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Balanced Decision Making

Welcome to the Summer 2019 season and Digital Dollars and Sense! This edition provides a perspective on 'balance in decision making' on several topics. Inside you will find:

- Insights into cognitive biases - What is your filter bias when making decisions using data from analytics, spreadsheets and trend reporting programs?
- Search Engines Users - What they like, What's not Great and What's Helpful!
- The changing ecosystem of Email Communications.
- What is the best 'new' way to Blog - How about a Video?
- Why minimalist design is quickly becoming consumers choice.

We always welcome and enjoy your calls, texts and emails. And we'll see you again for our next publishing period this Fall/Winter of 2019. Have a great Summer!

Joe Wozny and the Concentric Team

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DIGITAL STRATEGY

digitalroadmap®

digitalroadmap® strategies are plans and processes for your online initiatives that create value and revenue for your business

The Cognitive Bias Effect in Data-Driven Decision Making

In our knowledge economy, making informed decisions using data-derived insights is part of many of our job descriptions. We value the attributes and outcomes of decisions derived from data. We also like to think of ourselves as rational human beings.

Did you know that we are prone to hundreds of proven biases, that factor in our decision making abilities. Enter the cognitive bias.

Cognitive biases are those “thought traps” that cause humans to do irrational things. They can be either an asset or the “enemy” of rational decision making.

Physiologists also use the term “affect heuristic” when discussing cognitive biases. Affect heuristic is used to describe the way we allow emotions to “colour” our beliefs.

5 examples of the cognitive biases relevant to data-derived decision making are shared in the adjacent column. Additionally, Business Insider publishes a list of 58 cognitive biases that you can find [here](https://www.businessinsider.com/58-cognitive-biases).

Decision making can be complex when using data-derived insights. A main key to success is to embrace the possibility that cognitive biases do exist and then reconfirm your data-derived relationships and biases with a critic's eye.

Bottom Line: Become familiar with your cognitive bias to assist in better decision making when analyzing your data.

Cognitive Bias Examples

Consider the following cognitive biases when using data-derived insights to assist in making better decisions.

#1 Anchoring Bias

Be aware that using the first piece of information that is presented to you as a reference point against all other options could be a mistake.

#2 The Bandwagon Effect

The probability of one person adopting a belief increases based on the number of people holding that belief, so keep beliefs private when making important decisions. Consider the value of ‘hidden votes’ in group think setting.

#3 Clustering Illusion

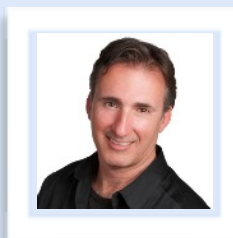
This is the tendency to see patterns in random events like the idea that red is more or less likely to turn up on a roulette table after a string of reds.

#4 Observer Expectancy Effect

Ensure your expectations do not involuntarily impact how you interpret results.

#5 Recency Bias

The newest piece of data is not always more important than historical data. Compare past data sets against new ones.



JOE WOZNY

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DIGITAL ADVERTISING

Leveraging Internet technologies to deliver promotional messages.

Why DO People Click on Search Ads

Knowing the reasons why people click on paid search ads allows you to make better decisions about how to use and optimize search advertising in your business.

Paid search is an established and helpful tool to find your prospective customers. In fact, 75% of people surveyed believe search ads make it easier to find information online, regardless of the platform they use including Google Ads, Amazon Advertising, Bing Ads and YouTube.

Paid Ads Are Easily Recognized - 80% of people are confident they can recognize a paid ad. This identification provides a perception expectation that the ad would be valuable to them.

Demonstrated Value - Ads answering direct search inquiries and assisting with the person's specific question, are the most valuable and rememberable.

A Familiar Brand - Branded paid search ads appeal to people who search for information about services, retail and consumer goods, and videos.

The Right Messaging - 19% of people click on paid search advertising because of a compelling title, description or image.



The Platform Matters - Nearly two-thirds of people (63%) are most likely to click on a Google search advertisement in comparison to 14% on Amazon and 9% on YouTube.

Types of Ads Clicked is Determined by the Platform Used - The paid search advertisements people click on depend on the websites they use:

- More than half of people (55%) who click on Google search ads prefer the text ad format.
- People who click on Amazon advertisements favour shopping/product listing ads (50%).

People engaged in activities on YouTube favour video ads (36%).

Do We Prefer Text Ads? - Nearly half of us (49%) are most likely to click on a paid search text advertisement, while around one-third (31%) are likely to click on a shopping ad and 16% are likely to click on a video ad.

Repetition from Multiple Sources - Paid search ads on multiple platforms improve

click through rates.

Ad Location in Mobile - Mobile interfaces often display only paid ads above the fold on the screen. No scrolling = convenience = better performance.

Bottom Line: Your target customers have high expectations about paid search ads. The time spent in making your brand look smarter pays off in clicks and conversions. Thoughtfully tailor your ads for best results.

ESTABLISH A "SOURCE OF TRUTH"

We've observed that customers who invest in a reliable measuring system to track items such as customer registrations, click to calls and form completions, have more time to focus on new idea and revenue generation and spend less time auditing and questioning results.





CONTENT MARKETING

Creating and freely sharing information with intent to attract prospects.

The New eMail Era Brings Substantial Marketing Opportunities

Your email marketing subscriber database is a valuable asset to your business. It's an opportunity to directly activate prequalified people who have shown an interest in your business.

Email systems have undergone a substantial transformation in recent years. Now at your fingertips are tools to understand customer habits, bridge SMS and email conversations, set automated workflows and easily assemble customized communications -, at prices attractive to small and medium sized businesses.

Consider these **tools and features** to help you decide if it's time to consider updating your current email system.

Levels of Integration - Native integration allows you to sync your customer databases with your email profiles providing a deeper subset of information on your customers habits.

Profiles vs an eMail Subscription - With Profiles, real time data on email subscribers website visit habits can be collected by your email system. This gives you a broader picture of how a subscriber interacts with the information you publish online and in your newsletters.



Better Segmentation - You can segment your customers according to their preferences and activities. This allows you to direct appropriate communications to specific sets of subscribers. For example, you could create a list of all subscribers who purchased over \$1000 of products/services from your company, send them tailored email messages and track the outcomes.

Automated Workflows - Automated workflows can be created to send timely communications to members of your lists. Workflows can also take actions like updating a specific field on a profile and integrating "web" feeds into your emails.

Enhanced Editors - Editors are intuitive allowing you to create visually appealing responsive email communications. You can build email templates and assign them to a Workflow. You can "pick" items from a website and import them into your email without having to

recreate this information.

Choose the Channel - SMS, mobile, desktop - The world is your oyster - clients choose the way they want to communicate with you and you can easily communicate back using the same platform.

Site Features - Items such as email POPs can be integrated directly into your website. These marketing features can be integrated with workflows. Items such as coupons from many commerce platforms can be generated and also integrated into emails.

Bottom Line: This email automation shift is about focusing on enhancing an already important asset and generating more business opportunities. Easily accessible real-time data and optimized workflows gives email marketers more time to focus on solving business problems.



ORGANIC SEARCH

Enter in one or more words in a search engine and receive listings that appear because of their relevance to your search request.

Turn Your Blog into a Video

Video has become one of the most popular forms of communications on “the web”. Consider the mixed use of video in blogging to provide significant advantages for your business, including:

- Reader Preference for viewing - many people have little time to read but will take 30 seconds to watch a video
- The video medium works well in communicating information in an engaging and entertaining way
- Once your video format is created it requires less additional effort to create your content
- Segments of video blogs often have multi uses and can be repurposed for both content and advertising
- For certain topics, quality videos are rising above quality blog posts in search results, especially on Google.



Is Video Appropriate for Your Blog?

The Google Search bar shows you the popular media type(s) for your topic. Prior to video creation, conduct a Google search (unfiltered if possible) to determine what media type is popular with your audience and your topic.

Does Your Blog Meet Google Criteria?

Educational category content work great in formats such as Tutorials, How-to content and Reviews and are deemed ‘high-value’ by Google. Structuring your videos in an “educational format” makes it easier for Google to recognize that your content is there to help the searcher.

Proven Video Blog Optimization Practices

The Title is Important - The name of your video file should be the same as the title of your YouTube video. When you upload the file into the platform, don't change the title. Having the same title and file name easily identifies for YouTube and Google what the content is right away.

Tag It Correctly - Always describe your video in the meta data associated with your video file on a web page. Ensure it has a proper title tag and video description and that you’ve indexed the video into Google via your sitemap and search console tools.

Thumbnails - A video thumbnail encourages viewers to hit the PLAY button. A great thumbnail makes a creator's content stand out.

Playlists - Put the video in a ‘playlist’ on your channel. Playlists are basically curated category pages that help add authority for your video content. Make sure your playlist is optimized with a top-search term and a quality description that includes keywords to help Google identify what the video content is all about.

Build links to your video - Google treats your YouTube video as a webpage; and the more quality backlinks you have directing back to it, the more likely Google is to rank your video.

Focus on YouTube First - Even though ranking on Google may be your goal, start with ranking on YouTube. You are creating videos, after all, and YouTube is the second-largest search engine in the world.

Share - Platforms on which to share educational videos include Quora, Reddit, Blogs (as embeds) and of course your social media channels.

Bottom Line: Harness the power of visual content. Mix video into your blogs if they are instructional and educational in nature. You may find a whole new audience for your content.



DIGITAL DEVELOPMENT

Create experiences that differentiate your brand.

Minimalism in Web Design 6 Guidelines for Great Visitor Experiences

Minimalism in the world of design is everywhere - in architecture, paintings, sculptures and even in our lifestyles. This is initially driven by design and as it catches on becomes a consumer's choice.

Minimalism is also on the rise in digital product design. Well-designed "web minimalist website interfaces" pair aesthetics with strong usability to create an excellent user experience. Template driven websites provide multitudes of white label minimalist examples.

While minimalist web design is attractive, it is tricky to get just right. In order to help you decide what parts of minimalism you should embrace we share six rules for creating effective minimalist designs.

The Top 6 Guidelines

Content and Features - Remove all unnecessary elements and distractions from your design. Conduct a content and feature analysis. The goal of this activity is to prioritize all content and features, so you can identify what the essential components of the design are.

The more choices you present, the longer it takes to make a decision so reduce the options and features presented. Choose elements that serve a functional purpose. Only include elements that make your message clear. Communicate succinctly. Place the most relevant content at the top.

Imagery - Minimalism includes careful choice of when and where to use images. Thoughtfully choose

images that help create a focal point with asymmetrical and symmetrical balance.

Typography - Good minimalist design features clean and readable typography. Typography can be used to create focal points. Select font palette with one or two font families. Text blocks make it easier for visitors to understand and consume the content on your site.

Colours and Contrast - The colours you choose should be as clean as your typography selection. Color can be used for various purposes including as a background texture or as an accent, or to convey a mood. Keep in mind that monochromatic colour palettes are not the be all and end all of minimalism. While it's always better to use a limited number of colours, you should not be limited by your colour selection.



White Space - Visual clutter can be your worst enemy. Avoid having too many items fight for a visitor's attention. In fact, use white space to force a user's attention by increasing negative space around it. Empty space will naturally direct the eye towards the object. Avoid using multiple focal points per screen. Give visitors one thing to focus on at a time.

Visual Hierarchy - It's said that "Good visual hierarchy moves the visitor's eye across the page and pulls attention to certain elements." Grid systems are effective tools to assist with achieving visual hierarchy.

Bottom Line: Find the right relationship between all the visual elements you use in a design and the visitor experience you want to provide. A well-balanced design ensures no one element will overpower the other without a good reason. When you strive for minimalism, what you are actually doing is creating simple, easy-to-use products—products that help the user accomplish something quickly and easily. This leads to first rate visitor experiences your clients will remember.



DIGITAL DICTIONARY

A glossary of digital terms for navigating 'Planet Internet' and featured in Digital Dollar books and Digital Doll\$rs and Sense.

New Digital Diction

Bread Crumbs – Links at the top of a web page or in a search result, that better help the user navigate the site. Onsite links often appear near the web page's title and look something like this: Home > Services > Specific Service.

Native Integration - A native application is a software program that is developed for use on a particular platform or device. Because a native app is built for use on a particular device and its' OS, it has the ability to provide functionality such as seamless data transfer, database synchronization and tool integration.

List Segmentation - Ways to break up your lists – by industry, age, location, new and returning customers etc. These lists can be used to create automations or customize communications for email.

Page Authority (PA) - Each page on your website has a rank as well as your site as a whole. It's important to make sure you are distributing page authority evenly across your site. The more pages that have high PA's, the more likely they will be able to rank which means your business has a better chance of showing up in search results.

Relevancy Score - When running campaigns on Facebook, you will receive a relevancy score for the creative and copy in your advertisements. This score is given to each of your Ads by Facebook. It is a way for them to decide how relevant your advertisement is and how it compares to other similar ads.

Can't find a term? Have one we should include? Please send them to us at [Digital Dictionary](#) Access the full electronic version of the Digital Dictionary. [Visit Online](#). New terms are added regularly!

About CONCENTRIC

We love creating visibility for digital activities that contribute to favorable business change and positive social results.

We are a trusted partner and marketing collaborator for digital strategies, digital advertising programs, content marketing activities, anything mobile, being found in search and social, and developing new digital ideas.

Deploy our trademarked [digitalroadmap®](#) process to amplify your voice, make your next project shine and stand out from the crowd. Count on us to measure your performance and elevate your success.

About Digital Dollars and Sense

DIGITAL DOLL\$RS and Sense is dedicated to distinctive insights, online business integration, featuring digital strategy, marketing and advertising acumen. Published Quarterly. Copyright © Concentric 2018.

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