

Buyer Persona Story: David the Camp Director



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Company Profile

Youth Camp Consulting is a marketing agency that specializes in helping Youth Summer Camps. The founder believes Summer Camp is an integral part of childhood and is devastated to see the number of Youth Camps that close each year due to poor attendance and/or mismanagement.

In response to closing Youth Camps, Youth Camp Consulting was founded to specialize in Camp Promotions, Alumni Engagement, and Camp Finances. While the founder believes all three are closely tied together, his marketing efforts for the company focuses on helping camps by increasing attendance through effective camp promotions, mainly digital marketing. Once attendance has improved Youth Camp Consulting will then work with its customers on engaging alumni and long-term fundraising.

It is important to the company that they help youth camps with whatever issues they are addressing to ensure that they remain open and are successful in shaping the youth of tomorrow into responsible adults.

About this eBook

In order to ensure Youth Camp Consulting's marketing efforts are effective in connecting with its potential customers, it uses personas in order to shape its marketing campaigns. This eBook is the story of Camp Director David, one of the personas used when Youth Camp Consulting creates marketing material.

Without further ado, meet David the Camp Director...



Meet David the Camp Director

David was a 12-year-old when he started going to summer camp. He was just like his friends that were excited about going to camp but apprehensive about being away from his home, specifically his mom and dad for so long. Going to camp instilled a life long love of the outdoors, summer camps, and rock climbing.

Fast forward 18 years, and now David is the Camp Director in charge of the summer camp that meant so much to him as a child. He can hardly believe that he is in charge and responsible for making sure kids have a great time while staying safe. Sometimes he worries he doesn't know everything it takes to run the camp and is concerned he will not be able to leave his legacy due to poor camp attendance or going over budget.

"I love being in charge of this camp! I went here as a kid and now I run the place. What are they thinking? Why would they put someone like me in charge?"

Values and Beliefs

David loves the outdoors. He wants to protect nature, and he sees his role as Camp Director as a perfect opportunity to introduce kids to the outdoors and teach them how to respect the environment. David believes attending camp was one of the best things he did as a child and wants to make sure all kids have the option to attend camp.

David is a hard worker. He believes that you can play hard if you get your work done. David has always been the responsible one in his friend group, which often resulted in him being in charge of planning their outings and being the designated driver. It did help that he could fit a lot of people in his mini-SUV.

Family

David would like to be married; however, he spends so much time at camp or with the camp staff that he often feels like he is married to the camp. Before becoming Camp Director, David would often have a Summer Camp Girlfriend, but now that he is Camp Director, David doesn't want to cross any boundaries, so he doesn't let himself get too close to any of the female camp staff members.

David would like to have more time to be able to do the traditional dating scene and find someone who loves the outdoors as much as he does. His ultimate goal is to get married and have children, raising his family at camp.

Profession and Education

David attended the local the State University and earned a bachelor's degree in Outdoor Studies. He struggled with following his passion of camp, when all of his friends were getting more professional degrees such as Engineering or Psychology. It was important for David to stay true to his passion and love of the outdoors to pursue a degree that would allow him to manage a Camp.

All through his undergraduate career, David continued to work at summer camps moving up

the ranks from Staffer, to Program Manager, to Area Director, to Climbing Director, and ending with Program Director his senior year.



Potential Concerns

David feels like all he does since being put in charge of the camp is worry. He worries about losing staff before the season ends and being short-staffed. He worries about attendance being low. He worries about going over budget. He worries that a camper will get seriously hurt. David feels the weight of his responsibilities can be overwhelming; however, completing the summer successfully is extremely rewarding and worth all of the sleepless nights.

Physical Location

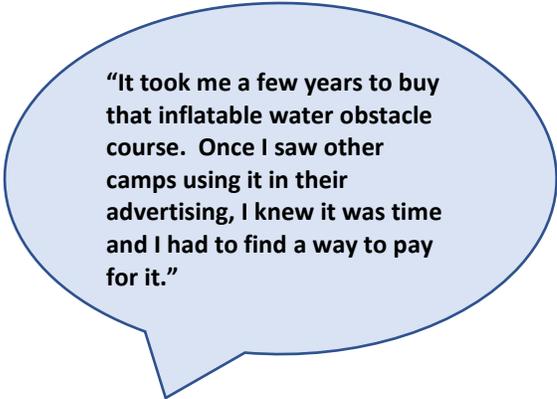
David resides in a cabin at the Summer Camp where he is Director. The housing is included in his compensation package. The camp is located in rural Wisconsin, and David has to drive about 15 minutes to get to a small town where there is a grocery and hardware store. In order to have fun, David has to drive about 45 minutes to get to a larger city that is geared more towards tourism and fun.

Timing

Because David's responsibilities are significantly higher during the summer months, due to it being camp season, David is unlikely to make any purchasing decisions during the summer. In order to best influence David's purchasing of consulting services to assist with camp attendance it is important to start the purchasing journey in October when David is starting to budget for the next year. If we don't reach David until February or March it will be too late to complete the purchasing journey for that summer, which will delay the purchasing decision and likely be detrimental to the purchasing journey with our company.

Past Buying Behavior

When it comes to purchasing products and services, he wants to make sure it is a good investment for his camp. David has to be able to visualize how the product or service will work with his camp, and make sure that it will attract new campers. He has to be able to include all purchases in his budget, and won't stray from his budget unless it is an emergency. David tends to rely on what other Camp Directors are doing when it comes to big purchases.



“It took me a few years to buy that inflatable water obstacle course. Once I saw other camps using it in their advertising, I knew it was time and I had to find a way to pay for it.”

Relationship to the Product Category

David has never considered hiring a marketing agency to help him promote his camp. In fact, he doesn't even know that hiring an agency is an option. The closest he has gotten is hiring a local college student to film a camp promotion video; however, once it was done, it was David and a few of his staff members, who would show the video at various Kid Expos and Camp Fairs.

David's camp has a pretty good website which he promotes on all of his marketing materials. He has dabbled in Social Media, mainly just posting pictures during the summer and reminding parents of the various deadlines to sign their kids up for camp. It is fairly common that he will go months without posting on Social Media.

David realizes he is struggling to get the number of campers that he has been able to get in the past. He often hears camp is too expensive or that kids have too many competing interests, mainly sports. David continues to use his tried and true methods of promoting camp even though it is getting less effective.

Purchasing Journey

Like many customers, David will appear to stumble into the purchasing journey with Youth Camp Consulting, when in fact, David learns about the company through a carefully crafted purchasing journey. This journey will start in Awareness, where David will learn about the service and company. Then it will turn into Information Seeking, where David will learn detailed information that is needed to help his camp. The final step is the purchasing decision, where Youth Camp Consulting will attempt to use its relationship with David to win him over and have him purchase their services.

Let's see David's Purchasing Journey...

Awareness



David enjoys the free time he has in the fall. He likes to take some time off from camp in October and follow his other passion of rock climbing. David almost always plans a week long rock climbing trip where his old college buddies will join him for a week of fun and climbing.

After his annual rock-climbing trip, David sat down at his computer and started posting the pictures from his trip to Facebook. He spent a good hour uploading all of them and tagging all of his friends in the pictures. While he was doing this, he noticed an ad that looked like a family feud game. It was asking him to identify the "Top Reasons Parents Send their Kids to Camp." David used to enjoy family feud, and knows camp fairly well so he clicked on the ad to see what the top reasons were.

Instead of seeing a list, he saw a family feud game board where he had to enter the top three reasons. David thought about it briefly and answered, the following:

1. To get a break from their kids
2. Experience fun and adventure
3. Because their kids want to go

David clicked on the link to see the answers but was told he had to enter his name and email address first. David was skeptical, but the website said that he wouldn't be spammed, and that he was signing up for a newsletter from Youth Camp Consulting. While David never heard of the company, he thought he might learn something from them... but just in case, he used an email address he seldom checks.

David was excited to see he got the number one and number two answer correct. He agreed with the number three answer, which was “To gain independence”.

David was getting tired of being on the computer, quickly shut it down and decided to call one of his buddies and make plans for the weekend.

Saturday came, and David was driving about an hour to pick up a good friend so they could go to the ballgame. Since he didn’t want to keep changing his radio station on his drive, he decided to listen to a podcast interview on the CampHacker Podcast, where the expert was arguing that the old model of advertising camps at Kids Expos and Camp Fairs is broken and social media marketing is the new way to promote summer camps. David found it interesting but wasn’t quite sure he agreed with the expert.

Seeking Information

About a week later, it was a rainy day and David was stuck inside. He had done all of his paperwork and decided to look into that Youth Camp Consulting company from the Family Feud Ad. They had sent him a pretty cool looking infographic titled “Why Summer Camps are Closing”. It hit David pretty hard because he sees the value getting kids outdoors and remembers how much attending summer camp meant to him as a teenager, and how much it is still a part of his life.

On the bottom of the Infographic was a link that said, learn how you can keep your camp from closing. David clicked on the link out of curiosity and found himself on the Youth Camp Consulting Blog. The first post on the blog was titled “How to Use Facebook to Attract New Campers.”



David read through the blog post but thought to himself he would never have time to do all that work on Facebook. He recalls how long it takes him just to post pictures over the summer. David wonders who would have time to promote a Summer Camp on Social Media like they were describing. It would be cool to target kids within a 100-mile radius, but it sounded pretty complex and more than he wanted to do.

David remembers he is on a consulting page. He thinks it is cool that a company would help summer camps; however, could never see himself hiring a marketing agency for his camp. He barley has a budget to print flyers to send home with the kids from the local elementary schools. David closes down his computer and decides to spend the rest of the rainy evening watching a movie about Mt. Everest.

About a week later, David is checking his email. He sees an email from Youth Camp Consulting. The subject line was “Biggest Myths of Hiring a Marketing Agency”. Since David still didn’t think anyone would hire an agency to promote a youth camp, he decided to read the email:

To: David@camp.com

From: Dan@YouthCampConsulting.com

Subject: Top 3 Myths of Hiring a Marketing Agency to Help Attract Campers

Hi David,

As a Camp Director I know you are busy preparing for camp and want to make sure everything is perfect for this summer. Whether it be hiring staff, promoting camp, ordering supplies, developing staff training, creating your budget - There is never enough time in the day!

Unfortunately, what we see is promoting your camp and attracting new campers often becomes an afterthought until it becomes a crisis! Wouldn’t it be nice to not have to worry about having enough new campers this summer?

Our agency helps camps, just like yours, to market their camps. However, I know there is a lot of concerns about spending money on a marketing agency. Today, I wanted to share with you the three biggest myths we see when talking to Camp Directors, like you, about helping them attract campers:

Myth #1 – We already have Social Media Accounts; You Won’t Be Able to Help Us

Truth: Social Media is only one part of an overall marketing strategy for camps. We utilize multiple marketing channels in order to reach your camp’s objectives. In addition, social media marketing is extremely powerful, and we often see that it is underutilized by camps. Not only will we help strengthen your social media strategy, we will ensure every post is optimized to meet your camp’s goals.

Myth #2 – Our Camp is Special, and an Outsider won’t be able to Market for Us

Truth: Our Founder worked at four different camps, has sat on the executive board of organizations that run multiple camps, has attended numerous camps, and our agency has helped many unique camps. When we start a relationship with a camp, we make sure we understand what makes your camp special.

If your camp is in the Midwest, we will visit your camp in person so we can see it first-hand. If we can’t visit your camp in person, we will interview the administrative team to really ensure we understand everything about your camp. We always are looking for what makes your camp unique and use that in our marketing plan and efforts. No two camps have the same marketing plan.

Myth #3 – We can’t afford a Marketing Agency

Truth: You can’t look at the expense of Marketing without looking at the income that you will make by having more campers. Every camp budget has fixed costs that don’t change (utilities, staff, maintenance), and variable costs that depend on the number of campers (food expenses, supplies, etc.). If we increase the number of campers you have at your camp, the fixed cost per camper will decrease, in addition, to the profit built into your camp fees.

Learn How We Can Help You!

Contact us today to see set up a free consultation so we can learn what makes your camp special and show you how our services are affordable. Give us a call at (608)318-3269 or fill out the contact form at <http://www.YouthCampConsulting.com/contact/> to schedule a free consultation.

See you around the campfire!

Dan Williams
Founder at YouthCampConsulting.com

David was impressed. He still didn't know who these guys were but they hit the nail on the head. They understood how busy he was, and that money in the budget was tight. David thought it was cool that the founder had worked at multiple camps and served on the executive board of an organization that ran multiple camps.

That night David thought about what makes his camp special and wondered if a marketing agency would help him hit his number of campers goal. David dreads having to cut staff because of low camper attendance, as that is never fun. Even though he still wasn't sure he could afford it, David decided to give them a call and see what they had to say. Even if he just got one idea from them during the free consultation, it would be worth it.

The next day, David filled out the form to schedule a free consultation. Right after he scheduled it, he received an email. The email included a worksheet to help during the consultation, it asked him the following questions:

What are your Goals for Camp?

What are your biggest fears related to Camp?

How much are your fees?

How much profit do you have per camper?

What do you currently do to promote your camp?

What would you like to get out of the free consultation?

David completed the worksheet and sent it back to Youth Camp Consulting, and then just waited for his call in two days.

Purchasing Decision



David was a little apprehensive the morning of the free call. He starting to think it may just be a big scam, or worse they would try to sell him some big package he couldn't afford. After all, what other camps relied on a Marketing Agency to help them?

David was still curious, so he still answered his phone when they called.

The hour-long phone call was over before David knew it. The consultant on the other end knew everything David was thinking about his camp. It was almost like they had worked together for multiple years. David was impressed that the consultant listened to him and agreed with his

fears and concerns. The consultant was able to provide David with some testimonials from other camps who saw success in hiring Youth Camp Consulting to promote their camps through social media. David ended the call saying he would think about it, but still wasn't sure if it was the right fit.

The next day, David had received a brief email from Youth Camp Consulting, thanking him for his time, and attached was a marketing proposal. David took a look at the proposal and was impressed with what he saw. They had outlined his goals and explained how they would reach them. In addition, they included a budget that was affordable. There was also a guarantee that if they weren't able to increase camper numbers, a refund was available.

David decided to take a chance and see what they could do. He figured if they weren't successful, he would take them up on the refund and all he was out was some time.

It turns out Youth Camp Consulting was able to implement a Facebook Campaign that was extremely successful in getting parents of his target campers into a sales funnel that took them through the purchasing journey. In the end, camp attendance was up, the camp's social media accounts were thriving, and David had one less thing to worry about.

Next Steps in the Relationship

David was extremely impressed with the services delivered by Youth Camp Consulting. He even considers them a trusted source of information and ideas, just like the other Camp Directors and “Old Guys” who volunteer at his camp. Looking back David would have never expected that he would have used a marketing agency for his camp but is still amazed at the results and is extremely appreciative of how successful his camp has become.

Youth Camp Consulting recognizes the relationship they have with David. While they have David as a customer for consulting services, they see this as the start of their relationship with David and realize that they can continue to provide additional products/services to David. In order to see how they can best serve David; they ask him what else he could use help with. David thinks about it and informs them that he would really like to start engaging the alumni as he has heard they can be a tremendous asset to his camp, but he doesn't know where to start.

The staff at Youth Camp Consulting take this feedback and develop a webinar, entitled “How to Develop a Thriving Alumni Group in less than a Year!”. They know David would like this, so they send him a personalized email informing his that this webinar is just what he needs, and only costs \$49.95. David remembers what Youth Camp Consulting said when he was first thinking about working with them, that it takes money to make money. Since they weren't wrong about marketing his camp, he believes they won't be wrong about creating an alumni group either and makes the easy decision to sign-up for the webinar and see where it takes him and his camp.

