

BrandForge: A Framework for Generating Brand Systems from Personality and Context

Coleen M. Sallot

The Inkk Spot, Rapid City, SD USA

Abstract. Building a professional brand identity requires expertise in visual design, language, photography, and strategy—a combination most small businesses cannot access. Existing tools produce individual assets like logos and color palettes, but they don't connect those choices to meaning. This research introduces a framework that addresses that gap directly.

BrandForge is a rules-based brand intelligence platform built on 12 Jungian archetypes, each mapped to computable design rules across seven dimensions. A multi-stage scoring engine translates quiz answers, keyword selections, and business context into a scored archetype profile that drives every design decision automatically. These are structural rules derived from personality theory, not aesthetic preferences. The same inputs always produce the same outputs but with different results, allowing the same business to appear as entirely separate brands.

The complete system has been implemented as a working web application, with usability testing and Phase 1 planned for this year. When tested against 17 real businesses, initial accuracy was 47 percent, but after fixing two systematic quiz coverage gaps, accuracy reached 100 percent. No published framework has previously documented this translation at this depth across all 12 archetypes.

Keywords: brand identity, brand archetypes, design systems, AI-assisted design, brand personality, knowledge-based design.

1 Introduction

Professional brand strategy translates a business's personality into every visual and verbal decision: color, typography, layout, voice, and imagery. Doing this well requires expertise most small business owners cannot access. A branding agency charges several thousand to tens of thousands of dollars [1]. As a result, most businesses settle for a Canva template and a logo from a generative tool.

What has been missing is a framework that connects brand personality to every design decision, not intuitively, but systematically. A Ruler brand's sparse layout is not a style choice but a trust signal. A Caregiver brand's warm, rounded typography is not a trend but a relationship cue. A Rebel brand's asymmetric layout is a deliberate break from what people have learned to read as authority.

As a rules-based brand intelligence platform, BrandForge has written these rules down and translated them into a product any business owner can use. The foundation

uses 12 Jungian brand archetypes and a multi-stage scoring process to produce a complete brand system covering seven design dimensions. Every decision comes from an explicit rule tied to personality theory. The same archetype always produces the same design logic, so that the same business run through a Ruler archetype and a Caregiver archetype produces two brand systems that look and sound nothing alike (Fig. 1).

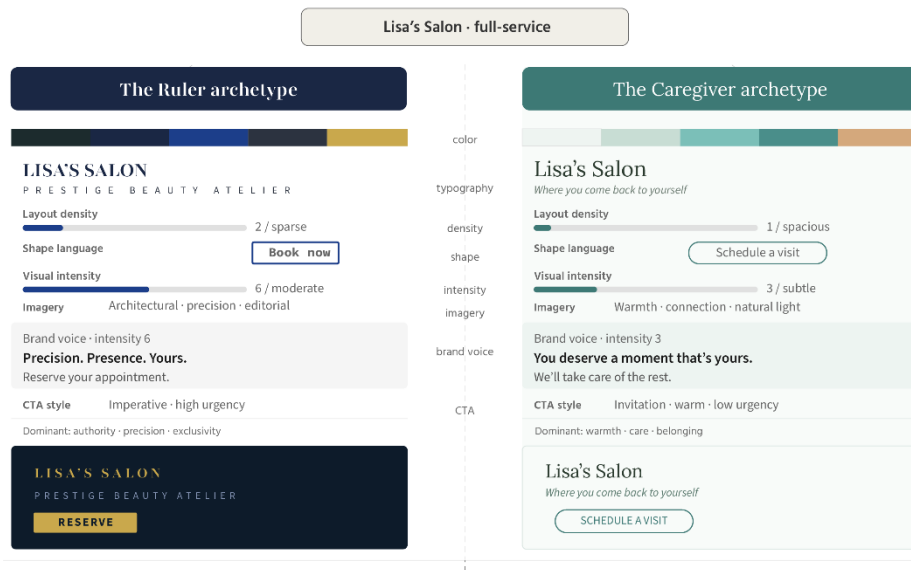


Fig. 1. Two archetypes, one business. Lisa's Salon processed through Ruler and Caregiver produces structurally distinct systems across all seven design dimensions. The rules, not aesthetic preferences, drive the difference.

This framework was first described in 2006, but encoding it previously required a specialized team. AI has collapsed that requirement to a single practitioner. The knowledge work is entirely human, but the production barrier is gone.

BrandForge's primary contribution is the scoring engine and the framework it drives: the first published, systematic translation of professional brand design practice into computable rules across all 12 archetypes. It takes quiz answers, keyword selections, and business context and produces a scored archetype profile that drives every design decision automatically across seven dimensions: color strategy, typography, layout, shape language, visual intensity, imagery direction, and brand voice.

For businesses where standard quiz language doesn't fit, such as paramedics, hospices, veterinarians, and disaster relief organizations, the quiz adapts to their context while still reaching all 12 archetypes. In addition, a subcategory system produces meaningful differences within the same archetype without adding questions. Ultimately, BrandForge aims to extend from a personality quiz through a complete brand system, audience analysis, UX strategy, and website execution.

2 Related Work

2.1 2.1 The Evolution of Archetypes and Brand Personality

In the early 1900s, Carl Jung identified archetypes as universal psychological patterns—not as abstract symbols, but as active organizing structures in how humans perceive identity, motivation, and meaning [2]. While people don't consciously recognize archetypes, he was able to prove that they do respond to them.

Margaret Mark and Carol S. Pearson mapped this to brand strategy, showing that each of twelve archetypes communicates through a distinct set of design and language signals [3]. While Nike's Hero harnesses bold contrast, physical strength imagery, and achievement framing to urge its customers to "Just Do It," Dove's Innocent uses warm colors, soft curves, and images of real people to signal the opposite promise: simplicity, goodness, and no performance required.

Jennifer Aaker proved the response is measurable. Her Brand Personality Framework showed that consumers attribute the same five dimensions to brands across cultures [4]. From there, she surmised that if personality perceptions are consistent, the design rules that produce them can be documented and reproduced.

2.2 The Existing Market Landscape

The research has existed for decades, but until recently the field lacked the production capacity to encode it. Using AI, BrandForge is the first system to cross this threshold.

Existing tools fall into two distinct categories. Archetype quizzes like Crowdspring, Vision One, and Kaye Putnam's quiz, the most widely used at 250,000 completions, identify primary and secondary archetypes from a series of personality questions [5]. These free tools are useful as a starting point, but the quiz result is simply a label and a description. The business owner must figure out what to do with it.

On the other hand, AI brand kit generators, such as Looka, Tailor Brands, Canva, Adobe Express, and others, produce polished brand assets, including logos and color palettes, from style preferences [6, 7, 8, 9]. However, because the tools never ask the question that would reveal the difference, two businesses with entirely different archetypes can produce identical branding if their owners pick the same starting colors.

BrandForge sits in the gap. Archetype quizzes tell you who you are. Brand kit generators make you assets. The scoring engine is the connection.

3 The BrandForge Framework

3.1 The 12-Archetype Model

Brand archetypes, derived from Jungian personality theory, are an established framework in marketing and brand strategy. Designers have applied them informally, but that translation has always relied on individual judgment and has never been formalized as an explicit, reproducible system.

BrandForge uses the 12-archetype model from Mark and Pearson [3], organized into four motivational drives: Provide Order, Seek Freedom, Leave a Mark, and Connect to Others. Each maps to an elemental register drawn from Jung [2]. The motivational grouping explains the personality logic, while the elemental grouping drives the translation to color, shape, and visual intensity rules (Fig. 2). Each archetype carries fixed design properties: a visual orientation, an intensity range, a hue territory, a saturation character, and between three and five subcategories. These properties connect personality theory directly to structural design rules.

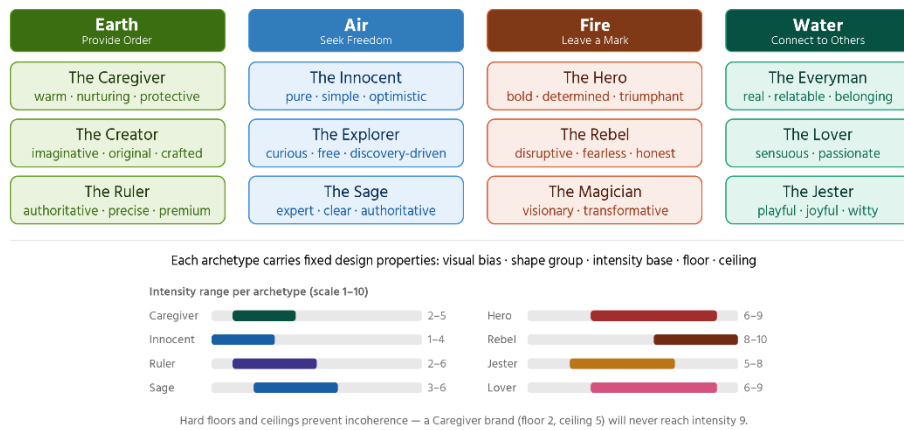


Fig. 2. The 12 Jungian brand archetypes in four elemental groups. Each carries fixed design properties that drive all seven output dimensions.

3.2 How Scores Are Calculated

The scoring engine takes four inputs — 12 quiz answers, 3–7 brand keywords, business type, and subtype — and produces a scored archetype profile that contains dominant, secondary, and shadow archetypes; all 12 normalized scores; and a confidence level. Quiz and keyword signals are processed independently, then combined at a weighted ratio that adjusts by keyword count. Business context applies in three sequential boost passes, each followed by re-normalization. The pipeline runs in 7.5 stages (Fig. 3).

Over 900 automated tests verify every stage. Any change that causes a passing result to drop breaks the build, ensuring stable, repeatable outputs.

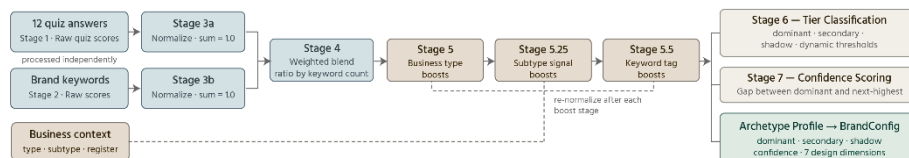


Fig. 3. The 7.5-stage scoring pipeline. Stages 1–4 process quiz and keyword signals. Stages 5–5.5 apply business context. Stages 6–7 classify archetypes and confidence.

3.3 The Seven Design Dimensions

The archetype profile drives seven structural design dimensions. These are not aesthetic preferences, but rules derived from the psychological signal each archetype sends.

Color palette. Each archetype has a defined hue range, saturation level, and contrast logic [10]. The secondary archetype shifts the resolved hue toward its own territory, clamped so it never overpowers the primary. Business type color constraints are applied first. The result is a ten-stop color scale with WCAG-compliant text contrast, governed by the 60-30-10 rule.

Typography. Each archetype has three curated font pairings. The secondary archetype determines which pairing is used: authority-type secondaries favor formal heading fonts, while elegance-type secondaries favor warm serifs [11, 12].

Layout density. A matrix indexed by dominant archetype and visual style answer produces a density score. Sparse layouts signal authority through whitespace [13]. Dense layouts communicate energy and vitality. Both the secondary archetype and business type apply modifiers, with business type carrying more weight.

Shape language. The dominant archetype sets border radius, button style, and layout asymmetry. When the secondary archetype's influence crosses a threshold, it modifies the result through a blend mode specific to that pairing. A Creator + Rebel pairing shifts the Creator's intentional geometry toward Rebel's angular tension, producing asymmetric layouts and square buttons rather than the Creator's default rounded forms.

Visual intensity. Every archetype has a hard floor and ceiling. The score is calculated from the archetype's base level, visual style answer, business type, and keyword signals, then clamped to stay within those bounds. A Caregiver brand stays low intensity regardless of business type modifiers, but a Rebel brand never registers as low intensity regardless of how conservative the keyword selection.

Imagery direction. Photography direction is derived from five layers: business type, experience domain, activity, archetype emotional register, and people presence. When the secondary archetype's influence crosses a threshold, secondary photography modifiers apply. The result is actionable direction tied to the physical world of the business, not abstract mood board descriptions.

Brand voice and calls to action. Voice rules are mechanical, not tonal. At low intensity, copy leads with “you” as the grammatical subject, reflecting relationship marketing psychology [14], while at high intensity, copy uses commands and incomplete sentences. These are different grammatical structures, not different moods.

3.4 Adapting the Quiz for Businesses with Different Contexts

BrandForge defines ten business registers: create, fix, serve, nurture, guide, advocate, crisis, delight, explore, and mission. Registers adjust scoring signals and drive the quiz questions themselves.

The standard quiz assumes a business is delivering a positive experience to a receptive customer. That assumption fails for an ambulance, plumber, hospice, or bankruptcy lawyer. While a yoga studio can honestly identify the feeling customers should have after interacting with them, an ambulance service cannot.

Tett and Burnett's trait activation theory establishes that the same personality trait expresses differently based on the situation [15]. The adapted questions don't change the archetype but instead change the language so honest answers produce honest scores.

Two types of businesses receive adapted questions. Businesses that fix or restore things receive alternate answer options on questions framed around creating beautiful experiences. Mission-driven businesses, which span crisis, advocate, mission, and nurture registers, receive adapted question text. Crisis businesses receive the deepest adaptations, including a question written for contexts where the outcome is genuinely uncertain. All adapted sets were verified to keep all 12 archetypes reachable.

3.5 Subcategory Inference

According to Pearson, archetypes are not a monolith but instead contain distinct expressions that vary meaningfully in personality, motivation, and behavior [16]. Brand-Forge infers three to five subcategories per archetype automatically from the differentiator answer, business type, subtype, and register. No additional questions are required.

Without subcategories, every business that scores the same archetype would get the same brand system. The archetype defines the territory but doesn't define the business. Within the Innocent archetype, there are five variations: Child produces warm sherbet pastels and a joyful voice. Idealist produces structured warm neutrals and principled simplicity. Saint produces quiet, grounded warmth for crisis and care contexts. Humanitarian produces mission-forward language for advocacy work. Pure is the default.

This means that a trades business scoring Innocent lands on Idealist: warm neutrals, with a principled voice. A child daycare lands on Child: sherbet palette with a joyful voice. The archetype scores are identical, but the brand systems share nothing visually.

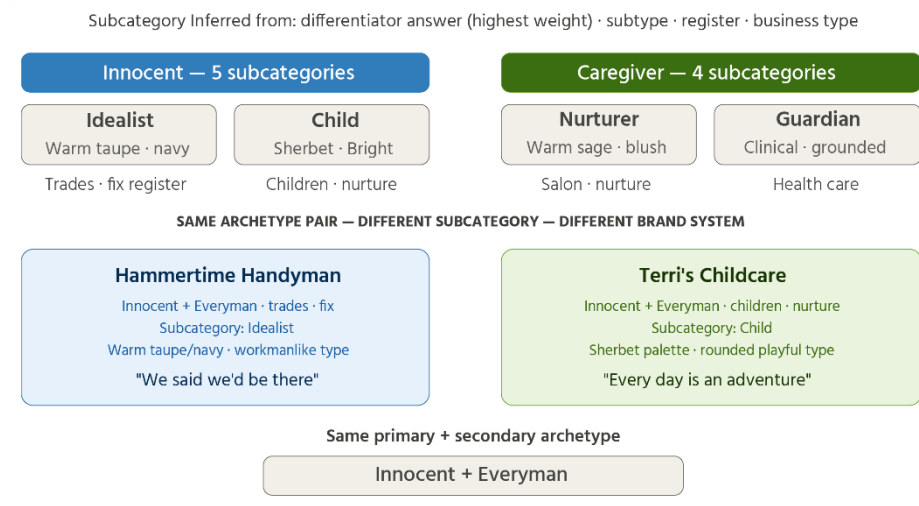


Fig. 4. Same archetype scores, different subcategory, different brand system. The differentiator answer and business type route each business to a structurally different result.

4 Implementation and Research Foundations

The rules in BrandForge were extracted from 30 years of professional brand design practice: cataloguing recurring patterns from client records, encoding them as explicit rules with specified inputs and outputs, and testing them against the 17 validation businesses. Each rule connects to established research (Fig. 5).

Design rules and their research foundations	
Design rule	Research source
Sparse layout signals authority	Lavie & Tractinsky — visual aesthetics and credibility [13]
You-led copy in nurture brands	Palmatier et al. — relationship marketing effectiveness [14]
Color communicates personality	Elliot & Maier [17] · Labrecque & Milne [10]
Typography signals personality	Doyle & Bottomley [11] · Shaikh, Chaparro & Fox [12]
Curves signal warmth, angles signal threat	Bar & Neta — human preference for curved objects [19]
Per-archetype subcategory design	Pass the Salt Studio — practitioner design guides [18]

Scale of the design reference					
270K	60	240	10	4	923
character design reference	subcategory definitions	archetype × business calibrations	business registers	registers with adapted questions	automated tests

Fig. 5. Where the rules come from. Design rules extracted from 30 years of practice, each connected to its research foundation [10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19]. Scale of the compiled BrandForge design reference.

BrandForge is a React 19/Vite single-page application. The quiz routes through register-appropriate questions at runtime, followed by keyword selection (53 keywords) and business context selection (21 types, approximately 280 subtypes). Results are presented in a six-tab interface covering archetype profile, color scale, typography, voice and messaging, imagery direction, and audience. Brand narrative is generated through the Anthropic API.

5 Evaluation

5.1 Method

BrandForge was tested against 17 real business scenarios spanning 14 business types. Target archetypes were established before running the quiz. Accuracy was measured as an exact match on both the primary and secondary archetype. A near-miss means the primary matched exactly and the secondary was within one adjacency tier.

5.2 Initial Results and What They Revealed

The initial test produced eight passes, three near-misses, and five failures, a 47 percent exact match. The five failures were not random but fell into two patterns that were traceable to gaps in the quiz itself.

Pattern 1—Businesses that fix things: These businesses had no honest path through the standard quiz. A plumber’s honest answer to “What do you hope your customer feels?” is relief that the pipe works. The quiz pushed them toward Sage and Caregiver instead of Innocent and Everyman.

Pattern 2—Businesses in crisis contexts: Quiz language about beautiful experiences does not apply to businesses operating in acute, outcome-uncertain environments.

These failures showed the system working as intended: the engine correctly identified that these businesses had no honest path and produced predictably wrong results.

5.3 The Fix: Adapted Questions

The failure pattern specified the fix. Businesses that fix things received alternate answer options that created honest scoring paths to Innocent and Everyman. Mission-driven businesses received adapted question text calibrated to their context. Crisis businesses received the deepest adaptation, covering every question where standard language fails. Advocate and mission businesses received variants for questions with the worst mismatch. Nurture businesses received targeted variants for the highest-impact questions only. Every adapted set was verified to keep all 12 archetypes reachable (Fig. 6).



Fig. 6. Validation results across 17 test businesses. Initial accuracy: 47% (8 pass / 3 near-miss / 5 fail). After adapted questions: 100% (17/17 pass).

5.4 What the Results Show

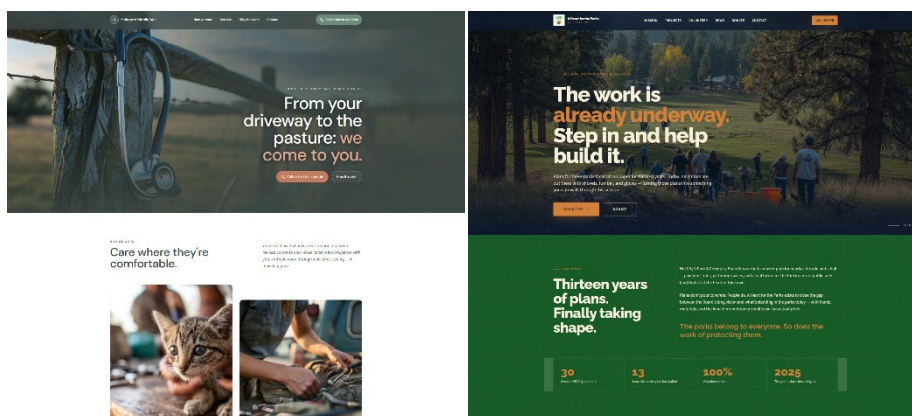
Within the same archetype. Even though Hammertime (Handyman) and Terri's Child-care both scored Innocent + Everyman, their subcategories are different. As Idealist, Hammertime gets grounded navy, principled voice, and workmanlike typography, while Terri's lands on Child, producing a warm sherbet palette, joyful voice, and rounded type. The archetype scores are identical, but their brand systems share nothing visually. The only inputs that differ are the business differentiator and business type.

Across archetypes. A Heart for the Parks (Hero + Magician, environmental non-profit) and a Caregiver + Innocent nonprofit of similar scale and type produced entirely different systems. A Heart for the Parks gets bold forest green, authority typography, and imperative calls-to-action, while the Caregiver nonprofit gets warm sage, rounded type, and a more invitational feel. They serve the same category of business, but the design logic is fundamentally different because the archetypes are different.

Register effect on voice. Hill City Ambulance and Lisa's Salon both scored Care-giver as their primary archetype. The crisis register routes the ambulance service through adapted questions, applies crisis vocabulary (present, ready, dependable), and selects a documentary photography direction. On the other hand, Lisa's Salon routes through standard nurture questions with warmth and beauty vocabulary. The archetype is the same, but the brand voice is structurally different because the context is different.

5.5 Full Pipeline Results

Four validation businesses went through the manual version of the full BrandForge pipeline using a custom ChatGPT strategy agent developed over more than 200 iterations. The agent was built as a core deliverable of Inkk Academy, a professional design curriculum that teaches designers to execute this pipeline manually. Slated to launch in Fall 2026, the Inkk Academy agent takes BrandForge output and produces a complete set of build documents: brand profile, website strategy, audience persona, imagery and direction, content guidelines, and a structured Lovable build prompt.



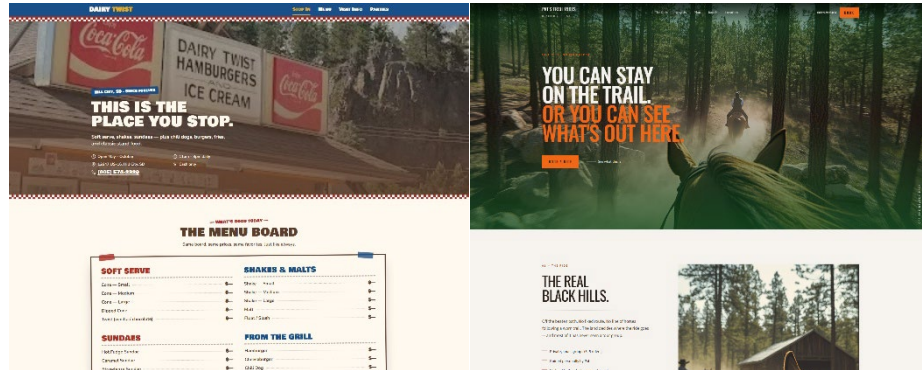


Fig. 7. Quiz to BrandForge to Inkk Academy methodology to home page mockup. (a) Care-giver+Everyman (b) Hero+Magician (c) Jester+Everyman (d) Explorer+Rebel.

The manual pipeline successfully created professional, on-brand homepage mockups for all four businesses. The agent is not yet automated, but it proves the translation from brand intelligence to site generation is possible and produces recognizable output.

6 Discussion and Future Work

BrandForge demonstrates that professional brand design practice can be documented and turned into a reproducible system. The progression from 47 percent to 100 percent shows the failures were structural and diagnosable. The framework specified the repair.

The main limitation is that ground truth was set by the framework designer, not by independent judges or business owners. A user study evaluating whether business owners recognize their brand as actionable output is the necessary next step.

7 Conclusion

Brand archetypes have been used informally in design practice for decades, but the translation from brand personality to visual system has always lived in the designer's head. BrandForge is the first published attempt to make that translation explicit, computable, and available to any business owner who can answer 12 questions.

The system works. The failures were structural, diagnosable, and fixable. The adapted question system is a contribution beyond brand identity generation and indicates that personality-based instruments need to adapt their language to the situational context of the respondent. An ambulance service and a yoga studio cannot be asked the same questions and expected to produce honest results. That fix is harder than it looks.

Finally, what makes BrandForge possible now and not 20 years ago is AI. A system encoding 270,000 characters of design rules, 60 subcategories, 240 archetype calibrations, and over 900 automated tests was built by one person. The scoring engine, archetype-to-design translation, and subcategory inference system are the subject of a provisional patent. BrandForge is one proof of what is now possible. It will not be the last.

References

1. Clutch: Branding agency pricing guide. <https://clutch.co/agencies/branding/pricing> (2024). Accessed 3 Jun 2026
2. Jung, C.G.: *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, 2nd edn. Princeton University Press, Princeton (1968)
3. Mark, M., Pearson, C.S.: *The Hero and the Outlaw: Building Extraordinary Brands Through the Power of Archetypes*. McGraw-Hill, New York (2001)
4. Aaker, J.L.: Dimensions of brand personality. *J. Mark. Res.* 34(3), 347–356 (1997). <https://doi.org/10.1177/002224379703400304>
5. Putnam, K.: Brand personality quiz. <https://www.kayeputnam.com/brandality-quiz/> (2024). Accessed 3 Jun 2026
6. Looka: AI-powered brand identity platform. <https://looka.com> (2024). Accessed 3 Jun 2026
7. Tailor Brands: Brand builder and logo maker. <https://www.tailorbrands.com> (2024). Accessed 3 Jun 2026
8. Canva: Visual communication and design platform. <https://www.canva.com> (2024). Accessed 3 Jun 2026
9. Adobe Express: Quick content creation tool. <https://www.adobe.com/express> (2024). Accessed 3 Jun 2026
10. Labrecque, L.I., Milne, G.R.: Exciting red and competent blue: the importance of color in marketing. *J. Acad. Mark. Sci.* 40(5), 711–727 (2012). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-010-0245-y>
11. Doyle, J.R., Bottomley, P.A.: Dressed for the occasion: font-product congruity in the perceived suitability of typefaces. *J. Consum. Psychol.* 16(2), 112–123 (2006). https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327663jcp1602_2
12. Shaikh, A.D., Chaparro, B.S., Fox, D.: Perception of fonts: perceived personality traits and uses. *Usability News* 8(1) (2006). <http://psychology.wichita.edu/surl/usabilitynews/81/PersonalityofFonts.htm>
13. Lavie, T., Tractinsky, N.: Assessing dimensions of perceived visual aesthetics of web sites. *Int. J. Hum.-Comput. Stud.* 60(3), 269–298 (2004). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhcs.2003.09.002>
14. Palmatier, R.W., Dant, R.P., Grewal, D., Evans, K.R.: Factors influencing the effectiveness of relationship marketing: a meta-analysis. *J. Mark.* 70(4), 136–153 (2006). <https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkg.70.4.136>
15. Tett, R.P., Burnett, D.D.: A personality trait-based interactionist model of job performance. *J. Appl. Psychol.* 88(3), 500–517 (2003). <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.88.3.500>
16. Pearson, C.S.: The Pearson 12-archetype system: human development and evolution. <https://carolsperson.com/about/the-pearson-12-archetype-system-human-development-and-evolution> (2021). Accessed 4 Jun 2026
17. Elliot, A.J., Maier, M.A.: Color psychology: effects of perceiving color on psychological functioning in humans. *Annu. Rev. Psychol.* 65, 95–120 (2014). <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-psych-010213-115035>
18. Pass the Salt Studio: Brand archetype design guides. <https://passthesalt.studio> (2024). Accessed 3 Jun 2026
19. Bar, M., Neta, M.: Humans prefer curved visual objects. *Psychol. Sci.* 17(8), 645–648 (2006). <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9280.2006.01759.x>