




Personas



What are Personas?

A persona is a fictional user archetype – a composite model you create from the data you’ve gathered by talking to real people – that represents a group of needs and behaviors.

The purpose of personas is to create reliable and realistic representations of your key audience segments for reference.

These representations should be based on qualitative and some quantitative user research and web analytics. Your personas are only as good as the research behind them.



Benefits of Effective Personas

Personas allow designers to advocate for user's needs.

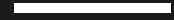
Represent **different user groups** for your product and **describe real people** with backgrounds, goals, and values.

Give a clear picture of the **user's needs, expectations**, and how they're likely to use the product.


Aid in **revealing shared reasons** why different user groups might want to use your solution.

Gives the team and stakeholders the same **reference point for decision-making**.

Helps maintain an **empathetic mindset** rather than designing something a certain way just because someone on the team likes it.



How to Develop Personas



Best Practices for Developing Personas

Personas can inform product functionality, help uncover gaps, or highlight new opportunities.

Conduct User Research

Understand your product's users with research and statistics

Condense Research

Examine your data for themes and patterns.

Brainstorm

Organize findings into persona groups that represent your primary users.

Refine

Distill those groups into characters that embody your findings.

Make them realistic

Develop background, motivations, and expectations for each.



Elements of a Persona



What Goes in a Persona?

Avoid just making up a character that might be as relevant to the design process as any given imaginary friend.

Avoid stereotyping and bias by basing your personas off of your interviews and online market research.

Primary Elements

- Photo
- Name
- Role
- Demographics
- Goals
- Behaviors & Habits
- Technical Skills
- Environment
- Relationships

You may also sometimes see the following:

- Anxieties, Challenges, Frustrations, Pain Points
- Motivations, Needs
- Key Personality Attributes
- Brand Affiliation

Photo

Use a photo of a real, relatable person, not a generic stock photo. Creative Commons-licensed photos from Flickr or other copyright-free source.

Don't use a photo from anyone who is known to the design team or has too many distracting elements in the image.



Diane McAvoy

Local parent

"I have so much going on between my job and taking care of the kid, I can't remember a damn thing without my iPhone."

Goals

Find a few places for reliable family outings that don't require a lot of planning.

Entertain her family members when they are out of town.

Keep learning throughout her life.

Stats

33 years old

Married with a 5-year-old child

Lives in Chicago, IL

Account manager for a large health care company

Behaviors and habits

Works from home two days a week. Does most of her shopping online. Weekend routine is one day for "fun" and one day for errands and chores.

Technology and skills

Diane is a multi-device user. Has a work-assigned Windows laptop that she carries between home and the office, as well as an older MacBook and an iPhone for personal use. The family shares an iPad 2. Because she is pressed for time, she has strong habits, no patience, and little motivation to explore.

Relationships

Lives with husband and son. Has large extended family. Sisters often visit and bring their children.

Name

Give the persona a name that fits the demographic information and is easy to remember and pronounce for everyone on the team.

LinkedIn is a good source of inspiration for names.
The Game of Thrones name generator is not.



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Role

Select a role that most closely matches one of the participants you interviewed and is also one of the identified target user types/groups.

For example: teacher, parent, or tourist.



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Demographics

Select a relevant set of demographics that fit the role and behavior pattern. Be realistic without stereotyping. The persona must be plausible and representative (*no teenage marketing VPs who model and also fight crime*).



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Demographics

Ideally the gender, age, ethnicity, education, job, marital status, and location are derived from actual users you've interviewed.

If this isn't suitable, you can increase your knowledge by finding people whose online profiles match the criteria you have.

Just remember to create a composite from multiple people.

For example

Need more info for a Fantastic Science Center's high school science teacher persona because you couldn't get it from an interview?

Try searching for local news stories about teachers to get useful background details, quotes, and even pictures of actual classroom environments.

Quote

Use an actual quote from an interview that embodies a core belief or attitude that is essential to keep in mind to meet their needs.



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Goals

Identify three to four key goals for the persona based upon what you found in your research. These will be goals that the product will serve or relate to.

For example

Local parent's goals related to Fantastic Science Center, might include finding weekend activities, keeping kids learning while not in school, and keeping up to date with advances in science.



Behaviors & Habits

Note the specific and habitual behaviors that constitute the pattern that defines the persona.

Parenting, teaching, researching activities online, switching among multiple devices, making decisions with another person, making plans last minute.

Real life is imperfect and complicated.

For example

Maybe you spoke with a dad who is torn between wanting to relax on the sofa and wanting to get out and find new things to do on Saturdays.

Does he have a habit of checking Facebook over coffee to see what his friends are up to with their kids?

This detail could open up a whole conversation about social media.



Technical Skills

Level of technical expertise and experience. Be realistic about the level of skill you are targeting with your design.

How much experience do you expect them to have based upon their profession and education? Don't make assumptions here. Reference your interviews and research.

For example

A very successful physician might be a relative technology novice because she is in surgery all day and gets very little time to learn expert features or acquaint herself with the latest applications.

She could be a good proxy for everyone who has a lower skill level, but absolutely doesn't want to be made to feel stupid when using the product.



Environment

Note all aspects of the environment that will affect the persona's interaction with the product.

Relevant hardware, software, and internet access.

Do they go online at home or at work? Are they surrounded by people or in private? Is there time online continuous or in chunks?

For example

The teacher might have half an hour during the day using the classroom computer.

The parent might have an office job with a browser window always open.

Relationships

Note any relationships the persona might have that will affect their interaction with your product.

Is there a partner who influences decisions? Will children or coworkers be present and influence the use of your product?

Relationships should be based on real world information – either from your interviews or demographic information gathered through surveys or online research.



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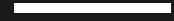
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Persona Examples

I would use this one as a primary model, but you can add any additional helpful and relevant elements.



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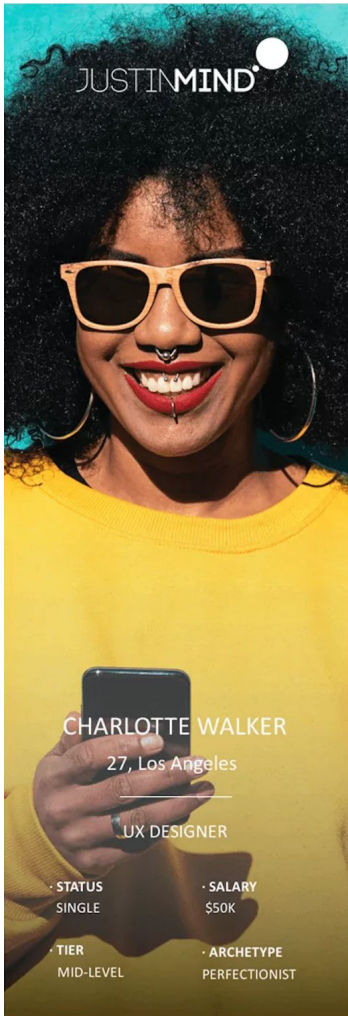
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CHARLOTTE WALKER

27, Los Angeles

UX DESIGNER

· STATUS
SINGLE

· SALARY
\$50K

· TIER
MID-LEVEL

· ARCHETYPE
PERFECTIONIST

PERSONALITY

- Prototyping
- Interviewing
- Design Thinking
- Empathy
- Coding

BIO

Charlotte recently started a new job as a UX design in a mid-size bank. She moved over from the start-up world and is still getting used to all the changes, particularly the paperwork. She's excited to bring a user-focused perspective to the design department but nervous because she's the bank's first UXer.

Outside of the office she's a sports-mad psychology grad. She enjoys reading UX blogs and will sometimes go to UX-related conferences if they're nearby. She's also tuned into design channels like Dribbble.

Motivations



Goals

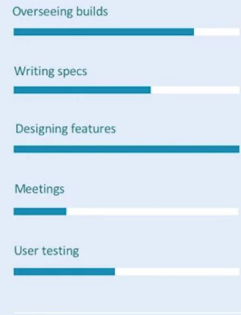
- Introduce user focused mentality and methods into traditional company landscape
- Improve usability of bank's customer facing interfaces
- Grow the UX team

Frustrations

- Getting buy-in for the new department's activities
- Dealing with more bureaucracy than in her old job
- Communicating necessity for change to development team

“I want to help my team deliver great user experiences”

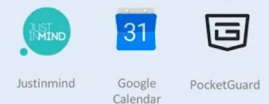
Behavior



Influences

- CREDIBILITY
- COLLEAGUES
- TECHNOLOGY
- BLOGS/ FORUMS
- PSYCHOLOGY
- UI TRENDS

Frequently used apps



Jack Rowland

Age: 45
Work: Operations/Support
Family: Married
Location: Seattle, WA
Character: The Authentic

Bio

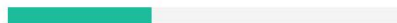
Jack has been working in customer support for the past fifteen years and loves it. He is very tech savvy and enjoys helping others. On a daily basis, he provides customer service and audits accounts focusing on KPI. When there's a problem, he always prefers to deal with clients personally. He wants the system to be easy and intuitive so he can find solutions easily.

Preferred Channels

Traditional Ads



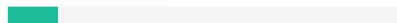
Social Media



Referral

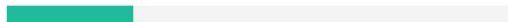


Guerrilla Efforts & PR



Motivations

Designer Products



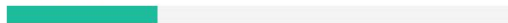
Eco-Friendly



Personalization



Low Prices



Convenience



Social



Goals

- To reduce churn
- To help educate advertisers
- To transition toward email / automated customer service

Frustrations

- Confusing UX for advertisers leading to increased tickets
- Logging the calls manually
- Multiple steps to completing a ticket

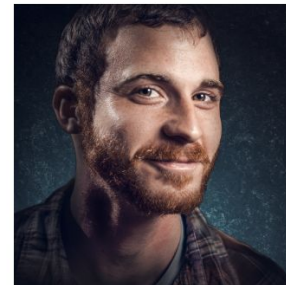
Personality



Agreeable

Accessible

Dependable



"I want to optimize how the support ticketing system works to capture product feedback better."



Intercom





Nerdy Nina

"The book is way better than the movie!"

#booklover
#bookaddict
#booknerdproblems

DEMOGRAPHICS

Age: 25
Location: Sao Paulo, Brazil
Education: Software Engineer
Job: Q/A at Indie Game Company
Family: Lives with her boyfriend

TECH

Internet
Social Networks
Messaging
Games
Online Shopping



GOALS

- Discovering new books / authors to read
- Finding unique stories
- Cataloging book collection

FRUSTRATIONS

- Keeping track of different series
- Forgetting a book launch date
- Finding space for more books

READING HABITS

- Fast pace reader
- Never lends books
- Likes hardcovers and boxed collections
- Pre-order books to get them first
- Reads eBooks, but prefer physical copies
- Always finishes a book
- Loves binge reading and re-reading

FAVORITE BOOKS



American Gods
Neil Gaiman



Harry Potter
J.K. Rowling



Ready Player
One

User Persona Type



"A quotation that captures this user's personality."

Age: 1-100

Work: Job Title

Family: Married, kids, etc.

Location: City, state

Character: Archetype

Personality



Trait 1

Trait 2

Trait 3

Trait 4

Goals

- A task that needs to be completed.
- A life goal to be reached.
- Or an experience to be felt.

Frustrations

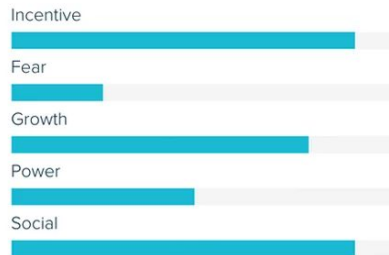
- The challenges this user would like to avoid.
- An obstacle that prevents this user from achieving their goals.
- Problems with the available solutions.

Bio

The bio should be a short paragraph to describe the user journey. It should include some of their history leading up to a current use case. It may be helpful to incorporate information listed across the template and add pertinent details that may have been left out. Highlight factors of the user's personal and of professional life that make this user an ideal customer of your product.

Remember - you may modify this template, remove any of the modules or add new ones for your own purpose.

Motivation



Brands & Influencers



Preferred Channels





Untraditional Personas (i would not do this for your first and only personas. I would only do this if it still clearly communicates the user or is an additional brand element.)

