

Mixing marketing with neurons to create powerful relevance

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What do neurons have to do with marketing? A lot more than you may think! At this year's Nedbank Integrated Marketing Conference (IMC), a virtual one-day conference that will take place on 29 July, delegates will hear about what neurons - the brain's information messengers - have to do in the development of marketing messages that are deeply relevant to consumers.



Bernice Samuels

Bernice Samuels, group marketing executive at MTN Group, will present the topic, "Relevance – Neurons and Narratives". That Bernice is potentially inviting us to consider neurons, those information messengers of the brain, suggests there are deeper explorations at hand into what makes consumers tick. Dale Hefer, Nedbank IMC CEO says, "This year's virtual conference has the theme of relevance. As consumers become more sophisticated and discerning about what they consume, it makes sense for marketers to want to dig deeper to better understand the nuances that drive their behaviour."

An article published by advertising agency, [Digivate](#), highlights the importance of "neuromarketing" which draws on neuroscientific research with the aim of understanding consumer behaviour to improve the effectiveness of marketing.

Traditional market research seeks to explain consumer behaviour using largely consumer self-reporting on their habits, choices and activities. Neuromarketing looks to unconscious signals using technologies that observe brain activity, eye gaze and biometrics to determine how people respond physiologically to marketing messages. Neuromarketing potentially gives marketers a powerful insight that can be applied to product and packaging design as well as brand messaging.

Another area that is fast gaining traction in marketing discourse is neurodiversity. As described in an [article](#) on the Harvard Health website, neurodiversity refers to the idea that people experience and interact with the world around them in many different ways, with no one "right" way of thinking, learning and behaving. Differences are not viewed as deficits.

Neurodiverse people are those who have neurological or developmental conditions such as dyslexia, ADHD or other learning disabilities. Forbes magazine [reports](#) that neurodiverse people account for as much as 15 to 20% of the world's population.

In marketing's current drive for diversity and inclusivity, there is an awareness that brands should also cater to this neurodiverse audience. Marketing behavioural specialists platform [Creative Brief](#), suggests that while assistive technologies have been successfully leveraged by companies such as Google and Apple to help neurodiverse audiences control their environments, the uptake in the broad marketing community is slow: "Brands are obsessively trying to become more community-driven, drive advocacy, and have long-lasting impact; and here's a huge community with amazing stories to tell who deserve to be represented along with other underrepresented communities."

While it remains to be seen what perspective Nedbank IMC thought leader Bernice Samuels will be bringing to delegates on 29 July, it will almost certainly reveal important new considerations for marketers. Says Dale, "I think that by adding neurons or 'brain chemistry' into the mix will show us some powerful new possibilities as we unpack marketing relevance."

Virtual tickets are available at R1999 (VAT excluded).

Group discounts are available.

Book now at imcconference.com.

Nedbank IMC 2022 bursaries are available at imcconference.com/imc-bursaries/.

About the Nedbank IMC

In 2021 a total of 1 300 delegates from 14 countries around the world watched the live virtual Nedbank IMC. Since its launch in 2019 the conference has become known for its 'no sales pitch, one stream, one day only' format and a galaxy of renowned and specialist speakers. Importantly, the conference is committed to presenting the business case for marketing, driven through the determination to secure marketing's seat at the boardroom table.

The Nedbank IMC is presented in association with the Marketing Association of South Africa, with chartered marketers receiving continuous-professional-development points for attending. The conference is endorsed by the Interactive Advertising Bureau of South Africa.

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