Target Groups and Personas for IP Experts

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1. What are Personas and Target Groups?

In the area of expert marketing, understanding and identifying the right audience is paramount. This is achieved through the concepts of target groups and personas, which help IP experts to tailor their strategies effectively. Personas and target groups are the basis for developing meaningful client journeys and effective content marketing. In this online marketing guide, I focus on personas and target groups. I explain client journeys and content marketing in other online marketing guides.

Defining Target Groups

Target groups, also known as target markets, are specific segments of the client population that an IP expert aims to reach with their marketing efforts. These groups are defined by shared characteristics such as

- demographics (age, gender, income level),
- psychographics (lifestyle, values, attitudes),
- geographic locations (country, region, jurisdiction),
- behaviours (purchasing habits, brand loyalty),
- position (manger, general manager, C-level)
- function (marketing, management, product management, R&D, inventor)
- industry (deep tech, chemistry, telecom)
- organisation (start up, growing business, SME, corporate)

The identification of target groups is a critical first step in any expert marketing strategy because it allows IP experts to focus their efforts on the leads most likely to respond to their messages and offers.

Criteria for Segmenting Target Groups

The segmentation of the target groups depends on the marketing strategy and your own positioning (I have a separate online marketing guide for IP experts on the positioning of IP experts). For example, geographical segmentation can be done according to:

- Country (USA, UK, Switzerland, Germany, Austria...)
- Language (English, French, German...)
- Jurisdiction (EPC, UPC, USA...)
- Region (Around a City, South of France, Western Germany...)

When asked which industrial sectors are interesting, it could be, for example, a technology, such as telecommunications, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, glass. An industry can also be segmented as a sector with heterogeneous technologies, such as automotive, mechanical engineering, medical technology. Segmentation can also be done according to the relevance of IP for the target group: fashion, gaming, entertainment industry, luxury goods.

This understanding is crucial for the segmentation of target groups for IP experts in their content marketing (I have a separate online marketing guide for IP experts on content marketing) and their own positioning. Segmentation is also relevant for the choice of communication channels, events, media formats (brochure, blog post, LinkedIn profile...).

Understanding Personas

Personas are fictional characters created to represent the different user types within a targeted demographic that might use a site, brand, or product in a similar way. Developing personas helps marketers to understand their audiences better, making it easier to tailor content,

messaging, and services to meet the specific needs, behaviours, and concerns of different groups.

Components of a Persona

- Demographic Information: Age, gender, income, education, and family status.
- Background: Career path, lifestyle, and core values.
- Identification of Needs and Goals: What the persona is looking to achieve, both in the short term and long term.
- Pain Points: Challenges or problems that the persona faces that the product or service can address.
- Behavioural Traits: How the persona behaves, including buying behaviour and product usage.

Crafting Personas

Creating personas involves a similar process of data collection and analysis, but it goes a step further by humanizing the data into a relatable character. This typically involves creating a detailed biography, including the persona's background, daily activities, decision-making processes, and how they might interact with the product or service being marketed.
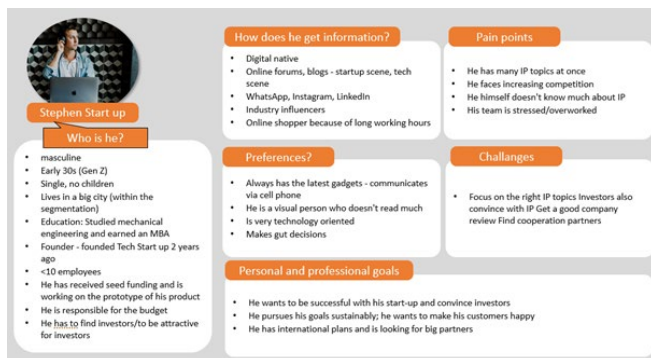

Figure 1: Typical example of a client persona

2. Why are Personas important for online marketing by IP experts?

In the digital age, the significance of precise and effective marketing strategies has escalated, primarily due to the vastness of the online audience and the intense competition around IP experts. Target groups and personas stand as pivotal elements in expert online marketing, providing a structured approach to understanding and engaging potential customers.

The importance of target groups and personas in IP expert online marketing cannot be overstated. They provide a strategic focus, enhance personalization, facilitate data-driven decisions, and offer a competitive edge — all of which are crucial in the dynamic and competitive online marketplace. As digital technologies and client behaviours continue to evolve, the role of target groups and personas in online IP expert marketing will remain a cornerstone for experts and law firms aiming to succeed in the digital era.

Strategic Focus and Resource Allocation

- Concentrated Marketing Efforts
  Target groups allow IP experts to concentrate their efforts on a specific segment of the market. This focus is crucial in online marketing, where the audience is vast and diverse. By identifying and understanding these groups, IP experts can create more relevant and compelling marketing messages that resonate with a specific audience.

- Efficient Use of Resources
  Online marketing involves various resources, including budget, time, and manpower. Target groups and personas help in allocating these resources more efficiently. By understanding who the audience is and what they want, IP experts can optimize their campaigns to yield better results with fewer resources.

Enhanced Personalization and Client Engagement

- Tailoring Content and Messaging
  Personas are instrumental in personalizing marketing efforts. In an online setting, personalized content is more likely to capture attention and engage leads. For example, by using personas, IP experts can tailor email marketing campaigns to address the recipient's specific needs and interests, significantly increasing the chances of engagement.

- Improving Client Experience
  Websites, LinkedIn profiles and online services can be optimized for a better client experience based on the characteristics of target groups and personas. This might include adjusting the design, navigation, and especially the type of content displayed, to cater to the preferences of different clients.

Data-Driven Decision Making

- Insightful Customer Analysis
  Both target groups and personas are developed through rigorous data analysis. In online marketing, data is abundant but harnessing it effectively is the key. These marketing tools help in translating complex data into actionable insights, guiding IP experts in decision-making processes.

- Predictive Marketing
  With a deep understanding of target groups and personas, IP experts can anticipate client needs and future behaviours. This predictive capability allows for the creation of proactive marketing strategies that can address potential challenges and leverage upcoming opportunities.

Competitive Advantage

- Differentiation in a Crowded Market
  The online market is crowded, with numerous IP experts and law firms competing for attention. Target groups and personas help to stand out by enabling them to tailor their offerings and marketing messages to specific segments of the market, thereby differentiating themselves from competitors.

- Building Brand Loyalty
  By consistently meeting the specific needs and expectations of a target audience, IP experts and IP boutiques can build stronger relationships with their clients, leading to increased brand loyalty. Personas play a crucial role here, as they ensure that all marketing messages are crafted with the customer's perspective in mind.

Risk of Stereotyping

There is a risk that relying too heavily on personas can lead to stereotyping. Marketers must ensure that personas are used as flexible guides rather than rigid labels, and they should be regularly updated to reflect changes in customer behaviour and preferences.

3. What role do personas play in client journeys?

In the digital marketing landscape, understanding the customer is paramount for crafting strategies that not only attract attention but also convert interest into loyalty. Personas and client journeys are two pivotal concepts that help IP experts achieve this understanding. Personas represent fictional, generalized characters that embody the key traits of a larger group of your target audience, while customer journeys map out the path a prospect or lead takes from becoming aware of an expertise to making a project and beyond. The interplay between these two elements is crucial in expert online marketing, offering a blueprint for engaging content, personalized experiences, and ultimately, successful client conversion and retention.

Importance of Personas in Online Marketing

- Targeted Communication: Personas allow IP experts to tailor their messaging and communication strategies to address the specific concerns and interests of different segments of their audience along the client journey.

- Service Development: Insights from personas can influence service features and interaction patterns ensuring they meet the needs of the target audience.

- Content Customization: Understanding the persona's preferences enables the creation of content that resonates, increasing engagement and loyalty.

Integration of Personas into Client Journey Mapping

Client journey mapping is a visual representation of every experience prospects or leads have with an IP expert. It helps in understanding how personas interact with your expert brand across multiple touchpoints over time (I have a separate online marketing guide for IP experts on expert branding). Integrating personas into this mapping ensures that the journey is personalized and reflects the varied experiences of different client segments.

Steps for Integrating Personas with Customer Journeys

- Research and Data Collection
- Gather data on client demographics, behaviour, and preferences to create detailed personas
- Identification of Touchpoints
- List all possible interactions between the prospects/leads and you and/or the law firm, considering the specific paths taken by different personas
- Mapping the Journey: For each persona, outline the steps they take at each touchpoint, considering their goals, challenges, and emotions at each stage

4. Best practice from working with our partners

Example: Dr. Malte Köllner

👉 LinkedIn

Dr. Malte Köllner, from Köllner & Partner, is a German and European Patent Attorney as well as Trademark and Design Attorney. In 2022 he was ranked in the category Industrial Property as being one of Germany's Best Lawyers for the fifth consecutive year by the German business newspaper "Handelsblatt":

👉 Handelsblatt - Germanys BEST Lawyers

He was also recognized as Germany's most influential patent attorney. Dr. Malte Köllner holds a Ph.D. in Physical Chemistry and a diploma in Physics from the University of Heidelberg. His areas of expertise include physics, physical chemistry, optics, lasers, biotechnology, medical devices and software. With a vast experience in the field of Intellectual Property, Dr. Malte Köllner is also the editor-in-chief of the German journal for patent law "Mitteilungen der Deutschen Patentanwälte" and a lecturer at various conferences and universities. Dr. Malte Köllner has authored a handbook on the Patent Cooperation Treaty as well as numerous publications on the economic and legal side of the IP system. His notable achievements in the IP area have listed him, year after year, as one of the world's leading lawyers and IP strategists. Dr. Malte Köllner regularly presents current trends and developments in the IP industry in his lectures.

Dr. Köllner has a very clear positioning and target group. He is currently focusing on users and developers of solutions with generative AI. He already makes this clear in the banner of his LinkedIn profile (1) and also refers to it in the tag line of his profile (2). The topic is then taken up again in the focus area of the LinkedIn profile (3). This concentration on this target group runs consistently through the various touchpoints along the client journey of Dr. Köllner. The topic can be found again in the newsfeed of his blog on his law firm's website (5). He also communicates the topic on various channels. In a live interview at the IP Business Talks (4) and in a blogpost at the CEIPI IP Business Academy about his work as a university lecturer on IP management with the European Patent Office (6).
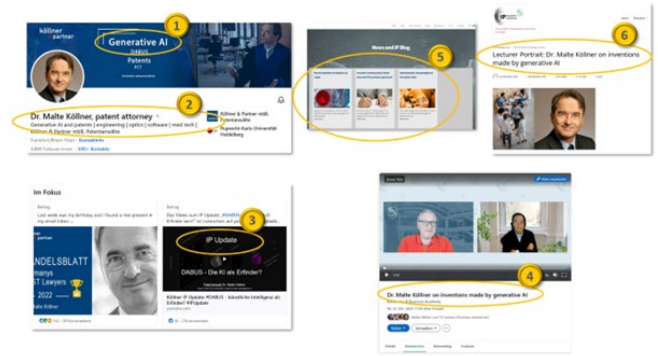

Figure 2: Target group focus in online marketing by Dr. Malte Köllner

Dr. Köllner consistently addresses its target group at the various touchpoints with a consistent message. It provides relevant, helpful and valuable information for the target group. By using various channels, he creates backlinks to his LinkedIn profile and his website. You can see how well this works on the SERP (Search Engine Result Page) when searching for "Malte Köllner" - without any other additions such as (Dr. or patent attorney, etc.). Dr. Köllner occupies the first 60(!) entries in the Google SERP with professional links. This is an extremely good result. In a Google search for "Inventions made by generative AI" - an extremely competitive search on an extremely relevant topic, the live interview from October 2023 is listed in seventh place as a hit and that is the first link that points to a patent attorney.
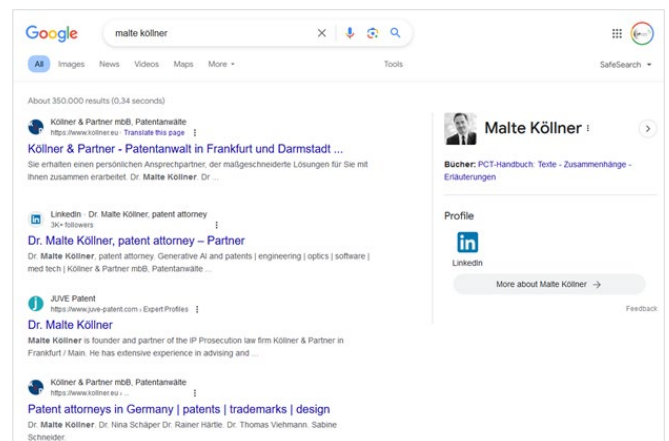
Further Examples

👉 **Maier Fenster**

👉 **Stephen Carter**

👉 **Robert Klinski**

👉 **Erica Smith**

The following figure shows different target group focuses. Maier Fenster, for example, directly reports on the management of a department in his IP boutique: "Head of Medical Devices Dept. at Ehrlich & Fenster" (1). This is an excellent opportunity to immediately point to the intended target group. Stephen Carter addresses his target group directly in the tag line "technology start-ups" (2). In the tag line, Robert Klinski refers to his doctorate in telecommunications and thus addresses his target group (3). In the tag line, Erica Smith refers to the industry she addresses, "Creative Industries" (4). The LinkedIn profile not only serves as a business card but is also used directly to address the respective target groups. With all the positive effects described above.
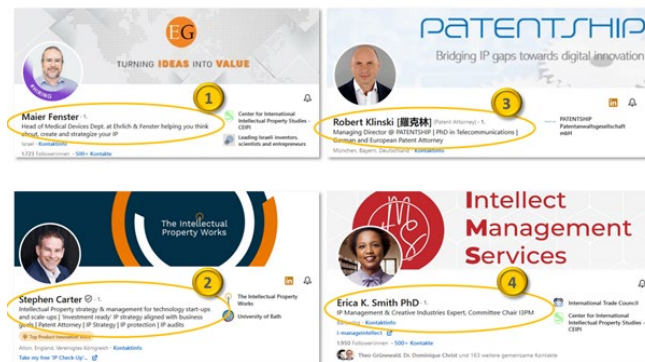
6. If you have questions?

Here are a few typical questions about designing customer journeys that I would be happy to help with:

- How can I position myself as an IP expert - I don't want to lose any business potential in the process?
- I don't have the time to constantly produce content, how can I do this efficiently and effectively?
- Where do the ideas for good, relevant, valuable content come from?
- How do I actually define my target group correctly and profitably for sustainable business for me as an IP expert?
- How can I ensure that I really reach my target group with my communication

If these and similar questions concern you, then I would be happy to talk to you and help you specifically. Just contact me on LinkedIn:

👉 https://www.linkedin.com/in/profalexanderwurzer/

There you will also find my #reflectandlearn, in which I report every month how I cooperate with IP experts in awareness building and business development.

Figure 3: Different target group focuses for IP experts at our partners.