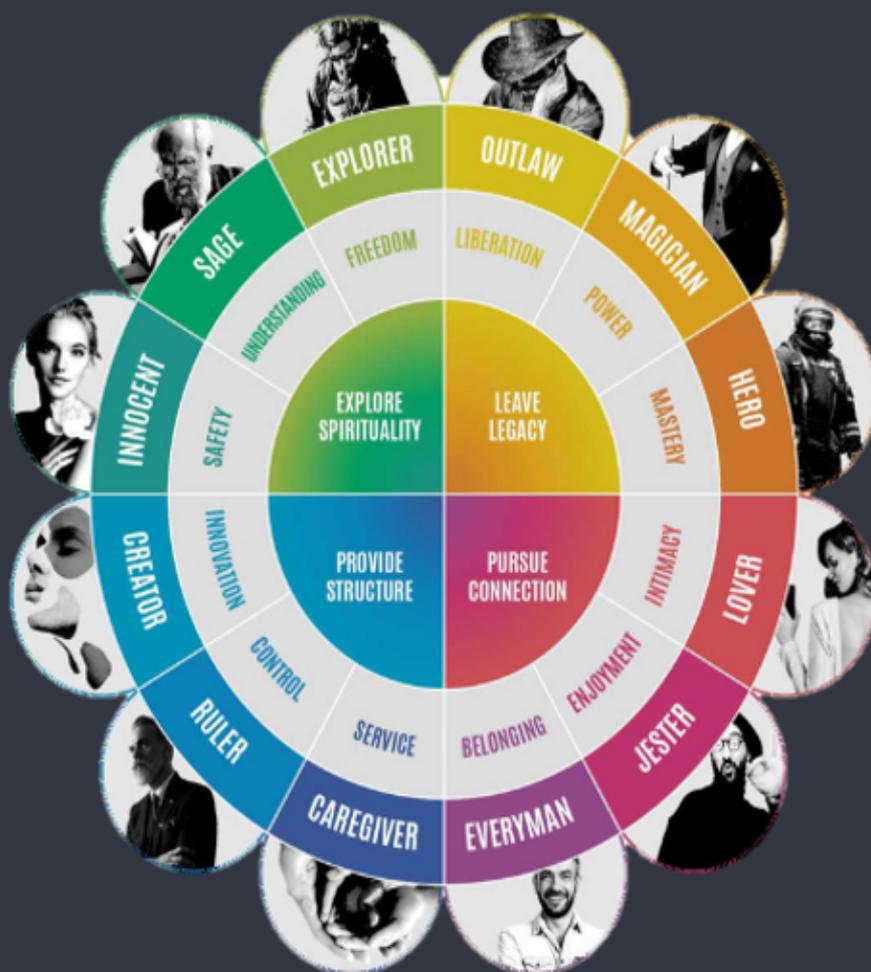


# ISOLATION INSPIRATION

Views from Discovery on how psychological theory can provide the key to understanding modern brands

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Discovery

Discovery Research has been providing the insights that fuel change for clients since 1996. We are here to help combine customer insights with industry knowledge to help move things forward for your brands

**One of the age old challenges for market researchers** is distilling raw data and qualitative insights into clear, actionable, strategic options for clients. Rarely do consumers give neat, tailored strategic sound bits. Nor do they tend to think consciously about things that keep marketing managers up at night. Questions like: How do consumers see the brands in the market? How do they see our brand? Where does our brand sit in relation to our key competitors? What should we shout about in our comms? And, does this new idea fit with how consumers see our brand?

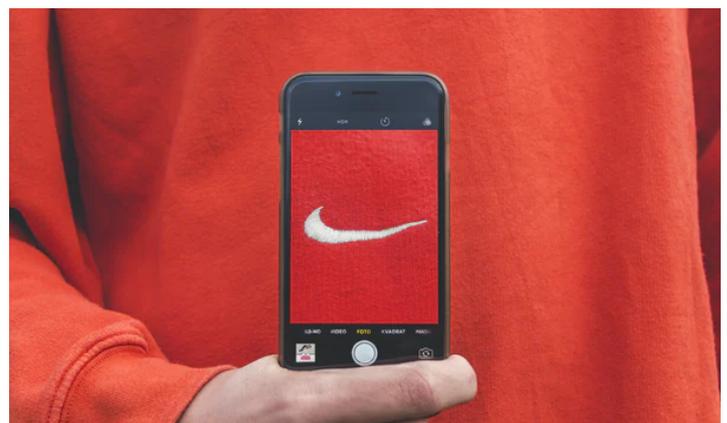
Archetypes are a theory developed by **Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung** in the early 20th century that claim that there are certain fundamental character traits that are carved like grooves into our collective unconscious. Attributes that are inherently recognisable, regardless of cultural or personal experience. All cultures, races and religions, at all times in human history, have demonstrated the same concepts of archetypal characters. The 'Hero', for example, is an ubiquitous concept in all cultures. Strong, brave, moral and righteous. As is the 'Villain' – Evil, contemptuous, underhanded, morally corrupt. The 'Warrior' – Fearless, staunch, code-orientated and valiant. The 'Lover' – Seductive, romantic, intoxicating and beguiling.



Jung argues, that the reason that these characters, among others, continue to reoccur in stories and art throughout human history is because, they supersede our collective cultural awareness and are hardwired into us at a more primordial level. We recognise them unconsciously before we are aware of how our perceptions about them are formed.

When we think of the most successful brands, they often have something in common. They have to have a distinct brand identity that is immediately recognisable to consumers on a subconscious level. Ask anyone what they think of the brand Nike and you'll get words like – strong, hero, star, empowering, performance and athletes, etc. Ask about a brand like Victoria's Secret and you'll hear words like – angel, seductive, beautiful, and sexy. Consumers have a clear image of their brands and what they stand for because they are aligned with a single, pre-existing archetype that is hardwired into their collective unconscious. In this case Nike is clearly the 'Hero'. You can see this in the language they use in their comms, the empowering imagery and the fact they consistently align themselves with the greatest sporting heroes of the day. Victoria's Secret is clearly the 'Lover', from their carefully selected spokes models - referred to as "Angels", to their soft pink colouring and their seductive store design.

So how does this help us answer client's questions you might ask? Using Archetype examples in a research environment with a moderator who understands them, provides consumers with a conceptual lens and a linguistic tool that allows them to articulate how they perceive brands, how they compare them and how they view their role. It allows them to reverse engineer a brands identity using their subconscious perception of the brand in question, in combination with the pre-existing structures in their collective unconscious that are Archetypes. Using the language of Archetypes is often simpler for consumers, who don't tend think of brand identity on the conscious level that marketers do and often are considering it for the first time in the research environment.



For the trained moderator, there are a range of projective and linguistic exercises, imagery tools and techniques, which can aid in unlocking consumer thinking using Archetypes. Not only do they yield deeper insights into consumer understanding of brands, but they provide clear, simple, strategic examples that can be easily communicated throughout a brand's organisation and with external stakeholders. Because not only are Archetypes a great tool for unlocking and articulating consumer thinking but, they're also a great aid for stakeholder comprehension as well. Making them extremely useful when communicating a brand's vision to advertising agencies, brand teams and more.



**So this all sounds great, you may be thinking?** While Archetype analysis works very well in projects that are solely focused on master brand positioning, we all know projects of that nature are few and far between. How could Archetype analysis work for my brand and can it be added as a supplement to other projects? **The good news is yes it can!** Any qualitative project that includes examination of a new product, territory or comms can incorporate archetype analysis tools into its methodology.

Let's use an example... imagine you're testing several territories to identify which one will be the best fit with consumer's perception of your brand. You conducted a series of workshop style discussion groups with customers.

You could utilise archetypes cards (these are words and images designed to demonstrate the core Archetypes for consumers) followed by a personification exercise, prior to revealing territories to build a clear, comprehensive understanding of both you and your competitor's brands, from a customer perspective. These would provide an easy to comprehend framework for participants to build a nuanced vision. Once you reveal the territories, you can then use the output of the Archetype analysis to evaluate the territories based on their best fit. Not only does this give participants something to compare it against and a framework that helps give structure to their thinking, but it also allows them to suggest how the territories could move the brand forward, how they could complement its positive

attributes and reduce its negative perceptions. It helps them move beyond the functional conversation that so often plagues discussion groups and helps unlock the subconscious emotional perspective. Which we know, is where the core purchase decision-making lies.



However, it's more than simply a nice exercise to aid participants thinking. Often brands that struggle to form a cohesive identity, do so because they stray from product to product and ad to ad in how they portray their brand. This constant change of tack undermines consumers ability to form a strong brand image in their mind and as a result, means these brands are less likely to be top of mind when it comes to purchase decisions. Regular Archetype analysis works as a measuring stick, which helps brands ensure that they are consistently communicating in a way that aligns with their core values in consumer's minds. And this means, when it becomes the time to make a purchase consideration, they will know who you are, what you stand for and what you do.

**Something which in the current climate, is becoming more essential than ever.**

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