

CHAPTER EIGHT

IDENTIFY YOUR AVATAR

BUSINESS, NICHE, SPECIALIZE

Identifying your ideal client, or "avatar," involves analyzing various factors, including demographics, behaviors, needs, and pain points. Your unique talents, expertise, and desires shape the business model for your products or services, and this avatar embodies the perfect match for your business. It's essential for the success of your business to align your marketing strategies and product development precisely with the specific needs, actions, and likes of your target audience, completing the connection between what you offer and those you aim to serve.

Often, the choices we make in life are significantly influenced by our experiences and our innermost needs. Our deepest wishes and wants don't always come from logical places; they're rooted in these personal experiences. This isn't just true for us; it's the same for the people we aim to serve with our business. A common "reason" to start a business is to fulfill a deep, unmet need within ourselves. These

unmet needs usually involve influences rooted in our childhood, a challenging or traumatic event, or a desire to shield others from negative experiences or challenges we've faced. In 2019, I published my first book, and even though it was over 30 years in the making, the 18 months it took to get it out of my head and onto paper seemed longer. I struggled to form cohesive sentences, let alone paragraphs. I knew the material COLD. I had given numerous lectures on the subject matter, written articles, guest blogs, and was considered an "expert," yet I struggled. Essentially, I wanted to brain dump my knowledge onto paper, let someone else come along and tidy it up for me, and... VIOLA! A book. Because of that experience, I set out to create a company that makes it easier for someone to write a book when looking to establish credibility, brand their expertise, simplify their life, and gain more business. I am helping "me" of a few years ago. See how that works?

Understanding that your motivations as a business owner and the deep needs of your ideal client are often rooted in profound personal experiences can greatly improve your ability to establish credibility and connect with them effectively. This approach aligns with the concept that the best business-client relationships are built on empathy, understanding, and the ability to provide tailored solutions to deeply felt problems. Blending your motivations and experiences with your client's pain points and effectively resolving them requires three things:

- Defining Your Avatar. (client)
- Understanding the pain point the client needs to be resolved. (Problem)
- Positioning yourself as the solution to their problem. (Solution)

Not just a generic solution; you aim to be the tailored solution uniquely suited to their needs. Doing so requires that your solution

address not only the pain point but also the cause. In every moment, we stand in a space with our future ahead of us and our past behind us. Inside this space, without fail, we make decisions that lead us toward our future and leave a trail of our past. For our clients, the decisions they make are colored by their experiences, desires, and unmet needs; while powerful motivators, they do not always lead our clients to make decisions that are in their best long-term interest. They can, in fact, cloud judgment, leading to choices that may feel right in the moment but ultimately do not serve the needs of our clients. By not helping to address the root causes of their "problems," our clients will continue getting in their own way. With our uniquely tailored solution that resolves the root causes of their problems and not just the symptoms, we can create more effective, lasting progress that fulfills our clients' needs and propels us toward our goals and aspirations. The question then becomes, how do we achieve this? Through credibility.

Building this credibility isn't just about claiming to be an expert; it's about demonstrating your expertise and reliability in ways that resonate deeply with your target audience. This foundational trust sets you apart in a sea of options, where every expert, be it a guru with a book or a coach with a masterclass, promises a solution. But remember, every solution hinges on a critical element: the ideal client's willingness to take action. While directly influencing your ideal client's motivation to act might be challenging, your role is to ensure that when they're ready to jump, you're the first business they think of as a credible and trustworthy option.

In Chapter One (Rejection Is A Gift), we touched on some marketing suggestions to increase your credibility:

"In business, each person you meet at any time should become a client or a megaphone for you and your

business. Having someone act as a megaphone for your business means leveraging others to advocate or promote your brand and offerings to a wider audience, regardless of whether they have a personal need for your services. It's a strategy to tap into their credibility and reach in order to boost your brand's visibility and credibility."

In Chapter Four (Always Bet On Red: Embracing Imposter Syndrome), we discussed how using the Socratic Method of interviewing potential clients allows you to reach out to people with authenticity and genuine interest, instilling confidence in prospective clients and solidifying your credibility.

"A coach using the Socratic Method of interviewing clients can benefit from establishing trust and credibility, zeroing in on specific coaching strategies and mitigating SSWP (imposter syndrome) by investing time to inquire and learn about the client's expectations and needs."

And in Chapter Six (Model Behaviors and Trajectories), we were "standing on the shoulders of giants," which involves capitalizing on the established influence, credibility, and reach of well-known online businesses and social media influencers.

A clearly defined "avatar" is foundational to building a credible and sustainable business. This creates a business model that is mutually beneficial to both the business owner and the ideal client. Here's how:

Enhances Credibility

- **Expertise in a Specific Domain:** By focusing on a well-defined group, you position yourself as an expert in addressing their specific needs. This specialization boosts your credibility, as potential clients see you as more knowledgeable and skilled in your niche compared to a generalist approach.

- **Quality of Service:** When you know your ideal client well, you can tailor your services or products to meet their needs more effectively. This customization improves the client experience, leading to higher satisfaction rates and positive testimonials, which further enhance your credibility.

- **Relevant Marketing Messages:** Your marketing efforts become more effective when they speak directly to the pain points, aspirations, and language of your ideal client. This relevance makes your business come across as understanding and empathetic, traits that build trust and credibility.

Prevents Poor Customer Experiences

- **Misalignment of Expectations:** Serving clients who don't align with your ideal profile can lead to mismatches in expectations. When clients don't fully benefit from your offering because it wasn't designed for them, it can result in dissatisfaction, negative reviews, and harm to your reputation.

- **Efficiency in Service Delivery:** Knowing your ideal client allows you to streamline your processes, services, and products to cater specifically to them, reducing the likelihood of poor fit and the associated negative experiences.

Sustainable Business Growth

- **Beyond Transactions:** A business built on transactions rather than relationships lacks sustainability. Relationships are fostered with repeat business and referrals, which come from deeply understanding and consistently meeting the needs of your ideal clients.

- **Referrals and Repeat Business:** Satisfied clients who see the value in your service because it's tailored to their specific needs are more likely to refer others. This organic growth is more sustainable and cost-effective than constantly acquiring new clients.

- **Avoiding the Constant Search for New Clients:** When you focus on serving those who truly need and value your service, you spend less time in "find my next client" mode. You build a loyal client base that is more profitable over time.

Letting Go of Non-Ideal Clients

- **Protecting Your Brand:** Serving the wrong clients can dilute your brand's message and value proposition. By being willing to let go of clients who are not the right fit, you maintain the integrity and focus of your brand.

- **Focusing on Fit:** Understanding that not every potential customer is the right client for your business is crucial. Letting go of those who don't fit allows you to dedicate more time and resources to serving your ideal clients exceptionally well. Learn to make referrals to others in your Business or niche.

Clearly defining your ideal client goes beyond just targeting only certain people as it's not about exclusion; it's about bolstering your credibility and ensuring alignment between what your business offers

and the specific needs, desires, and challenges of a well-defined segment of customers.

"Don't find customers for your products; find products for your customers."

- Seth Godin, author and entrepreneur

Business, Niche, Specialize: Finding Your Ideal Client

At Belmont City Press, as part of our "Game Changers" Workshop and Conference (TheGameChangersConference.com), we developed a "Business, Niche, Specialize" Workshop designed for business owners looking to discover the heart of their market. It's one thing to run a business, but true success lies in carving out your niche and then specializing within it to appeal to a specific market segment. As discussed above, doing so sharpens your business identity, streamlines your marketing efforts, and enhances the overall customer experience. In the workshop, we guide business owners through discovering their ideal clients by mastering the art of "drilling down" and "pinpointing." (Oh, hello corporate speak, where have you been?).

Let's define the nuances between having a business, having a niche, and having a specialty:

Business: This broadly outlines what the company does, including its main operations, target market, and overall goals. It's a general overview of the company's activities and the market it serves.

Niche: The niche narrows the business's focus to a specific market segment. It identifies a narrower group within the target audience the business aims to serve, often characterized by unique needs or preferences that distinguish it from the broader market.

Specialty: This is a further refined aspect of the business's offering, highlighting a unique product, service, or approach that sets the business apart even within its niche. It's how the business differentiates itself from competitors targeting the same niche.

A business provides a helicopter view, while a niche zeroes in on a specific market segment, and the specialty details how the company serves its niche uniquely.

"Best way to predict the future is to create it."

- Abraham Lincoln

While this quote doesn't mention the word "niche" directly, it's frequently interpreted in the context of business strategy to emphasize the importance of carving out a unique space or niche in the market. By focusing on a specific niche, businesses can effectively create their future success through innovation and targeted service, differentiating themselves in a crowded marketplace. Drucker's insights into business efficiency, effectiveness, and innovation have inspired many to focus on identifying and dominating their niche to predictably shape their future in the business world. Let's get started!

Start With the “Face-Test”

When considering how to put your marketing together and prospecting for your ideal client, your first consideration should be: does it pass the “face test.” The concept of the “face test” in networking and identifying your ideal client revolves around the clarity and precision with which you describe your target audience. When your description of your ideal client is so specific that it conjures up the image of a specific person in the listener’s mind, it passes the “face test.” This vivid specificity means that as you explain who benefits most from your services or products, the listener can easily think of someone they know who fits that description perfectly—a potential referral.

To ensure your description passes the “face test,” consider these aspects:

- **Be Specific in Your Description:** You should avoid broad or vague descriptors that could apply to too many people. For example, instead of saying “I help small businesses grow,” specify the type of small businesses, like “I help small, family-owned restaurants in urban areas increase their customer base through targeted social media campaigns.” This specificity makes it much easier for someone to visualize a specific restaurant owner they know who could use your services. Do you remember Amy from Chapter Seven? (Ya, I don’t want to either, but here we are...) Amy was not specific enough in the description of her business to pass the “face test.”

- **Highlight Unique Needs or Problems:** Discuss the unique challenges, needs, or aspirations your ideal client faces that your business specifically addresses. For example, if your ideal clients are “first-time authors needing comprehensive guidance to publish their novels,” it’s far more descriptive than simply saying “aspiring authors.” It speaks

directly to a particular stage in their journey and the specific help they need.

- **Use Relatable Examples:** When explaining who your ideal client is, use examples or tell stories that resonate with common experiences or well-known scenarios. This approach helps people connect the dots more effectively. If your target clients are "parents of high school students looking to improve their children's SAT scores," it's a scenario many can relate to and recall within their circle of friends or family. Also, people like lists or information provided in small groups of 3 or 5. If you serve "moms," you might want to describe your services as "moms of babies, toddlers, and mixed ages under seven."

- **Incorporate Demographics and Psychographics:** Include both demographic information (age, location, job role) and psychographic (sorry, that is the official big word for "lifestyle choices and opinion and attitudes") details (values, interests, desires) to paint a fuller picture of your ideal client. For instance, "I specialize in helping eco-conscious homeowners in Seattle retrofit their homes with sustainable technologies to reduce their carbon footprint and save on energy bills." This description makes it easy for someone to think, "Oh, my cousin in Seattle has been talking about doing just that!"

- **Be Consistent and Memorable:** Repetition aids recall. Consistently describe your ideal client in the same specific, vivid manner across all networking opportunities. Over time, this consistency helps solidify the image of your ideal client in your network's mind, making it easier for them to remember and identify potential referrals for you.

By ensuring your description of your ideal client passes the "face test," you not only make it easier for your network to understand exactly who you're looking to serve but also turn them into effective referral sources, as they can more readily identify and connect you with potential clients who fit your detailed criteria.

Fill-in-the-Blank Script for Businesses Elevator Pitch

In business marketing, a tagline is a brief, memorable phrase that encapsulates the essence of a brand or product, designed to leave a lasting impression in just a few words.

Nike: "Just Do It."

Apple: "Think Different."

McDonald's: "I'm Lovin' It."

L'Oréal: "Because You're Worth It."

An "elevator pitch" is a succinct and persuasive speech that summarizes who you are, what your business offers, and the unique value or solution it provides, all within the span of about 30-45 seconds—the average length of an elevator ride. It is a critical component of your networking and marketing arsenal. Here is the framework (and examples) for a sample "elevator pitch" script from TheGameChangersConference.com:

"Our business, [Business Name], operates in the [Industry/Market] and offers [Main Products/Services] to [General Target Audience]. Within this market, we specifically cater to [Niche Target Audience], who seek [Niche Needs/Problems]. What truly sets us apart is our [Specialty], providing [Unique Value Proposition/Solution] to address [Specific Niche Problem], thereby [Benefit to the Niche Audience]."

Example One: Tech Startup

[Business Name]: GreenTech Innovations

[Industry/Market]: Green Technology

[Main Products/Services]: Energy-efficient software solutions

[General Target Audience]: Businesses and corporations

[Niche Target Audience]: Small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) focused on reducing their carbon footprint

[Niche Needs/Problems]: Need for cost-effective, energy-efficient operations

[Specialty]: Customizable energy management software

[Unique Value Proposition/Solution]: Personalized software that optimizes energy use for sustainability

[Specific Niche Problem]: The challenge of implementing green solutions affordably

[Benefit to the Niche Audience]: Reduced operational costs and a smaller carbon footprint

How it sounds when you put it all together:

"Our business, GreenTech Innovations, operates in the Green Technology market and offers energy-efficient software solutions to businesses and corporations. Within this market, we specifically cater to small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) focused on reducing their carbon footprint, who need cost-effective, energy-efficient operations. What truly sets us apart is our customizable energy management software, providing personalized software that optimizes energy use for sustainability to address the challenge

of implementing green solutions affordably, thereby reducing operational costs and achieving a smaller carbon footprint."

DING! The elevator doors open. That is your elevator speech, and you should know it cold! The above "pitch" includes 81 words and three sentences and takes 27 seconds to recite. I'm not certain I really understand what "green" technology is, but after hearing this pitch, I feel like I might!

Example two: Marketing and Publishing Company (Belmont City Press)

[Business Name]: Belmont City Press

[Industry/Market]: Marketing and Publishing

[Main Products/Services]: We are a marketing company masquerading as a boutique book publishing company

[General Target Audience]: Salespeople looking to become the go-to expert in their field

[Niche Target Audience]: Salespeople looking to write books for marketing purposes

[Niche Needs/Problems]: Establish credibility, brand their expertise, simplify their marketing efforts, and gain more business

[Specialty]: We literally help you write your book through our online course and then our team of writers cultivate a narrative based on your answers.

[Unique Value Proposition/Solution]: Comprehensive publishing solutions that include 12-point marketing and branding strategies

[Specific Niche Problem]: The need for a professionally published book to enhance their marketing toolkit

[Benefit to the Niche Audience]: Salespeople write their book which is curated by us and then marketed for success which helps to establish their authority and expertise in their field

How it sounds when you put it all together:

"At Belmont City Press, we're a marketing powerhouse masquerading as a boutique book publisher specifically designed for salespeople looking to become the go-to experts in their field. Unlike traditional publishers, we cater exclusively to salespeople aiming to write books for marketing purposes and to establish credibility, brand their expertise, simplify their lives, and ultimately gain more business. Our unique specialty lies in not only helping people write their books through our online course but also in our team of writers who cultivate a narrative based on their responses and provide a comprehensive publishing solution that includes a 12-point marketing and branding strategy. This approach enhances our client's marketing toolkit as they become the go-to expert in their field. "

DING! Ride's over.

So that you can play along at home:

[Business Name]:

[Industry/Market]:

[Main Products/Services]:

[General Target Audience]:

[Niche Target Audience]:

[Niche Needs/Problems]:

[Specialty]:

[Unique Value Proposition/Solution]:

[Specific Niche Problem]:

[Benefit to the Niche Audience]:

Our business, [Business Name], operates in the [Industry/Market] and offers [Main Products/Services] to [General Target Audience]. Within this market, we specifically cater to [Niche Target Audience], who seek [Niche Needs/Problems]. What truly sets us apart is our [Specialty], providing [Unique Value Proposition/Solution] to address [Specific Niche Problem], thereby [Benefit to the Niche Audience].

Long Form Business, Niche, Specialize

A long-form business presentation is a detailed, structured overview of a business or project, often lasting anywhere from 2-10 minutes to an hour or more. It is designed to inform, persuade, or secure support from the audience by incorporating data, insights, and strategic plans. The idea is to deliver a compelling overview of your business that captures the listener's interest and encourages further conversation, all in a very brief timeframe.

Below is an expanded script that provides a detailed narrative that can be adjusted to fit various speaking opportunities, offering a comprehensive insight into your business's mission, target audience, and unique value proposition. When given the opportunity to introduce your business, you should capitalize on all the time you are given, and be pointed, and confident. This version is intended to be detailed

enough to fill 1-2 minutes of speaking time, providing a more comprehensive overview of your business.

"Our company, [Company Name], stands at the forefront of [Industry/Market], offering [Primary Product/Service] designed with [Target Audience] in mind. Founded in [Year], our mission has always been to [Mission/Objective], addressing [Key Problem/Need] that our customers face daily.

What sets us apart in the [Broader Industry/Niche] is not just our [Unique Selling Proposition] but our commitment to [Core Value or Approach]. We dive deep into the specific challenges of [More Specific Target Audience], particularly those who [Specific Problem or Need of Niche Audience].

Our specialization lies in [Specialized Service/Product], where we excel by [How You Excel/Innovate in This Area]. This focus allows us to not only meet but exceed the expectations of our clients, offering them [Specific Benefits of Your Specialization].

What truly distinguishes [Company Name] is our approach to [Customer Relationship/Service Model]. We believe in [Belief About Customer Relationship], ensuring that each client feels [How You Want Clients to Feel]. This philosophy is embedded in every aspect of our business, from initial consultation to post-purchase support.

We are proud to have achieved [Notable Milestone/Achievement], reflecting our dedication to [What This Achievement Reflects About Your Business]. Looking forward, we aim to [Future Goal or Vision], continuing to serve [Target Audience] with unparalleled [Service/Product Quality].

In conclusion, [Company Name] is not just another [Industry/Market] company. We are a team of dedicated [Type of Professionals] committed to [Ending Statement of Commitment or Vision], making a tangible difference in the lives of [Who You Serve]."

Example One: Solar Company

[Company Name]: EcoTech Innovations

[Industry/Market]: sustainable technology market

[Primary Product/Service]: cutting-edge solar solutions

[Target Audience]: environmentally conscious homeowners

[Year]: 2015

[Mission/Objective]: make renewable energy accessible and affordable

[Key Problem/Need]: the urgent need for sustainable living practices

[Unique Selling Proposition]: high-efficiency solar panels

[Core Value or Approach]: personalized energy assessments

[More Specific Target Audience: suburban homeowners looking to reduce their carbon footprint without compromising on lifestyle

[Specific Problem or Need of Niche Audience]: seeking sustainable energy solutions that fit their living conditions

[Specialized Service/Product]: custom solar installations

[How You Excel/Innovate in This Area]: integrating the latest in photovoltaic technology with smart home systems

[Specific Benefits of Your Specialization]: significant energy savings and a reduced environmental impact

[Customer Relationship/Service Model]: building long-term relationships

[Belief About Customer Relationship]: each client feels supported and informed throughout their transition to solar energy

[How You Want Clients to Feel]: supported and informed

[Notable Milestone/Achievement]: facilitated over 5,000 solar installations

[What This Achievement Reflects About Your Business]: dedication to promoting sustainable energy solutions [Future Goal or Vision]: expand our reach to urban areas

[Service/Product Quality]: unparalleled solar technology and service

[Type of Professionals]: renewable energy specialists

[Ending Statement of Commitment or Vision]: empowering homeowners to embrace a greener future

[Who You Serve]: communities across the nation

How it Sounds in Action:

"Our company, EcoTech Innovations, stands at the forefront of the sustainable technology market, offering cutting-edge solar solutions designed with environmentally conscious homeowners in mind. Founded in 2015, our mission has always been to make renewable energy accessible and affordable, addressing the urgent need for sustainable living practices that our customers face daily. What sets us apart in the green technology space is not just our high-efficiency solar panels but our commitment to personalized energy assessments. We dive deep into the specific challenges of suburban homeowners, particularly those looking to reduce their carbon footprint without compromising on lifestyle. Our specialization lies in custom solar installations, where we excel by integrating the latest in photovoltaic technology with smart home systems. This focus allows us to not only meet but exceed the expectations of our clients, offering them significant energy savings and

a reduced environmental impact. What truly distinguishes EcoTech Innovations is our approach to customer service. We believe in building long-term relationships, ensuring that each client feels supported and informed throughout their transition to solar energy. This philosophy is embedded in every aspect of our business, from initial consultation to post-purchase support. We are proud to have facilitated over 5,000 solar installations, reflecting our dedication to promoting sustainable energy solutions. Looking forward, we aim to expand our reach to urban areas, continuing to serve environmentally conscious homeowners with unparalleled solar technology and service. In conclusion, EcoTech Innovations is not just another sustainable technology company. We are a team of dedicated renewable energy specialists committed to empowering homeowners to embrace a greener future, making a tangible difference in the lives of communities across the nation."

So you can play along at home:

[Company Name]

[Industry/Market]

[Primary Product/Service]

[Target Audience]

[Year]** of founding

[Mission/Objective]

[Key Problem/Need] your avatars face

[Unique Selling Proposition]

[Core Value or Approach]

[More Specific Target Audience]

[Specific Problem or Need of Niche Audience]

[Specialized Service/Product]

[How You Excel/Innovate in This Area]

[Specific Benefits of Your Specialization]

[Customer Relationship/Service Model]

[Belief About Customer Relationship]

[How You Want Clients to Feel]

[Notable Milestone/Achievement]

[What This Achievement Reflects About Your Business]

[Future Goal or Vision]

[Service/Product Quality]

[Type of Professionals] in your team

[Ending Statement of Commitment or Vision]

[Who You Serve]

By providing specific details about your business to complete these blanks, you construct a rich and engaging story that clearly outlines your business's purpose, target audience, and distinctive qualities. This narrative can be tailored to suit the time available for your presentation. Use the concise version for brief introductions, while the more extensive format is ideal for occasions when you have more time to elaborate on your business, such as during presentations to a larger audience or when you're the main speaker.

Identifying your "avatar," is critical for business success. This involves understanding their demographics, behaviors, needs, and pain points, which allows you to tailor your products or services precisely to their requirements. By aligning your marketing strategies and product development with your target audience's specific needs and prefer-

ences, you create a strong connection between what you offer and who you aim to serve. Understanding that both your motivations as a business owner and your ideal client's needs are often rooted in personal experiences enhances credibility and builds meaningful relationships. Defining your avatar, understanding their pain points, and positioning yourself as the solution to their problems are essential steps in this process. By addressing the root causes of your clients' challenges, you can provide more effective and lasting solutions, driving both your business and your clients towards success. Building credibility through authentic connections, tailored solutions, and strategic marketing efforts ensures that you become the go-to option for your ideal clients, fostering sustainable business growth and positive customer experiences. Ultimately, letting go of non-ideal clients and focusing on serving those who align with your business values and offerings is key to maintaining brand integrity and maximizing long-term success.