

## User Personas

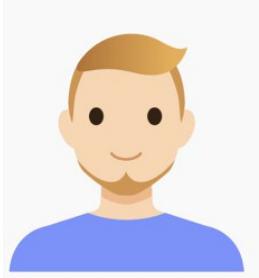
In user experience (UX) terms, a persona is a fictional character created to represent different types of users, and to give insight into their goals, abilities, and behaviors. A good overview of personas can be found at the **usability.gov** website ([http://www.usability.gov/methods/analyze\\_current/personas.html](http://www.usability.gov/methods/analyze_current/personas.html))

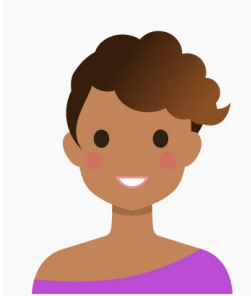
Personas are invaluable to a technical writer, because they allow you to write with a particular user in mind, and the documentation can be geared towards that user's skill set and goals.

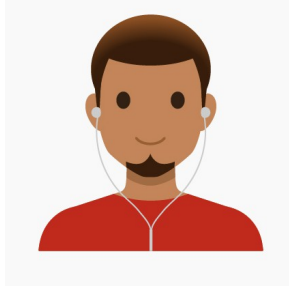
I created these personas to use when re-evaluating documentation for a previous employer. I spent time reviewing support tickets for certain products to understand what customers were having trouble with or trying to do, and then looked at some of the demographic information in our CRM system to get a better idea of where our customers were located and any other self-reported information (age, income, etc.). Then I created these personas based on the information I found and my own intuition from dealing directly with our customers.


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Persona Name/Role	Characteristics	Goals/Tasks	Information Needed
<p><b>Miguel</b></p>  <p><b>System Administrator</b></p>	<p>35 years old, has a college degree in Information Systems but is mostly self-taught in regards to system admin. Bilingual in Spanish and English.</p> <p>Holds several industry certifications (A+, Cisco). Extremely familiar with the command line, and can write scripts in Bash and Python to automate system admin tasks. Good understanding of networking. Very familiar with several Linux distros, but mainly uses Mac OS X. Can also work with Windows. Very computer literate, very Internet savvy, spends significant time online during the day reading sites like ServerFault. Comfortable with finding information on Google, forums, and blogs, and also contributes to these resources.</p> <p>May not be that familiar with the actual applications being served, or the resources needed for the application. May not be familiar with the setup of the application server (as opposed to the setup of the actual VM). May need assistance tuning the application server for best results.</p>	<p>Needs to install any needed applications on the VM, and manage the resources for the VM.</p> <p>Needs to monitor the server to make sure that it is up, and that it has enough resources to serve the applications that are being run on it.</p> <p>Needs to troubleshoot any server or application issues.</p>	<p>How to install applications from the Control Panel or the command line, how to monitor the server and resources, how to troubleshoot server and application issues.</p>

Persona Name/Role	Characteristics	Goals/Tasks	Information Needed
<p><b>Amaya</b></p>  <p><b>Blogger</b></p>	<p>28 years old, Communications degree. Worked on the student newspaper in college. Windows user, but owns an iPad and iPhone. Comfortable with MS Office.</p> <p>Understands the basic functions of her blogging engine, but has to Google to find info on the advanced features. Computer literate and Internet savvy, spends a lot of time online during the day reading other blogs and social media sites. Has never used the command line, and is unfamiliar with Linux. Has used Mac OS X but is not that familiar with it.</p> <p>Willing to search online for answers to technical problems, but would prefer human assistance when possible.</p> <p>May not keep up with updating and securing her blog, or backing it up. Also may need assistance adding new themes or plugins to her blog if they are not simply point and click.</p>	<p>Needs to install her blogging engine and any additional components it may need.</p> <p>Would like to monitor blog traffic and stats. Needs to upload images and video to the blog on occasion.</p>	<p>How to install the blogging engine and any related components, how to upload files to the blog using the Control Panel or an SFTP/FTP client, how to manage the applications and VM from the Control Panel.</p>

Persona Name/Role	Characteristics	Goals/Tasks	Information Needed
<p><b>Peter</b></p>  <p><b>Application Developer</b></p>	<p>30 years old, degree in Comp. Sci. Works as a freelance developer or contractor. Familiar with the command line and various development frameworks, able to write applications in his language(s) of choice.</p> <p>Comfortable with Windows, Mac, and Linux, very computer literate, very Internet savvy. Spends significant time online during the day reading sites like Hacker News and StackOverflow, as well as social media. Comfortable with finding information on Google, forums, and blogs.</p> <p>May not be familiar with managing the application server itself. Also may need assistance tuning the server for best performance, or doing any type of configuration. May also need assistance deploying applications to the server.</p>	<p>Needs to install the application server and any relevant applications (databases, frameworks, etc).</p> <p>Needs to deploy the applications, and make sure that they are running optimally. May also need to monitor the applications to make sure that they are up.</p>	<p>How to install the application server and any related applications from the Control Panel, how to deploy the application.</p> <p>Also needs info on how to tune the application server and troubleshoot issues.</p>

Persona Name/Role	Characteristics	Goals/Tasks	Information Needed
<p><b>Bill</b></p>  <p><b>Webmaster</b></p>	<p>45 years old, has a college degree in Liberal Arts and is mostly self-taught in regards to creating and managing websites.</p> <p>Able to write HTML ,CSS, and JavaScript. Windows user, but familiar with Mac OS X and Linux. Mostly works in Dreamweaver, but can work from Notepad++. Able to install PHP-based web apps and do basic configuration, but is not a PHP developer.</p> <p>Very computer literate and Internet savvy, has been online since the mid-1990s. Spends a large amount of time each day online, reading news sites and some social media.</p> <p>Can work from the command line, but mostly relies on a GUI to get work done. Will search for answers online to technical problems, but prefers the official vendor documentation or a printed manual if available.</p> <p>May not be familiar with managing the actual web server, and may need assistance in tuning the web server, or with troubleshooting issues and managing server resources.</p>	<p>Needs to upload site files to the web directories, needs to install any relevant applications and components.</p> <p>Also would like to monitor the website and any traffic and stats.</p> <p>Needs to update the website on occasion.</p>	<p>How to upload files and images to the web site directories using the Control Panel or an SFTP/FTP client.</p> <p>How to manage applications and the VM from the Control Panel.</p> <p>How to do basic troubleshooting and tuning, and how to manage resources.</p>

Persona Name/Role	Characteristics	Goals/Tasks	Information Needed
<p><b>Alice</b></p>  <p><b>Account Administrator</b></p>	<p>50 years old, has a college degree in Business, and is a small business owner.</p> <p>Is computer literate, and knows she needs a website/web application for her business, but does not know or want to know how to set one up. Has hired the Application Developer/System Administrator/Webmaster to handle these tasks for her.</p> <p>She may call with issues, but does not understand all the technical information, and will have her web gurus call back to continue troubleshooting. Is not familiar at all with Linux or the command line, and has only a passing familiarity with the Control Panel.</p> <p>Is more concerned with running the business than running the web site, and expects to get good value (uptime, fast-loading, stability) for her money. Is penny wise but not pound foolish.</p>	<p>Needs to be able to pay the hosting bill and manage the account.</p> <p>Also wants to know about any discounts available or credits due to her without having to specifically ask about them.</p>	<p>How to access the Portal and account administration information.</p> <p>How to add services and cancel services, and how to manage payment information.</p>