Are you confused about how to figure out the target audience for your film? Don't worry, we've got you covered!

Start Below
First, why is it important to figure out a target audience?

Understanding who is MOST interested in the topic of your film helps you in three ways:

1) Editorial:

Helps with editorial and creative decisions in the making of your film. For example, if you know that your target audience admires a certain person, you might make an extra effort to include that person in your film.

2) Fundraising:

Your target audience will often be your best sources or clues for funding.

3) Distribution/Marketing:

A lot of time and money can be wasted trying to market your film to “everyone”, many of whom will have no interest in the topic of your film. It’s a much more effective strategy to hone in on those specific individuals who have a genuine interest, passion and connection to your film. Understanding your target audience as soon as possible in the early stages of the filmmaking process allows you to start building your audience from day one instead of the pressure of trying to find an audience at the last minute once your film is complete.
Let’s Get Started Finding Your Target Audience

Name of Documentary: ________________________________

Topics Covered in the Documentary:

List all the topics/subjects/themes and groups of people represented in the documentary (examples: Mental Illness, Olympics, Teachers, etc)

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

**Hint!** Each of the above items has a corresponding audience who cares about that issue. Those will be the people most interested in seeing your film!
Creating Your Target Audience Profile

Your primary target audience is the **specific group of people who will be most interested in seeing your film**. Often, this includes several groups.

Don’t worry if you can’t figure this out right away... sometimes it takes years for filmmakers to fully engage with their audiences to figure out who is most interested in the story. Make your best guess now and refine your audience as you go.

**Audience Demographics, Psychographics & Behaviors**
(these are just a few examples, add your own!)

- Gender ________________  Age Range ________________
- Race ________________  Income: ______________________
- Ethnicity ____________  Religion ____________________
- Political View ___________  Marital Status ______________
- Core Beliefs ____________________________
- Core Values ____________________________

List other important factors that categorize your audience (Hobbies, Turn-ons/offs, internet access, Owns a computer, etc)
Clues to finding your target audience:

**Who will benefit the most from your film?** (example: their cause will be supported, their values validated, their lives will improve, etc)

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

**Hint!** The individuals/groups who will benefit the most from your film will be your hottest leads for funding.
What publications focus on the subject matter of your documentary?

Look for magazines, newspapers and blogs that focus on the subject of your documentary. The subscribers and readers of those publications are your target audience! Check their websites for the advertising page or request their media kit which usually lists the demographics of their audience.

List the top 10 publications in your topic niche:

1. ____________________________       6. ____________________________
2. ____________________________       7. ____________________________
3. ____________________________       8. ____________________________
4. ____________________________       9. ____________________________
5. ____________________________      10. ___________________________
What other documentaries or films have been made about the subject of your documentary?

Check their websites or in the film credits to see their list of partners and resources. Better yet, reach out to the filmmakers themselves and ask who their audience is!
Describe Your Primary Target Audience

**Primary Target Audience:**

________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________

**Examples of a Target Audience Profiles:**

“North American senior citizens and their families.”

“African American youth (13-40) from the Southern United States whose families took part in the Civil Rights Movement.”

“Family members and caretakers of the mentally disabled in the U.K.”

“Motorcycle enthusiasts from Europe who tend to go to road rallies.”
Secondary Target Audience Groups:

1. ________________________________
2. ________________________________
3. ________________________________
4. ________________________________
5. ________________________________
6. ________________________________
7. ________________________________
8. ________________________________
9. ________________________________
10. ________________________________

How many people would you estimate are part of your target audience?

Estimating your audience size gives you a clue to how many people might buy your film later. For example “Winners of the Nobel Peace Prize” is a very tiny group, whereas “Gun Owners in America” is a much larger niche (ie more chances for big distribution of your film)

Estimated Audience Size: ________________________________
Target Audience | Worksheet

**Additional Market Research**

**What does your audience want to know?**

Audience's main question/concern/curiosity about the subject matter of your documentary:

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

**Where does your audience “hang out”?**

This will become valuable information as you begin building your base of support throughout the making of your film.

What social media platforms does your target group use? (Facebook, Reddit, Twitter, Pinterest, etc)

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

What events do they attend?

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________
Where do you foresee your documentary being shown once it's complete?

Options include churches, community theaters, broadcast television, universities, a website, etc. Perhaps it’s part of a “transmedia” project where people interact with your documentary through a website or other digital technologies. What are the best avenues to reach your target audience?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Wrap Up

Finding your audience is an evolving process throughout the making of your documentary.

Be sure to start gathering emails of people who show an interest in your film (use an email service like MailChimp or Aweber). Then, once you have a decent list, send your list a survey asking them about their lives and interests. Ask them what intrigues them about your documentary project and what topics they’d like to see covered. It’s amazing the great information you’ll get.

Good luck!

About Desktop Documentaries

Desktop Documentaries is an on-line resource helping filmmakers bring their dream documentary to life with practical step-by-step tips and inspiration. To learn the ins and outs of making a documentary, visit: courses.desktop-documentaries.com/courses/7-day-documentary-crash-course

To start raising money for your documentary: courses.desktop-documentaries.com/courses/documentary-fundraising-101

© Desktop-Documentaries.com