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# HOW CREATING BUYER PERSONAS CAN HELP SMALL BUSINESSES IN THEIR MARKETING EFFORTS

Provided by SCORE TriCounty

Compiling demographic information about your buyers will only take you so far in understanding how to reach and what to say to your target customers. By creating a "buyer persona" (a profile of a customer to represent a particular group of buyers) for each group of customers to whom you wish to sell your products and services, you will gain greater insight. Buyer personas help you drill down to the specifics of what motivates individual customers to buy and identify what communications channels will give you an opportunity to connect with more of your prospects and customers.

Some of the most powerful benefits of creating buyer personas include:

- Improving your marketing focus because personas bring to light the customers worth your time and marketing dollars.

- Giving insight to help you more effectively craft your marketing messaging.

- Helping you determine the best marketing channels and advertising venues to reach your ideal customers.

- Enabling you to give your buyers a more personalized experience through the sales process.

- Saving money and improving sales because you are not developing products and services to try to appeal to too broad an audience. You have the insight you need to focus your development efforts on satisfying the needs of your ideal customers.

How do you create buyer personas for your small business? Here are a few steps to guide you on your way:

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## CREATING BUYER PERSONAS

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### 1. Consider what you know right now about your current customer base.

a. What characteristics do they have in common?

b. What are their demographics (age, gender, income, marital status, educational level, etc.)?

c. What do they do for a living?

### 2. Talk with your present—and past—customers.

a. What challenges do they face?

b. What goals and aspirations do they have?

c. How did they find you?

d. What made them want to use your products or services?

e. What do they like about you?

f. Why have they stayed with you rather than moving to the competition?

g. Why did they leave you and go to the competition?

### 3. Write your personas.

Present them as fictitious individuals who represent the typical traits and motivations belonging to your specific ideal customer groups. Incorporate the information you know about them and create short stories about who they are, the challenges

they face, their buying habits and what motivates their buying decisions. You can find many examples and templates online for structuring your buyer personas.

Various factors (including your industry, type of business and others) will affect the number of buyer personas you should have. For additional guidance and input as you begin developing your customer profiles, consider talking with a SCORE mentor. SCORE volunteers have expertise in all aspects of starting and managing a small business, and they are here to offer free insight to help you through all stages of your company's growth.

The SCORE TriCounty Learning Center is offering workshops focusing on Marketing and Sales for the month of November. Visit their website, <http://tricity.score.org>, for information about these workshops.

Since 1964, SCORE "Mentors to America's Small Business" has helped more than 10 million aspiring entrepreneurs and small business owners through mentoring and business workshops. More than 11,000 volunteer business mentors in over 320 chapters serve their communities through entrepreneur education dedicated to the formation, growth and success of small businesses. For more information about starting or operating a small business, contact SCORE TriCounty. You can call 610.327.2673, email [tricity@scorevolunteer.org](mailto:tricity@scorevolunteer.org) or visit the website at [www.tricity.score.org](http://www.tricity.score.org).

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