

D I G I T A L S T R A T E G I E S

WHAT IS A PERSONA?

A persona is a fictional character that communicates the primary characteristics of a group of users who use your website, social media feed or application.

Personas help you and your team understand your audience. They provide insights about the attitudes, behaviors, thought processes, challenges and desires of those you are trying to reach and serve.

Personas inform what kind of content you create and where you publish it. They also give insight and direction for wording, images, tone and design.

EXAMPLES



HOW ARE PERSONAS HELPFUL?

THEY HELP US LOVE AND LEAD WELL

By cultivating a deeper understanding of others' motivations, needs, desires, and practical realities, we are challenged to question our preferred methods and channels in order to communicate the gospel most effectively.

THEY ARE A KEY PART OF AN EFFECTIVE DIGITAL STRATEGY

Four key questions to ask when creating a digital strategy:

- 1 What are you trying to do?
[Objectives, SMART goals]
- 2 Who are you trying to reach/engage?
[Personas]
- 3 Where will you interact with them?
[Channels/Platforms]
- 4 How will you put these pieces together in a strategic way?

“PERSONAS ANSWER THE QUESTION WHO ARE YOU TRYING TO REACH AND ENGAGE?” THEY ALSO INFORM WHERE AND HOW YOU WILL SEEK TO INTERACT.

PERSONAS SET THE STAGE TO BEGIN CREATING REALISTIC SCENARIOS OR “USER STORIES” FOR PEOPLE YOU MAY NEVER MEET FACE TO FACE.

Every good story has:

- A main character (who)
- A setting (where)
- A goal (what the main character wants to achieve)
- Actions leading to their goal
- Obstacles

Understanding your audience is the first step in predicting what will be most helpful for them.

1 CORINTHIANS 9:19-23

For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.”



WHO NEEDS TO USE PERSONAS?

ANYONE SEEKING TO COMMUNICATE WITH A BROAD AUDIENCE WITH THE GOAL OF MOVING THEM TO ACTION.

What do you want them to do?

- Read an article?
- Watch a video?
- Give a donation?
- Download and/or use a resource?
- Provide contact info?
- Ask a question?
- Engage in conversation?
- Pray?
- Share something with their friends?

How do these desired outcomes compare or overlap with what they want and need?

ANYONE WHO CREATES OR POSTS CONTENT ON A WEBSITE OR APPLICATION

- Ministry websites, including Area, National, and Departmental sites
- Blogs, including GCX sites and MPD profiles
- Social media sites including Facebook, Twitter, Weibo, YouTube, etc
- Applications for smartphones, tablets, etc and web development
- Evangelistic and discipleship resource sites

WHEN WOULD I USE THEM?





HOW TO CREATE A PERSONA

STEP 1

Identify your existing (or desired) audience

DETERMINE GENERAL TARGET DEMOGRAPHIC

- Who do you want to reach?
- Location
- Language
- Spiritual and life background

REVIEW RELEVANT EXISTING RESEARCH

- Industry research
- Missions research
- Organizational research

REVIEW ANY EXISTING ANALYTICS

- How many people are coming to your site?
- How long are they staying? Do they come back? What action do they take while on your site?
- At what point do they leave your site? ("bounce rate")
- How do they find the tool? Friend's referral? Searching? (What keywords did they search for?) Clicking on an ad?

STEP 2

Dig deeper and identify patterns

FILL IN GAPS IN KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

- Assess existing information and identify areas for further research
- Create hypothesis of different user types
- Create and execute plan for additional research
 - User surveys (quantitative)
 - Interviews and focus groups (qualitative)

IDENTIFY PATTERNS THAT GO BEYOND SIMPLE DEMOGRAPHICS

- What are users' likes, dislikes, desires, and motivations?
- What do they value? How do they identify themselves?
- What are their pain points, felt needs, and potential obstacles?
- What are their preferred methods of obtaining information and communicating?

SEGMENT USERS BASED ON COMMON TRENDS AND PATTERNS

- Analyze information for key insights
- Determine total number of categories/personas (try to limit these)



HOW TO CREATE A PERSONA

STEP 3

Research each category to identify an average desired user in that category

BACKGROUND

- Location
- Nationality/race/cultural background
- Languages
- Socio-economic group/occupation/income

THEIR LIVES

- Values and goals
- Current reality/"a day in the life"
- Previous relationship with you and your tool or organization
- Who/what sources of information they trust and how they make decisions

MOTIVATION FOR ENGAGEMENT

- Use and familiarity with different technologies
- The pain points and challenges that they are trying to overcome
- How they found/arrived at your tool
- What they want that will help them achieve their goals and values

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- The results from each type of use of the tool
- The experience they expect in using the tool
- The actions that will be taken following use of the tool
- Where your tool fits in the process that they are taking

STEP 4

Briefly describe the average desired user



2 PAGES MAXIMUM



INCLUDE A STOCK IMAGE OF THAT PERSON



DESCRIBE THE CHARACTER IN SHORT PHRASES AND KEY WORDS FROM STEP 3



INCLUDE A QUOTE THAT BEST REPRESENTS THE PERSON

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

10 STEPS TO PERSONAS

[PDF](#)

GLOBAL SOCIAL MEDIA STATISTICS 2014

[Link](#)

DEBUNKING DIGITAL STRATEGY – INDIGITOUS KEYNOTE BY LIEZE LANGFORD

[Link](#)

NEXT STEP: DEVELOPING A CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE PATHWAY

[Link](#)