

Understanding Your Customer Avatar

Before you start marketing, its important to make sure that you understand exactly who your ideal customer is. If you're already trading, then it will be easy to look back through your customer records and form a vision (and it really needs to be a vision) of exactly who your ideal customer is - so that you can direct your marketing towards finding more of the same. If you're just starting out, then you'll need to do a little bit of guessing to begin with. But don't wait, get on to this straight away. This is a sure-fire way of connecting emotionally with prospects

This is known as creating an avatar. This is a very specific definition of your ideal customer - including giving the avatar a name along with very specific details. In your avatar, you are describing your ideal customer. You need to do everything you can to get inside your ideal customer's head. Walk a mile in their shoes - see life as your avatar sees it - not the way you see it.

You may have heard of the marketing principle of
Market
Message
Media

Basically, what this means is that you must define your market first, then you can craft a message specifically for that market and then define a method of conveying that message.

Please note, at lot of businesses get this completely the wrong way round in that they decide to send out an email so they craft a message and then they send it to everyone they can think of - hence the low open rates and lack of response.

Also, there's a saying in marketing that if you try to attract everyone to your business your message will be so generalised that you'll attract no one.

At 48HL, we believe there's on more element to the principle of Market, Message, Media - and that is Target.

i.e.
Market
Target
Message
Media.

So first of all understand your market place, then, by creating a precise avatar - target that specific avatar with a finely crafted message using media that is known to be used by your avatar.

Its helpful, if when creating your avatar, you start to describe someone who is already a customer and whom you would like more of.

Be clear, a good avatar needs to be very detailed - including giving them a name. It may sound a bit awkward at first but its well worth persevering.

This is not a one off exercise either, every time you have a new offer, or product then you need to define a new avatar.

Ok, so let's start with the simple stuff.....the demographic information - all of which can be used to personalise communications such as ads, emails and direct mail

- Male or Female (if you sell to both male and female then you need at least two avatars - one male and one female)
- Age
- Geographic Location (from country right down to postal or zip code)
- Parental Status
- Children (Ages)
- Marital Status
- Currently Works As
- Job function / title
- University Education
- Professional Memberships
- Household Income
- No of household vehicles
- Do they own or rent their home?

Then we come on to the desires, aspirations, values and goals of your avatar.

If they purchased your product/service what would they be expecting, what outcome?

What benefits would the avatar experience? Are there other market participants that your avatar could purchase a similar product or service from? If so, what would your avatar, like or dislike about their offering?

Then we need to determine where our avatar "hangs out" - who he or she associates with.

Which books or magazines are they likely to read, both on-line and in print. Would they attend meetings or conferences? Are they likely to be a member of an organisation? What interests or hobbies do they have? Who or what have they liked on Facebook? Which car do they drive? What sports are they keen on?

Next, you need to think of all the objections you've heard over the years as to why your avatar would or could not purchase your product. Remember - most objections and barriers put up by prospective clients are simply misconceptions or false objections. If you include these so-called objections as part of your avatar, then you'll be prepared for every twist and curved-ball the real prospects can throw at you.

Then finally, what are the challenges which your avatar experiences or suffers that your product or service will alleviate?

Oh, and remember to give each avatar a personalised name and keep refining it as more data comes to hand about your ideal customer.