

# Why real-life results don't meet buyer persona expectations

[Business](#)



As content marketing gains steam as a strategy in the marketing world, more businesses are taking a stab at building buyer personas.

According to Customer Think's survey, 57 percent of respondents did their first-ever buyer persona development initiative within the last two years. But that wasn't the survey's most interesting finding. Despite efforts to really get to know their buyers, only of survey respondents thought their efforts were effective.

So if your buyer personas are falling short of your expectations, you're not alone. Here's a look at why it might be happening.

### **You stick with what you know.**

The first place most businesses start when is by profiling their current customers. Then, they use their own perspective of their products and services to develop pain points and unique selling propositions.

This is a great place to start, but many make the mistake of stopping there.

In reality, your company's vantage point is very narrow. This method helps you target the people who are already buying, but it ignores other demographics of customers who have yet to come out of the woodwork. Start with what you know, and use that as a launching point for some in-depth research into your target audience.

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Only of Customer Think's survey respondents actually used in-depth qualitative research to build their personas, which speaks volumes as to why so many were disappointed with the results.

## **You fail to stand out from the crowd.**

Buyer personas can work wonders for a business if they're used the right way. They actually make websites more effective for targeted users.

That's a big reason why they're an increasingly popular marketing tactic. So it's likely that if you're targeting a specific persona relevant to your market, some or all of your competitors are, too. It's pretty difficult to nurture leads, especially as a fledgling company, when your well-known competitor is using the exact same method.

Because of this, competitor research should also be a consideration when developing your buyer persona strategy. Luckily for you, people have many . Understand what personas your competitor is targeting and how, and find a unique way to stand apart.

## **You lean on sales intelligence.**

Especially for businesses just beginning to adopt buyer personas, it's easy to get them confused with buyer profiling. Customer Think's survey shows this is a huge problem:

- were confused about the difference between buyer personas and product management/sales intelligence type buyer profiling
- Nearly said they were frustrated their buyer personas were based on typical product management and sales intelligence

<https://assignbuster.com/why-real-life-results-dont-meet-buyer-persona-expectations/>

Buyer personas should be built in collaboration with the sales team, but they shouldn't be driven by sales intelligence. Effective buyer personas come from:

- Listening to your customers
- Considering decision flows beyond the buyer's journey
- Mining customer data for demographic information
- Considering the goals of the buyer
- Paying attention to who you don't want to target

All this information comes together to tell a story about your unique audience, which can then help you build empathy and understanding as you look for ways to meet their needs with your products or services.

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### **They're ticked off your to-do list.**

Building buyer personas is one of the first steps of an effective , but just like all the other important tasks, it can never be permanently ticked off your to-do list.

Your company is growing and the economy is changing, while people's social positions and job security change at an amazing rate. All of these things (and more) are factors that affect the state of your target audience.

If you don't make the effort to regularly dig for new insights and adjust your understanding of how people are thinking, feeling, and acting, you won't have a good idea of what their needs are, or how your business can help.

**There's a content disconnect.**

In determining why your buyer personas aren't effective, consider that the reason might not necessarily be because they're not accurate. The truth is, many businesses create great buyer personas and use them to develop pain points and a USP, but then never for other content marketing tasks.

Buyer personas should be used to brainstorm content ideas.

And since marketers create at least one piece of content per day, they should also serve as a daily litmus test -- with every new piece of content created, marketers should have a good understanding of how their ideal buyers would think, feel, and respond to it.

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All your content should be designed to drive certain behaviors in your audience. You won't know how effective your potential content will be at this goal unless you take a hard look at your buyer personas for each piece.