Grow Your Agency With Target Marketing

Using Personas and Marketing Automation
to Get More Business for Your Clients

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About the Author

Cliff Jones is the founder and managing partner of Conversion Marketing Experts, a sales and digital marketing planning, consulting and management company based in Scottsdale, Arizona. Jones is a professional writer, blogger, speaker and creator of the CME Sales and Digital Marketing Action Planning system. You can learn more about Cliff and his company at www.ConversionMarketingExperts.com.

Ever work on a ski mountain making snow for a living? I did — and it was definitely the most dangerous job I ever had. In retrospect, however, it was much easier than what I do now — sales and marketing automation consulting. I've been in this line of work for 30+ years now, and I've learned a lot about the challenges that clients face, the most common one being how to simply get more customers. Luckily, I've also learned about one of the most powerful strategies for solving this challenge, and that's target marketing.

Target marketing is about knowing exactly who your ideal customers are and working toward a clear goal of getting those customers. This involves knowing your purpose, identifying a plan and setting up clear processes. And while there's no doubt that sales enablement, CRM and marketing automation tools have helped improve the way we build campaigns, they haven't changed the way we approach them. It's up to you to ensure you're getting the most out of your target marketing efforts, and one of the most effective ways is by building detailed buyer personas.

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The Power of Personas in a Digital World

Personas might seem like a relatively new concept, since it's become more of a hot topic in the digital marketing community. But if you look back 100 years, you'll find that the fundamentals of sales, marketing and business success are the same. You've got a product or service that people want, you know who your ideal audience is, and you have techniques and processes in place for targeting that audience. Marketing in today's world is essentially the same. The only thing that's changed is where you find, acquire and keep customers — online.

While doing business online allows you to widen your reach, it can also make it more difficult to access your target audience and effectively get your message across to them (not to mention all the added competition from other businesses trying to do the same thing). This is where marketing automation plays in.

Marketing automation enables you to create highly detailed buyer personas so you can effectively target prospective customers, no matter how many there are. You can make personas as specific as you want and create content suited to each one's interests and needs. Then, using dynamic email and other tools, you can set up automated campaigns that will speak to your targets on a super-personalized basis.

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The number-one thing I offer clients today is a proprietary planning process that helps them fill in any creative or strategic gaps and provides business owners with more clarity and confidence.

When it comes to helping clients set up and execute a target marketing strategy, I take them through a series of processes to help them define their own goals and purposes, create a plan for targeting their audience, and develop clearly defined, highly detailed buyer personas.

The Business Planning Process

The purpose of sales and marketing is to get and keep customers. In order to do this for yourself and for your clients, you need a sound process for defining your strategy. This is the number-one thing I offer clients today — a proprietary planning process that helps them fill in any creative or strategic gaps and provides business owners with more clarity and confidence. From there, it's much easier to develop a clear strategy for creating and targeting personas.

Personalized Exploration → Define Purpose & Strategy → Track Successes

The planning process I've developed involves posing and exploring nearly 100 questions with each client. It's a multi-step approach that looks at sales, marketing, content and ROI. It helps clients define their purpose, goals, brand identity and strategies, and it helps us track their success over time.

Here is a breakdown of the types of questions I ask clients:

Contacts

Emails

Lead Scoring

Sales

Goals

- **Mission:** What is the reason you got started and want to continue forward? Define your initial purpose, and tie it to your goal(s).

- **Vision:** Detailed description of what you see for the company over the next 3-5 years (or longer). Think big. Act small.

- **Ideal customer(s):** Who is your target market? The personas you create should be based on your ideal or most common customers.

- **Brand identity/story:** How are you talking about your brand? Create content and tell stories that are true to your mission and that people will be able to relate to.

- **Compelling offers:** What are you offering, and how can you make that offer even more appealing?

- **Marketing strategy/tools:** Are you using a suitable suite of marketing tools for your business? A sales and marketing funnel built on the right marketing automation platform is essential for success. This is where SharpSpring and other leading solutions work to help you manage contacts, emails, lead scoring, sales follow-up and more.
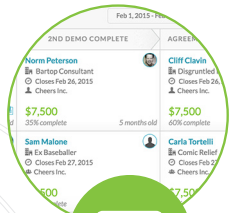
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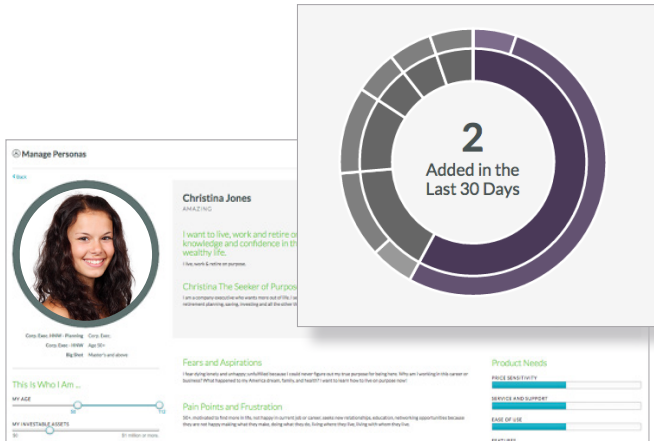
Landing Page templates

VisitorID

Customized Metrics

SharpSpring offers powerful reporting features that can be customized to report on what counts the most — conversions to sales.

- **Conversion goals:** How do you keep score of your conversion goals? Use Google Analytics and marketing automation to manage and track the conversions for each campaign you run.

- **Performance measures:** Are you meeting your goals? Setting clear performance metrics will help you stay on track and adapt to challenges as you go.

We use SharpSpring and other leading marketing automation platforms based on what's most suitable for the client. These solutions offer powerful reporting features that can be customized to report on what counts the most — conversions to sales. Keeping close score of the customer journey teaches us what's working and what's not, so we can adapt our processes to attract and engage the right audience.

Building Your Personas

How would you describe your role today? Website designer? SEO dude? PPC guy? Social butterfly? Or how about strategist? Project manager? Motivator or coach?

The rules you use to categorize your own role are the same ones you'll use to create buyer personas. Having clearly defined personas is

essential for creating content — stories, blogs, videos, online courses, etc. — that will attract the right audience and help you and your clients win over more business. You can get as detailed as you'd like when you're defining your personas. In fact, the more detailed, the better. However, there are some basic items that you should build into any persona you're working on.

WHEN IT COMES TO BUILDING OUT PERSONA PROFILES, HERE ARE THE MAIN ASPECTS YOU SHOULD COVER:

- Persona name, job/title.

- Age, gender, personality, education, etc.

- Fears, motivations and aspirations.

- Pain points and frustrations.

- How the product or service will help them.

SharpSpring makes it easy to define personas — both for your agency and for your clients.

SharpSpring makes it easy to define personas — both for your agency and for your clients. I've been using SharpSpring for a couple of years now, so I've developed a persona-building process that works well with the platform (which I discussed in my recent blog post). However, you can extend this process to almost any marketing automation solution you choose, and each element in the process can be expanded to include as much detail as you want. Note: It's important to focus on building one persona at a time.

Back

Brittany Backpacker
FOUNDER/CEO

I would describe myself as...
Founder of a small company

Bio
I started and run my own creative design agency. We are a small company, but have reached profitability and stability.

Job Keywords — Designer, UI, UX, Creative
Job Experience — 28 Years
Education Level — Bachelor's Degree

4
Added in the
Last 30 Days

Fears and Aspirations
My objection is that we are fundamentaly competitors, offering many of the same services

Frustration
...lls, outsourcing calls and running the business. I have to fight for the

ct Helps Me
...ant to look at them as an extension of my own product line and

Product Needs

PRICE SENSITIVITY

SERVICE AND SUPPORT

EASE OF USE

FEATURES

New Section

NEW WIDGET
19   63

Personality

AGE RANGE
32   66

PURCHASING MOTIVATION
Analytical   Emotional

GENDER IDENTITY
Male   Female

You can get as detailed as you'd like when you're defining your personas.

Staying Ahead of the Curve

The purpose of any business is to find customers, serve them what they want, and make a fair profit along the way. This is not easy even when you have a proven process, great people, and products people really need or want. The competition is fierce — and it's only getting tougher.

Knowing in detail who your ideal customer is makes a significant difference when it comes to getting results. The more you know about your target audience, the easier it is to catch people's attention, get them engaged, and lead them to become happy and loyal customers.

Marketing automation gives you the tools to build highly precise buyer personas and develop an optimal target marketing strategy — so you can convert more leads and achieve your long-term goals.

See how adding marketing automation to your agency's services can drive revenue from existing clients and help you add new ones. Schedule a demo with a partnerships specialist to chat about your specific needs.

Get a Demo

SharpSpring

SharpSpring is the marketing automation platform of choice for more than 1,000 digital marketing agencies and their 5,000+ clients. Since 2014, SharpSpring has provided its powerful marketing automation solution to businesses around the globe. In the short time since its inception, the company has gained significant market share from industry leaders with its competitive pricing, agency-focused business model, and robust platform.

Visit www.sharpspring.com for more information.

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Conversion Marketing Experts, LLC is a sales and digital marketing consulting firm based in Scottsdale, Arizona. CME offers a 10-stage business planning process to help clients get better sales and digital marketing results

Visit us at www.ConversionMarketingExperts.com