# BuBul user Personas

Age? 38

First name? Anna

Marital status? Married, one child, 2 step children

Background? Work as a care worker fulltime, started a side business importing jewellery and selling it on Etsy. Has progressed to designing her own jewellery and selling it via her own website. Turns over @£14k pa.

What social media do they use? Instagram, Twitter and Facebook

What do they use it for? To promote their jewellery plus uses Facebook to keep in touch with friends.

What type of job do they do? Fulltime care worker, part-time sole business owner.

What are their key responsibilities? They are the only person in the business so do all the design, sales, marketing and distribution. They had their website designed and built and uses another SME to help manufacture the jewellery. This is the first business they have had.

What are their ambitions? Anna wants to grow her business to a turnover of @£60k which will give her sufficient income to leave her fulltime role and help support her family. She doesn’t want to grow it beyond the point where she has a decent income and employs no more than two people.

What stresses them out -what keeps them awake at night or keeps niggling away at them? Anna worries about irregular income. She is stressed about the amount of time she spends in the business and the impact it has on family life. She knows there are many more things she could do to grow the business but isn’t clear on what they are or how to do them so often lies awake churning things over in her mind. She knows there are advisers out there but wouldn’t be able to afford them so does look at online advice, checking out free webinars and googling for advice but worries about the amount of time and effort this takes.

What do they normally do if they need to know something? Anna googles, askes friends and sometimes other small business owners – she belongs to a number of small business groups, mainly on Facebook.

What are their values – why did they start a business, why did they choose this job/career? She has always been creative but started the business to earn more money – she didn’t go to University and knows her career prospects are limited. When she had the business established she experimented with designing her own and now finds most satisfaction in that. She uses some of the income to support her favourite charity – a small local one.

What challenges do they face – results, budgets, management? Budget is always an issue. The other main one is time, plus she has a fear of spending money and making mistakes which she can ill afford to do.

What are their priorities? To understand how to generate a more regular income, to avoid wasting time or money.

What words will they use if searching online for a solution to their challenges or priorities? Free business advice, how to grow an online business, running your own business, getting more leads, retaining customers, get organised running a business, how to get business from social media.

Age? 52

First name? John

Marital status? Divorced, two adult children

Background? Was a senior manager in a large corporate, made redundant a year ago. Specialised in business efficiency projects and decided to set up their own consultancy.

What social media do they use? LinkedIn

What do they use it for? – still getting to grips with it but wants to make it their prime lead generator.

What type of job do they do? They are the sole person in their business so they do everything. They have won a few small contracts but don’t have a large pipeline of potential clients.

What are their key responsibilities? They see the key one as creating leads as they are confident they can convert and deliver results but want to get to a position where they manage a team of consultants.

What are their ambitions? To build the business to a team of marketeers, consultants and admin which they can manage, creating a business that they will be able to sell in 10 to 15 years time.

What stresses them out -what keeps them awake at night or keeps niggling away at them? They feel on a treadmill – some months are good but many are bad. They are financially comfortable but are frustrated that the business is not expanding. They have tried networking for the first time but found it stressful and can’t decide if they should focus on works for large corporates or on the SME market.

What do they normally do if they need to know something? They attend many free or low cost seminars and read management books. They do read some advice articles on LinkedIn and have considered approaching a business adviser but don’t know who to speak to, don’t really want to spend time talking to several and have heard horror stories about the cost.

What are their values – why did they start a business, why did they choose this job/career? They started the business because they had been in corporate world for 30 years and wanted a change. They are confident in their ability re business efficiency, have few commitments and a good level of savings so thought having their own business would be a good income generator and would let them have a good work/life balance – but it’s not working out that way. Secretly, a key reason for starting the business was that they thought it unlikely that anyone would recruit someone over 50 into a senior role, plus they never quite made director in corporates so like the idea of being the Managing Director!

What challenges do they face – results, budgets, management? Key challenges are results, not really knowing what is the best strategy to follow, get frustrated at doing all the admin jobs that were done for them in corporate world and are fed up at spending so much time without getting consistent sales.

What are their priorities? To have a proper business where they can revert to manager rather than doer.

What words will they use if searching online for a solution to their challenges or priorities? How to build a business/consultancy, how to find and engage with your target market.

Age? 48

First name? George

Marital status? Married, two teenage children

Background? George was a window fitter working for a large company but realised that he could make more money doing it himself so he set up a company with his best friend at work. They started in a garage and found business easy to get so kept moving the new premises and expanding the number of staff. Turnover is now £1.2m

What social media do they use? They don’t use any but have a marketing agency which uses Facebook, Instagram and Twitter to target potential customers (this is a B2C business).

What do they use it for? George has a Facebook account which he uses to track what his children are up to.

What type of job do they do? Both partners now manage the business and staff fulltime, plus they go out to price up and check on work.

What are their key responsibilities? Managing staff and budgets, tracking sales and profit results. They don’t really understand how they got to this point and feel lost when they see results plunging.

What are their ambitions? They want to enjoy the business again, see it grow steadily and to have it run like clockwork so they can spend less time in the business.

What stresses them out -what keeps them awake at night or keeps niggling away at them? Staff issues – there is always someone or something to worry about. Sales – whenever they see sales reducing they immediately blame the marketing agency and have changed agencies twice in the last two years.

What do they normally do if they need to know something? Talk about it amongst themselves or to business contacts they have known for years. They also speak to their accountant regularly and get their advice plus have been introduced to some external experts, some of whom they have used – although they tend to start something new or initiate a change in the business then move onto something else and find that initial results don’t continue.

What are their values – why did they start a business, why did they choose this job/career? The initial reason was to make more money than being employed. That’s still their main motivator!

What challenges do they face – results, budgets, management? Managing the business – they don’t feel that they are in control of the business and worry that they may lose everything. They aren’t enjoying work or life at the moment.

What are their priorities? Get in control of the business, understand what they need to do, recruit the right people to manage and grow the business.

What words will they use if searching online for a solution to their challenges or priorities? How to recruit managers, how to grow a business, managing staff effectively.

# Licensee persona:

Age? 52

First name? Jonathan

Marital status? Married, one teenage child, one adult child

Background? Was an accountant in a large practice and set his own up 15 years ago, working from his kitchen table. He specialises in micro SMEs and has built up the business so he now has 6 staff in an office plus two virtual offices.

What social media do they use? LinkedIn and Facebook

What do they use it for? To generate awareness and referrals.

What type of job do they do? They run the business and still do some accountancy work.

What are their key responsibilities? Client acquisition and retention, staff recruitment and training, managing the team and keeping customers happy.

What are their ambitions? To continue to grow the business till they have 3 real offices with up to 20 staff, then to look to sell to a competitor.

What stresses them out -what keeps them awake at night or keeps niggling away at them? They are a traditional accountant and focus on micro SMEs because of that. They know they are missing opportunities to grow the business and struggle to differentiate themselves from other accountants. They worry about losing clients and keep prices low to manage this but desperately want to increase prices. They are really short of time as they seem to just network, manage staff issues and check accounts before they are sent to clients. They realise they are fairly reactive and that, with the exception of some longstanding clients, that they don’t know enough about clients’ businesses to get more value from the.

What do they normally do if they need to know something? They have a strong network that helps but also Google and ask HMRC – recently they had a client ask about R&D tax credits which they hadn’t dealt with before so ended up working late nights to learn enough so they could handle the request.

What are their values – why did they start a business, why did they choose this job/career? Initially they became an accountant because they had a head for figures and saw it as a safe career but got fed up with all the politics in a large organisation so set up on their own. They are passionate about SMEs and love working with a wide variety of businesses.

What challenges do they face – results, budgets, management? Managing staff, having enough time to develop relationships with existing clients, finding time to recruit, manage and train staff.

What are their priorities? Getting more value from their clients to generate additional revenue which will fund the growth of the business – but they need to find the time to do this.

What words will they use if searching online for a solution to their challenges or priorities? They don’t have term to search online much but when they do it’s normally in response to a request from a client.

Age? 38

First name? Tom

Marital status? Married, 2 pre-school children

Background? Worked in the family business (accountancy practice) since leaving University, now a 50% shareholder with his father.

What social media do they use? Just LinkedIn

What do they use it for? Connects with clients and people he meets networking but not an active user.

What type of job do they do? Accountant

What are their key responsibilities? Client acquisition and retention, finding new technology to offer to clients (although that’s mainly driven by their interest in it).

What are their ambitions? To take over the business and grow efficiency and the client base, especially through new technology

What stresses them out -what keeps them awake at night or keeps niggling away at them? He’s not sure his dad will ever retire which frustrates him, he’s scared of the competition – they were one of the first accountants to use the cloud but now everyone does that.

What do they normally do if they need to know something? Googles or does some online training

What are their values – why did they start a business, why did they choose this job/career? They just followed in their dad’s footsteps but love what they do.

What challenges do they face – results, budgets, management? They find the management side of the business an issue, especially working with their dad who they see as too traditional. They are often short of time, failing to turn up to as many networking events as they would like.

What are their priorities? Be seen to offer value to clients and to be different from run of the mill accountants.

What words will they use if searching online for a solution to their challenges or priorities? Building a business, increasing client lifetime value, accountancy tech.