

## EVERY DAY QUALITY OF LIFE: ARE TRADITIONAL MARKETING MODELS INCOMPLETE?

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In contrast with traditional cognition-based models of brand choice, neuroscience supports the powerful influence of affective components of decision-making. Every decision that consumers make is influenced by affective factors, sometimes moderated by the cognitive knowledge we have (Damasio, 2000). We do not think consciously about every nuance of every brand we choose – in most purchase situations, we buy simply because we feel, deep in our implicit memories, a stronger emotional “liking” for one brand than another. This form of response is commonly termed “low attention processing” (Heath and Ryder, 2004). Affective inputs into decision-making represent one form of shortcut, or heuristic, that consumers invoke when making routine purchases of low-involvement products. Damasio (1994) has shown that affective response to sensory input is processed instantaneously and irrespective of how much cognitive attention is paid to the input (e.g., a commercial).

An important question for advertising and marketing scholars and managers is “what determines the relative influence of cognitive versus affective factors on decision-making?” Empirical evidence suggests that happier people make more use of these affective heuristics while less happy people tend to pay more cognitive attention to brand communications (Schwarz, 2000). Levels of personal “happiness” also affect how people use their networks and word-of-mouth. Here, the link between personal well-being and processing styles is discussed. Themes such as the relationships between levels of personal happiness and the use of affective heuristics, networks, and word-of-mouth in decision-making are explored. Data from the Research Surveys’ Everyday Quality of Life (EQL) model demonstrate that understanding people’s everyday quality of life and their well-being is of central importance for marketing communications.

### REFERENCES

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