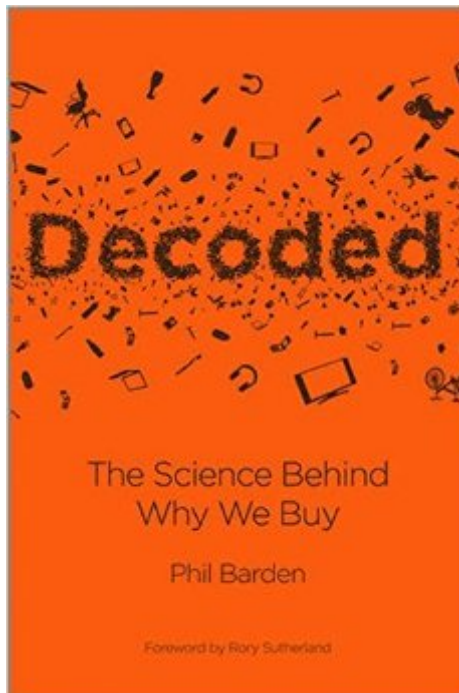


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# Decoded: The Science Behind Why We Buy



## Synopsis

In this groundbreaking book Phil Barden reveals what decision science explains about people's purchase behaviour, and specifically demonstrates its value to marketing. He shares the latest research on the motivations behind consumers' choices and what happens in the human brain as buyers make their decisions. He deciphers the 'secret codes' of products, services and brands to explain why people buy them. And finally he shows how to apply this knowledge in day to day marketing to great effect by dramatically improving key factors such as relevance, differentiation and credibility. Shows how the latest insights from the fields of Behavioural Economics, psychology and neuro-economics explain why we buy what we buy Offers a pragmatic framework and guidelines for day-to-day marketing practice on how to employ this knowledge for more effective brand management - from strategy to implementation and NPD. The first book to apply Daniel Kahneman's Nobel Prize-winning work to marketing and advertising Packed with case studies, this is a must-read for marketers, advertising professionals, web designers, R&D managers, industrial designers, graphic designers in fact anyone whose role or interest focuses on the 'why' behind consumer behaviour. Foreword by Rory Sutherland, Executive Creative Director and Vice-Chairman, OgilvyOne London and Vice-Chairman, Ogilvy Group UK Full colour throughout

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Honestly the most impressive part of the book is how beautiful the physical book is. The layout is flawless, the pages are glossy and high quality, and the entire book is in full color with lots of illustrations. The audience is more specific than I anticipated. It seems to be exclusively written to

people working at huge firms selling tangible products that have large marketing budgets and no background in psychology. If you fit into that category, that's great and you will get quite a lot out of this book. Unfortunately for me, I really don't fall into that category at all. My undergrad degree was in psychology and a lot of the principles and studies he talks about we covered repeatedly throughout college. At this point, they're unoriginal and cliché. That's fine if you're not familiar with them, but if you've ever taken an upper level psych course, there isn't a whole lot of new information here. The applications are sometimes interesting, but I do think he could have been a bit more original than how people perceive optical illusions, for example. The other disappointment I had is that "buying" refers exclusively to tangible products in this book. In fact, it was so specific to products and brands (think Coke, deodorant, cars, Tropicana, etc.) that I had a hard time extrapolating much of anything to take away for my small service based business. It's great that when people are walking through a store they choose one product over another for whatever reason, but what about when they're looking for a service? How do people choose then? I think service based industry deserved at least a chapter, or a mention or something. It's also really not geared toward small business.

This book is written by a marketing expert for marketers. It takes information about decision making from recent studies in economics and neuropsychology and provides clear applications to everyday marketing decisions. Here are just a few of the big points you'll learn in this book: \* Strong branding encourages shoppers to make decisions without logical decision-making. \* Most marketing communications need to deliver their core message in seconds (like -- 2 to 4 seconds). \* It's easier to change behaviors than beliefs, and changes in belief often follow changes in behavior. The book offers a very readable main narrative. There is also a "Science box" in most chapters which lays out the basic research that supports the applications proposed in the chapter, with references. Each chapter ends with a summary: "What we have learned in this chapter/ What this means to us as marketers." There are lots of research reports. We learn, for example, that brain scans have found that seeing a product activates pleasure centers while seeing a price activates parts of the brain associated with pain. Asked whether or not they would buy the product they saw, subjects made yes/no decisions in line with the relative intensity of the pleasure involved in thinking of the product compared with the pain of paying the price -- that's how our brains decide whether an item is worth buying. These research reports are aligned with case studies mostly involving consumer goods. For example, the pleasure/pain ratio described above is followed by an examination of brands of shower gel. One brand makes a satisfying click when opened and has a bottle that suggests greater power

by using visual cues associated with cars and high performance.

John Wanamaker is credited with saying, "I know that half my advertising dollars are wasted; the trouble is I don't know which half." Advertising and marketing have long been considered more an art than science. The average tenure of a CMO (chief marketing officer) for large organizations is more typically measured in months than in years. The reason is that most CEOs have an unfavorable view of advertising and marketing. Sixty-five percent of CEOs call "marketing la-la-land". This circles back to Wanamaker's observation - half of the dollars spent are wasted. Phil Barden, author of *Decoded - The Science Behind Why we Buy*, has written a well researched book with the goal of turning advertising and marketing into more of a scientific endeavor. To achieve the goal of making advertising and marketing more scientific, we first need to understand the psychology behind how humans make decisions. We tend to think that decisions are rational, logical and the result of conscious effort. But as Mr. Barden explains, decisions are a combination of autopilot (implicit) and pilot (explicit) systems in the brain. The autopilot - the subconscious is much more powerful and handles about 11 million bits per second. The pilot - the conscious part of the brain can only handle about 40 bits per second. The book presents the information in a very logical sequence. First Mr. Barden explores the why of consumer behavior. Next he decodes how we make purchase decisions. Then he moves on to how the autopilot system interprets the signals we receive from advertising and packaging. He then talks about how to optimize the path to purchase. All decisions are goal based. But to market effectively we must market to the implicit goals as well as the explicit goals.

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