

How to Use Your Buyer Personas to Solve your Target Customers' Problems

Buyer personas help your business in so many ways, but here's one of the most important ones -- they allow you to deeply understand your target customer.

They help you figure out what your target customers are looking for, what they don't want, and even where they hang out online.

Let's say one of your main buyer persona types spends lots of time on Twitter. Knowing this allows you to search that social media platform for clues about the best way to market your business to this type of customer.

Here's an example of what we did recently for a client, the owner of a small, independent makeup line who wasn't getting enough visitors to her website, and as a knock-on effect, wasn't getting enough sales.

While creating buyer personas for her business, we realized her competitors received a solid amount of interaction on Twitter. Since that meant her own target customers were probably on Twitter too, we headed over there.

Here's where we had to get creative.

Just posting a slew of tweets advertising her products and website obviously wasn't going to work.

So instead, we looked at her competitors' accounts and noted the kinds of replies and questions they were getting in response to their tweets. Then we took it a step further and used a favorite marketing tool -- Twitter Advanced Search.

We typed in some of the keywords that our client's business is linked to, like mineral makeup, foundation matching, and contouring.

Twitter Advanced Search then pulled up a range of really useful results.

Even better, we were able to specify a time frame so we could see which topics were trending. From these results, we could see that a lot of her potential customers had questions about how to match their foundation shades properly, or find shades suited to their skin.

With this information, we created a blog series where the client went in-depth about how to find or mix the perfect foundation shade for a range of different tones.

Next, we promoted it (you guessed it!) on Twitter and we made sure to tweet during the time slot that a large portion of her likely customer types usually posted or replied.

We included a track-able bitly link on our tweets that showed us how many visits to her blog posts came directly from Twitter and were thrilled with the results.

We continually searched for questions about foundation and even humorous memes/complaints on the topic, particularly from those who matched our client's target customer profile.

She then went on Twitter herself to answer questions and direct people to her blog series.

Using this one tactic alone, we managed to pull in a large number of new blog visitors and increase queries and sales.

The takeaway here is that you can use your personas to find your potential customers online, understand their problems, and then create content that answers or assists them. Then you can promote this content on the social media channels your customers tend to

hang out on. Instead of trying to sell, you'll be trying to help. In this way, you'll stand out from the crowd and earn trust.

Imagine you've just tweeted about how much you love scented candles but have concerns about whether the ingredients are healthy. If a brand replied with information about how healthy their candles are, you'd probably be turned off.

But if that same brand gave you a few great tips and a link to a blog post or helpful video they created on the topic, you'd likely be more interested in checking their products out. That's the power of providing helpful content.

Tutorial: Using Twitter Advanced Search to Answer Your Potential Customers'

Questions and Concerns

So now that we've looked at some example cases, let's try this out for your business.

Head to Twitter Advanced Search and let's get started:

Twitter Advanced Search

Twitter, Inc. [US] | https://twitter.com/search-advanced

HomeAbout

Search Twitter

Have an account? Log in

Words

All of these words

This exact phrase

Any of these words

None of these words

These hashtags

Written in

Finding the right foundation color

Mixing foundation pale skin dark skin right tone coverage

All languages

People

From these accounts

To these accounts

Mentioning these accounts

Places

Near this place

Dates

From this date

2018-07-01to2018-07-31

Search

4

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2018-07-01to2018-07-31

Search

1. In the box marked “all of these words”, type in the keywords your potential customers might be using to describe what they need help with (as it relates to your product/service).

For our client, we used “finding the right foundation color” because we knew from her buyer personas that her target customers typically struggle with this issue.

If you own a family-friendly holiday spot, for example, you might use “kid-friendly vacations near(your location)” or “affordable family vacations in (your location)”.

2. Skip the box marked “this exact phrase” because unless you’re 100% sure of the exact words your target customers are using, this filter could skew your search.

3. For “any of these words”, enter a string of related keywords that have to do with what you offer and any questions you know your personas tend to have about this topic.

It’s important to include this step as it will help you broaden your search and turn up plenty of likely results.

4. Skip “none of these words” as well. Again, if you aren’t totally sure which words your personas definitely wouldn’t be using, adding this filter could skew your results.

5. “These hashtags”-- if you know of any specific hashtags your buyer personas are likely to be using on Twitter, type them in here. If not, no worries!

The keywords you added in the “all of these words” and “any of these words” sections will do the job.

6. The section marked “written in” is where you select the language your personas use. You could go with “English” if your target customers tend to be in English speaking countries, or select “all languages”.

In most cases, however, we’d recommend choosing “English”. This will cut down on the number of irrelevant results you’ll get back from markets you’re not selling to.

7. You can also skip the area marked “people” as you’re just doing a general search and not looking for specific individuals.

8. Now you’ve reached the section marked “places”. Here’s where it gets really interesting! You can use this section to specify a location to search, allowing you to see posts from potential customers in your area. This helps you understand exactly which phrases your buyer personas are using to discuss businesses like yours.

You can also find people who are actively looking for your products and services this way, or those who have questions you can help them with.

Side note: If your business is mainly online or ships worldwide, you don’t have to worry about specifying a location, as your potential customers are everywhere.

9. In the section marked “dates”, specify the date range for posts you’re looking for. The more recent, the better. We’d say no more than a couple of weeks to a month old is ideal. You want to get the freshest possible data and comments, and this will help you find people you can reply to and engage with.

Okay, you’re all set! Now just hit search and let all of those results roll in. In a few seconds, you’ll see a wide range of posts containing your keywords from those in your area.

The majority of the results won't be what you're looking for, but a handful will provide you with useful information. You can use these Twitter search results to gain an advantage for your business in two key ways:

1. **Strategic Listening:**

At this point, you'll likely have found some relevant tweets and conversations about your product, service, or niche. So this is where you really listen. What are the most common complaints people have about businesses similar to yours? What do they like? Who are they recommending and why? What are they looking for? Also pay attention to the exact words and phrases they're using when tweeting. This will help you build out content using these phrases in the future.

Look at the most relevant posts and begin making a list.

Create a section called **"Blog Topics to Cover"** and here, list out the questions you see people mentioning repeatedly.

For example, if you own an organic candle company and see lots of tweets asking what the real difference between organic and non-organic candle wax is, or whether chemicals in scented candles are actually unhealthy, you can list these under blog topics to cover.

A solid next step would be to create some informative blog posts on your site answering these exact questions. Next, you could break these posts down into short but helpful tips to post on all of your business's social accounts.

Create a second list called **"Words & Phrases to Use"**. Here you'll list all of the most common words used in tweets about your type of product or service.

In the case of our client, we found that a lot of tweets about foundation included complaints like "not enough coverage" or "goes on patchy". So we added these exact phrases to the list and used them as keywords in her blog posts and advertising content.

She also provides custom foundation blending to her customers so we rewrote her content to explain how this service gives smooth, natural, and long-wearing results. These terms addressed the common complaints we saw on Twitter.

Apply this trick to your own website content and social posts too. If you run a family-friendly getaway and see a lot of tweets about other businesses being “unwelcoming” or concerns about overpriced family vacations, use the opposite of these phrases in your content. Highlight how your getaway offers a warm, family-friendly ambiance, and welcoming staff.

You’ll stand out as exactly what your potential customers are looking for.

How does this benefit your business?

When you create blog content and social media posts answering your target customers’ most pressing questions and concerns, you’re increasing your business’s visibility.

Let’s face it, no matter how unique your products or services are, there are going to be several other businesses in your area competing for the same customers.

Bigger companies get visibility by spending heavily on expensive advertising, but that’s not an option for most businesses. So how can you compete?

By answering your target customers’ questions and providing useful solutions to their problems.

Once you've used Twitter Advanced Search to find out what they're asking or looking for, you can create in-depth blog content around these same topics. You can use the keywords they use in their tweets within your blog posts as well. This way, whenever they search Google or social media for these same questions, your business's website and social accounts are more likely to show up. Let's go back to the example of the organic candle company.

If your potential customers are Googling "Are chemicals in scented candles unhealthy?" before they decide to buy some for their homes, and your website has an informative blog post answering this exact question and using the same key phrases, there's a good chance that your post will show up in the results.

Even better, when customers see that the title of your post closely matches the words they used in their search, they'll probably choose to click on your site over your less helpful competitors. Why? Because they'll feel you understand their concerns and can provide them with the answers they're looking for. We'll go into this even further in a later section.

You'll also be building a readership for your site as more potential customers start to see your site and your business as a trusted source of information and help.

If you've ever done some online research before making a purchase, you've probably ended up buying from the business that best answered your questions and gave you a sense of trust. That's exactly what you'll benefit from when you use your buyer persona information to create targeted content for your customers.

Now, on to the second tactic.

2. Strategic Engagement:

This is where you move past just listening and actually start reaching out and connecting with potential customers. But don't worry, it's not as overwhelming as it sounds.

Make a third list and call it **"People to Engage with"**.

Here, you'll want to list out the tweet results from your advanced search that fulfill the following criteria:

A) mention having questions that you know you could answer or have complaints about businesses similar to yours in your area

B) are less than a couple of weeks old (the more recent, the better, as you're more likely to get a response or start a conversation)

If you're a nutrition coach and you see someone in your area tweeting about how their weight loss on the keto diet has slowed down, this is your cue to score a win for your business. Tread gently, however, and keep human interaction at the core of your messaging.

The fact is, social media is not the place to lead with the sale. Instead, lead with interaction, empathy, and engagement.

As a rule of thumb, always provide value and help first, not a sales pitch.

In the scenario above, you could agree that plateauing on the keto diet is a struggle. You could then add a link to a post on your site explaining the top five ways to kick-start a plateauing metabolism and let them know you've got a free forum where others on the keto diet share their experiences and help each other out.

This is much more helpful than shoving a list of your business's accomplishments in front of your prospect.

So now that we've gone through the process, take a moment to look through the results of your advanced search and create the three types of lists we discussed. Then outline some blog topics you can create based on these results and also identify some words and phrases to use on your site and in your social media posts that match those being used by your personas.

Make this content part of your content schedule and make sure your next posts cover them. Once you've got these posts up on your site, be sure to promote them on the social media channels your buyer personas use the most.

Finally, go ahead and select a couple of tweets to engage with. Look for people who have a question in your niche that you can answer and try to be as helpful as possible, while keeping overt marketing to a minimum.

You'll likely be surprised by how positively people respond to your business when they feel they're getting true value and useful information from you.

Use Your Buyer Personas to Improve Your Business's Graphics:

This is probably one of the most overlooked but powerful ways to use your buyer persona information to boost your business. If you search for information on using buyer personas, you'll see article after article telling you that you should use personas to enhance your written content, but few people are aware that they can help you overhaul your images too.

Ensuring that your knowledge of potential customers' preferences comes through in the styling, graphics, and colors on your business's site and branding is more crucial than ever.

Thanks to Instagram, YouTube videos, and the dominance of online shopping, we tend to spend more time viewing images online than looking at words.

We're all more likely to click on the link to a company's site if we love the images on its Instagram page, and we respond positively to brands with fonts, colors, and styling that speak to us.

So when it comes to looking at how to appeal to your target customers today, you have to focus on the visual content as much as the blog posts you write and emails you send out.

If you look at the social media accounts and websites of brands in specific niches, you'll find that they share visual similarities. For example, a lot of organic, natural, or vegan brands tend to use green and brown tones and lots of natural imagery, while tech brands use sleek fonts, minimalist images, and strong colors.

Obviously, every brand differs slightly and a certain graphic theme may not apply to every single company in a specific niche. But there are definitely noticeable trends in each sector, because those trends appeal most to the buyers of those products and services.

You don't have to become a cookie-cutter replica of your top competitors to successfully pull in their customers. But giving visitors to your site and accounts a few visual cues that your brand is exactly what they're looking for can really help you boost sales.

In this quick tutorial, we're going to look at how you can use what you know about your personas to boost your business's visual content and give yourself the winning edge over others in your field.

When you were creating your buyer personas, you researched similar businesses and looked at their Instagram followings and their websites. Those same places are goldmines of information on how to style your brand to appeal to your customers.

1. Go to the Instagram pages of your top competitors and look at their visual content.

Note the colors they use, the types of images in their posts, and the general styling.

2. Next, click on the accounts of those who follow and interact with them. Check out a good number so you can get a solid sample -- 15 to 20 accounts is a good starting point.

You'll likely find a lot of the same types of images, fonts, and even colors appear on the accounts of those who follow your competitors. That's because we're strongly drawn to brands that share our tastes and match our aspirations.

Make a note of the images, colors, and styles that appear on both your top competitors' accounts and those of their followers.

3. Check out your competitors' websites and see if these same visual themes appear there too. If they do, you can be certain that these are the kinds of colors, images, and styles you'll want to include when marketing your own business to potential customers.

4. Finally, narrow down the list of similar styles you've noticed and think about how you can strategically add some of these elements to your own branding. Even something as simple as changing the colors of your logo can help you grab the attention of potential customers.

How to Match Your Content to Your Main Buyer Personas

If your business's blog or site has been up for a while, you probably already have a good collection of content. But now that you've created buyer personas and identified your target customers, does that mean you have to start creating all-new content for them?

Absolutely not! Creating quality content is hard work and in this course, we're all about helping you simplify your marketing and maximize your results.

You can still use all of that great content you worked so hard to create. You just have to know how to audit and match each piece of content to your main buyer persona types.

When you match your content to each persona type, you'll be able to deliver the right content to the right person. This makes it much more likely that the person reading your content will then purchase from your business.

So let's look at how to achieve this.

Step 1: List down your main two or three buyer personas and under each, list all of the content you've already created that you know could help that specific customer type.

This could be blog posts, informative Instagram posts, podcast episodes, YouTube tutorials, email marketing content...whatever you've already created to help market your business.

Here's an example:

Let's say you own a hair care business. Two potential customers visit your site. They're both looking for hair care products but each one has different concerns.

They like the look of your website and your products, so when they see your offer to email them the latest tips, deals, and discounts, both sign up.

But your sign-up form also asks them a few quick questions, to help you figure out what their primary concerns are:

For example,

"Would you classify your hair as (please select one:)"

- A. Normal
- B. Dry and damaged
- C. Oily/thin
- D. Very curly

“What are you most interested in hearing about?”

- A. Products that help with manageability and fast styling
- B. Products using all-natural, safe ingredients
- C. Products that help with volume

Your first visitors selects B. “Dry and damaged” and B. “Products using all-natural, safe ingredients”.

Your second visitor selects D. “Very curly” and A. “Products that help with manageability and fast styling”.

Immediately, this lets you know that visitor one’s biggest hair care concerns are caring for dry, damaged hair and only using natural products and visitor two’s concerns are managing and quickly styling her very curly hair.

You now know which buyer persona type each of these potential customers fit into. So before you start sending them any email marketing content, you want to identify the appropriate content.

Under each persona type, list any existing content you have that will appeal to, help, and inform that specific persona.

Here's an example:

Content for Visitor 1:

- Blog post about how chemical ingredients can dry and damage hair
- Blog post about how natural ingredients can nourish and repair damaged hair
- Limited time coupon code for your organic, deep-conditioning treatment product
- Offer for a free online consult with your natural hair care expert

Content for Visitor 2:

- Blog post about how to manage curly hair
- Email tip showing how to achieve the latest curly hair styles

- YouTube video on your channel showing how an influencer uses your products to quickly style her curly hair
- Limited time coupon code for the curly hair care products used in the video

As you can see, organizing it in this way really helps you see how you can best use your content.

If you sent emails about your natural ingredients or dry hair repair products to your curly haired buyer persona, she'd probably unsubscribe pretty quickly. And your non-curly haired buyer persona wouldn't use coupon codes for curly hair care products, so you wouldn't get much of a response if you sent them.

But when you send provide each type of customer with the exact type of content that is relevant to them, they'll hit open, read your emails, click on your free offers, and be much more likely to purchase your products.

Even better, they'll become long-term fans, check out your website and social media accounts often, and even tell others about your brand.

Why?

All because you took a little time to understand what they need and send them the information and offers they actually want.

You can use this example to help you create the same kinds of lists for your own business and persona types.

How to Use Your Buyer Personas to Create Content that Turns Browsers into Buyers

Okay, so now you know how to match your existing content to each type of buyer persona. Next, we'll look at how to map your content to each buyer persona's stage in the buying process.

This is a crucial step. If you don't have enough content for a buyer at the beginning, middle, and final stages of the buying process, you might lose that sale.

For example, if you send only coupons and discount offers to a buyer who is just casually browsing, you might scare them away.

By the same token, if you have a buyer who *is* ready to buy from you, you don't want to bore them by emailing them broad, unspecific blog posts , when they're really looking for coupons and product comparisons.

Here's what you need to know to avoid that:

Before a person makes a purchase, they generally go through three different stages:

1. **The Awareness Stage:** This is the very beginning of the process. This stage is where your potential customer realizes she/he has a need or problem.

Returning to our example, when someone realizes their hair is getting dryer and less manageable, they might do a quick Google search for ideas or answers.

2. **The Consideration Stage:** This is where your potential customer will start to look at different solutions and options. For example, at this point, a person with dry hair will have found a couple of brands with deep-conditioning treatments that look promising and will try to figure out which one is best.

3. **The Decision Stage:** This is the final step, where your potential customers goes from thinking “maybe” to “I’m ready to buy now”. Returning to our example, the person with the dry hair now decides which hair treatment product to buy.

You can get a casual visitor to your website or social media account to go from just browsing to actually buying.

But you need one thing to make it happen: content for each step of the process.

Think of your content as top-performing salespeople for your products or services.

Each piece of content answers your potential customers questions, helps them compare prices and options, and finally, helps them feel good about deciding to buy.

In fact, providing your potential customers with content that matches their buyer persona type and their stage in the buying process makes them six times more likely to buy from you.

This is not a step you want to skip!

To help you achieve this for your business, let's look at an example of the kind of content you could create to help the example customer(with the dry hair) go from browsing to buying:

1. The Awareness Stage:

Content for this stage should focus more on the customer's problem and less on how awesome your brand is. So to make sure you're answering these early questions, you should have content like:

- Blog posts or email content explaining common causes of dry hair
- Short Instagram tips about ingredients that help repair dry hair
- A quick quiz that helps customers identify which kind of dry hair they have

2. The Consideration Stage:

Here your content should provide helpful information about solutions to your customer's problem. So in the case of the customer with the dry hair, this could look like:

- In-depth blog posts about how deep-conditioning improves dry, damaged hair
- A downloadable guide on repairing dry hair
- Instagram tips about how often to deep-condition dry hair

Keep in mind that here, you're talking about the solution, but you're not heavily promoting your own brand to the potential customer yet.

3. The Decision Stage:

Okay, so now the potential customer is convinced that she needs a deep-conditioning treatment. Because of all the useful content you've provided her with, she trusts your brand. Now, it's time to give her the last nudge she needs to buy from you. At this stage, your content could include:

- A YouTube video showing how quickly your deep-conditioning product provides real results
- Reviews from other satisfied customers who used your product, re-posted on your Instagram account
- Before and after pictures of customers' hair since using your product

While this example is specifically for a hair care business, it should give you a clear idea of the kind of content you need for each stage of the buying process.

Remember how we listed out all of the content you already had in the previous tutorial?

Well, go through that list again and identify which pieces of content you already have that would help potential customers at each stage of the buying process.

Do you have some broader, helpful blog posts? Those would be ideal for the first stage of the buying process. Do you have a more in-depth article or video? You could use that in the second stage to convince your customers to consider your products or services.

And finally, do you have some great reviews from previous customers that could really cement your potential customer's decision to buy from you? Those would be excellent in the final step of the buying process.

Your website and social media accounts should have a good mix of content that will appeal to your main buyer persona types at every step of the buying process:

- Those who are just browsing
- Those who are more interested in your products/services
- Those who've decided to buy from you but want a little more information.

Don't feel overwhelmed if you don't already have content for each step of the buying process. Just make a note of what you think would work well for each stage and work towards creating it.

It may take a little time, but it will be well worth it when your target customers start coming to your business for information and end up staying for your products and services.

