

Columinate on non-conscious insights as the measure of tomorrow

 By Leigh Andrews

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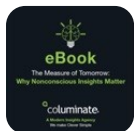
On Friday, 9 March, I attended the Columinate research presentation on the measure of tomorrow, where I learned that up to 90% of consumers' decision-making is non-conscious. Here's further proof why your brand needs to tap into consumers' non-conscious decisions.



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Columinate presented their research presentation on the measure of tomorrow to an eager crowd of marketing earlybirds at The Cullinan Hotel, where we were also active participants in a non-conscious experiment that really showed us the importance of putting consumers' non-conscious insights into action. The non-conscious experiment, which took just a few minutes to complete, left attendees curious.

We were encouraged to sit at two desks to participate in the study – categorising first terms then company logos with associated terms as either pleasant or unpleasant by pressing a button on the left or right of the keyboard – as fast as possible, with a red X appearing when we were incorrect. Ten minutes later, we were done.



Columinate develops methodology to measure nonconscious attitudes and perceptions

InSites Consulting 24 Aug 2017



Experiment interacted with, a satisfying hot brunch in our bellies and attendee introductions made, Alex de Coning, marketing manager of Columinate, welcomed attendees by talking through the day's agenda before introducing Columinate CEO, Dr Henk Pretorius.

Pretorius took a slight detour through the history of Columinate, founded a decade ago, before his main presentation on the current state of Columinate, while also explaining why the non-conscious experiment was created and how it works – the faster your response, the more positive your connection to the brand you see flash on screen – the logo isn't necessarily

linked to the descriptor phrase.

Pretorius added that the statements used in the experiment can't be long sentences so that a longer response time isn't attributed to reading. Pretorius said his research team was reading our minds through this new methodology that uncovers implicit associations consumers may not even be conscious of, in shifting the paradigm in the marketing research perspective through what they call 'the measure of tomorrow'.



"Who said surveys should be boring?" - Elna Pretorius of Columinate

Leigh Andrews 14 Jul 2017



When Columinate first started, their vision was to create better, faster, and cheaper ways to do research and get to those ever-elusive consumer insights, and while they were perhaps idealistic about the potential of the internet, they knew digital was already the answer back then.

So while sparing us what he called 'the gory details of starting a company in a recession', Pretorius said they had aimed to drive the first fully-fledged digital local consumer insights research – a 'modern market research agency', if you will. The 'measure of tomorrow' is thus one methodology in a set they believe is the future of modern insights, all of which brands can immediately put into action.

Making the implicit actionable through behavioural science

Pretorius said a focus on digital data collection is critical to their business in that regard, and they complement that with new data sources, known as **data fusion**.

They also focus on **automation**, which to some seems negative as it implies standardised, inflexible methodologies.

Instead, Pretorius says the reality is that automation facilitates decision making by keeping the human element, in allowing people to spend time on the aspects of the process that have the greatest impact: **extracting insights** – something he says data science researchers aren't so good at.

Explaining his personal perspective, Pretorius shared that he has always been focused on psychological insights. In summing up the way we currently measure opinions and behaviours, he pointed out that at present, we simply ask people how they feel, which is simple and works... until it doesn't.



Dr Henk Pretorius, Columinate CEO.

“Wow. My psychology-centric brain is loving learning about non-conscious decision-making with [@Columinate](#) this morning. Coverage on [@Bizcommunity's @Biz_Marketing](#) soon! 🎉🎉🎉🎉🎉🎉🎉 [pic.twitter.com/rqmgmtNQk3x](#)— Rambling Litchi (@Leigh_Andrews) [March 9, 2018](#)”

For example, many consumers claim to love 'green products' but don't actually use them, so the stated claims mismatch the actual behaviour. This links to why we don't get completely overwhelmed in a shopping situation, when facing so many choices. We already have an idea of the brands we're going to purchase, so any last-minute decision-making changes in store tend to be based on a truly exceptional offer or sample.

Thank you NSRI - For saving lives, and making great ads

Henk Pretorius, InSites Consulting 12 Mar 2018





Pretorius says it's obvious then to ask: Why are our intentions not aligned with our actions? The answer is simple yet complex in itself:

“ *Lots of what we do each day is due to non-conscious processes – up to 90% of them, in fact. So non-conscious insights matter, but even if we agree with that statement, how do we go on to measure them?* ”

Pretorius shared that the measurement is not limited to expensive options TV has brought to mainstream media's attention, like brain scanning imagery, but instead includes a full range from biometrics and other physiological responses, like heart rate.

You can better understand this through behavioural economics, especially concepts such as priming and implicit associations.



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Leigh Andrews 13 Mar 2018



Pretorius also listed the advantages of a non-conscious insights-driven approach as follows: It is scalable; the non-conscious measures can be captured online; there's no need for expensive equipment like electrode caps; it's cost-effective to run; there's quick turnaround, and there's a strong scientific background of over 40 years. They can also assess a range of different associations, not just good or bad, and apply the methodology for brand measures or tracking, as well as ad testing, new ideas, product packs and almost anything else.

Pretorius further sparked the interest of marketers in the room when he spoke us through the importance of understanding brand imagery profiles and how they're linked to your consumers' non-conscious or implicit associations. So, knowing your own brand profiles, as well as how they differ from those of your competitors, means you'll know which associations to leverage in future communications, and which to steer clear of as they have negative connotations for your consumers.



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Doing so will also clarify which attributes of your own brand statements are genuinely important to include in research, and which are merely there as you always include them. Pretorius recommends including 20 to 25 statements, both positive and negative, across five brands for optimum insights. He adds that any opinion you can verbalise, they can test.

Pretorius ended with apologies to Carl Jung with the quote:

“ *Until you make the unconscious conscious, it will direct your life research and you will call it fate.* ”

Visit the [Columinate press office](#) or follow them on [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#) for more information. You can also [click here](#) to

download the Columinate ebook, 'Why non-conscious insights matter'.

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

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