AUDIENCE PERSONAS

The below overview was compiled via various sources such as Silverpop, Marketo, HubSpot, etc. The full list of sources can be found in the Reference Section.

WHAT IS A PERSONA?

The purpose of personas is to create reliable and realistic representations of your key audience segments for reference.

A persona represents a cluster of users who exhibit similar behavioral patterns in their purchasing decisions, use of technology or products, customer service preferences, lifestyle choices, and the like. Behaviors, attitudes, and motivations are common to a "type" regardless of age, gender, education, other typical demographics.

Buyer personas (sometimes referred to as marketing personas) are fictional, generalized representations of your ideal customers. Personas help us all -- in marketing, sales, product, and services -- internalize the ideal customer we're trying to attract, and relate to our customers as real humans. Having a deep understanding of your buyer persona(s) is critical to driving content creation, product development, sales follow up, and really anything that relates to customer acquisition and retention.

- PERSONA: Defines who the story is about. This main character has attitudes, motivations, goals and pain points, etc.
- SCENARIO: Defines when, where and how the story of the persona takes place. The scenario is the narrative that describes how the persona behaves as a sequence of events.
- GOAL: Defines what the persona wants or needs to fulfill. The goal is the motivation of why the persona is taking action. When that goal is reached, the scenario ends.

Tom Brodie

Tom Brodie, Shop Manager

"Sometimes I'm so busy fighting alligators that I forget about draining the swamp."

Tom has 8 years of experience in lube shop operations. He's married with two young kids, and his wife jokes that the last time his hands were completely free of grease was on his honeymoon 5 years ago. At the shop he manages, Tom constantly puts out little fires. He works on the floor most of the day, trying to be everywhere at the same time although he prefers to act as greeter and cashier.

Most shop trends get measured on a monthly basis, since Tom has to meet sales targets defined by the owner, Eddie, in order to get his manager's bonus. On a daily basis, Tom frequently monitors car counts, ticket average and employee productivity (especially individual service statistics). Sometimes his team needs a kick in the pants, but he tries to lead by example.

Tom's Goals:

- **Keep the cars coming.** Tom has to rely on Eddie’s marketing efforts but car count is his make-or-break figure; he focuses on customer service to generate repeat customers.
- **Reduce labor percentages without sacrificing customer service.** Staffing is a tricky balance between keeping the shop’s labor costs down while ensuring employees get enough hours and bay times stay low.
- **Meet or exceed last year’s numbers for this month.** The Owner’s sales targets aim for year-on-year increases across the board, but in the current business climate Tom is happy simply meeting last year’s numbers.
### COMMON TERMINOLOGY

It is important for the audience teams to educate the business teams on common terminology.

- **PERSONA**: types of individuals who share attitudes, motivations, goals and pain points, etc., regardless of demographics.
- **PROFILE**: personal data associated with a specific user as well as job and/or company demographics.

### WHY DEVELOP PERSONAS & WHAT DO “I” DO WITH IT?

#### AUDIENCE/MARKETING

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<td>1</td>
<td>Modeling -- your persona is 18-24 - where do you find them, should we reach out via mobile or sms, what time of day are they most likely to engage, what types of content do they engage with vs a different persona, etc.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Does the actual audience match perceived audience</td>
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<td>Inform a redesign -- what are top 5 things each persona needs and can they get it easily from the site; if we're not serving what they want, or making it too difficult to find, we can have the greatest marketing but it won't be effective</td>
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<td>How to increase engagement from non-engaged users; find what will engage the unengaged</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Baseline of what we have to roadmap where we want to be</td>
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#### EDITORIAL/CONTENT

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<td>1</td>
<td>Identify gaps in coverage</td>
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<td>Assists in determining resource allocation for topics and platforms that readers use/want</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>New product opportunities</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Does the actual audience match perceived audience</td>
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#### SALES/PRODUCT MANAGEMENT

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| 1 | Can sales sell more based on persona?  
  • This is who they are, this is what they do, and this is how we can reach them. Personas can help demonstrate the variety  
  • Personas include behavior -- so we know how to reach them  
  • Helps to tell a story -- from numbers on the audit statement to the people that you reach |
| 2 | Gating strategies |
HOW DO YOU CREATE PERSONAS? HOW DO YOU START?

Research is the foundation of personas.

What types of research should be used?
1. Surveys
2. Interviews (A day in the life of...) – don’t forget to record your interviews!
3. Focus Groups
   o Additional data such as behavioral patterns and audit data may augment the research to further bucket the persona’s

START WITH THE END GOAL IN MIND

1. Are you trying to find conversion patterns based on referral type or channel
2. Are you looking to map out a user journey through a product
3. Are you looking to ensure content is truly matching audience needs

ARE THERE STANDARD QUESTIONS THAT MOST LIKELY APPLY TO ANY PERSONA PROJECT

1. What is their job and level of seniority?
2. What is their level of influence in the decision making process?
3. What does a day in their life look like?
4. What are their challenges & pain points?
5. What emotions come with these challenges (frustration, excited, overwhelmed, cumbersome/time consuming, unable to take the next step)
6. What do you help them solve?
7. What do they value most?
8. What are their short term / long term goals?
9. Primary vs secondary goals
10. Where do they go for information?
11. How do they absorb content (newsletters, websites, podcasts, etc)
12. Do they have a preference on medium
13. What are their most common objections to your product/service?
### ARE THERE STANDARD QUESTIONS THAT MOST LIKELY APPLY TO ANY PERSONA PROJECT

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<td>Age?</td>
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| 15 | Recommended # of questions:  
Surveys 10-12 questions on average - up to 20 if you’re asking demo’s or if there is an incentive, be cognizant of the number of open ended questions being asked. |

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### HOW MANY PERSONAS DO I NEED?

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<td>Three or four broad personas projects is best.</td>
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<td>Remember, the goal of personas is not represent all audiences or address all needs of the website but instead to focus on the major needs of the most important user groups.</td>
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| 3 | Keep in mind, you may have multiple sets of personas for different projects.  
- Project 1: Online activity based on referrer  
- Project 2: Core audience engaged in events, webinars, print, etc.  
  - Maybe you want to break this down into groups by audience life-cycle to gauge overall engagement fluctuations – where do the newbies hang out vs the seasoned audience, etc. |

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### HOW MANY PEOPLE DO I NEED TO INCLUDE IN THE RESEARCH?

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- Interviews: 8-12  
- Surveys: 100 per segment  
- Focus Groups: minimum of 2 |

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### OUTSIDE OF AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT, WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN CREATING PERSONAS?

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<td>Who, and level of involvement, is really depending on the goals and who will be utilizing the personas.</td>
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| 2 | Determine, and obtain agreement, on who should be involved early in the process  
Unless you are creating personas for a sales specific need, sales is usually not involved in the research. Even slightly skewing the questions in order to fulfill sales needs may hinder the deeper insights that uncover hidden opportunities found in true personas. |
| 3 | Editorial teams provide a wide range of knowledge – what topics are covered, what topics are not, what they would like to do more of, they probably have the most audience feedback, etc. |
| 4 | Research team |
| 5 | Marketing |
REFERENCES:  TOP PICKS

- How to Create a Buyer Person & Journey: Marketo:
- Customer Journey Maps and Buyer Personas: The Modern Toolkit for Marketing, Silverpop:
- Creating detailed buyer persona’s by HubSpot:
  - The HubSpot powerpoint includes a great persona template
    http://offers.hubspot.com/free-template-creating-buyer-personas?__hssc=20629287.1.1452722340582&__hstc=20629287.576a1afc54dc164c236d61a3260852e9.1441384245018.1452515230567.1452722340582.11&__hsfp=&hsCtaTracking=36f0bd21-f25e-4906-9451-b84452a7ab7d|c28b18a2-bc59-4c78-9a51-4b40abe039bd
- The No-Nonsense Guide to Mapping the Customer Journey, Hannah Alvarez, April 2, 2015,
  UserTesting.com https://www.usertesting.com/blog/2015/04/02/customer-journey-mapping/
- 5 steps to greater understanding & measurement: 20140digital

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

- A Closer Look at Personas: What They Are and How They Work (Part 1), Shlomo Goltz, August 6, 2014, http://www.smashingmagazine.com/2014/08/a-closer-look-at-personas-part-1/#what-is-a-persona This article looks at personas for use in the design process for software but the principles are applicable.
- How to Create Easy, Yet Actionable, Content Marketing Personas, Jodi Harris, Content Marketing Institute, April 27, 2015, http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/2015/04/content-marketing-personas/
- Persona-Buyer’s Journey Worksheet (TN, source?)
- How to Create Personas for your B2B Content Marketing Strategy, Eloqua.com/content-marketing