



Bulls-eye Marketing

Portland Business Alliance, Cornerstones handout

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While it may be self-evident that all men are created equal, it is not self-evident that all customers are created equal.

Purpose:

The purpose of bulls-eye marketing is to help you find lots of customers who:

- 1) Are most likely to buy from you
- 2) Most appreciate what you provide
- 3) You enjoy having as customers
- 4) Refer other clients to you
- 5) Buy from you frequently
- 6) Are the most profitable

The goal of bulls-eye marketing is to be able to describe your ideal target customer very specifically which will allow you to know, **how to find them** and **how to communicate with them**.

It is particularly powerful for small businesses that can target a niche. As a specialist of that niche the small business can out-compete a more generalist company. In addition, the niche itself may be too small for a large company.

Five steps to the Bulls-Eye:

1. **WHO IS NAUGHTY AND WHO IS NICE?:** Take your customer list and try to separate into a naughty and nice list. Look at revenue, profit, how often they buy, how hard/easy they are to work with, how often they refer, etc.
2. **COMMON CHARACTERISTICS:** Take the "nice" list and start looking for common basic characteristics such as age, income, gender, geography, education, home ownership, # of employees, industry, business size, business age, etc.
3. **DIG FOR INSIGHT:** Pick ten of your best or ideal customers and interview them to get more insight about
 - a. Why they first bought from you. Was there any event that was the trigger?
 - b. Why they chose you and not someone else?
 - c. Why they continue to buy from you?
 - d. What needs do you meet?
 - e. What frustrations do they have?
 - f. What fears do they have?

Here are some examples of insight:

- a. *A financial planning company might identify life-stage events (e.g. layoff, death of a parent, retirement) that they want to focus on.*
- b. *A custom tailoring store might have business executives as customers. They discover that their ideal customers don't have time to come for fittings but are prepared to pay more for convenience. The tailoring*

company decides to offer a service in the client's office for fittings. They define the bulls-eye as upper income busy executives within a certain geographical area who value personal service.

- c. An excavation contractor may define its bulls-eye customers by geographical area, by size of job, landowners but not sub-contracting, customer who care about planning and service.*
- d. A home remodeler – might find that their customers are concerned about how they will manage as they get older but want to retain their independence. The company may decide to pick as their bulls-eye newly retired couples for whom they can remodel homes with wider doors, lower cabinets, etc.*

4. **TRENDS AND INNOVATIONS:** Look at trends or innovations in your industry. For example, the population is aging, environmental issues, etc.
5. **WRITE THE IDEAL CUSTOMER PROFILE:** Take all you have learned about your bulls-eye target and write the ideal customer profile. This description will help you with all of your future marketing.

The formula¹:

Ideal customer = physical description + their needs and wants + their problem + how they buy + best way to communicate with them

Here is mine for marketing consulting. My ideal customer is the owner of a company with 5 to 100 employees but no marketing department. They are located in the Portland metro area and have been in business for three or more years. They are outwardly successful and want to grow but have found it difficult to do so beyond their existing size. Their problem is that their marketing is sporadic and unplanned. Their marketing materials and initiatives have been created on the fly and as a result are not effective. The best way to reach my ideal customer is through referrals, networking and business workshops.

¹ Taken from Duct Tape Marketing, John Jantsch, Nelson Business