

THINK LIKE AN SMB

CREATING MSP MARKETING YOUR BUYER CAN ACTUALLY RELATE TO



FEEL LIKE YOUR MARKETING MESSAGE IS GETTING LOST?

Some of our **MSP** members felt this way too, so we put our heads together to help them...

THINK LIKE AN SMB





THINK LIKE AN SMB

PEER BRAINSTORM SERIES



One of the most important marketing skills to master is the ability to think like your prospect. The ordinary decision makers you want to reach don't have your knowledge, experience or passion for technology. And so, they do not... and cannot think like you. Which means the things that influence you will never influence them. It's why talking tech to prospects rarely turns them into clients (it's more likely to turn them off). How to solve this problem? Pull together a buyer persona. This looks into their deepest needs, wants and fears. And it forces you to think about your prospects at deeper levels.

Paul Green
MSP Marketing Edge



Nate Freedman
Tech Pro Marketing

Participating in the "Think Like An SMB" sessions inside MSP Spark helped me exercise the behavioral part of my marketing skillset. While building customer avatars is largely talked about across our industry and others, it's something that needs to be practiced constantly in order to be executed. For those MSP Owners and Decisions Makers that might not be building marketing campaigns everyday, simply taking a few minutes to go through these mental exercises is enough to keep you in-check with what your customers want and need.



When we launched the "Think Like An SMB" series, I wasn't sure what to expect, but I couldn't have been happier with the result. I have noticed that now every time I create content or launch a campaign, I am mentally putting myself back in the session to walk through the steps of empathizing with the audience. It's easy to get swept up in your own ideas and create marketing for yourself but starting with a buyer persona first when building your campaigns is the perfect way to hedge against this common mistake.

Kevin Clune
MSP Spark



Brian Doyle
vCIO Toolbox

For those serving the SMB, technology is often not your buyer's first language. It is our job to be the Sherpa and guide them to the right solutions and that starts with thinking like they do. When you identify your buyer personas and begin to understand how your audience thinks, you can build the right messaging for the right people at the right time, quickly building trust. This trust shows you understand the buyer's needs, even when they can't articulate it to you.





BUYER PERSONA 1

 BUYER'S AGE:

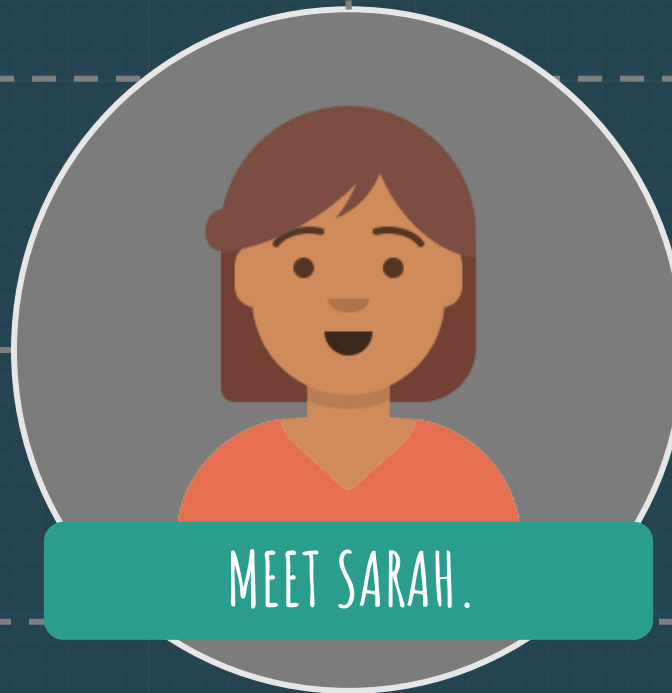
43

 LIVES IN:

Washington, DC US

 HOBBIES/ INTERESTS:

Dining out, Exercise /
Yoga, Novels



MEET SARAH.

 COMPANY NAME:

For The People
Foundation

 JOB TITLE:

Executive Director

 COMPANY INDUSTRY:

Not-For-Profit



DURING A NORMAL WORKDAY, I NEED TO:

- Manage people
- Set / track our fundraising goals
- Make financial decisions
- Deal with employee turnover
- Plan upcoming events
- Find / communicate with donors



WAYS I DISCOVER NEW SOLUTIONS ARE:

- Peers and former Co-Workers
- Industry expos and events
- YouTube and social media
- Volunteers and board members
- Google / search engines
- Industry directories / websites



THE HARDEST PARTS ABOUT MY JOB ARE:

- Tight budgets
- Slow decision-making / bureaucracy
- Optics of decisions / public scrutiny
- Finding reliable resources
- Meeting our fundraising goals
- Volunteer turnover



MY KEY NEEDS / CHALLENGES ARE:

- Fundraising enough money to help our cause
- Covering and tracking expenses to stay on budget
- Making decisions faster



THE MOST IMPORTANT TECH I USE IS:

- Fundraising management software
- Point of sale / merchant (donations)
- E-sign / Docusign
- Tax and Bookkeeping software
- Email & Collaboration
- Compliance / security software




REACHING SARAH.

 TOPICS THAT FRAME MY SOLUTION ARE:


- How to integrate Fundraising Software across organization
- Ways to use technology to meet your organization's fundraising goals
- Increasing the speed of decision making through optimized communications

 PLACEMENTS FOR MY SOLUTION ARE:

- [Non-Profit Tech Conference \(Event\)](#)
- [NTEN Non-Profit \(Community\)](#)
- [TechSoup \(Blog.\)](#)
- [The Story Telling Non-Profit \(Blog\)](#)
- [R/nonprofit Subreddit \(Forum\)](#)
- [Amber Melanie Smith \(Influencer\)](#)

 MY SOLUTION MAKES ME FEEL:

- Accomplished
- Efficient
- Relieved
- Happy
- Well-funded
- Meaningful

 THE RESULT OF MY SOLUTION LOOKS LIKE:

- The ability to help more people that are in need
- Reaching our fundraising goals with ease and never having to worry about budgets and spending
- Faster decision-making due to better financial health

 DELIVERING MY SOLUTION MIGHT REQUIRE:

- Product knowledge of different fundraising solutions
- More flexible pricing / packaging of services
- Increased frequency of business reviews to speed up decision-making



BUYER PERSONA 2

 BUYER'S AGE:

38

 LIVES IN:

Philadelphia, PA US

 HOBBIES/ INTERESTS:

Craft beer, Finance /
Investing, Sports, Business
Books



 COMPANY NAME:

Washington Law LLP

 JOB TITLE:

Managing Partner

 COMPANY INDUSTRY:

Criminal / Family Law



WILLIAM'S WORK-LIFE.



DURING A NORMAL WORKDAY, I NEED TO:

- Talk to and meet with clients
- Oversee organizational structure
- Make legal decisions for clients
- Case management and prep
- Tracking / measuring case win rate
- Evaluate team productivity



WAYS I DISCOVER NEW SOLUTIONS ARE:

- Legal industry blogs / publications
- Talking to other Lawyers at court
- Networking or chamber events
- Google / search engines
- YouTube & social media
- Friends I went to law school with
- Alumni meetings and events



THE HARDEST PARTS ABOUT MY JOB ARE:

- Meeting case and trial deadlines
- Dealing with office politics
- Long hours and always being on-clock
- Finding new clients to work with
- Losing trials and guilty clients
- Maintaining bar status / ethics



MY KEY NEEDS / CHALLENGES ARE:

- Making sure my team and I have the productivity tools we need to meet deadlines
- Keeping case files organized, accessible, and secure




THE MOST IMPORTANT TECH I USE IS:

- Case management software
- E-sign / Docusign
- Secure file sharing & communication
- Document management
- Data hosting & recovery
- Compliance / security software




REACHING WILLIAM.

 TOPICS THAT FRAME MY SOLUTION ARE:

- Ways to automate and streamline case preparation to meet deadlines
- How to get legal document completed faster using e-sign
- Best ways to digitally store case files that are easily searchable and secure

 PLACEMENTS FOR MY SOLUTION ARE:

- [Law sites Tech & Innovation \(Blog\)](#)
- [ABA Tech Show 2022 \(Event\)](#)
- [CLOC \(Community / Org\)](#)
- [The Crime Report \(Blog\)](#)
- [Alumni Golf Event \(Sponsorship\)](#)
- [Andrew Stickel \(Influencer\)](#)

 MY SOLUTION MAKES ME FEEL:

- Savvy
- Like A Winner
- Awesome
- Organized
- Confident
- Secure

 THE RESULT OF MY SOLUTION LOOKS LIKE:

- Winning more cases, leading to satisfied clients and more revenue
- More respect from my peers and friends from law school
- Excess income so that I can live a more luxurious lifestyle

 DELIVERING MY SOLUTION MIGHT REQUIRE:


- Product knowledge of various case management software
- Ability to develop dashboards to track win rates and other business goals
- Remote capabilities for employees to work off-hours

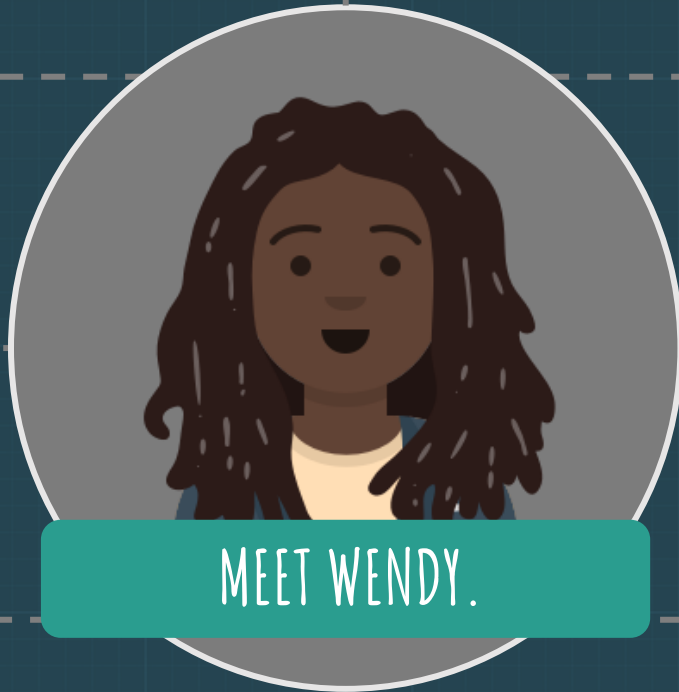



BUYER PERSONA 3

 BUYER'S AGE:
61

 LIVES IN:
Lincoln, NH US

 HOBBIES/ INTERESTS:
Grandkids, Painting /
Crafts, Volunteering



 COMPANY NAME:
The Village of Lincoln

 JOB TITLE:
Village Clerk

 COMPANY INDUSTRY:
Local Government



DURING A NORMAL WORKDAY, I NEED TO:

- Act as a coordinator between different branches of government
- Process documents for citizens
- Schedule and maintain the village calendar
- Answer the phones and transfer calls
- Send out RFPs for government services



WAYS I DISCOVER NEW SOLUTIONS ARE:

- Word-of-mouth from other citizens
- Local newspaper and print ads
- Facebook groups and social media
- YouTube videos
- Sponsorships and events
- Roadside signage and billboards
- News websites / blogs



THE HARDEST PARTS ABOUT MY JOB ARE:

- Prioritizing all of the requests I receive
- Keeping citizens happy and listening to their complaints
- Dealing with changing politics in the local government
- Finding reliable vendors to work with to keep the government running



MY KEY NEEDS / CHALLENGES ARE:

- Being able to mass communicate with citizens in a reliable way
- Removing bottlenecks for information and communication
- Sending, receiving, and approving requests for proposals seamlessly



THE MOST IMPORTANT TECH I USE IS:

- Web-based citizen engagement (notification system)
- Accounting and budgeting software
- Phone system and IVR
- Document management and storage
- Virtual meeting and video platform
- Email and desktop security




REACHING WENDY.

 TOPICS THAT FRAME MY SOLUTION ARE:


- Tips to avoid spam-filters on your outbound emails
- How to transition your government from email to asynchronous channels
- Ways to use technology to simplify your RFP process

 PLACEMENTS FOR MY SOLUTION ARE:

- [Spirit of NH Awards \(Sponsorship\)](#)
- [Lincoln Community Forum \(Group\)](#)
- [Lincoln Fall Craft Fair \(Sponsorship\)](#)
- [Blip Digital Billboards \(Signage\)](#)
- [NH City & Town Clerks \(Association\)](#)
- [Main Street Station Diner \(Ad\)](#)

 MY SOLUTION MAKES ME FEEL:

- Competent
- Heard
- Proficient
- Useful
- Calm
- Systematic

 THE RESULT OF MY SOLUTION LOOKS LIKE:

- Happy citizens that feel like their government is there to help
- A well-oiled government that can communicate more effectively without me being in the middle
- Less time on the phone and more time being productive

 DELIVERING MY SOLUTION MIGHT REQUIRE:

- VoIP system that allows for smart IVR and call routing
- SMS communication platform to send alerts and receive replies
- Knowledge of cloud-based RFP systems and how to integrate them



BUYER PERSONA 4

 BUYER'S AGE:

40

 LIVES IN:

Austin, TX US

 HOBBIES/ INTERESTS:

Dallas Cowboys, Country Music Festivals, Fishing



MEET JIMMY.

 COMPANY NAME:

Advanced Chiro Associates

 JOB TITLE:

Practice Owner / Physician

 COMPANY INDUSTRY:

Medical / Chiropractic



JIMMY'S WORK-LIFE.



DURING A NORMAL WORKDAY, I NEED TO:

- Work with clients / patients
- Dictate files and keep records of treatment
- Oversee the operations of the practice
- Find ways to attract new patients
- Stay up-to-date on new treatment techniques



WAYS I DISCOVER NEW SOLUTIONS ARE:

- During my commute (radio & billboard)
- State Chiropractor's Associations
- People I went to med-school with
- Local Chamber of Commerce
- Industry publications and websites
- In-person tradeshows and events
- Online communities and forums



THE HARDEST PARTS ABOUT MY JOB ARE:

- Clients that are late or don't show up
- Staying on schedule throughout the day
- Keeping systems secure and HIPAA compliant
- Dealing with turnover of front office
- Billing coding and submitting claims



MY KEY NEEDS / CHALLENGES ARE:

- Being able to manage my team while also seeing patients
- Reducing the time spent dictating and dealing with patient billing
- Keeping my practice / patient data secure and compliant



THE MOST IMPORTANT TECH I USE IS:

- Practice management software
- Accounting / billing software
- X-ray and imaging tools
- Document / image storage
- IoT connected therapy devices
- Mobile workstation / tablet
- Cloud phone, chat, and email



REACHING JIMMY.

 TOPICS THAT FRAME MY SOLUTION ARE:


- Best tools for busy Chiropractors to command their front-office staff
- How to automate patient dictation to free up hours per week
- Security tips for Chiropractors to keep their patient data safe and compliant

 PLACEMENTS FOR MY SOLUTION ARE:


- [TX Chiro College Alumni Gala \(Sponsor\)](#)
- [Chiro Texpo 2022 \(Event\)](#)
- [Patient Media \(Blog\)](#)
- [Texas Chiro Association \(Affiliate\)](#)
- [Dr. Stephen Franson \(Influencer\)](#)
- [Blip Digital Billboards \(Signage\)](#)

 MY SOLUTION MAKES ME FEEL:

- On-track
- Dynamic
- Focused
- Productive
- Worry-free
- Collected

 THE RESULT OF MY SOLUTION LOOKS LIKE:

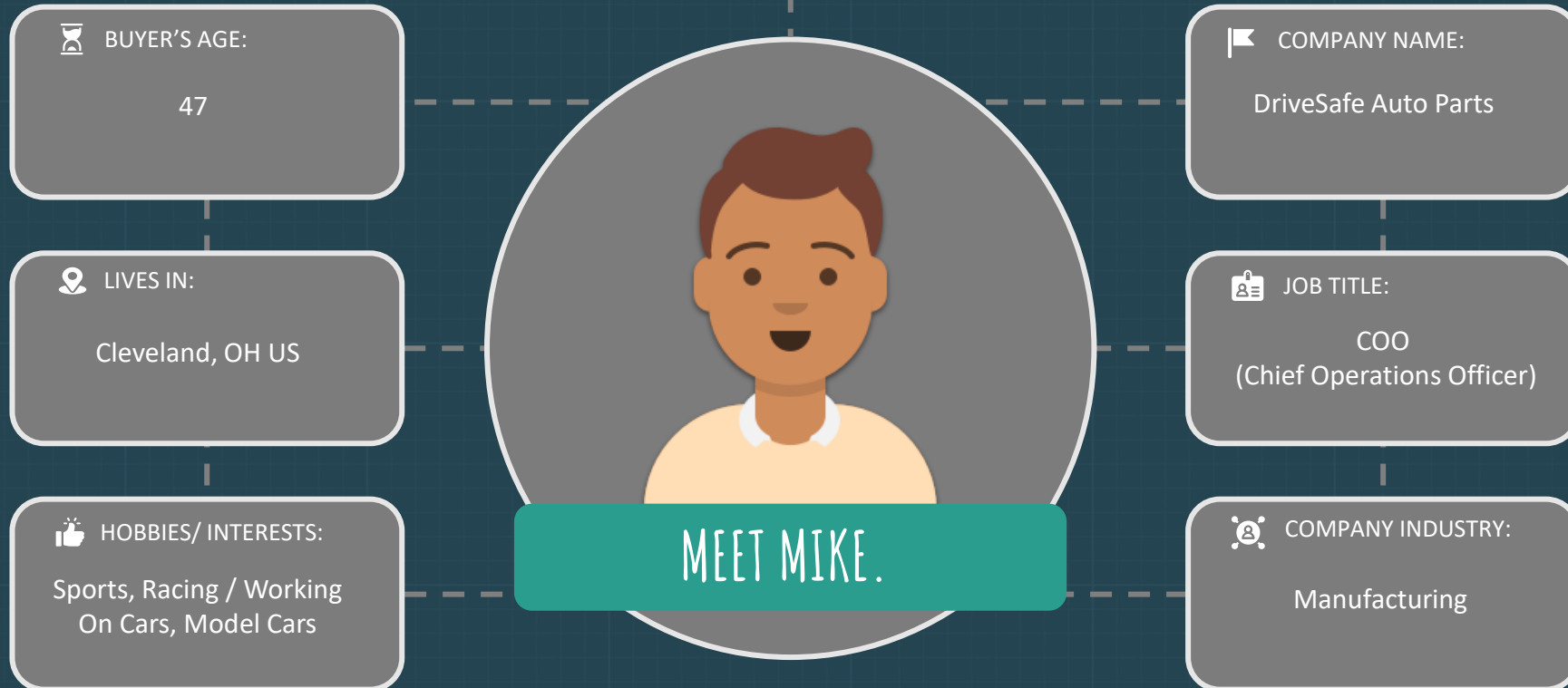
- Retaining my well-trained staff for longer periods of time
- Increased cash-flow from smoother customer billing and collections
- Being able to handle scheduling more patients every day

 DELIVERING MY SOLUTION MIGHT REQUIRE:

- Knowledge of Chiropractor Practice Management software
- Ability to deploy and support cloud-based EHR systems
- Tablet / mobile capabilities for medical practitioners to work from



BUYER PERSONA 5





MIKE'S WORK-LIFE.



DURING A NORMAL WORKDAY, I NEED TO:

- Update other executives on operations
- Meeting with other executives about projects or outstanding issues
- Solve operational challenges
- Keep employees happy and working
- Find new partnerships to improve ops
- Email and coordinate with employees



WAYS I DISCOVER NEW SOLUTIONS ARE:

- Personal network of previous co-workers
- Industry trade shows
- Online blogs and industry publications
- Google and search engines
- YouTube & social media
- Commercials while watching sports
- Sponsorships and events



THE HARDEST PARTS ABOUT MY JOB ARE:

- Handling high pressure situations when productions slows or stops
- Getting people to understand and trust decision-making and see "big picture"
- Dealing with employee politics and labor disputes
- Finding the right solutions



MY KEY NEEDS / CHALLENGES ARE:

- Being able communicate more efficiently with different departments
- Documenting / installing businesses processes that are sustainable and repeatable



THE MOST IMPORTANT TECH I USE IS:

- Enterprise resource planning (ERP)
- Accounting and billing software
- IoT production / scanning devices
- Customer management software
- Email, chat, and communication
- Human resource / time management software



REACHING MIKE.



TOPICS THAT FRAME MY SOLUTION ARE:

- How to get the most value out of your company's ERP solution
- Business processes your Manufacturing company can automate
- Technologies proven to increase production for Manufacturers



PLACEMENTS FOR MY SOLUTION ARE:

- [Manufacturing.net \(Blog\)](#)
- [The Smart Manufacturing X \(Event\)](#)
- [The Manufacturer \(Blog\)](#)
- [Ohio Manufacturer's \(Association\)](#)
- [ThomasNet \(Organization\)](#)
- [Cleveland Sports Commission \(Sponsor\)](#)



MY SOLUTION MAKES ME FEEL:

- Gratifying
- Profitable
- Effective
- Important
- Understood
- Listened To



THE RESULT OF MY SOLUTION LOOKS LIKE:

- Production at full capacity for longer periods of time
- Increased capacity leading to more revenue growth of the business
- Company executives respecting me for my decision-making ability

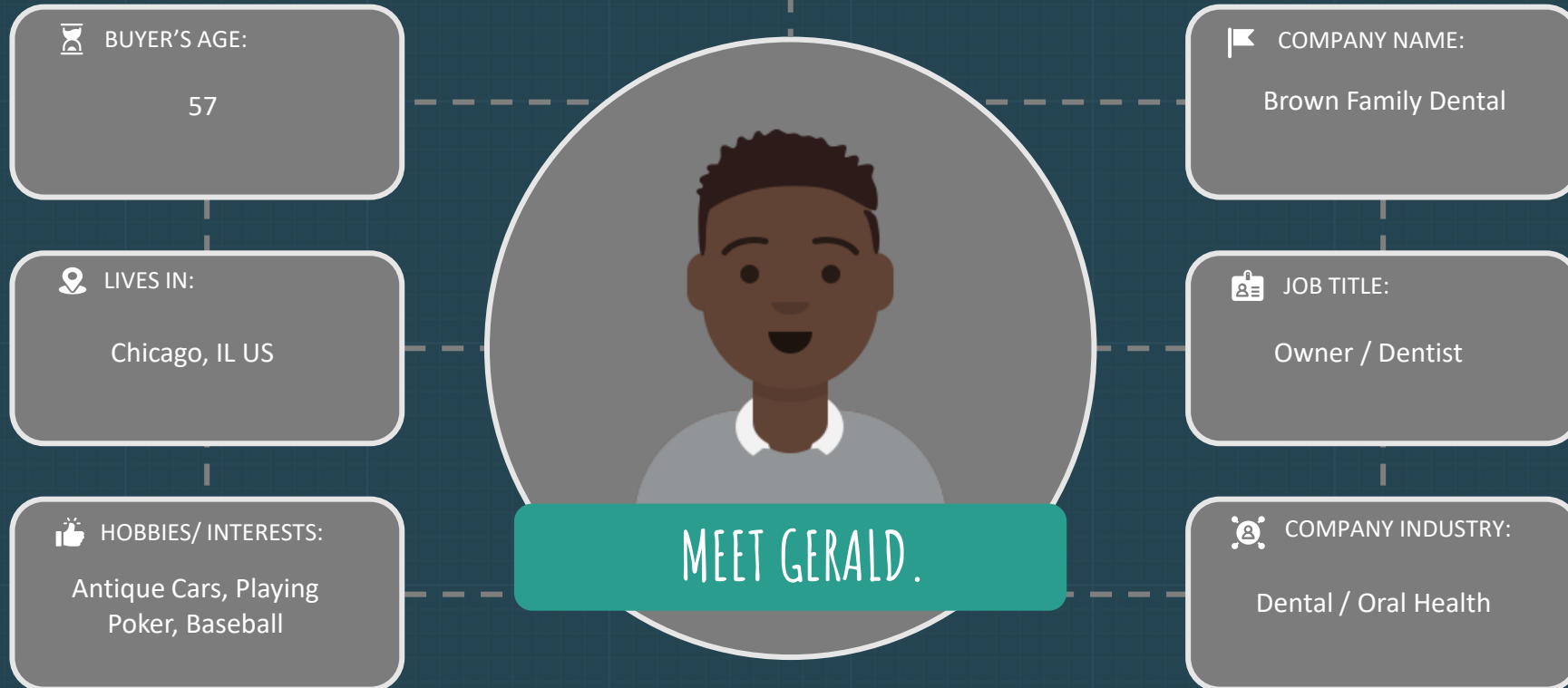


DELIVERING MY SOLUTION MIGHT REQUIRE:

- Knowledge of various Enterprise Resource Planning solutions
- Integrations to and from communication apps for different departments
- Extra layers of redundancy across the network to avoid any downtime



BUYER PERSONA 6





GERALD'S WORK-LIFE.



DURING A NORMAL WORKDAY, I NEED TO:

- Interpreting X-rays for patients
- Doing Dental procedures on patients
- Designing oral health plans
- Overseeing and managing practice staff
- Making financial and purchasing decisions
- Overseeing practice staff



WAYS I DISCOVER NEW SOLUTIONS ARE:

- Word-of-mouth from other Dentists
- Working with a DSO (Dental Service Org)
- Industry publications and websites
- YouTube and streaming video
- Alumni and peer groups
- Local networking events
- Google and search engines



THE HARDEST PARTS ABOUT MY JOB ARE:

- Dealing with unforeseen treatment issues
- Staying on schedule with patients
- Being able to optimize my time to see the most patients possible
- Finding new patients to work with
- Dealing with outdated and legacy equipment
- Keeping employees working



MY KEY NEEDS / CHALLENGES ARE:

- Being able to optimize my time, working faster and seeing more patients
- Streamline billing process to improve collections / receivables
- Keeping equipment and treatment techniques up-to-date



THE MOST IMPORTANT TECH I USE IS:

- Dental practice management software
- Digital imaging device / software
- Document storage / hosting of images
- Data backup and disaster recovery
- Email and appointment calendar
- Cloud-based voice system
- Point-of-sale / merchant system



REACHING GERALD.

 TOPICS THAT FRAME MY SOLUTION ARE:


- How to get your imaging files to and from the cloud with ease
- Technologies that will help you increase your production time with patients
- Everything you need to know about HIPAA compliance for Dentists

 PLACEMENTS FOR MY SOLUTION ARE:


- [Chicago Dental Pros \(Sponsorship\)](#)
- [Off The Cusp \(Blog\)](#)
- [Dentistry Today \(Blog\)](#)
- [Illinois Dental Society \(Organization\)](#)
- [Fred Joyal \(Influencer\)](#)
- [CDS Midwinter Meeting \(Event\)](#)

 MY SOLUTION MAKES ME FEEL:

- Revitalized
- Worthwhile
- Productive
- Cutting-edge
- Protected
- Inspired

 THE RESULT OF MY SOLUTION LOOKS LIKE:

- Happy patients that leave having a great experience
- An expanding practice that I can eventually sell and retire on
- Less time worrying about my business and more time with family

 DELIVERING MY SOLUTION MIGHT REQUIRE:

- Knowledge of Dental Practice Management software
- Scalable solution for onsite and offsite storage of image files
- Ability to work in conjunction with Dental Service Orgs (IT Staff)



BUYER PERSONA 7





DURING A NORMAL WORKDAY, I NEED TO:

- Meet with team members virtually
- Manage a team of technicians and their ticket-load
- Monitor system uptime and status
- Oversee IT change management process
- Patch management and upgrade systems
- Research new technology solutions



WAYS I DISCOVER NEW SOLUTIONS ARE:

- Sysadmin forums / sub-reddit
- YouTube and streaming video
- Spiceworks and online communities
- Google and search engines
- Tradeshows and vendor events
- Industry peer and networking groups
- Online blogs and websites



THE HARDEST PARTS ABOUT MY JOB ARE:

- Getting decision-makers to invest in upgrades and system we need
- Dealing with technician productivity issues
- Talking to frustrated endpoints who need hand-holding with issues
- Disagreements on technical strategy with management



MY KEY NEEDS / CHALLENGES ARE:

- A way to prevent downtime a keep systems running smoothly at all times
- Keeping software updates from breaking things.
- Making sure end-users are always helped efficiently



THE MOST IMPORTANT TECH I USE IS:


- Remote monitoring (RMM)
- IT documentation portal
- Email and collaboration platform
- Data and endpoint security
- Multi-factor authentication
- Disaster recovery
- Cloud based hosting solution




REACHING MEGHAN.

 TOPICS THAT FRAME MY SOLUTION ARE:

- Ways to improve your patch management process to avoid rollbacks
- How to better communicate IT problems to Executives
- Proven ways to get the budget approval you need to secure your network

 PLACEMENTS FOR MY SOLUTION ARE:


- [R/Sysadmin Subreddit \(Forum\)](#)
- [Tech Pro Gabe \(Influencer\)](#)
- [LifeHacker \(Blog\)](#)
- [Windows OS Hub \(Blog\)](#)
- [//Sys Admin Expo \(Event\)](#)
- [CNET TV \(Streaming\)](#)

 MY SOLUTION MAKES ME FEEL:

- Calm
- Harmonious
- Elated
- Joyful
- Virtuous
- Skilled

 THE RESULT OF MY SOLUTION LOOKS LIKE:

- Significant reduction in the amount of end-user support requests
- A quiet and focused IT department that can finally be proactive
- Decision-makers finally understanding my value to the company

 DELIVERING MY SOLUTION MIGHT REQUIRE:

- Deploying a Co-Managed IT support model for endpoints
- More documented communications to pass-through to Decision Makers
- A security-first approach to network infrastructure



HOW TO BETTER UNDERSTAND YOUR SMALL BUSINESS CUSTOMERS.



OUR COMMUNITY'S CONCLUSION :

At the end of each session, we asked for feedback from members on this process of building a buyer persona and empathizing with that individual as a way to develop a marketing campaign. Almost all our members that provided feedback indicated that this process would lead to them developing a better, more thoughtful campaign. Many were surprised at how difficult the process was, leading them to question how well they know their buyers / customers. Overall, we found that problem-solving for our personas led us in directions that may not be classified as traditional "Managed Services," but instead helped to develop unique value propositions.

"BE THOUGHTFUL OF YOUR BUYER'S UNIQUE WANTS AND NEEDS"



WE PUT THE IT INDUSTRY'S BRIGHTEST MINDS TOGETHER TO SOLVE YOUR GROWTH PROBLEMS

JOIN OUR COMMUNITY OF MSP FOUNDERS & MARKETERS TO CROWDSOURCE THE SOLUTIONS TO YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGES

FREE 30 DAY TRIAL