

Formerly it was necessary to discover the need for a customer or wait for him to go shopping to know what he wanted and thus, be able to get it somewhere. With the help of Neuromarketing strategies, it is already possible to predict, in some situations, what the customer wants or to understand their needs ahead of time, so when the consumer buys, the product is already ready to be delivered, reducing the time, money and generating customer confidence and satisfaction.

## 5 CONCLUSION

With the studies carried out to build this article, it is concluded that Neuromarketing is a tool that joins Marketing and Neuroscience and discovers several ways to enter the consumer's mind, making him buy a product or service even without need, only for the emotional desire.

Consumerism is something that is part of people's daily routine. From the time they wake up until bedtime, all consume different brands and products. Marketing already needed new strategies to discover the factors that influenced consumers in their purchases and this was achieved through Neuromarketing, which became possible by the use of MRI machines.

We also discovered the strategies used by this tool to obtain their results in different ways, for different audiences, but with the same technique. The five senses of human beings are the greatest allies to Neuromarketing, because it is through them that you can reach parts of the human brain that refer to good memories, characteristics that please the personal taste of the consumer, nostalgia, etc.

Some other specific strategies were presented in the article, such as calls for action (CTA), somatic markers, mirror neurons, etc. There are those who believe that Neuromarketing acts in an unethical way to access customers thoughts and emotions, but contrary to these opinions, others believe that this tool helps meet good memories and brings happiness to the consumer.

To be sure, it is not possible to predict the future of this tool. What is known is that it has been studied little by little and, more and more the research tends to advance, discovering new forms of consumer psychology, which can helping both businesses and consumers to facilitate their purchases.

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