Customers

A great idea for a product or service can only become a business if people are willing to buy it. So, it's important to think about who your customers are.

A common mistake that business owners make is thinking that their product or service is going to appeal to everyone. Products that appeal to everyone are known as *mass market* products and are often seen as essentials. For example, every household has a fridge. So, if you manufacture fridges, you won't have to spend any time or effort persuading people that they want a fridge…because everyone needs a fridge, right? You would of course have to persuade them that they want to buy their fridge from you…

Back to your customers. Who are they? What do they like? What are they motivated by? One way to answer this question is to group customers by the characteristics they share. This process is called **segmentation**.

You can segment customers on a range of characteristics:

Demographic *Population characteristics*	Age, gender, income, education level, marital status, family size
Geographic *Where they're located*	Are your potential customers local? Or could they buy your product or service from anywhere? (e.g. could a customer in Cornwall buy your product/service online?)
Lifestyle *People's activities, interests and opinions*	Do they love the outdoors? Do they care about the environment? Do they like traditional things? What are they driven by?
Behavioural *Buying or usage behaviour*	Are they tech-savvy? Luxury seekers? Are they price conscious or quality conscious? Are they time-poor and need quick solutions?

By doing this, it makes it easier to create tailored marketing messages that speak directly to your customers.

Example: if one of the features of your product/service is that it saves time, you will probably want to target customers who lead busy lives and who want to save time (obviously!) Think about the words you'd use to attract those customers: 'fast-acting', 'no fuss', 'leaving you with more time to get on with your day' etc.