

Is your brand a cowboy or a Stepford wife?

 By [Jason Ray](#)

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Common sense (and lots of research) tells us that people's inner psychology is not driven by their biological gender, but rather by the family, cultural and social structures that have helped to form their unique personalities.



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Some men may be more feminine than masculine in terms of their emotional needs, while some women might be more masculine than feminine.

Yet many brands continue to behave like caricatures of the sexes... 100% competitive and assertive for men... positively vibrating with sensitivity for women.

(This is particularly short sighted when it comes to Millennials, who live far less binary lives. In the US, a recent survey showed that half of this age group believe that gender exists on a spectrum and shouldn't be limited to male and female.)

Our experience suggests that there are feminine needs and masculine needs and most people have a mix of both. It is useful therefore, when planning your customer's journey, to make sure that your brand is answering those needs right along the gender spectrum, irrespective of whether your target audience is male or female.

For instance:

Some feminine needs.

Relationship – looking for a way to participate.

Full value – a need to feel that they have acted responsibly, wrung every rand dry.

Recognition – wanting to be seen as individuals with quirks, flaws and unique taste.

Personal connections – identifying with real people.

Some masculine needs.

Reassurance of quality – product specs and peer referrals.

Clever buys – a sense of a bargain or a smart product.

Ego – being able to afford an expensive purchase or VIP service.

Loyal to groups – company reputation is important.

This awareness opens up creative opportunities and allows brands to engage in different ways. For instance, meeting the need for full value may cause us to interrogate and enrich the purchase experience, while underlining ego may indicate a need for visual signifiers.

It's not rocket science but giving it some thought will make your brand less stereotyped, more modern and importantly, quintessentially human.

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ABOUT JASON RAY

Jason Ray is the owner and strategist at RADAR which he loves because it means he gets to be part of the front-line in their client's quest to be the very best at what they do. In his spare time he loves SA art, adventure travel and designing spaces.

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