

# Branding and archetypes: an analysis of Ayrton Senna's representations in advertising

## *Branding e arquétipos: análise das representações de Ayrton Senna na publicidade*

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### ABSTRACT

This article analyzes how branding and archetypes are articulated in the construction of Ayrton Senna as a timeless brand. Using a qualitative approach, with the application of content analysis, four advertising campaigns broadcast in different decades are examined, having been responsible for consolidating and updating the driver's legacy. The campaigns, developed by companies from different segments, highlight the symbolic permanence of Senna in the collective imagination over time. The analysis identifies a recurring activation of archetypes, especially the Hero and the Helper, associated with universal values such as courage, loyalty, overcoming challenges, and solidarity. These elements structure narratives that go beyond promotional logic, operating as devices for constructing meaning, belonging, and national identity. The results demonstrate that the Senna phenomenon functions as a symbolic pendulum between legacy and market, in which corporate brands and the athlete's image mutually strengthen each other. More than just tributes, campaigns mobilize affective memories and cultural values, creating lasting emotional bonds. It can be concluded that the Ayrton Senna brand exemplifies the power of branding by converting memory into cultural and emotional value, maintaining its relevance and ability to inspire generations over the decades.

**Keywords:** Branding. Archetypes. Ayrton Senna.

### RESUMO

*O presente artigo analisa como o branding e os arquétipos se articulam na construção de Ayrton Senna como marca atemporal. Por meio de uma abordagem qualitativa, com aplicação da análise de conteúdo, examinam-se quatro campanhas publicitárias veiculadas em diferentes décadas, que foram responsáveis por consolidar e atualizar o legado do piloto. As campanhas, desenvolvidas por empresas de distintos segmentos, evidenciam a permanência simbólica de Senna no imaginário coletivo ao longo do tempo. A análise identifica a ativação recorrente de arquétipos, com destaque para o Herói e o Prestativo, associados a valores universais como coragem, lealdade, superação e solidariedade. Esses elementos estruturam narrativas que ultrapassam a lógica promocional, operando como dispositivos de construção de sentido, pertencimento e identidade nacional. Os resultados demonstram que o fenômeno Senna funciona como um pêndulo simbólico entre legado e mercado, no qual marcas corporativas e a imagem do atleta se fortalecem mutuamente. Mais do que homenagens, as campanhas mobilizam memórias afetivas e valores culturais, criando vínculos emocionais duradouros. Conclui-se que a marca Ayrton Senna exemplifica a força do branding ao converter memória em valor cultural e emocional, mantendo sua relevância e capacidade de inspirar gerações ao longo das décadas.*

**Palavras-chave:** Branding. Arquétipos. Ayrton Senna.

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Received on: 02/26/2026 – Accepted on: 06/11/2026

## INTRODUCTION

In Brazil, Ayrton Senna represents an emblematic figure who transcended the sporting arena and established himself as a reference of national identity through symbolic archetypes that generate emotional identification and public legitimacy (Bourdieu, 1998; Mark; Pearson, 2001). Even after the peak of his career and his death, his legacy remains alive, whether through advertising campaigns or the collective memory of the Brazilian people. Currently, the company Senna Brands manages and expands Ayrton Senna's portfolio of brands, which includes: Ayrton Senna (the idol himself, the focus of this article), Instituto Ayrton Senna (a non-profit organization), and Senninha (an animated character). This entire brand portfolio draws inspiration from the pilot's legacy, achievements, and values (Senna Brands, 2025).

According to Jacks (2007), the media plays a central role in the production and circulation of social meanings, which is essential to understand how certain figures gain symbolic status and remain relevant over time. Furthermore, we live in a society characterized by emotional bonds and a constant search for symbolic representations that express identity and belonging (Lipovetsky, 1989). In this sense, Ayrton Senna's trajectory aligns with what Rubio (2001) defines as the construction of the sports hero: a figure who embodies collective values, projects social hopes, and occupies national imagination as a symbol of perseverance, bravery, and belonging. According to Rubio (2001, p. 26), "the athlete, when elevated to the status of hero, becomes a model of conduct, a symbol of what a society values and aspires to be."

When this discussion is approached from the field of branding, it becomes clear that brands, like idols, depend on symbolic narratives and the construction of meanings capable of transcending time. Ayrton Senna's case illustrates how symbolic capital and archetypes support the timelessness of a brand, keeping it relevant across different contexts and generations. In this sense, the main objective of this study is to analyze how archetype activations and advertising campaigns have contributed to the enduring presence of Ayrton Senna as a brand.

An important aspect of the present study is that Ayrton Senna does not represent a conventional corporate brand. Rather, he can be understood as a personal brand whose symbolic value was built through sporting achievements, media visibility, and the association with socially shared values. According to Peters (1997), individuals may become brands when their identity, reputation, and values generate public recognition and differentiation. In this sense, Senna's image transcended his role as an athlete and evolved into a symbolic asset capable of generating cultural, emotional, and economic value. This perspective is particularly relevant because the advertising campaigns analyzed in this study do not promote a product directly; instead, they mobilize the symbolic power of a personal brand that continues to resonate across generations.

The case study of Senna provides insights into the mechanisms of symbolic management that maintain him as a reference of identity and belonging, demonstrating how archetypes remain meaningful in a context of intense cultural transformations. The choice to investigate the branding of Ayrton Senna stems from

the recognition that the pilot represents an emblematic case of a brand mobilized over decades. This phenomenon raises academic interest in understanding the processes through which advertising and social discourse produce and renew identity-related meanings. In this regard, this study seeks to contribute to the field of Communication by investigating how brands are constructed and sustained to remain relevant over time.

## METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

Regarding methodological classification, this study was characterized as basic research, with exploratory and descriptive objectives, employing bibliographic procedures and a case study approach, and adopting a qualitative perspective for the analysis of the problem. Data analysis was conducted using content analysis, as proposed by Bardin (2011), which structured the process into three main phases: pre-analysis, material exploration, and treatment of results, as well as inference and interpretation.

For the data collection stage, the research corpus consisted of the advertising campaigns described below, selected to represent an approximate contextual snapshot by decade, including campaigns that involved audiovisual productions. They are:

- Banco Nacional – *Despedida* (1994)<sup>1</sup>: Produced shortly after Ayrton Senna's death, this video became one of the most striking tributes of the period;
- Instituto Ayrton Senna – *Seja você também parceiro de um programa educacional campeão* (2008)<sup>2</sup>: The campaign, narrated by Rodrigo Santoro, showcased memorable moments from Senna's career and drew a parallel between his achievements and the Institute's work in promoting education in Brazil;
- Allianz – *Meu Momento Senna* (2015)<sup>3</sup>: The campaign invited Brazilians to recall memorable moments with Ayrton Senna, from an unforgettable race or a gesture off the track to the emotion of seeing him lift the trophy;
- Heineken – *The Toast* (2024)<sup>4</sup>: Released decades after Ayrton Senna's career, this campaign presented a symbolic toast between Alain Prost and the memory of his historic rival, connecting generations of Formula 1 fans.

For each campaign, the following categories of analysis were applied, as proposed in Bardin's (2011) content analysis method and described in Chart 1: theme, archetypes, and values. The theme category enabled the identification of the central ideas expressed in the advertisements; the archetypes category allowed for an understanding of the symbolic representations attributed; and the values category made it possible to analyze the principles, ideologies, and cultural meanings mobilized by the campaigns, highlighting the elements that reinforce both the pilot's image and the positioning of the brands involved.

1 Available at: <https://youtu.be/AXwl6mGmess?si=Vyajd9v1NR3YzImx>. Accessed on: May 1, 2026.

2 Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i0cbjBEmMTQ>. Accessed on: May 1, 2026.

3 Available at: [https://youtu.be/0N9kHksWA5M?si=UAG4N-8FTfsX6\\_9x](https://youtu.be/0N9kHksWA5M?si=UAG4N-8FTfsX6_9x). Accessed on: May 1, 2026.

4 Available at: [https://youtu.be/Oz\\_F2xjdNi0?si=XkiPt1jBYNXwTq9](https://youtu.be/Oz_F2xjdNi0?si=XkiPt1jBYNXwTq9). Accessed on: May 1, 2026.

Chart 1. Categories of Analysis.

| Analysis Category | Justification                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| i. Theme          | Thematic analysis allows the identification of the main ideas expressed in communication materials. Bardin (2011) emphasizes that thematic categorization organizes content into units of meaning, facilitating interpretation. Krippendorff (2004) reinforces that thematic analysis captures both explicit and implicit meanings, while Bauer and Gaskell (2002) consider it essential for understanding social representations through media narratives.             |
| ii. Archetypes    | The archetype category enables an understanding of the symbolic representations conveyed in campaigns. Jung (2016) grounds the notion of archetypes as universal symbolic structures that shape narratives. Mark and Pearson (2001) apply this perspective to branding, showing how archetypes guide the construction of brand identity. Herskovitz and Crystal (2010) complement this by demonstrating the role of archetypes in creating consistent brand characters. |
| iii. Values       | Values analysis allows the identification of principles, ideologies, and cultural meanings mobilized by campaigns. Schwartz (1992; 2005) presents the Theory of Universal Human Values, useful for understanding the motivational foundations of advertising messages. Feather (1992) links values to social attitudes and cultural choices. Rocha and Barros (2006) discuss how advertising mobilizes cultural and identity values in Brazil.                          |

Source: Prepared by the authors (2025).

## BRANDING

Branding can be understood as a strategic process of building, managing, and consolidating brands, going far beyond aesthetic or communicational aspects. According to Martins (2006), a brand should be seen as an intangible asset that adds value to products and services, connecting to culture and people's lives. In this sense, brand management is not limited to logos or advertising campaigns, but involves creating meaning and identity capable of sustaining long-term relationships with consumers. Aaker (1996) already highlighted that brand equity, or the value of a brand, is formed by elements such as loyalty, perceived quality, associations, and awareness, constituting an essential asset for contemporary organizations.

Over the years, various researchers and practitioners have expanded the understanding of branding, integrating it into the social, cultural, and emotional dimensions of consumption. Kreutz *et al.* (2016) observe that brands, in a globalized and competitive world, become drivers of social, economic, and cultural progress, attracting consumers, collaborators, and investors while simultaneously building strong relationships and driving financial markets. This perspective emphasizes that brands do not merely sell products; they represent forms of economic development and social inclusion, becoming embedded in the daily lives of communities.

Authors such as Troiano (2016) reinforce the idea that brands resemble living organisms, going through phases of growth, crisis, reconciliation, and transformation. This view highlights that branding should be regarded as a continuous and dynamic process, in which symbolic consistency and authenticity are decisive for

maintaining trust. In this context, brand experience gains relevance, as consumer interaction across multiple touchpoints is essential for consolidating positive perceptions and building emotional bonds.

Furthermore, contemporary branding values storytelling as a crucial resource for giving meaning to brands. As highlighted in studies presented at international branding conferences (Kreutz *et al.*, 2016), storytelling allows the articulation of tradition, identity, and innovation, offering brands a narrative capable of captivating and engaging their audiences. This narrative dimension is closely related to the concept of brand experience, in which a brand is understood as a system of symbolic, sensory, and emotional connections that go beyond functional communication to create memorable experiences.

Martins (2006) adds that strong brands transcend their economic nature and become rooted in culture, influencing lifestyles and social behaviors. Similarly, Aaker (1996) emphasizes that well-positioned brands are capable of sustaining competitive advantage over time, as they create clear, differentiated, and relevant associations in consumers' minds. In this sense, branding should be seen as a strategic management process that aligns identity, positioning, purpose, and values, ensuring consistency and coherence across all touchpoints with audiences.

Brazilian literature also reinforces the importance of branding in contemporary contexts. Troiano (2016) observes that the emotional bond established by brands ensures their longevity, allowing them to withstand crises and transformations without losing relevance. Kreutz *et al.* (2016), when analyzing international branding experiences, conclude that a brand should be seen as a strategy for development and as a space for building social, cultural, and economic connections.

Thus, branding cannot be reduced to a set of marketing or design techniques but should be understood as a management philosophy focused on creating meaning. It acts as a bridge between organizational identity and consumer expectations, structuring narratives that strengthen emotional bonds and consolidate strategic positioning. In a scenario marked by intense competition, hyperconnectivity, and accelerated cultural changes, branding emerges as an essential tool for ensuring the longevity, differentiation, and relevance of brands in the collective imagination.

Additionally, Carneiro (2010) highlights that the corporate brand phenomenon is expansive and constantly evolving, requiring companies to maintain a posture of continuous updating. The author stresses that brand longevity depends not only on consistency but also on the ability to engage with new audiences and emerging social values. This connects to Troiano's (2016) reflection that brands are living organisms, navigating crises and adaptations while maintaining a recognizable symbolic core that sustains trust over time.

Another key point is the role of storytelling, increasingly considered a central pillar in brand-building processes. Kreutz *et al.* (2016) demonstrate how well-structured narratives allow brands to articulate tradition, innovation, and identity coherently, engaging diverse audiences. By telling stories that mobilize archetypes and universal values, branding strengthens its capacity to generate emotional identification, an essential condition for timelessness.

Thus, it can be observed that branding should not be understood as a static practice but as a dynamic, relational, and culturally anchored management philosophy. As Aaker (1996) emphasizes, the principles underpinning strong brands are linked to the creation of enduring meaning, the coherent management of experiences, and the construction of continuous relevance. This approach explains why some brands remain embedded in the collective imagination for decades: they do not merely sell products or services, but create symbolic contexts that renew themselves without losing their essence. At this point, it becomes fundamental to understand the symbolic mechanisms that give depth to these brand narratives. Among them, archetypes stand out as universal structures of meaning that guide how brands express values, build identities, and emotionally connect with their audiences. It is through this archetypal dimension that branding transcends strategic management and reaches the symbolic and cultural spheres.

## **ANALYSIS**

This section aims to analyze how branding and archetypes interact in campaigns that contributed to the consolidation of Ayrton Senna as a perennial and culturally relevant brand. The study examined the advertising materials of Banco Nacional (1994), the farewell commercial; the Instituto Ayrton Senna campaign, *"Seja você também parceiro de um programa educacional campeão"* (2008); Allianz's *"Meu Momento Senna"* (2015); and Heineken's *"The Toast"* (2024), observing how each utilized themes, archetypes, and values to reinforce the brand's enduring presence in the collective imagination.

The analysis is grounded in the concepts of brand equity and symbolic management (Aaker, 1996; Martins, 2006), archetypal typology (Mark; Pearson, 2001; Jung, 2016), and the theory of human values (Schwartz, 1992; 2005). It seeks to reveal how different brands appropriate, reinforce, and resonate with universal patterns of meaning, thereby sustaining the timelessness of the Ayrton Senna brand, converting memory into cultural attachment, and translating reputation into brand and consumer value.

### **BANCO NACIONAL: FAREWELL COMMERCIAL (1994)**

The farewell campaign for Ayrton Senna, aired shortly after his death in 1994, not only reinforces the magnitude of the athlete's impact but also inaugurates the consolidation of Senna as a brand. In this sense, the commercial transcends the mere function of homage and assumes a strategic character by perpetuating values that transform the human figure into a symbolic asset. The campaign is configured as a farewell, evoking the image of a friend whose memory is perpetuated through values such as perseverance, dedication, and altruism.

According to Martins (2006), branding should be understood as the management of tangible and intangible attributes that, when properly administered, generate value and influence, transforming into an asset that transcends economic

dimensions and becomes embedded in culture and people's lives. In Senna's case, his trajectory was narrated not only through sporting excellence but also through his ability to inspire dedication, resilience, and nationalism, values that resonate deeply within the Brazilian collective imagination.

The construction of this narrative directly connects to the concept of archetypes, as developed by Jung (2016), for whom these universal images form part of the collective unconscious and organize human experience. When applied to branding, archetypes function as patterns of meaning capable of generating immediate identification. Mark and Pearson (2001) emphasize that strong brands rely on enduring archetypes, capable of translating universal desires and creating consistent emotional bonds.

In the farewell campaign, two archetypes were clearly activated: the Hero and the Everyman. The Hero archetype represents courage, overcoming obstacles, and the pursuit of excellence — attributes consistently associated with Senna due to his tireless dedication, discipline, and historic victories. This dimension connects to the human desire to achieve extraordinary feats, almost evoking a "superpower." Meanwhile, the Everyman archetype evokes closeness and humility. Despite his position as a global idol, Senna was recognized for his simplicity and the genuine way he connected with the public, particularly the Brazilian people. As Troiano (2016) notes, strong brands build emotional relationships comparable to friendships, permeated by trust and empathy.

This combination is strategic: while elevating Senna to a heroic and transcendent figure, it does not distance him from the public, preserving his humanity and accessibility. Thus, the campaign mobilized universal values such as courage, dedication, humility, and companionship, elements that endure over time and sustain the Senna brand narrative as a collective legend. This process of signification corresponds to what Aaker (1996) terms brand equity: an intangible asset constructed through associations, awareness, and loyalty, capable of maintaining a brand's relevance even after the physical absence of its protagonist.

According to Kreutz *et al.* (2016), contemporary branding is directly linked to the capacity to connect emotional and cultural experiences, transforming brands into vectors of memory and identity. Senna's farewell campaign exemplifies this dynamic, as it not only communicates a loss but also establishes a narrative of legacy that resonates with universal values.

In summary, Banco Nacional opens the door and contributes to the emergence of enduring meanings, demonstrating how the athlete transcends both the race-track and time, while elevating him to the status of hero and projecting him as a brand. Simultaneously, by paying homage, Banco Nacional associates itself with everything Senna represents, positioning itself as a loyal friend bidding farewell to a partner, further echoing values that any bank would aspire to convey: friendship, loyalty, and closeness. Thus, it becomes evident that strong brands are those that go beyond functional attributes, activating archetypes and values capable of resonating within the collective unconscious.

## **INSTITUTO AYRTON SENNA (2008): "BECOME A PARTNER OF A CHAMPION EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM"**

The campaign draws parallels between significant moments in the driver's career, such as winning a race after starting from the 14<sup>th</sup> position, and the educational challenges faced in Brazil. Its goal is to connect Ayrton Senna's winning character to the mission of transforming education, so that more students can "succeed" within the educational system.

The Instituto Ayrton Senna campaign centers on education as an instrument of social transformation, projecting the pilot's legacy beyond the realm of sport. The advertising narrative mobilizes affective and collective memories around Senna, associating his image with responsibility, discipline, and perseverance, while the voiceover, conducted by Rodrigo Santoro, establishes an inspiring tone that invites the public to engage in a collective social impact project. This shifts the concept of "champion" from the sports field to the realm of citizenship. In this sense, the discourse is structured around values such as solidarity, commitment, and hope, reinforcing education as a path toward the future and prompting reflection on the individual's role in building a better country, aligning the brand with a legitimate social purpose. As Alessio (2008, *apud* Kreutz *et al.*, 2016, p. 595) notes, "corporate social responsibility enhances brand image, fosters closer relationships with consumers, strengthens corporate reputation, encourages loyalty, and delivers value to customers."

In this context, the archetypes of the Hero and the Caregiver (*Prestativo*) are articulated, translating the pilot's legacy into a narrative that unites courage and solidarity. The Hero is embodied by Senna, whose trajectory of effort, discipline, and overcoming challenges is re-signified in the social sphere, reinforcing the idea that winning involves transforming lives through education. As Mark and Pearson (2001, p. 97) assert, "the Hero archetype seeks to prove its worth through courageous acts, aiming to make the world a better place through effort and competence." This heroic dimension extends to the audience, inviting participation in a collective project that transcends individual admiration and becomes a commitment to the country's future.

Complementarily, the Caregiver archetype manifests in the campaign's essence by proposing empathetic and socially responsible engagement, aligned with the authors' description: "The Caregiver is motivated by the desire to protect others from harm, pain, and life's hardships. It expresses compassion and a commitment to collective well-being" (Mark; Pearson, 2001, p. 142). Thus, the Institute combines the Hero's drive for achievement with the Caregiver's genuine concern, reaffirming that true heroism is realized in acts of service: "when a brand incorporates the heroic ideal of making a difference, it inspires people to act, awakening in them the desire to also accomplish something meaningful" (Mark; Pearson, 2001, p. 100).

The Instituto Ayrton Senna campaign mobilizes values deeply linked to the idea of social transformation through education. By connecting Senna's victorious

trajectory to achievements that require effort and perseverance within the educational system, the narrative conveys virtues such as solidarity, commitment, and hope. According to Troiano (2016, p. 42), “brands that emerge from genuine and human values earn an emotional space within people, becoming part of their personal history.” This emotional relationship reinforces the role of brands as mediators of meaning and identity, capable of transcending the market and integrating into culture. Accordingly, the Instituto Ayrton Senna activates collective emotion around the pilot’s figure, translating the ideal of “winning” into an act of responsibility and social contribution.

The Institute not only strengthens its own reputation, but also promotes a coherent and continuous narrative of the Ayrton Senna brand. As Martins (2006) observes, brands that transcend their products and become part of culture “influence people’s lives and simplify their choices in an increasingly confusing world.” In the same vein, Troiano (2016, p. 64) adds, “when a brand creates genuine identification, it ceases to be a logo and occupies an emotional space in people’s lives,” as it establishes emotional bonds comparable to relationships of affection and trust. The campaign thus reaffirms Senna as a symbol of heroism and humanity, consolidating the convergence between social purpose and symbolic strength, a link that perpetuates Ayrton Senna’s name as a brand that inspires, mobilizes, and educates.

### **ALLIANZ: “MY SENNA MOMENT” (2015)**

The campaign “My Senna Moment” was launched by Allianz Seguros in 2015, inviting people to share their own “Senna moments,” everyday situations in which effort, care, and determination become central. The analyzed film recounts the most emblematic episode of former Formula 1 driver Érik Comas, who shared his “Senna moment.” He recalled the 1992 incident during the Belgian Grand Prix, when he suffered a severe accident. Upon realizing the gravity of the situation, Ayrton Senna stopped his car on the track and rushed to help Comas, turning off the engine of the crashed vehicle and preventing an imminent explosion.

This heroic gesture, marked by courage and solidarity, was highlighted by Allianz and transformed into a thematic narrative to convey its brand promise: protecting lives and providing safety in risky situations. The campaign concludes with the message “a tribute to the man greater than the driver,” shifting the focus from individual performance to a universal human value: the preservation of life. This aligns with Kreutz *et al.* (2016), who emphasize that strong brands play socially and culturally relevant roles by mobilizing symbols that engage and inspire people around shared values. In this regard, Zerbinatti (2012, p. 41) notes that “branding is a strategic tool of symbolic management, responsible for translating the essence and values of a brand into experiences and meanings that connect people and organizations.” By recalling this emblematic act of heroism, Allianz builds a bridge between Senna’s collective memory and its institutional promise of protection. The theme of heroism and protection thus serves as a central axis for symbolic identification,

consolidating both Allianz and the Ayrton Senna brand within a territory of universal and timeless values.

In the Allianz campaign, two archetypes stand out in a symbolic and complementary manner: the Hero and the Caregiver. The Hero archetype is activated through Ayrton Senna in the episode narrated by Érik Comas. By interrupting his own race to save a colleague in danger, Senna materializes individual sacrifice for the greater good, embodying the essence of the Hero archetype (Mark; Pearson, 2001). However, the scene transcends heroism. By extending a hand in a moment of vulnerability, Senna also activates the Caregiver archetype, representing those who nurture, protect, and demonstrate genuine loyalty. Herskovitz and Crystal (2010) highlight that coherent archetypes strengthen brand characters, giving them symbolic depth. From this perspective, Allianz's narrative transforms Senna's human gesture into an archetypal storytelling act, where the institutional promise of protection merges with the pilot's affective memory. The brand thus reinforces its symbolic identity through a story that transcends functionality and enters the realm of emotions and universal values.

The campaign mobilizes universal values that reinforce both Allianz's institutional positioning and Ayrton Senna's symbolic dimension as a brand. The act of stopping the race to save a colleague evokes values such as courage, solidarity, empathy, and collective responsibility, elements central to an ethic focused on preserving life. As Carneiro (2010, p. 21) explains, "corporate brands are living organisms that feed on meanings, values, and perceptions, evolving in accordance with the cultural and social transformations around them." From this perspective, Allianz re-signifies this heroic episode as an expression of its promise of protection and human commitment, strengthening its institutional identity through collective values. Moreover, Carneiro (2010, p. 34) observes that "the symbolic strength of a brand depends on its ability to translate attitudes into gestures perceived as genuine and socially relevant." Allianz's campaign exemplifies this coherence between discourse and practice by linking the idea of protection to a real act of empathy and courage.

Finally, Carneiro (2010, p. 52) emphasizes that "enduring brands are those that inspire trust and remain emotionally close to people, becoming part of affective memory and the social imagination." By aligning its institutional promise with Ayrton Senna's legacy, Allianz positions itself as a brand that embodies, in the present, the same human values that immortalized the driver: courage, loyalty, and care for others.

### **HEINEKEN: "THE TOAST" (2024)**

Heineken's campaign The Toast (2024) revisits the memory of Ayrton Senna, transforming it into a symbolic gesture of unity and celebration. With the motto "today and always bringing us together," the action demonstrates that, regardless of the passage of time and generations, the toast remains a ritual capable of connecting people around shared values. By evoking Senna's moments, the campaign

reinforces the idea that his legacy transcends the racetrack and continues to inspire gatherings and celebrations. The highlight of the narrative occurs when even Senna's greatest rival raises a glass to honor him, symbolizing that admiration and respect surpass competition. In this way, Heineken aligns itself with a collective cultural memory, projecting the toast as a universal language of recognition, unity, and continuity.

The central theme focuses on the capacity to unite generations. The toast, as a universal symbolic gesture, is re-signified by Heineken to represent not only the celebration of victories but, above all, admiration that transcends time. The motto "today and always bringing us together" reinforces that, although decades have passed since Senna's career on the track, his presence remains alive in collective culture, evoking respect, emotion, and recognition. By showing even former rivals raising their glasses in tribute, the campaign communicates that Senna's greatness goes beyond competition, becoming a bond across generations and reaffirming that values such as courage, respect, and unity remain timeless.

The campaign also activates archetypes that reinforce both the heroic dimension and collective connection. The Hero archetype emerges by positioning Ayrton Senna as a symbol of courage and overcoming challenges, a legacy that inspires multiple generations through achievement and determination. Simultaneously, the Everyman archetype is manifested in the shared gesture of the toast, which transcends rivalry and strengthens bonds of closeness and belonging. The Innocent archetype is also perceptible in the atmosphere of celebration and hope, representing the purity of the act of toasting as a timeless ritual that unites individuals around the same symbolic value (Jung, 2016). In this way, the advertising narrative combines complementary archetypes, enhancing the symbolic strength of the brand by linking perseverance, emotion, belonging, and the act of doing good.

The values mobilized demonstrate how the act of toasting transcends mere consumption and acquires symbolic density. The value of tradition is evident in the recognition of Ayrton Senna as an icon, whose memory endures across generations. Benevolence is expressed through the unity of former rivals, transforming competition into a gesture of closeness and respect. Achievement is associated with the pilot's legacy of victories and the inspiration his trajectory conveys, while universalism is present in the idea that admiration for Senna crosses boundaries and connects different cultures. This reading resonates with the understanding that brands not only communicate but also translate cultural values that allow consumers to see themselves in collective narratives, enhancing a sense of belonging and identification (Troiano, 2016).

Therefore, the campaign demonstrates how Ayrton Senna has been consolidated as a timeless brand, whose legacy continues to inspire and mobilize generations. His image transcends sports and becomes a shared cultural asset, revealing how powerful symbols remain alive over time and strengthen collective

bonds. In this sense, Kreutz *et al.* (2016) highlight that strong brands create connections that go beyond immediate consumption and embed themselves in culture as elements of belonging and continuity. By leveraging this permanence, Heineken anchors its narrative in a legacy of respect and unity, positioning itself as part of this cultural continuity, which strengthens its symbolic relevance in the present.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The analysis of the selected campaigns demonstrates that the Ayrton Senna brand functions as a symbolic axis connecting memory, emotion, and universal values, sustaining its presence in the Brazilian collective imagination. Over three decades, the athlete and the brands that leverage his image operate like a narrative pendulum: moving continuously between Senna's legacy and the market, where the symbolic legacy of Senna drives brand value, and in turn, these brands perpetuate and recall his story.

The campaigns by Banco Nacional, Instituto Ayrton Senna, Allianz, and Heineken reveal the recurrent activation of the Hero, Everyman, and Caregiver archetypes, articulating courage, determination, loyalty, empathy, closeness, and perseverance. These archetypes appear consistently throughout the analyzed campaigns and contribute to the construction of Ayrton Senna as both an extraordinary figure and a symbol of human proximity and social commitment. Although the Innocent archetype is also present, particularly in Heineken's campaign, its occurrence is more contextual and limited when compared to the recurring prominence of the Hero, Everyman, and Caregiver archetypes. According to Jung (2016), such symbolic structures emerge from the collective unconscious and shape human experiences of meaning. When translated into the branding context, these archetypes enable narratives of identification and belonging. As Mark and Pearson (2001) emphasize, enduring brands mirror timeless human desires and values. In this sense, Ayrton Senna transcends the figure of an athlete and consolidates as a symbol of collective ideals, where heroism ceases to be individual and becomes a cultural mirror of shared virtues.

From a branding perspective, the Senna phenomenon exemplifies what Aaker (1996) defines as brand equity: a symbolic asset built through associations and meanings that endure beyond time and the product itself. Kreutz *et al.* (2016) further observe that strong brands establish connections and experiences that go beyond consumption, embedding themselves in culture as bonds of belonging and transforming into elements of historical and emotional continuity. This dynamic explains why various companies, even those without direct ties to Formula 1, continue to associate with Senna, recognizing in him a symbolic bridge across generations.

The brands involved perceive the athlete as a channel for celebrating Brazilian identity and emotional connection, both with those who witnessed him race and with new generations who know him only through his legacy. As Constanza Novillo

(2024), Marketing Director at Asics Latin America, notes, “Senna’s cultural impact gives new generations access to his values,” demonstrating the power of symbolic transmission and the relevance of his image as both a cultural and market asset. Similarly, Poyares (*apud* Gleneix, 2024), Marketing Head at Guaraná Antarctica, emphasizes that values such as determination, boldness, and pride in being Brazilian have been inherited and interpreted by new generations, perpetuating Senna’s narrative as a national inspiration.

It is important to recognize that Ayrton Senna passed away more than three decades ago, which means that a significant portion of contemporary audiences never witnessed his sporting achievements firsthand. Therefore, the continuity of his symbolic relevance does not depend exclusively on historical memory, but also on the constant process of cultural mediation carried out by advertising campaigns, documentaries, educational initiatives, media products, and institutional actions. These mechanisms continuously reinterpret and reintroduce Senna’s values to new generations, ensuring that his legacy remains meaningful beyond direct lived experience.

Senna’s name has become a brand capable of generating economic, emotional, and cultural value, a clear example of how ethical conduct and life symbolism can be translated into brand strategy and cultural capital. The Ayrton Senna brand represents a unique case of timelessness, where archetypes, values, and narratives converge to create a collective identity that transcends physical death and consolidates a living brand in social memory. Senna’s legacy remains a reflection of universal virtues, reaffirming that truly strong brands are those that, like him, inspire, transform, and endure with purpose.

This research achieved its objective by analyzing the archetypal activations that sustain Ayrton Senna’s permanence as a timeless brand and by identifying the branding strategies employed across different decades. The study demonstrated that the symbolic power of Senna’s legacy lies in its ability to mobilize universal archetypes and human values in advertising narratives that transcend time, establishing him as a cultural and emotional asset.

Moreover, the study contributes to understanding branding as a cultural mediator, capable of transforming public figures, social causes, and affective memories into narratives of symbolic and emotional value. In a context where humanizing brands is increasingly emphasized, this research highlights that genuine humanization does not rely solely on approachable language or empathetic actions, but on the capacity to reflect authentic human values and create collective meaning. These insights show that branding, when anchored in authenticity and purpose, goes beyond commercial function: it perpetuates stories, inspires identities, and constructs meanings that endure over time.

Therefore, as an outcome, this research expands the field of reflection on the role of communication and advertising in building enduring meanings. It opens avenues for future studies on the symbolic longevity of brands, evidencing how brand narratives can traverse generations and cultural contexts.

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**Conflict of interests:** nothing to declare – **Financial support:** none.

**Authors' contributions:** Oliveira, N. M.: Data curation, Investigation, Formal Analysis. Barths, G. O.: Conceptualization, Formal Analysis, Resources. Barth, M.: Conceptualization, Formal Analysis, Project administration, Resources.

