CREATING BUYER PERSONAS WITH AI

A Sample Lesson Plan from Mujo Learning Systems

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Lesson Overview

This package provides teachers with everything they need to teach students about buyer personas and AI-powered persona development tools. A rough estimate of the content timing and sequencing has been provided below.

Timing Estimate	Content
20 minutes	Introduction: What are Buyer Personas
40 minutes +	Activity: Creating Buyer Personas
20 minutes	Reflection Worksheet
30 minutes +	Discussion: Evaluating AI Persona Tools

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Note for Teachers

The AI persona development tool can be found here: https://userpersona.dev.

Students should be encouraged to experiment with different ChatGPT prompt patterns to create their buyer personas. One useful prompt format might include elements of roleplay. For instance: Act as an audience research expert. Create a buyer persona for a hardware store located in an American suburb. The buyer persona should include a brief bio, demographic information such as occupation, marital status, age, and gender, as well as key pain points and behavioral details.

After students complete their reflection worksheet, the same questions can be discussed as a group to encourage students to share their experiences with each platform.

Introduction: What Are Buyer Personas?

When developing marketing campaigns, marketers need to connect with their customers on a personal level. In order to do this, marketers make use of **personas**, or imagined ideal customers for a given business. Marketers build these personas using target market data to better understand and target audiences that they do not yet sell to, and better connect with their existing customers.

For example, a used bookstore may develop a buyer persona of their ideal customer: a college-educated person in their mid-20s. Based on this information, they might choose to invest more time and resources into digital marketing efforts that target this persona, such as a paid social campaign on Twitter. Similarly, that same bookstore might want to target a new persona, such as retirees who collect signed books. With this goal in mind, marketers could research and develop marketing content to better target this persona.

Personas can play a big role in many other aspects of a business: They can help a business determine what kinds of products they should focus on developing. They can also be useful in helping marketers determine what kind of content they should be creating, and for what channels.

Marketers can also make use of **exclusionary personas**, or types of customers that are highly unlikely to buy a business's products or services. Exclusionary personas can be a useful tool for determining which marketing channels a business should avoid.

For example, a real estate agent might develop an exclusionary persona report that highlights students or people too young to be interested in buying a home. Based on this information, the real estate agent might avoid spending time and energy promoting herself on TikTok, where users are generally younger.

Data-driven Personas

While it is possible to develop a rough sense of a business's target audience by looking at their website and social media feeds, it is unlikely that that these strategies alone are enough to reverse engineer the actual buyer personas that these businesses have developed for themselves. In part, that is because buyer personas are not just a list of demographic characteristics. Instead, personas are meant to be a detailed, specific description of a potential customer that go beyond broad demographic information such as gender, income, and age. This is because personas are meant to help marketers imagine the actual people that their efforts are meant to connect with.

For example, imagine a marketing company developing a social media campaign for a new protein powder retailer. They might start to develop their buyer persona by examining the demographic data about that retailer's customers. Here, they might learn some useful information that helps them begin to understand the kind of person that is interested in that retailer's products.

Age: 18-35
Country: USA
Gender: Male
Interest: Fitness, Sports

This is a good starting point, but buyer personas are most useful when they are expanded to include even more qualitative detail. A good buyer persona will include not only broad demographic data about who is making purchases from a company, but a wide range of descriptive information, such as what social media platforms they frequent, their lifestyle, and any potential **pain points**, or specific problems that the product or service could solve. While the specific information to include in a buyer persona will vary widely depending on the product or service, including more personal details can help marketers develop even stronger and more focused campaigns and other efforts

For example, here is a much more specific buyer persona for the same protein powder retailer:

Protein Powder Buyer Persona: Mark

PERSONAL BACKGROUND

Age 22
Single
Lives in a large city

PAIN POINTS

Not a lot of disposable income
Finds most protein powder on the market to be too sweet
Does not know much about nutrition and diet

LIFESTYLE/GOALS

Student
Works out 3 times a week
Wants to gain muscle mass
Follows a lot of fitness influencers on Instagram and TikTok

Luckily, marketers have a wide range of analytics data at their disposal for creating more robust personas. Buyer personas need to be as accurate as possible, so research is necessary to get a data-driven picture of their hypothetical customers. In order to generate the best possible understanding of their customers, marketers can use data from sources including:

CRM data

By design, **customer relationship management** software collects information about the people who engage with a business. The information that CRMs generate about demographics, buying context, habits, and preferences is a crucial resource for creating and improving personas.

Website data

Website analytics provide a wealth of insight into who is on the site, how they got there, and what appealed (or did not appeal) to them. Website analytics data alone would give an incomplete and flawed buyer persona. However, this data can be combined with data from other sources to create detailed buyer personas.

Social data

Businesses can use social media platform analytics or data from CRMs that are connected to social media to learn about buyer values, attitudes, and preferences. Social media listening can reveal people's interests and dislikes, which reveals much more than just knowing the age, device type, geographic location, and other demographic data. It is also a good idea to pay attention to competitor's social media, learning from their mistakes and successes.

Customer surveys

Customer surveys can be a great source of qualitative data and help marketers determine *why* customers chose to buy certain products and services. In order to get the most generative data out of a customer survey, marketers need to know what kind of questions to ask. The right questions will vary depending on the nature of the product or service being marketed; but in general, surveys should be geared toward asking customers why they chose to purchase a given product or service over another similar product. While this information will be anecdotal, it can provide useful context to the quantitative data generated by CRMs and other analytics platforms.

AI Tools

Marketers can also make use of AI powered tools to generate plausible buyer personas. This can be accomplished using a broad purpose generative AI such as ChatGPT, but there are also several tools specifically designed to help marketers generate their buyer personas. For instance, the user persona tool from AI Consulting Tools can generate buyer personas based on a description of a given business's product or service. Importantly, while these automated personas may require careful review and should generally be supplemented with qualitative details from additional research, they can provide a useful starting point for marketers looking to build out their understanding of their business's audience.

Activity: Creating Buyer Personas

One of the best ways to understand the strengths and limitations of an AI-powered buyer persona tool is through experimentation. With that in mind, this activity will task you with working with two different AI tools to generate buyer personas.

This activity consists of four steps. When you are finished, you will combine all four steps to hand in to your teacher for evaluation:
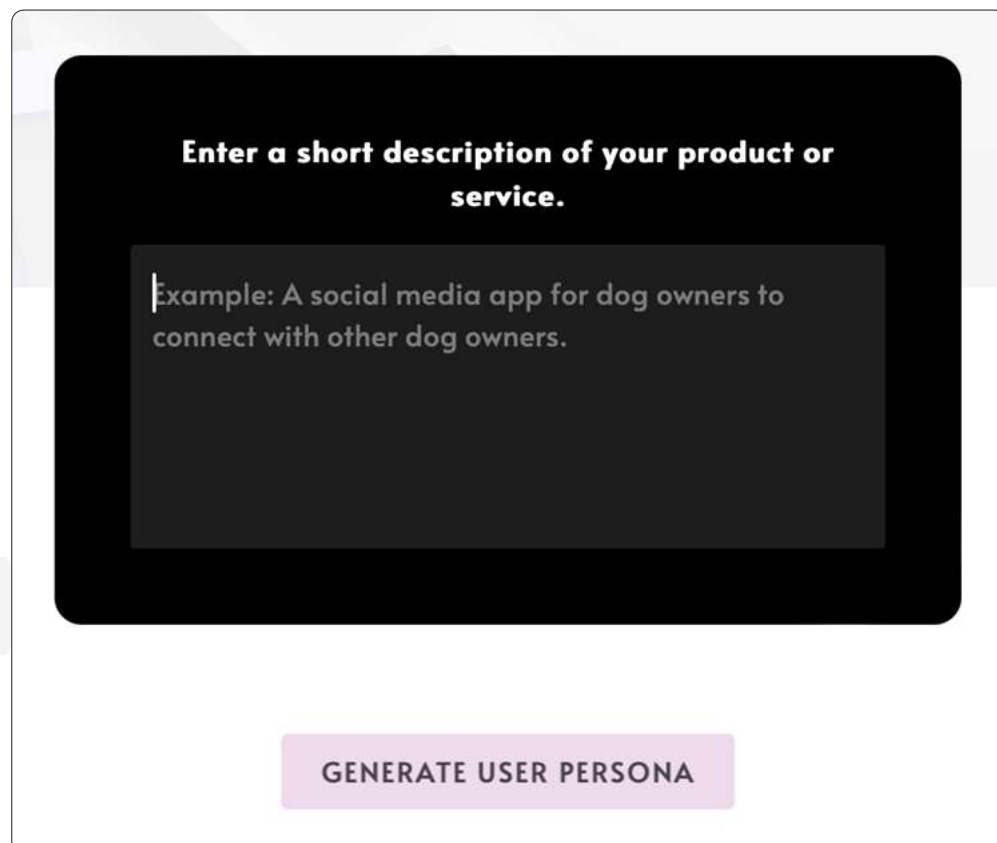
Manual Persona Development

Start by manually developing a buyer persona without the assistance of an AI powered tool. To do this, start by choosing a business and use a search engine to build your understanding of the business's target audience while completing the below worksheet.

AI Consulting Tools' User Persona Generator

Once you have manually created a buyer persona, use AI Consulting Tools' User Persona Generator to manually create a second persona. Your teacher can provide you with a link.

To create your buyer persona using this tool, enter the detailed business description you developed in the previous step into the prompt field and click "Generate User Persona".

Be sure to **save a screenshot of your generated persona.**

Enter a short description of your product or service.

Example: A social media app for dog owners to connect with other dog owners.

GENERATE USER PERSONA

ChatGPT Persona Development

Next, use ChatGPT to create a third buyer persona. ChatGPT can be used to generate a wide range of outputs, so you will need to construct a prompt that gives it a clear sense of what you want. This may take some experimentation.

As a rule, a strong ChatGPT prompt will be as specific as possible about what to create. It is generally more effective to prompt the tool to create a buyer persona with the specific elements you want, rather than simply asking it to create a buyer persona.

Try at least two different prompt variations and be sure to **take a screenshot of the resulting buyer personas**.

Reflection

Finally, complete the below reflection worksheet based on your experiences throughout this activity. Be sure to give an honest evaluation of the AI tools you worked with, and consider how useful they might be for real digital marketers.

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Manual Buyer Persona Worksheet

Think of a local business to create your buyer personas for. Name the business and create a brief description *Be detailed. Instead of "a bakery" describe the business; "a bakery that serves vegan baked goods and ethically-sourced coffee ".*	
Business Name: Description:	
Manually Created Buyer Persona: Consider the questions below to create a buyer persona for your chosen business.	
Demographics Age Range: (e.g., 18 – 24) Income: Does the buyer persona have disposable income? Are they on a tight budget? Gender: What is the gender identity of the buyer persona? Location: Are they in urban, suburban, or rural areas? Occupation: What does the buyer persona do for work? Marital Status: What is the buyer personas' relationship status?	
Interests: What topics is the buyer persona interested in? Hobbies: What does the buyer persona do for fun? Pain Points: What potential problems is the buyer persona experiencing that the business could address?	

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Reflection: Evaluating AI Persona Tools

1. What differences did you notice between the three buyer personas you created? Which persona that you created do you feel was the most accurate?

2. Do the AI created buyer personas this feel like real people, or are additional details needed? If so, what sections feel like they need to be further developed with more detail?

3. What did you learn from creating your own prompt when creating a buyer persona with Chat GPT? Did you need to adjust your prompt at all?

4. Which tool(s) would you be likely to use in the future? Why?

Evaluation Rubric

Criteria	3 Points	2 Points	1 Point
Manual Buyer Persona	Buyer persona is clearly identified and described in detail.	Buyer persona is identified with some detail.	Buyer persona includes minimal detail.
AI Consulting Tools Persona	Generated persona is based on a clear and detailed description of the chosen business.	Generated persona is based on a somewhat clear description of the chosen business.	Generated persona is based on an unclear or thin description of the chosen business.
ChatGPT Persona	Generated persona includes relevant details and is based on a clear and specific prompt.	Generated persona includes some details and is based on a somewhat specific prompt.	Generated persona is based on a thin or ambiguous prompt.
Reflection/ Discussion	Reflection answers demonstrate a meaningful engagement with the topic at hand.	Reflection answers demonstrate some engagement with the topic at hand.	Reflection answers demonstrate minimal engagement with the topic at hand.

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