



Episode 4: Buyer Personas: The PEDs of the Marketing World

E4: BUYER PERSONAS: THE PEDS OF THE MARKETING WORLD

00:03 Ken Franzen: Hey everyone, this is Ken, from Neon Goldfish. Marketing can be tricky, and simply getting any response should not be considered a win. Your goal should be getting a response from the most ideal customer that you can think of. Furthermore, having them feel educated and more sales ready when they initially contact you is even better. In this episode of the Neon Noise podcast, Justin and I discuss buyer personas. What they are, why you should take the time to create one or more for your marketing and sales efforts? We hope our conversation gives you a solid understanding of buyer personas, and the information you need to get started on creating your own. Enjoy.

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00:48 Justin Johnson: Hey everybody, welcome to this episode of the Neon Noise podcast, this is Justin and Ken, hope you are all doing well. Hey Ken, what do you want to discuss today?

00:58 Ken Franzen: Well, Justin, today, I think we should talk about buyer personas.

01:04 Justin Johnson: Buyer persona, alright.

01:05 Ken Franzen: Specifically, what they are, why they're important and even how you go about creating them.

01:12 Justin Johnson: Alright Ken, so I heard you say that buyer personas are the PEDs of the marketing world. What exactly do you mean by that?

01:19 Ken Franzen: Alright, so, I have made mention that buyer personas are the PEDs of the marketing world. Anyone that's a sports fan, they'll recognize the acronym PEDs as performance enhancing drugs.

01:34 Justin Johnson: Alright, [chuckle] not exactly what I think about when we're talking marketing. Go ahead.

01:37 Ken Franzen: Maybe not the most positive of analogies here, but stick with me for a second.

[chuckle]

01:43 Ken Franzen: So we've heard Mark McGwire, Barry Bonds, Alex Rodriguez, they all been accused of using these PEDs. PEDs, performance enhancing drugs, they provide an athlete an advantage over the other athletes by enhancing muscle growth, strength, reducing their body fat, they help with recovery time. Sure, this term has a bad stigma, but I think its overall purpose applies here. So developing a buyer persona is gonna help elevate your marketing and sales efforts above the norm, to give you an unfair advantage, or that competitive advantage that we all search for, right?

02:20 Justin Johnson: Okay, yeah. So, for those of you that don't know what a buyer persona is, what the definition is, it's a semi-fictional representation of your ideal customers. They represent the perfect customer you wish would walk in your door and buy from you. For example, we work with quite a few home improvement companies, right?



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02:43 Ken Franzen: Yeah.

02:44 Justin Johnson: Let's imagine that you are a home improvement contractor, your phone rings constantly for a wide variety of different types of jobs. You get all kinds of calls, everything from replacing shingles that were damaged from the storm last week, to somebody that wants to put an addition on their home that might include a kitchen remodel, or something along those lines. Most contractors, in this instance, would prefer the home addition that included a kitchen remodel, because it's probably a larger ticket and it probably has better margins.

03:17 Ken Franzen: Sure.

03:20 Justin Johnson: So why not do business, why not target that type of buyer directly as opposed to everybody else, right?

03:30 Ken Franzen: Right, trying to be the everything to everyone, right?

03:32 Justin Johnson: Exactly.

03:35 Ken Franzen: So yeah, that buyer persona, creating your focal point or buyer persona around that person, that consumer that wants that home addition with the kitchen remodel, let's hope that's in there too, is the goal here. Now, let's look at negative personas as well. These are also a thing.

03:53 Justin Johnson: Exactly.

03:54 Ken Franzen: It's kinda the bizarre world of the buyer persona, it's those folks that are the shingle repair. This negative persona is important to create because then we can identify who we don't want to do business with. You think about all the money that's spent marketing to the wrong people. If we create this negative persona, we can exclude those and then we create the buyer persona. We know what specific buzz words we need to include, what type of messaging is going to resonate with them, where they hang out, where their consumer behaviors lie, ultimately leading to speaking to the people that we want to do business with in the end.

04:44 Justin Johnson: Alright. This all sounds great. What are the best ways to go about creating your buyer persona?

04:55 Ken Franzen: There's lots of ways to go about creating the buyer persona. It's obviously getting started and just doing so. I think the best starting point is your current customers. You're likely to have existing customers that are gonna be more than happy to share some of the details that you're gonna need in creating this buyer persona. Flatter 'em with a compliment, how great of a customer they were, and ask them if...

[laughter]

05:23 Ken Franzen: Flattering works. Ask them if they can learn a little bit more about what you did that attracted them to your business. And you get that one-on-one conversation, online survey can make sense if

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you got a large group you wanna tackle. You can do one-on-one though, you'd get better feedback and more insights.

05:43 Justin Johnson: Yeah, anytime you can have that one-on-one conversation, that's probably gonna to be more ideal. What about talking to your sales team? They talk to prospects every day. They may have inside tracks to exactly what their goals are, challenges, objections of what that buyer persona would look like, talking to them about prospects, and prospects that didn't turn into customers for your negative buyer persona. That would be extremely helpful as well, don't you think?

06:12 Ken Franzen: Oh, absolutely. Sales team I think, is often overlooked for input. And they're looking for a better leads, so if there's things we can do, the marketing side, to speak to that target customer... I mean, sales is into learn the business and closing deals down and making commission. So if we can get them better leads that are more qualified, better ticket, better margins, they're gonna be happy too. So they should likely be more than happy to participate in helping you there.

06:45 Justin Johnson: All right, so then we've got old fashioned research. After talking to your best customers and sales, you should have a pretty good feel for your buyer personas. Put yourself in their shoes and turn into the inner web for additional insights. Try to search like they would search. Find blogs, industry influencers, industry resources, forums that they might reference, just really digest everything that they're talking about.

07:13 Ken Franzen: Yeah. No, that's, well, a little bit elbow grease. It's just some manual labor that goes into that.

07:18 Justin Johnson: Goes a long way.

07:19 Ken Franzen: But it's going to go a long way. So when you go in your... You get through the research, you talk to your sales team, you talk to your customers, some of the areas that we should really focus on, 'cause like "Okay, great. I got this understanding of who this is" but we wanna put this on paper. We're creating a semi-fictional representation of our target customer. So some of the things that you wanna include is their background, what is their background? Details about the job they hold, their career path, how they got there, even their family life. There's influences from their personal lives that carry over into what they're buying and consuming habits can be. That's a B to B client, from B to C obviously that takes place directly.

08:06 Ken Franzen: Demographics, information about their gender, their age, their income, where they live. Some of their behavioural habits, type of personality they have, if they're introvert or they're extrovert. Do they have a preferred method of communication? Do they like to be emailed versus phone call received? What are their goals? What do they focus on, at home and at work? Challenges, things that provide resistance to obtaining their goals, some of the common objections, reasons that they would not buy your product or service. What are some of those common things that they say? Let's get those on paper. And then lastly, what are some real quotes that they'd say? Some of the things they would say regarding their goals and challenges. So to make things easier for jotting these down, you're in your car and you're trying to remember all this, to make things easy, we actually created a how-to-create-buyer-personas-for-your-business download. It's a guide, we'll give you details on where you can download that later here in the podcast.

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09:16 Justin Johnson: Alright, so here are some ways that you can benefit from more defined buyer personas. A likely increase in your marketing ROI. Gone are the days of the spray-and-pray marketing campaigns, making changes to your design and message placement of your marketing messages to be more in line with the interest of your buyer personas. It's likely going to yield a higher return on the dollar spent in marketing. Couple that with closed-loop marketing software and you will be amazed roughly how much insight you can now have.

09:51 Ken Franzen: Absolutely. Another is more quality leads. When you position your business in front of the proper audience and you key in on the things that matter most to them, you're gonna generate more quality leads. And then an increase in those quality leads is gonna generate a higher lead to customer conversions resulting in more sales. Simple, eh.

10:11 Justin Johnson: Yeah, absolutely. Marketing and sales will be better aligned. With marketing and sales focused on the same defined buyer persona, they can identify and communicate with one another much better. Feedback from sales will assess marketing and marketing in turn will provide better leads to sales.

10:31 Ken Franzen: Absolutely. Also improving future product development, I think is something that we touch on. Better understanding customers is also gonna identify what other areas they may need help, opening doors of opportunity for new products and services that you could create or start to provide. This will help better serve your customer base today and tomorrow, strengthening your overall customer relationship.

11:00 Justin Johnson: Absolutely. Alright, so what are the next bus stops to creating our buyer persona? We've got this how-to guide that we're gonna download. Did we provide a URL for where they can locate that on?

11:15 Ken Franzen: Yes, so to start off next stop, let's download the how-to-create-buyer-personas-for-your-business, you can find the URL on the show notes neongoldfish.com/podcast. And this will serve as your guide for creating your buyer personas. It's gonna touch on all those specific areas that we mentioned earlier.

11:37 Justin Johnson: Alright. Okay. So, two would be, let's make a list of your best customers that closely resemble the type of customer you would like to do business with. Just go through your customer list and take a peek and identify exactly who it is that is your best customer, and try to replicate that.

11:57 Ken Franzen: Absolutely. And then connect with those customers, whether it's via phone, email. You set an appointment with them, you do an online survey. I know we've used SurveyMonkey in the past for these and it works really well. Although I will warn you, the surveys do take some encouragement to get completed. So don't get discouraged if you send out a survey to 200 customers and only two fill it out. You might have...

[overlapping conversation]

12:23 Justin Johnson: Everybody's not gonna respond it first time?

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[laughter]

12:26 Ken Franzen: Nice as that would be, and if you do have that happen, give me a call and tell me what you did.

[laughter]

12:33 Ken Franzen: Next, work with your sales team. Learn more about the conversations that they're having with the current customers you have and the prospects they're talking with on the phone.

12:42 Justin Johnson: Alright. And then leverage the internet. We talked a little bit about it. Act as your buyer persona. Try to mirror exactly ways that they would search and look for answers and problems with your product and services.

12:57 Ken Franzen: Sure. And then after you've done all that, now it's time to create your buyer personas. So you might have one, you might have two, you might have three, it all depends. Start with one, go through that process, and then rinse and repeat. Once you have that buyer persona created, the next step is, start implementing changes in your marketing and sales efforts, being more in line with the interests of these defined buyer personas. And then track your successes and failures, and identify where you're doing well, what's resonating, what's not. It isn't a one and done set-up. You're gonna wanna to go back and revisit your buyer personas on a regular basis, and discuss these successes and failures and make changes where needed. And like I said earlier, rinse and repeat. Continually make this a dynamic component of your business.

13:52 Justin Johnson: Alright, we're outta here for today. Hopefully, you guys have a better understanding of the importance of buyer personas, and are excited about creating your own. As we mentioned before, be sure to check out the show notes at neongoldfish.com/podcast. This is Justin and Ken with Neon Noise. We will see you next time. Later, guys.

[music]