



Your Guide to Creating Customer Profiles

Your customers are your lifeline. Without them, your business fails.

Knowing your typical customers and tailoring content to their needs helps broaden your customer base and ensures customer loyalty.

Why create customer profiles

A customer profile helps flesh out surface observations. Also known as a buyer persona, a customer profile is a semi-fictional representation of your target customer based on research and real information supplied by your team and your current customers. You'll likely have more than one customer profile since you probably have more than one ideal customer. A customer profile is important because it helps you send the right message to the right person at the right time — the crux of any successful marketing strategy.

With buyer personas, you learn:

- How to speak the customers' language
- How to market your business on the channels they frequent
- How to adapt your messages to different stages of the buyer's journey
- How to sell to them in the way that is natural for them

We've created a customer profile template to jumpstart your work. In the sections below, we'll guide you through the information you need to populate the customer profile template. With your completed customer profiles, you'll be primed to sell to your ideal customers.

What you need and where to find it

Demographics are the basic facts and information about your customer. Your customer's most basic demographics include their name, age, job title, marital status and income.

To find your customers' demographics, start by reviewing the information in your Google Analytics account. Here, you can find out where your site's visitors live, their age, gender and more. You can also use social listening tools on Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook. Analyzing your competitors' social media pages is a smart way to learn more about your customers' demographics.

Role in the buying cycle

This information is often more important in B2B than B2C businesses, where supervisors or other departments need to be consulted on purchases. This is often the case when selling bigger ticket B2C products or B2C services.

B2B:

- What's your customer's seniority in the business?
- Who do they report to?
- Who reports to them?
- What role does the customer play in purchasing?
- Are they a decision-maker or an influencer?

B2C:

- Is your customer purchasing your products or services for someone else?
- Are they a parent, purchasing for a child?
- Does your customer need to consult with anyone before making a purchase?

For information about your different customers' goals and responsibilities, try searching LinkedIn for users with your ideal job titles and learning their daily tasks and responsibilities.

Your sales team and your customer services team are also ideal resources for this because they hear straight from the customers what's preventing them from buying and what problems they're trying to fix.

Goals and challenges

Goals and challenges take you a little further into your customer profile.

- What does your customer need to achieve?
- What's stopping your customer from achieving his or her goals?
- Does he or she have any secondary goals or responsibilities?

With both goals and challenges, ask yourself, “How does my business help?” and “What’s motivating my customer’s change?” These questions help reveal the problem your prospect is dealing with and the unique solutions your business offers.

Pain points

Pain points (real or perceived problems) are the key for differentiating between your personas. Once you differentiate what makes your customer tick, you can personalize your approach by relating it to their goals.

- What obstacles stop them from achieving their goals?
- How has your customer addressed these pain points in the past?
- How does your company help alleviate their pain points?

Your sales team and customer service teams will be invaluable when learning your customers’ pain points. Your business development team may also have insights into why prospects get in touch with your company and what problems they’re trying to solve.

Watering holes

Your customer's watering holes are the places they go to gather information. Knowing their watering holes will help you learn the language that your customers use. You'll also learn more about the influencers they respect.

- Which publications do they read?
- Which professional associations do they belong to?
- Which social media sites do they use?

Social media listening is the best method to learn about your customers' watering holes. Check out which links they share or discuss, which groups they've joined on LinkedIn and which lists they've created on Twitter.

Common objections

What's stopping your prospect from buying your product or service? If you can learn this information before you engage with a prospect, you have a huge advantage when it comes to selling.

- Is your customer open to change?
- What budget concerns might your customer have?
- Who makes the final buying decisions?
- How much time is your customer willing to devote to learning your product or service?

Schedule a meeting with your sales team to hear why prospects ultimately don't purchase from your country. Sales typically have the most insight into the objections of prospects and what works (and doesn't work) when addressing those challenges.

Qualitative insights

Qualitative insights are the deepest things you can learn about your buyers. These are things you wouldn't know by looking at them or from a few minutes of casual conversation.

- What phrases might you commonly overhear from your customer?
- What language does your customer use to search for information?
- How does your customer prefer to make purchases?
- What does a day in their life look like?

These questions might seem a little outside the realm of what you reasonably assume about your customers but with a little savvy, you can read between the lines. Social media listening gives you an idea of the language that your customers use and phrases that they commonly say. You can even see which links they tweet to learn which blogs and publications they're frequently reading.

However, for truly helpful insights, it's recommended that you speak with an actual customer and interview them. You'll likely want to ask a customer that you know well who will offer valuable information. On the other hand, if you can get a newer customer to agree to an interview, you'll get the bonus of a different perspective.

Start planning

Spending the upfront time to create thoughtful and well-researched customer profiles can more than pay off. Tailoring your marketing message to your customers, will help drive revenue and increase your customer base.

Get started today with your Customer Profile Template.