



# Photography Buyer Personas

How to Create Buyer Personas to  
Grow Your Photography Business

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# What Is A Buyer Persona?

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A buyer persona is a semi-fictional portrayal of your ideal client created from consumer research data. Your buyer persona will be a detailed document including the hobbies and characteristics of your ideal client. You'll want to get as in-depth as possible with your persona so that you can accurately tailor your marketing to the consumer you envision.



# What A Buyer Persona Isn't

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Your Existing Client—Your persona isn't simply a detailed account of whom you've worked with; it's a guide to reinventing your marketing strategy to gain new clients and improve your relationship with existing clients.

Assumptions—Buyer personas should be based on consumer research data gathered on the client you want, or the clients you've already had.

Stagnant—Personas are meant to be revisited. As your business evolves, so should your personas.

# Begin With Research

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Your buyer persona should be as detailed as possible to humanize the vision you have of your ideal client. Begin by researching your consumers who are similar to your ideal client, and continue to ask yourself questions to build your persona's background.

Your buyer persona should be backed by the consumer research data that you've gathered through interviews or surveys. Ask your pre-existing clients questions and compile the results so that your persona is backed by real-world data.



# Buyer Persona Demographics

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- Basic demographic points—i.e. gender, relationship status, children or not
- Age range/generation (Millennial vs. Baby Boomers vs. Gen X)
- Education level
- Occupation
- Annual income
- Employer's industry
- Role in the company

# Online Behaviors

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Now that you've established the demographics of your buyer persona, you'll want to examine their online behaviors.

- Online behaviors indicate where your persona receives the most information from and what sources they are most influenced by.
- Online behaviors are important, because these can determine the sources that influence your client in their daily life. This helps you target potential customers through the sources they use most.

# Types of Online Behaviors

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- **Social Media**

Your ideal persona will be influenced by different social media sources depending on their age, gender, and background. Do they frequent Facebook or Instagram? What about Twitter and Pinterest?

- **Online Shopping**

Your ideal client's lifestyle and personal values can guide their online shopping habits. What sites do they frequently rely on for their online shopping?

- **News & Information Sources**

Where are your potential customers going to find information? News, health, lifestyle, recipes... where do they go to stay up-to-date or find what they need?

- **Entertainment Habits**

Do they watch movies online? Are they online gamers? What sites do they use for these?



# Goals

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- What are your potential client's goals for their photography experience? What do they expect to get from this relationship?
- Goals allow you to convey your ideal client's ambitions and help you strategize the way your photography business will help them reach those goals.

## Examples of Goals

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- To hire a photographer they can connect to and enjoy working with
- To have professional quality images delivered digitally
- To find a photographer that meets their budget
- To hire a photographer with a particular style
- To have beautiful photos delivered fast
- To receive outstanding customer service
- To have a large variety of products to choose from

# Common Objections

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- Common objections are vocal expressions of your persona's challenges. Listening to the common objections that your ideal client is likely to make will help you prepare solutions to guide your marketing strategy.
- Every challenge or pain point you assign to your ideal client should prompt you to envision the solution you offer as an artist and business owner. Voicing common objections is the way that your clients communicate the problems that they need you to solve.
- Common objections are a good place to include a quote from the perspective of your persona. An introductory quote is also good to include at the top of your persona's image as a way to introduce them.

## Examples of Common Objections

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- Bride: "I want to hire you as our photographer, but I just don't know if your style will match our wedding."
- Mother: "My family is the most important thing to me. I want to hire you as our photographer for this special occasion, but my partner thinks you're too expensive."
- Company: "We need new images to market our signature product, and my boss has a specific tone in mind for these photos. Can you create something that follows our company's voice?"
- High School Senior: "I love the creativity in your photo shoots and how you allow clients to express who they are, but my mom says I need to get traditional pictures. How can I get her on board with your style?"

## Your Solutions

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- Once you have an understanding of your buyer persona's goals and common objections, you can tailor your communication in a way that will resonate more with your potential buyers.
- By anticipating potential objections you will eliminate possible roadblocks and make your business a more viable solution.



# Types of Solutions

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- For more insight into solutions to your clients' challenges and common objections, use these resources from *Professional Photographer* magazine and Imaging USA speaker Rachel Marten to learn the best ways to respond to sales objections.

 [How to Respond to Sales Objections](#)

 [Overcoming Sales Objections Without Fear or Anxiety](#)

- Marten's primary message directly relates to crafting your buyer personas. Understanding your consumer is the best way to counter their sales objections. The family that may at first seem hesitant to purchase wall art will likely respond well to Marten's suggestion of the emotional response the wall art will inspire in their home. Every time they walk by their family portrait, they'll be reminded of the love and unity they share. Marten presents this and other great suggestions which could act as solutions to your personas' objections.

# Buyer Persona Samples

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# The Business Owner

*Olive Olsen*

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## Overview:

Olive wants to spread her love of trendy clothing options to women in their 20s and 30s. She needs someone who can carry her vision into photographs of her brick and mortar store and her products.

## Demographics:

Age: 32

Gender: Female

Income: \$45,000-\$50,000

Education: BA in Fashion Marketing

Occupation: Business Owner/Clothing Designer



*"I just opened a new clothing boutique geared towards young women. I'm so excited, but I need great photos to really get the word out."*

## Online Behaviors:

- Uses Instagram and Business in her free time and to advertise her boutique.
- Avoids Amazon in favor of small businesses like her own.
- Uses Etsy, ThredUp, and Poshmark for online second-hand shopping.
- Follows media sources like BuzzFeed, Bustle, Vogue, and Cosmopolitan.
- Rarely reads long-form news articles because she doesn't feel like she has the time.

# The Business Owner

## *(Continued)*

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### Goals:

- To find a photographer who listens to her plans and can capture the style she wants.
- To hire a photographer who makes her feel comfortable and has experience in commercial photography.
- To expand her business into e-commerce and hire influencers.

### Pain Points:

- Worries that her business won't succeed.
- Self-esteem takes a hit when people assume she doesn't know what she's doing as a business owner.

### Challenges:

- Many photographers have a higher rate than she can afford.
- Needs to find a photographer who is transparent and consistent in communication.

### Common Objections:

- "You seem to be somewhat new to the professional photography world. How do I know your images will be better than what I could take myself with my phone camera?"
- "I would love to hire you, but I'm just not sure your work represents my business."
- "I can't determine who you are from your social media or professional website. I'm not sure I want to hire someone if I don't know how we'll mesh together."



# The Bride & Groom

*Alex Austen and Nadia Norman*

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## Overview:

Alex and Nadia are high school sweethearts getting married. They want a great package that includes a photo album, digital images, and enough prints to go around for their home and their in-laws.

## Demographics:

Age: Late 20s

Gender: Male and Female

Income: \$70-75,000 a year combined

Education: MFA in Creative Writing (Alex), In-Progress Medical Student (Nadia)

Occupation: Senior Editor for a local magazine (Alex), Assistant Nurse at a low-cost clinic (Nadia)

## Online Behaviors:

- Nadia uses Pinterest as a wedding planning resource.
- She stays up-to-date for her doctorate degree with online medical journals.
- Alex reads The New Yorker, Medium, and online literary magazines.
- They both use Amazon for shopping and frequent LinkedIn for professional development.



*"This is the most important day we've ever experienced. We need these photos to be perfect."*

# The Bride & Groom

## *(continued)*

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### Goals:

- To receive a beautiful wedding album and wall art since their parents didn't go all out for wedding photos.
- To find a photographer they can use in the future for family portraits and events like a vow renewal ceremony.
- To hire someone who can be organized and do the thinking for them so they can enjoy their event.

### Pain Points:

- Feel like they constantly have to take control of events to make sure they run smoothly.
- They don't want their photos to look like they could be just anyone's wedding.
- They need their special day to look unique.

### Challenges:

- Finding a photographer they love within their budget.
- Staying true to the vision they want while keeping their parents' desires in mind.

### Common Objections:

- "We love the style of your photography, but I don't know how big our budget is after the caterer, DJ, and the wedding venue."
- "This is the most important time of our lives so far. We need a photographer to take pictures when we aren't looking. We want images that are traditional yet personal to our day."

# The Family Portrait

## *The Watson Family*

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### Overview:

Harris and Serena are parents of three kids under 10 years old. They want a beautiful portrait they can hang on the wall, where everyone is relaxed and their personalities shine through.

### Demographics:

Age: Late 30s

Gender: Male and Female. Kids are two boys and a girl

Income: \$70-80,000 per year combined

Education: MA in Education/BA in History (Harris), BA in Early Childhood Education (Serena)

Occupation: High School History Teacher (Harris), Kindergarten Teacher (Serena)



*"Our kids are growing up so fast. We need to capture these memories while they last. We don't just want smartphone photos. We want art."*

### Online Behaviors:

- Serena uses Pinterest for parenting tips, classroom decoration ideas, and new recipes.
- They use Amazon and Instacart for fast online shopping and groceries.
- They subscribe to Netflix and Disney+. The kids have minimal screen time.
- Media influences are CNN and The New York Times.

# The Family Portrait

## *(continued)*

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### Goals:

- To have a beautiful family portrait to hang on their wall.
- To capture those special moments of their kids' childhood in a formal setting.
- To have enough copies of a family portrait to share with friends and family.
- To remember their children growing up happy and well-adjusted.

### Pain Points:

- When DIY family photos don't look good because the kids are squirming.
- Not enjoying family events as much as they could because of disciplining the kids.
- Hoping they can provide a college education for their kids with a teacher's salary.
- Needing more quality time with their children.

### Challenges:

- They want a formal photo but don't want their children to be bored with the process.
- They want their kids' personalities in the portraits, not just a fake smile.
- They have a limited budget but want quality work.

### Common Objections:

- "We want to hire you, but how do we know that your photography studio will give us a better product than those department store studios?"
- "Our family needs a formal wall portrait, but we need you to capture who we are and what we stand for, not just what we look like."



# The High School Senior

## *Mateo Martinez*

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### Overview:

Mateo really wants a session different than the default photographer hired by the school. He wants to stand out and also have a traditional headshot to use for his LinkedIn as he heads into the career world after college. His dream is to play music in his college marching band and hopes to show off his love for his saxophone in his senior photos.

### Demographics:

Age: 17

Gender: Male

Income: \$4,500 a year

Education: High School Diploma

Occupation: Part-time Starbucks Barista

### Online Behaviors

- Uses Instagram and Snapchat for social media.
- Uses Youtube to watch videos of college marching bands.
- Doesn't really watch the news. Family subscription to Netflix, and he watches Twitch for gaming streams.
- Uses Amazon for online shopping and the Xbox store through Microsoft for gaming purchases.



*"I want to have different senior pictures than the rest of my classmates, so it doesn't just feel like another school picture."*

# The High School Senior

## *(continued)*

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### Goals:

- To get senior photos that show off who he really is.
- To be accepted into his top college with a scholarship.
- To join the college marching band and get on the Dean's List every year as a Psychology major and Music minor.
- To become a school therapist and a High School band director as an adult.

### Pain Points:

- When adults assume he doesn't care about his future.
- Worrying that he won't have enough time to study for his SATs.
- Doesn't want his high school photos to look like everyone else's, because they'd feel less special.

### Challenges:

- Mother has decision-making power for hiring the photographer.
- Knows what he wants out of a photo shoot but doesn't know how creative the photographer will be.

### Common Objections:

- "How is your style different from the photographer my school hired?"
- "I want you to take my photos, but my mom has the money. How can I convince her?"

# The New Mother

*Zola Zinnerman*

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## Overview:

Zola is 7 months pregnant and needs a maternity and newborn photographer ASAP. She's always wanted to be a mother, and she needs an artist who can make her feel comfortable and beautiful.

## Demographics:

Age: 35

Gender: Female

Income: \$45,000-\$50,000

Education: BA in Communications

Occupation: Communications Specialist

## Online Behaviors:

- Constantly browsing Pinterest and parenting blogs/forums.
- Uses Facebook and Instagram to update family with pregnancy progress.
- Keeps up with marketing trends with online courses on LinkedIn.
- Shops on Etsy for sustainably sourced baby clothes and supplies.
- Loves sellers who are also mothers.



*"I've waited my whole life to become a mother. I want my maternity session to make me feel like a goddess and a newborn photo shoot that shows off how amazing my baby will be."*

# The New Mother

## *(continued)*

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### Goals:

- To overcome insecurity with her pregnant body through a maternity shoot.
- To have a unique photo shoot experience that captures the special time she's experiencing.
- To have the same photographer to capture her pregnancy and her baby's debut into the world.

### Pain Points:

- Mother-in-Law is constantly meddling in plans for the baby.
- Always wants to be in control but also wants to relax during the session.
- Needs to have fun during the portrait and get away from stress.

### Challenges:

- Husband wants to be more involved in pregnancy, but Zola wants the final say in the portraits.
- Wishes money were no object, but expenses are piling up with the baby coming soon.
- Wants quality photos without having to worry about the details.

### Common Objections:

- "This won't just be any baby; this is my baby. These pictures need to be special."
- "You only do maternity photos? I need someone who is willing to do both maternity and newborn portraits."



# BUYER PERSONA TEMPLATE

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# BUYER PERSONA TEMPLATE

*NAME*

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**Descriptive Statement** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Overview** \_\_\_\_\_  
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## Demographics

Age \_\_\_\_\_

Gender \_\_\_\_\_

Income \_\_\_\_\_

Education \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

## Online Behaviors

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# BUYER PERSONA TEMPLATE

*(continued)*

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## Goals

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## Pain Points

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- \_\_\_\_\_
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## Challenges

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- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## Common Objections

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