WHO IS YOUR CUSTOMER?

Describe the exact person you serve, what they need, and where to find them, so every decision gets easier.

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AT A GLANCE

- Your **target customer** is the specific group of people most likely to buy from you first.
- Describe them by **situation and need**, not just age or gender: what they're trying to do, what gets in the way, and what they do today.
- A clear customer makes your marketing cheaper, your product better and your pitch stronger.

Why it matters

When you try to sell to everyone, your message is vague and your marketing money spreads thin. When you know exactly who you serve, you know which words to use, where to advertise, what to charge and what to build next. Investors and lenders also want to hear that you know your customer.

How it works

A useful customer description answers six questions:

Question	Example: a mobile car-detailing business
Who are they?	Busy professionals and parents with newer cars, in suburbs within 15 miles
What are they trying to do?	Keep their car clean without losing a weekend afternoon
What gets in the way?	No time, car washes are crowded, kids mess up the car
What do they do today?	Drive-through car washes, or nothing
What would make them switch?	Someone who comes to their home or office and does a great job
Where can you find them?	Office parks, neighborhood social media groups, kids' sports leagues

Step by step

1. **Write a first guess** using the six questions above.
2. **Find 10 people who fit** and talk to them. See **I-03 Talking to Customers: Learning What They Really Need**.

3. **Update your description** with what you learn, especially their exact words for the problem.
4. **Name your first customer group.** Start narrow. You can widen later.
5. **Write one sentence:** "I help [customer] who [problem] by [what you do]."

> EXAMPLE
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> **Amara** thought her natural skincare products were for "women who care about their skin." After 15 conversations, she learned her most excited buyers were **new moms with sensitive skin** who wanted products without strong fragrance. Her sentence became: "I help new moms with sensitive skin find gentle products they can trust." Her ads in parenting groups cost less and sold more.

> TIP
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> Your first customers are often people like you, or people you already know how to reach. That's an advantage, not a limitation.

Business customers

If you sell to businesses, describe both the **company** (type, size, location) and the **person** who decides to buy (owner, office manager, operations lead). The person who uses your product isn't always the one who pays.

Common mistakes

- **"Everyone is my customer."** That usually means no one in particular.
- **Describing only age and gender.** Needs and situations matter more.
- **Never updating the description.** Customers teach you as you go.
- **Ignoring who pays.** For kids' products, parents pay. For business tools, a manager often decides.

Your checklist

- ☐ Answer the six questions for your first guess
- ☐ Talk to 10 people who fit
- ☐ Write down their exact words for the problem
- ☐ Write your one-sentence customer statement
- ☐ List three places you can reach these customers

Key words, explained

Word	What it means
Target customer	The specific group you're built to serve first.
Niche	A narrow, well-defined group of customers.
Decision-maker	The person who chooses to buy.
B2B / B2C	Selling to businesses / selling to consumers.

Where to go next

- **I-03 Talking to Customers: Learning What They Really Need**
- **I-04 Sizing Your Market Without Fancy Research**
- **L-05 Marketing Basics: Reaching Your First 100 Customers**

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