

BONUS GUIDE: CUSTOMER PROFILE

HOW TO IDENTIFY YOUR IDEAL CLIENT AND
CREATE YOUR CUSTOMER PROFILE

ELEVATECREATIVECO.CO.UK



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Defining your ideal client is one of the most important tasks in your online marketing. If you don't target the right people, your messaging won't resonate and you will find it very difficult to achieve success with your online marketing. This guide will introduce you to the customer profile and how to create one.

Revisit this guide often and refine your customer profile as your business grows. By the end of this guide you should be able to:

- Identify the core components of your customer profile
- Conduct in depth research to define your ideal client
- Develop your in depth customer profile
- Use the customer profile to build a community of loyal, engaged fans and followers



ELEVATE CREATIVE CO.

WHO ARE WE?

For more than a decade, the team at Elevate Creative Co. have been helping businesses with their marketing. We have written, planned, implemented and reviewed thousands of projects for clients across all industries.

We recognise that not every business has thousands of pounds to spend every month on outsourcing their marketing. This guide is designed to give you the knowledge and tools you need to create and implement a strong marketing strategy.



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INTRODUCTION

Understanding your ideal client is essential to your digital marketing efforts. It will help you build your entire online strategy and ensure that your messaging and content is tailored and targeted to the needs of your audience.

Many businesses get this wrong – they post content all about themselves, never thinking about how relevant it is to the people reading.

Getting your ideal client right may be a process of trial and error. It's much easier for an established business to gain a deeper insight into their ideal client because you have a bank of data that you can access to collect the information you need. New businesses or at least those new to marketing may not have this information available. You can still create your ideal client profile but it just takes a little more effort. Even if you have customer data you may want to use some of the methods outlined in this guide to gain greater clarity on who you are targeting. There are characteristics of your ideal client:

Trust – Understanding your audience will help you establish all important connections and build trust

Marketing – It is much easier to establish relationships, make connections and attract a loyal following if you know who you are talking to.

Focus – A customer profile will help you clarify who you are targeting, why and what topics resonate with them the most.

The persona – A semi-fictional representation used to describe the characteristics of your ideal customer

A detailed customer profile will help you to create a detailed description of your ideal customer. Think of the process in a similar way that a writer would develop a character for a novel.



INTRODUCTION

The information in your customer profile should guide every marketing decision you make. From the content you post to the platforms and channels you choose.

A buyer persona is a detailed representation of your ideal follower and customer. It's semi-fictional combining real world data with fictional information or ideals.

The finished persona will look similar to a personal profile and include a lot of useful information including traits, habits, preferences and values as well as things such as interests, income and goals. All of these things will guide the choices that your target follower/customer makes online, how they buy, what they spend and who they interact with.

When you have this information, you can create targeted posts that your audience are much more likely to engage with. It also becomes so much easier to build an engaged group of followers and convert them into paying customers.

The buyer persona can be broken down into a series of steps which starts with research and information gathering and ends with community building.



PART 1 INFORMATION GATHERING

A finished buyer persona contains a lot of information. On a most basic level, there are two components to the customer profile that will underpin all of your other work: demographics and psychographics.

Demographics relate to the 'who' of your ideal customer, they provide an insight into who they are. Demographic information includes background such as job title and education, their gender, age, income, location and goals.

Psychographics are a little more complex. They look at why your ideal client makes the decisions they do. This type of information can include hobbies and interests, challenges, objections and fears.

Problem Identification

Problems are everywhere. As a business owner you need to identify the most important problems your customers want to solve.

Find out the negative thought processes they go through. What barriers are in the way. Why won't they take action, even though they know it will help them in the long term?

Your job, as you piece together the customer profile, is to find out what matters to your ideal customer. Discover their pain points, needs and wants, what keeps them awake at night and understand problems stopping them from moving forward in their life, work or relationships. Once you have identified these factors, you can then provide a suitable solution in the form of a product or service that you sell.

As well as exploring why they will buy, also look at the negative thought processes that they go through. What barriers are in the way? Why won't they buy?

Also think about platforms. Where do they spend most of their time, why and which platforms do they visit to find information?

What are their values and beliefs – Does your product/service support these or contrast with them?

There are five categories of questions that you can ask to delve deeper into your research and add some weight to your customer profile: who, what, where, why and how.

Who:

- Who is most likely to buy from you?
- Who do they look up to, admire and respect?
- Who do they live, work and spend their free time with?

What:

- What interests, passions, hobbies do they have? Explore interests because areas of common interest can become talking points. When people are interested, they are more likely to engage.

- What challenges do they face in life, work or relationships? Everyone faces a challenge or two now and again. Some are more serious than others. Challenges can occur in life, business or relationships. Understanding challenges is the first step in providing a valuable solution.

- What are their goals, hopes for the future? When you know where your ideal client wants to be, you can tailor your product or service to help them get there.

- What content do they consume, social platforms do they use, blogs, books and newspapers do they read? Always tune your content into WIIFM (What's In It For Me?). Always create from the perspective of your customer.

PART 1 INFORMATION GATHERING

Where

- Where does your ideal customer visit the most when they use the internet? Shopping, information, advice, something else?
- Where does your ideal customer find out about new products and services? Email lists, friends and family, adverts etc?
- Where does your ideal customer shop the most? High street brands or independent stores?

Why

- Why do they like the platforms they do – Engaging content, range of content, ease of use, availability of products and services?
- Why do they buy from the companies they do – customer service, convenience, price?

How?

- How do customers use technology – Are they tech savvy with the latest mobile devices and apps or are they more reliant upon traditional types of technology such as a desktop PC?
- How can your products or services solve the challenges and/or pain points that your ideal customer has?
- How does your product or service address customer needs?
- How does the ideal customer prefer to contact you – through social media DMs, email, telephone, chat?

As you go through each of these questions, always follow your answers with 'why'. This allows you to understand why people make the choices they do and can give you further insights into how your target customers behave and buy online.

Finding Information

To find information to build up a detailed profile of your customer, there are five main sources that you can consult:

Surveys – Create a quick survey of a few questions (no more than five) to gather information about the challenges of your ideal client. Be mindful that sometimes surveys can skew results as respondents may provide the response they think you want rather than the true answer. Surveys can be delivered through polls on Instagram stories, questions sent to your mailing list or a simple outreach email to business owners who fit your target market. If you are reaching out to business owners through cold outreach, be respectful of their time and offer them something of value in return for their help such as a free report or a simple audit.

Competitors – A hugely underused resource that can prove helpful for your research. They have done all the hard work – the trial and error and they understand what content works. Review 5-10 competitors (more if you have the time to do so) to gain an insight into who interacts with their content. If you review their comments/posts you might even be able to identify problems of your ideal client.

Blogs – Research popular blogs and review those of your competitors. What topics are talked about often? What questions appear over and over? These are indicators of big problems in the market that you could solve. Look for industry blogs and websites to find out what they are talking about.

Forums – Quora, Reddit and Facebook groups are a goldmine of information. You will gain a deeper understanding of what people are asking in your niche. Questions are often problems.

PART 1 INFORMATION GATHERING

Reviews – Look at company, course and book reviews on Amazon. These can provide important insights into what customers think in your industry. They may also provide important clues as to their problems or the transformation they had.

As you go through each of the above, make sure you have a good system in place to take and organise your notes. There will be a lot of information to sift through, but it will prove invaluable as you build and implement your marketing campaigns.

Competitor Analysis

Competitors are an excellent source of information for research. Spend some time researching the marketplace to find between 5 and 10 competitors that you can evaluate. For each of your competitors use their website, social media pages and their blog if they have one to find out about your ideal customer. The following questions will guide your research and the types of information that you should look to collect:

Topics – Many businesses will build their content around what is known as content pillars. These are central themes that they cover often. Review competitor websites, blogs and social platforms to identify what these content pillars are. Look at their last 10–20 posts and see what they cover often.

Questions – Where there are opportunities for interaction such as comments, browse through to see if the audience asks any questions. You can also check the Frequently Asked Questions section on websites to pick up on any useful questions you could add to your research. In doing so, you may uncover topics or issues that you hadn't initially thought of.

Engagement – Check that frequently covered topics have good engagement. Are there topics they don't cover as often that get higher levels of engagement or shares? These topics may be worth researching further.

Keywords/Hashtags – Identify keywords and hashtags they are using. Use Google and search features on social platforms to uncover any problems or useful data that you could add to your research.

Audience – Browse through your competitors followers. What types of people follow them and regularly engage? Are there any particular patterns that you can see with certain people or businesses?

Research Sources

When choosing the places to research always try to use authoritative sources.

Problems – As you discover problems, make sure you write them down. Problems don't have to be huge or complex. It can be something as simple as running late, little time or low productivity.

Call to Action – Evaluate your competitor call to action. Where are they taking the prospect or customer? Is it a DM, a landing page, a freebie or something else?

Content Type – What content types prove to be the most popular?

Frequency – How often do your competitors post to social platforms and their blog?

Activity – How active are your competitors? Is the page current or is it a while since they last posted? Is the page growing? Are lots of conversations taking place in the comments?

PART 2 THE CUSTOMER PROFILE

Step 1 Research

It's time to collate the information you have gathered so far and start making sense of it.



Step 2 Analysis

It might take some time, but carefully analyse the data that you have collected and look for common themes, topics and problems that keep appearing.



Step 3 Summary

Summarise your research into the following categories:

- Demographics/psychographics
- Problems and pain points
- Goals/aspirations
- Popular content



Step 4 Profile Development

As your buyer profile starts to take shape, be creative, give the persona a name, describe their background, their values, likes, dislikes and so on. The more detailed you are, the more impact your messaging will have when you are creating posts and engaging with followers.



Step 5 Goals

The final step in the process is to consider how your customer profile fits in with your wider business goals and objectives. What types of content can you create that can solve problems, provide solutions and create a connection while also boosting conversions? What drives purchase decisions, how do you get from follower to customer, and do they have the buying power to make the purchasing decision or are their decisions influenced by someone else such as a manager for a B2B persona?



PART 3 COMMUNITIES

While building a following is great, it's important to attract followers who want to become part of your tribe, who are as interested in your industry as much as you are and who show the same level of enthusiasm, interest and excitement about your products and services that you do. Remember that follower counts are not everything. It's much better to have a smaller, more targeted group of followers who are likely to buy, than thousands of followers who don't engage with your content and who will never convert.

Building a community of likeminded individuals requires an understanding of your target audience, (which you should have if you've reached this point in our workbook), along with a willingness to invest time and effort in the process.

Rather than trying to hit an unrealistic goal, set yourself small increments. If you're new to marketing, grow your audience by 100 people, then slowly build up to 500 or 1000. It is easier to engage a smaller audience. It is much better to have a super engaged following of less than 500 people than thousands of followers who rarely interact.

Digital marketing is now more than ever about creating communities. People want to feel like they belong to something.

If the people you attract to your business are going to become engaged community members, regular communication is needed. Make it easy for people to talk to you. Start conversations often, run Q&A sessions, ask questions and gather feedback, share user stories, encourage members to share their experiences and stories

Provide Value – Start with problems and solve them. In every industry there are countless problems. Find out what they are and give value by offering your audience a quick win, something they can try to achieve a small result. How can you add value to their life? Value means different things to different people so consider your customer profile and identify what would be valuable to them.

Give – Use giveaways to increase awareness and boost engagement. Reward top contributors or people who often support your content. When you provide incentives to regularly engage, people are more likely to remain consistent.

UGC – Who do people trust more than anyone else? Customers. If you can encourage customers to send videos or photo's of their experience working with you or using your product, you can repost this as user generated content. It's great social proof and gives you a lot of credibility – what you say works.

Be You – Share your story, show your personality, tell your followers who you are and why you do what you do. Explain your values and how they came about. It's all about being relatable.

Growth – Connect and collaborate with accounts who complement your business. If you find accounts with an audience who would find your product or service useful, engage with their posts, participate in conversations and become known in their circle.

Influencers – How can you start networking with influencers in your industry to bring them into your community? Find top accounts in your niche and engage. Participate in conversations, share their content. In time influencers will get to know you and may even reach out to feature your content or work with you.



EXTRA MARKETING SUPPORT WHEN YOU NEED IT

We want to give you the confidence to succeed in your digital marketing journey. As well as our DIY toolkits, we also offer more tailored support to help you achieve your goals. Some of our services include:

- Social media consulting
- Content marketing
- Funnel building
- SEO strategy
- VIP Days – Intensive marketing support

And lots more.

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