NEUROCRAZE: BRAINS, POLITICS, AND NEUROMARKETING, OH MY!

Marketers have joined numerous other fields in embracing what could arguably be called a Neuro craze, the pursuit of deeper insights into human decision-making and behavior based on brain science. The result for marketing has been both growth and hype in a new area of marketing research called neuromarketing.

The alluring promise of neuromarketing is that the method yields more accurate insight into how individuals really think and feel in ways that traditional methods such as surveys and public opinion polls completely fail to capture. One recent area where this issue has come to the surface is in the realm of politics due to the perception that political polling failed to accurately measure deeply rooted public sentiment that led to the 2016 election outcomes.

This, however, begs the question how likely is it that the data obtained in neuromarketing research can better predict human decision-making and behavior? Put more bluntly within the context of politics, are unconscious brain processes that may not be revealed through traditional marketing research methods better predictors of election outcomes and should political campaigns focus on appealing to the more raw, reptilian parts of voters' brains?

This talk will wrestle with these questions from a scientific perspective. Attendees will receive an overview of Neuromarketing as a cutting-edge research methodology and be introduced to a framework for scientifically valid and practically valuable applications of the science. This talk will feature presentation of a case study on neuromarketing science consisting of a joint study on the 2016 presidential election that was conducted by Media Mind Insights at Texas Tech University and Cascade Strategies in Seattle, Washington.

Attendees should gain insights into the relationship between public opinion polling and the methods and measures of Neuromarketing, especially in the fascinating realm of politics, and walk away with the ability to critically evaluate and possibly apply this method in their own work.


Dr. Paul Bolls

Dr. Bolls is a professor and the director of Media Mind Insights, a Neuromarketing research group in the Center for Communication Research at Texas Tech University. He has nearly 25 years of experience using neurophysiological methods to study how individuals cognitively and emotionally process media. Dr. Bolls co-authored "Psychophysiological Measurement and Meaning: Cognitive and Emotional Processing of Media" the first research methods book completely dedicated to the application of neurophysiological methods in media research. He works as a Neuromarketing consultant and regularly conducts projects for large national clients in his lab at Texas Tech University. Dr. Bolls' holds a PhD from Indiana University, MA from

Washington State University, and BA from Montana State University. Prior to graduate school he worked in commercial radio as an on-air talent. He grew up in Montana and loves escaping back to the beauty of the Northwest as much as possible.