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# eBay Motors Enthusiast Personas

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ebaymotors

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# Introduction and Background

# Background

Motor enthusiasts are *different*: their cars, trucks, vans, and bikes aren't just a means of transportation, but part of who they are. So what does it mean to be an motor enthusiast?

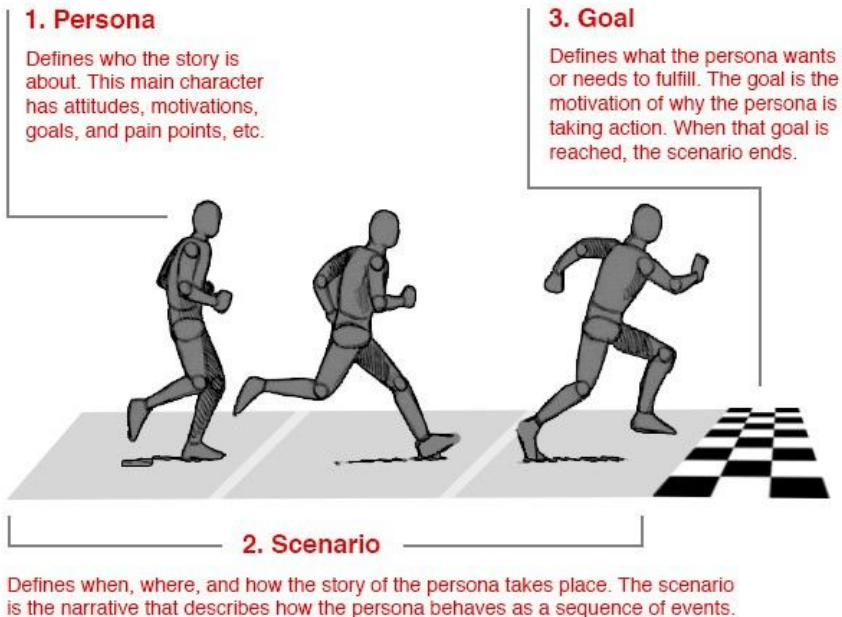
We set out to understand what makes enthusiasts different, and how we could design better experiences for them. In turn, we found a spectrum of folks across all ages and walks of life whose stories presented the same handful of scenarios.



# Purpose

We created these *goal-directed* personas to both synthesize research and to explore common scenarios that had been documented in the research process.

These personas span the C2C ecosystem, incorporating enthusiast buyers and low-volume sellers (not operating as dealers), centered on their experiences rather than our business categories.

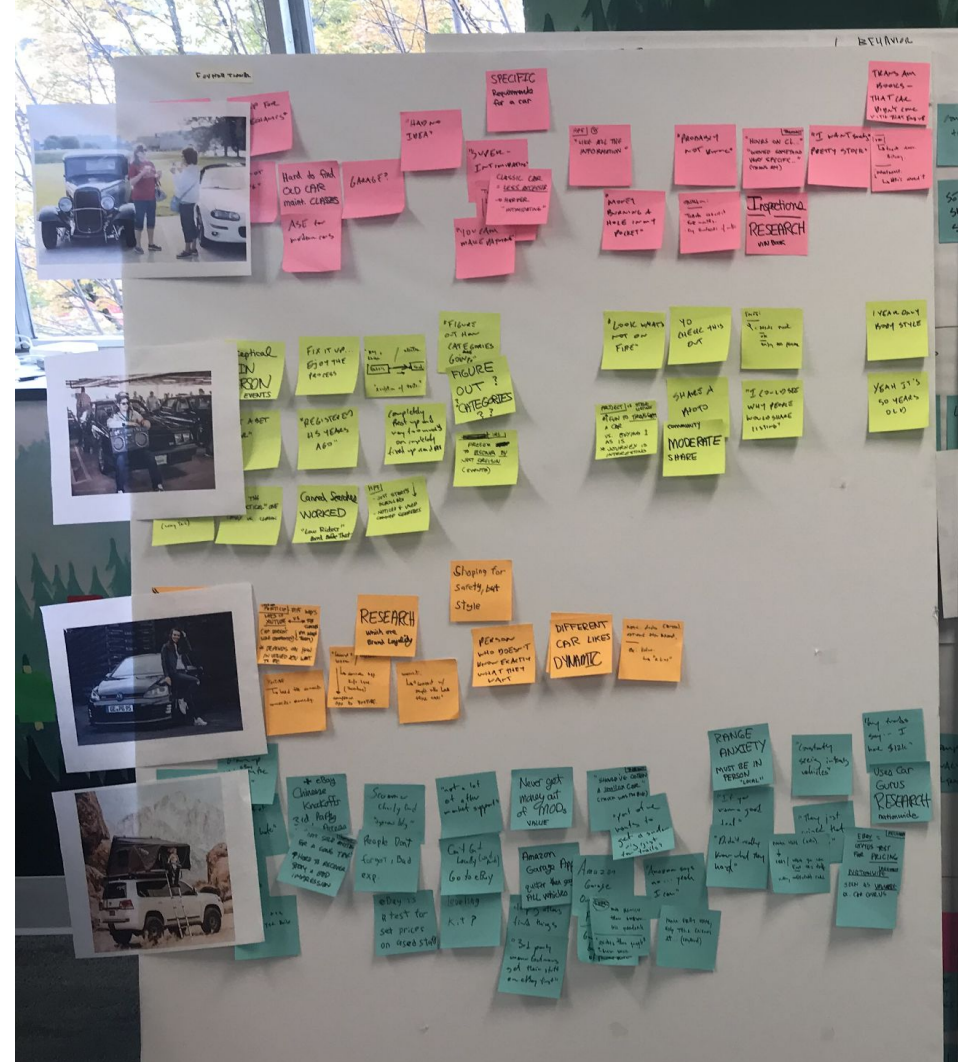


# Approach

As part of our ongoing design research, we first identified scenarios that matched the patterns we were seeing in our research participants, sketching out what we encountered in lo-fi proto-personas.

As we continued our research and iterated on product design, we also sought to validate and iterate on personas and scenarios.

We also reviewed the [spectrum of existing eBay personas](#) to understand where we needed to better understand the unique needs of motors enthusiasts.



# Research Findings

We conducted over 20 rounds of design research from 2019-2020, including interviews, usability tests, participatory prototyping sessions and surveys. All participants were self-identified motor enthusiasts living in the US.

You can access our [research review and study summaries](#), as well as our [survey findings](#).



# Personas





	Defining Quote	Uses eBay to:	Characteristics
	<p><i>"Sure, my daily driver is pretty boring, but I can dream!"</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Buy parts and accessories</li> <li>- Browse listings for rare, unique, classic and luxury cars</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All ages, all demographics</li> <li>• Lifestage buyer who still loves to go to car shows, look at listings, follow motorsports and other enthusiast activities</li> <li>• Practical- wants modern conveniences in daily driver, but still loves the design of classic and exotic cars</li> </ul>
	<p><i>"My car is one of a kind, like me"</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Find rare parts for project car</li> <li>- Track the market for cars I'm interested in.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gen X and Younger - interested in cars from the 70s-90s or performance cars</li> <li>• "I don't have a daily driver"</li> <li>• Urban, may not have a garage or skills to work on cars</li> </ul>
	<p><i>"I've customized my rig for experiences and escapes"</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Buy and sell parts and accessories</li> <li>- Find inspiration and shop for new toys</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baby boomers and younger</li> <li>• Wants an offroad-capable vehicle for adventures: winter sports, mountain biking, camping, or equestrian sports</li> <li>• Obsessed with customization, mods, and accessories</li> </ul>
	<p><i>"Always looking for the next project"</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Buy and sell parts for projects</li> <li>- Find the right buyer for finished projects, look for new ones</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gen X- Greatest Generation, cars are a family affair</li> <li>• "I've bought a lot of cars, so I've sold a lot of cars"</li> <li>• Broad interests, has taken on several ambitious projects</li> <li>• "I have a list of cars I want to own someday"</li> </ul>
	<p><i>"I've been in this game for a long time, and I know exactly what I like."</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Buy and sell parts and accessories</li> <li>- Watch pricing trends and get the best price for cars when I sell.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baby Boomers and older, have time and money to devote to their passions</li> <li>• Interested in cars from the 60's and older, higher-end luxury or exotics</li> <li>• Collection is an investment, strives for Concours quality</li> </ul>

# Dreamers

A photograph taken from the driver's perspective inside a car. The driver's profile is visible on the right side of the frame. The car's interior, including the steering wheel and dashboard, is visible on the left. Through the windshield, a large tree stands in the middle ground, with a fence and a white car behind it. The sun is setting in the distance, creating a warm, golden glow. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.



# Dreamers

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## Demographics

- Lifelong obsession
- All ages, all demos
- Life-stage buyer who still identifies as an enthusiast and participates in car culture

## Behaviors

- Loves to look - at car shows, online, on the street, and any other chance
- Driven by nostalgia and life experiences
- If mechanical, does maintenance on family cars

## Attitudes

- Budget conscious
- Practical- wants the modern conveniences in daily driver
- Admires the design of classics and exotics

## Needs

- Intimidated by logistics of buying a classic
- Loves to look and "go down the rabbit hole"
- Reminisces about the way cars "used to be"

## Goals

- Inspiration
- "One day..."
- Not buying, not selling

## How can we help?

- Make it fun
- Inclusion: Connect with community
- Resource for education and research
- Make a good first impression
- See success stories


# Meet Derek

Derek, 47, is a mechanical engineer living in Cherry Hill, New Jersey with his wife and two kids. His daily driver is a 2018 Nissan Leaf, and his wife drives a 2012 Honda CRV that they use for family outings with their kids, one of whom is getting close to driving age.

Derek loves to reminisce about the cars he and his friends and family have owned over the years, and loves to look at classic and exotic cars when he gets the chance, attending 1 or 2 car shows a year. With his kids, he's gotten into playing racing games and watching YouTube videos. He's always looking up different cars to see what they're going for these days - he saw "Ford Versus Ferrari" recently and has been looking at Shelby Cobras online when he has time to kill.

Derek loves looking at listings, and often helps several friends and family members decide on what cars to buy. He uses eBay occasionally for Parts and Accessories, and to daydream searching for his latest obsession. Someday, he says, he's going to get the classic car he's always wanted - if only he could decide on just one!





*(To me) car culture is having love for all makes and models across the board and not just being a single automaker kind of person. I like to attend local car shows and also love to stay up to date on new vehicle models and technology.*

*- eBay Buyer, Odessa, TX*

*I love cars and the emotions they trigger. I currently don't own one, but have always had love for several iconic models. Besides that I do a lot of sim racing.*

*- eBay Motors App Beta Tester*

# Nouveau Enthusiasts





# Nouveau Enthusiasts

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## Demographics

- Gen X and younger
- Urban-Suburban
- Probably did not have shop class in high school
- ISO Community

## Behaviors

- "I don't have a daily driver"
- May not have a garage
- Interested in 70s-90s classics or performance cars

## Attitudes

- Aware and ambivalent about carbon emissions
- Different influences: "Fast and Furious" movies, video games, YouTube
- Distrusts traditional financing

## Needs

- Time is money
- Worried about environmental impact
- Empower me to DIY

## Goals

- Wants a diamond in the rough
- Learns via YouTube, IG
- Wants to find community
- Most likely to share via social media

## How can we help?

- Help me stand out from the crowd
- Help find community
- Educate and socialize
- Make a good first impression
- Make me feel a part of something

# Meet Nathan


Nathan, 33, works as a Creative Director and lives in Los Angeles. Last year he bought the car he's always dreamed about, a 1988 BMW M535i. He lives in Koreatown and works in Downtown LA, so he rides his bike for the daily commute, taking the M5 out on the weekends.

After buying the M5, Nathan splurged on a new paint job and some necessary body work, but now he's got a lot of work to do on the electrical system and performance enhancements. He'd love to do more of his own work, but he's limited by time, space, and his own skill set. He and his partner live in a condo building with a dark and crowded underground garage, not an ideal environment to tinker.

Nathan's never felt like he's seen himself represented in mainstream car culture, but he spends a lot of time playing racing and other auto games, watching YouTube videos, and following other enthusiasts on Instagram. His M5 has its own dedicated Instagram account, and occasionally he'll post stories about the projects he's done or just pretty shots from drives. He sees his car is an investment, and he's confident it will go up in value, if he can finish the restoration. Ultimately, he seeks community and guidance to help finish this project and move on to the next one.







*Car culture is anything that deals with customizing cars or building cars. Car shows, YouTube videos, meet and greets, and forums. I also have my own YouTube channel and car forum.*

- eBay Buyer, Atlanta

# Adventure Seekers





# Adventure Seekers

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## Demographics

- Baby Boomers and younger
- Urban-Suburban
- DINKs or young families

## Behaviors

- Involved in outdoor recreation - winter sports, camping, off-roading, MTB, equestrian sports
- Interested in potential Mods and customization
- May or may not have a DD

## Attitudes

- Mods and customization is an investment
- Cognizant of climate change
- Limited mechanical knowledge and garage space
- Drives all-terrain vehicle in town
- All about the accessories

## Needs

- Time is money
- Worried about environmental impact
- Empower me to DIY

## Goals

- Motivated by experiences
- Want to do it differently
- Lifestyle-driven

## How can we help?

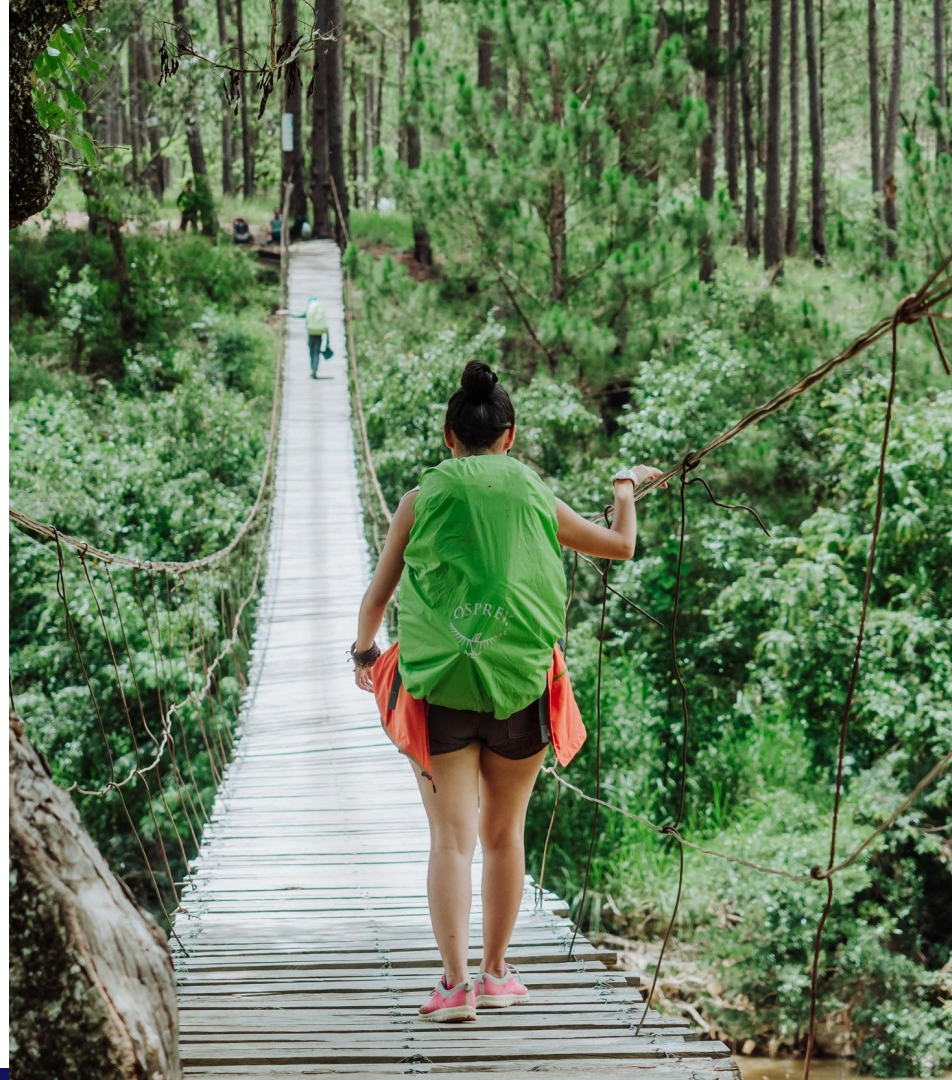
- Find the vehicle with the mods they need
- Community - share adventures
- Connect to activities
- Motivate them to share


# Meet Aiko

Aiko, 38, works as a project manager for a software company and lives in Issaquah, Washington with husband and two young children. They love kayaking, backcountry skiing, camping and rock climbing, always looking for a chance to get outside with the family.

Five years ago, Aiko and her husband bought a 2009 Lexus GX 470 and have since upgraded the suspension and tires, added a roof rack, ski basket, a canopy, an aftermarket steel bumper, rock sliders and tow hooks. The GX is the family car and her daily driver, while her husband drives their 2018 Prius for his longer commute. Although she loves the GX and is proud of the work they've put into it, she often thinks about upgrading to a newer model, or daydreams about getting a Range Rover.

Aiko would describe herself as environmentally conscious - she's concerned about climate change, especially for her kids' sake. At the same time, she knows that the Prius could never handle the trails the GX can, and takes pride in parking her rig next to the Teslas in the grocery store parking lot.





*I'm most interested in custom van culture. I am a member of a van club, I attend van and car shows, occasionally go to swap meets...*

*- eBay Motors App Beta Tester*

*It's all about adventure and memories for me. I love trucks, but I also love the Japanese car scene and modding. I like to camp, fish, and trail in the 4Runner or the Silverado, but also drive and test the limits on the 86. I like to go to rallies and check out that side of the car world too. I get the best of both worlds I think.*

*- eBay Motors App Beta Tester*

# Flippers





# Flippers

## Demographics

- Gen X - Greatest Generation
- Cars are a family affair
- Suburban- Rural

## Behaviors

- "Gotta make room in the garage"
- Always looking/watching the market
- "I've bought a lot of cars, so I've sold a lot of cars"
- DIY-ers who rely on specialists for big jobs

## Attitudes

- Broad range of interests
- Watches the market
- "Ugly runners"
- Always wants to experience something new

## Needs

- Ease the process of buying/selling
- Relies on cash deals
- Finding the right buyer

## Goals

- Cash money
- Upgrade the car experience
- Build mechanical skills and knowledge
- Trends and research

## How can we help?

- Improve trust and security
- "Get in early" - anticipating what will be hot next
- Keep busy
- "I have a list of cars I want to own someday"
- Pricing and Marketing
- enable better communication
- Track sales and market

# Meet Frank


Frank, 53, lives outside of Austin with his partner and their three teenage kids. A musician and producer, he's been restoring and selling classic cars and motorcycles for about 25 years, and it's been a lucrative side business that's given him a chance to drive and own some of the coolest rides, then trade up. Folks know him for his cars—he occasionally drag races, and his friends in the music scene have used his cars for video and photo shoots.

Since he's been around the scene for awhile, he prefers to buy and sell from people he knows, but he's successfully bought and sold long-distance via eBay. Most recently, he bought a lot of two 1976 Yamaha XS650 motorcycles and a bunch of spare parts from a seller in Ohio. He's also working on restoring a '67 VW Beetle with his 16 year-old daughter.

Even though he's a veteran on the car scene, Frank sometimes feels out of touch with the latest trends. His first loves were classics from the 50s and 60s, and he sees those losing their value. If he's going to keep up, he knows he needs to keep his finger on the pulse.







*I just finished rebuilding a 1956 Chevy BelAir  
... go to shows, enter the contest, talk car  
stuff on the forums. Hang out a lot at shows  
and meet up with people doing original  
work/custom work in the car building  
/design area. Always online researching new  
parts ... classic and late model parts...I stay  
up on auto prices and how the market is  
doing...what is selling and what's hot at the  
time.*

- eBay Seller, Las Vegas

# Connoisseurs





# Connoisseurs

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## Demographics

- Baby Boomers and older
- Most affluent group
- More time to devote to passions

## Behaviors

- Long-term involvement in car clubs, shows, and reading auto press
- Confident in tastes and preferences
- Interested in 70's and older or high-end
- Have time and money to devote to cars

## Attitudes

- Collection is an investment
- Have taken on several long-term projects
- Want Concourse quality

## Needs

- Maintain connections and community
- Connect with new trends and younger enthusiasts
- Kinda snobby

## Goals

- Motivated by being "better"
- Want to impress the "right" people
- More about owning than using

## How can we help?

- Provide provenance
- Awards and badges
- Rare and special finds
- Want to be first/elite
- Accessibility and simplicity
- Concierge services
- Upgrade

# Meet Carlos

Carlos, 73, lives in Naples, Florida. Retired in 2002 after a career in finance, he finally has the time (and money) to devote to his passion: British motors. He got started with an MG, moved on to Triumph, Jaguar, and Morgan. Right now his collection numbers 15 cars and a handful of scooters and motorcycles, but it was bigger a few years ago, before he auctioned off 13 of his choice restorations to raise money for prostate cancer research.

When he first got started, Carlos rented a warehouse to store his cars, but soon realized an opportunity in buying and restoring older buildings to house his collection and add to his portfolio. These days, he keeps his collection in a warehouse that's a former fuel station - his buddies call it his "private museum", and it's a popular hangout spot for his fellow British motor enthusiasts. His forever car? A 1953 Jaguar XK 120 he purchased from the original owner and restored in 2003.

At this stage in life, Carlos is increasingly selective about what projects he'll take on, and who he wants to share them with. He browses eBay in order to keep up with the market, and often buys and sells parts and other collectibles.



BMW Car Club

*I'm an active member in the BMW technical car club since 1983; have 11 cars currently. I'm also an active and highly rated automotive consultant on Car Guru... attend yearly Chicago and LA car shows.*

- eBay Seller, Chicago



11863-H  
VICTORIA

*Touring*  
*2002ti*

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# How can we utilize personas?



# Moving between personas

*Nota bene:* these personas are not intended to be rigid or singularly defining, and we recognize that many enthusiasts will move through different scenarios throughout their lives.

For example, someone we'd identify today as a *Dreamer* can move into the *Adventure Seeker* persona as they expand their interests and pursuits. A *Nouveau Enthusiast* can transition to *Connoisseur* as they build a collection.



# How can we win with each segment?

As we move forward, we seek to identify unique and universal needs across persona segments, starting with these themes:

- Trust and Safety
- Community
- Payments/Transaction Success
- Logistics





# Next Steps

- Workshop with marketing and leadership teams to socialize, strategize, and iterate further on personas
- Develop and launch survey to validate personas and understand segments



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**Thank you!**

The background consists of a grid of colored squares. The top row has five squares: light pink, red, light orange, orange, and dark red. The second row has four squares: dark purple, light pink, yellow, and a large blue square. The third row has three squares: pink, light pink, and light blue. The bottom row has two squares: green and dark blue. The word 'ebay' is centered in white lowercase letters on the large blue square.

ebay