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OCTOBER 23-25, 2025 • SAN DIEGO



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The Neuroscience of Branding

How Your Brand Builds Trust and Influence

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A neuroscience-backed formula for brand trust:



How the brain forms trust, and how to earn it



Why first impressions matter more than you think



How to leverage cognitive biases ethically



Why storytelling is the secret to memorability

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Why I'm Talking About This

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What a Brand Is (and Isn't)

Not just a logo, font,
or color palette



The gut feeling people have about
you (*Neumeier, The Brand Gap*)

Not your website or
business card



An emotional shortcut for trust, credibility,
and connection

Not what you say it is



The story people tell themselves
about you

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The Magic Formula

$$\text{Trust} = \frac{(\text{Credibility} + \text{Empathy} + \text{Reliability})}{\text{Perceived Risk}}$$

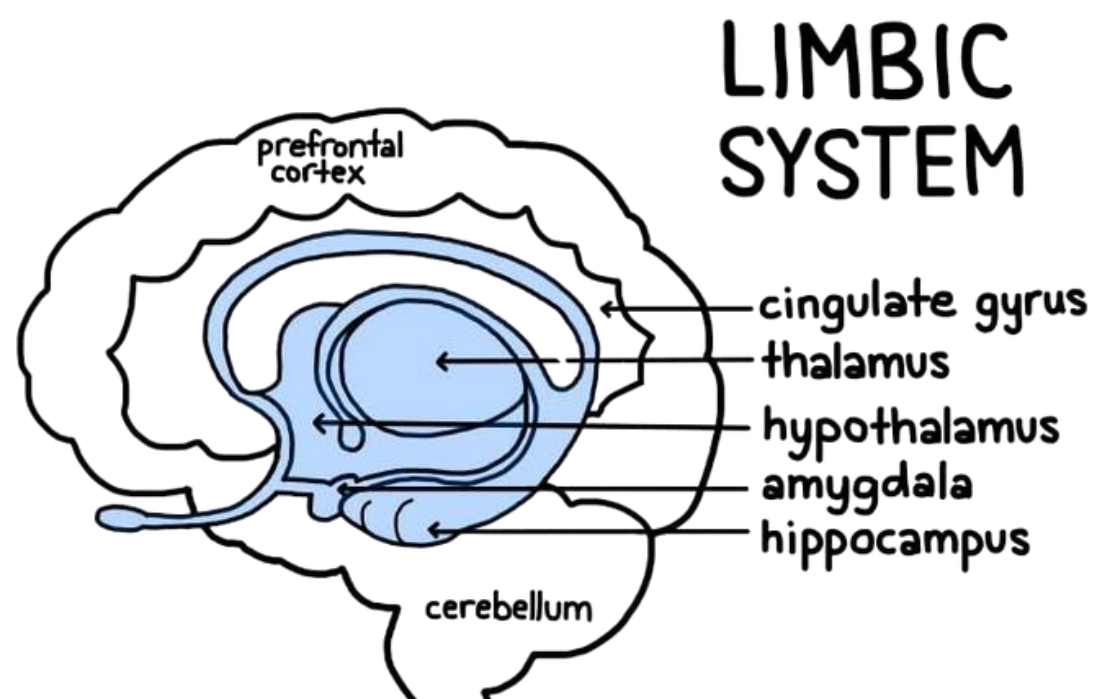
**A TRUSTWORTHY BRAND DOESN'T JUST LOOK COMPETENT.
IT FEELS SAFE, CONSISTENT, AND ALIGNED.**

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How the brain forms trust, and how to earn it.

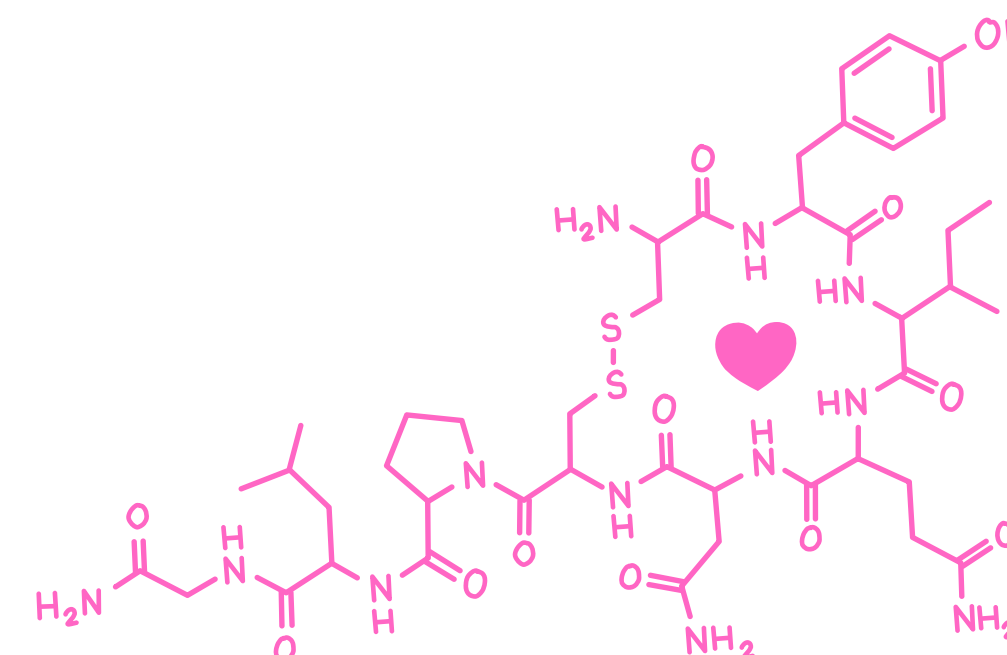
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Trust and the Brain & Oxytocin



BRAND IMPLICATIONS

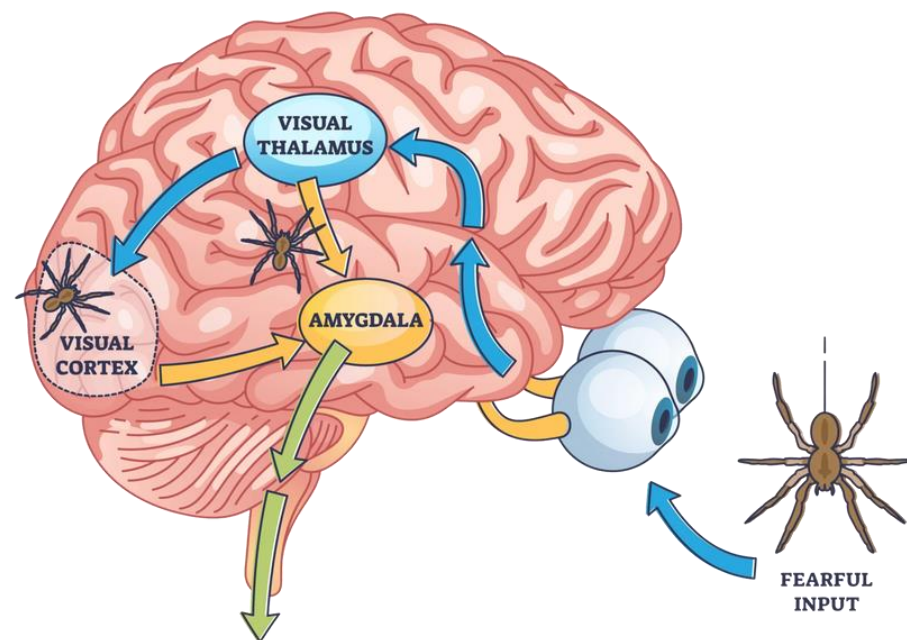
Your brand must speak to the emotional brain first. This includes tone, imagery, warmth, and authenticity, before you make the logical case for your services.



BRAND IMPLICATIONS

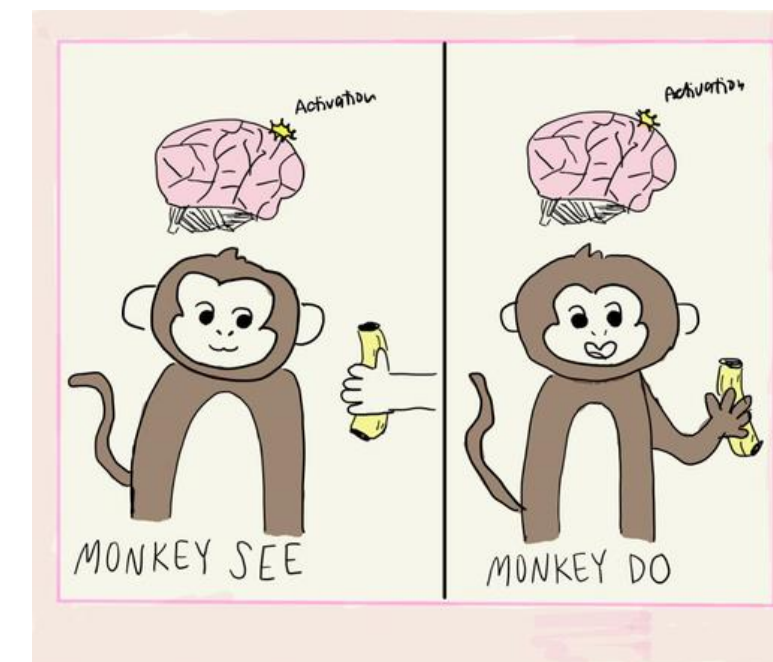
Human stories and kind language trigger oxytocin, storytelling, video, and real testimonials strengthen that connection.

Amygdala & Mirror Neurons



BRAND IMPLICATIONS

Your brand is scanned for danger cues: vague promises or inconsistencies across platforms can trigger the amygdala's threat response.



BRAND IMPLICATIONS

Brands that model transformation or vulnerability create a mirror-like effect in the viewer, **enhancing empathy and increasing trust.**

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The Power of First Impression

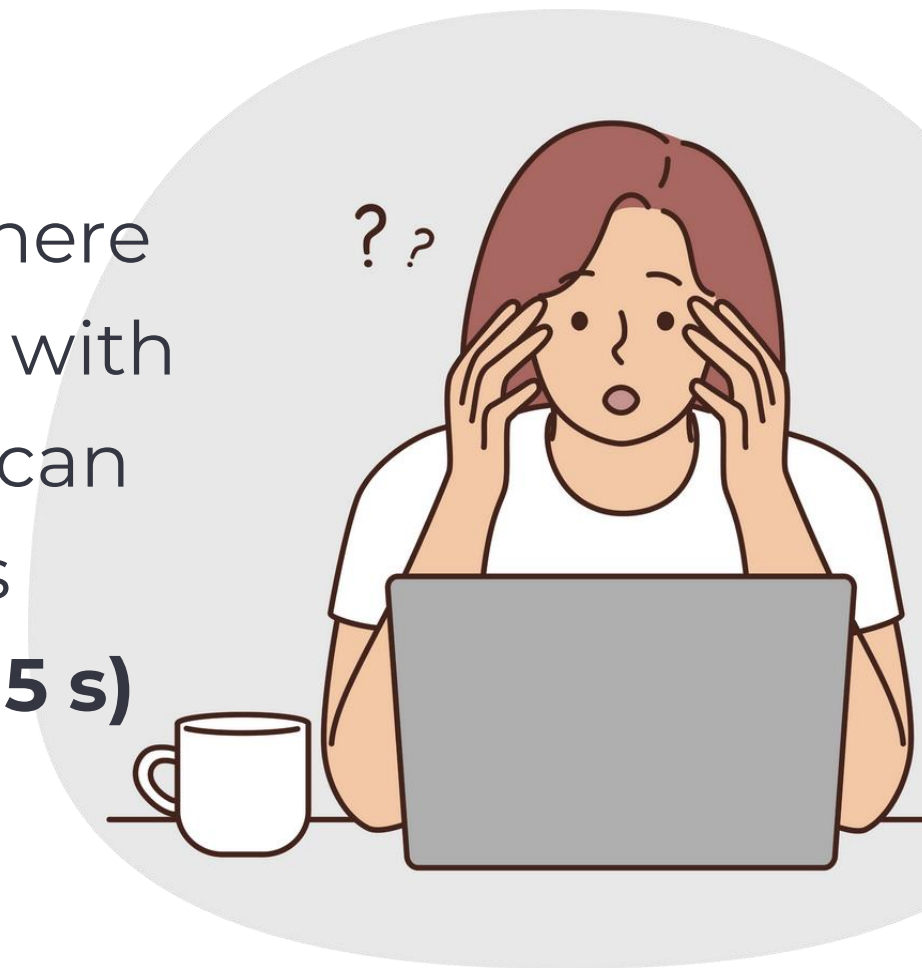
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Beyond the 7 Seconds Rule



Behavioral studies have consistently supported the notion that people form first impressions in **under 7 seconds**

In online contexts, where users are bombarded with stimuli, impressions can form in as little as **50 milliseconds (0.05 s)**



**IN BRANDING, FIRST IMPRESSIONS ARE NOT JUST VISUAL
—THEY ARE NEUROBIOLOGICAL EVENTS.**

Coaches seeking to build trust must ensure that their brand aligns with the subconscious expectations of their ideal client.

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Consistency in Branding

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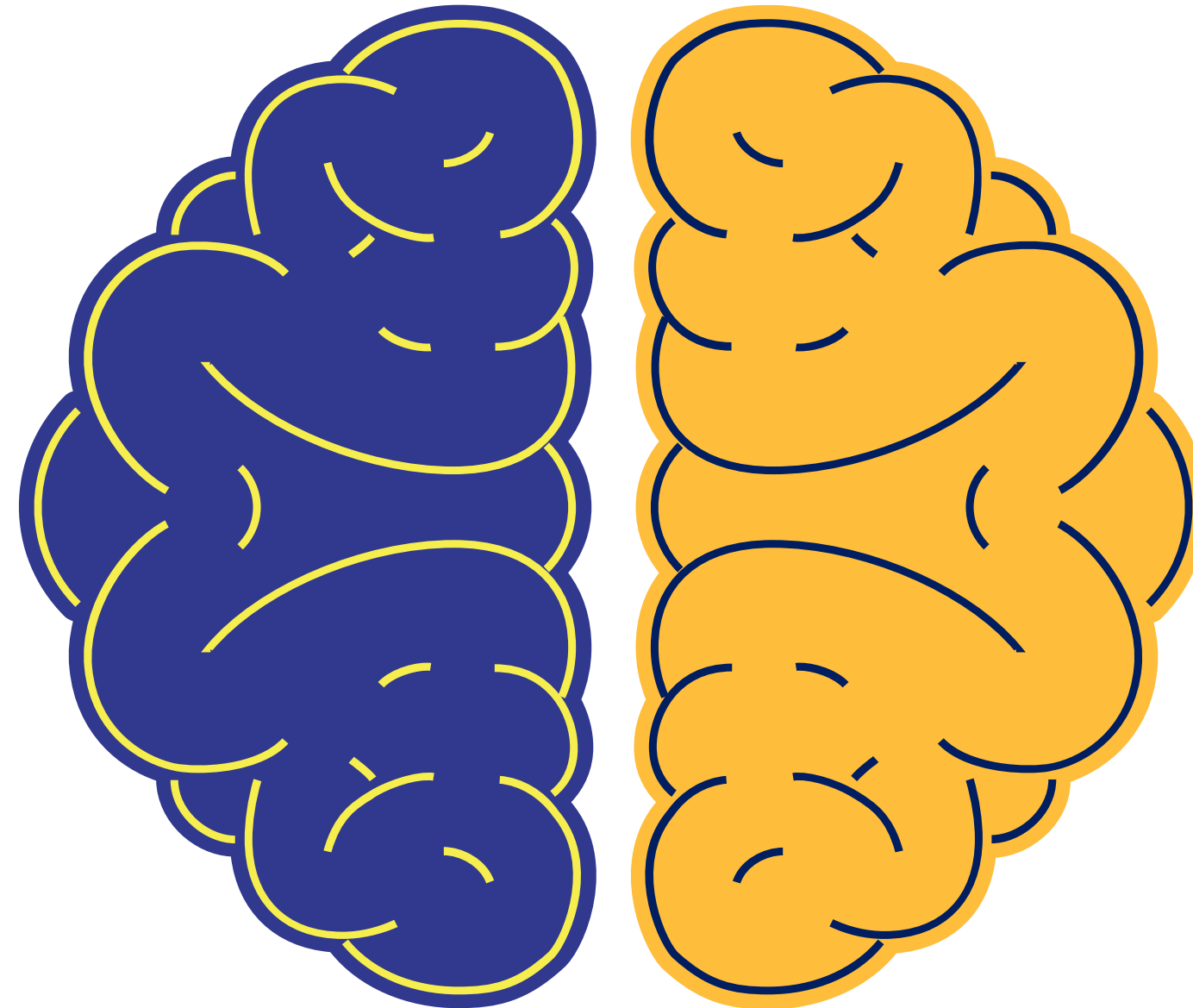
(Credibility + Empathy + Reliability)

Perceived Risk

LEFT ⚠️

Fragmented brand
(different fonts/colors,
mixed messages)

= Risk



Right: ✅

Consistent brand
(aligned visuals/tone)

= Trust

CONSISTENCY TURNS RECOGNITION INTO TRUST.

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Cognitive Biases That Impact Trust

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THE HALO EFFECT



“Nice design = must be a great coach”

The halo effect refers to the tendency **to allow one specific trait or our overall impression** of a person, company or product **to positively influence our judgment of their other related traits.**

FAMILIARITY BIAS

What it Means	Brand Example
We like what we've seen before	Consistent colors, tagline, presence



The familiarity bias refers to the tendency **to develop a preference or positive feeling** toward people, companies, or products simply **because we are repeatedly exposed to them.**

AUTHORITY



Authority bias is the tendency to **give more weight and credibility to the opinions and judgments of perceived authority figures**, regardless of the actual content of their message.

CONFIRMATION BIAS



Confirmation bias is the **tendency to seek out and prefer information that supports our preexisting beliefs**. As a result, we tend to ignore any information that contradicts those beliefs.

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Storytelling for Brand Trust

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$$\frac{(\text{Credibility} + \text{Empathy} + \text{Reliability})}{\text{Perceived Risk}}$$

Why Stories Stick

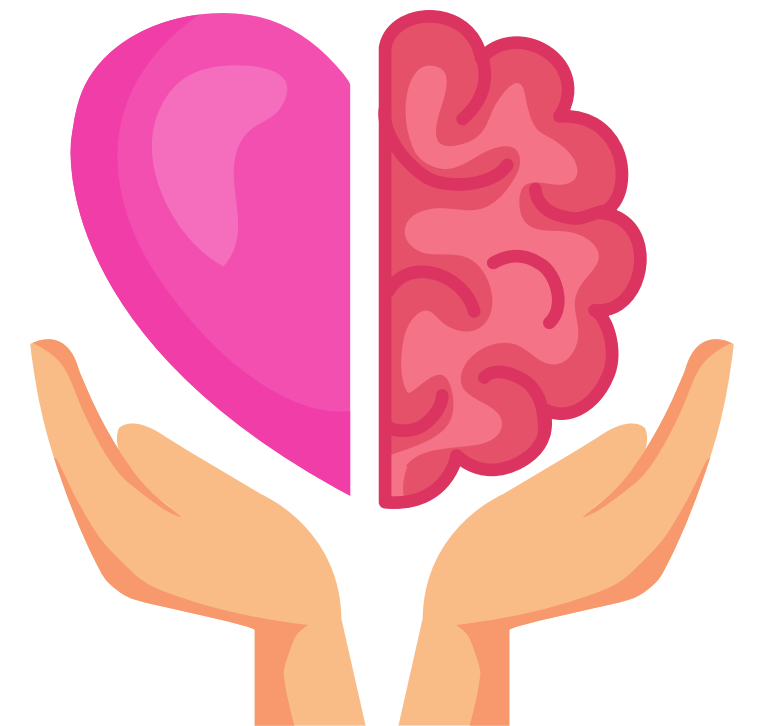
Stories activate neural coupling and oxytocin release



The brain experiences stories as if they were real



Stories build empathy and emotional memory



STORIES ARE REMEMBERED UP TO 22X MORE THAN FACTS

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The Hero Story

(Credibility + Empathy + Reliability)

Perceived Risk



The hero (our client)...



...meets a guide (you)...



...You co-create a plan...



The Hero commits to action



The Hero avoids burnout and succeeds

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From Insight to Action

Is Your Brand Trust-Ready?

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Take the science and apply it:

-  **Credibility** → Do my visuals, tone, and presence signal competence and professionalism?
-  **Empathy** → Does my brand story show that I understand and care about my clients' world?
-  **Reliability** → Am I showing up consistently across platforms and interactions?
-  **Perceived Risk** → Does the client journey feel safe, clear, and free of friction or uncertainty?

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**A trusted brand isn't just
seen, it's *felt*.
And people remember how
you made them feel.**

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**THANK
YOU!**



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