**Taken from ‘The Hidden Persuaders’, by Vance Packard.** First pub in the UK by Longmans Green, 1957.

The 8 hidden needs are a set of implicit drives that are said by Packard to be innate in people and can be exploited to persuade them to consume.

They include:

1. **Emotional security**: the world proposes many threats and people generally feel unsafe due to disease, war, crime, pollution and so on. Anxiety about the present and future is widespread and can even, to an extent, be created by the manipulation of mass consciousness. Such anxiety has a promised solution in the form of consumer products that confer safety, comfort and happiness.
2. **Reassurance of worth**: in a world that is felt by many to be hyper-competitive and impersonal, people have come to believe that they are not sufficiently recognised and valued for what they do and who they are. Many people don’t believe they are given the credit they deserve for the work they do and the example they set for others, thus they can be made to feel that a consumer product will bestow the esteem of others on them, particularly that of the individuals from whom it is most sought.
3. **Ego gratification**: this in a sense is akin to selling reassurance of worth. A maker of steam shovels found that sales were lagging. It had been showing in its ads magnificent photos of its mammoth machines lifting great loads of rock and dirt. A motivation study of prospective customers was made to find what was wrong. The first fact uncovered was that purchasing agents, in buying such machines, were strongly influenced by the comments and recommendations of their steam-shovel operators, and the operators showed considerable hostility to this company's brand. Probing the operators, the investigators quickly found the reason. The operators resented pictures in the ad that put all the glory on the huge machine and showed the operator as a barely visible figure inside the distant cab. The shovel maker, armed with this insight, changed its ad approach and began taking its photographs from over the operator's shoulder. He was shown as master of the mammoth machine. This new approach, *Tide* magazine reported, is "easing the operators' hostility."
4. **Selling a sense of power**: the fascination Americans show for any product that seems to offer them a personal extension of power has offered a rich field for exploitation by merchandisers. Automobile makers have, strained to produce cars with ever-higher horsepower. After psychiatric probing a Midwestern ad agency concluded that a major appeal of buying a shiny new and more powerful car every couple of years is that "it gives him [the buyer] a renewed sense of power and reassures him of his own masculinity, an emotional need which his old car fails to deliver."

One complication of the power appeal of a powerful new car, the Institute for Motivational Research found, was that the man buying it often feels guilty about indulging himself with power that might be regarded as needless. The buyer needs some rational reassurance for indulging his deep-seated desires. A good solution, the institute decided, was to give the power appeals but stress that all that wonderful surging power would provide "the extra margin of safety in an emergency." This, an institute official explains, provides "the illusion of rationality" that the buyer needs.

The McCann-Erickson advertising agency made a study for Esso gasoline to discover what motivates consumers, in order more effectively to win new friends for Esso. The agency found there is considerable magic in the word power. After many depth interviews with gasoline buyers the agency perfected an ad strategy that hammered at two words, with all letters capitalized: TOTAL POWER.

This need for a sense of power, particularly in men, has been observed and very thoroughly exploited by marketers interested in the boat-buying habits of Americans. Although the owner of a pleasure boat is not going anywhere in particular or at least not in a hurry, Americans prefer power boats to sailboats by a margin of eight to one. The Institute for Motivational Research studied American attitudes toward boat buying and concluded that the average buyer sees his boat as a very satisfying way of fulfilling his need for power. One man, an executive, who was invited to chat at length on the subject said that with a good power boat "you can show you are all man and let her rip 3/4 without having the fear you are bound to have on the road." The institute found that many men seem to use their boats to express their sense of power in "almost a sexual way," and it outlined whatit found to be a "power profile" in the average enthusiast's boat-buying habits. If the man has owned five boats the "power profile" structure is apt to shape up like this: first boat, 31/2 horsepower; second boat, 5 horsepower; third boat, two tens; fourth boat, 20 to 25 horsepower; fifth boat, the sky is the limit in horsepower. The institute counsels: "Manufacturers, eying profits, should explore to the fullest the psychological ways and means of tapping these motives."

The above extracts have been taken from <http://www.12manage.com/description_packhard_hidden_needs.html>

For further reading, try <http://changingminds.org/explanations/needs/packard_needs.htm>

and

<http://pdffinder.net/Marketing-Eight-Hidden-Needs.html>