

Aki Kalliatakis

aki@leadershiplaunchpad.co.za

www.leadershiplaunchpad.co.za

This article is one of a short series on how behavioural economics and 'being human' affects your business.

# In the world of customers, emotion creates motion

“Fighting emotion with logic is like bringing a calculator to a knife fight”

Josh Sundquist

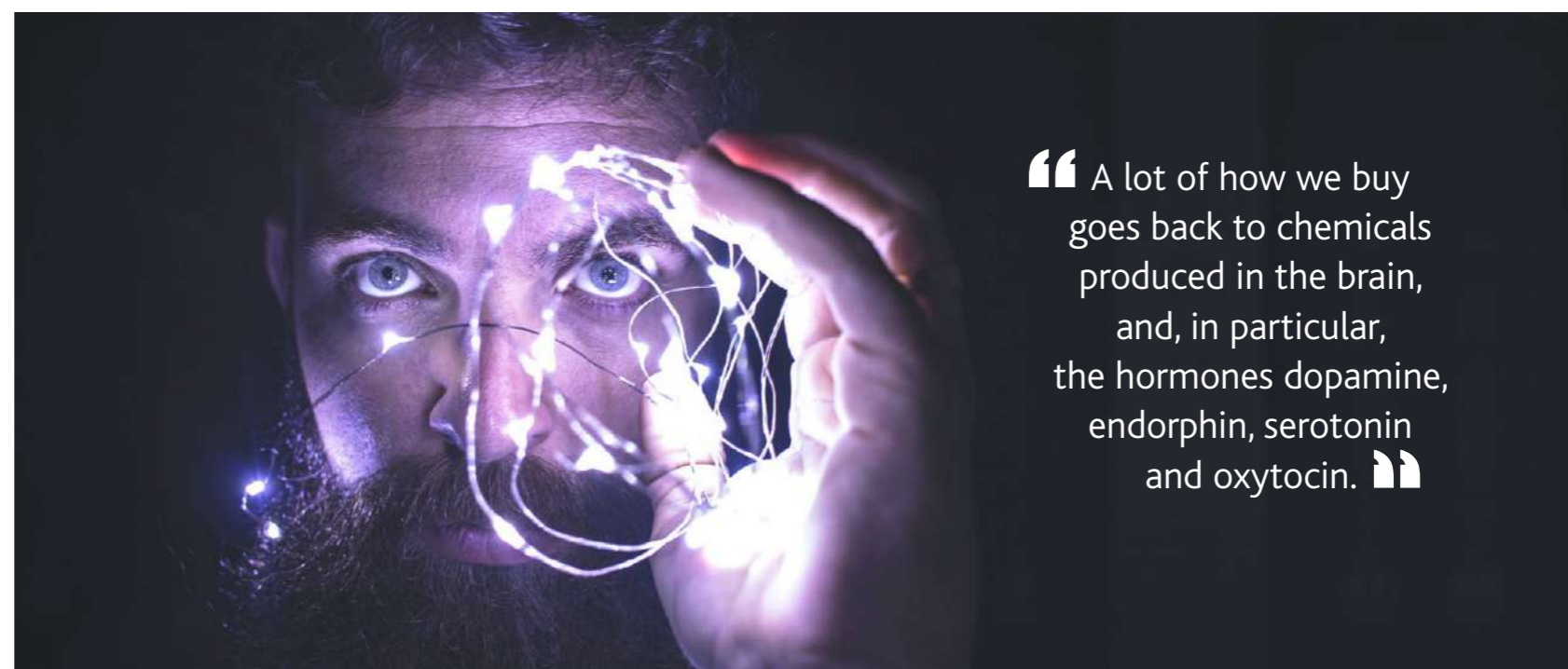
My dear old dad was an engineer and scientist, and he always insisted that all human issues revolved around chemicals and energy. So you can imagine how he felt when his oldest son informed him that he'd chosen a weird career in psychology and marketing.

We disagreed – always with love – about what made human beings happy, what motivated and inspired them, why they were so irrational, illogical, and sometimes evil, and about all things spiritual. As a cocky young graduate I wasn't prepared to concede.

But in one area, my scientist dad was proven absolutely right ... A lot of how we buy goes back to chemicals produced in the brain, and in particular the hormones dopamine, endorphin, serotonin and oxytocin.

Before we take a look at these and how you can use them to your benefit, it's also good to remind ourselves that, as sales trainer Zig Ziglar said, "People buy on emotion and justify on logic."

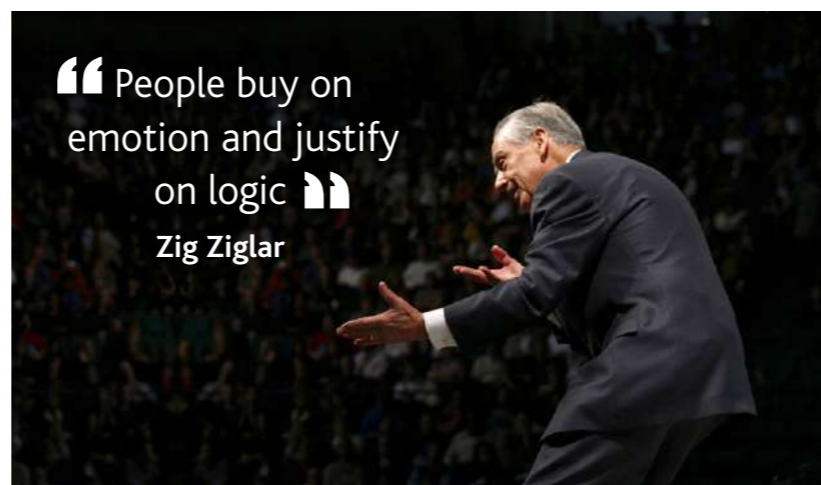
This was confirmed by Harvard Business School professor Gerald Zaltman who concluded (in his



“ A lot of how we buy goes back to chemicals produced in the brain, and, in particular, the hormones dopamine, endorphin, serotonin and oxytocin. ”

Image courtesy of David Cassolato, Pexels

“ People buy on emotion and justify on logic ”  
Zig Ziglar



book *How Customers Think: Essential Insights Into the Mind of the Market*) that 95% of our purchase decision making takes place in the subconscious mind.

Let's start with **dopamine**, produced by the hypothalamus in your brain, and often called '**the reward chemical**'. It's an important part in your reward system, meaning the brain releases dopamine when you do things that feel good or



pleasurable or when you complete a task. It helps you feel pleasure in a very powerful way.

When we develop addictions – to gambling, eating, smoking, drugs, online gaming, 'likes' on social media, and so on, it's the dopamine that makes it so hard to stop. It's the pleasure you get when you finish a particular task that's important to you and includes all self-care activities. Even the anticipation of something pleasurable makes dopamine spike. And the best news is that you don't have to do it every time. The principle of occasional reinforcement – a little surprise out of the blue – can also be potent.

But you can also use dopamine effectively by celebrating things with your customers. Anything that you do to make them feel even a small win can trigger a positive reaction. You can use a reminder of something good that happened in the past in their lives. You can also give them positive feedback: pay them a compliment, tell them what a good choice they made, even emphasise at the end of the experience that the worst is over and they achieved something by completing their shopping task. Unlike serotonin, see below, it is the selfish hormone.

The second chemical is **serotonin** – another neurotransmitter produced when you feel satisfaction, calmness and in touch with your surroundings. It **helps regulate your sleep, appetite and mood**, and is triggered by being outdoors, meditation, relaxing activities, exercise and even just the sun. It's a mood stabiliser that gives you a sense of calmness. As a result ...



“ When we develop addictions – to gambling, eating, smoking, drugs, online gaming, 'likes' on social media, and so on, it's the dopamine that makes it so hard to stop. ”

Image courtesy of Jonathan Petersson, Pexels



Image courtesy of Tim Douglas, Pexels

Some things you can do include looking out for things that do the opposite of creating calm in your business. Could it be too much noise, or hectic activity? Is the environment so artificial and cold that it creates stress? Is there enough light? But you can also build empathy and trust by being an example of empathy and trust and offering things like guarantees and reassurances.

“ Don't worry, I've got your back” is the message you want to transmit to customers. ”



Image courtesy of Singkham, Pexels

“ Serotonin increases feelings of empathy, it connects people and increases trust. It is the selfless chemical because it strengthens our social bonds with others. ”

In some businesses you can also do this by showing that you are skilled and have expertise in what you do, and even offering social proof such as recommendations from other customers “just like me” to build that trust and confidence.

But at a deeper level, serotonin is released whenever we feel respected and admired. That boosts our confidence and makes us feel great. You can see what actions you can take to get this going.

**Oxytocin** is **sometimes called the 'love hormone'**, or 'the cuddle hormone', and we get it in our lives by spending time with family





don't just touch,  
**sani-touch**<sup>®</sup>  
Infection Protection Products (Pty) Ltd



**Proud local manufacturer  
of pre-saturated wipes, sanitisers,  
cloths, dispensers and consumables.**

**ENQUIRE NOW**

TO PROTECT YOUR STAFF AND CUSTOMERS  
**[sanitouch@sanitouch.co.za](mailto:sanitouch@sanitouch.co.za)**

***Trust the brand you know!***  
**[www.sanitouch.co.za](http://www.sanitouch.co.za)**



and friends, playing with a pet, physical touch, (like holding hands and hugging) and giving compliments to others. It produces feelings of love and connection, and it's what binds human beings to each other.

While you need to think very carefully before you go out there and start hugging your customers, simple gestures like a handshake, or allowing a customer to feel a soft toy or similar can make a difference.

“ A short personal chat can also work wonders, especially if it acknowledges that your customer is someone you know, recognise and appreciate. ”

But it should also be obvious to you that simple acts of generosity and kindness achieve the same, especially if they hit some problem – like dropping some of their shopping, or being unable to find something, or reach something. But there is one very important factor that plays a role in this. Obviously, the person on the receiving end feels good, and the person who does something nice also gets a hit of oxytocin (which makes it more likely that we pay it forward again). But even an observer who witnesses someone being kind and generous gets a good feeling!

It's nature's way of making sure that we take care of each other and protect other members of our tribe. But it must be authentic, and you can't have any expectations in return.



Image courtesy of Vinicius Wiesehofer, Pexels

To a lesser degree some fragrances or a massage also help. Once again, what you can do is obvious, and you can manage these things in your business without spending a fortune.

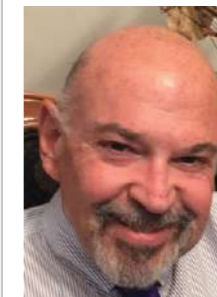


Image courtesy of Lisa Fotios, Pexels

Now, one final word of advice ... unless you are like my dad whose need to understand the science was so important ... don't get caught up in the terminology and try to identify which chemical plays what role. We've looked at a bunch of things that you can do to create positive feelings that result in loyalty. **SR**

And finally, **endorphin, the pain killer chemical.**

“ Endorphins trigger positive emotions when you do something you enjoy such as laughing, exercising or having sex. Nostalgia about happy events sparks it off – and eating chocolate or pleasurable foods has a similar pain-masking effect. ”



Aki Kalliatakis is the managing partner of The Leadership LaunchPad, a company dedicated to helping clients become more customer driven. He can be contacted at (011) 640 3958, or via the website at [www.leadershiplaunchpad.co.za](http://www.leadershiplaunchpad.co.za)





# From farm to fork.

Southern Africa's Leader  
in Food Safety



## Professional Lab Testing Services

We provide a broad range of Chemistry, Microbiological, Diagnostic and Molecular Testing in our custom-built, state of the art laboratories country wide.



# What you need to know about nutritional profiling

To consumers, a label on a food product is nothing but a guide to help them make purchasing choices. But to manufacturers of foodstuffs, the labels are much more than that. Labels on food products contain the nutritional profiling of the item. And, acquiring the correct information for these labels is a large responsibility. This is because it is legally required, and because it is there to protect consumers.

## What is nutritional profiling?

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines nutritional profiling as the science of grouping or grading foodstuffs in relation to the nutrients that they hold. The purpose of this is to encourage healthier eating habits, and to mitigate foodborne disease.

Organisations like the WHO have also placed an emphasis on nutritional labelling as a part of global efforts to reduce non-communicable diseases like hypertension.

To describe it differently, nutritional profiling is the process of analysing the food items that you produce to determine its nutritional contents. After this process is complete, manufacturers can use the information to create labels for their products.

The South African government, in their regulations relating to the labelling and advertising of food stuffs (like the Foodstuffs, Cosmetics,



and Disinfectants Act (Act 54 of 1972), extensively lays out what information you need to present on these labels.

## How is it done?

In short, nutritional profiling is done in a chemistry laboratory, by an accredited and reputable food testing facility. But what happens in the lab?

After you provide the scientists with samples of your product, they analyse it using specialised equipment, like chromatographic and mass spectrometric instruments. Through their analysis, they can give you an overview of both the physical and chemical characteristics of your products.

At the end of the process you'll have a full nutritional profile of your product.

## Why should you do nutritional profiling?

If you're in the business of producing food or feed, you are likely required by the law to have food labels. And if you need food labels, then you need nutritional profiling.

When your samples are sent to the lab, you can select to have your products analysed for the regular factors like nutritional composition of the item. But you can also select to test for harmful components, example: heavy metals and trans fats.

With chemistry lab testing and nutritional profiling, you can avoid unnecessary expenses, legal claims, and damage to reputation.

On top of this, we must remember that part of the reason for nutritional profiling is promoting good health. By doing nutritional profiling, you can help people make better food choices and contribute to overall public health.

## In conclusion

To retain consumer trust and a good brand reputation, you must ensure that your products have undergone thorough testing and nutritional profiling. You can get this done easily, by sending your products to a chemistry lab.

What makes this even better is that this can be a two-in-one activity. You can ensure your food is free of harmful components, and meets food quality compliance standards. **SR**

