



EPISODE 235

How to Identify Your Ideal Customer Avatar

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AMY PORTERFIELD: Hi there, Amy Porterfield here. Welcome to another episode of The Online Marketing Made Easy Podcast. Today's episode is all about defining your ideal customer avatar.

You've got to know who you're talking to, who you're creating all this content for, and who you are selling to. You want to know this person inside and out: Their wants, their needs, their challenges, their struggles, their loves, their hates.

You want to know them intimately. How do you do that? We're going to talk about it today.

Before we get there I want to spotlight one of my listeners. This is Miriam Schulman's review on iTunes and I want to give Miriam a big shout out. Thank you for the kind words. Here's what she said:

"Listening to Amy's podcast is the best investment of my time. Every week she gives actionable tips that I implement into my business that has really helped me level up. My business was completely struggling before I found Amy's programs a few years ago and I am forever grateful and a super fan."

Miriam, I am forever grateful for you tuning in and being a loyal listener. I am a sucker for a good action taker so thank you so much for not only listening but taking action and getting things done. I just love to hear that.

If you would like to leave a review and possibly be a spotlight on the podcast you can do so on iTunes or anywhere you listen to this podcast. I would love to hear your feedback.



Let me ask you a question. You know that moment when you find a product or service or program or even a person that you know is literally going to change your life? It could be a specific training program to help you with your business or it could be as simple as a really good pair of Lulu Lemon yoga pants that make your butt look better than you ever thought it could look.

It could be a life coach that you know is just going to help you make some amazing transformations. Can you remember the last time that you found something that you knew was just what you needed?

For me, recently, it was finding an amazing online training program that felt like the answers to my prayers for a new direction I am going in my business. To give you a hint, I am creating a brand new membership experience and this training was everything I needed.

I'll get to that a little bit later. Here's the deal. You and I, as business owners, want to create the type of experience for our ideal customer avatar where they actually say, "This was exactly what I needed."

Even better, we want them to say, "Did you read my mind? How did you know this was what I wanted and needed in this very moment?"

In order for this to happen we need to intimately understand our ideal customer avatar; their fears, their aspirations, and what they are thinking and needing. Today's episode is all about learning how to define your ICA so that you can create, market, and sell exactly what they need and want most.

By the way, this episode is the first in a three-part miniseries called Creating Compelling Content. In order to create compelling content you much first know who your ideal customer avatar is and what compels them.

We're going to get into all of this. I cannot wait to share this miniseries with you. This is a solo show and the next two are with guests that know a thing or two about creating compelling content. I think you are going to love this miniseries.

Before we dive in, this episode is sponsored by my free masterclass, The Ultimate List-Building Catch-Up Plan. I wanted to encourage you to sign up for my free masterclass all about list building because once you understand how to create compelling content you will be able to list build with such ease and really enjoy the process.



I know list building can be a pain for some entrepreneurs. I want to take that struggle away so first I'm going to teach you how to create compelling content but next you really need to understand what it takes to build a list-building foundation in your business. That's precisely what I do in my free masterclass.

Go to <http://www.amyporterfield.com/listbuilding> and you can sign up for your free spot and start your list-building foundation.

Let's go ahead and jump into Part I of our three-part miniseries all about creating compelling content and, specifically, let's talk about defining your ideal customer avatar.

Just so we are all on the same page let's get a definition out of the way. An ideal customer avatar represents your perfect customer. This one single person is the potential customer who wants and needs your content, your products, or your services.

To add a little to that, you also love working with this person as well. They need you and you love working with them.

The first thing you may be wondering is why it's only one person. There are billions of people in this world and tons of people need what you're selling. So why would you only focus your efforts on creating for just one person?

The answer to that is because by focusing your efforts on this one single person you are not limiting your reach. You are actually helping yourself to be laser focused on what your ideal customer wants and needs.

Believe me, this focus will pay off tenfold. Don't be afraid to narrow it down to just one person. You will attract a lot of people who fall under the umbrella of just your one person. But don't worry about it.

We're going to focus in on deciding on who this one person is that you would love to serve.

If you are not clear on who your ideal customer avatar is your message will be 1) unclear, 2) totally diluted, and 3) lacking relevance. You know the saying, "When you try to attract everyone you're going to attract no one."



If you try to have a general avatar, again, it will be an unclear, totally diluted message. Get laser focused.

You and I both know there is a lot of noise online. Without laser focus with your messaging and your offers you are likely going to get lost in the sea of voices. When you're general you're just kind of boring. When you're laser focused you actually stand out to the people that will resonate with you most.

If the first question is, "Why just one person," and we've talked about that, the second question you are probably asking is, "How am I supposed to truly know what my ideal customer avatar needs and wants?"

I hear this question a lot. You must put yourself in their shoes. When you do this you'll understand immediately what they like, what they don't like, what their aspirations are, and most importantly, what their fears are.

When you know all this about them you're able to serve them best because the content, products, and services you create will be a solution to their needs and wants. They will actually pay for it because you know how to get them results or how to get them the transformation that they are looking for.

Actually putting yourself in their shoes is exactly what you want to do in order to understand them more. Naturally, the third question might be, "How the heck do I put myself in their shoes?"

It's actually more simple than you think but it can take some time. What you do is connect with them. But, most importantly, you listen to them. Connection and listening is sometimes easier said than done so I want to give you some specifics so you can take action.

I've created a worksheet for you to go through an exercise where I will take you through a bunch of questions that will help you to define and intimately understand your ideal customer avatar. You can grab it at <http://www.amyporterfield.com/235>.

Let's just talk about how you're going to define this one single person and how you're going to connect directly with them. First, you will write a detailed description of your ideal customer avatar. You all know I'm a huge, huge fan and friend of Marie Forleo.



I think she teaches ideal customer avatar better than anyone I know and so much of what I've learned about the ICA is through Marie. But I've also learned about how to really hone in on who this person is through a few of my mentors.

I've taken things from what Marie has taught me and a few of my mentors and even stuff I learned at Tony Robbins. I put it all together in order to help you to really define who your ICA is. I just wanted to give a shout out to where I first learned all of this, probably more so than anything from Marie and Tony.

From there I also made it my own. I've done so much work around my ICA so some of the things I've learned along the way I wanted to give you some of the tips and strategies of some of the things I've created for myself to really hone in on who the ICA is for my business.

The worksheet you're going to download is really curated from all of those different places and experiences that I've had with developing my own ICA.

Getting back.

First you're going to write a detailed description of your ideal customer avatar. I want you to really dive in when you write his/her description. You will most likely be making this person up. I know that seems weird but just stay with me here.

You may already have a raving customer who is your ideal avatar. If that's the case then describe them in detail.

When I was first starting out I made somebody up. Here's the truth. A lot of times when we are creating our ICA we are actually talking about ourselves. We tend to be our ICA or maybe we used to be our ICA.

When I was first starting out my first ICA, Kari, was really me about two years ago from the time I was writing it. It was someone just starting out in online marketing. She came from corporate. She had a few kids. She was basically some version of me.

That's how I was able to develop my first ICA. I think that's fine. But as you become more sophisticated in really defining your ICA I would love for you to think of past clients you've worked with.

Who did you really love working with and who have you been able to get amazing results for? Think about that one person and let them guide you as your ICA. I think



stepping outside of yourself and looking at somebody else that you've served, helped, and supported, and loved working with. Remember, your ICA is somebody that you know what they need and want and you know you can serve them but you also love working with that type of person as well.

Think about some past clients, if you can. That's taking this to a whole other level. But either way describe your ICA in detail. Get in there and complete the avatar description exercise which you will get in the worksheet once you download it.

You will be answering questions like:

- 1) How old are they?
- 2) What books do they read?
- 3) Where do they hang out online?
- 4) Who inspires them?
- 5) What blogs do they read?
- 6) What podcasts do they listen to?
- 7) Most importantly, what are their biggest pain points and frustrations?

When I first learned this from Marie she asked, "What keeps them up at night?" That's always a great question. Really dig in.

If you don't already have a raving fan base that you can talk to and survey and really understand by listening to them and engaging with them you can also do a little investigative work online.

You can go into Facebook groups, online forums, and in the comment section of other people's blogs. Go to one of your competitors that you know is attracting your ideal customer avatar. There are some people out there that do similar work to what I do and they are attracting my ICA.

I could go to one of their blog posts and look at the comments and see what people are talking about and what kind of questions they are asking. What kind of struggles are they sharing in the comments or in other people's Facebook groups? You can do that kind of investigative work.

So I recommend going to the blog of a couple of people who are very successful in your field and learn from their audience. I always say there is more than enough to go around. Don't just think that just because someone else is also serving your ideal customer avatar that they've got the only corner on the market.



You be you. You do your thing. But you can always learn from other people that are doing what you are doing or what you want to do. Eventually, you will do it in your own way and your ideal customer avatar will gravitate to you and their ICA will gravitate toward them.

I say that other people might have my ICA. But there are always a few little quirks and little distinctions that make my ICA unique and actually want to work with me because I offer exactly what they need. Do you see how that works?

Do your investigative work but know that you will find your ICA and they will find you.

Next I want you to do seven to ten validation calls. When I say a call this is you jumping on Zoom or Skype or, better yet, do an in-person meeting if you can. You aren't just doing a telephone call because I want you to see the person you're talking to.

There is so much more than just the audio cues. There are visual cues with your ideal customer avatar that you will totally miss if you're not on video when you talk to them or, better yet, in person.

The goal is to ask questions that will help you to validate your product or service offering by truly understanding what your ideal customer avatar wants, what they need, what they've tried before in the past, what they are hoping to do in the future, and of course, really understanding their pain points.

I'm sure you have a few people in mind that you think you would love to work with "this person" or maybe you're just thinking your neighbor or somebody in a networking group could be your ideal customer avatar. You're not sure but you're thinking they might be perfect for what you're creating. Meet with them.

It's okay if they don't turn out to be your ICA. You're going to learn so much from the conversation and the next person you choose to do a call with will be closer to your ICA until you nail it.

You're going to be asking very directed questions on these video calls or in-person meetings. It's critical that you remember to listen more than you talk. The words your ideal customer avatar uses to answer your questions are like gold for your future copy, for your emails, sales pages, webinars, and all that good stuff.



If they give you their permission then definitely record the call. You're going to want to go back, take notes, and really probably just transcribe everything and pull out phrases they are using and words they use because you're going to hold onto that for your copy.

Some of you listening may decide to skip over these validation calls because you just know you totally created something so awesome and all kinds of people are going to want to buy it. You just know it.

No. I don't mean to burst your bubble but I'm going to give you a little tough love here. What you think is amazing may not be something that your ideal customer avatar actually wants and needs. You've got to remember I've been doing this for a long time.

Somebody will walk up to me at an event and they will say, "I've got this great idea. Here's the course I'm creating." I help people create online courses so that tends to be the conversation we have around whatever it is they are creating.

I listen to what they are creating and I ask them what their ICA says about the idea. Have they given feedback? Have you asked questions about it? They typically look at me with a blank face.

I get it. No judgment. It's actually not tons of fun to do ICA calls because it's a little uncomfortable. I'm actually projecting that. I'm an introvert. I don't necessarily always feel comfortable putting myself out there like that so they're not comfortable to me. You might be totally relaxed doing them. More power to you.

I don't care if you're relaxed or uncomfortable, you've got to do them. Do not move forward with an idea without first spending time on your ICA. You can then validate your idea with your ICA but you first have to understand who your ICA is and make sure of their wants and needs.

The second level to this is that once you come up with a really great course idea you will go back to your ICA, now that you know who they are and really understand them, and put the idea in front of them and you get their feedback from there. That's really cool.

In the worksheet I'm going to give you I'm going to give you some ideas around questions to ask them so you first understand them and then you can take it to a new



level and put your idea in front of them and see what they have to say. Do you see how there are two layers to this?

First you understand your ICA and then you could ask them questions about a product you're creating and get their feedback. Here's the deal. If you just ask some random person for their feedback about a program you're creating they could give you feedback that means nothing to you because they are not the right person to even buy what you're selling.

You need to first make sure you nail down your ICA before you validate an idea with your ICA. Do you get it? I feel like I'm beating a dead horse here. We are moving on.

Your homework is to head over to <http://www.amyporterfield.com/235> and complete the Defining Your Ideal Customer Avatar worksheet. Allow yourself an hour or two in the next 24 hours to work on defining your ICA and answering all of the questions.

Do your very best. Remember Brooke Castillo? You can do B- work but you sit down with your goal to produce some results. Answer all of the questions to the best of your ability but they do not need to be perfect.

For some this will be a process that you will be working through in the coming days. But at some point you just have to take the leap that you've done your work and you're moving forward.

I'm constantly refining my ICA as I create new programs and products. That's another thing you might be thinking, "What if I have two different programs and they are different ICAs?"

That's totally fine. I have the same thing. This membership site I'm creating, which I'll tell you about later on in some coming podcasts, is not for my newbie ICA. I have a lot of newbies in their first year of business. They haven't yet finished their course or launched anything.

They would not be my ICA for my brand new membership experience. The membership experience is for those who have gone through my programs and are looking to up level and want to take their promotions and launches and webinars to a totally new level.



They are looking to make more money and a bigger impact. I have two different ICAs. When I launch that membership site I've got to get really clear on that ICA before I create even one lick of copy for my sales page or webinar or anything like that.

You can have more than one ICA but work on one at a time.

Once you do your worksheet that you are going to download, I want you to do the actual homework in the next 24 hours, then I want you to schedule seven to ten validation calls and I want you to do those over the next two weeks.

Plan this stuff in your calendar or you will never do it. Please, please, please don't skip this step. This is a crucial marketing step. It's part of your marketing foundation that most people will skip over. Don't be that type of entrepreneur. You will struggle for it down the road.

I want you to do seven to ten validation calls and I want you to plan them out and put them in your calendar and get them done in the next two weeks. These calls don't need to be more than 15 to 20 minutes each. Believe me, you're going to be so glad you did them.

The worksheet will guide you with the type of questions, first, to really understand who your ICA is. Then we've added some extra questions to go back to your ICA later when you have really developed your idea based on the needs and wants of your ICA (once you've developed something like a course idea) you can go back to them and ask questions around validating an idea.

There are two levels. Remember, first you will understand your ICA. Then you can go back to them with a survey or call or questions on social media to see what your ICA has to say about your idea for a product or service or whatever it is you're creating.

We'll have that all in the worksheet at <http://www.amyporterfield.com/235>.

I absolutely love seeing you all take action so if you want to be so brave and take a snapshot of your finished worksheet and post it on Instagram and tag me or put it in my DMs on Instagram I will kind of eat that up.

I want to see your finished work so I'm [@amyporterfield](https://www.instagram.com/amporterfield) on Instagram. You can DM me or just post about it and tag me. I want to know.



I'm telling you, once you've clearly defined your avatar, creating content for your blog, podcast, or video show is so much easier. It is actually enjoyable. So when I sit down to create I know who my ICA is. I can picture her in my mind.

I really act as though I'm just talking to my ICA. I'm talking to her in videos. I'm talking to this one ICA right this minute. I'm definitely writing for her in all of my emails. It just flows because I know who she is.

One more thing. Remember that none of this is completely set in stone. My ideal customer avatar has changed a lot over the last few years. I've grown as a better marketer, as a better content creator, and so with that I can really understand where I'm going with my business.

That will tweak your ICA just a bit. As I develop my membership program that's going to define a whole new ICA. So you can have more than one and you can tweak and refine as you go along.

Don't take it all too seriously. It's more important that you get it done and do the exercises and the calls than being totally right about all of this. Just remember that. Just get it done.

There you have it. I cannot wait to hear about how you feel once you've defined your ideal customer avatar. It's a game changer in your business, for sure.

Coming up next week we are continuing with our creating compelling content miniseries and next week we've got Donald Miller of Storybrand on the show. Oh my gosh, I'm so excited about this.

Donald will share his seven-part framework to creating powerful messaging that will bring your ideal customer avatar through a special customer's journey using story. You know how powerful stories are in all of your marketing, right?

Donald's going to bring it to life for us. I cannot wait. Same time, same place. Meet me here and we will continue our miniseries.

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Okay guys, meet me here same time, same place next week to continue our content miniseries. See you soon.