

# Unfinished business drives us crazy

Aki Kalliatakis

aki@leadershiplaunchpad.co.za

It's a familiar feeling. You're watching a movie or a series on TV. You are tired and way past bedtime, but ... you just can't seem to quit.

The talented writer creates a series of awe-inspiring cliff hangers that keep you hooked in, and then you simply have to watch some more.

Here's another example: What happens when you are driving down the road and you see some traffic lights in the distance? If you are like most of us – particularly if you are a man – you probably accelerate to make sure that you make it before it goes red. Is it the cleverest thing to do? Of course not in fact it is really very risky behaviour.



Zhenya Bluma  
Zeigarnik

Why do we do this? It's called the Zeigarnik Effect and goes something like this ...

“ People don't like the tension created by incomplete tasks. That's why we remember them better or take action to complete them. ”



Image courtesy of Gucci

By a pure stroke of luck, I happened to pop into a large hyper store of a grocery chain that sells, not only groceries, but also many other products like lawnmowers, electronics and apparel.

I saw a really cheap version of the shoes I was looking for, but made in South Africa – an added bonus. They were literally 15% of the price

of the branded shoes,

so I bought two pairs!

If I come into your store with a list, and I don't get everything on my list (inevitably), it leaves me with a feeling of dissatisfaction). Of course, rationally, logically, I know it's impossible to have everything in stock but, you see, I'm neither rational nor logical.

Here's a recent example: As I get older, comfortable (boring) shoes are far more important than a fashion statement, so I went to buy a famous brand of expensive soft shoes at the branded store. They didn't have what I was looking for, but the staff response was at best, indifferent. Slightly irritated, I asked if they could look on the computer, and it was as if I'd suggested they plan an expedition to climb Kilimanjaro. The final answer? No, we can't help.

On the other hand, what if you make it easy for me to discuss my dilemma of the missing items with you, and then have a system to respond to that through delivery to my home or office, or a simple phone call or text message to let me know when it's available. I can tell you without any hesitation that the businesses that do this have my greatest support. My pharmacist who runs out of my medicine gets delivery from the supplier the same day, and then by 17h00 the motorbike rider delivers.

The place where I occasionally buy clothes and apparel sometimes doesn't have my size, but they phone around to the other branches, see who has it in stock, and then get my details to deliver it to me.



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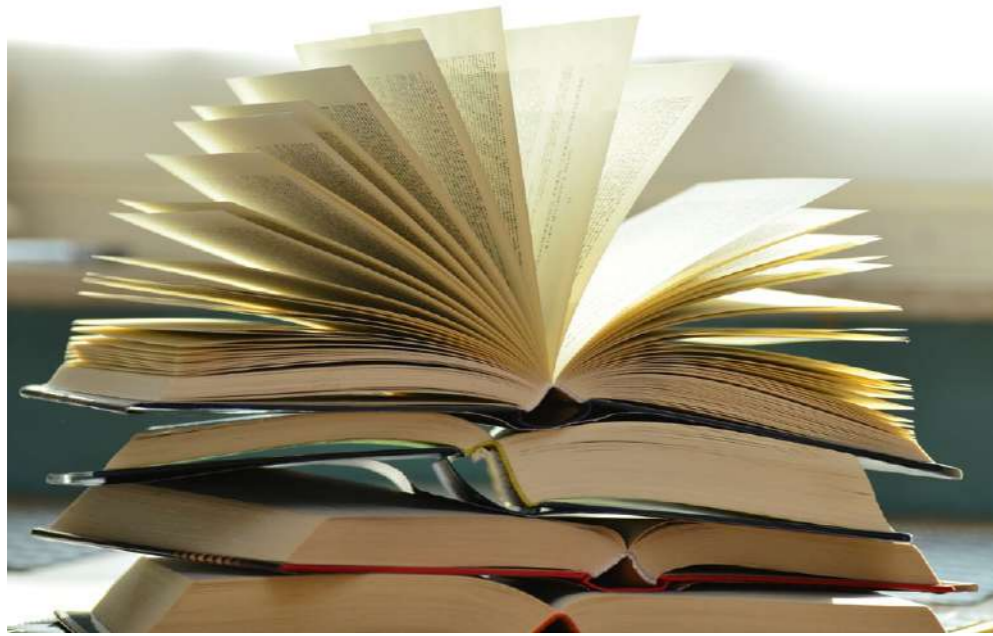


Image courtesy of Pixabay, Pexels

A final example: I love books, and the feel and smell of books. Although my Kindle and Amazon are usually my go-to for buying business books, fiction simply has to be on paper to be enjoyed, so I popped into my favourite bookseller, but they didn't have what I was looking for. Without prompting, the sales person went onto the computer, told me there were a few copies at other branches, but then offered me something I've never experienced before.

"Where do you live and work?" she asked. I told her, and she said, "Well, your home is near where I live. Would you like me to bring it to you on my way home tomorrow?" I got such a surprise I nearly had a heart attack. There and then I vowed to write the head office a letter – which they loved because more often than not they get complaints – and I promised myself I would support them forever.

But here is where it gets better for you. All the previous examples I mentioned were in response to

your customers' needs, but the Zeigarnik Effect is a principle that can be applied to any product or service that wants to help people complete harder tasks. It's used by social media, for example, when your profile is incomplete. The algorithm tells you that there are some gaps or empty spaces, and you need little encouragement to complete your professional profile. On LinkedIn, you are even ranked by your completeness with the lowest rank being 'Beginner', and then you move to 'Intermediate'

by completing two simple steps. You know exactly what you need to do next to reach completion.

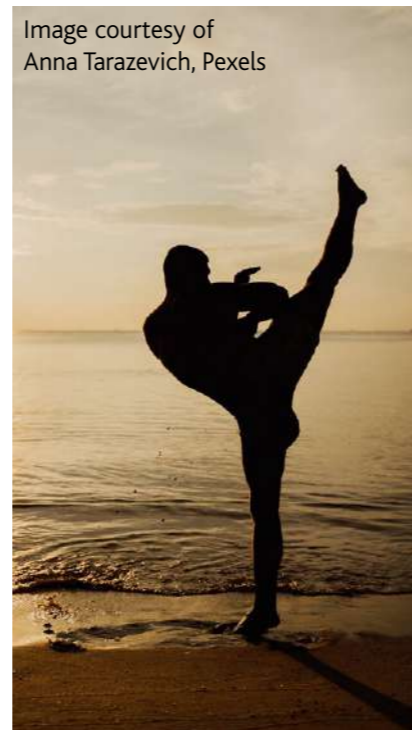


Image courtesy of Anna Tarazevich, Pexels

We see it in the martial arts too: you begin as a white belt and then progress every three months or so to the next level until eventually you become a black belt. Even then it doesn't end, because the first level black belt, or 'Sho-Dan', is followed by 'Ni-Dan' (2nd level), then 'San-Dan' and so on.

I've also noticed that this technique is very successfully used by some online retailers like Amazon, for example, at the checkout point.

Many don't use this technique, and the cart abandonment rates are generally much higher than their rivals. (As a minor negative, you probably find that you get caught up going down multiple rabbit holes in your research to find the perfect product for you, and hours later you may finally complete your transaction!)

But with a few isolated exceptions, bricks-and-mortar retailers have not been very successful at using this effect. While the 'cart abandonment' rates in your store are probably not nearly as high as those online, that is probably not because your customers want completion, but more because of their sunk costs. They are time hostages, and to abandon their transaction right now means they have wasted a whole lot of their time and energy – and you can be sure that they leave your business resentful about that.

The biggest weakness? I would suggest that it is because the final step, the long and complicated checkout process, is the area where most improvement can occur. Where is the finish line in the store? How many steps to complete the transaction? How long will it take? Sure, they can watch and maybe even time the queue's progress, but there is never real certainty or guarantee, is there?

And therein lies your opportunity. **SR**



Aki Kalliatakis is the managing partner of The Leadership LaunchPad, a company dedicated to helping clients become more customer driven. He can be contacted at +27 (0) 83 379 3466, or via the website at [www.leadershiplaunchpad.co.za](http://www.leadershiplaunchpad.co.za)

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# Why is nutritional analysis in food important for businesses?

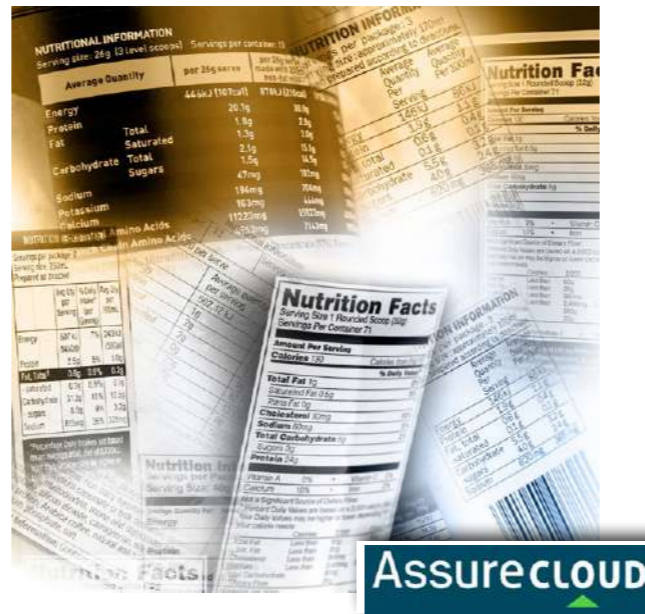
**F**ood labels and comprehensive information about what each product contains has gained importance in recent years, as consumers have begun looking for more information about their food.

Through nutritional analysis, brands are able to give consumers detailed information – and, by having clear and comprehensive food label content on food, brands are able to build consumer trust and a positive brand reputation for transparency.

## What is nutritional analysis in food, and what elements are measured?

Nutritional analysis in food is the process of assessing the nutritional content of food. As a vital part of analytical chemistry, it provides a range of information that is used by the business to inform consumers about the composition of the food.

This information includes the nutrients that are commonly used for food labelling purposes – such as energy, protein, carbohydrate and total fat; as well as other micronutrients such as salt and sugar. Nutritional analysis of food is a complex matrix that involves several techniques used to perform nutritional analysis in food, including laboratory analysis, mass spectrometry, and nutrient analysis instrumentation, among others. The overall analysis also tests for contamination of the food, and identifies allergens.



## What foods are analysed, and why is nutritional analysis in food important?

Any food product that will be used for consumption – including beverages, meat, sauces, dairy, fruits, and infant food – needs to undergo nutritional analysis. It is important for several reasons, including ...

- Product consistency across geographies and batches
- Better quality assurance of the product
- Identifying contamination and allergens
- Assisting consumers in making product choices based on the nutritional analysis and composition
- Adhering to the laws related to food composition

## Nutritional analysis in food: increasingly important for businesses

In order to adhere to the laws that govern food safety, businesses are increasingly required to test foods extensively. Partnering with an expert with state-of-the-art chemical laboratories – such as Assurecloud – will ensure that your testing is done efficiently and effectively ensuring that the information shared with consumers is accurate. **SR**



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