Market Your Business with
Blogging, Content and Copywriting

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Content Marketing

Customer Profile Template

What you need to know about your customer before you create your content.

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Introduction

Getting to know your customer is the first step in content-marketing.

But creating a useful customer profile isn't always easy.

If you've struggled in the past with the idea of demographics, or trying to picture an imaginary person and describe them, hopefully this download will help.

This is a stripped down process of what I do when working with a new client. It's been designed to help you get to know your customer in a way that will help you create content to market your services.

Work through each section and then use the prompts at the back to help you write out your own customer profile.

And don't forget, if you found this download by watching Content Marketing... Stripped! on AmyTV, to subscribe to future videos so you can see how we'll be using this profile in the future.

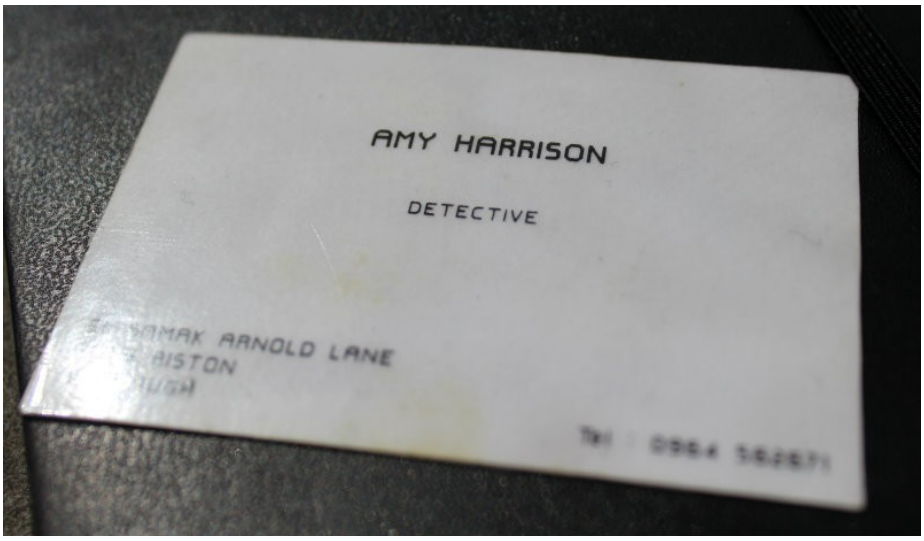
You can subscribe to future videos by clicking here.

Now onwards!

What you need to know about your customer

The first stage in creating content your customers want to read, is doing some detective work about who you're trying to reach.

Now don't worry because I used to be a detective. And by that I mean that when I was 9, dad took me to a machine that printed business cards and I got set up.



A little worn after 20 years but still intact...

So you're in safe hands.

And as you go through this process you will not only know more about your customer,

you'll start to see what kind of content they're looking for.

What specific labels describe your customer?

Some people don't like being described using labels. We like to think we're all individuals and far more complex to be described using a generic term.

But think about this: there are only 12 star signs and even if you don't believe in them you *still* know which one you are.

Labels are practical shortcuts for getting to know your customer and we use them all the time to communicate messages.

You don't have to tell your customer you're using labels. But they do help you come up with content ideas.

When thinking of your own customer label, be as specific as possible.

For example, don't just say “educational institutions” also list whether you mean colleges, universities, language schools, private tutors, academies etc.

Here are some labels you might want to start with:

Where they live (if it's important)

Does it matter where your customer lives? If you have a local service and only serve customers in that area, then make sure that you have this written down because it needs to influence your content.

Their sex (if relevant)

Boys or girls – who are you writing for? No you don't have to choose, but if you do, it's good to have it written down.

Their profession (or type of profession)

Do you know the profession of the person you want as your customer? Do you help small business owners? Or professional office workers in London who make more than £40,000 a year?

Remember, it's better to list a few specific groups of people you serve, rather than a general group such as “people who work in London.”

To help you break this down, try and think about:

- Are they employed or self-employed?
- What industry are they in?
- Do they work in an office, from home, in a studio, outdoors?
- How long have they worked in this profession?

What label describes the company or organisation they work in?

If your customers are other businesses, you need to know what best describes that business. There are many different ways you

Think about:

- Their size
- Their industry
- Their turnover

Some other labels people respond to:

But here are some other common labels that may be relevant to who you want to try and reach:

- Their position within the family (mother / father)
- Their stage of life (student / retired)
- Their hobby or passion (knitter/ scrap-booker / blogger)

Take some paper and write down the labels that you feel best describe the person you want to attract to your blog, help and do business with.

What is their personality?

Sometimes people can have diverse backgrounds but still be connected by a personality trait. For example creativity, or humour.

Think about your own customers, what type of personality do they have? Are they bold? Introverted? Positive? Creative? Analytical? Sensitive? Shy?

List the personality traits of your customer because these can be used effectively as the basis for content topics.

For example:

"Networking skills for introverts"

"Time-management for creative people"

What is their problem?

Your customer has some kind of problem. If they didn't they wouldn't need your help.

In the next few sections we're going to look at some more specific details about your customers problem but first of all just ask yourself what is the main issue that you can help them with?

For example do they want to learn to play an instrument? Do they need to source eco-friendly baby clothes? Do they want to send their children to a good school? Are they in pain? Do they need advice about their business?

What is the main problem you solve in your business?

What is their current situation?

What this title really means is what do you know about your ideal customer's life. Are they studying for an exam? About to move home? Are they working a part time job to fund their education?

Remember, even if you sell one product, you might appeal to customers in different situations, and it's useful to be aware of as many as possible.

For example:

Business: Pet Store

Ideal customer – families looking for new pets

Possible situations:

- Family moving into a bigger home – can now have a pet
- Family lost a pet, ready to look for another
- Family with children old enough to now have a pet in the house

By having ideas about this information, you'll be able to choose much better content topics when it comes to writing and promoting your blog posts.

What are the 'symptoms' of their problem?

When creating content, it's useful to visualise specifically how your customer's problem is impacting on their life.

We call this looking at the “symptoms.”

Just as a doctor goes through your symptoms first before telling you what's wrong, when you create content around your customer's symptoms you get their attention and build trust.

Think about your customer's current problem.

How does it show up in their day to day life?

This is why it's important to know about your customer, because depending on who they are, it may affect them in different ways.

For example:

Overall problem – Customer needs to increase their fitness

Specific symptoms:

- Tired in a morning
- Out of breath when walking
- Doesn't enjoy getting dressed / shopping for clothes
- Tired when playing with children
- Doesn't enjoy activities they used to love (swimming / dancing)

Take some time on this one. Knowing your customer as you do, how does their problem affect them:

- At home?
- At work?
- With their colleagues / friends / family
- Doing things they love?
- Socialising?

The more specific you can be, the better your results will be when thinking of content topics.

How does this problem make them feel?

Once you have an idea of what's going on in your reader's life, it's a good idea to poke around and think about the kind of emotions this problem is causing them to feel.

Are they frustrated? Frightened? Concerned? Nervous? Anxious?

Get inside their mind and think about all the different ways their problem makes them feel.

What worries them about not fixing it?

It's good to know what problems your customers are facing today, but taking a little peek into the future is another way to generate content topics that interest your ideal customer.

For example a business owner who can't make sales, might feel a very real worry today about having to go back to a job in the future.

Or someone thinking about taking up yoga might be motivated by the idea of going to their school reunion on 6 months and wanting to look and feel their best.

So have a think about your customer's problem. Let's say it doesn't get solved. What worries them about this?

What happens when they solve the problem?

When they work with you, how is their life improved? For example:

Business	Service	Customer	Benefits...
Web designer	Budget home page revamp	Musicians	**An online image to impress fans and promoters**
Software company	Customer Relationship Management Systems	Wholesale distribution and manufacturing firms	**Better visibility into customer relationships / more efficient sales force**
Accountancy firm	Emergency Tax Return Service	Small business owner	**Peace of mind that taxes are done / time to work on their own activities**
Holistic health centre	Child-friendly 1 week retreat	Work at home mums	**Guilt-free relaxation / to look after her health / to find better work life balance**

Focus your concentration on that final column. How does your customer feel after you've solved their problem?

How does their life change? What can they now do that they couldn't do before?

Why do they care about fixing the problem?

Following on from the previous section, this is where we dig deeper into what really motivates your customer to look for a solution to their problem.

For example, there is a business that provides marketing help for musicians.

Why does the musician care about marketing?

Well, the problem it solves is it gets the word out about their gigs.

Why do they care about that?

Well, it gets more people to the gigs

Why do they care about that?

Well they get to make more money playing music?

Why do they care about that?

Because they can make a living doing what they do?

In each stage there we have the potential for content topics such as:

- how to get more people to your gigs

- How to get more money from each gig
- How to make enough to play music full time

And each of those topics would allow us to promote our services, while sounding much more interesting than:

How to market your gigs

You dig?

Now it's your turn – think about the problem you solve for your customer and take it through the “why do they care” approach.

Where are they in the sales process?

Another way to get to know your customer is to think about all the different stages they might be at in the sales process.

Not everyone who comes to your website and reads your blog will be ready to buy.

So for maximum effect, if you want to capture people's attention who might become customers, you need to provide content for each stage of their customer journey.

The rough journey looks like this:

- **Unaware**
- **Search and Research**
- **Considering Options**

- **Selecting a Solution**

Unaware

At this stage, your customer will recognise a problem, but may not be actively seeking a solution.

For example, if you offer career advice, you might have someone who hates their job but hasn't considered looking for another job (yet).

And some of their questions at this stage might be:

- What to do when you hate your job
- What to do when you hate your boss / colleagues

Notice our customer might not be thinking about career coaching, but they probably do have questions / thoughts about their problem. What are they for your customer?

Search and Research

During this stage, your potential customer is aware that they want to solve a problem and so they embark on a journey to search for solutions.

What questions do your customer have at this stage?

If we continue the above example, we might have:

- How to quit your job?
- How to look for a job without your boss finding out?

- How to find out the best job for your personality?

Again, we're not thinking about people looking for career advice, just people who might be helped by career advice.

Considering Options

Here, your customer is looking at different options to solve their problems.

It might mean comparing your solution to other methods of solving their problem. For example, your ideal customer in the previous example might be considering the following options to help them solve their problem:

- Career blogs
- Career books
- Recruitment agencies
- Career coaching

What are some of the options your customer might be considering?

Selecting a Solution

This is the stage where people are looking directly for the service or product you offer and are comparing companies.

So imagine that you have a potential customer looking at your site and another site. What questions might they have at this stage?

For example:

- How to choose a career coach
- Best career coaches in [location]

Think about your own customer. What questions do they have when choosing a company like yours?

How are they getting by today?

Another interesting area to explore is to look at how your customer is 'making do' without the solution that you have.

This can help you not only understand what their life looks like now, but it can help you get their attention even if they don't realise your product exists to help them.

For example, let's say you sell time-management software. Now your customer may not be in the market for time-management software.

But they could be interested in time-management efficiency and maybe they've tried books, but still mostly use a pad and paper.

Think about the alternative methods your customer might be using to get by.

What do they need to do / know to solve their problem?

It can help to think of your customer as being on a journey to solve their problem. We've already seen that they can be starting from a number of different situations, and be at varying stages of solving the problem when they find your company.

So based on this, what are the different steps they need to take, or knowledge they need to learn to help them improve their situation?

Let's say you run social media marketing training courses, and your ideal customer is a small business owner who is interested in using social media to increase traffic, enquiries and sales.

They have a website, they're online and that's about it.

So what do they need to do before they're closer to solving their problem?

The list might include:

- Knowing how to choose the bets social media channels for their business
- Setting up profiles on those channels
- Knowing what content to post on those channels
- Knowing mistakes to avoid
- Find their target market online and attract subscribers
- Learn how to increase subscribers
- Learn how to sell or promote a product through a social media channel
- Understand tracking and metrics to know if their campaigns are working

This gives you a fantastic source of content that you can create and it intersects perfectly between what your customer is interested in and what you do.

What are their common questions about solving the problem?

Another great source of content topics are the common and basic questions your customers tend to ask.

First of all, try and think of the most basic, entry-level questions. This is an area that's easy to miss, but you do benefit from making sure your website is friendly for beginners.

Beginner questions might include:

- What is [product / service]?
- What are the benefits of [product / service]
- How does [product / service] work?
- What does [industry term] mean?
- How do you [basic problem]

You may also have some industry / profession-specific terms, concepts or ideas that you might need to explain as well.

So there you go,

Exercise: complete your customer profile

Use the following prompts to help put together your own customer profile.

What specific labels describe your customer?

What is their personality?

What is their problem?

What is their current situation?

What are the 'symptoms' of their problem?

How does this problem make them feel?

What worries them about not fixing it?

What happens when they solve the problem?

Why do they care about fixing the problem?

Where are they in the sales process (and what questions do they have?)

How are they getting by today?

What do they need to do / know to solve their problem?

What are their common questions about solving the problem?

What now?

This download has been designed to help you get to know your customer better and hopefully you have a better idea of who you want to reach, the troubles they face and what's important to them.

Hopefully this has already given you some ideas of content topics that your customer will be interested in.

For future help in your content-marketing journey, don't forget the following resources:

- Keep watching Content Marketing... Stripped!
- Stay updated with content marketing, copywriting and business blogging tips on the blog
- Subscribe to the newsletter for a weekly tip
- Let me know how you get on, or any questions you have: amy@harrisonamy.com