

Creating Your Ideal Client Profile (ICP)

By Maria Marsala

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By marketing to and networking with your ideal clients, you'll spend your time and energy directly on the individuals who will purchase your products or services! Makes sense, doesn't it?

One tool that will help you to market to your ideal client is called your "Ideal Client Profile." Designing this profile is a great personal exercise, although you should involve others, too. Why? Because sometimes business owners are too close to their own enterprises to accurately create the best overall picture of their own ideal client. Michael Gerber, author and consultant, speaks to this issue in what I consider the most important book for a business owner to read, "The E-myth Revisited", available at <http://www.coachmaria.com/books/business3.html> .

To make sure that you know who your ideal client is, create a survey for your current clients to complete and provide them with a discount coupon or gift as an incentive for helping. You can also network with other business owners and ask their opinions about who would buy your products, and why! Finally, it doesn't hurt to ask new clients what they would like or want as part of the terrific customer service you provide. I bet you'll learn a lot!

When evaluating a new marketing tool, ask yourself:

- Is this something my ideal client would need, enjoy or purchase?
- Will this attract my ideal client to my business?

If not, the idea maybe better suited to the ideal client of another business. In that case, contact the business owner! After all, aren't building relationships and collaborations a big part of both life and business?

Things you can do with your Ideal Client Profile:

1. Give a copy to all your friends, family, employees or contractors.
2. Put a copy on your business stationary
3. Find a terrific frame for it and hang it on your office wall.
4. Use it on your Web site.
5. Carry a copy in your wallet, car, or briefcase.
6. Create an affirmation (special type of positive statement: <http://www.io.com/~rga/affirm.html>) that will help you to attract your ideal client.
7. Review your ideal client statement or list every six months as part of your overall business plan.

Over time, your Ideal Client Profile will change as you raise your standards, alter your business plan or add new products. To be prepared for such re-evaluations, take note of who you are really

attracting to your business: who is asking questions, who is buying, and who is subscribing to your newsletters. Keep track of these things over time, analyze the patterns you see and use the information to your best advantage when deciding on, and marketing to, your ideal client.

Answer these “Ideal Client Questions”

If you are completing the area below using Word 2000, use the gray shaded area, which will expand as you type. If you print this page, you’ll have enough space to write your answers in the areas provided.

Age, gender, sexual preference, religion and whatever demographics fit.
?????

What attributes do they possess? (Passion, consistency, committed)
?????

What are they passionate about?
?????

Where do they live? Where do they work?
?????

What types of people, places or things do they like?
?????

How do they learn and where do they like to go to learn?
?????

What do they read? When do they read it? Where do they read?
?????

What shops, Web sites, etc. do they purchase products from?
?????

What meetings, groups, and classes do they attend?
?????

What type of people are you attracting to your business?
?????

Add the answers to other questions you determine are important here.
?????

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