

# **Connecting with Consumers**

**A summary of BAV analysis  
of 4Cs Groups in BAV™ Wave 2  
averaged across UK, France, Italy,  
Spain, Germany, Switzerland  
and the Netherlands.**

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## The Point of Connection

Among the millions of advertisements that have been created all over the world during the past century, you will find that there are **several classic themes**, each with its typical range of styles and motifs.

The reason for this is that each one of these classic themes has, as its **point of connection** with the consumer, an appeal to a specific **enduring human value**.

- Probably the one that springs to mind first is the **STATUS** oriented advertisement – a glamorous, glitzy appeal to the need to be noticed and admired. You are Special, in with the in-crowd, having fun. The brand will give you charisma, others will admire and desire. This is the message that dominates advertising for fashion, cosmetics and accessories – the Rolex & Rayban idea.
- Status brands make high profit margins. Massively more important - in terms of volume – is appeal to **SECURITY**. These advertisements feature homes and kitchens, mums dads and kids, babies and grannies, value for money, a nest-egg for the future. The brand expresses how you love and care for those close to you. Heart-warming, heartstring-tugging advertisements for baked beans, coffee, household cleaners and savings schemes, and increasingly these days, the home computer.
- Another well-known advertising genre is the Prestige advertisement. Only the best, the very best – for the man who has everything. Servitors open car doors, smile down over airplane seats wishing only to please and pamper, spend years or decades maturing his drink in accordance with age-old tradition. This is actually an appeal to the need to **CONTROL** – the need to be the captain of your ship. The aura of prestige feeds back the achievement of success. The brand sets a person apart from the mass, a badge recognised (as expensive) by others who have achieved success, and respected by those ‘below’.
- Then there is the ‘Now’ generation advertisement. X, Y or Z it’s the same story, from James Dean to Johnny Depp – sensation, excitement, risk. The appeal is to **DISCOVERY** - you only live once, so make it count. This is the brand that tests your limits, most often found in experiential products such as vodka, beer, cigarettes, motorbikes, role-playing computer games, cult cinema. By and for the ‘cool’, these ads tend to be innovative, clever, witty, shocking.
- Finally, the less often seen appeal to **ENLIGHTENMENT** and the linked concept, **Freedom**. There is culture behind the design and its elements, something flowing and balanced – often a print ad, with more words than usual. It says – here are the facts. The brand is intrinsically genuine, right down to the fair deal for the workers who produced it. It’s adaptable, flexible, saves time for more important things. It’s simple, it’s natural – it’s intelligent.

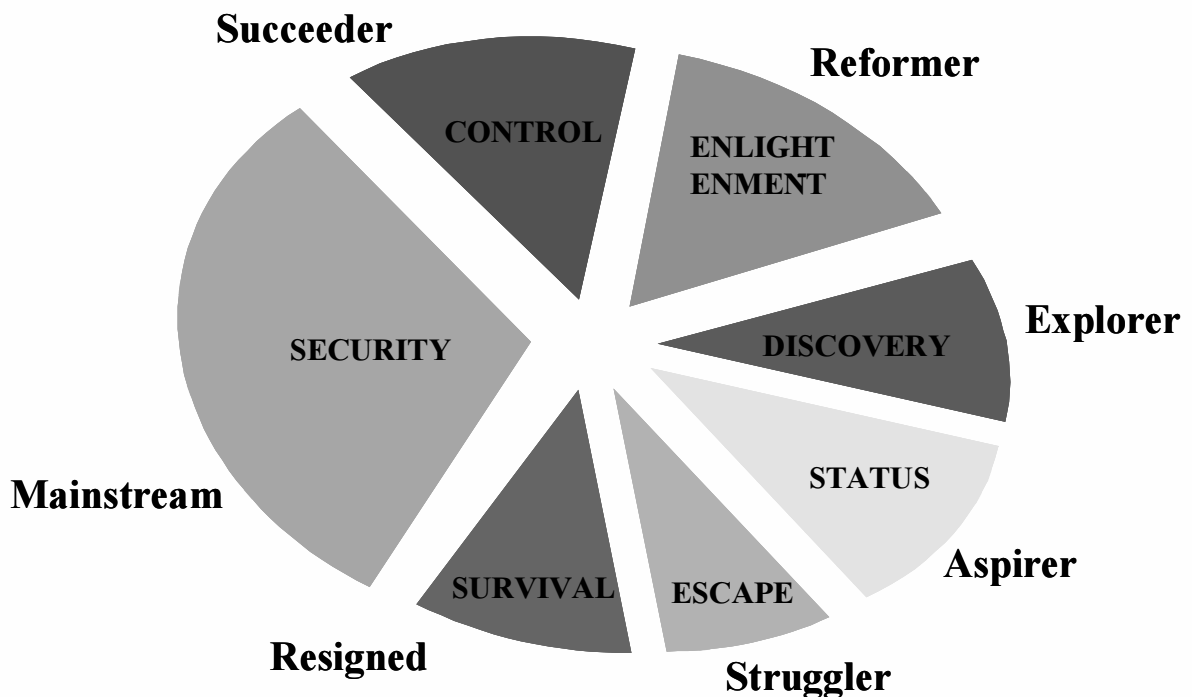
## Y&R 4Cs: The Values Connection

Young & Rubicam has a consumer segmentation specially designed for gaining insight into consumer values connections. It's called 4Cs – an abbreviation of Cross-Cultural Consumer Characterisation.

**CROSS-CULTURAL** because these target values are found in all countries, though their expression may vary.

**CONSUMER CHARACTERISATION** because 4Cs brings each value to life as a characterisation of a person that unfolds into an entire subjective reality, a lifestyle, a way of making choices.

In addition to **Status, Security, Control, DISCOVERY** and **ENLIGHTENMENT** - the five motivations that play such a large role in advertising, there are also two that are rarely targeted commercially - **Survival** and **Escape**.



The descriptions that follow are based on analysis of seven countries in Europe. With a few adaptations they should be recognisable anywhere in the world.

## Mainstream



## SECURITY

### Mainstream Values

Security means avoiding risk. Most of all this means being part of something larger than yourself – a family, a home. Filling the role of mum or dad. This is the solid base of the Mainstream character, a warm place in the heart. All the other ways of avoiding risk fit in like a jigsaw.

- ❑ Being price conscious, watching the pennies, avoiding debt, making sacrifices, saving for the future – especially for the children.
- ❑ Blending in, conventional and conformist, feeling the same as everyone else, part of the crowd, part of the neighbourhood, part of a nation.
- ❑ Obeying the rules, avoiding confrontation. Order, organisation, a place for everything and everything in its place. The comfortable feeling of routine.

### Mainstream Communication

- ❑ Emotion is the essential ingredient – human warmth. Easy-going, sensitive, considerate, even sentimental. Be careful about showing people alone.
- ❑ Communication is more concerned with impressions and images – bright and cheerful, neat and tidy, clean and clear. Lots of words will not be read.
- ❑ Safe and simple ideas - puzzles and ambiguity are turn-offs, but a good-natured sense of humour is appreciated.
- ❑ Familiar and reassuring – maintain continuity with the past.

### Mainstream Brands

Brands that are welcomed into this scenario carry a large emotional charge of trust and reliance. This trust is a big part of the value in 'value for money' and the loyalty in 'brand loyalty'.

- ❑ To fit in they must be like any friend of the family - honest and straightforward, simple and unpretentious. Like someone who has come to help, they will be seen as kind, helpful and obliging.
- ❑ They should also be generally popular and well-liked, a guarantee of acceptability. Up-to-date, but not innovative.

## Aspirer



## STATUS

### Aspirer Values

Status is all about how others perceive you. This is what is most important to the Aspirer character – being seen as attractive, successful, rich, popular, having fun, a fashion leader. It's a social world, and most of the time, a lot of fun.

- Everything has a value in defining the image you want to project, not just the items you own, but also the experiences you have, the places you go.
- Desire rules. Always wanting the next acquisition, stretching the limits of the credit card/s to keep up.

### Aspirer Communication

- Visual gloss is key to Aspirer communication.
- The Aspirer characterisation has constructed its own fantasy persona, someone who is imaginative and complex, involved in exciting social worlds. Connect to this, supplying quality material for the construction.
- Underneath is unsureness. Unsure of taste, of what to say, how to act... Not really at ease. So there is a lot of asking each other for advice – and also a search for formulas and frameworks. This context applies also to advertising.

### Aspirer Brands

The job of the brand is to act as a reference point in defining personal image.

- It is original, unique and special. It has charisma, sparkle and shine.
- It is dynamic, trendy, forward-moving.
- And also fun and friendly.

## Succeder



## CONTROL

### Succeder Values

Control means firmness - stability and duration. These ideas are the foundation of the Succeder character.

- Stability and duration are achieved by linking to stable and enduring things. The Succeder characterisation will be at home in the Establishment, in the hierarchical/competitive business world, in enduring institutions such as marriage or listening to choral singing at Christmas.
- To achieve personal stability he/she is motivated to meet challenge with achievement, with high levels of personal confidence, strong goal orientation, firm judgement, work ethic and organisation.

### Succeder Communication

- Over and above all, the aim of the Succeder's Control motive is a separation from the mass. Not only the obvious prestige, but also subtleties such as never showing a protagonist as part of a crowd.
- The Succeder character's self-image is of someone organising complexity, solving problems, controlling ambiguities. Visual style should reflect this – the content may be complex, but the presentation is tidy and ordered.
- Natural delegators, they are looking for useful and practical items and really enjoy seeing diagrams of how they work. Often expensive toys, such as driveable lawn mowers, for the man with a big lawn.
- The future is one area difficult to control, but key to Succeder desires – they are keen to understand possibilities of exciting ways forward.
- The Succeder wants evidence of claims – and is willing to study it thoroughly.
- There is room for an anecdotal approach, using first-person examples from personal experience.

### Succeder Brands

Brand choice is based on self-reward and self-affirmation

- Prestige brands mark discrimination from the mass, for self and also for others ... eg car park attendants enter into a relationship of respect/patronage.
- The feel-good factor is a concept well understood – the best golf clubs, the third holiday, good food and wine.
- Progress, leadership and performance 'introject' power.
- Elements of endurance and stability attract, such as long-matured spirits, authentic craftsmanship, mountain-climbing style for casual wear.
- On the more female side of brand personality, stress relief via caring and protective brands.

## Explorer



## DISCOVERY

### Explorer Values

DISCOVERY means taking risks, experimenting with life - leaving the safety of the familiar to find out who you are, outside of home/school/work roles and free from obligations, responsibilities and routines. This quest for identity is what the Explorer characterisation embodies - typically young, but not necessarily.

- Extreme adrenaline experience, adventure, sensation, hedonism, speed and danger. Could be sport, travel, drugs, intellect, music, and cinema...
- Breaking established rules and codes, responding instead to your own impulse.
- Establishing a personal difference, sometimes shock tactics. Company of friends.
- Confident, optimistic, open to change and new experience - actively seeking the new, unusual, unconventional.
- Acquisitions are ultimately disposable.

### Explorer Communication

- Have a point of view if you want Explorer respect.
- The Explorer character ridicules the normal conventional and stereotyped ways of communication. The rules must be broken so that communication is real. Colour clash.
- Nothing in boxes – visually or otherwise. Ambiguity, crazy logic, surreal and hyper-real presentation is more true to individual reality.
- Clever – puzzles that other can't solve makes the communication narrow-band and different, also hip-cynical wit. Adept at handling messages.
- Tribal – groups of individuals, each with a real and different character.

### Explorer Brands

- Daring – brands with attitudes that don't compromise.
- Different... true to itself, with its own class and style - not necessarily reflecting Explorer values, as the Explorer is extremely eclectic in brand behaviour.
- Progressive, innovative, intelligent.

## Reformer



## ENLIGHTENMENT

### Reformer Values

ENLIGHTENMENT needs freedom – without freedom to follow your course you cannot achieve it. This generally requires a reasonable standard of education and income. Maybe the first rule of freedom is to disagree...

- Freedom from personal restriction – especially imposed roles and rules. Freedom to express yourself, freedom of movement, tolerance of chaos, eclectic decor, loose clothing, large rooms and windows.
- Personal growth – creativity, aesthetics, awareness.
- Social conscience – active on behalf of other's freedoms. The freedom to ask questions ... to disobey laws and rules that are wrong.
- Not impressed by status, not concerned with respectability - though taste may be a basis of judging others.
- No certainties – not one right answer.
- Independent decision-making on the basis of intrinsic values. For instance, preference for easy to read analogue vs flashy digital. Resistance to hybrid concepts such as the washer/dryer.

### Reformer Communication

- The first impulse is to disagree with propositions that are put forward. Also curious and enquiring. The Reformer loves words, enjoys debate, and will give thought to concepts and ideas. They will make up their own minds about your proposition, your job is to provide information, in-depth, with layers of complexity.
- Free and open – use of free space, for instance, or unexpected point of view.
- Fluid, sensual... train of thought, design, aesthetics
- Attraction to things foreign, especially the pure, natural, peasant, soil aspects.
- Cultural and intellectual sophistication. Will understand 'hommage' to post-impressionism.

### Reformer Brands

- Innovative and intelligent – a good new idea advancing progress.
- Intrinsic – for instance it performs well. Another example is fair trade ethics.
- Authentic, unpretentious, expressive personality – a brand with which one can have a relationship.
- Adaptable, flexible, saves time.



## Resigned



## SURVIVAL

### Resigned Values

Values of survival arise due to a feeling that the changing world is slipping away from your grasp. The response is rigidity – on the one hand, holding fast to what you knew in the past.... on the other, strict discipline especially of budget.

- Past orientation, resistance to change and innovation.
- Responsive to authority – those in charge know best. Pro law& order.
- Duty, self-sacrifice - strong opinions as to what people should/must do.
- Roles and rules – woman's place in the home, young men in the army.
- National chauvinism.
- Enjoyment of the quiet life - daily shopping, personal resourcefulness, friends and family.

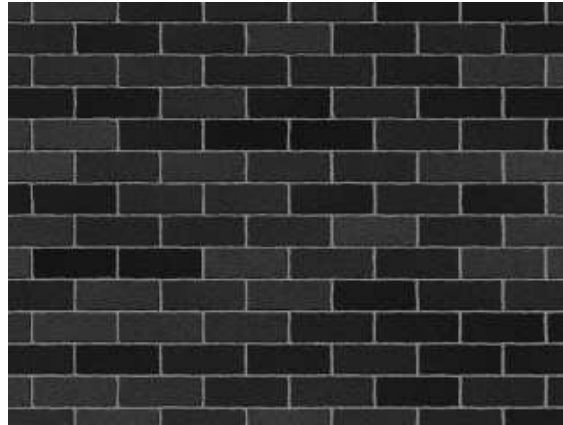
### Resigned Communication

- The right thing to use. For instance, expert opinion.
- Look to the past - for instance, class hierarchy was more persuasive.
- Simple and straightforward, nothing complex, no fancy ideas.
- Avoid overtly sexual colours, sensual messages ... forget hormones in general.

### Resigned Brands

- Brand on a pedestal, like a classical marble statue.
- Ethical values. Honest, simple, healthy.
- The pleasure of a good bargain.

## Struggler



## ESCAPE

### Struggling Values

The need to escape arises when the reality of your life is depressing and you are unable to change it. The problem is personal resources – poor education, poor up-bringing, an impoverished experience. The only hope is that help will come from outside, maybe a lottery win, or through a physical skill such as mending cars, wrestling or boxing. Otherwise escape can be found through alcohol, drugs, TV.

- Low self-esteem - frustrated material desire. Need flash trainers to make an impact.
- Alienation - living in a successful consumer society and all too often the onlooker.
- Lack direction, discipline, order and organisation, difficult to set and achieve goals.
- Gang culture - tough on the outside, soft on the inside. Rites of belonging such as tattoos and scars. Wide boy, street-wise, Jack-the-lad.
- Basics neglected – junk food diet.
- Living on the edge - break the rules simply to survive. Excitement, sensation.

### Struggling Communication

- Hard to express feelings.
- Aggression, anarchy, fantasy.

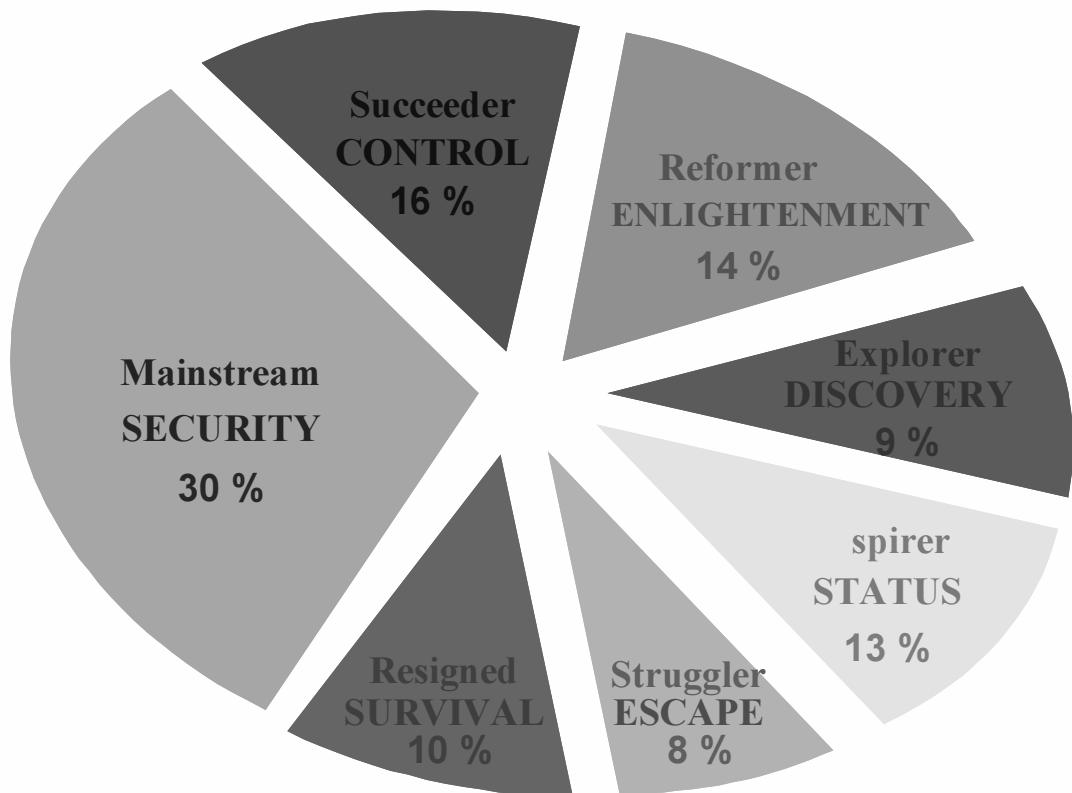
### Struggling Brands

- A dramatic image of rugged, stylish glamour – the black leather jacket.
- The lovable rogue, charming and fun, but slightly devious.

## Putting Numbers to Values

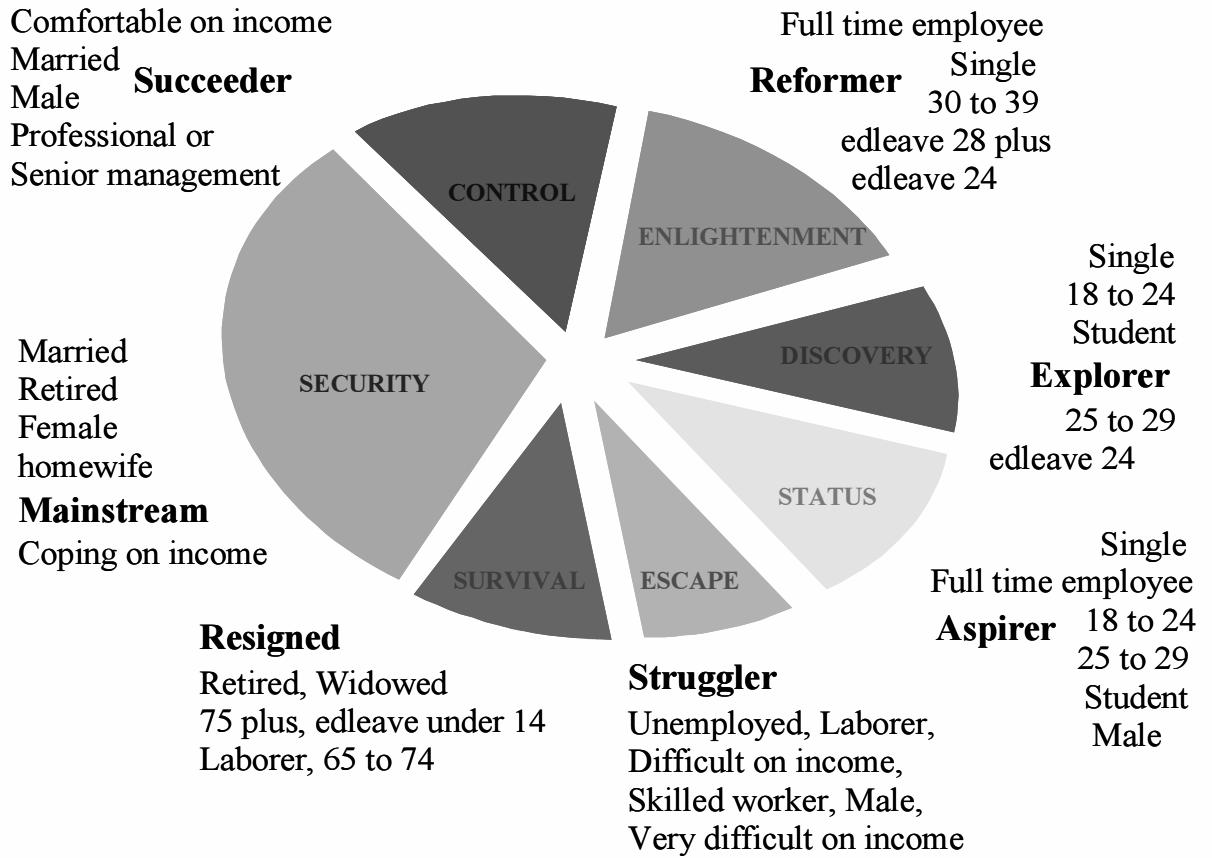
Around the world we tend to find the following breakdown of 4Cs type. This can be taken literally as numbers of people who have that value system as the main priority that affects their brand choice decisions in general ...

... or it can be taken to reflect the normal distribution of values in the average person. After all, you don't have to be classified as a Mainstreamer to love your children.



With what we have learned so far, even without data we have a conceptual tool. We can use it to understand from different points of view, much as it was used to de-construct advertising at the start of this discussion. You could apply it to your existing knowledge for a better understanding of internet use, sports activities or politics. Or, of course, category brand use. It's also a natural for new product development.

## Demographic Tendencies



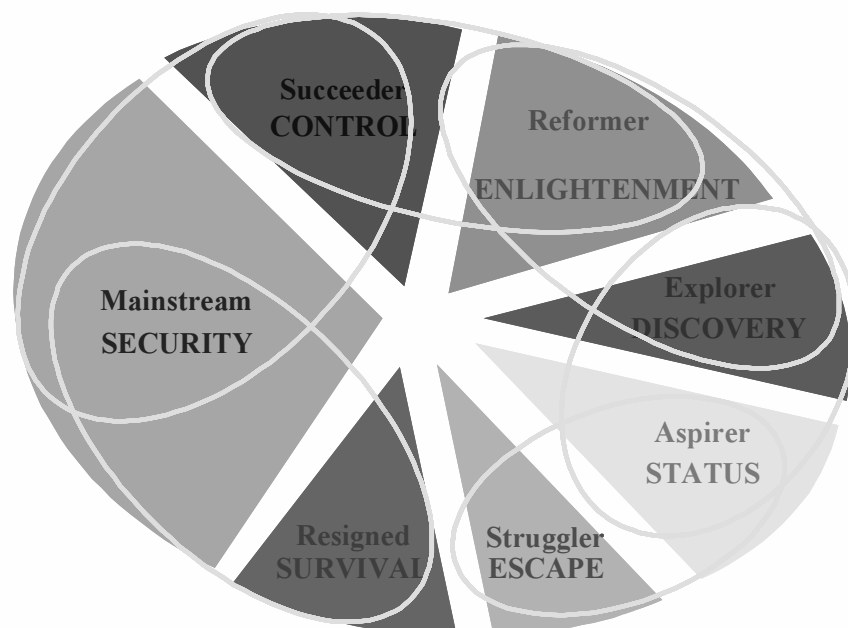
With this information we can connect to purely demographic target descriptions.

## Starting to Understand Structure

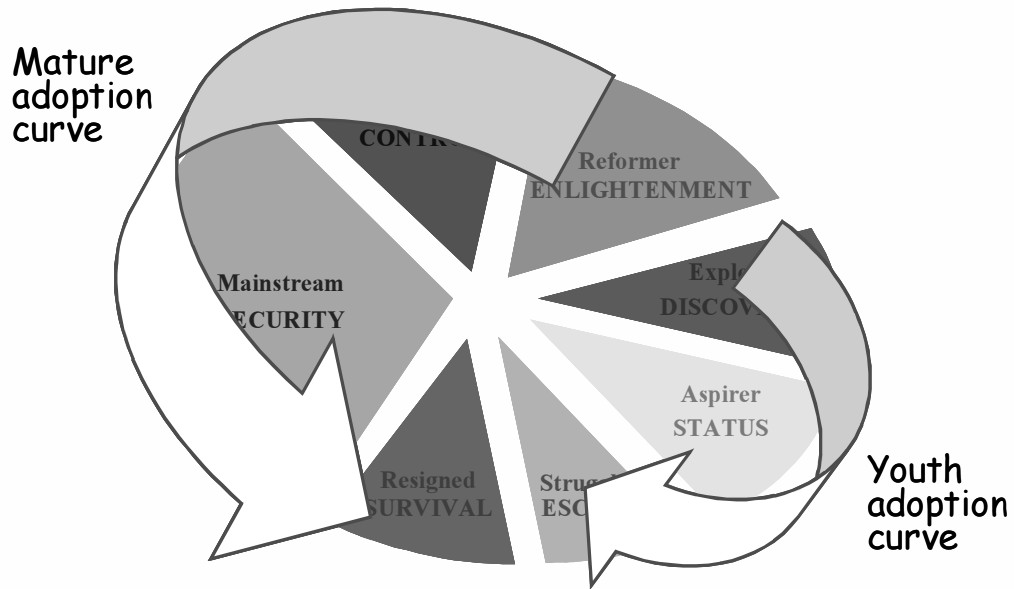


The main difference between people's values is whether a person's priority is for security over freedom, or for freedom over security.

The second dimension is more to do with the resources a person can call on, such as education and nurturance, which in turn affect confidence, income, social skills, material needs and so on. A consequence of the structure is that adjacent 4Cs groups share certain values – and may be targeted together.

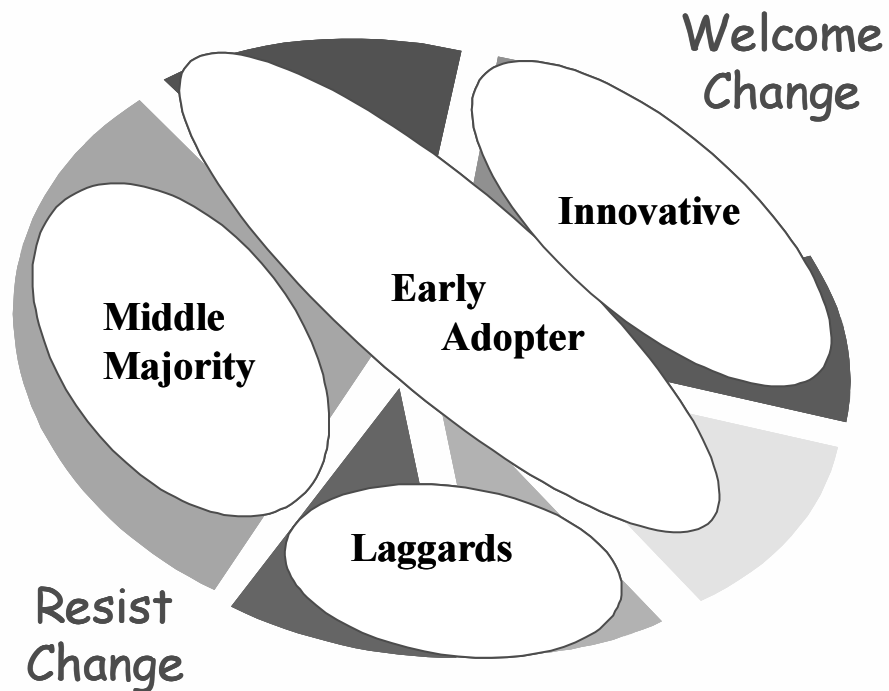


# Adoption Behaviour



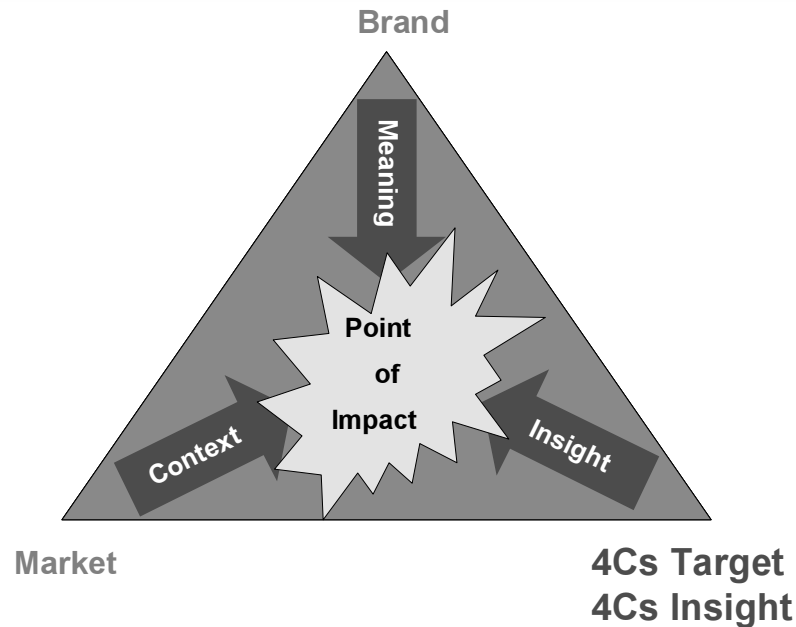
The structure includes a time dimension – Modern to Traditional – from the New to the Old – that is, the adoption curve. Reformers and Explorers are the most open to new ideas. Both Succeeders and Aspirers are motivated to follow fashion trends. Mainstream will not take up new ideas until they have become generally accepted. Both Struggler and Resigned are classed as Laggards, though only Resigned are wedded to the past. Strugglers simply lack the resources.

Adoption analysis can be useful in determining brand health and the task of advertising.



## Making the Connection – What's the Big Idea?

The contribution of 4Cs to the planning process is to find the relevance that connects the brand to its target – the 4Cs value.



The basic 4Cs value of your chosen target is your starting point for insight.

Unlike a demographic or product use target, the target itself provides meaning, a fundamental value to which the brand must connect.

It has a whole world of general associations, a subjective reality, a lifestyle, a myriad of brand and lifestyle choices to inform your imagination.

You will also find out as much as you can about how the value operates in the specific category and in relation to the brand. You will analyse BAV, talk to people in the street and in shops, generally research the situation using whatever is relevant and useful.

The Consumer Insight form will be a helpful aid to your thinking process, taking you to the point where you decide how you want your target to think, feel and act about the brand, and find your key insight into the consumer as a target for the brand