

Emotional Engagement Measurement

WHITEPAPER



the ability to read
the subconscious
consumer mind
in a meaningful way

the question is

**'Why consumers do
what they do'?**

The holy grail of 'Why'

James Crimmins in his book '7 secrets of persuasion' says that it's not that consumers don't want to tell us the answer to the ever elusive 'why' behind their actions, it's just that they don't know it themselves.

Human mind is a complex organism and the decision-making process it manages happens at a subconscious level as a result of functioning of several intricate mechanisms. For that reason, researchers have concluded that asking a consumer why they have made a certain decision; why did they make a certain choice; how was their experience; what did they like most about a product or service, is not going to give a meaningful response. Almost all humans lack the capacity to dig into their own subconscious mind on questioning and come up with a valid reasoning for their actions. According to a research done with a group of respondents, it was discovered that in most cases the reasons given by research subjects were not the real reasons for their actions. Researchers concluded that we do that to ensure that we are seen to be in command of our affairs, including our subconscious mind.

The complexity of consumers' decision-making process and measurement tools that lack the ability to read the subconscious consumer mind in a meaningful way, means that we are some distance away from the holy grail of 'why'. And so, the answer to the question 'why' consumers do what they do, still remains elusive to researchers.

There have been some recent advances in science and technology that are starting to make it possible for marketers to tap into subconscious motivations that drive behavior.

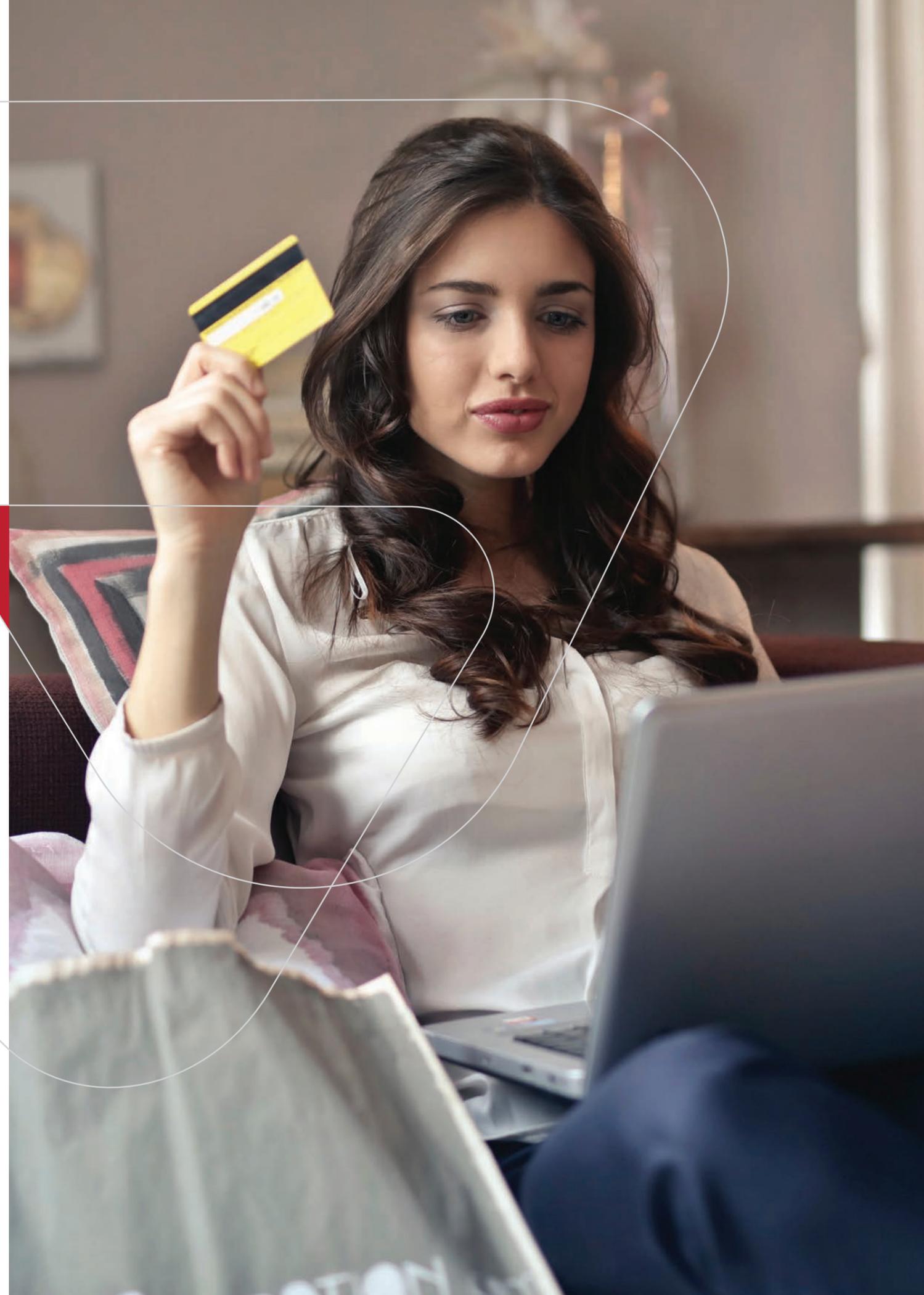
After the fact vs In the-moment

In today's fast paced environment, organizations need to be agile. Digital transformation enabled by technology is influencing consumer behavior in ways that are hard to predict and plan. Consumers are increasingly connected and prefer digital over analog mediums to identify and purchase what they want, when they want it, and how they want it.

As a result, the whole consumer decision ecosystem – from awareness to purchase – is in transition and will continue to be for the foreseeable future. Agile, trusted, and actionable measurement of evolving actual behaviors is fundamental to understanding drivers of choice, and indicator of brand's long-term connection to consumers.

Current research tools are not able to measure the automatic/nonconscious part of the brain and do not provide real-time and real-life measurement.

But this is about to change.





Focus on Emotions

Decades of Social/Psychological Research has established that many of our decisions and actions are automatic and nonconscious.

So, what is the best lever that could act as a valid proxy to show the working of subconscious mind?

Research shows that it's our emotions. And there are some good reasons for it:

1. Emotional connections are what consumers are really looking for;
2. Functional reward maybe delayed, but the emotion is immediate;
3. Functional reward may be uncertain, but the emotion is assured;
4. A fact or feature is rational, but emotions speak to the automatic mind

According to a widely quoted research article in the Harvard Business Review, emotional engagement is a key metric that can be used to assess and monitor consumers affinity towards a brand and their value as a lifetime consumer.

Furthermore, measuring emotional engagement is a more robust predictor of consumers' behavior and their propensity to spend than customer satisfaction and brand equity.

**But the question is
how can we measure emotional
engagement?**

Never Ask, Unearth

The challenge we had in front of us was not only to find effective and reliable ways to measure emotional engagement but also to do it:

Emotions

- Real Emotions
- Real time
- Real life

Insights

- Derive useful insights

Actionable

- Ensure outcomes are actionable

This was a tall order. None of the traditional research methods can get to the truth.

Naturally, our most important premise was not to ask the consumer. We wanted to develop a way to bring the measurement as close as possible to consumers' natural habitat, so that we can measure emotional engagement in its purest form.

We concluded that solution lied in smart integration of human intellect and AI.

Next Gen Measurement of Consumers' Emotional Engagement

All emotions face duality. That is, they are either positive or negative. They are also stimulated via a duality. External stimulus and internal construct. In the first stage, we are aiming to understand how 'external stimuli' impacts consumers' emotional engagement. These external stimuli could cover many aspects: an experience be it in-store or digital, while using a product or service, and to a certain degree connecting with a brand in the digital world.

Research has shown that consumers' subconsciously express their emotions in several ways. We are developing a solution that is ethically and within the guidelines of privacy restrictions, going to leverage new technology and AI to capture emotions expressed by consumers. We are building a cohesive, consistent, robust and valid measurement process that can understand those emotions, calculate the emotional engagement and bring insights into drivers. Eventually, this should lead to identifying actions brands must take to improve their engagement and outcomes. This measurement process will involve listening, seeing and reading consumers as they interact with a brand.



Beyond emotions and towards emotional engagement

Our motivation is to ensure that our measurement of consumer emotional engagement is:

- Real time
- Unbiased
- Real Life
- Actionable

We also need to go beyond the current measures of a select group of sentiments and connect it to a context as well as to an outcome.

By only telling an organization that a consumer expressed a negative emotion such as anger during an interaction, while useful, is not going to enable organizations to understand the impact as well as plan actions.

We want to provide a holistic connection between the **context** of interaction, which aspect of consumers' emotional motivators is getting impacted, which interaction should be given more importance and finally what action should be taken.

Business questions we can answer

Our goal is to provide robust information to decision makers, real time and real life, so that they can plan timely actions to improve outcomes. Our goal is to be able to provide organizations:

- their Consumer Emotional Engagement scores as they are interacting with the product or service
- where do their consumers stand in their emotional engagement journey (i.e. from non-engaged to fully engaged)
- which variables drove scores higher and what caused it to drop (experience, product/service features, journey steps)
- what actions can they take to improve emotional engagement
- predict customer decisions and impact on outcomes

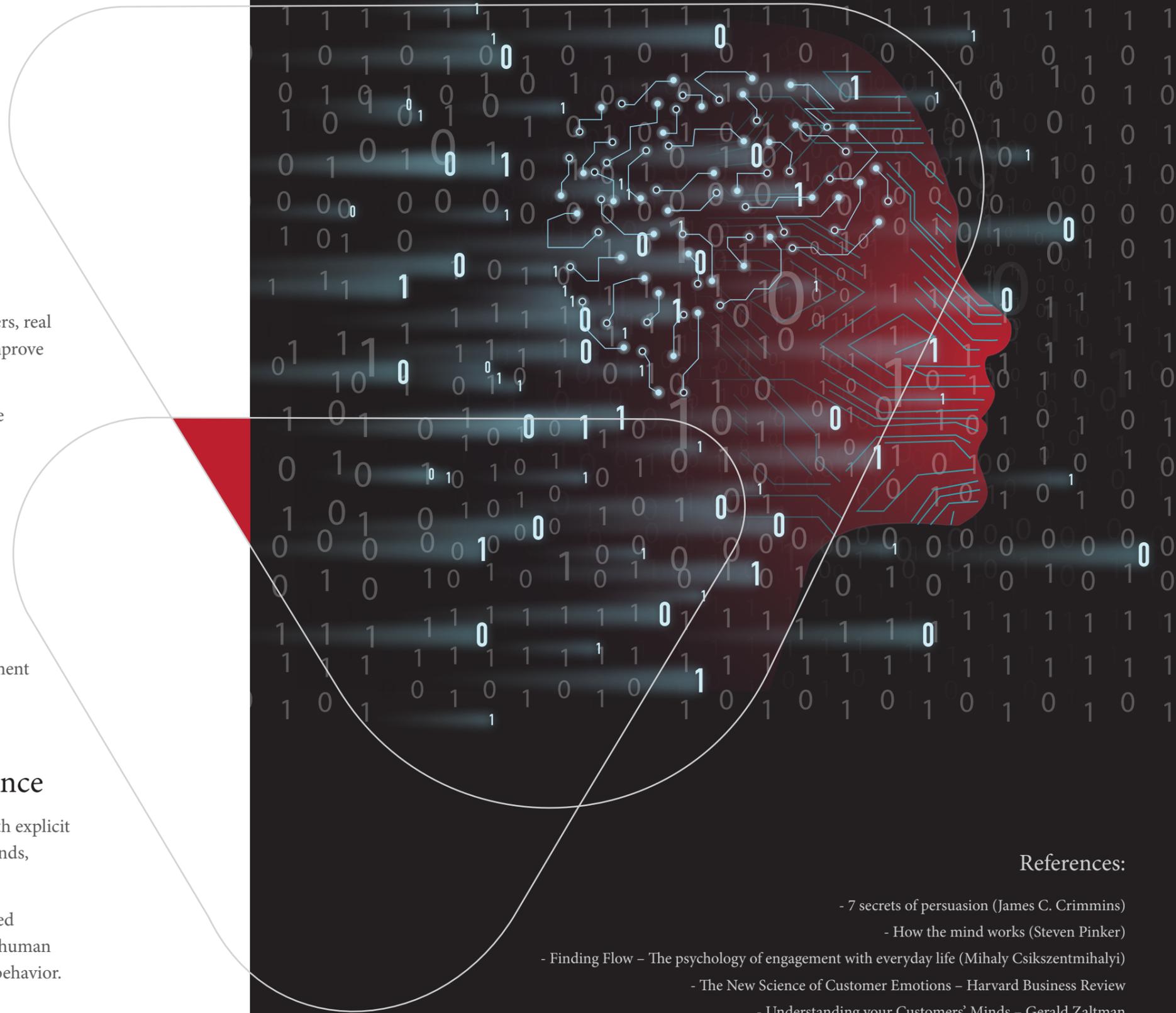
Methods and Tools - Artificial Intelligence

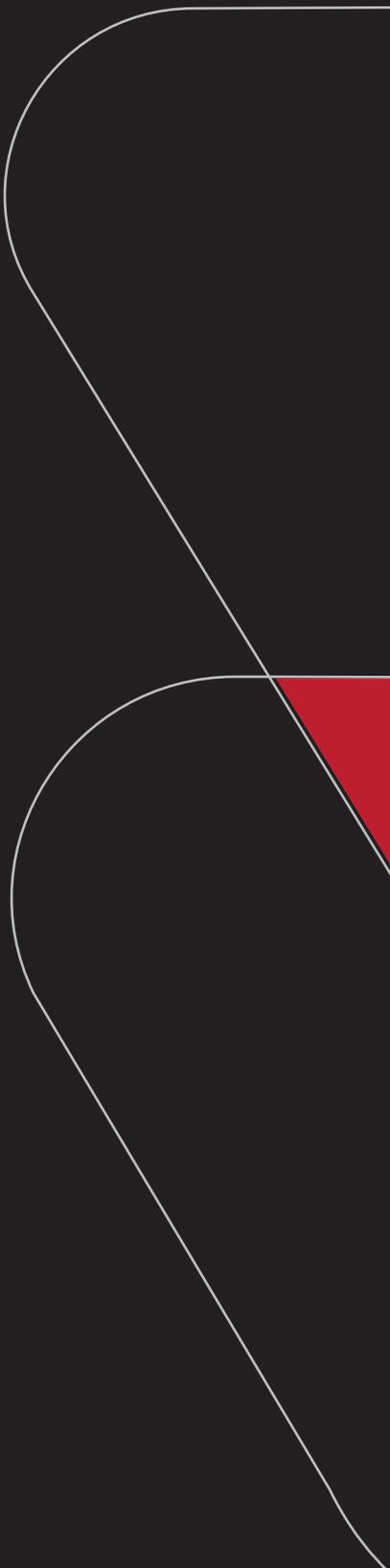
We are deploying tools and training models to measure both explicit and implicit consumer response to the experience with brands, services and interactions with product experiences.

In this regard, we are introducing groundbreaking integrated platform combining AI technology and converging it with human expertise to provide a unique understanding of consumer behavior.

References:

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- Finding Flow – The psychology of engagement with everyday life (Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi)
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- Consumer Brand Engagement in Social Media: Conceptualization, Scale Development and Validation – Linda D. Hollebeek, Mark S. Glynn, Roderick J. Brodie





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