

# Establishing Brand Personality - Public summary

## From Greek Mythology to Machine Learning

Brand personality can be described as the set of human characteristics associated with a brand (Aaker, 1997). The way it communicates its products and services reflects what kind of person it would be if it were human. For example, the personality of Coca-Cola is authentic, connected, optimistic, and spontaneous (Budelmann & Kim, 2010). If it were human, it would be an optimistic person seeking happiness.

For this Bachelor Assignment, a tool is designed that can help companies to establish their brand personality within the context of Abrnd. Abrnd is an online platform that helps companies to build and maintain strong brands without external help of expensive marketing companies, which makes it an efficient and affordable solution for any company. The platform provides tools for four different steps: development, implementation, measurement, and improvement. These are similar to the traditional steps of building strong brands, but within Abrnd, a company can do it autonomously. The Brand Personality Tool belongs to the first step: development of a brand.

The starting point of the solution, from now on the *Brand Personality Tool*, are the *archetypes*. An archetype is an original pattern recurring in things or people, an idea that stems from Greek Mythology. The psychiatrist Carl Jung advanced it to describe people (Jung, 1919) and later Carol Pearson and Margaret Mark connected it to branding in their book *The hero and the outlaw*, where they set out 12 brand archetypes (Pearson & Mark, 2001). Those can be used to describe the personality of a brand.

To come to the right personality for a brand (in the form of a combination of archetypes), different steps should be followed. First of all, it is important to know the customer and align with their characteristics so they will feel bonded to the brand. The brand should reflect the image the target group want to relate to (Kapferer, 2004). This is not per se the target group itself. For example, Coca-Cola reflects young people who have a fun and active social life. The target group, however, consists of anybody who likes sweet soft drinks. The target group likes being associated with the reflected group. Secondly, the competitors should be analysed. It is important to look at companies in the same sector and see where it can diverge their personality. This is one of the main points where Coca-Cola differs from Pepsi. Pepsi's brand personality is characterised by high energy, music, and comedy, whereas Coca-Cola emphasises the emotional side of their personality through spreading happiness and conveying a strong sense of community (Johnson, 2011). If the personality is bound to the sector, for example, the healthcare sector that is bound to the caregiver archetype or the sports sector that is bound to the hero archetype, it is still possible to diverge from competitors by

adding other archetypes to the brand personality mix (Hounaghan, n.d.).

The Brand Personality Tool consists of four distinct rounds. In round 1 and 2, the customer can be reflected and the competitors can be analysed, as described in the previous paragraph. Based on the results of these two rounds, the brand personality can be strategically chosen in round 3. Round 4 shows the results, it tells the user which archetypal mix suits well with the company. It is also possible to invite multiple stakeholders of the company to fill in the tool. In this case, a 5<sup>th</sup> round is available that conveys the teams' results. The latest version of the Brand Personality Tool can be retrieved [here](#). A preview is shown in figure 1.

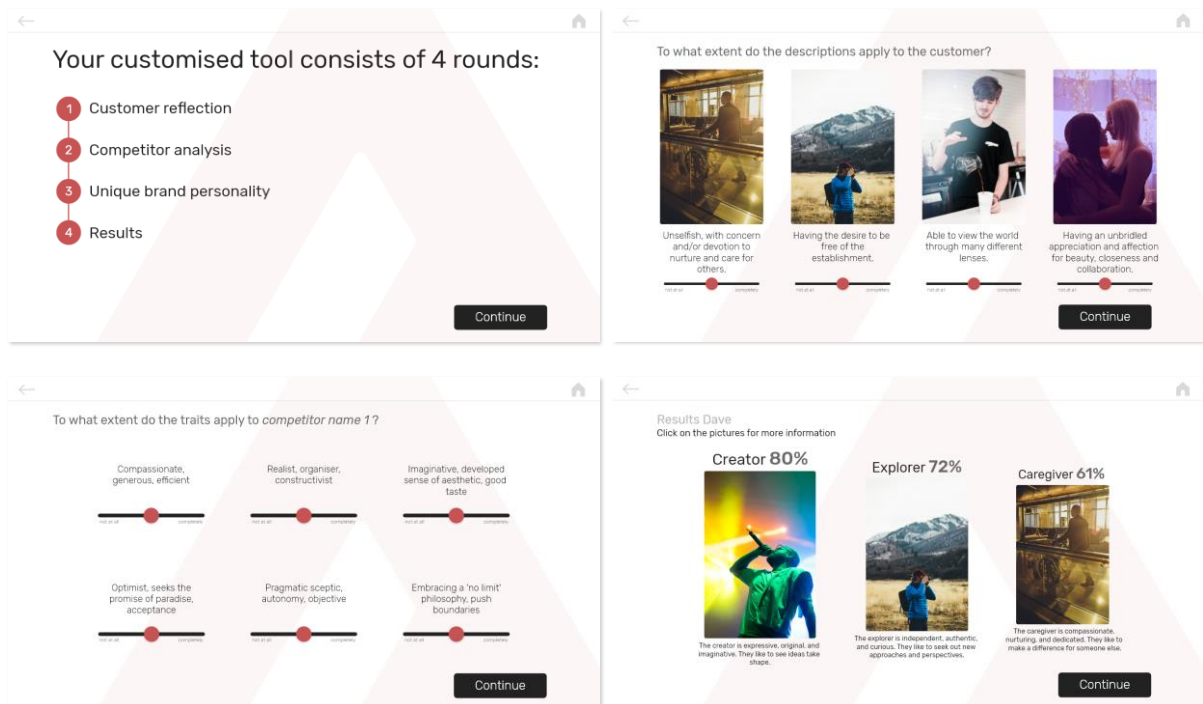


Figure 1 - Preview of the Brand Personality Tool

After multiple testing and iteration sessions, it appeared that the results of the tool are prone to subjectivity. Users have different associations with the customer reflected in round 1 and the competitors analysed in round 2. Besides, questions can be interpreted differently. To make the tool more objective and reliable in the future, solutions involving Artificial Intelligence are explored. Based on Google's AI Building Blocks, a Machine Learning model is built that is able to predict the brand personality of a social media post of a company. Still, a lot of research needs to be performed on this topic, but the results of the Machine Learning model are promising.

## References:

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