

# Angela Kelly Smith

## How to Identify and Attract Your Ideal Client

Brand + Design Scoop ep. 005

Podcast Transcript

Welcome to brand design scoop, where I share practical, relatable tips on branding design and building a business for sole proprietors.

I'm Kelly, a brand strategist and Squarespace website designer and founder of AKS Design Studio.

Today, we're going to talk about how to identify and attract your ideal client. So, why should you identify your ideal client?

When I was a marketing consultant and then a mentor coach, most of my clients would bristle at the idea of identifying an ideal client.

"But my services are good for everyone," they would say. They worried that if they narrowed their market to one ideal client, to one small niche, then they'd lose out on other people who could use their services. The problem was, they weren't getting enough clients, even though they were trying to appeal to everyone. That's why they hired me. Their website and their content were generic, speaking to everyone and to no one.

And that's the thing: You can't appeal to everyone. Not everyone will be attracted to you. And, if you try to appeal to everyone, you'll end up not attracting the people who would really want to hire you. Trying to appeal to everyone, you're not speaking to anyone. And casting such a wide net, you're likely to draw in some clients whom you really don't want to work with. You would have to sift through all those just to get to the ones who are exactly right for you, the ones who value you and are willing to pay you. That's a massive waste of your time.

**When you identify your ideal client, you show them that you really get them, that you understand who they are and what they need.** They arrive at your website or read your social media posts and feel, "Yeah, that's me they're talking about." Then they want to check out more about you.

For example, Apple, doesn't try to appeal to everyone. Lots of people are turned off by Apple's premium prices. And yet Apple still has rabid fans. And their customer base is growing every year. That's because they know who their ideal client is. Okay. Apple has different ideal clients for their different products, but the company's ideal client is a Millennial who has an income close to a hundred thousand dollars a year, is career-oriented, lives in the city, values both design and function, and buys nothing but Apple for their technology.

So, how does Apple use this information? They make their website dynamic, showing off the technology, not just of their products, but also of their website, which is stunning. They create ads that directly appeal to Millennials. They use images of Millennials, of different races and ethnicities in their ads. They are starting to skew younger as more baby Millennials and Zoomers become Apple customers. So, they're featuring younger people in their ads and using music that appeals to this younger generation. And their marketing really works.

As I mentioned earlier, their market share is growing every year with every product. So, identifying your ideal client helps you reach the people you really want to work with, who are happy to pay you and who you will really enjoy working with.

## **Now you know why you should identify your ideal client. So, how do you identify yours?**

There are several ways you can do this. **If you're just starting out in your business and you don't have any current clients to refer to, then you're essentially designing your ideal client from scratch.** You're choosing whom you want to work with. I've worked with service-based clients in the past, like lots of coaches, who want to work with other people who are essentially mirrors of them. This makes it pretty easy to create a client persona, which I'll talk about in just a minute. You're basically creating a snapshot of yourself.

But what if you don't want to work with yourself or you already have clients you enjoy working with?

## **Here are the things you need to know about them.**

**What do they want? And what do they need?** The wants and the needs can be subtly different. Clients are consciously aware of what they want. They may not be consciously aware of everything they need. It's up to you to show them what they actually need while still highlighting what they say they want. Their wants and needs are going to help you know what content to put on your website.

**What are their goals? What do they want to achieve and looking for your service? Why are they looking for you or someone like you?**

**What are their fears?** This is essentially their pain point. You're going to be hitting on this and their goals on your website and in your content.

**Where do they go for information?** Do they go straight to Google? Are they looking for information on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, or even TikTok? This is going to help you know where to go to attract them.

**What do they want from you?** This is really going to help you hone and customize the content on your website specifically for them. No more generic content.

**How do they make their buying decisions?** Do they take a while to review and consider? Do they listen to their gut and make a quick decision? Do they need to talk with you first? Will the information on your website be enough for them to make a decision?

**To really hone in on who your ideal client is you'll need to identify their basic demographics, such as their age range.** This can be what generation they're in or what decade or even a specific number. Their

income range, where they live. So, what country, what city. If you're [looking] local, that matters. Whether they're urban, suburban, or rural. Whether they're married, single, widowed, or divorced. What industry they're in. Sometimes race or ethnicity matters. Sometimes sexual orientation matters.

**And finally their psychographics.** So this means their interests, hobbies, beliefs, and attitudes.

**Once you have all of this information, you'll create a client persona.**

**A client persona is a short description of who your ideal client is.**

Why do you even need a client persona? It's going to help guide you when you design your website, when you create content, when you share content on social media, when you talk with your potential clients, and when you screen your potential clients.

A client persona in written form and seared into your brain is a key part of your marketing. In fact, it's one of the three components of all of your marketing messages:

- Who you are — that's your brand,
- What you do — that includes the client's problem and your solution,
- And finally, who your audience is — that's the client persona.

**So to repeat: All of your marketing messages need to include who you are, what you do, and who your audience is.** Without all three components, your audience won't be clear on what your brand is or how you can help them, or even if you're the right match for them.

When writing your client persona, lots of businesses include a name and an age range or a specific age for their ideal client. So, let me share a couple of examples.

[Here's one for] a client in the past, whose ideal client was this:

“Mary is a 59-year-old widow who is looking to start a new long-term relationship. She is afraid that she will never find love again. And yet she's hopeful that true love and companionship are possible at her age. She doesn't know where to meet men whom she would be interested in. And she's worried that no one would be interested in someone her age. She needs help to boost her confidence, to believe in love again, and to figure out where her ideal man is. She is looking for help on Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and Google.”

So, that includes a name and age, what she's looking for help with, her pain point, where she's looking for information, and where this business can find her.

So, here's my client persona.

“Vanessa is a 55-year-old divorced woman making a mid-life career change to freelancing. She wants a business website that is simple, beautiful, and designed to attract our ideal clients. She is interested in Squarespace because she wants to be able to make updates on her own, but she doesn't want to design it from scratch. She gets her information from YouTube and Instagram and Facebook, and is looking for designers on Google and UpWork.”

You see, your client persona can be that short. But it contains specific details that allow you to create better content, especially for social media and any ads you might end up buying. Now, does that mean I won't work with anyone who doesn't fit this exact profile. Of course not. I'll work with younger or older clients of any gender. But I know who most often seeks me out and whom I really enjoy working with.

## **So, if you already have clients, how can you get this information about your ideal client?**

Think about whom most of your work comes from. Think about who your highest paying clients are. Think about whom you get the best positive feedback from and the fewest problems from. Think about whom you most like to work with. If you plotted these on a Venn diagram, you'll find your ideal client right in the middle.

If you want to find out what your ideal clients are looking for from you, what they most value about you, just ask them. The best way to do this is to contact them individually. And if you have too many clients to do this, then send out a survey. I'd still reach out personally to your best and most favorite clients. You'll get more responses that way. And you'll also get testimonials this way.

## **Now, how can you use your client persona to help you attract more of your ideal clients?**

**Design your website around your ideal client.** You want your ideal client to feel at home when they arrive at your website. You want them to feel moved to take whatever action you want them to take. You want them to feel like you really get them, that you understand their goals, their fears, their needs, and their wants. I wrote a post on my website called “What Makes a Good Website”—there's a link in the show notes—where I write about putting the information your ideal client is looking for right where they're expecting it to be, where they can find it quickly and easily.

**You'll want to use colors on your website that are attractive to your ideal client.** A more stoic, professional client will expect deep blue or forest green, for example. More spiritual clients will be attracted to shades of purple. A down-to-earth client will be engaged by muted, earthy tones. I'm generalizing, but you get the idea.

**Create content that speaks directly to your ideal client.** For the example of my former client who works with widows looking for a long-term relationship, she shares success stories about her clients. And she also shares information about how to boost your confidence and where to meet new people. She's giving away information that she uses with clients, but she knows that her ideal client will want more from her directly, not just rely on her freebies.

For me, even though my ideal client wants me to create her website, I share information for do-it-yourselfers. I know that most people who visit my website aren't going to hire me. That's true for all websites. You can't create content that only showcases your work and why people should hire you. You have to share practical information that shows people you know what you're doing. Yes, that means that lots of people walk away with that information and never pay you. And that's fine because your ideal client will see that you do know what you're doing. They'll know that you have lots more knowledge that you can share directly with them in a customized way. And they'll want to pay you for that.

Finally, you'll refer to your client persona when sharing content on social media. Remember, you're not sharing content for just anyone. You created the content for your ideal client. Now you've got to target them when you share for that client. So, write the post with them in mind, use a photo that will appeal to them, and use hashtags with keywords that they're searching for.

So, that's it for today. You can find the main points of this podcast and a list on my website. The link is in the show notes.

I'll be back next week with six ways to keep people on your website longer.

See you next time on Brand + Design Scoop.

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Links mentioned in the episode

[“What Makes a Good Website”](#)

[Link to this episode](#)

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Angela Kelly Smith provides custom Squarespace websites, branding strategy, and marketing instruction so freelancers and entrepreneurs can run a successful business while spending more time focusing on the work they really love doing. Check out her [website design + marketing strategy services](#).