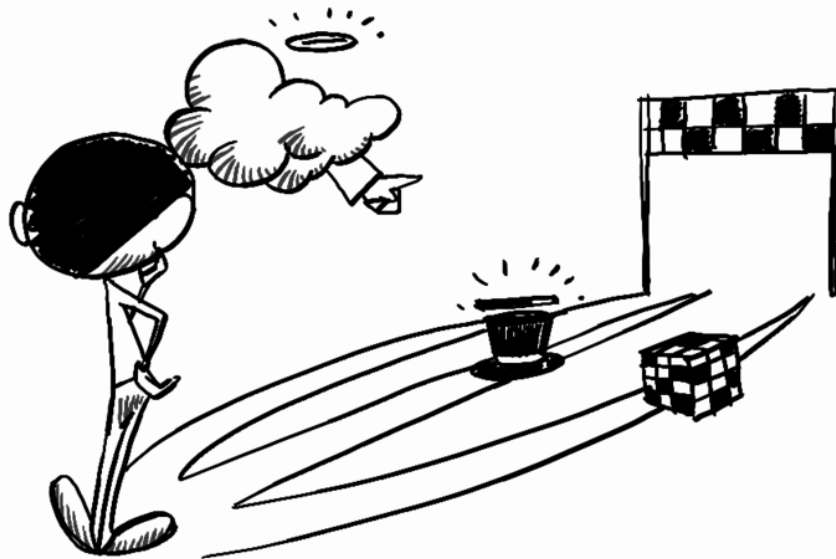


# How To Get Your First 10,000 Customers- Even If You Don't Have A Growth Team



Step by step roadmap for growing a faster, sustainable, cash generating business online.

## **Contents**

1. What's the most important step?
2. What does your ideal customer want?
3. What do you want?
4. How to decide what price is right
5. How to attract prospects
6. What to do before sending traffic to your site
7. The best traffic sources for early stage companies
8. The psychology behind converting visitors into paying customers
9. Bonus: Turning advertising into profits

Hundreds of early stage companies and small businesses have used these powerful steps to get their first paying customers and hit their sales targets.

The conversion rate improvements have multiplied by 10-50% in many cases.

However all the aforementioned businesses sell products and services online.

These include consumer startups, SaaS startups, B2B companies, education startups, fintech startups and professional services providers.

**The 3 main pillars of business growth are:**

1. Attract high quality leads
2. Convert these leads into paying customers
3. Grow and scale your business with automation and strategy

GrowingStartup was positioned, promoted and distributed to customers in cities all over the world using these same keys.

To get your first 10,000 paying customers, follow this guide.

N.B The reason we focus on strategies over tactics or hacks is that even though technology changes, human behavior is predictable.

# 1. The most important step



Over the last 11 years I have learned that it all starts with identifying what you want to be known for in your prospect's mind and identifying the goals you are willing to work toward. (If you don't know where you are going, how will you know when you get there?)

For the sake of illustration, let's take Sam's startup; DocMoni LLC as a case study.

Sam says his 9 to 5 started to feel like a prison so he quit to work on something he is passionate about and uniquely equipped to solve.

He wants wealth, freedom, contribution and the respect of those he cares about.

Sam is the founder of an early stage startup that sells payroll software online.

He's raised his first round of funding and had been able to get his first 500 customers over the last 13 months.

He has a product launch coming up and wants 10,000 new paying customers in the next 12 months. The payroll feature in DocMoni was the highest value one so he decides to lead with that.

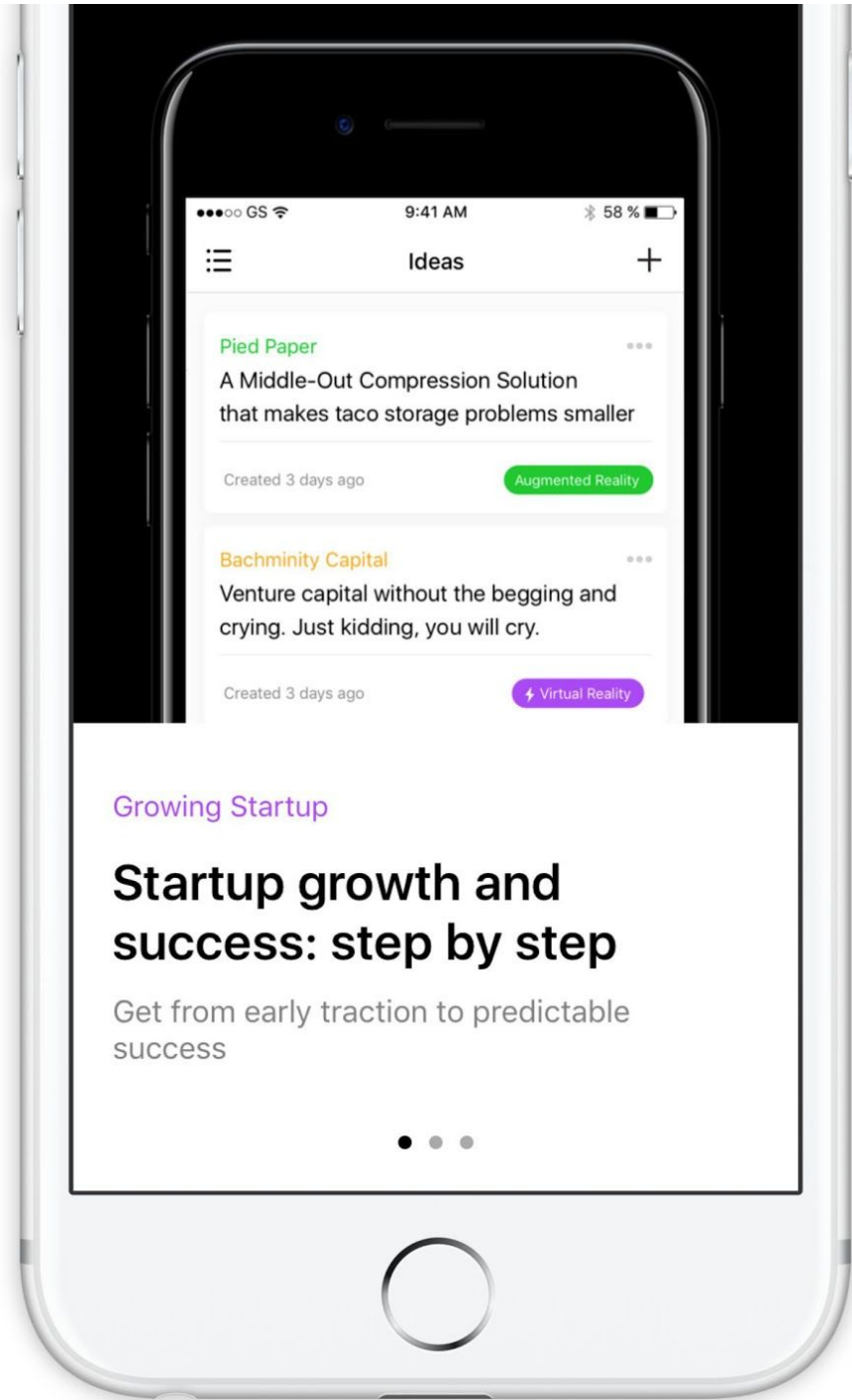
Sam's product positioning is "payroll software for private health practices."  
His promise was "Get paid faster. Easily invoice clients from your desk or on the go. On average, DocMoni customers are paid 5 days faster than their competitors."

Notice Sam didn't try to be everything to everyone.

We did the same with GrowingStartup. We defined it as "a growth marketing tool that helps early stage companies get their first 10,000 customers even without a growth team."

The better differentiated you are, the easier it is to stand out in your market.

**Can you tell who the screenshot below is aimed at?**



GS 9:41 AM 58%

☰ Ideas +

**Pied Paper** ...  
A Middle-Out Compression Solution  
that makes taco storage problems smaller

Created 3 days ago **Augmented Reality**

**Bachminity Capital** ...  
Venture capital without the begging and  
crying. Just kidding, you will cry.

Created 3 days ago **Virtual Reality**

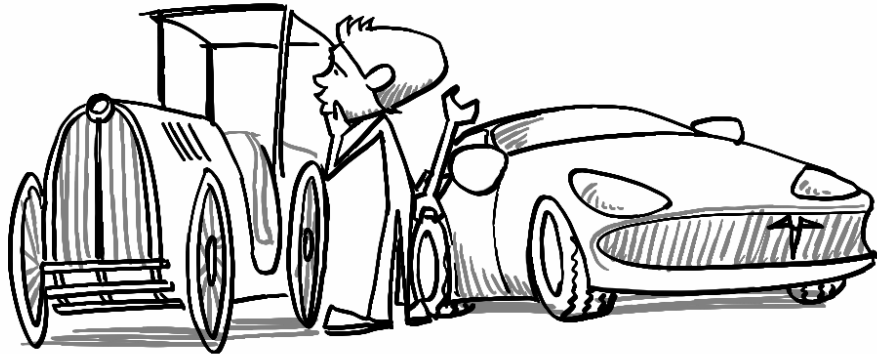
Growing Startup

# Startup growth and success: step by step

Get from early traction to predictable success



## 2. What Does Your Ideal Customer Want?



**Beware of the temptation of trying to build a product for every customer.**

Most people don't know who their ideal customer is.  
They try to target a forest instead of a single tree.

In every market there are ideal customer characteristics that will save you from guesswork.

Your ideal customer has the following characteristics

- a. She wants your product and has the ability to pay you (The best ones even have a recent purchase history of a competitor's offering or inferior alternative to your product)
- b. She is actively looking for the solution/product you are providing

For example, Sam is targeting chiropractors and dentists with the following characteristics.

"Patrick is a 39 year old chiropractor with 2 kids. He lives in the suburbs and drives a

BMW 765Li to work.

He makes between \$300-350k a year and spends his weekends engaged in family activities such as brunches, soccer practice and church.

He wants to spend more time doing what he loves and less time dealing with paperwork, payroll, benefits and other administrative chores.

Patrick follows WSJ, Forbes, Economist and Inc Magazine on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook. “

You see how different this is from the common mistake of just lump in different customer segments together?

The better defined your ideal customer is, the easier it will be to reach her.

Talk to people to find out what their hopes, dreams, expectations and fears are.

Find out what kinds of media you can use to reach them.

Do they spend more time on Facebook, Snapchat or Instagram?

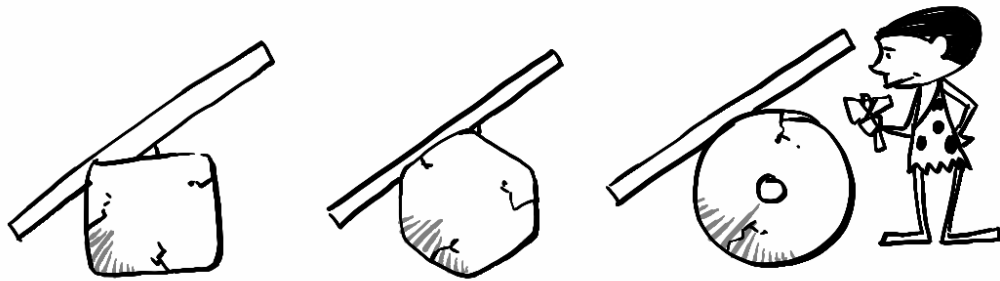
Do they watch HBO or Netflix?

Do they get their news from social media or physical newspapers?

Is it easier to reach them in forums or at meetups and local events?



### 3. What do you want?



Sam wanted 10,000 customers in the next 12 months for 3 reasons.

First, as a former health care professional, he knows his software will help others who are facing the same problem that he faced.

Secondly, at \$39 per month, 10,000 customers equals \$4.7m.

This is enough for the \$250,000 salary and the brand new home, vacation and SUV Sam has on his wishlist in the coming year.

Third, that amount of growth will give DocMoni greater leverage with investors and a higher valuation if they decide to raise more money.

Let's say we are having this conversation 12 months from today.

As you look back, how much revenue would you like to have?

Is it \$100,000, \$1,000,000 or \$1,000,000,000?

Next, how many customers and sales would you need to hit that figure?

If 500 people pay you \$200, that is \$100,000

If 5000 people pay you \$200, that is \$1,000,000

If 50 people pay you \$2000, that is \$100,000

In our company, some of the most important growth metrics are sales, profits, engagement/usage, customer progress and market share

As the business owner, your duty is to make sure the business progresses in employee happiness, sales growth, profits and market share.

Unless your online followers and social media likes can be converted into sales, they shouldn't be your measure of success.

There are a lot of people who have a lot of likes but no money.

### **A note on deciding how much to charge**

Are you charging premium or mass market prices?

It's a decision you have to make based on how much value you're providing and what your target market is willing to pay for it.

Notice I didn't say your price was based on your cost.

This is a common mistake of early stage founders.

They look at their cost and just add a little to it because that's all they have been told about pricing. In my experience.

9 out of 10 entrepreneurs wish they could charge more for their products but are afraid that it will drive away customers. They are also afraid of what their friends will say.

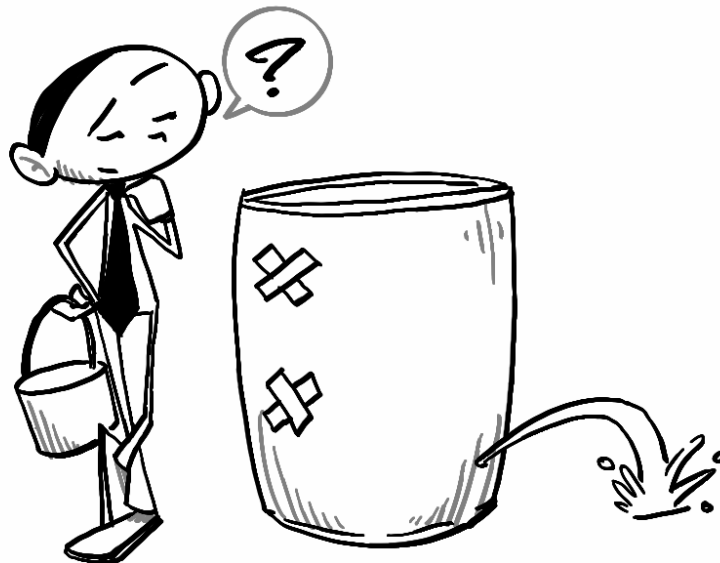
**The golden rule of pricing is to charge whatever you want as long as it's a discount of what the customer is getting.**

This means the customer should get more value than what they are paying.

For example, a person who buys a \$700 iPhone will argue that the value they get from the phone in convenience; being able to download their favorite apps, the cool factor and even public perception is worth more to them than \$700.

N.B once a prospect believes they will get more value than they are paying for, it's only a matter of time till they purchase your product.

## 4. How to attract high quality leads



Marketing is very similar to fishing and hunting.  
One might argue that marketing is fishing and sales is hunting.

Sam understands that to get a big catch, a fisherman follows these main steps.  
First, he identifies the water bodies that have the fish he desires.  
Second, he creates or buys the bait that type of fish wants and places it in front of them.  
(A good fisherman doesn't put minnow bait in front of sharks.)

Sam knows who his ideal prospect is so now it's time to create the bait that will bring them to him.

This is called a lead magnet in marketing-speak.

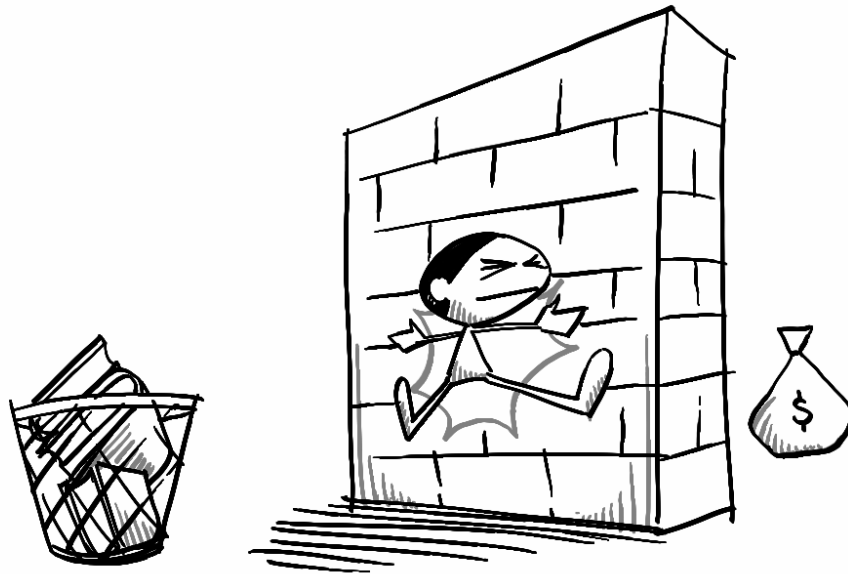
He creates a pdf and a demo video called "5 ways to automate your payroll and make more money without any paperwork"

He creates a pdf and a demo video called "5 ways to automate your payroll and make more money without any paperwork"

Sam will ONLY put this bait in front of his ideal prospects and no one else.  
His lead magnet a call to action where he offers his prospect a free trial of his software.

With a single click the prospect can sign up to try his product for free.

## 5. What to do before you start driving traffic to your site



I'm sure you know of entrepreneurs who are always complaining of stress and being overwhelmed.

Sadly, few of them have a sustainable, cash generating business.

This is usually because they don't have a dynamic, behavior based funnel.

**A sales funnel is the "ideal" process you intend your customers to experience as they go from Prospect to Lead to Customer to Repeat Buyer.**

A sales funnel helps you control and automate your business without stress or overwhelm.

Sam's sales funnel looks like this:

Step 1 Lead comes from traffic source to optin page

Step 2 Lead enters contact details and sees demo video or pdf

Step 3 Lead receives follow up email with link to sales or sign up page

Step 4 Lead signs up for free trial

Step 5 Lead becomes a paying customer

**Let's break down each step of his funnel.**

First Sam drives traffic to an optin page(also known as a squeeze page)

We'll talk about how to get highly qualified leads from the best traffic sources in the next step.

Secondly, after his ideal prospects enter their contact details, they get to either watch or read his lead magnet i.e "5 ways to automate your payroll and make more money without any paperwork"

At the third and fourth stage, some of his prospects will see the value of DocMoni and decide to try it out.

For those who do not sign up immediately, he follows up via email to ask if they have any questions after which he dissolves their doubts with social proof, testimonials and step by step insights on how DocMoni can help them.

He can convert them with his email sequence, sales page, sales video or a one on one phone call.

(At this stage, don't spam your prospects with useless information. We all have subscribed for things that we regretted afterwards. Only email relevant insights that will help your prospects move from where they are to where they want to be. )

Finally, some of the chiropractors who sign up for the free trial will convert into paying customers.

Some founders need extra help in setting up funnels, campaigns and offers, if you would like me to help you with this, simply email [jeff@growingstartup](mailto:jeff@growingstartup) to find out how we can work together.

## 6. Getting high quality leads and converting them into paying customers



You know who your ideal customer is and you've created your irresistibly attractive offer.

### **It's time to get some traffic.**

There are a million tactics but we're going to deal with the more advanced stuff.

As you read this, don't focus on just the implementation, **think of how and why this works.**

You'll be able to use that understanding to come up with creative ways to bring people to your business consistently.

When you're starting out it's helpful to individually email or cold call your prospects to get them to download your app or buy your product.

This one on one approach allows you to learn what people actually want so you can perfect the product.



When you're done with that, here are the most effective ways to get a lot of traffic in less than 30 days!

We'll get back to Sam's journey in a moment.

These are the top 4 sources of traffic (or traction depending on what you want)

### **Traffic Strategy 1: Distribution and Integration**

Find out who is already selling to your ideal customer and partner with him by giving them a commission for every sale.

In some cases, some businesses will simply ask you to return the favor. Integration is when your product is embedded in the product of a complementary partner.

The optician, florist and bank in your local department store are using this strategy. Whether you're B2B or B2C software business, the principle is the same.

Some cloud storage apps like Dropbox and Google Drive are integrated seamlessly into Recruitment, Productivity and Email apps.

Distribution is when your product becomes an upsell or cross sell of another business' offering. This is good, symbiotic host meets parasite relationship.

The more traffic your host has, the better it is for you. The more they sell, the more people get introduced to your products.

As long as the host is convinced that your product adds value to his customers, he'll be more incentivized to add you as an extra offer to his current offer.

Spotify got a lot of traffic when Facebook anointed them as a music provider.

The inverse of this strategy is to find affiliates who are smaller than you to do the same thing.

If you have a product, find a complementary service to partner with and vice versa.

### **Traffic Strategy 2: Endorsement traffic**

The endorsement of a celebrity or an authority can go a long way. It's not always the case but finding people your prospects respect or admire and convincing them to publicly endorse you is a great strategy.

Ipsy did this with Michelle Khan.

Tesla did this with celebrities like Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Khan Academy got a lot of attention after Bill Gates talked about the service at a conference. The variation of this is collaboration like Glu Mobile did with Kim Kardashian and Kanye did with Adidas.

The way to do this right is to get someone who can be perceived to be a great authentic fit. Convince this person (or business) should endorse your product publicly consistently to make sure the press and their followers are reminded of your value.

### **Traffic Strategy 3: Public Relations**

The founders of Warby Parker famously said they hit their first year sales targets within 3 weeks using PR as a strategy.

Press coverage brings publicity and credibility depending on the source and what is said about you.

The strategy here is to find out which media outlets focus on a niche that is important to you. There are subreddits and blogs that will give you better traffic and sales than TechCrunch or Forbes.

Secondly, you should think like an editor before you submit your request for press coverage. Look at what was said about other startups in your category and emulate the best parts.

### **Traffic Strategy 4: Appearances online and offline**

For years Steve Jobs gave hour long presentations that many did not realize were sales events in disguise.

Whether it's a speaking engagement, a guest post, podcast interview or an event, being seen in the right place, at the right time, in front of the right audience is an effective strategy.

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All advertising isn't the same. What your bank and favorite soda brand do is usually brand advertising.

That's where they talk about themselves and have no call to action.

**For big brands, advertising is a popularity contest.**

**For startups, you want to elicit a response and actually make money or some ROI that matters.**

Advertising that offers the prospect the opportunity to do something in exchange for your offer is what you should be thinking about.

Unfortunately retail and other offline businesses do this better than most software companies.

NB-in all your marketing strategies, you don't want everyone.  
You only want people who will use your product and share it with people like them.

Secondly, make sure you set up your funnels before sending traffic to your website.

## **What works best for tech startups i.e Sam's approach**

Sam's main traffic sources were distribution, endorsements and paid ads.

DocMoni partnered with complementary businesses that already sold to chiropractors and other health care practices.

These partners became affiliates and got 30% of the sales off each new customer they sent to DocMoni.

Secondly, Sam found out who were the influencers and bloggers that had clout in his space and got them to tweet and share links to his website on their platforms.  
He also advertised on their websites and created sponsored posts for their social media accounts.

Finally, he run paid ads that invited prospects to a free webinar after which he answered their questions.

In addition to this, he invested in content marketing that didn't just provide information but practical insights that his prospects could use.

If you would like me to help you set up your marketing campaigns, sales sequences and

funnels, simply email me at [jeff@growingstartup.com](mailto:jeff@growingstartup.com) and I'll let you know if we can work together.

## The psychology behind converting visitors into paying customers

If you're getting tons of visitors who are not converting, it's likely that your offer doesn't appeal to them or your website copy needs work.

For Sam, the offer that made DocMoni appealing to his prospects was a free trial.

At GrowingStartup we have tried many different offers over the years such as risk reversal, money back guarantee, bill-me-later, free gift, limited time offers, free demonstration, free gift, free consultation, short term introductory offer, early bird discount, free bonus with purchase etc.

Getting customers is 90% influence and 10% analytics.

**Scientific customer acquisition has to do more with how people think than the tools you use.**

Remember, technology changes but human behavior is predictable.

Conversion takes place in your sales video, presentation or sales page  
This is where you direct the prospect's desires in the direction of the action you want them to take.

You can do this by using the offers mentioned above.

The next step is to scale with back end sequences and referral systems

For advanced entrepreneurs, you can employ mental triggers such as takeaway selling, pre-supposition, community, reciprocity, testimonials, using stories, us-versus-them et cetera.

I have an advanced online workshop on 23 Ways To Use Psychology To Create A Buying Frenzy.

You can request it by emailing [jeff@growingstartup.com](mailto:jeff@growingstartup.com)

**Bonus:**

## The framework of turning advertising into profits

“Your role is to sell, don’t let anything distract you from the sole purpose of advertising.”-David Ogilvy

To make sure your ads follow a proven model, follow this framework.

### Headline

Your headline should fit into the thoughts that your potential customer is already thinking.

To use the dating analogy, let’s say you are trying to get the attention of a lady who likes muscular men in vneck tshirts.

The wise thing to do would not be to walk up to her in a pinstriped suit.

The right headline shows the prospect that you share the same mindset as they do. There’s a quote I love that says “People don’t buy just because you understand them. They buy because they feel understood. “

The title of this guide is a perfect headline for the customers who use our app and get our services i.e “How to get 10k customers even if you don’t have a growth team.”

Don’t create one-size-fits-all headlines.

They rarely work well.

Other successful headlines are below. See if you can identify the products and potential customers-Á

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## Images that mirror the mind

The image or video in your ad has to catch the prospects attention and ignite their desires.

Notice how car manufacturers paint a picture of their ideal customer driving their vehicle.

They know that if you can see yourself driving that car, it's the first step to getting you to consider their brand over a competitor's.

## Copy that sells

The copy has to be loaded with psychological triggers that direct the prospect's desires in the direction of the action you want them to take.

Should your copy or ad be long or short?

Before I answer that, consider this:

Would you force a salesperson to only speak a specific number of words?

Would you advise tv directors to only create 1 hour films instead of 12 part tv shows?

One of the Harry Potter books is over 600 pages long, have you heard any fans complaining?

The rule of thumb is to optimize for results not length.

If it takes you 10 minutes or 7000 words to make the sale, then DO IT.

There are short ads that sell and long ads that sell.

It's not the length, it's the skill of the marketer.

## **Call to action**

Years ago I was invited to speak to a group of business owners at a university in my city.

They laughed and even came to me after the presentation to tell me how much they loved it.

One lady run a culinary business so she gave me some of her food to take home out of appreciation

.

Unfortunately I didn't come there for the food.

I forgot to add a call to action to my presentation.

I didn't give them a specific action to take such as the option to buy my product, email me for more information or sign up for a consulting session.

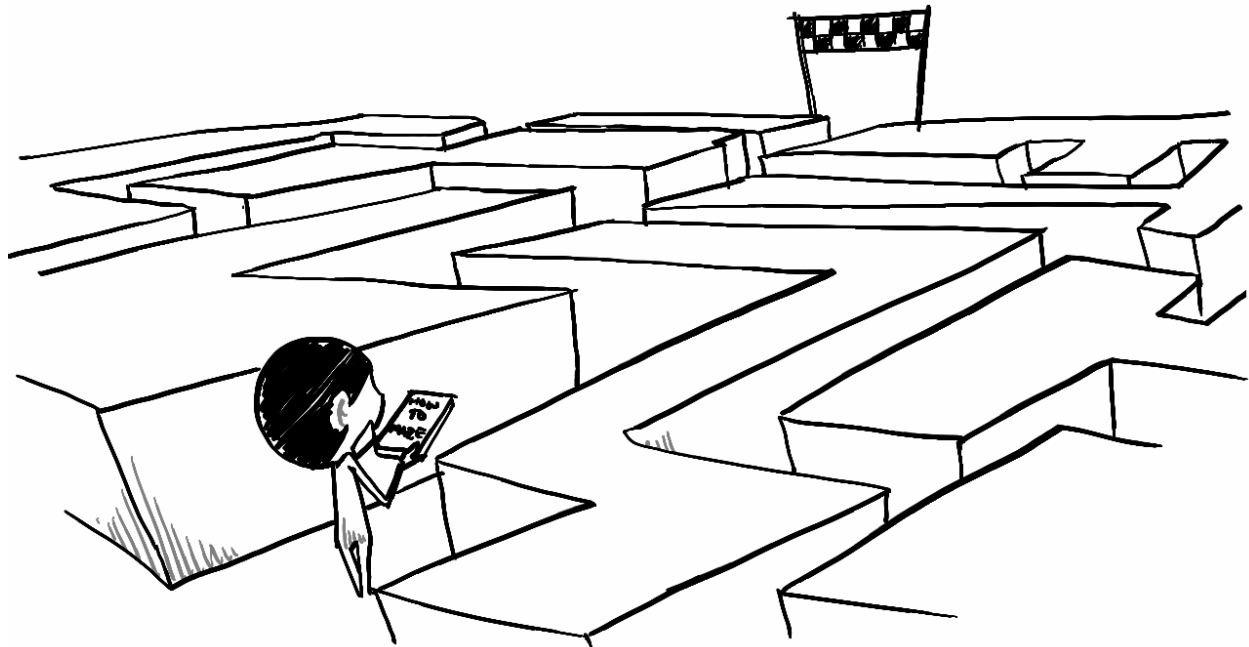
I never made that mistake again.

## To recap how to get your first 10,000 paying customers

1. Identify your ideal customer and your highest value feature
2. Set up your marketing and sales system by creating lead magnets, funnels and offers
3. Drive traffic to your lead magnets and landing pages
4. Convert leads into paying customers with psychology and persuasive marketing
5. Scale with back end sequences and referral systems



Is this ALL there is know?



This is a small percentage of the insights I've collected over more than 11 years of starting, growing and advising companies all over the world.

The more advanced strategies and concepts for attracting paying customers and growing a faster, sustainable, cash generating business are only available to private clients and users of [GrowingStartup](#).

The ideal entrepreneur who comes to us pays upwards of \$12,000 for help with setting up their marketing funnels, sales sequences, advertising campaigns and business growth systems.

This individual runs a startup that has raised at least \$1.2 million dollars or has yearly revenue above that amount.

If this describes you, simply email me at [jeff@growingstartup.com](mailto:jeff@growingstartup.com).

Overwhelming demand may cause a tardy reply but I promise someone from my office will contact you within 72 hours.

This guide will require work on your part and while I can't guarantee everyone will get

the same results, I know that you have been exposed to the same wisdom that many others are using to prosper in their businesses.

Thank you for reading.

Jeffrey Manu

Founder, [GrowingStartup.com](http://GrowingStartup.com)

Extra:

My story and lessons you can learn from two of my business failures



## My first business failed

Let me tell you a story about two businesses I started that failed and how I would do things differently.

As you read, you will see which pitfalls to avoid.

In my first business, we created one of Africa's first iPhone/iOS apps.

We had the idea and in a few months we had launched the app.

**The praise and reviews came in but we made no money from it.**

**Not even \$1 dollar.**

One of the reasons was that it was 2009 and knowledge on app monetization wasn't as widespread as it is today.

We could have charged for the app or allowed in-game purchases but no one on the team understood sales or marketing very well.

To tell you the truth, I was just excited to have worked on something cool at the time.

There's a bigger reason why we did not make any money on the app but let me tell you about another business I started that also made ZERO dollars.



If at first you don't succeed

Fresh Words Inspired was a blog I started to talk about business about 3 years ago.

I like lions so nearly all the posts had an image of a lion.

Very soon people were sending me photos of lions.

I have always liked the t-shirt industry because moving from idea to product is fairly simple plus I'm pretty creative.

There's something really fulfilling about seeing someone wear something you created. I wanted to monetize the blog and the only way I knew how was to have a friend design a tee and put it up so I did exactly that and guess what?

**No one bought a single shirt.**

**Not even one.**

I did not understand how to promote products online so I did what I saw others doing and got no good results.

Here is the point I was getting at.

**“Not understanding how business or anything for that matter works is the same as walking around in a dark room.”**

Have you noticed the common theme in the experiences I shared?

I was ignorant. I had not studied what it took to promote and monetize software or t-shirts.

I was trying to use common sense like everyone else.

**“Common sense will get you common results but understanding will make you see farther than anyone else.”**

What I should have done was to first understand the market, identify who my ideal client was and then create a strategy to monetize the products.

I could have also researched to find out who else was making money in their field and sought to understand their business model.

For example with the t-shirt company, I never bothered to find out if there were any prospective clients who wanted to buy a tee with a lion wearing a snapback.

I just assumed others would like it because I liked it.

**Understanding can make you so much money in business.**

It's the difference between a broke real estate developer and a wealthy one.

Many people build apartments, not because they know of a specific demand for the property but because they have a few acres of land and think that is the best way to develop it.

When I got tired of failure. I started winning!



Now that I was tired of failing I sat down to find out where I had missed it.

Around this time, I had just gotten married and moved from Ghana to Connecticut.

Here I was unemployed and broke for the most part.

Everyday for months I spent at least 6 hours a day studying online marketing, copywriting, business growth and sales.

I didn't just read books and online courses..

**I studied them inside and out.**

**Reading involves the eyes but studying engages the mind.**

When I was ready I launched an online course and promoted it using my new skills.

This time money came in even when I was asleep.



I found out that my ten years of experience starting and advising business owners was finally paying off.

My next act was to start helping others to get the same results.

I moved my family to Silicon Valley and started a growth advisory firm.

Finally, I was able to start charging 5 to 7 figures to help software companies and online businesses grow faster, sustainable businesses.

I also launched the GrowingStartup growth marketing tool and started getting customers from all over the world in a matter of days.

**I did all this as a solo founder without a virtual assistant or growth team.**

This will take work on your part and I can't say that you will get my exact results since I don't know your strengths, weaknesses and experiences. If however, you are determined to be a success, I can help you.

**You can copy my secret formula right now**

If you were paying me \$40,000 to review and advise you on business growth, this is what we would do together.

Step 1: Identify your best idea, product, features or highest value activity.

Step 2: Identify the best segment of the market

Step 3: Create the bait that will attract your ideal customer

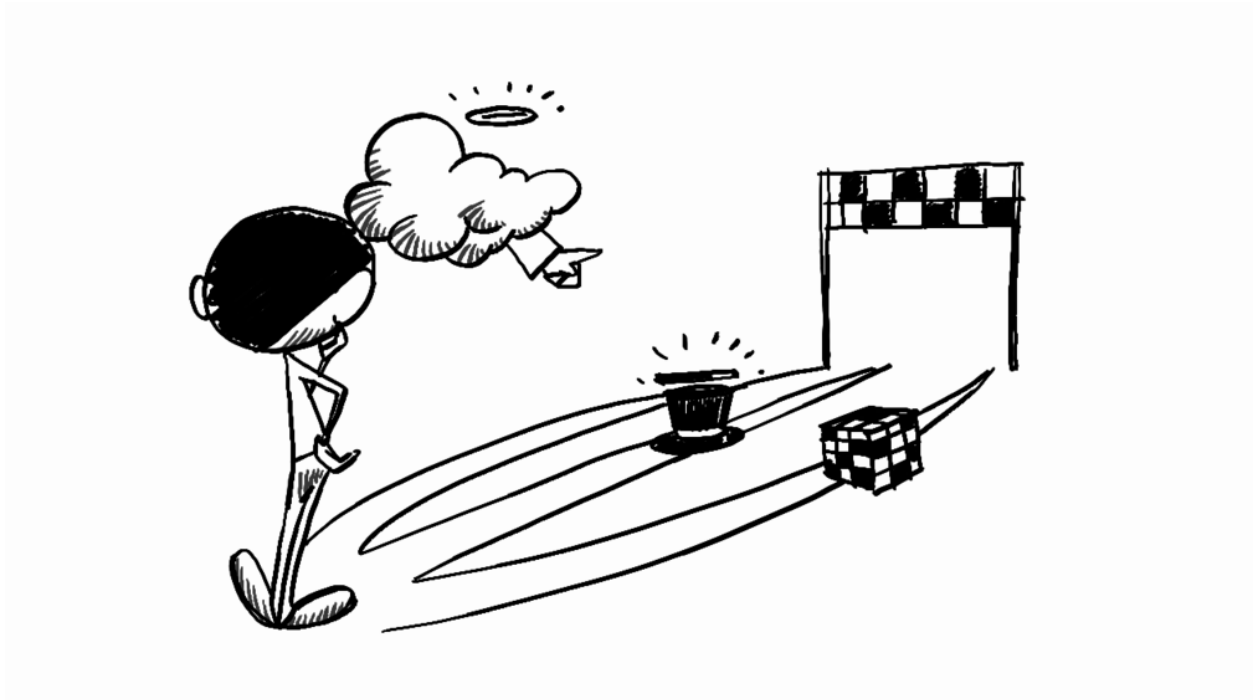
Step 4: Set up marketing system i.e landing pages, funnels and campaigns

Step 5: Launch campaign and watch the money roll in

**I went from nothing to where I am today with:**

NO connections, no staff, no big email list, no capital and no office.

Here's what I want you to do next



You are online reading this and are interested in growing a faster, sustainable cash generating business in the shortest time possible.

If you don't have a lot of time and would like me to teach you what I do personally, simply email me at [jeff@growingstartup.com](mailto:jeff@growingstartup.com)

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