

BUSINESS MADE EASY[!]



Episode 29

Do You Really Know Who Your Customers Are?

Full Episode Transcription

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G'day, g'day, and welcome to the 'Business Made Easy Podcast', where we make business easy. I'm your host Jason Skinner and I am thrilled that you are with me for another week where we navigate this crazy thing we call business and entrepreneurship. I don't know about you, but it really can be a challenging time out there in business, when you're juggling so many hats.

When you start out in business, you start out with this grand vision of working for yourself and you're gonna have a better life, and more free time, and less stress, and more money in the bank. Usually all common motivators that people go into business and start business for themselves, but quite quickly into the journey, once we start putting on staff, or having cash flow issues, or customers needing extra attention, or things just don't seem to be as rosy as what we first set out to do.

We're wearing multiple hats. As a business owner and entrepreneur, we're always wearing multiple hats. That's really important to recognise and understand, and not beat yourself up over really, because it is a big role that you're taking on when you take on business for yourself.

The podcast is all about helping you to navigate that maze, and helping you to give you tools, and techniques, and tips, to help you to I guess deal with those things, and make things more efficient, and life a lot better for you, and hopefully put some more money in the bank account for you as well. That's what we want to do.

That's what my role and profession is all about doing as well. I love bringing you this podcast. I love helping you to grow your business, so thank you for joining me today. Thank you if you are new to the show, for tuning in. Please be sure to hit the subscribe button, if you haven't already done so, and that will ensure that you get each weekly episode as it comes out, straight to your listening device of choice.

Thanks for joining me. For everybody, whatever you're doing I hope it is fun, and you're enjoying yourself, whether you're at the gym or out on a run, driving to work, or you may be just tuning in at home, kicking back for a bit. Thanks for being here.

I've just got back from a whirlwind trip to the States. I've been over there for 'Trafficking Conversion Summit', and also 'Social Media Marketing World'. It really was quite a rush trip. I landed probably two days before the conference. Had a couple of days to check out San Diego, which is an absolutely beautiful part of the world. And then I had the conference for a week and straight on the plane the next day, and home and into it.

Yeah. It's been quite a whirlwind. I'll be bringing you tips and new information that I've learnt over there, that I think will help you in your business as well, because there's a lot of exciting things on the horizon in terms of social media marketing, and traffic, and way the internet's going. I really want to make sure that you're at the forefront of that for your business as well. Without further ado, let's get into it. Now today, we are going to talk about probably one of the most important ... Not probably, actually what I think is one of the most important things that you could do in your business, to make sure you give yourself every possible chance to

maximise the growth of your business, that is the understanding of your ideal customer avatar, or some people call it your ideal customer persona.

The personality that the ins and outs of your ideal customer. The reason why this is so, so important, particularly in the current environment, and more important going forward as well, is that the customer now is more informed than they have ever been before in the history of man, because they have this thing called 'Google'. They have these things called smart phones, and they have location settings, they have an ability, they have every conceivable bit of data that they need to inform themselves of their buying, or whatever it is that they're wanting to buy.

If you take someone who's looking to buy a television, they can virtually sit at home, do all their research, look at what they need, and they can even get directions to the nearest store, because 'Google' knows their location and knows the location of the stores that they're looking at and searching for, so they can get directions.

They can know price comparisons, they can know features, they can know all about it. When they come into that store to buy that TV, they know bang, it's in and done. And in a lot of cases now too, more and more this is going, is the ability to just order it online and have it sent to you.

The customer is informed. It's not like they have to go and talk to somebody now to buy something. They can just look it up. It's really a no-brainer. What that means for you as a business owner, is that you really know or need to know, of the most profitable people that you're looking for, your ideal customer, what it is that they're searching, what it is that they need. What do they want? When do they want it? How do they want it? How do they want to be spoken to? What language are they talking?

We're gonna cover all that today. I think you'll get to see the importance of what I'm talking about here, is because if let's just say for instance, your ideal profitable customer only wants to buy things online, and only wants to talk via email, yet you have employed a call centre to ring them every Friday night to talk about your product or service.

There's a real mismatch there between what your customer's needs are and the way they like to be treated, and how you are actually treating them. As we go, the world's a very, very competitive place now. The customer, as I said, is informed, and they really call the shots now.

It's no longer a business owner's world, if you like. It is the customer's world. The business owner is now, really the guest in that world, I guess, for want of a better word. But yeah, the business owner is now really the guest, because they've got multiple choices. They can just get it online. They can just go to 'Amazon'.

If you look at 'Amazon', it is ginormous what 'Amazon' can do and have. If we want to succeed and we want to win at this game, then we really need to be playing it within the right rules. The rules have changed. The rules of business have changed. I'm gonna help you

today to set you up I guess, as best as possible, to be able to give you every chance to win that game.

It does start by knowing who your most profitable customer is. If you go back to episode 23, this is mainly for existing businesses, if you go back to episode 23, we worked through an exercise to identify who your most profitable customers are. You can get to that by going to www.businessmadeeasy podcast.com/episode23 . But if you go back and work through those exercises if you haven't done so already, that will help you if you're an existing business, whether online or offline. That will help you to identify who your most profitable existing customers are.

If you're new to business, don't stress. This still applies to you, and still very important, but I just wanted to position that I guess. That is the only variation I guess, if you've got an existing business, you really want to make sure you've gone through your existing customers to identify where they're at, or who the most profitable ones are, and can be.

But for a new business, then you can still work through this, you're just gonna have to do a little bit more investigation, a little bit more work. But I'll help you along the way with that as we go. What we want to do here is get really, really granular, and get a specific understanding of our customers so that we can better relate to them, and better speak their language.

When they are searching, and when they are researching, and when they are looking for things, we're coming up and we're talking to them. They are hearing us loud and clear. We're listening to them. It's a person-to-person relationship now. Not just a, "Hey we've got a business. We've got these TVs and you need them, so come to us," because if you want to go down that path, that's not gonna work real well.

What we're gonna be doing in this exercise, at the end of this exercise is being able to have enough information so we know everything there is to know about our ideal profitable customer, because what that does is that shapes then, all our marketing messages.

Everything from our copywriting, the words we put on our website. It's no good building a website for a plumber and filling it full of jargon that a lawyer would use. I mean, the person needing plumbing services gets to the website, and it all sounds all legally and legal jargon. There's a real mismatch there. We want to make sure, and this exercise is gonna help you to identify exactly who that is.

It's really important we do this too, because we don't want to annoy our customer. We don't want to turn them off our business or brand. We want to welcome them with open arms. When they're looking we want them to say, "Hey these people get me. I'm gonna go to them because these other people over here don't." You can get an idea of the game. That's why we're working on this, we want to identify this avatar.

It is the starting point in your marketing journey. If you go out there, and this is why a lot of people are having trouble with social media, for instance, and Facebook, and they're going, "Look, Facebook ads don't work." Well, it's not that Facebook ads don't work, maybe your

messaging isn't talking to the right people. Or the people that you're trying to get is not matching up with your message, and they're not resonating or relating to it.

By going through this exercise first, before you go and spend money on advertising, before you start doing your copywriting and all those things, you'll have a framework after today, to help you position your business and position that message in the right way.

The starting point with, I guess the customer avatar or the customer persona, is that we want to look at a few key things. Now, the better you do this, and the deeper you dig, and the more you get to know about your customer, the better the results are that you are going to get in the long-run, with your marketing and with all your branding, and sales, etc.

A point with this too is that it's an ever changing document this, because the environment is continually changing. Customer's needs are changing all the time. Technology's changing and dictating a lot of the change. It should be a live document, this avatar worksheet, because as needs change and demographics change, and things change, you want to be making sure that you're keeping up.

That's why talking with your customers if you're an existing business, talking with your customer is a really, really important thing to do, because that's how you learn. You learn what's driving them, what pain points, etc., they're having.

The critical areas of a customer avatar, if you like, I call it an avatar. Some people call it persona, whatever works for you. There are a number of different words for it. I'll call it an avatar for the sake of this exercise.

The things that we're looking for, we want to look at the demographics of our customer, our ideal customer. What's their age group? What's typically the age group of someone who we would ideally like to serve?

Their marital status. Are they married? Single? Divorced? For a divorce lawyer, the marital status is going to be, their ideal customer is someone who's looking to get divorced, so currently married and unhappy. They're not gonna go hanging around looking for singles, are they? You get the picture with why those sorts of things are important.

Occupation. What do they do for a living? Are they in a professional occupation? Or are they a trade occupation? Or are they an online business? Offline business? What specifically do they do? Are they self-employed entrepreneurs? We want to know their occupation.

The sex. Are they male or female? Maybe it doesn't matter. These are sorts of questions and facts that you want to sit down, I guess, and identify. Other things we want to look at then, are the psychographics of our customer. What are their attitudes, their behaviours, their values? What do they value? Are they particularly religious? What sort of language and communication do they like? We're looking here in the psychographic area, and I've got a list of these too. I'll put it on the website, which you'll be able to get at www.businessmadeeasy podcast.com/episode29 . We want to look at all the psychographic elements of our customer.

The geographics. Where do they live? Are they in a particular country? Are they in a particular state, or town, or city? You might be only targeting really local businesses, like for a restaurant, for a local restaurant, or a hairdresser. You may be only targeting a really defined, specific region, or area. You want to get that down and really drill down where your customer lives, and where do they work?

You might be targeting the work arena as well. Demographics, psychographics, and then geographics. Then we want to look at the behaviours of our ideal customer avatar. What sources of information do they consume? Where do they read their information? Where do they do their research? Are they on Google Chrome? Do they subscribe to the financial newspapers? Do they read magazines? What magazines do they read?

If you're targeting a particular hobbyist in fly fishing, it's no good advertising over in a lawn bowls magazine, for want of a better example. But you get the drift there. We want to start really drilling down on where our ideal customer's absorbing information.

Then what pains and objections do they have? What sorts of things are really frustrating them? What's keeping them up at night? This is a really, really important one, because if you clearly know the pains and objections that your customer, your ideal most profitable customer is having, well guess what, you can now shape your product or service, or marketing message to say, "Hey, I know that you have these pains and objections. I have this way to take those pains and objections away. Would you like to talk about that?"

All of a sudden, there's a match. There's a match between your marketing and your business, and your ideal customer's needs. I hope you get the point there with this, as to how I guess your ideal customer can easily marry up to what it is. You're talking their language. You're actually speaking with them. Some of the things under the behaviour category, just to give you an illustration ... Actually I'll just go back one bit.

If we go back to the demographic for instance, when we're talking demographic, we want to look at age, gender, country of birth, nationality, race, height, weight. Someone in the weight loss industry would really want to know exactly what weight, you'd be looking for certain people over a certain weight, that had a pain and objection, which was difficulty losing weight. You get the idea, that when we sit down and break up these and understand these needs, we can really get granular and specific about how we can best help you with our product and service.

In the geographic area, we're looking at the climate even can be a factor. No good selling board shorts and a surfboard to someone who lives up in the snow. You just not gonna go there with your advertising, or your marketing message. The way Facebook is now too, it really can drill down, someone was telling me the other day, there's something like over 2 million data points that Facebook has on any particular ... Facebook know more about you and I, then you and I know about ourselves. That came out at the conference the other day. This exercise really is designed to help you get specific, and understand these things, before you go and put pen to paper, in terms of spending dollars, or wasting money on Facebook ads, and marketing as well. When we're looking at ... What are some of the other ones here. I've got behaviour. When we're looking at behaviour, we're looking at what social channels

do they mainly hang around? One type of customer is gonna hang around on a certain type of platform, social platform, as opposed to another.

One might be on Instagram. There might be a lot of craft lovers are on Pinterest. If you're in the craft-loving market, it's no good going in advertising on LinkedIn, or putting all your content into LinkedIn, or into Twitter, because craft lovers are looking at Pinterest and Instagram type stuff. That's the gist I'm getting at with when we're talking about these elements.

It really is important that we drill down and get the best out of them. I've got some worksheets to help you with this exercise. When we do this, we want to make sure that we don't just skim over things, because don't go, "Ah I don't need to worry about that. I won't worry about that." Work through them all. Identify all of them. Brainstorm as many as you can, because as I said, situations are changing all the time, and technology's changing all the time, and customer needs are changing all the time.

The better you understand your customer, the better you're gonna be able to talk to them, and the more value you're going to be able to provide them, so it's so, so important that you get quite granular with that.

As I say, I've got a worksheet here, which I'm gonna put in the show notes for you. It's under www.businessmadeeasy podcast.com/episode29 . That will help you to work through what we're talking about here today. Now the question that probably comes to mind is, well where do I find this information? Particularly if you haven't got an existing customer base. If you haven't got an existing customer ... Well we'll deal with if you do have an existing customer base, best thing that you can do is talk with them.

As they come in, "What brings you in here today? Whereabouts do you live?" You can ask them those questions. You can look at addresses on your database. You can look for age. I'm in the business advisory space, so I usually know roughly the age factors of my clients, and I know roughly what age group they fit into, because it's no good talking to all my clients on SnapChat if none of them are on SnapChat and they're all on Facebook or LinkedIn, or whatever it is that they may be on. You get the gist there. Talking to your existing customers, very, very important.

Surveying your existing customers. You can use programs like SurveyMonkey, which is a free surveying tool. You can design a brief survey to say, "Hey look, you know, we want to improve our services, and your experience with our business," and then you could ask some questions along those lines to build that out.

Another way to find information is Google itself. Google has a number of tools that a lot of people aren't aware of. There's Google Survey. Google News, so you can get really, really specific with Google as to the types of news and information that you start to drill down. Google Trends is another one as well. I'll put links to these in the show notes for you. Google Trends will show you the trends, the content that's trending for particular topics. If you type in there, a topic into Google Trends, and then you can find out what's trending at the moment for that particular topic. It's a really useful tool.

Trendsmap is another one. LinkedIn Pulse, so LinkedIn has I guess, like a newsfeed of what's trending in LinkedIn for particular topics as well, so you can check that out. BuzzSumo, is a great tool, really good tool. There's a free version and a paid version. But the free version gives you enough information to get started, and it'll show you exactly what's trending on particular topics for a particular subject that you're looking for out there at the moment. Really good program to use.

There's another one, Wordtracker. There's a couple of options there for you, if you don't know where to start. If you started just fishing around with that information, through any of those programs, you would find a starting point to get you started, because a lot of people don't know where to start when they go, "Oh geez. I'm looking for, ideally want to look at 40-year-old fly fishing ladies that live in New Zealand. Well, where do I start looking?"

Well, you might go into Google Trends and type fly fishing New Zealand, ladies fly fishing, something like that and see what's trending around in there. I don't know why I picked lady's fly fishing, but anyway I did so I got to work on my examples. I'm sorry.

There is a really good program as well called AnswerThePublic. It's free to use right now. It's a really great tool for finding out what people are actually searching for on a particular topic. If you go into AnswerThePublic, and you type in there a particular keyword that you're looking for, or a particular area, it will show you every single search on the internet for that particular thing, what people are typing.

If you typed in lawn mowing, it would show you all the questions that are being asked around lawn mowing. Where is the best place to do lawn mowing? How do you do lawn mowing? All those sorts of things. It puts it in this really great cool logical formula for you, layout for you, to show you exactly, easy to follow. It's a free tool at the moment, and I'll put a link to it in the show notes, so go and check that out if you haven't done so already.

You can go in there and do that, because it's a really good useful tool to help you do your research as well. I'm also gonna put a worksheet in the show notes for you, so you can go to that worksheet, download it, and use that as your research plan to help you to do that.

Now, a question that may be coming across your mind is, "What if I've got more than one customer avatar?" That's quite possible. You know you've got multiple products in your business, they're not gonna be for everybody. What you're gonna have is you're gonna have this situation where you might have a particular avatar over here that's a 35-year-old female, but over here it's a 50-year-old surfing male.

It's okay to have more than one avatar in your business. But the more specific you get with this, the better you can target and position your advertising, and position your messaging to that specific person. If you use that example I just had there of the 30-year-old female, you're gonna use a different language than the 50-year-old surfing male. It's just gonna be a totally different language.

I hope that you get what I'm talking about there. But as I said, I'm gonna put some templates in the show notes for you. I'll put them in there. They're free to use. You can download them

and use them. I'm also gonna have a workshop on this. I'm gonna put a training together on this, so if you're interested in doing a training on this with me, just drop me an email to jason@businessmadeeasypodcast.com , and I'll put together a training and make sure I include you in the invitation when I put that training out, because it really is such an important area of your business, that you get right from the outset, because it's just gonna save you so much pain.

You know yourself, if you're willing to talk to a particular person for your own needs, if you go into a business and someone talks to you in your language, that you understand, how much nicer and easy that conversation goes, and how much more pleasant it is to deal with that person or business. Think about that in reverse. Relationships going forward and now, start that it is now, it's not in the future, relationships and relationship marketing is the way. You can only have great relationships when you're really communicating effectively and to the right people, at the right times, with the right messages. Can't stress that enough for you in your business.

All righty. That's pretty well all I had time for today to cover with you. I really wanted to just get you thinking about that customer avatar, and who is your customer avatar. If you do have one, please feel free to drop me a line and tell me who they are. I'm happy to check what you've got and make sure that it's in line with what I'm talking about. If you need help with it also, drop me a line, jason@businessmadeeasypodcast.com . Happy to point you in the right direction and get you started. I really just want people to take action on this, and I think you'll find that you'll have a much, much more effective time with marketing and messaging, even emails when you're doing email campaigns, or sending emails out to these people. You're gonna use words and language that they understand and relate to, and it's just a lot better experience and a lot more effective.

All righty. I will leave it at that. If you haven't joined our Facebook community yet, please remember to do so. It's free to join. It's over there at www.businessmadeeasypodcast.com/community . It's a free community of entrepreneurs and business owners that are all talking about business and helping and supporting each other. We've got such a vast range of skills and expertise over there. They're all helping each other, and talking, and sharing in the community. That's www.businessmadeeasypodcast.com/community . If you go over there, I'll be sure to let you in and make sure that you're all looked after.

All righty. That's all I have time for today. I'm gonna leave you with this question, who is your ideal customer avatar? Go and grab the worksheets, download them, fill them in, work on them, and I will talk to you next week. Until next week I'm going to now hand you over to Mia, and she's gonna take us out. I will speak to you soon. Here's to your success. Take us out Mia. Bye.

Thank you for Tuning In

We hope you enjoyed this episode.

If you have any feedback or questions about the content in this episode please don't hesitate to drop me a line at jason@businessmadeeasypodcast.com I would love to hear from you.

Other things that you might like to help grow your business.

We have a very active Facebook community that is free to join for business owners and entrepreneurs. You can get access here:

www.businessmadeeasyfacebook.com/community

We are also on Instagram at:

www.businessmadeeasypodcast.com/instagram

Thank you again,
I appreciate you!

*Regards
Jason*