

Nürnberg, Germany 15.– 18.2.2022

VIVANESS 2022

into natural beauty



PRESS RELEASE

July 2022

VIVANESS 2022: Change is the price of survival on the (cosmetics) market

- **New insights into neuromerchandising® at VIVANESS Congress**
- **Presentation by Bert M. Ohnemüller with hands-on discussion of practical ideas**

VIVANESS, the International Trade Fair for Natural and Organic Personal Care, doesn't just offer four days full of global diversity, inspiration, trends, newcomers and start-ups. It's also four days packed with sound professional expertise, networking with experts, and cutting-edge topics presented by high-calibre speakers. Because the VIVANESS congress will also be taking place alongside the exhibition as a one-off "Summer Edition" from 26 to 29 July 2022. On 28 July, Bert M. Ohnemüller, (co)founder of the neuromerchandising® group and heart leadership coach, will give a talk from the perspective of neuromarketing that explores among other things what makes the retail environment a place of encounters and how the point of sale can become a point of success. But what role does the heart play in all this? And why is "inner sustainability" the only way to truly keep us grounded? VIVANESS got the chance to ask these questions in advance.

Mr Ohnemüller, you say that the retail environment is a place of encounters. Can you tell us briefly what we need to do to make more out of these encounters? And how does the point of sale become a point of success?

The market, or retail space, has always been about people coming together and not just about offering goods for sale. And the biggest challenge is to turn these encounters into relationships. The point of sale only becomes a point of success in a successful combination with the "point of people".

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If you want your business to really fly, you will need both these “wings”.

From my vantage point, the tragedy is that we completely overrate the retail space as such and place far too little value on the people within that space (the employees). No customer is going to feel good in a space where the employees themselves are not happy.

Success follows something else, but what?

Success derives from the verb succeed, meaning to come next (and to achieve a desired outcome). Success is always a consequence, or the result, of taking the right action. The intention determines the result, and what matters here are authenticity, honesty, and relevance.

In the retail space, success means that a decision has been made, a decision to buy something. How do I reach customers, on an emotional level as well? How can insights from neuroscience help in this context?

In my view the priority is to win customer hearts, and if we manage to do that then loyalty is one of the consequences. People need a sense of belonging. When we feel that we belong, our body rewards us by releasing a happiness hormone, in this case serotonin. I like to call this “the loyalty of biology”. Moreover, we are only capable of making a decision if the corresponding positive emotion comes into play. And this is where the most important principle of neuromerchandising® applies: “Everything that does not evoke an emotional response is of no value to the brain!”

We should ask ourselves again and again whether what we are doing has an emotional impact, and if not, we should stop doing it. This is my suggestion for how we can save a lot of money.

Only those who understand how we think, feel and act can exhaust the full potential available. And it is precisely here that the neurosciences and evolutionary biology can provide us with very valuable approaches and solutions.

In this context, what role do emotions play in your view?

“What is uttered from the heart alone will win the hearts of others to your own” – as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe wrote many years ago. I believe

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that in business, we far too often focus on the intellectual side of things and have simply forgotten the basics of successful communication. We need to get out of our heads and dive right down into the heart.

After all, people know intuitively whether a message is authentic and honest or not. And incidentally, there are wonderful scientific findings on why heart rate variability is the most important biological signal. But I will talk more about this in my presentation. We mustn't forget that people don't so much remember what we say to them but rather the feeling that we give them. We should therefore be endeavouring to enrich every encounter with positive feelings.

Customer centricity or employee centricity? You say that the latter makes all the difference, and not just in the retail sector. Is this because the customer is only happy if the employee is happy?

I believe that the principle of success, now and in the future, is "EX", i.e., the employee (and employer) experience. In my view business is always about people, and the quality of my business is highly dependent on the quality of my relationships. This applies to my team, my customers, and the person I see in the mirror. I therefore like to compare good leadership with the image of a good gardener. How can I get the plants in my garden to grow? Or to put it another way, when you look after your staff, they can look after your customers. Happy employees make happy customers, and they make for happy bosses.

From positive psychology we know that joy is a very important prerequisite for success. Or "fun makes the brain run", as brain researchers say.

You say that "change is the price of survival" on the cosmetics market. What special factors do you see at play when it comes to the beauty and cosmetics segment?

Since Charles Darwin we have been talking about the "survival of the fittest", but I believe that this has often been interpreted in a misleading way. It is not about physical and/or mental fitness, but the ability to adapt, i.e., the way we handle change. So, from my perspective, most crises are essentially something positive: They represent an invitation to change, to find and take better approaches. I believe that some pioneers of natural cosmetics feel under siege by the "major players" and "smart young things". And perhaps

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this perception is just an invitation to reinvent yourself again, without forgetting your authenticity and your own story. I'd like to see these particular pioneers focusing more on what makes them unique and using this to formulate a compelling story that everyone will want to pass on. This story needs to literally "get under the skin".

Sustainability is a megatrend, why is it that only "inner sustainability" truly keeps us grounded?

For me, it is this inner strength that keeps us grounded as human beings when everything else is falling apart. And by that, I mean our roots, our values, our culture, and our heart. This kind of mindset results in optimism and (self) confidence, and the conviction that we will always find a better way, even if we cannot (yet) see it. It all starts from the inside out, so if we want to have a good harvest, we need to take care of the roots. Our professional and personal success will then come almost naturally.

Thank you for talking to us!

Make a note now of the date and time of Bert M. Ohnemüller's talk at the VIVANESS Congress: 28.7.2022 // 11:30 - 12:30: Change is the price of survival in the (cosmetics) market. New insights from the world of neuromerchandising®

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