



## Profiling Your Clients

A target audience profile is a written and very detailed appraisal of your clients' characteristics, attitudes, and behaviors. Audience profile information typically falls into two categories: demographics and psychographics.

- **Demographics** describe **who** your clients are. The most frequently used demographic variables include age, gender, occupation, location, marital status, income, education level, and nationality.
- **Psychographics** describe **why** your clients act as they do. For example, even in a specific geographical area, you might be running a community theatre company, you will have low self-esteem clients who find it difficult to express themselves, as well as expressive extroverts who are more confident and expressive.

### Why do I need to do Audience profiles?

- Help the company make better, more consistent client decisions about how to best reach clients, including which products and services to offer and how to most effectively communicate their features, benefits, and availability.
- Reduce confusion among functional areas through a common business foundation for decision-making.
- Make it possible for your staff to treat clients more consistently because everyone is working from the same comprehensive information.
- Improve overall marketing focus and communication effectiveness.



### TAP fundamentals

Before you start building your Audience profiles, take the time to consider how many Audience profiles you need, who you need to profile, and how much detail to include in your profiles.

You need to produce multiple Audience profiles as needs arise. There is no one comprehensive TAP that contains all your client information insights. If you're trying to increase the average revenue per current client, you need to profile existing clients. If you're preparing a communications plan for your expansion into new market segments, you need to profile prospective clients.

Everyone involved in the purchase process should be profiled. Clients can usually be segregated into two categories: decision-makers and influencers.

**Decision-makers** might include "Mum" and the **Influencer** might be a "teenager". You must understand the specific characteristics of each category and the relationship between them. What are their relevant needs, goals, beliefs, fears, and selection criteria? Where do they get information? Who initiates the purchase?

### Useful Tips

- **Use, share, and update your client profiles often.** Audience profiles should be a living document. As your understanding of your client changes, you should consider adapting your strategies and policies in response.
- **Don't rush the client profiling process.** The information you gather will be the foundation for many significant decisions. It's worth doing your Audience profiles well the first time.
- **Don't assume your organization already has a thorough understanding of its clients, thus making target audience profiling unnecessary.** Few companies actually know their clients that well.
- **Talk to selected clients.** Under the right circumstances, they are often willing to share their perceptions and experiences.