**Target Customer Scenario Template**

The target customer scenario describes a day in the life of a customer before and after your product is available. The scenario’s purpose is to help you understand what a typical customer experiences with and without your product. The goal is to ensure your solution solves customers’ problems, to motivate them to buy.

For our example, the customer is “John”, an airline mechanic and maintenance manager who’s on call to fix emergency maintenance issues that may delay flights. He needs information quickly to troubleshoot and resolve issues. The company sells an electronic, smartphone-based maintenance manual system to replace paper-based reference manuals. The header is brief and should only be a few sentences:

**Header**

*“John is a 45-year-old Certified Airframe & Powerplant (A&P) mechanic and maintenance manager for an operator of corporate jets. He works at JFK Airport in NY and is responsible for resolving mechanical issues with the company’s aircraft to ensure flights depart on schedule. The company’s customers are very wealthy executives who are impatient and demanding, with little tolerance for flight delays.”*

**A Day in a Customer’s Life Before the Product is Available**

This section describes how users try to achieve their desired results and what happens if the problem continues. The narrative should capture the real-time situation. *What’s happening?*

*“One of the company’s jets is stuck on the ramp, unable to depart. John arrives at the aircraft to investigate and resolve why the “autopilot-enabled” indicator light on the flight deck instrument panel is blinking red even though the aircraft is at the gate and the autopilot is not powered or engaged. The light should be off. Passengers have boarded, and the flight is ready to depart. As John looks at the instrument panel, he realizes this is the first time he has ever worked on an “autopilot-enabled” indicator light issue. He has no idea what could be causing the problem. John must diagnose and fix the light issue quickly so the aircraft can depart without any schedule delay or upset passengers.*

*John pulls up the aircraft’s maintenance manual and checks the troubleshooting guide. He discovers the guide is missing several vital pages with critical diagrams he needs to diagnose and fix the problem. John returns to his office to find another copy of the manual. He returns to the aircraft and fixes the light. However, the damage is done. The light issue causes departure delays, forcing the pilot to request a new departure clearance. When the aircraft departs, the flight is more than 90 minutes late. The passengers are upset, and the company must offer over $100,000 compensation.”*

**Interfering Factors**

This section explains what went wrong, how, and why. The goal is to describe the customer’s problem clearly.

*“Paper manuals can be easily damaged, vandalized, or misplaced. If field staff fail to notice updates are available or forget to replace obsolete pages with new pages, the manuals can fall quickly out of date.”*

**Economic Consequences**

This section explains the economic impacts of the customer failing to accomplish the task productively. For example:

*“The light issue delays the flight, upsetting customers and damaging the company’s reputation for reliability. The cost impact is $100,000.”*

**A Day in a customer’s life after the product is available**

This section replays the same scenario as a day in the customer’s life before the product is available, but this time with the new product in place. This section is typically two to four paragraphs. For example:

*“John pulls out his tablet and logs into the company’s custom maintenance app. The app contains maintenance manuals and repair logs for all aircraft in the company’s fleet. John does a keyword search on “autopilot-enabled indicator light” and finds the relevant information. The documentation is updated automatically in the background whenever updates are released, so John knows he is accessing the latest information.*

*John searches the maintenance logs and quickly finds the same autopilot-enabled light problem that occurred a month before on a similar aircraft. The database includes an explanation of the root cause, how to fix it, tools required to perform the repair, and a parts list. The app also shows parts inventory, location in the storage facility, and availability. John submits an emergency parts order through the app, receives the parts, and applies the repair. The flight departs only 15 minutes late. The pilot communicated with the passengers, who were understanding of the slight delay.”*

**Enabling Factors**

This section explains how the new product solves a customer’s problem.

*“Databases can hold essentially unlimited amounts of information, and today’s tablets can store data offline. They can be updated electronically in the background when an Internet connection is available, and are searchable, eliminating paper-based documentation.”*

**Economic Rewards**

This section itemizes avoiding costs and gaining benefits after the new product is available. Economic rewards are essential for business customers. The target customer scenario must describe economic rewards in tangible and verifiable terms.

*“Cost avoidance and customer satisfaction depend on service availability, primarily whether the aircraft flies on schedule. The system pays for itself in avoided losses from a delayed or canceled flight, increased business from satisfied customers, and avoided labor and printing costs related to managing paper updates.”*