

Brand Archetypes 101

# HOW TO BRING **YOUR BRAND** TO LIFE WITH **PERSONALITY**

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# Brand Archetypes 101: How To Bring Your Brand to Life With Personality

The way a customer views your brand holds a lot of power.

When they see you as someone who can help them live a better life and become a better version of themselves, they're much more likely to become a long-term, loyal consumer of your products or services.

In order to connect with your customers like this, you need an overarching brand personality that deeply resonates and makes you more memorable to your target audience.

## **Enter: Brand Archetypes.**

Rooted in personality psychology and derived from the work of Carl Jung, brand archetypes are based on human core desires, motivations, and emotions.

They're essentially a personality profile for your brand, offering a snapshot of typical human motives and behavior. As such, archetypes provide a framework to connect your brand with your ideal audience in more meaningful ways.

Tapping into a customer's deeply-held ideals and aspirations serves to humanize your brand and make it more important in your customer's eyes. The goal of archetypes is an emotional connection; that the customer would see your brand as an extension of themselves and relate to it like they would another person.

Here's an overview of the 12 core brand archetypes, plus how to determine your brand's archetype and how to apply it to your marketing to effectively engage your audience.

# The Brand Archetype Wheel

derived from the work of Carl Jung\*



# The 12 Core Brand Archetypes

Each of the 12 brand archetypes has its own unique motivations, desires, fears, and characteristics.

## 1. Caregiver

 **Motivation:** Provide structure

 **Core desire:** Service

 **Fears:** Selfishness, ingratitude, anguish, helplessness, instability

 **Strategy:** Put others before self; sacrifice for the greater good

 **Called to action:** When someone is in need

 **Tone of voice:** Caring, warm, reassuring, conveying inner strength

Caregivers are nurturers, altruists, and supporters. They are parent-like, strong, and reliable. They naturally care for themselves and their loved ones, as well as the wider world around them. The caregiver's basic desire is to serve people and protect them from harm.

Caregiver brands tend to be nonprofits in fields like healthcare or education, but can also encompass products that are nurturing.

**BRAND EXAMPLES: ST. JUDE, CAMPBELL'S SOUP, SALVATION ARMY, UNICEF, JOHNSON & JOHNSON, PAMPERS**

This archetype connects to a customer's need for compassion, care, generosity, and safety. In marketing, it looks like:

- Highlighting guidance and assistance in service packages
- Moderately-priced products and services
- BOGO opportunities
- Customer service as a competitive advantage
- Community give-back programs or incentives to donate
- Value propositions of care, health, and education



## 2. Creator

- 🧠 **Motivation:** Provide structure
- 🌀 **Core desire:** Innovation
- 🐜 **Fears:** Mediocrity, stagnation, dullness, duplication, being ordinary
- 🎯 **Strategy:** Unlock imagination and pursue originality
- 📣 **Called to action by:** Inspiration and vision
- 🗣️ **Tone of voice:** Aspirational, posing different perspectives, connecting concepts to encourage new thought and execution

The Creator archetype is entrepreneurial, artistic, and innovative. They are inspired storytellers, imaginative visionaries, and daydreamers. Naturally creative, they seek to bring their vision to life and to create the structures that shape society. Their most basic desire is to create something valuable and enduring.

Creator brands are generally in creative fields like arts, marketing, design-focused technology, or toys. This archetype is ideal for products that encourage self-expression and innovation.

**BRAND EXAMPLES: APPLE, ETSY, LEGO, SQUARESPACE, ADOBE, GOPRO, CRAYOLA**

This archetype seeks to spark inspiration and instigate feelings of creativity, critical thinking, and a longing for answers in the customer. In marketing, this can look like:

- Clean lines and negative space in marketing collateral
- Prices ranging from low end (attracting DIY creators) to high end (emphasizing the value of quality design)
- A focus on originality, highlighting their differentiation factor
- Geared toward a buyer who has discretionary time and funds to help their creativity flourish



### 3. Ruler



**Motivations:** Provide structure



**Core desire:** Control



**Fears:** Chaos, being overthrown, insignificance, weakness, failure, poverty



**Strategy:** Exercise leadership and show superiority



**Called to action:** When there is a lack of resources, order, or harmony



**Tone of voice:** Invitational, exclusive, superior, authoritative

The Ruler is a leader, boss, judge, and diplomat. This archetype is naturally responsible and believes they're masters of their own destiny. They are Type A, achievement-oriented, elite executives. Their basic desire is to gain control and to create prosperity for themselves, their family, their company, or their wider community.

Ruler brands are often high-priced luxury brands who are leaders in their fields, with high-status products that enhance power and prestige. This archetype can also encompass classic products that promise predictability or stability.

**BRAND EXAMPLES: LOUIS VUITTON, AMERICAN EXPRESS, MERCEDES-BENZ, ROLLS ROYCE, HUGO BOSS, ROLEX**

This archetype seeks to draw out feelings of pride, confidence, responsibility, and drivenness in customers. It connects to customers who want to be perceived as special or elite. In marketing, this can look like:

- High-end pricing
- Lifetime guarantees
- Differentiation from popular brands; positioned as the clear leader
- Invitations to elite memberships, clubs, and perks



## 4. Explorer

- 🗺️ **Motivation:** To explore life's journey
- 🌀 **Core desire:** Freedom
- 🧠 **Fears:** Conformity, being boxed in, feeling empty or stuck
- 🎯 **Strategy:** Break new ground in search of liberation and self-discovery
- 👉 **Called to action by:** Restlessness and yearning
- 🗣️ **Tone of voice:** Exciting, daring, aspirational

The Explorer archetype is an adventurer, pioneer, seeker, and wanderer. They are individualists—pilgrims on a quest. Natural explorers who love the open road, waters, and skies, they seek out challenges with the inner resolve and personal confidence to confront those challenges.

This archetype lives outside the comfort zone, and can be described as a rugged, brave weekend warrior. At their core, the Explorer desires the freedom to explore the world and figure out who they are. They are driven by fulfillment.

Explorer brands tend to be related to the outdoors or to seeking out adventure.

### **BRAND EXAMPLES: JEEP, GOPRO, REI, NASA, SUBARU, NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC, THE NORTH FACE**

This archetype seeks to inspire feelings of empowerment, ambition, and an urge to break free from constraints. In marketing, this can look like:

- Copy and graphics that lean into individuality and personal freedom
- Challenges and contests
- Moderately-priced products
- Ability to buy and use products anywhere
- Video testimonials of customers using products to fuel their exploration



## 5. Innocent

- 🧠 **Motivation:** To explore life's journey
- 🌀 **Core desire:** Purity
- 👹 **Fears:** Failure, punishment, depravity, complexity, lies and deceit, negativity
- 👁️ **Strategy:** To see the beauty in everyone and everything, and to display a wholesome, virtuous life
- 👉 **Called to action by:** A seen or felt need for simplicity or goodness
- 🗣️ **Tone of voice:** Cheerful, optimistic, clear, and to the point. Never guilt-inducing.

The Innocent archetype is often described as Pollyanna-ish: an idealistic dreamer, a naive traditionalist. Ever the utopian, this archetype tends to be idyllic in their desire and expectation for clear, simple paths. They put a lot of faith in people and important issues. They are honest, simple, natural, and trustworthy, and always see the sunny side of things. At their core, they desire purity: to be good, enjoy simplicity, and feel positive.

Innocent brands tend to be nature-oriented, like organic foods and skincare. But this archetype can also encompass products that accentuate simplicity.

**BRAND EXAMPLES: DOVE, AVEENO, HASBRO, COCA-COLA, VOLKSWAGEN, CHOBANI, MCDONALD'S, DISNEY**

This archetype relates well to customers who see themselves as virtuous, positive, and happy. In marketing, this can look like:

- Simple solutions to clear-cut problems
- Highlighting safety and simplicity
- Low-to-moderate pricing
- Brand promise with a lifetime guarantee
- A customer experience that exudes this persona
- Prominently featured company core values



## 6. Sage

- 🧠 **Motivation:** To explore life's journey
- 🧠 **Core desire:** Understanding
- 🧠 **Fear:** Being duped or misled, inaccuracy, misinformation, powerlessness, ignorance
- 🧠 **Strategy:** To engage in lifelong learning and show the path of wisdom to others
- 👉 **Called to action by:** Confusion and doubt
- 🗣️ **Tone of voice:** Articulate, explanatory, philosophical, academic, use of symbolism, trusts audience to grasp concepts

The Sage archetype is contemplative, scholarly, philosophic, and evaluative. They are researchers, teachers, planners, detectives, experts, and translators. Naturally self-reflective, they utilize critical thinking and are committed to lifelong learning. They pursue personal growth, mastery and influence. Their deepest desire is to discover the truth in order to better understand the world. They are driven by the quest to learn.

Sage brands tend to be teachers, mentors, and guides who pass on information and education. They are not just experts, but also thinkers.

**BRAND EXAMPLES: PBS, MORGAN STANLEY, ROSETTA STONE, TED, DISCOVERY CHANNEL, MAYO CLINIC, HARVARD, NEW YORK TIMES**

This archetype seeks to initiate curiosity and reflection in its customers. It relates to consumers who desire objectivity, who seek truth and clarity. In marketing, this can look like:

- Content that deep-dives into a subject
- Citing references, attributing others, and posing different perspectives
- Asking rhetorical questions
- Using supported data to building the quality of the brand
- Highlighting new breakthroughs in science and research
- E-learning and group learning opportunities



## 7. Hero

-  **Motivation:** To leave a legacy
-  **Core desire:** Mastery
-  **Fears:** Weakness, vulnerability, incompetence, inferiority, cowardice
-  **Strategy:** Become stronger and more powerful, prove others wrong
-  **Called to action by:** A challenge, such as someone who needs their defense
-  **Tone of voice:** Challenging, empowering, bold, aspirational, unafraid

The Hero archetype is a rescuer, warrior, competitor, team player, and superhero. They are wired toward mental and physical fitness to become as strong, competent, and powerful as possible. They tend to be idealistic and strong-willed.

Courageous and determined to achieve, this archetype rises to the occasion. Their core desire is mastery and courage: They want to prove their worth through courageous action. The Hero is driven to improve the world with their strength and competence.

Hero brands are often athletic brands who help people achieve peak performance. This archetype can also encompass products that have a big impact on the world.

### **BRAND EXAMPLES: NIKE, OLYMPICS, FEDEX, ADIDAS, BMW, GATORADE, DURACELL, MARVEL**

This archetype seeks to give customers feelings of empowerment, strength, readiness, and accomplishment. In marketing, this can look like:

- Highlighting customer aspirational identity
- Value propositions of improving the world, making an impact
- Messaging around being the underdog, rivaling the competition
- Building community around serving the local neighborhood and the world
- Short-term, challenge-themed opt-ins
- Customer stories of courage, determination, and achievement



## 8. Magician

- 🔮 **Motivation:** To leave a legacy
- 🌀 **Core desire:** Power
- 👁️ **Fear:** Unanticipated negative consequences, doubt, uncertainty
- 🎯 **Strategy:** Create and live by vision and transformation
- 👉 **Called to action by:** Their “sixth sense”
- 🗣️ **Tone of voice:** Mystical, fantastical, imaginative, informed, believable

The Magician is a charismatic visionary, an innovative catalyst, an engineer, alchemist, scientist, or healer. They are eager to recognize serendipity and magical moments.

Influential trend-spotters, they strive for win-win outcomes and inspire people to dream bigger and to defy common beliefs and natural laws. Their core desire is for power and knowledge of the elemental laws of the universe. They are driven to make dreams come true.

Magician brands offer a transformation of some kind. They tend to offer products and services that expand consciousness or have a spiritual element.

### **BRAND EXAMPLES: MAKE-A-WISH, DISNEY, XBOX, POLAROID, DYSON, MAC COSMETICS**

Magician brands seek to inspire feelings of hope, excitement, intrigue, and willingness in their customers. In marketing, this can look like:

- Brand messaging that emphasizes customer transformation
- A focus on the customer journey and experience
- Medium- to high-end product pricing
- User-friendly digital touchpoints
- Logo animation and audio that adds to the brand's mystique



## 9. Outlaw

- 💡 **Motivation:** To leave a legacy
- 🌀 **Core desire:** Revolution
- 👤 **Fear:** Feeling trivialized or inconsequential, powerlessness, servitude
- 🎯 **Strategy:** Disrupt, shock, or destroy what isn't working for themselves or for society
- 👉 **Called to action by:** Powerlessness
- 🗣️ **Tone of voice:** Passionate, rebellious, bold, disruptive

The Outlaw archetype is a rebel, reformer, activist, gambler, revolutionary, misfit, and risk-taker. They are often nonconforming, fearless, and shocking. This archetype disdains rules, is anti-status quo, has righteous anger, and takes control, yet is confident and good at heart. They desire revolution that liberates themselves and others or abolishes what isn't working.

Outlaw brands leverage rebellious, revolutionary anger to right the wrongs of the world. This archetype also often includes products that are perceived as being not in the customer's best interests.

### **BRAND EXAMPLES: HARLEY-DAVIDSON, VIRGIN RECORDS, JACK DANIEL'S, UBER, GREENPEACE, RED BULL**

The Outlaw archetype seeks to spark feelings of restlessness, empowerment, freedom, and confidence in their customers, inspiring them to embrace change. In marketing, this can look like:

- Low- to moderately-priced products
- Groups and communities that embrace the identity of being a misfit
- Bold color, fonts, and a disruptive tone
- Challenging the status quo



## 10. Every Guy/Gal

-  **Motivation:** To pursue connection
-  **Core desire:** Belonging
-  **Fears:** Being rejected, standing out, disassociation, hostility
-  **Strategy:** To line up with basic values and be a part of a welcoming space
-  **Called to action by:** Feelings of loneliness or alienation
-  **Tone of voice:** Friendly, approachable, practical, humble, authentic

The Every Guy/Gal archetype reflects the neighborly citizen, the common man or woman, the girl or guy next door. This archetype is naturally amiable, realistic, resourceful, down-to-earth, stable, and moral. They are faithful friends who desire to belong, who are driven to connect with others and fit into the group.

Every Guy/Gal brands tend to encompass functional, commonly used, moderately-priced products.

**BRAND EXAMPLES: CHEVROLET, HOME DEPOT, OLD NAVY, FORD, LEVI'S, IKEA**

This archetype seeks to inspire feelings of acceptance, understanding, trust, and willingness in customers. In marketing, this can look like:

- Highlighting the uses and practical applications of products
- Using the Goldilocks principle with 3 product or package options (good, better, best)
- How-to videos, step-by-step instructions, DIY projects
- Appealing to down-home practical values



## 11. Jester



**Motivation:** To pursue connection



**Core desire:** Laughter



**Fears:** Boredom, apathy, sadness, negativity, loneliness



**Strategy:** Joke, play, be funny, and lighten up the world



**Called to action:** When they are bored

**Tone of voice:** Fun, irrelevant, light-hearted; emphasizes belonging

The Jester archetype is, as its name suggests, the entertainer, clown, prankster, and comedian. They are naturally clever, socially intelligent, and great conversationalists. They live in the moment. The Jester is the life of the party: a sociable, optimistic, jokester who doesn't take themselves too seriously. Their core desire is to laugh and to make others laugh. They are driven to lighten things up and have a good time.

Jester brands encompass fun-loving products that help people have a good time or products that have a community aspect.

**BRAND EXAMPLES: DORITOS, DOLLAR SHAVE CLUB, M&M'S, BUDWEISER, SKITTLES, OLD SPICE**

The Jokester inspires feelings of joy, silliness, positivity, and happiness. In marketing, this can look like:

- Group experiences and social platforms that create a sense of belonging
- A mascot that further associates the brand with fun
- Low-to-moderately priced products
- Poking fun at the obvious problem the brand or product solves



## 12. Lover



**Motivation:** To pursue connection



**Core desire:** Intimacy



**Fear:** Being alone, unloved, unwanted, invisible



**Strategy:** Affirm love and beauty in relationships, work, experiences, and surroundings



**Called to action by:** Infatuation or seduction



**Tone of voice:** Enticing, irresistible, indulgent, descriptive, sensory

The Lover archetype is a companion, friend, and partner. They are harmonizers, matchmakers, romantics, and hedonists. They seek relationship and fall in love easily. They are driven to become more attractive and indulge in luxury, pleasure, special treatment, sensuality, and passion. Their core desire is intimacy, and they are driven toward sensual pleasure.

Lover brands often encompass products that accentuate beauty and celebrate love, such as perfume, cosmetics, or jewelry.

**BRAND EXAMPLES: HALLMARK, TIFFANY & CO, LANCÔME, GODIVA, CHANEL, VICTORIA'S SECRET**

This archetype inspires customers to feel passionate, beautiful, connected, appreciated, and indulgent. In marketing, this can look like:

- Numerous meaningful customer touchpoints
- Beautiful imagery and sensory descriptions
- Personal shoppers, attendants, or guides
- Elegance and high-end pricing
- Perks and gifts to make customers feel special and appreciated



## How To Determine Your Brand Archetype

A brand archetype is not the same as a buyer persona. Yes, it's a reflection of your customers' desires, but it also reflects your desires as a brand and what role you want to play in the customer's life. All of these factors need to be considered when determining your brand archetype:

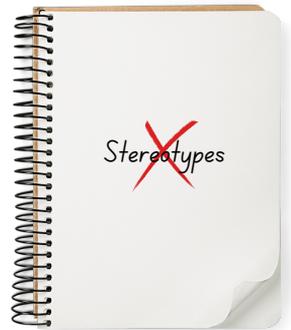
- 1. Keep the customer at the center of your process.** Think about customer demographics, attitudes, aspirations, and personality.
- 2. Consider the desires your customer wants to be fulfilled by your brand.** Ask yourself:
  - o How will your brand be used in the customer's life?
  - o What are your target audience's expectations?
  - o How will you interact with consumers? Loyalty programs? Events? Social platforms?
- 3. Think about the role you want your brand to play in your customers' lives** (expert, friend, rescuer, etc.). What desires do you want to evoke? What do you want your brand to mean to your customer?

These three factors are key to determining your archetype, especially #3. Determining your brand archetype isn't like taking a Cosmo quiz, where you answer a few questions then score yourself to find your type. There's an art to it, and it depends a lot on your perspective. Thinking about how you want to show up in your customers' lives is central to this.

Also, archetypes are different from stereotypes. Stereotypes look at characteristics, but they're oversimplified and based on preconceptions. As such, they can be dehumanizing. Stereotypes create ordinary, bland, even phony brands.

In contrast, archetypes show a spectrum of human characteristics—positive and negative patterns of behavior and motivation that are recognizable and widely understood.

Archetypes result in a believable personality and help forge an emotional connection with your audience.



**Here's an example to show you the difference:**

Consider [JUST Egg](#). A stereotypical choice for their brand archetype would have been the Innocent archetype—pure, wholesome, and simple. But they went with more of an Outlaw or Jester type instead, with a snarky tone and a concept focused around creating a more just food system.

**See the difference?**

One last element to consider in determining your brand archetype is that most brands have two archetypes: a primary archetype, and a secondary archetype. For example: Home Depot's dominant archetype is the Everyman (appealing to the average Joe customer), and their influencer archetype is the Hero (tapping into their customers' desire to be masterful and rescue their home from being ordinary).



Your brand's unique archetype blend will help you determine the voice and tone you use to communicate who you are as a brand.

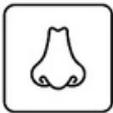
## How To Apply Brand Archetypes to Your Marketing

Once you've figured out your brand archetype blend, it's time to apply it.

First, list the characteristics of each archetype (primary and secondary), then consider your brand's attitudes, opinions, language, tone, and outlook. Think about how your brand would look and act if they were a person (age, size, demeanor, dress, speech, etc).

Keep all five senses in mind, even if your brand doesn't have a brick-and-mortar:

- **Touch.** What fabrics and textures would the persona wear or enjoy?
- **Hearing.** What music would the brand persona want to hear playing in the background?
- **Sight.** What kind of aesthetics would the persona prefer? Think about color, lines, minimalist vs maximalist, etc.
- **Smell.** What scents would the persona prefer? Musky, floral, fruity, fresh?
- **Taste.** What would your brand persona eat? Sweet or salty? Fancy or simple? Healthy or indulgent?



Use this information to create your brand persona(s), then consult your persona whenever you're creating content for your brand. When writing copy, ask:

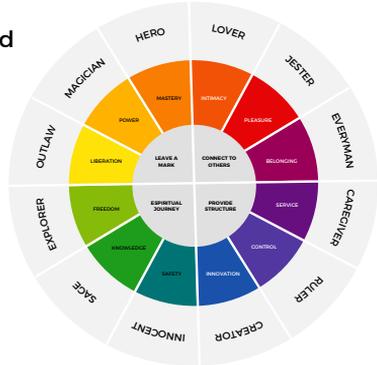
- How does the persona speak? What words, phrases, or dialects would they use?
- Does the brand persona initiate conversations or simply respond?
- Is the brand persona aggressive, passive, direct, indirect, measured, assertive, etc?



**PRO TIP: WRITE YOUR COPY, THEN GO BACK THROUGH AND EDIT DESCRIPTIVE WORDS AND PHRASES TO BETTER REFLECT YOUR BRAND PERSONA'S VOICE.**

And there you have it: personality-fueled marketing that connects emotionally and builds long-term bonds with your audience.

**Ready to get started with brand archetypes, but feeling overwhelmed?**



We get it, it's a lot to take in! Luckily, Wild Fig is here to help you figure it all out. Plus, once we've determined your brand archetype and built your brand personas, we can help create your marketing content! We're basically a one-stop-shop for your marketing needs.

**Schedule your FREE exploratory call today to chat about your needs and learn how Wild Fig can help!**

SCHEDULE A QUICK 15-MINUTE

**EXPLORATORY CALL** *with Jen*

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