



For more than thirty years, New Pig has led the industrial absorbent industry with a variety of innovative products for effectively cleaning leaks, drips, splatters, and spills. New Pig has created absorbent products that have revolutionized cleanup for industrial, institutional, and government facilities and now helps more than 200,000 customers worldwide provide a safer, cleaner, and more productive workplace.

New Pig Goes Whole Hog on a Buyer-Centric Marketing Strategy using Akoonu

The Challenge: Improve Quality of Content

Even with a distinctive, long-standing brand reputation, several thousand happy customers, and best-selling industry products, New Pig knew it had to keep current with marketing trends and that content marketing using high quality content was a competitive must. It also knew its “big pile of legacy content” was not going to drive the thought leadership and demand generation it wanted.

“For several years, we produced content without a plan or a direction for ongoing use. So we began evaluating all of our content—early through late stage—and realized we had several gaps in topics and targeted audiences. Not only did we have to address these gaps, but we also had to improve the quality of our content moving forward,” said Doug Laplante, Chief Innovation Officer and VP of Strategy at New Pig.

For New Pig, higher quality content covers topics relevant to its buyers’ needs and adheres to its brand standards. New Pig decided to undergo an initiative to organize its content by topic and audience and to develop a process for strategically planning and creating new, higher quality buyer-centric content in 2016.

The Solution: Add More Oink (Strategy) to Content Planning and Creation

New Pig’s first step in taking a more strategic approach to content planning was to gain a deeper understanding of its audience through buyer personas. Laplante initially created a persona, but it was “slim,” amounting to about a paragraph of higher level insights. He and his team decided

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to search for software solutions that would make it easier and faster to create, share, and update some truly in-depth, insightful personas.

“ We came across Akoonu and loved that it had such a rich built-in persona framework with associated interview questions,” said Laplante. “ Then we saw an example of a persona created in its platform—which highlighted the types of detailed insights a useful persona should provide. Once I saw this in addition to the platform’s frameworks, data analysis, and systems integrations, we knew we wanted to move forward with Akoonu.”

To start, New Pig connected Akoonu with its CRM records to evaluate current customers and pipeline contacts by their functional areas. The resulting heatmaps and data analysis confirmed what New Pig had already identified as two likely personas, but the heatmaps revealed a surprising persona that represented a material amount of the company’s sales and revenue.

With its three personas now identified, New Pig leveraged Akoonu’s built-in interview questions (some of which they configured to meet their specific needs) to conduct interviews with customers for each persona. After one person on the team executed the first interviews and word quickly spread of exciting new buyer insights, several employees—many of whom were new to the company and had never spoken with a customer—volunteered to each conduct a few interviews.

Each interview was audio recorded and then uploaded and transcribed into Akoonu. New Pig evaluated the interviews for each persona and aggregated the findings to create the personas.

Results: Persona Insights Drive More Buyer-Centric, Targeted Content

For each persona, New Pig learned of key attributes such as day-to-day duties, goals, business challenges, upcoming major initiatives, current fears, primary need for a solution like theirs, primary buying criteria, solution concerns, desired results, content preferences, and more.

“ Most customers interviewed for each persona faced similar challenges, needs, and fears, so the interviews gave us confidence in the accuracy of our personas. One of the first surprises we had was that the word ‘blog’ was a put-off to several customers across our three personas, so we’re reducing our emphasis on blogs and increasing many other content marketing activities.”

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Building the personas through interviews also provided insights on the words buyers use, informing New Pig on the lingo it should use in its content. However, the biggest impact from New Pig’s persona process was understanding how to best plan and create buyer-centric content for each of its personas.

“ Using the insights we gained from developing our personas through customer interviews and data analysis, we can now plan and create content that is of value to our each of our buyers across all stages. And now that we realize how critical the new persona is, we’re planning and creating content geared for them—this is something we were missing before Akoonu’s data analysis.”

New Pig’s personas are now guiding the planning and creation of its content, and it’s also now tagging existing and new content by persona.

“ With Akoonu, we’ve been able to publish our personas to a broader audience throughout the company and as a result, ensure everyone is on the same page around who our buyers are. It also saves time training new employees about our target audience. Our entire organization has really rallied around the personas—we even printed life-sized versions of PDFs Akoonu produces of the personas to hang in our offices so we can keep our buyers top of mind.”

Akoonu also helped New Pig save significant time in getting started with creating the personas.

“ Akoonu’s high quality frameworks and processes for guiding and managing the work allowed us to create our personas about five times faster than if we had started from scratch on our own and loaded everything into spreadsheets. Beginning with the data insights to ensure we were marketing to the right buyers, to the platform’s features and built-in best practices, Akoonu provided value each step of the way so that our resulting personas are accurate and insightful. And we now have a repository of buyer insights and customer interviews that are easily accessible to anyone who needs them and can be kept up-to-date as we see changes in our market.”

Another advantage New Pig enjoyed working with Akoonu was the support of knowledgeable experts in the Akoonu Client Services Team. Akoonu services include systems configuration and data analysis, an onboarding process to support the primary users of Akoonu, and both persona and journey mapping workshops with the key stakeholders.

“ Akoonu provides a way to ensure our brand is correctly reflected in every single asset we produce.”

“ We felt really well taken care of by the Akoonu team. They worked with our team to make sure we were making the right decisions around the configuration and usage of the product. And, because they are marketing experts themselves, we also got really good advice along the way.”

In addition to developing buyer personas, New Pig leveraged Akoonu's Brand module to capture its brand style guidelines. For New Pig, creating and maintaining a strong, memorable, unique brand that is engrained both internally and within the industry has always been a high priority for the company. Using Akoonu, it can ensure that its brand standards are documented and shared, so that they're consistently applied by everyone working for the organization.

“ We're ecstatic about documenting the brand guidelines in Akoonu. Nothing is more frustrating than putting a lot of thought and work into creating these standards only to have them sit in PowerPoint slides and forgotten. Now everyone can easily access them. This is incredibly important to us as we have always taken pride in our brand. Akoonu provides a way to ensure our brand is correctly reflected in every single asset we produce.”

What's Next

Moving forward into 2016, New Pig will employ Akoonu to build buyer's journey maps to bring even more insight into its audience's buying process. The company will also leverage the platform's survey tool to interview customers via email, thereby ensuring continuous updates to the accuracy of its personas.

“ Capturing buyer insights through personas is not a one-time project. As industry trends shift and new challenges arise, our buyers' needs and preferences change as well. Akoonu will allow us to continually update and maintain our personas so that as an organization we are confident we always have the latest, most accurate understanding of our buyers.”

