

SPICED Exercise

For [Your Company]

Introduction

SPICED is a diagnostic framework [developed by Winning by Design](#) that helps you understand your customer's complete story - from their current situation to how they make decisions. It's particularly powerful because it looks beyond surface-level qualification to uncover not just what a customer needs, but why they need it and what will drive them to act.

The beauty of SPICED is that it creates a complete picture of your ideal customer and buying process. When you get clarity here, it informs everything from your marketing messaging to your [sales conversations](#) to ensuring [customer success](#).

SPICED Exercise Instructions

1. For each Ideal Client Profile (ICP), create a separate chart.
2. For each SPICED element, write a brief hypothesis based on your current understanding:
 - Situation: Describe your customer's context
 - Pain: Identify their key challenges
 - Impact: Note potential rational and emotional benefits of solving their pain
 - Critical Event: Specify any time-sensitive factors
 - Decision: Outline their typical buying process
3. Spend about 5 minutes on each element.
4. Review and refine your overall SPICED hypothesis.

Remember: This is a starting point. Your hypotheses will be validated or adjusted through customer interviews and sales conversations.

SPICED FRAMEWORK	SPICED EXAMPLE	SPICED FOR [Company Name]
Situation - Describes the basic facts and circumstances of the customer, relevant to the pains you help them solve. This includes the firmographic profile of your ideal customer and other important characteristics that determine fit.	• 3,000 employees, 4 global offices • ACME has traditionally avoided cloud solutions entirely, but they started to push into the cloud in early 2017. • They are currently using Box, Salesforce, and Google across the organization.	•
Pain - What problems do you help customers solve? What rational pain points are they trying to address (business issues, KPIs, etc.)? What emotional pains are the specific individual buyers having (frustrations, anxieties, etc.)?	• Quantitative - Losing time and efficiency due to the inability to easily share data externally with global customers and partners. • Qualitative - Senior execs are concerned about the potential for a breach/leak (and the resulting bad PR) as the need to share sensitive data with third parties increases.	•
Impact - What business results or “experience” improvements will customers realize if they adopt your solution? Business results are “rational” impacts and can include increased revenue or decreased cost. Experience improvements include better customer experience or employee work experience.	• Rational - Avoiding another breach/leak of sensitive IP data would save the company \$100K+ of fines & monetary damages. • Emotional - Avoiding another breach/leak of sensitive IP data would make the head of IT a hero to his leadership and give him peace of mind that the org is protected.	•

Critical Events - What events on the customer side drive them to make a decision by a specific date? Critical events are those where, if the deadline is missed, the customer will suffer negative consequences. If there are no consequences to missing the timeline, then it's a compelling event.	• Critical Event - The Board of Directors is looking for a solution to be in place by the company compliance meeting at the end of Q2. • Compelling Event - ACME is hiring 20% more engineers in Q1, which will increase the risk of information leaks.	•
Decision - What is the typical buying process? Anything notable about how customers like to buy your offering? What job titles are typically involved in the decision-making process?	• Decision Criteria - Need a solution that can integrate with existing applications. They require full service, integration support, and cost-effective pricing. • Decision Process & Committee - The CFO signs all contracts above \$25,000. This decision will be recommended by the VP of IT, and approval will be needed from the CTO, CEO, and SVP of Product. Legal will likely require redlines of the contract.	•