

5 Steps to Building an Effective Avatar



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5 Steps to Building an Effective Avatar to Transform the Power of Your Words

Why Do I Need an Avatar Anyway?

If you're in any type of marketing, you've probably been told by the experts to describe your ideal client. Then sell to that fictional person.

And if you're like most people, your response is, "Why? My product / service benefits everyone. Why should I limit my scope?"

The answer is Connection - which in the end leads to more sales.

Many years ago, when I was in corporate America, our Sales Managers would tell us that a rifle was better than a shotgun. With a rifle, you aim at a specific target and with skill, hit it. With a shotgun, you aim in a general direction and hope the scatter hits something - anything.

The newbies would haul out their shot guns and exhaust themselves running around after anything that moved. The professionals would aim their rifles, shoot, adjust, shoot again, adjust, shoot again ... until they perfected the shot.

A "rifle" brings in sale after predictable sale. A "shot gun" might bring in a sale, but more by luck than anything else and certainly not predictable.

The point is, if you want a predictable income, you need a "rifle".

So how do you build your "rifle"? By understanding your ideal client.

You see, while your product or service may be good for a lot of different people, the fact is that your offering has a sweet spot. A group for whom this product is not just good - it's perfect. A group for whom this service isn't just exceptional, it's life changing.

But having an ideal fit isn't enough.

For this group ultimately to buy from you - predictably and repeatedly - they need to know and like you, and they need to trust the statements you're making. And one of the ways you build trust, is by speaking directly to their problems, needs, wants, values, hopes, dreams and desires in a language they understand.



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When they feel you truly know and respect them – and that you are speaking right to them – then they will listen long enough for you to show them that ideal fit.

And to nail that understanding so well that it shines through everything you write and say, you need to build an Avatar – a representation of your ideal client or customer – that you address everything to.

So even though it may be hard to disregard the millions who could benefit from your offering, you need to hone in on the one person who exemplifies the bullseye on your target.

Let's get started.

Step 1 – Look at the product or service

Ask yourself the following questions:

First, what problems is this product or service designed to solve? List as many as possible. You're going to be building an Avatar that has at least one of the major problems you list.

Second, what result should your ideal client see after using your product or service? How will their life change? What benefits will they get? You are going to build this into your Avatar's wants and desires.

Third, does the ideal client need any particular skills to use this product or service? For example, does he need to be computer literate or social media savvy? If so, to what degree? Selling a product that requires the client to have reasonable computer skills may not be ideal for an older individual. They will need a different solution to their problems. So your Avatar will need to be in a different age bracket.

Fourth, does the ideal client need a certain amount of time to learn this product or effectively use the service? If it will take several months to master the product or use the service effectively, then this is probably not an ideal fit for someone who works 12 hours a day and needs relief immediately.

Fifth, is the product complete when purchased or does the client need to buy or create pieces to make it work? If the client needs to add components, they may need the budget, time, expertise and perseverance to make your offering work. May be better for someone who builds their own computers for fun rather than someone who wants their laptop fully loaded at purchase, complete with its own tech support.

If you look at the market, who is buying offerings similar to yours?



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Step 2 – Look at the Market

Go to your browser and type in phrases that most people who are searching for your product or service would use. For example, if your product or service teaches the use of social media and your target market is network marketers, you can try Social Media Prospecting. See what's available and what groups the items seem to target.

Go to Amazon and Barnes and Noble and see what books are available and what groups they seem to target. Look at who are writing the reviews.

If you have a service like Buzzsumo.com you can also look for articles and see what groups the articles are written for and where the articles were placed. An article in AARP.com is targeting a different group from an article in thenetworkforwomeninbusiness.com.

This research will give you an idea not only of what group or groups your ideal client would be included in; it will also give you a good idea of your competition and where people are spending money.



Step 3 – Look at the People You Know

When you look at your current clients, customers, friends, colleagues, family members, do any of them look like good candidates for your offering? Think of each person in relationship to your product or service and envision them using it. What would work and what wouldn't work? Why?

Look at

- Demographic – male or female? Age? Living in what area – country / state? Race, religious and political affiliations – only if that is important to know.
- Life circumstances – Married? Children? Going through life transitions? Working? Student? Stay-at-home parent? Primary care giver for family member?
- Finances – Need money - Why? Already working – doing what and earning what? Assets – what? Home owner or renter? Disposable income?
- Health – Healthy or has particular issues? Fit or not? Exercises regularly or not? Doing what?
- Social –Belongs to what groups or club? Follows which people or groups online? Hobbies? Travels? Reads what?
- Characteristics – Detailed or big picture person? Introverted or extraverted? Loves to learn or wants it done for them? Hard working, fun loving?
- Problems – what are the biggest / main issues in this person's life
- Desires – what do they really wish for?

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To get some of this information, you may need to interview your contacts. Just explain you are putting together the characteristics of an ideal client for your product or service, and you'd really appreciate their help.

Step 4 - Putting together your Avatar

Once you have been through the first 3 steps and answered the questions as well as you can, you're ready to create your Avatar.

List the following

- Name
- Age
- Gender
- Marital status
- Family relations – children, parents, siblings
- Residence – where, what type of dwelling, own or rent, and who lives with them
- Work – in-home or outside, what specifically, and how much does he/she earn and, if married, what does their spouse do and earn?
- Finances – are they comfortable or do they need money? If they need money, for what specifically – pay down debt, save for retirement, pay for children's college, help elderly parents, improve lifestyle? How much do they need extra each month? If you have time, do a personal income and expense sheet and look at the gap.
- Health – do any of the family members have health problems? If so, how does that impact your Avatar?
- Social – how social is your Avatar? Where does he/she hang out – online and offline? Is he/she social media active? Does he/she play sports, belong to a team, have a hobby? Does he/she read and if so, what?
- Characteristics – is this person a leader or supporter? Do they step up when needed or look for someone else to rescue them? Do they work hard or do only what's required? Are they detailed oriented or big picture? Do they delegate or keep things for themselves? Are they half-full or half-empty in outlook?
- Problems – what are his/her main problems? Be detailed.
- Desires – if money and time were not an issue, what lifestyle would he/she have? What would he/she own? Where would he/she live? What would his/her charitable giving or volunteering look like?



This list is certainly not exhaustive, but should get you started.

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One more thing ...

When you have your list completed in as much detail as possible, you need to add one more component – feelings.

How does your Avatar feel about their life and its possibilities? Are they excited, can't wait to get up each day, bursting with energy, full of hope, expecting the best, and smiling at everyone? Or do they hate waking up to face another day of challenges, weighed down by all the burdens they carry and not seeing any way out?

This is extremely important to understand if you are going to speak effectively to this Avatar. As human beings we like to think we are directed by logic, but in the fight between logic and emotion, emotion wins every time. If you are going to influence this ideal client to buy from you, you must do it on an emotional level. So understanding the emotions that drive your Avatar is key to your success.

Step 5- Create the Narrative

Now it's time to create your story.

This is the fun part. Let your imagination loose.

Write about this person and their life in as much detail as possible, filling in all the emotions you can, as you describe their life, their problems and needs, their wants and desires. Then rewrite the narrative into a manageable story. Remember, you are building your ideal client, so keep your product or service in mind as you do this.



Next, show your Avatar to your mastermind group, think tank group or your colleagues. Ask them if they can understand with this person, empathize with their situation. Is the person believable?

To round out your Avatar you will probably have to pull pieces from your life and the lives of the folks around you. That's fine – just as long as, in the end, the pieces fit one congruent picture, and this is the picture of someone who would find your product or service an irresistible fit.

What's Next

After your Avatar is built, he or she must become real to you. Read your description every day, update it with relevant bits of information frequently. Look at things and wonder "What would <<Avatar's name>> think of this? Feel about this? Do about this?"

And as you begin to write your blogposts, social media posts, ad copy and emails, write specifically to your Avatar, using your unique understanding of that person's world and that person's emotions.

Then see what a difference this makes.