# Zoho CRM

# The importance of Buyer Personas in a Business

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# Overview

**Zylker Garments** is a clothing store based out of San Francisco, California. It also runs its sales online and sells a range of clothes from different brands inspired by comfort and style. Over the past six months, the company has been noticing its sales trend going south. After much deliberation, the team at Zylker learned that their low sales volume was a result of not paying complete attention to their customers' requirements, and thus not understanding their needs.

## How can this issue be resolved?

The company can create buyer personas for its customers in order to understand their requirements better and thus ensure that they cater to their customers' needs.

Here's an example of a buyer persona they can create to resolve the issue:

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# Steena Kimberley

**Profile**
Tall and slim physique

**Gender**
Female

**Age**
26

**Occupation**
Receptionist

**Location**
Los Angeles

## Motivations

She struggles to find dresses that fit her physique. She has had to turn to tailor-made clothes as a result.

## Goals

She needs a gown for an event and she hopes to find that she does not have to sacrifice style while searching for options.

## Purchase Behavior

She purchased a shirt from us last year and gave a positive feedback for the same.

## Why us?

She loved some of the dresses her friends had purchased in the past and hoped that we might have what she was looking for.

## Frustrations

Not being able to find the perfect dress that fits her physique.

If you've spent time with marketers, you may have heard the term "buyer persona" being thrown around every now and then. Let's try to understand what it actually means.

A buyer persona is a semi-fictional mockup of your average client that details the demographic and psychographic details of your ideal buyers. Even though it's created via your imagination as a marketer—albeit based on observation—you'll still need to gather all the facts before creating a buyer persona. In doing so, you'll be able to build and maintain a solid relationship with your clients—which will increase your chances of keeping them happy.

**In this ebook, we'll delve into the following topics:**

- What does the term "buyer persona" mean?
- Why is it important in a business?
- How do you build a buyer persona?
- What role does Zoho CRM play in creating a buyer persona?

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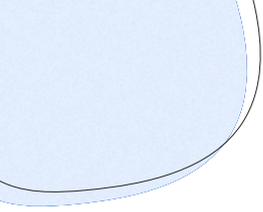
# What is a buyer persona?

Let's start by trying to understand what the term really means. A persona is the aspect of someone's character that is presented to or perceived by others. If you wish to establish your brand, as a marketer, it's important to understand who your target audience is. It's therefore essential that you define a persona for your buyers, which is one of the best ways to understand them and their buying behaviors.

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# How did this concept come to be?

In an article entitled, A Closer Look at Personas: What They Are And How They Work, author Shlomo Goltz offers a comprehensive view into what a buyer persona looks like and how the concept originated. He states that personas were informally developed by Alan Cooper early in the 1980s to empathize with and internalize the mindset of people who would eventually use the software he was designing.

In a way, this concept is similar to a stereotype in that a buyer persona consists of a set of shared characteristics upon which you can form generalizations about the behavior and interests of real-life buyers who match that persona to some degree.

"

**Alan Cooper**
Father of Visual Basic

Personas put a face on the user—a memorable, engaging, and actionable image that serves as a design target. They convey information about users to their product team in ways that other artifacts cannot.

Even though a persona is fictional, it's important to remember that they are based on fact. In a business context, it's a detailed description of someone who represents your target audience. However, it's important to note that even though both buyer personas and target audiences are marketing tools that help you narrow down and determine who you want to sell to, they're quite different from each other.

| Target audience | Buyer persona |
| --- | --- |
| Represents a larger subset of the general population | Is more specific than target audience; contains comprehensive details (physical, demographic, and psychographic attributes) of who your buyer is. |
| Defines who your company is and who you want to sell to. | Defines who your ideal clients are and what you need to know about them in order to build a solid relationship with them. |
| A business can have one target audience. | A business can have multiple buyer personas. |

A buyer persona is formed based on a lot of research on your existing or desired audience. It won't be useful if it doesn't accurately represent the real people buying your product.

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> **"** The key is to understand your customer on a deeper level. For example, we understand that some of the clients want jewelry that is sentimental in value and unique to them, so we created customized options. All our choices are based on customer needs.

**Raphi Mahgereft**
CEO,
jewelry retailer Allurez

A well-designed buyer persona reveals insight into how buyers buy and how you can reach that buyer if you have the relevant information.

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# Types of buyer personas

**There are two types of buyer personas:**

## 01    Positive buyer persona

This type is also simply referred to as a buyer persona. A positive buyer persona is the representation of your ideal customer; it's what you picture your buyer to be—their character, attributes, interests, and motivations.

## 02    Negative buyer persona

This is the opposite of the positive buyer persona. In other words, it is the representation of who you do not expect your ideal buyer to be. Even though it's not necessary to create a negative persona, doing so can help prevent businesses from wasting valuable resources and refine their existing marketing strategy such that it caters to their target audience.

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Until now, we've seen that a buyer persona is a detailed analysis of people who may buy from us. While this concept sounds quite similar to that of customer profiling, it is important to note that they are quite different.

**Let's examine how:**

| Parameters | Buyer persona | Customer profile |
|---|---|---|
| **Definition** | A detailed analysis of the people who may buy from you. | A description of the type of company you should try to sell to. |
| **What is it based on?** | A fictional representation of the ideal customer | A precise description, such as company size, industry, budget, etc. |
| **Who handles it?** | Marketing teams | Sales<br>Customer Success<br>partners |
| **How is it defined?** | Job role<br>Background<br>Motivation<br>Goals | Company size<br>Budget<br>Geography<br>Demographics |

Having established a detailed understanding of buyer personas as a concept, let's look into the role it plays in a business.

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# The role of buyer personas in a business

Having a well-built buyer persona is vital to a product's success. It offers insights into what makes your ideal clients tick, helps you better understand your customers' needs and wants, and helps you identify common user needs and bring them to the forefront. These insights, in turn, help you drive toward better customer acquisition and retention rates by improving your ability to appeal to your customers' desires. A well-defined buyer persona can also help ensure you're gathering higher-quality leads and ensure consistency across departments.

While businesses, more often than not, tend to look at customers as mere data points, personas help them see the human side of customers. In fact, with a clear buyer persona, you can effectively better understand and relate to the audience to whom you want to market your products and services.

"

**A buyer persona makes assumptions and knowledge about users explicit, creating a common language with which to talk about users meaningfully.**

**Alan Cooper**
Father of Visual Basic

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Additionally, research shows that using buyer personas to target groups of customers increases open rates by 16%.

**Read more »**

> "
>
> **Marketers must understand how markets full of buyers navigate the buying decision they want to influence so that they can become a useful, trusted resource throughout the decision. Marketers need to become good listeners if they want to be effective communicators.**

**Adele Revella**
A leading authority
on buyer personas

With the world constantly changing at a rapid pace, you're now selling to people who you've never sold to before, and the way customers connect with you is also changing—which can affect your ability to have conversations with them. However, a buyer persona will help you connect with your customers better.

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# How do you build a buyer persona?

The persona you create should be based on past experiences with customers or credit based on market research.

To create a buyer persona, you need adequate market research, actual data about your existing customers, and a few educated assumptions. It's crucial that you get enough data before you attempt to build a persona. And how does one gather this data? Through interviews, observations, surveys, and so on. Get specific around the group of characteristics around which you choose to create your persona, such as demographics like age. Be creative enough to make believable and realistic characters. Besides, you need a good amount of factual details to be able to create one. You have to achieve the following:

- Interview/observe an adequate number of current customers.

- Find patterns in interviewees' responses and actions, and use those to group similar people together.

- Create archetypal models of those groups based on the patterns found.

- Share those models with other teams.

- Collect data from product users: behavioral patterns, attitudes, goals, skills, backgrounds, objections.

- Divide all the information gathered into segments.

- Develop a narrative for each persona.

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- Define the age range, sex, occupation, name, and location of your buyer persona—which can be generated by drawing on the data of your previous buyers.

- Map out the psychographic information of your buyer persona based on your research, the type of product you sell, and how much information your company has on each of your contacts or present buyers.

"

**Marketers sometimes make the mistake of gathering buyer information that doesn't really help them deliver more effective content or campaigns. If you are bogged down with just finding the right stock image of your persona, then you're focusing on the wrong things.**

**Adele Revella**
CEO,
Buyer Persona Institute

You need a good amount of factual details to be able to create a buyer persona— well-researched information, data collected on previous buyers, as well as imaginative details to fill in the little gaps.

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**Let us look at an example to understand this better.**

We read earlier that Zylker Garments, a clothing store based out of San Francisco, also runs its sales online, that it focuses on millennials and sells a range of clothes inspired by comfort and style, and that it revamps its collections each year.

Now let's consider that its marketing team creates a customer persona, based on which it revamps its collections. It first needs to consider some do's and don'ts:

# The do's and don'ts of creating a buyer persona

| Do's | Don'ts |
|---|---|
| Use your resources to get a clear picture - in other words, do your research. | Fill out the survey yourself or indulge in lazy research. |
| Give your persona a name in order to bring them to life—preferably a unisex name. | Be vague while creating your buyer personas. |
| Identify your ideal personas. | Limit the number of personas you create. |
| Create a story for your personas to bring them to life. This could include aspects such as their purchase behavior, motivations, goals, etc. | Create too many personas as having too many can make it difficult to focus on the most important ones. |
| Interview real-life customers, as it's important to get to know the people who buy from you. | Rely on pre-conceived ideas. It is better to rely on facts. |

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| Do's | Don'ts |
|---|---|
| Ensure other teams recognize your buyer personas as well. | Ignore important details or leave out aspects that will help define your persona. |
| Update your personas continually. | Share your buyer persona only with one department. |

# Steps to follow

## 1. Research:

To create a persona, the team starts by gathering reliable information about their customers, without which it will be difficult to come up with ideas about how to improve their products and services.

**This includes the following:**

- Conducting interviews with customers

- Talking to employees who interact directly with customers

- Using information already at hand, such as customer buying patterns or products of interest

- Making assumptions

- Using web analytics tools

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## 2. Segment the audience:

Given that Zylker Garments is a clothing store, it has a range of clothes and can't use one persona to represent the entirety of its clientele. It's therefore important that they segment their customers based on similar characteristics, goals, needs, and behaviors. They should consider the following parameters:

- Garment type

- Geography

- Demography

- Age group

- Ethnicity

- Buying patterns

## 3. Description:

Next, the Zylker team summarizes every important detail they've gathered about their persona—keeping in mind the need to clearly define their customer's goals, as well. This is to help them see how their goals align with their customers'. It's also imperative that they understand what motivates and frustrates the customers. The team focuses on their customers' motivations and pain points, as it helps to shed light onto what can be done to win their customers' hearts.

Shown below is another example of a persona created by the team at Zylker Garments.

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# Danielle Antony

**Gender**
Female

**Age**
26

**Location**
New York

**Profile**
5'9" with slightly broader shoulders and hips

**Profession**
Interior designer by day, DJ by night

## Motivations

She shuffles between two jobs, both of which involve interacting with a variety of clients. She is looking for a single store - a trustworthy online facility - which can meet most of her clothing needs - formals and party wear.

## Goals

- She needs some pantsuits and skirts or her client visits, and a few dresses, tops, and skirts for her nights at the city clubs where she DJs.

- Style is very important for her and she hopes that Zylker Garments can provide.

## Purchase Behavior

She usually makes a bulk purchase online every few months. She has not shopped from Zylker Garments yet.

## Frustrations

She has not found a single online store that has a great selection of both formals as well as party wear. Besides, she has also had some bad experiences in the past.

## Why us?

Danielle has been desperately looking for an online store that will cater to all her shopping needs. As soon as she heard about Zylker Garments (from a friend), she started her research, before contacting us. She loved that we focus on millennials and that we promise not only style, but comfort too.

Now that we've learned about buyer personas, their importance in a business, and the requirements for building one, let's look into how to connect the personas and their journeys to your CRM.

# Personas and Zoho CRM

Let's examine how Zylker Garments uses Zoho CRM to meet its requirements.

## 1. Customer reports and analytics/dashboards

In trying to understand their customers' requirements better, the sales team at Zylker Garments wants a record of the preferences of customers within the 21 to 30 age group. However, gathering that much data manually can prove to be infeasible.

With Zoho CRM, they can create a report using the "age group" filter to identify it.

| Filters ⌄ | | | | | ⊙ Hide Details |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **FIRST NAME** | **LAST NAME** | **SEX** | **AGE GROUP.** | **STAGE** | **DEAL NAME** |
| Daniel | Parker | Male | 21-30 | Virginia | **Men's olive green trench coat** |
| Patty | Garcia | Female | 21-30 | Alaska | **Purple Dressberry puff sleeve** |
| Matt | Davis | Male | 21-30 | Florida | **Men's solid black joggers** |
| Amon | Johnson | Male | 21-30 | New Jersey | **Floral shirt - red** |
| Anita | Brown | Female | 21-30 | Oregon | **Women black solid waist bag** |
| **TOTAL RECORDS IN THIS PAGE: 5 RECORDS** | | | | | |

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The team also wants to create a visual report of this data to make it easier to identify customer requirements.



**Brands preferred by women (Age: 21 - 30)**

- Mini Boden (7.14%)
- Design House (7.14%)
- Girlfriend Collective (7.14%)
- Patagonia (7.14%)
- Dressberry (7.14%)
- Everlane, Levi's & Zara (64.29%)

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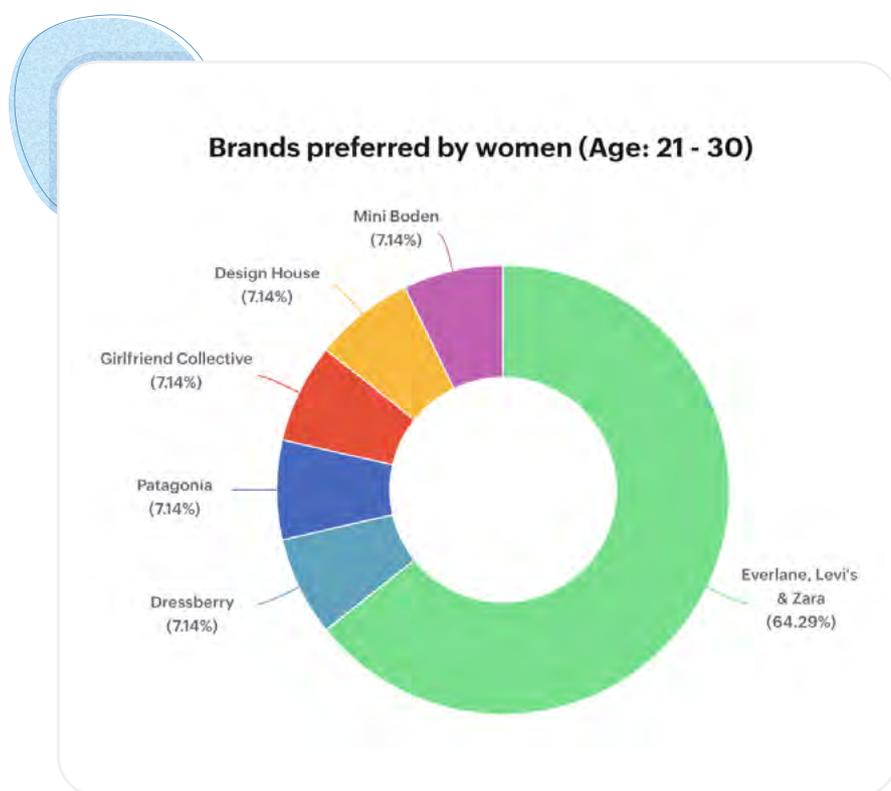
## 2. Segmentation

We've established that the business revamps its collections each year. However, one of the biggest challenges it faces is getting a bird's-eye view of its clients' activities—without which it's difficult to identify possible repeat customers easily. It hopes to be able to segment its customer database and create buyer personas to sell better and work towards retaining its customers.

With Zoho CRM's segmentation feature, the company tracks its buyer characteristics and uses them to build a data model. Doing so gives them the ability to view their buyer journeys graphically and track them in real time as they progress towards becoming customers.

The team at Zylker Garments segments the customers into categories based on their recency, frequency, and monetary (RFM) values.

### Create Segmentation

| | |
|---|---|
| Segmentation Name | Zylker Garments |
| Segmentation Module | Contacts |

● All Records  ○ Based On Criteria

This rule will be executed for all Contacts.

| | |
|---|---|
| Contribution Module | Deals ⓘ |

AND

● All Records  ○ Based On Criteria

This rule will be executed for all Deals.

| | |
|---|---|
| Linking Field | Contact Name ⓘ |

**RFM Fields Entry**

| | |
|---|---|
| Recency Field | Closing Date ⓘ |
| Frequency Field | ● By count  ○ By field  ⓘ |
| Monetary Field | Amount ⓘ |

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**Zylker Garments**
Published

| Segmented On | Contributed By |
| --- | --- |
| **Contacts** | **Deals** |

| Linking Field | Recency Field |
| --- | --- |
| **Contact Name** | **Closing Date** |

| Frequency Field | Monetary Field |
| --- | --- |
| **Count of Deals** | **Amount** |

Segment Labels
**7**

They assign scores for each category in the RFM value and, by doing so, are able to segment customers in their database. Once implemented in the CRM account, the team at Zylker Garments can identify champions, loyal customers, and those who need attention, which will help them understand their customers better and successfully retain them.



Contacts filtered by Segment Score specifying a frequency value

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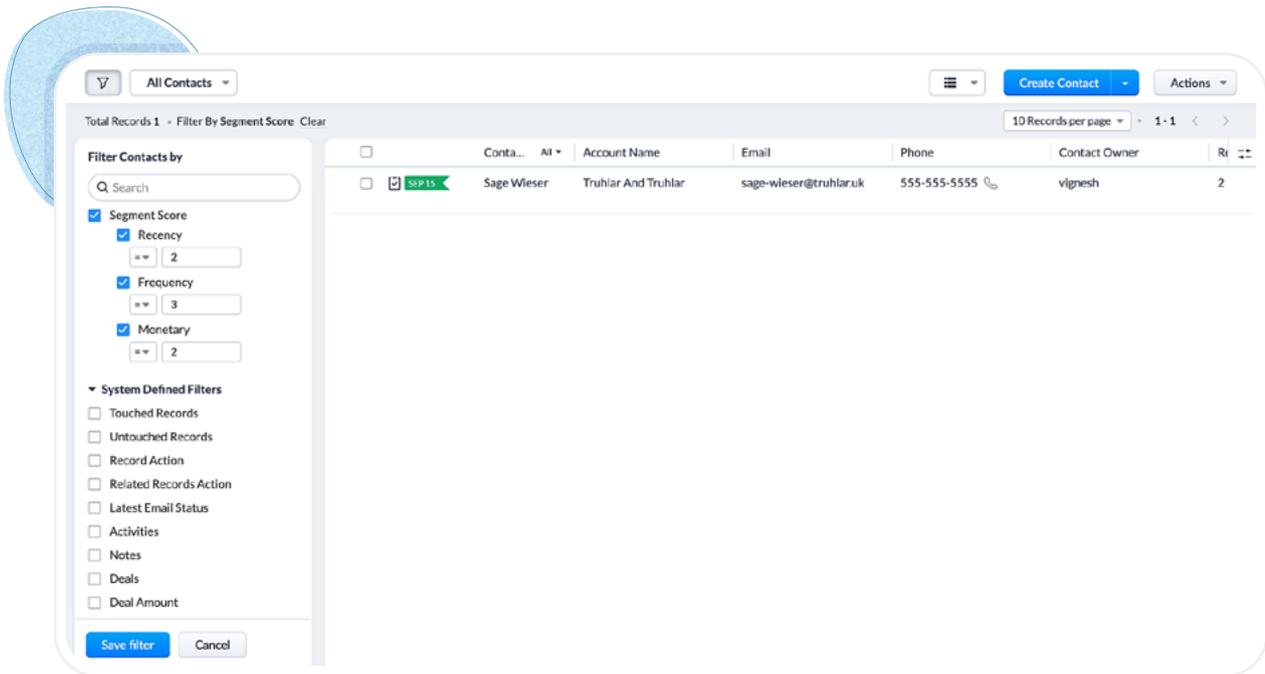
Contacts filtered by Segment Score specifying recency, frequency, and monetary values
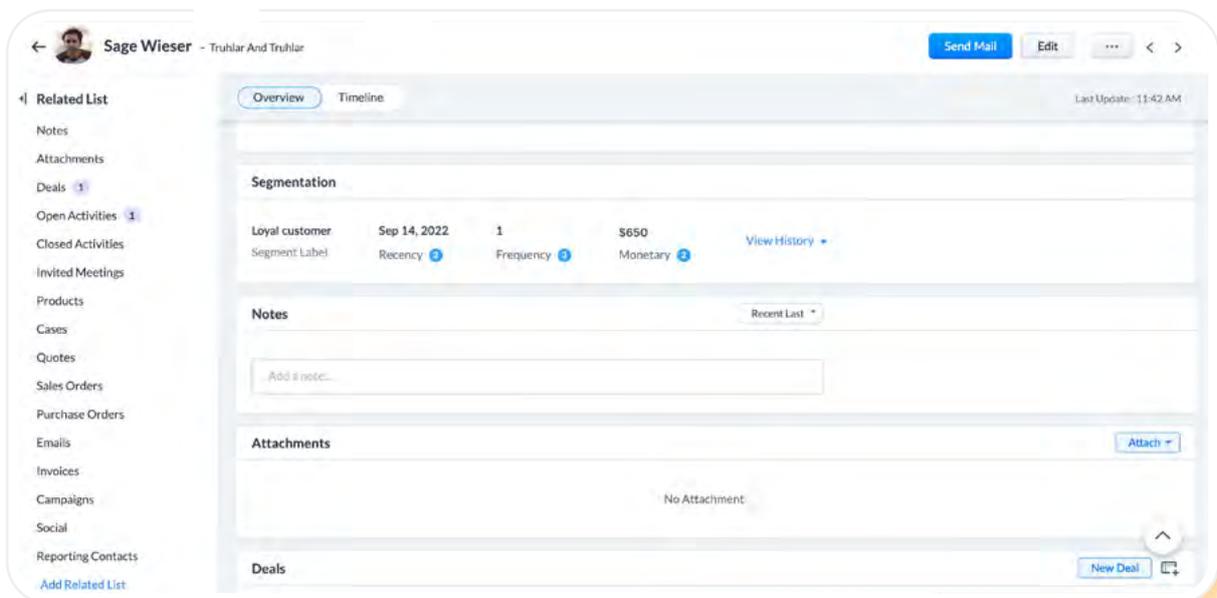


A record's details page

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## Benefits of segmenting your customers

- You can measure the lifetime value of your customers.

- You get a better understanding of your customers and their preferences.

- You gain an at-a-glance view of your customers so you can create strategies based on their data.

- You can determine which customers need extra attention.

- You attain a comprehensive understanding of areas that need growth.

- You can allocate resources properly and increase upselling and cross-selling opportunities.

# 3. Zia Recommendation

Another crucial challenge that the company faces is trying to get a complete understanding of what their customers require and so that they can tailor their offerings accordingly. The team hopes to stay apprised of each customer's complete transaction history across channels and strike the right balance without compromising on sales productivity. They aspire to be able to easily identify products that may spark the interest of their customers and thus sell better.

With the help of Zia Recommendation in Zoho CRM, sales representatives receive a prompt for products in which their customers are likely to take an interest.
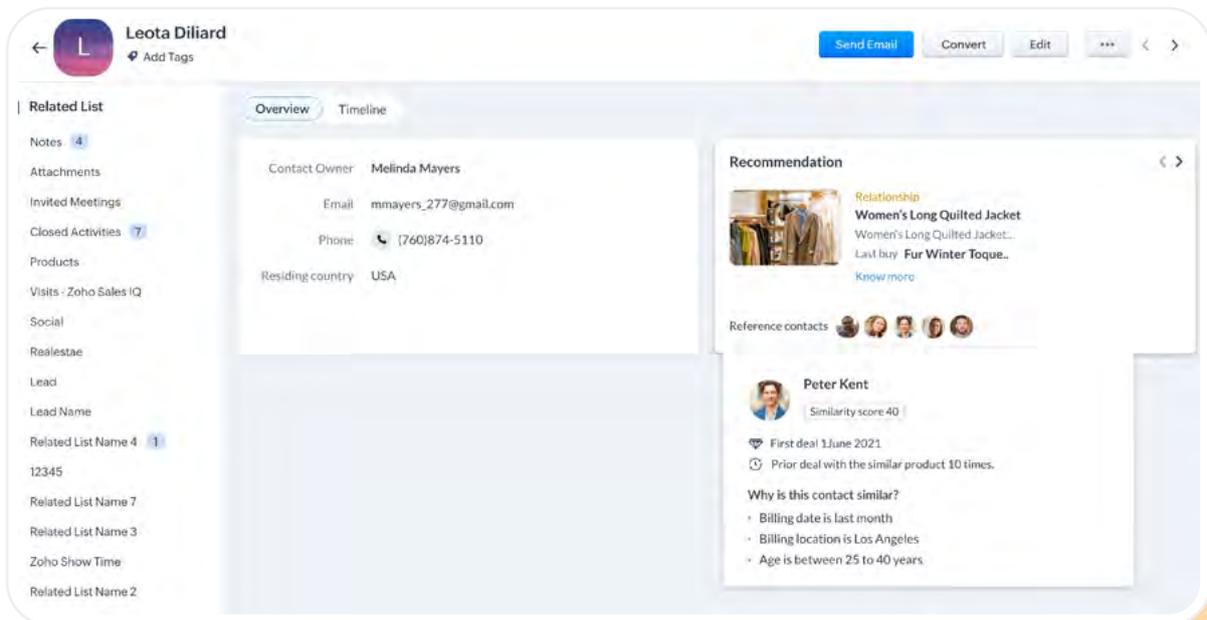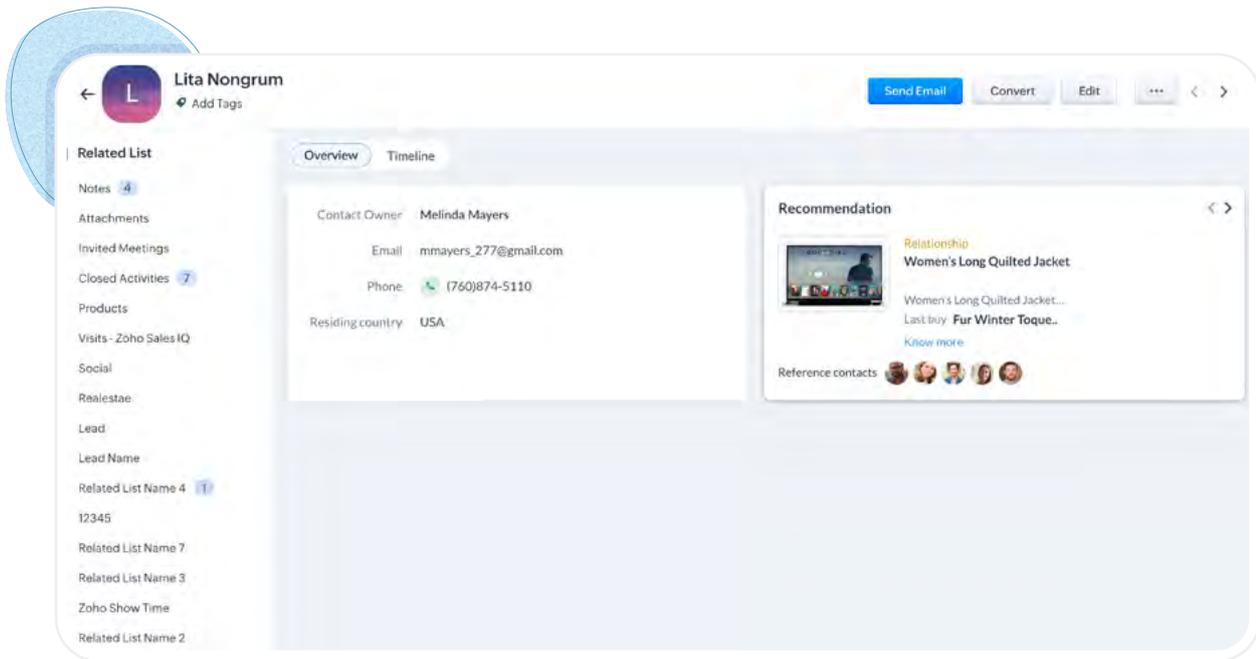
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Based on the sales rep's past interactions with clients, Zia—Zoho's AI-powered sales assistant—identifies potential upsell opportunities and prompts suggestions at the record level. This cuts down on the need to go through countless volumes of data manually to identify sales opportunities and helps reps win their customers' trust by empowering them to sell contextually.

## Benefits of using Zia Recommendation

- Zia analyzes the behavior pattern of the customer base and suggests relevant products.

- It helps you understand the buying pattern of existing customers to suggest additional products they could purchase.

- You can monitor lead search activity, interests, purchase details, and requirements to understand the customers better.

- Zia recommends products that will be more relevant to customers.

- It helps reduce time and money invested in lead nurturing campaigns by sending tailor-made content.

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# 4. Survey

In order to revamp its products each year, the team at Zylker Garments needs to create a new buyer persona so as to understand its customers' requirements better and tailor its offerings accordingly.

With the help of Zoho CRM's integration with Zoho Survey, the team can create a survey which they send out to their customers, whose input is automatically captured in CRM.

# 5. Campaign

The team at Zylker Garments conducts an email campaign for its new fall collection. However, it faces the challenge of trying to associate customers with the most appropriate campaigns and to understand how successful each campaign was.

Therefore, with the help of Zoho CRM, they can associate customers to one or more campaigns and define the success metrics for each individual campaign. Doing so enables the team to determine what changes are necessary to yield the best results for their business.



An ad campaign

Contacts associated with the campaign

# 6. Social Media

Zylker Garments gets multiple messages and posts about its products on its Facebook page and Twitter account. However, instead of scrolling through social media each time to understand their customers' needs better, the team wants a more detailed view of all their customers' social media activity on a single platform.

With Zoho CRM's Social feature, keeping track of their customers' needs becomes effortless. The team can now view all posts, comments, and messages from customers in the Social module on CRM.
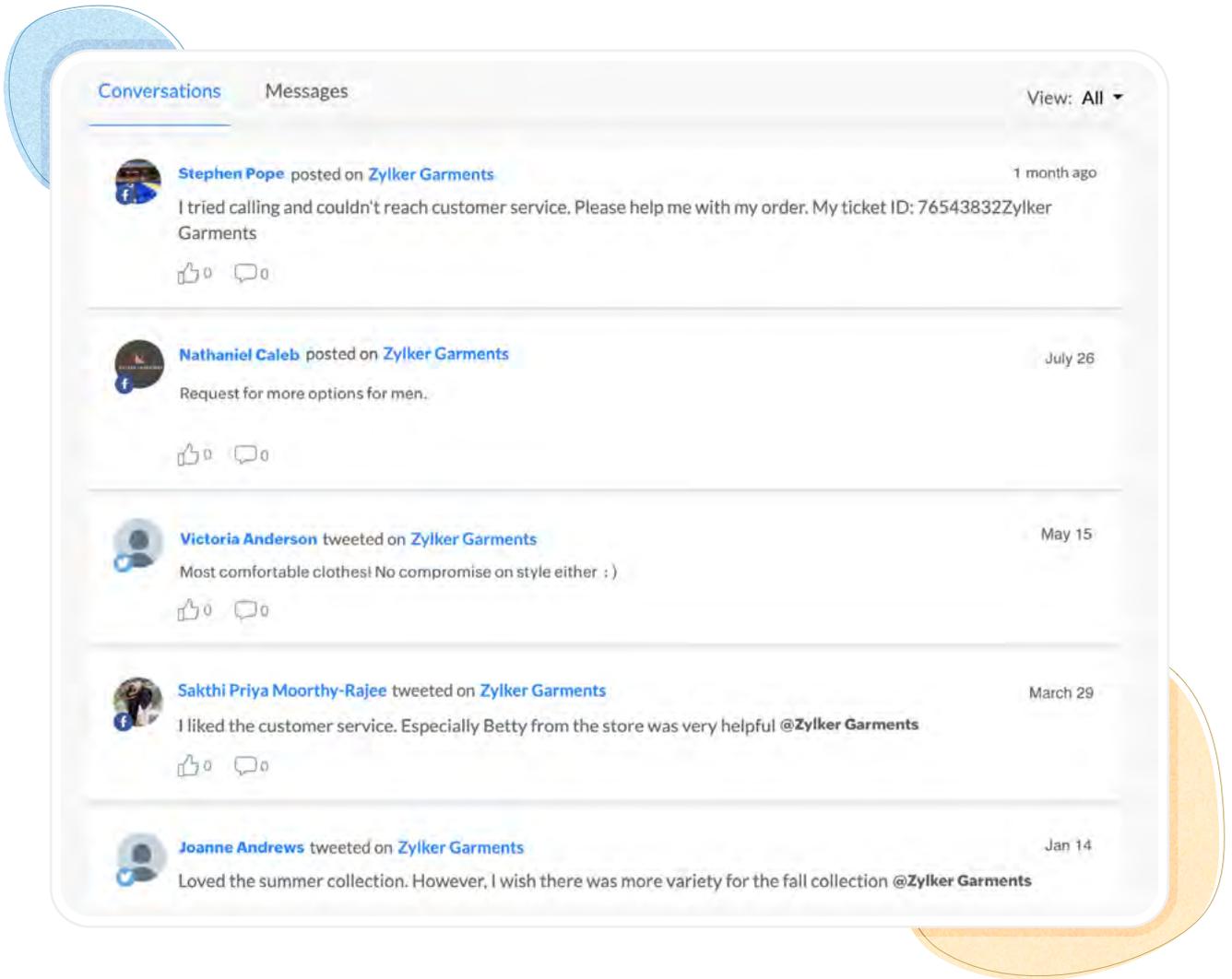
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Facebook and Twitter posts that can be viewed from Zoho CRM
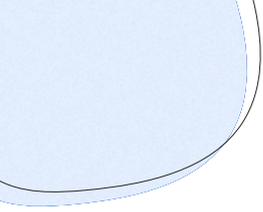
# Conclusion

Whether you're a small business or one that's vastly growing, your customer will always be a motivating factor for all your marketing strategies. By creating key buyer personas, you'll be able to ensure greater effectiveness in your customer retention efforts. Besides, creating buyer personas is itself an illuminating practice; understanding and determining who all benefits from the solutions your brand offers is essential to building your business and retaining customers.

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# Exercise

**What is a buyer persona?**

a)     A personality test for each person in your company

b)     A semi-fictional mockup of your ideal client

c)     A real person

d)     A silver bullet for sales


**Who developed the concept of buyer personas?**

a)     Shlomo Goltz

b)     Raphi Mahgereft

c)     Alan Cooper

d)     Adele Revella


**A buyer persona is the same as a target audience.**

a)     True

b)     False

**What are the two types of buyer personas?**

a)     Positive buyer personas and negative buyer personas

b)     Good buyer personas and bad buyer personas

**It's important to interview real customers while creating a buyer persona.**

a)     True

b)     False

**How is Zoho CRM's Zia Recommendation feature useful for a business?**

a)     It prompts customers with products that may interest them.

b)      It prompts sales reps with the products that their customers are likely to be interested in.

**Create a buyer persona for the following scenario:**

Richard Morris, a 25-year-old travel vlogger, recently bought a phone from Zylker Mobiles. He enjoys vlogging about his trips, and to ensure quality content, he updates his phone each year. He prefers to avoid purchasing from shops that don't offer good service. His goal, at the end of the day, is to ensure he gets his money's worth.

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