

Neuromarketing In The Age Of Digitalization: A Case Study On Colgate's Evolution

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Abstract: Neuromarketing has emerged as a transformative approach in the modern marketing ecosystem, leveraging cognitive science to decode consumer behaviour. In the age of digitalization, brands like Colgate have evolved from simple awareness campaigns to advanced, neuroscience-based advertising strategies. This article examines how Colgate integrates neuromarketing tools—such as emotional triggers, colour psychology, and trust signals—to influence consumer habits and build brand loyalty. The study also highlights the financial, ethical, and behavioural implications of such practices, offering insights into the future of responsible brand communication.

I. INTRODUCTION

The digital revolution has redefined consumer-brand interaction. Traditional mass marketing has given way to personalized, psychologically optimized strategies that appeal directly to the subconscious mind. Neuromarketing, a blend of neuroscience, psychology, and marketing, studies how the brain responds to advertising stimuli. Companies now use brain-imaging technology and biometric feedback to craft emotionally resonant campaigns (Plassmann et al., 2012). This paper explores how Colgate has transitioned from educational oral care messaging to a modern, neuromarketing-driven approach that captures attention, builds trust, and fosters lifelong brand attachment.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- ✓ To analyze the evolution of Colgate's marketing strategies in the context of neuromarketing and digital innovation.
- ✓ To identify specific neuromarketing techniques used by Colgate to shape consumer perception.

- ✓ To examine the impact of these strategies on lifestyle behaviours, oral health awareness, and financial outcomes.

III. COLGATE'S TRADITIONAL MARKETING STRATEGIES

- ✓ In the pre-digital era, Colgate's core mission was educational. It promoted brushing as a superior alternative to traditional practices like charcoal or neem twigs. Campaigns were localized and often focused on:
 - ✓ Community health programs in rural areas.
 - ✓ School-based awareness drives highlighting daily brushing habits.
 - ✓ Partnerships with health authorities to promote oral hygiene literacy.
- ✓ These efforts positioned Colgate not just as a brand, but as a trusted household ally in health (Keller, 2003).

IV. THE SHIFT TOWARD MODERN MARKETING

- ✓ With digitalization, Colgate moved toward emotional branding, aligning its messages with familial values, trust, and expert authority:
- ✓ Television and digital ads began featuring children, mothers, and dentists—symbols of care, responsibility, and science.
- ✓ Campaigns like “Smile Karo aur shuru ho jao” focused on positivity and confidence.
- ✓ Colgate’s presence expanded across social media platforms, adapting content for Instagram, YouTube, and even voice assistants.
- ✓ This marked a shift from functional messaging to emotional resonance.

V. NEUROMARKETING TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

Colgate’s use of neuromarketing is subtle but powerful. Key strategies include:

- ✓ *Colour Psychology*: Red evokes urgency and energy; white signifies cleanliness and purity. Colgate’s red-and-white packaging subconsciously communicates hygiene and vitality.
- ✓ *Fear-Then-Relief Technique*: Ads depict the risks of ignoring oral hygiene (e.g., cavities, bad breath), followed by Colgate as the safe solution.
- ✓ *Trust Cues*: Featuring dentists or medical professionals builds credibility—a classic authority heuristic (Cialdini, 2001).
- ✓ *Sensory Appeal*: Use of visual close-ups, foaming toothpaste, and smiles create a multisensory engagement. These elements trigger emotional and cognitive brain areas, boosting recall and persuasion (Morin, 2011).

VI. TRENDS IN DIGITAL ADVERTISING

Colgate’s adaptation to digital trends includes:

- ✓ *Programmatic Advertising*: Targeted YouTube ads based on user behaviour and preferences.
- ✓ *Interactive Content*: Animated reels and explainers to simplify oral care routines
- ✓ *QR Codes*: On packaging and print ads to drive users to tutorials, reviews, or free samples.
- ✓ *Gamified Education*: Apps and online quizzes for kids to learn brushing techniques.

These digital tools increase engagement and allow for real-time feedback analytics.

VII. ETHICAL AND SOCIAL CHALLENGES

While neuromarketing is effective, it raises ethical concerns:

Manipulation vs. Influence: Are brands nudging choices or overriding consumer autonomy?

Medicalization of Daily Life: Regular dental check-ups, once rare, are now normalized—raising questions about necessity vs. Branding.

Access Disparities: High-end oral care products may become aspirational rather than accessible for all.

Regulations and ethical frameworks are needed to balance persuasion with consumer well-being (Lee et al., 2007).

VIII. FINANCIAL AND MARKET IMPLICATIONS

- ✓ Colgate has remained a market leader in oral care, with a global market share exceeding 40% in some regions (Statista, 2024).
- ✓ Investment in branding and advertising has yielded long-term loyalty and high ROI.
- ✓ The dental care economy—including toothpaste, clinics, brushes, and whitening products—has grown significantly, with consumer spending influenced by consistent messaging.
- ✓ Neuromarketing helps maintain this cycle of consumption, linking brand trust with financial stability.

IX. TRANSFORMATION OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Colgate’s efforts have shaped behaviour at multiple levels:

- ✓ *Early Brand Imprinting*: Many people recall Colgate as their first toothpaste—building childhood loyalty.
- ✓ *Normalized Dental Habits*: Twice-daily brushing, flossing, and dentist visits are now widespread.
- ✓ *Health as Lifestyle*: Oral care is integrated into self-care, beauty, and wellness routines.

This behaviour shaping illustrates the power of repeated, emotionally intelligent messaging.

X. KEY INSIGHTS

- ✓ Neuromarketing is a powerful yet double-edged tool—when used ethically, it can educate and empower.
- ✓ Colgate’s journey reflects a balance between innovation, influence, and responsibility.
- ✓ The brand’s success stems from its strategy: Educate → Emotionally Connect → Retain.

XI. CONCLUSION

In an era of digital saturation, brands must engage wisely. Colgate’s case illustrates how blending scientific insights with emotional intelligence can reshape entire industries. However, the future must include ethical guardrails to ensure that influence does not become exploitation. The intersection of finance, neuroscience, and social good is where modern marketing must evolve—transparently, inclusively, and responsibly.

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