

HOW TO CREATE INSIGHTFUL & ACTIONABLE BUYER PERSONAS



Knowing your buyers is key to making informed sales and marketing decisions. That's why organizations are increasingly making buyer personas a strategic priority for their organization. But to get maximum value out of your buyer personas, you need to think about how to build them. Here's why:

The **INTEREST** in buyer personas is growing



BUT The number of marketers who use them **EFFECTIVELY** is not. ¹



Buyer personas are not all created equally.



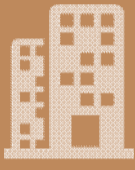
Out of the three popular methodologies, **ONLY INTERVIEWING BUYERS** tells you something you don't already know.

1 Consult Internal Stakeholders

SOURCE: Sales team, product/marketing team, customer support team, etc.

PROS: Fast and simple; makes it easy to leverage existing knowledge

CONS: Provides a limited and recycled view of what you already know about your buyers; no new insights



2 Leverage Familiar Tools

SOURCE: Online surveys, social media, web research, analyst reports, web analytics, etc.

PROS: Low cost, statistical data, validates existing opinions

CONS: Misses offline buying behavior; focuses on historical behavior and responses to internally generated questions



3 INTERVIEW REAL BUYERS



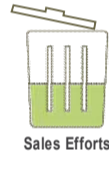
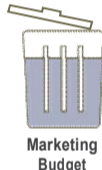
SOURCE: Buyers who recently evaluated your solution or your competitors', etc.

PROS: Provides in-depth and non-obvious details about how, when and why buyers make the decision you want to influence

CONS: Requires strong listening and interviewing skills

If you don't, you may be heading in the **WRONG DIRECTION** at great cost to your organization.

Interviewing real buyers led one CMO to an astounding discovery – current marketing and sales spend wasn't working: ²



5 Rings of Buying Insight™ reveal buyers in the **CONTEXT OF THE DECISION YOU WANT TO INFLUENCE**, eliminating irrelevant data and reducing the number of buyer personas.



Reveals why some buyers make your solution category a strategic priority while others choose the status quo.

Reveals what buyers expect to change after implementing your solution, and why.

Reveals why some buyers wouldn't perceive your company or solution as their best option.

Reveals which buyers are involved in the decision and what resources they trust to guide their decisions.

Reveals what criteria buyers use to evaluate solution options and make a purchasing decision, and why.

Regulations in our industry just got a lot stricter. We needed a more reliable way to prove that we were complying for audit purposes.

Our goal is to eliminate human processing errors in client contracts so that we reduce our legal exposure.

Despite what all the vendors were saying, we didn't find it to be more cost-effective. So we decided to do nothing.

Anything that can help me to create the business case and demonstrate ROI to my executive team is really helpful.

It has to be easy to use. That means being able to complete the online transaction without having to download and install any plug-ins.

The insights you gather from buyer interviews are **HIGHLY ACTIONABLE**. You'll know precisely:

WHO you need to persuade within the buyer's organization	WHAT information they need to make their purchasing decision	WHEN buyers are most likely to be receptive to your message	WHERE to reach buyers with your marketing content	HOW to create a persuasive argument for purchasing your solution	WHY your marketing and sales plan is the best course of action
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THE BIG PAYOFF FOR MARKETING: RESPECT

By channeling the buyer's authentic voice – clearly, accurately and persuasively – the buyer persona gives marketing the confidence to say, **"This is what really matters to our buyers. So here's the plan."**



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PRESENTED BY:

Adele Revella, President, Buyer Persona Institute
Gordana Stok, Buyer Persona Institute Certified Practitioner

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¹ ITSMA Survey: Increasing Relevance with Personas and B2B Marketing, March 2014
² "The B2B Customer Decision Journey: The Route to Increased Sales," Forbes Magazine.

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