HOW TO CREATE
BUYER PERSONAS
FOR YOUR BUSINESS

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What Are Buyer Personas?

Buyer personas are fictional, generalized representations of your ideal customers. They help you understand your customers (and prospective customers) better, and make it easier for you to tailor content to the specific needs, behaviors, and concerns of different groups. The strongest buyer personas are based on market research as well as on insights you gather from your actual customer base (through surveys, interviews, etc.). Depending on your business, you could have as few as one or two personas, or as many as 10 or 20. (Note: If you're new to personas, start small! You can always develop more personas later if needed.)

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What Are Negative Personas?

Whereas a buyer persona is a representation of an ideal customer, a negative -- or “exclusionary” -- persona is a representation of who you don’t want as a customer.

This could include, for example, professionals who are too advanced for your product or service, students who are only engaging with your content for research/knowledge, or potential customers who are just too expensive to acquire (because of a low average sale price, their propensity to churn, or their unlikeliness to purchase again from your company.)

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How Can You Use Personas?

At the most basic level, personas allow you to personalize or target your marketing for different segments of your audience. For example, instead of sending the same lead nurturing emails to everyone in your database, you can segment by buyer persona and tailor your messaging according to what you know about those different personas.

If you take the time to create negative personas, you'll have the added advantage of being able to segment out the "bad apples" from the rest of your contacts, which can help you achieve a lower cost-per-lead and cost-per-customer (and see higher sales productivity).

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How Can You Use Personas?

When combined with lifecycle stage (i.e. how far along someone is in your sales cycle), buyer personas also allow you to map out and create highly targeted content.

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How Do You Create Buyer Personas?

Buyer personas are created through research, surveys, and interviews of your target audience. That includes a mix of customers, prospects, and those outside of your contact database who might align with your target audience.

Here are some practical methods for gathering the information you need to develop personas:

Interview customers either in person or over the phone to discover what they like about your product or service.

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How Do You Create Buyer Personas? (cont'd)

Look through your contacts database to uncover trends about how certain leads or customers find and consume your content.

When creating forms to use on your website, use form fields that capture important persona information. (For example, if all of your personas vary based on company size, ask each lead for information about company size on your forms. You could also gather information on what forms of social media your leads use by asking a question about social media accounts.)

Take into consideration your sales team's feedback on the leads they are interacting with most. (What types of sales cycles does your sales team work with? What generalizations can they make about the different types of customers you serve best?)

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How Do You Create Buyer Personas?

HubSpot customers: You can create and manage your personas within the Contacts tool. Right click here, then select Hyperlink > Open Hyper-link to learn more!

Customers and non-customers alike: You can use the following 4-slide template to organize your persona data.

First, we'll walk you through an example, then we'll leave you with some blank templates so you can get to it!

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Section 1: Who?

Persona Name	Sample Sally
Background Job? Career path? Family?	• Head of Human Resources • Worked at the same company for 10 years; worked her way up from HR associate • Married with 2 children (10 and 8)
Demographics Male or female? Age? Income? Location?	• Skews female • Age 30 – 45 • Dual HH Income: $140,000 • Suburban
Identifiers Demeanor? Communication preferences?	• Calm demeanor • Probably has an assistant screening calls • Asks to receive collateral mailed/printed

Section 2: What?

Persona Name	Sample Sally
Goals Primary goal? Secondary goal?	• Keep employees happy and turnover low • Support legal and finance teams
Challenges Primary challenge? Secondary challenge?	• Getting everything done with a small staff • Rolling out changes to the entire company
What can we do ...to help out persona achieve their goals? ...to help our persona overcome their challenges?	• Make it easy to manage all employee data in one place • Integrate with legal and finance team's systems

Section 3: Why?

Persona Name	Sample Sally
Real Quotes About goals, challenges, etc.	• "It's been difficult getting company-wide adoption of new technologies in the past." • "I don't have time to train new employees on a million different databases and platforms." • "I've had to deal with so many painful integrations with other departments' databases and software."
Common Objections Why wouldn't they buy your product/service?	• "I'm worried I'll lose data transitioning to a new system. • "I don't want to have to train the entire company on how to use a new system."

Section 4: How?

Persona Name	Sample Sally
Marketing Messaging How should you describe your solution to your persona?	• Integrated HR Database Management
Elevator Pitch Sell your persona on your solution!	• We give you an intuitive database that integrates with your existing software and platforms and lifetime training to help new employees get up to speed quickly.

Section 1: Who?

Persona Name	
Background Job? Career path? Family?	
Demographics Male or female? Age? Income? Location?	
Identifiers Demeanor? Communication preferences?	

Section 2: What?

Persona Name	
Goals Primary goal? Secondary goal?	
Challenges Primary challenge? Secondary challenge?	
What can we do ...to help out persona achieve their goals? ...to help our persona overcome their challenges?	

Section 3: Why?

Persona Name	
Real Quotes About goals, challenges, etc.	
Common Objections Why wouldn't they buy your product/service?	

Section 4: How?

Persona Name	
Marketing Messaging How should you describe your solution to your persona?	
Elevator Pitch Sell your persona on your solution!	

About Us

Short description and text about your company, mission, goals, etc.

[YOUR AGENCY NAME] was founded in [YEAR YOUR COMPANYW AS FOUNDED]
and designed around creating marketing thatpeople love.

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