



Customer Personas: Making Your Demographics Come Alive

Who Are These People?

There are multiple methods to learn about your customer. One great way to organize your information is developing customer profiles or personas. In other words, you are creating examples of your target market so you can be very specific in how you plan your sales and marketing, and how you work with your customers. These “live customer identities” can serve as a challenge and opportunity to your business’s sales and marketing efforts: How can we best reach and serve these customers?

TO DO: Read the following sheet and fill in the blanks with the information you have. As you gather new information, go back and refine this document or your own customer persona map. Use it as a tool to continuously better understand the needs of your customers.

1. Developing Detailed Customer Profiles/Personas

The more information you have on your customers, the more refined your marketing efforts will be. A customer (or buyer) persona is a “semi-fictional representation of your ideal customer based on market research and real data about your existing customers.”¹ Personas are used to customize your customer/buyer’s experience with you, making them more likely to buy from your business.² The list of questions and details you could examine about your customer/buyer are endless. Below are a few examples for you to try out:

B2C BUSINESS THAT PRIMARILY SELLS TO INDIVIDUALS	B2B BUSINESS THAT PRIMARILY SELLS TO OTHER BUSINESSES	B2G BUSINESS THAT PRIMARILY SELLS TO THE GOVERNMENT
Who makes the final buying decision? Is there more than one decision maker? _____	Who makes the final buying decision? Is there more than one decision maker? _____	Who makes the final buying decision? Is there more than one decision maker? _____
What are the purchase decision drivers? _____	What is the buyer’s product or service type? _____	Which branch(es) of the government are you targeting? _____

B2C

B2B

B2G

BUSINESS THAT PRIMARILY SELLS TO INDIVIDUALS

BUSINESS THAT PRIMARILY SELLS TO OTHER BUSINESSES

BUSINESS THAT PRIMARILY SELLS TO THE GOVERNMENT

What is the typical age of the buyer?

What is the typical gender of the buyer?

What is the typical location of the buyer?

What are the typical spending habits of the buyer?

What is the typical income of the buyer?

What is the customer's buying decision process?

What is their career goal?

What are their hobbies?

What are their responsibilities at work and at home?

Other

What are the purchase decision drivers?

What is the size of the buying business?

How much does the buying business spend?

What other suppliers does the buying business have?

What is the customer's buying decision process?

Other

What are your average and median government contract sizes?

Where do you learn about available government contract opportunities?

What type (e.g., small business, competitive, sole source, government contracting, joint venture) of government contract do you pursue?

What is the customer's buying decision process?

What is their role in the organization?

What is their career goal?

What are their responsibilities at work and at home?

What are their hobbies?

Where do they get their information (online sources, TV, etc.)?

Other

2. Making Personas Work for Your Business

Next, consider how you can consolidate your answers to the above questions to make the information in the personas work for you. This gets away from “Everyone should buy this product or service because I like it” to really understanding what they (the customer/buyer) need and want, then matching your development, marketing and sales to those personas.

EXAMPLES OF PERSONAS AND ACTION STEPS:

B2C company: customer/buyer persona

Yvonne is a 52-year-old female who makes the majority of purchasing decisions for her household. Fifty percent of her purchase decisions are made at the last minute. She lives in a suburb and is a marketing manager at a large employer headquartered locally. She makes \$120,000 annually. She watches the morning news and listens to public radio on her way into work, and she reads the paper online every morning. She is married with three kids, two of whom are in college and one of whom is in the working world. Her hobbies include photography and going to plays and musical performances.

Action items to reach this customer/buyer persona:

- **Marketing:** Take out an ad in a local theater playbill.
- **Marketing:** Create an ad for the online morning paper with a “48-hour sale.”

B2B company: customer/buyer persona

Taylor is a 25-year-old male who makes most of the office management buying decisions for his company. He lives in an urban area and is an executive administrative assistant. He makes \$50,000 annually. He gets creative ideas from social media and searches. He is single and a former high school athlete, and his hobbies include running and eating out.

Action items to reach this customer/buyer persona:

- **Marketing:** Develop social media mini-campaign for products/services targeted to Taylor.
- **Sales team:** Send links to creative product uses, highlighting our social media ads and posts.
- Study up on new fitness trends and restaurants before meetings. Conduct meeting over lunch at a hot new restaurant.

B2G company: customer/buyer persona

Jade is a 35-year-old female who works at a government organization focused on science. She is a mid-level employee who influences purchasing decisions by contributing her thoughts to RFPs (request for proposals). She owns a condo with her spouse and one child in the city. She makes \$85,000

annually. She receives her information from work listservs and also has a favorite news app she reads each day. Her major hobby is traveling, and she is very active on social media.

Action items to reach this customer/buyer persona:

- **Marketing:** Connect with a government communications company that hosts a show with influencers. Suggest Jade for the show (with her permission). Create a #travel hashtag in conjunction with a social media campaign.
- **Sales:** Request an informational interview with Jade to better understand the direction of her industry/field of expertise.

Within the context of growing your business, a better understanding of your buyer can lead to a better decisions around reaching your target customer. To learn more about customer/buyer personas, search online for “How to create and use customer/buyer personas.”

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- 1 Sam Kusnitz, *The Definition of a Buyer Persona [in Under 100 Words]*, HubSpot, <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/buyer-persona-definition-under-100-sr> (accessed March 26, 2019).
 - 2 Shane Barker, *How to Create and Use Buyer Personas to Drive Sales*, Medium (July 31, 2018), <https://artplusmarketing.com/how-to-create-and-use-buyer-personas-to-drive-sales-1893996c9fc3> (accessed March 26, 2019).