



IDEAL
MARKETING

HOW TO ATTRACT YOUR IDEAL CUSTOMERS



By downloading this guide, you've taken a step towards meaningful marketing that attracts your ideal customers and supports your business goals. It goes without saying that customers are the lifeblood of any business. After all, without people willing to pay for your product or service, you don't have a business. So how do you attract customers? And not just any customers, your IDEAL customers.

Throughout the almost 20 years we've spent supporting companies, the most significant barrier we see to marketing that works is when businesses don't know who their ideal customers are or understand what they want. Once you know who your ideal customers are:

- Your marketing is more targeted
- Your marketing budget is more focused
- Your marketing results are more positive

We help our clients to understand their customers with a process called Audience Analysis, which we've perfected over the years. It's now at the core of every marketing plan we design, informing everything from website design to social media messaging and sales pages.

In this guide you'll learn some of the most important steps in this process which will help you to:

- Identify your ideal customers
- Write text that attracts and converts them
- Pick the right marketing channels to access them
- Build marketing plans and budgets
- Create a marketing system that attracts your ideal customer

By taking the time to get to know your audience before embarking on marketing activities, you'll avoid the common pitfall of wasting time and resources on marketing that fails simply because it doesn't resonate with your ideal customer.



STEP 1: IDENTIFY YOUR POTENTIAL CUSTOMERS

The first step in the process is to identify the people you could do business with. It's only by understanding who you COULD do business with that you can define who you SHOULD do business with.

Here are some things to consider:

- Who have you enjoyed working with in the past? Why?
- Do you have an ideal customer? This might not be someone who you've worked with yet but would like to attract.
- How do you know someone isn't right for your product or service? Do you already have different groups of customers? What distinguishes them?

Using this information, you can start to group your potential customers, ready to build customer profiles. It's unusual for a business only to serve one group of people, but it can feel hard to know where to get started with categorising different groups. Just know that there are no wrong answers, and you will adjust these groupings as you go along.

The rule we follow is to split people into separate customer groups if their motivations differ enough that your messaging has to change, or you have to use a different channel to reach them. So, take the ideas you've got from this step and consider the following factors that we usually find define customer groups.



Business to Business (B2B) groupings will often be split according to:

- Size of company (based on turnover or employees)
- Industry
- The position of a person in a company
- Their attitude

For Business to Consumer (B2C) businesses, demographics of individuals will be more important such as:

- Age
- Gender
- Family situation
- Hobbies
- Pets

You can create 2 groups or 15; it completely depends on your business. Factors like the size of your company, whether you serve businesses or consumers, and your industry can impact your customer groups but so can your experience and business goals. For example, the choice for an ecommerce company to target UK only, European or international customers and include all of these groups and any sub-groups depends on experience, market, ambitions and budget. The fact is that even if you identify that you'd like to have an international reach one day, it may well be better to start closer to home with your 1–2-year business goals, marketing plan and budget.

Once you have the groupings, give each group a descriptive name so you understand who they are. The names don't need to be imaginative (although they can be if you want!). They just need to be functional and include the elements that matter.

For example:

- Women - 40-50, Legal, Partner
- Young Dads – 18-25, Football Fan
- SME - 10-50, Employee Manufacturing

STEP 2: UNDERSTAND YOUR CUSTOMERS

Now that your groups are defined, the really powerful part in the process starts – analysing what motivates each group.

This is where we see lightbulb moments that really help our clients create engaging messaging across the right marketing channels and sales pages that write themselves. It also demonstrates why it's important to group customers. For example, we often work with B2B companies who may be selling to the person who owns the company, or a person who works in the company. These two people have very different motivations and it's a lot easier to write copy that engages them if you know what these motivations are. Next, answer the following questions:

- Has something happened to make them reach out to you? What's spurred them into action right now?
- What do they want to achieve as a result of working with you? Whether it's a service or a product, what is the desired outcome?
- What concerns do they have about using your product? Often, it's price based, around loyalty to an existing product/service, timelines or risk. Are there ways to reduce these concerns and provide reassurance?
- Who is your competition, and in each case, why would these customers choose to use the competition over you?
- What can you do to make them trust you? Case studies, reviews on Google, testimonials, awards, qualifications, free trials and guarantees are all ways to help build trust and reduce risk.
- What do you want them to do? This may not be as simple as a sale. It may be repeat purchases, recommendations, upsells/cross-sells. How can you encourage this behaviour and be direct about what to do next?

The answers to these questions can form your audience profiles in combination with the defining characteristics from the previous step. When performing an Audience Analysis we work through these questions with clients, drawing out the answers based on previous experience.

STEP 3: IDENTIFY YOUR IDEAL CUSTOMERS

Now comes the critical step for your business goals – identifying which customers are your IDEAL customers. To do this, take these groups and prioritise them according to the opportunity they present to support your business goals. This is based on the following:

- Who can you sell the most extensive range of products and services to? Who do you understand best? Suppose you find a customer group you really understand the motivations of in the previous step. In that case, it will be easier to engage with them in your marketing materials and convince them that you can serve them.
- Who do you have most experience with and so already have great case studies and the know-how to serve efficiently?
- Who do you have the easiest access to via existing networks/connections, cheaper advertising options, your existing CRM/email database or similar?
- Who do you prefer working with? A profile can include elements like attitude and communication style as well as age or industry.
- Where do you see an opportunity to serve? Is there is an industry or demographic that your competitors haven't conquered?
- Who has the simplest onboarding processes? For example, larger companies may have bigger budgets, but they usually take longer to make a decision, involve more people in the process and will ask for more quotes.

As a result of this review, you could identify primary, secondary and tertiary customers groups. Prioritising in this way means you can design a marketing plan with activities that will attract your priority customer group.



STEP 4: PICK YOUR CHANNELS

A marketing channel is a tool that helps companies distribute information about products and sell them to the target audience.

Examples are:

- Social media
- PR
- SEO
- Email marketing
- Digital advertising
- TV advertising
- Video marketing
- Direct mail
- Networking
- Referral scheme
- Print advertising

The list goes on and there is some crossover, but you get the idea...

Usually when businesses think about their marketing, they focus on a particular channel as the solution, but it's important to take a step back and consider if a channel will help you connect with your audience. This is hard to do if you don't know who you're trying to connect with, which is why this section is so far down in this guide. We recommend picking your channels after you've made the decision about your ideal customers. Part of the reason is that different channels cost different amounts, so you need to be clear how much a customer is worth before assigning marketing budget to connecting with them. While most businesses can say that their customers watch TV, you're unlikely to pay for a TV advertising campaign for a low value product bought by a customer who will only buy from you once. Another more obvious reason is that you can connect with different customer groups in different places.



Now the beady eyed amongst you may have noticed that the title of this section is 'Pick your channels...'; plural. However, you may be thinking, "I can just pick one, right?" The short answer to this question is no. Have you heard the statement that 'it takes around 5-7 touchpoints for a contact to become a customer'? It will be challenging to make all of those touchpoints over one channel. However, the right mix of channels will leave a potential customer perceiving that you are everywhere (in a good way), meaning they are more likely to think of you when they're ready to buy.

WHAT TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING YOUR MARKETING CHANNELS

There are a few factors that will influence the right channels for your business. It's important to try not to be too distracted by what everyone else is doing or by the latest fad. There will always be new technologies and updates, but it's better to commit to doing fewer channels well than diluting your efforts across them all.

Consider:

- Marketing budget – there's a huge range in price with different marketing channels and although some channels are cheap/free they may still require a time investment.
- Your audience's whereabouts – how targeted can you be in who you want to talk to? There's no point advertising on TV if your target customers mostly watch YouTube or posting on LinkedIn when they're easier and cheaper to target on Facebook.
- Resources – do you or your team have time to create materials and messaging for the channels? If not do you need to hire someone external and factor in the ongoing cost.
- Timeframe – how quickly do you need or want to see results?
- Stage of the funnel – customers rarely see a message once and buy. There's a journey of building trust before this happens, particularly with larger ticket items or anything with a commitment. With so much to consider you may feel more confused than ever, so we've put together a handy table which touches on some of these points.

MARKETING CHANNELS COMPARISON TABLE

Type	Cost	Timeline to see results	Good for	Bad for
Content marketing (usually a combination of website posts, email marketing and social media)	££		Taking a potential customer through the marketing funnel on autopilot from attraction to sale.	Quick results, as some of the content required are long form guides and videos that take time to build but are worth it.
SEO	£-££		Helping your ideal clients find you.	Keeping customers sticking around rather than landing on your site to read what they came for and leave.
Organic social media	£		Keeping potential clients thinking of you and becoming aware of what you do while building trust in the brand.	Converting leads into sales. People turn off if you sell too hard and only promote yourself. Also, social media algorithms don't favour self-promotion.
Email marketing	£		Easing potential customers through a marketing funnel, encouraging current customers to come back to you and building trust in the brand.	Attracting customers. Since GDPR has enforced good quality email marketing, you need to build a list that provides great content consistently, which can take time.

<p>Digital advertising</p>	<p>£££</p>		<p>Getting in front of your target market FAST and filling your marketing funnel with prospects.</p>	<p>Long term plans and small budgets. Depending on the platform, you'll need to make a minimum commitment and the minute you switch off the ads, your marketing mechanism is gone.</p>
<p>PR</p>	<p>££</p>		<p>Raising awareness of your brand and building a positive impression of your expertise and authority.</p>	<p>Slower results and it can be difficult to prove return on investment. It's hard to predict what will be picked up by the media and challenging to prove the exposure and impression PR makes. However, PR has the potential to make a big splash without high costs.</p>
<p>Direct mail</p>	<p>£££</p>		<p>Getting in front of new potential customers and getting noticed, particularly if you're creative with your mailer.</p>	<p>Long term results – once you send a campaign, you're finished unless you rerun it to another area.</p>

STEP 5: BUILD A MARKETING PLAN

Once you've decided on the marketing channels you'll use and the budget you can devote to each, you can break everything down into step-by-step activities and plot them into a marketing plan. [Download this handy template](#). Fill in what you can now and the rest as the plan progresses. The fields include:

- Task
- Status
- Anticipated start date
- Anticipated end date
- Actual start date
- Actual end date
- Estimated cost
- Actual cost

This format is an Excel spreadsheet rather than a word document or PDF because it is designed to be a marketing plan AND a progress tracker. This format works best because the plan can update as the situation evolves as a working document, as opposed to a file that ends up being filed away and forgotten about. The fact is, activities may take longer than you anticipated, costs could fluctuate, and if they do, you'll have an easy way to keep on top of things.

Prioritising activities at this stage can be a challenge because it may all feel important. Maybe you've identified an ideal customer BUT you know that reaching them will take time and an investment. This means when you're plotting activities into your marketing plan, you need to consider both the long-term aspirations while being realistic about what's achievable in the short term. However, once the plan is in place, it will be a lot easier to act and share the vision with your colleagues.



STEP 6: UPDATE YOUR MESSAGING

Now that you know what's driving your ideal customers at each stage, it will be a lot easier to write engaging messaging for each stage of the marketing and sales funnel and for each of the channels you've picked. If you've answered the questions in step 2, you can turn the answer to each question into a message. For example:

Has something happened to make them reach out to you? What's spurred them to action right now?

Have you experienced x, y and z

If this thing keeps happening and you're ready for x instead.

Are you...

What do they want to achieve as a result of working with you? Whether it's a service or a product, what is the desired outcome?

Do you want...

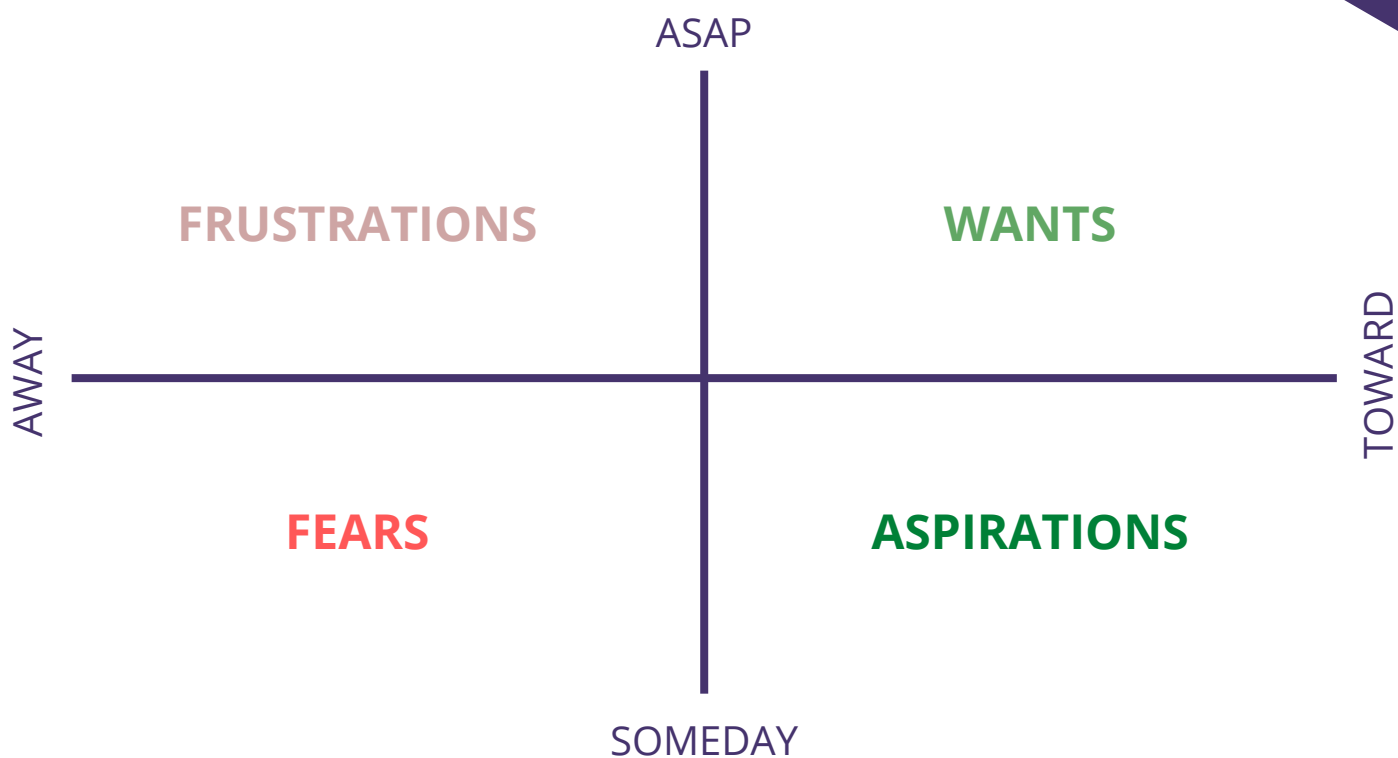
Are you ready for...

What concerns do they have about using your product? Often, it's price-based, around loyalty to an existing product/service, timelines or risk. Are there ways to reduce these concerns and reassure them?

You don't have to worry about x, y and z; we have [insert appropriate trust signal like a guarantee, case studies, trial details]

If you don't feel like you have enough to work with, despite step 2, you could use the following exercise to gain a broader range of understanding to turn into messaging:

1. FEAR: What keeps them up at night? What are the consequences of not solving the problem you can fix for them?
2. FRUSTRATION: What consistently annoys them? What would they pay good money not to have to deal with anymore?
3. WANTS: What are their motivations?
4. ASPIRATIONS: What are their long-term goals? How can you help them achieve them?



Once you have a selection of messages, you can apply them to your marketing channels to create

- A more compelling website homepage
- More engaging messages on social media
- A range of posts on your website touching on your customers' concerns at every point of the sales funnel
- Sales materials that speak to and reassure their concerns

Your profiles are based on what you THINK is going on for your audience. This means the work you've done as a result of this guide is a first step in a process that should continue to evolve as the understanding of your customers improves. Make sure you test your conclusions by researching your customers and industry.

You can do this by creating a survey using software like Google Forms with multiple choice or open-ended questions based on the profiles you've created. You can even ask for a testimonial at the end of the survey so that the research helps support your marketing aims in more than one way.

GET THE MARKETING SUPPORT YOU NEED

While this process may seem daunting at first, it's the most reliable way to deliver marketing that works. For most people it even proves to be an enjoyable and fulfilling exercise as they eliminate uncertainty by tapping into insights they never knew they had access to.

If you need help implementing these steps and building engaging messaging through a marketing plan, you can join our [Customer Attraction Roadmap](#). Learn more [here](#). Alternatively, if you find yourself struggling at any point in the process, we can provide support. Why not take advantage of one of our Audience Analysis packages with the option to include a marketing plan and messaging for each profile written for you?

Call us on **01858 374 170** or fill in our [contact form](#) to find out more.