

Buyer Personas

A Beginner's Guide for Small Business Owners
and Entrepreneurs



Contents

- 1 What Is A 'Buyer Persona' and Why Is It Important?
- 2 Where to Obtain the Necessary Information
- 3 What Information Should You Be Looking At?
- 4 Valuable Tools and Resources
- 5 Getting Started with Google Analytics
- 6 Creating Your Buyer Persona
- 7 Creating and Using Negative Personas
- 8 Conclusion



What Is A 'Buyer Persona' and Why Is It Important?

If you have been reading into the world of marketing or small business, you have likely heard someone use the phrase 'Buyer Persona'. However, not every article and workshop that throws this phrase around takes the time to explain what it means, how we create one and what benefits are associated with the use of a buyer persona in your business. Before we start walking through the steps to craft one of your own, let's tackle these important questions!

A 'Buyer Persona' is a fictional character created using detailed demographic data, designed to best characterize your ideal customer. A well-crafted buyer persona is highly detailed, describing this individual's age, gender, life stage, buying behaviors, goals and motivations.

What does that mean for you? After you have collected the demographic information about your current customers and/or social media followers, you can use that information to begin to better understand exactly *WHO* your customers are. Are the majority of your customers female? Are your products or services purchased more by people in their early 20s or are they generally of interest to an older crowd? Does your business speak more to a family with children or a single, career-focused professional? Using this information, you can create a fictional character that describes the type of person most likely to purchase from you.

Don't forget to give him/her a name! It may sound a little crazy, but the more human you make your buyer persona, the easier it is to connect with it and imagine how it would respond to your brand's messaging.



Where to Obtain the Information

The most time-intensive part of the process is the gathering of your customer information. If you want your buyer persona to be as accurate as possible, you will need to gather information from a variety of different sources.

The easiest and most readily available information will come in the form of **website and social media analytics**. This information will tell you who is visiting and engaging with your business website and social media accounts, providing you with a clear idea of who is currently paying attention to what information you share. It is important to remember, however, that a social media follower is *NOT* necessarily a buyer! Many people will browse and engage on social media without ever making a purchase, meaning that targeting them with your message would be a waste of your marketing budget. It is for that reason that you must continue to dig further.

Depending on your product or service, you may be able to gather some **information directly from your recent purchases**. For example, clothing retailers can get an idea of age/gender based on which products are selling, while service-based businesses often collect more detailed consumer information with purchase. This is the most valuable buyer information as there is no question whether they will follow through with a purchase or not, they already have! This can also be obtained through the user of a **consumer satisfaction survey** following a purchase.

Finally, you can take steps to reach out to your potential consumers to gather further information. There are many ways you can approach this including **email surveys, social media polling, and online surveys** shared on your website or social media, **website pop-ups, or direct customer outreach**, reaching out with a message to those who have purchased or who have shown interest in purchasing to ask them a series of questions. There are also more advanced options of information collection including industry trends and keyword research.



What Information Should You Be Looking At?

Once you have determined the best methods for collecting the information that you require, there is only one piece of the puzzle left to figure out before you get started: What information should you be collecting? While most business owners will automatically know to collect some of the basic information including gender, age, and where they purchased your product or service, don't stop there! You want to not only understand *WHO* is purchasing from you but also *WHY* they would choose your product or service.

Here is a list of starter questions and information that you should consider...

Demographic Information: Gender, Age, Income Level, Education, Children, Geographical Location, Marital Status

Psychographics: Beliefs, Attitudes, Personality

Professional Information: Job Title/Role, Company/Industry, Company Size (This section is particularly important if you are looking at selling 'Business to Business', targeting professionals and companies rather than individuals in their personal lives)

Why They Chose Your Product or Service: What problem are they looking to solve? What is their purpose? What functions does your product or service offer that appeal to them? What drives their decision making?

Where They Bought Your Product/Service: Small Retail Store, Big Box Store, Online either from your website or another eCommerce website

Objections: What may cause your buyer persona NOT to purchase from you? What obstacles might they see in using your product/service and how can you overcome this?

How Often Do They Purchase: Is your product/service a one-time purchase or will repeat purchase be required? Is your product disposable?

Communication Preferences: How do they get information? How do they prefer to communicate? (Email, Phone, Text Message, Social Media)



Valuable Tools and Resources

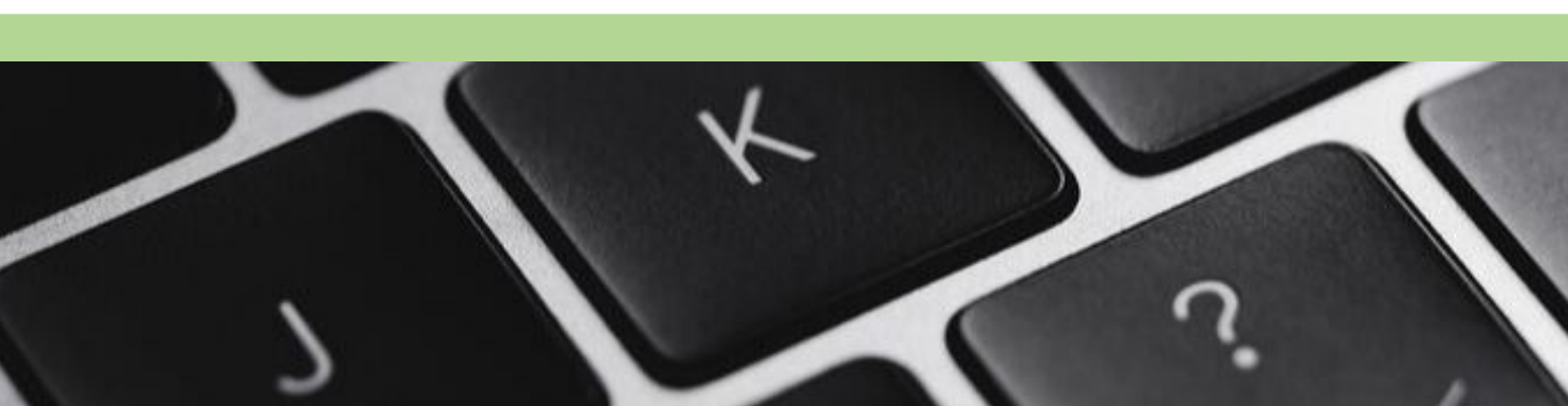
The most successful business owners are those who are aware of what tools and resources are readily available to them and how to best use them!

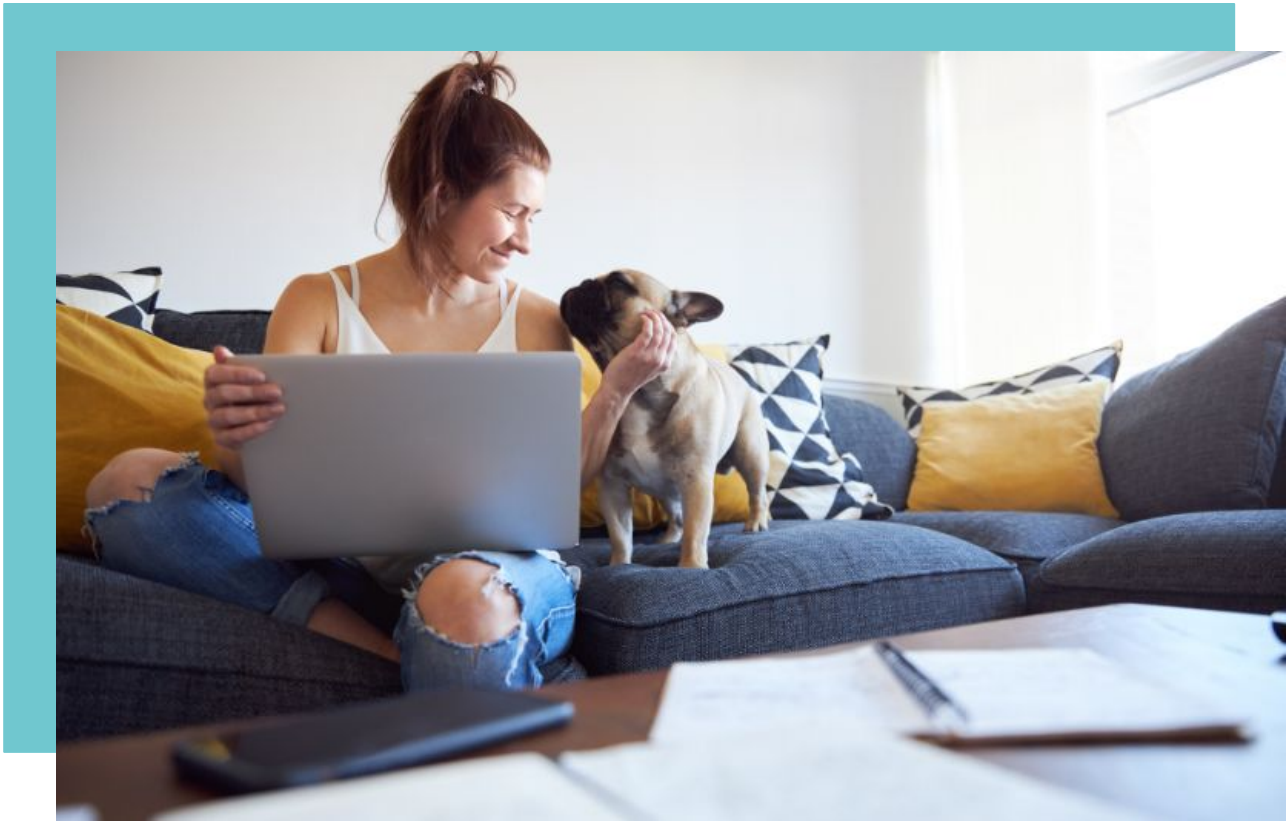
Google Analytics:

One of the best known tools for the collection and analysis of website traffic, Google Analytics will provide you with a detailed breakdown of who is accessing your site and where they are coming from (linked from a social media account, searched and found you in Google, etc.), as well as an idea of their viewing behaviors while on your site. For more information about how to get started with Google Analytics, jump to the next section of this guide!

Hubspot Make My Persona Tool:

While the Hubspot Make My Persona tool isn't going to help you collect the information necessary for your buyer persona, it is a great tool for organizing all of your information in a very logical and visually appealing way. Easy to use, you simply click 'Build My Persona' and then answer a series of questions based on your consumer data. In the end, it will create an easy to read overview of your buyer persona which can then be downloaded and printed off as a PDF document.





Quick Tap Survey:

Jotform is a program that will allow you to create easy to use surveys that can be easily shared with your customers and prospective customers alike. Not only is this a great resource if you are trying to collect information directly from those consumers who are actively engaging with your brand online, but it also displays the results in an easy to understand format. There is a free account that allows you to create up to 5 forms and provides 1000 monthly form views. As your business grows, you can upgrade to a paid subscription starting at \$34/month (USD).

Google Forms:

While there are several different sites available to create online surveys, a popular choice is Google Forms. One reason why it is so popular is the easy integration between Google Forms and Google Sheets, automatically inputting all responses into an easy to read spreadsheet. Furthermore, both Google Forms and Google Sheets are free to use at their most basic levels. There is an option to upgrade to [G Suite](#) for additional features starting at just \$6/month (USD).



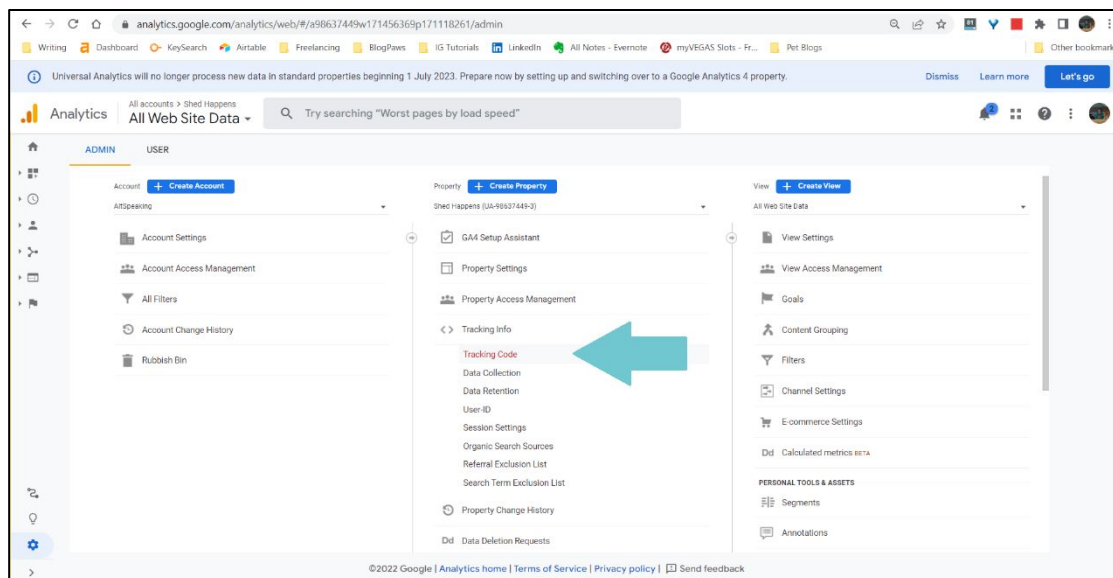
Getting Started With Google Analytics

A valuable tool for business owners and marketing professionals, Google Analytics provides an in-depth analysis of your website's visitors, however, it can be overwhelming for many at first glance! For this reason, we are going to take a moment to break down the basics.

Getting started is simple – [Click HERE to visit Google Analytics](#). If you have a Google account, simply sign into it. If you don't currently use any other Google features (Gmail, Google Forms, Google Docs, Google Drive, etc.) you can click '[Create an Account](#)'.

Once you are signed into your account, either old or new, click '[Access Google Analytics](#)' and then '[Sign Up](#)'. At this point, Google is going to ask you a series of questions about your website including its name, URL and the industry category that best describes it.

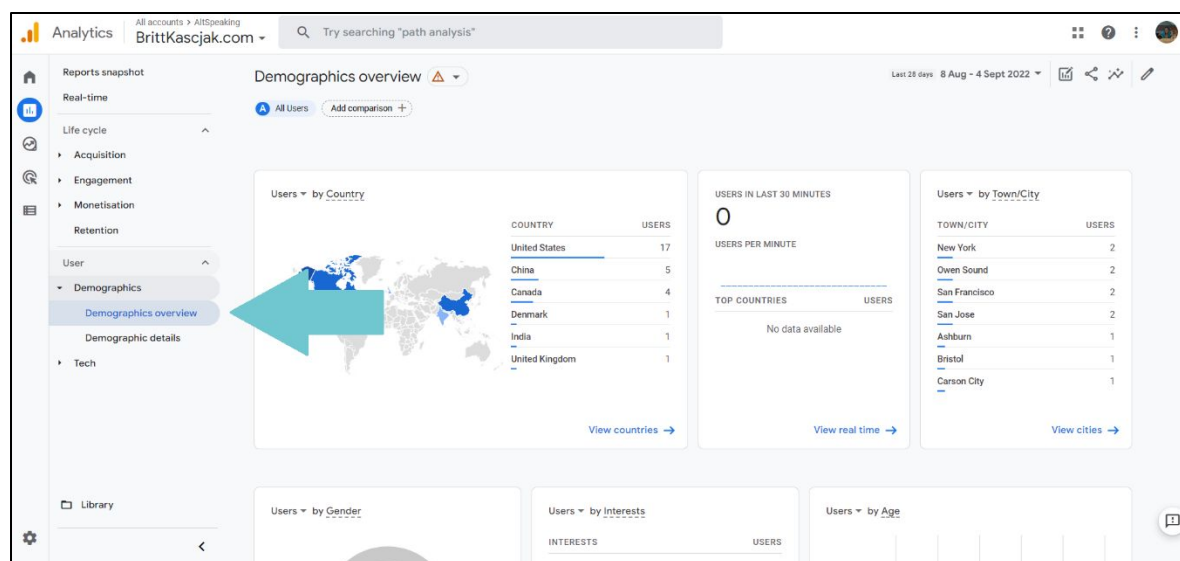
Once your Google Analytics account is fully set up, it's time to link your website by adding the tracking code. This code is what allows Google to collect the information necessary to provide you with their analysis. To find this code, click on '[Admin](#)' in the bottom of the left menu, then in the center under Property, select '[Tracking Info](#)' and then '[Tracking Code](#)'.



In this screen, you will be given a short snippet of code that needs to be placed in the <HEAD> of your site. How this is added to your website will depend on the platform that you are using. For example, if you have a self-hosted WordPress website, you can install a plugin like [WPCode](#) which will help you to easily add the code without coding knowledge. While Wix will allow you to add your code directly in your [Admin Panel](#).

Once it is set up, log back into Google Analytics. Some of the reports are in real-time, so you should start to see data immediately. But, for best results, give it time for the data to collect. You can also download the Google Analytics app to view your data.

To view detailed information about your audience, click “Reports’ on the far left menu, then ‘Demographics’ and ‘Demographics Overview’. This will provide you with a large list of valuable options including Demographics, Interests, Geo, Behavior, Technology, Mobile and more. Take the time to familiarize yourself with these reports as they contain a wealth of information in an easy-to-understand format.



Keep in mind that your information will continue to update and adjust. For this reason, you should continue to check back and update your information. If you are making changes to target a specific demographic, this will also help you to assess whether your efforts are effective – Simply monitor your audience data for trends to see if more people in your target demographic are starting to visit the site after you have implemented the changes.



Creating Your Buyer Persona

Once you have all your necessary consumer data, it is time to put it together in a simple, cohesive and easy to read way. The key to creating an effective Buyer Persona is that you aren't just listing the information you've collected – You are creating a fictional character using this information, giving a face and a name to your ideal consumer.

Look at the facts that you have gathered and analyze them for patterns. As we previously mentioned, it's important to note that **your website traffic and social media followers may not represent your buying customers!** People may follow a brand's social media accounts simply because they enjoy their posts, or they are curious about the brand without intending on paying for any products or services. Compare the trends from your online traffic to that of your actual buying customers to identify those that are likely to take that important next step towards a sale.

For example, you may notice that you have a fairly even divide of website visitors and Facebook followers that fall into the 18-24 age bracket and the 25-34 age bracket, however, the vast majority of those who have made a purchase are 25-30. In that case, your buyer persona may be a 28-year-old individual to represent those that you are targeting for future sales.

Put some serious thought into the questions asked earlier relating to what information you should collect. This 28-year-old buyer persona, are they more likely to be a fulltime business professional or a stay-at-home mother? Are they married or single? Each of these details may influence their buying decisions and therefore can be used to better target your marketing message. Try to identify what motivates your buyer, what problems your product or service can solve in their lives. On the other hand, what obstacles may be preventing your buyer from purchasing? What can you do to target and remove these obstacles in your marketing efforts?

Looking for some guidance?

Print out the worksheet included after the next page and fill it out. Start with 1 Buyer Persona, however as your business grows you may need to create additional buyers. Simply print this sheet out and start over for each new persona.



Creating and Using Negative Personas

While most business coaches and marketing departments will focus on establishing a buyer persona, negative personas are also a powerful tool.

What is a Negative Persona? Rather than focusing on who is actively buying from your business, negative personas are the people who are interested in wasting your time and resources with little to no intention of purchasing something at the end.

We've all dealt with them in business. It's the person who will ask you a dozen questions, each requiring a detailed answer such as what your return policy is, whether your business will allow for holds or financing, etc.

After carefully answering every question, they don't buy anything and walk away having monopolized your resources when they could have been put to better use connecting with customers who were going to purchase.

To craft a negative persona, you want to include as many details as you can following the same templates as you would for a buyer persona. **By understanding who is more likely to fall into this category, you can make smart business decisions** designed to avoid falling into these traps, improving your overall profitability and performance. Carefully word your marketing message in a way that discourages your negative persona from wanting to 'do business' with you while still attracting your ideal client!



Buyer Persona Worksheet



NAME: _____

AGE: _____

GENDER: _____

OCCUPATION: _____

HOMETOWN/LOCATION: _____

EDUCATION: _____

MARITAL STATUS/KIDS: _____

PROBLEM TO SOLVE: _____

WHAT DRIVES THEIR PURCHASE DECISIONS: _____

POTENTIAL OBSTACLES: _____

PREFERRED COMMUNICATION:

Email Social Media Text Phone Other: _____

SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS: _____



Are You Ready to Start Working on Improving Your Business Marketing Efforts?

Online Success is Within Your Reach

Are you prepared to put the time and effort into **propelling your business forward in the digital world**, but aren't sure where to start? That's where we come in!

Passionate about the pet industry and small business marketing, the BlogPaws team is dedicated helping you overcome any challenges or obstacles in your business to build your online presence and reach more pet parents.

If you're ready to join a Community of pet-focused small businesses, come join us in the FREE BlogPaws Community Facebook Group.

Join the
[BlogPaws Community Facebook Group](#)



THE
BlogPaws
COMMUNITY

NETWORK • LEARN • GROW

About the Author



Britt Kascjak

Director of Content & SEO, BlogPaws

Britt obtained her Business – Marketing Diploma from Seneca College of Applied Arts & Technology with a focus on digital marketing.

Since that time, she has completed several industry-specific courses and certifications including the Hootsuite Social Marketing Certification, Hubspot Content Marketing Certificate, Hubspot Inbound Certificate, and more. As the digital marketing landscape is continually changing and evolving, she continues to regularly add to this list in order to keep her skills sharp and stay up to date on the latest best practices.

She started her career as a Freelance Writer after recognizing her passion for content marketing. She has multiple websites and blogs of her own including ShedHappens.net and TheKasPack.com. As the Director of Content & SEO of BlogPaws, she dedicates her time to helping small pet business owners and pet professionals reach pet parents using online marketing.



[@blogpaws](https://www.facebook.com/blogpaws)



[@blogpaws](https://www.instagram.com/blogpaws)



[@blogpaws](https://twitter.com/blogpaws)



[/blogpaws](https://www.linkedin.com/company/blogpaws)

