

The ToolBoxer's

Guide to

DISCOVERING YOUR IDEAL CUSTOMER

*Everything you need to know to help
you discover your ideal customer*

Discovering your ideal customer

You will note from the title that I don't believe you need to create your ideal customer because if you have been in business and have had customers some of them will have been ideal, you do however need to discover or uncover who your ideal customer is from all of the ones you have worked for.

Unfortunately, many marketing advisors will tell you to create your ideal customer by merely deciding who it is that you want to work for so what can happen is you create a dream client /customer someone that you believe is the type of person like you want as a customer and I could look something like this:

A millionaire who drives a Ferrari lives in a mansion and has a bucket load of money that he wants to throw around.

Gather All Your Data

Some of us are organised and keep great records, while some of us are not, it is important going forward that you keep records of all your customers and potential customers. These records will help you to develop your marketing making it much more effective.

Whether you have a CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system or not, you will have details of customers that you have previously worked for, this may be in the form of old quotations, Invoices or simply notes in an old note book.

Gather all of this information or as much of it as you have before moving on to the next step

Filter the Bad Ones

In order to now identify your ideal customer you need to apply a few simple filters, these filters are simply to help you eliminate any customer types that you do not want to work with going forward.

During this phase of the process you need to be quite brutal create a list before you approach this step and once you identify the traits if they are on your list then eliminate that person or persons from your database.

Each persons list will be different but should contain things like:

1. Late Payer
2. Argued about final Invoice
3. Wanted quote revised for cheapest quote
4. Outside of 15mile radius (or what ever your target is)

You will create a list to suit you and your business to eliminate all the people and jobs that you do not want to do or would prefer not to do... you might have Landlords, Flats, tower blocks, etc.

Once you have completed your exclusion list you need to then go to your database and delete / remove all of the people who fit the details of your exclusion list. You cannot second guess yourself at this point if you do you will not be able to truly identify your ideal customer. Be brutal and if someone matches the exclusion criteria then remove them this will leave you with a much smaller list.

What you are left with will be dependant on the size of the list you started with and the criteria you set for your exclusion list I have know this to be a big as 200 and as small as 5, regardless of what you are left with this step is crucial to the success of identifying your Ideal customer.

Create a Spread Sheet

Now the hard work begins, because unless you have been deliberately keeping information (and you should from now on), you will be searching your memory or perhaps even guessing for the next phase.

Guessing is OK at this point to get you started, however once you have collected enough real data you will need to revisit this part of the process again to create a more accurate representation of your ideal customer.

So what you need to do is create a simple spread sheet with a list of your customers names down the left hand side and a list of knowable information across the top of the page see the illustration below.

| | A | B | C | D | E |
|----|---------------|-----|---------|----------|------|
| 2 | Name | M/F | Married | Children | Prop |
| 3 | Mark Smith | m | n | 0 | |
| 4 | Tom Hinez | m | y | 1 | |
| 5 | Clare Cassey | f | y | 1 | |
| 6 | Kevin Aspen | m | y | 0 | |
| 7 | Rose Clarke | f | y | 2 | |
| 8 | Don Stevens | m | n | 0 | |
| 9 | Kylie Cronley | f | y | 2 | |
| 10 | Kay Kelly | f | y | 3 | |
| 11 | Sandy Heart | f | n | 1 | |

The list across the top should consist of but not be limited to the following:

- Male or Female
- Type Of Property
- Married / Single
- Children (Number/Age)
- Type of work requested
- Type of Job (they do)
- Type of Car
- Radio Program Listened to
- Movies Liked
- Newspaper reads
- Books/ Authors
- TV Shows
- Hobbies
- Holidays

The more information you can add to this list, the more accurate a picture you will get of your Ideal customer. Remember what you are doing is developing an avatar of your ideal customer from information you already have, you are not inventing an ideal customer from your imagination.

Once you have carried out this exercise you will then need to go back over your list and identify common traits (commonalities) for example if the majority of

your list are Female, that is the person making the call is the Female regardless of whether they are married, in a partnership or paid the bill if it was the woman who made the call then pull out the word Female, if the majority live in a Semi Detached property then you pull out the word Semi Detached, if the majority drive a 5 Door Family Hatch Back then that's the description you pull out.

You will eventually end up with a list like:

- Female
- Semi Detached
- Married
- 2 Teenage
- Kitchen Rewire (had new kitchen fitted)
- Part time Doctors Receptionist
- 4 Door Saloon
- BBC Radio 2
- Romantic Comedies
- The Daily Mail & Times
- Elle Casey, Jenny Ashcroft, Shilo Walker
- CSI, Special Victims, Border force, Sherlock Hobbies
- Swimming
- Turkey (holidays)

Write a Description

From the list that you now have you will need to create a story that describes your ideal customer (a Customer Avatar), it is important to remember here that you are not inventing or imagining an ideal customer as some “Marketing Gurus” would have you do. You are taking what you know about all of the people that you view as great customers, worth working for (because you already have) and you are creating a composite.

So based on the information we now have from our example, we can create a description of our customer Avatar which may look like this...

Ideal Customer Avatar

Mary is a 46 year old woman married to Martin, they have two teenage children who are active in sports, the boy plays regular football and is part of a Sunday league. The Girl is an active swimmer and competes on her school team.

Mary lives in a three bedroom semi detached 1930's house, She is house proud and likes to have modern conveniences in her home.

Mary catches up with her news by reading the Daily Mail and the Times, when at home or in the car she can be found listening to BBC Radio 2 wher her favourite programs are Jeremy Vine and Simon Mayo

Mary Works Part time in order to have the added luxuries that she enjoys. She likes her job and when she is not working or taking care of the family she enjoys keeping fit and is a member of her local gym and swims regularly.

For entertainment Mary enjoys Romantic comedies, or romantic novels (with a military flare) – her TV watch list includes many American crime dramas like CSI and Special victims.

For day to day transport Mary uses the Peugeot family hatch back, She and Martin like to holiday at least once a year in Turkey where they return to the same villa each year, they also like to take regular weekend breaks in the UK visiting the lake district.

DO NOT SKIP THE STEP ABOVE

Now What...

By completing all of the steps above you will have a better understanding of who your ideal customer is this will help you in a number of ways.

When Targeting Online

You will now have a list of demographics that will allow you to pinpoint your online adverts whether they are Google Ads, Twitter or Face Book. Most people who attempt to target in this way fail because they don't target the customer but attempt to target what they think the customer wants. With the right information you can ensure that your advert lands in front of the right people.

When building your website

You will be able to formulate key words that your customer may use to search for your services once you know these words and phrases you can build them into your web copy, page names and image/photograph names. This will all help with your SEO ranking and in particular get you found for search terms your customer may use.

The above applies also to blogging and video creation.

When using Print Media

By understanding who your ideal customer is you will be able to write more effective advertising, whether you are designing a leaflet, a magazine advert or writing a sales letter. Your print advertising can now talk directly to "Mary"

Finally

Understand that marketing is as much about excluding people you do not want to work with as it is about attracting the right kind of person.

By completing this exercise it will help you to get more of your ideal customers, will you get enquiries / work from other customers YES, will this reduce the amount of work you get NO, unless you don't use the information correctly. What we find is that when you target your ideal customer you end up with much more satisfying and rewarding work.

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