

# Know Your Customer

How to Use Surveys and Interviews to Better Understand Your Customers and Their Needs



**Course Book**

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# Introduction

*"Everyone is not your customer."*

-Seth Godin

**W**hether starting a business or trying to grow and expand your existing business, there is a great deal of research involved. The most successful business owners understand the importance of staying on top of industry trends and keeping an ear to the ground at all times. Businesses spend a great deal of time researching their competitors in order to give themselves an edge. But with all of this research, you may be missing the most important piece of the puzzle – your customer.

## Why You Need to Understand Your Customers Well

It is vitally important to understand not only market trends, (i.e., your customer in big groups or as a demographic) but also to know your customers on an individual level. Your customers experience your product, service, and brand as an individual, and so this is the level at which you must reach them. You need to use every opportunity available to understand your existing or potential customers.

Take a moment right now to ask yourself a question: What does your ideal customer look like? If a clear image doesn't spring to mind immediately, you have some work to do. Or, if you say, "Everyone who has a dog is my customer," you have some mindset change and work to do. As the Seth Godin quote at the beginning of this chapter says, not everyone can be your customer.

What gives every business its competitive advantage is that it meets specific customer needs. It's impossible to be all things to all people. Your customer needs to feel like your business is in league with them.

You may want to cast your net wide, and there's not necessarily anything wrong with that. But not knowing who your customer is to each exact detail is like shooting in the dark. You will spend a great deal of money, time, and other resources without getting clear results.

If, on the other hand, you know your customer intimately, you can use your resources more effectively in order to craft the right message that resonates and perfectly meets your customers' needs. By focusing your message to your target market, you'll attract the right type of buyer, and not waste time with leads that you can't nurture. By carrying out this research continuously, you'll be able to keep meeting the needs of your market even as their needs change.

In other words, by understanding your customers at an intimate level, you can sell more and earn more profit with less effort. Your marketing will create a perfect match between you and your customers. If just launching your business, you'll know where to start (with the customer and their needs). If expanding your business, you'll know how to grow and stay relevant.

## Getting to Know Your Customers Through Research

Research isn't guesswork. It's done by gathering objective data about your customers through a variety of channels. Two of the best methods are surveys and interviews. Through the direct contact these methods provide, your customers will tell you what they want and expect, and a whole wealth of other information.

## Learning Objectives:

By the time you finish this course, you'll be able to:

- Identify different ways to understand and interact with your ideal and existing customers
- Create a survey instrument that gathers the most important data you need to understand your ideal customer
- Write a list of good, effective interview questions that will help you understand your customer at a deeper level than you do currently
- Analyze the data you've gathered and create detailed customer profiles
- Create an action plan to implement surveys and interviews on an ongoing basis to better understand your customer and keep up with changes in their attitudes or behaviors.

## Action Steps:

1. What do you know about your ideal customer today? What information do you already have about their demographics and psychographics?
2. What types of marketing and sales campaigns are you currently running? Who are they targeted at?
3. When was the last time you surveyed or interviewed your customers?

# Module 1 - Methods for Understanding and Interacting with Your Customers

To start, you're going to do a bit of analysis on your own and then figure out how to best interact with your customers in order to gather data. By the time you're finished with this module's learning activity, you'll be ready to start conducting your surveys.

## Analyzing Your Product

Start with products or services you offer. If you're an existing business and you've been offering your services for some time, this will be easy. If you're just getting started, you'll need to brainstorm a bit.

Take one product or service and write down a list of its features. Beside each feature, write the benefit that it provides for the customer. The difference here between features and benefits is that a feature is some quality or part of the product itself. The benefit, on the other hand, is the subsequent effect it has on the purchaser's life.

For example, let's imagine that your business provides a new kind of content management system (CMS). The CMS allows people to work together remotely and updates in real-time. That's its feature. The result is that your workforce can be spread across the globe but informed about what's going

on as soon as it happens, thus increasing your business's efficiency. This is the benefit.

**ATTENTION:**

This is only an excerpt from our full course **Know Your Customer**. The full, customizable course contains 4 major modules and Action Steps.

When you purchase a license for the course, you'll receive the editable files for the Course Book, Action Guide, graphics, social posts, and other resources.

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