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Using marketing to scale your business

6 simple steps to generate pipeline & create customers



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Marketing is easy – Marketing is hard

With the continued rise of digital channels, mobile communications and social media platforms, today anyone can be a marketer. Just as with You Tube, anyone can be a broadcaster – but then not everyone can be the BBC or Netflix.

We are witnessing a time when technology is making marketing easier than ever before, but where navigating the complexity and getting it right has never been so hard. And startup marketing – especially for tech startups – brings with it an additional set of challenges, pressures and demands for ambitious innovators, entrepreneurs and founders as they strive to build and grow their businesses.

That's why we wrote this simple-to-use guide. We'll help you understand the dynamics of startup marketing and show you how to cost-effectively generate leads and drive your revenue growth.

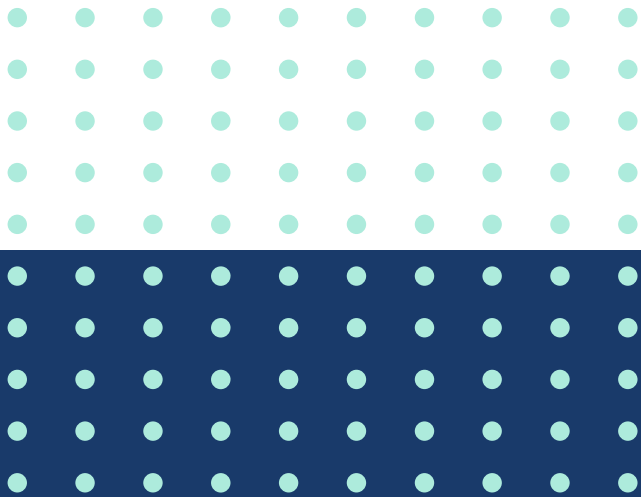


What You'll Learn

- The key challenges facing tech founders today
- Why you need effective marketing to achieve success
- How to deliver a startup marketing programme in 6 easy steps
- Top tips for accelerating your tech startup journey

Section 1

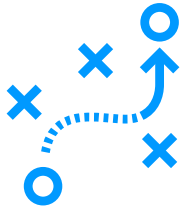
The Tech Founder's challenge



The tech founder's challenge

As you progress along your own high-growth startup trajectory, your priorities and focus will change.

Each new stage of growth brings with it new pressures and new demands from venture capital partners and other stakeholders as you plan, build and grow your business.



Plan

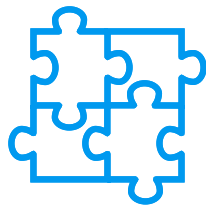
Marketing planning

Customer profiling

Message creation

Proposition development

[Marketing strategy](#)



Build

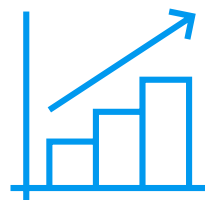
Driving revenue

Lead generation

Brand awareness

Sales conversion

[Revenue strategy](#)



Grow

Building Scalability

Internal team

External partners

Process automation

[Growth strategy](#)

Balancing your priorities

With the clock ticking and limited resources available, meeting the unique challenges of each funding stage requires a delicate balancing act.

Seed capital

When initial seed capital – or in your earliest stage, an angel investor – has been secured, your main focus is likely to be on business strategy and planning activities such as product market fit, customer profiling and proposition development.

It would be wise to start thinking about scaling your business, but the key priority will be building a lead generation machine and driving sales revenue. Of course, to do that you will need a marketing strategy.

Plan Marketing planning



Build Driving revenue



Grow Building scalability



Metrics

In the absence of a firm sales history, attracting further investment at this early stage will rely heavily on qualitative feedback and customer engagement metrics – like website visits, completed contact forms and other expressions of interest.

Series A

When Series A funding has been secured, your goal will be to attract the Series B investment needed to fuel further growth and reach the next milestone in your scale-up trajectory.

Your business plan will still be evolving at this stage and the question of how you will build scalability in the future will still be a concern, but the main focus will shift to developing and delivering a powerful – yet cost effective – marketing strategy to drive revenue growth. You will need a plan that details exactly how you will raise the awareness of your brand in your chosen markets, how you will generate leads from prospects that are ready

to buy and how you will convert your sales opportunities into paying customers.

At this crucial stage, the task at hand is no longer about validating an idea or proving a concept – it is about providing a solid ‘proof of business’. You will need to demonstrate that you can realise repeatable revenue and put your company on the path to sustainable growth.

As you align your new offering with the needs of customers in your chosen market segment, flexibility, agility and the ability to adapt quickly will be vital to your success.

Plan Marketing planning



Build Driving revenue



Grow Building scalability



Metrics

Investors will need you to report regularly on key growth metrics and performance indicators.

- Monthly Recurring Revenue (MRR)
- Annual Recurring Revenue (ARR)
- Customer Count
- Gross Churn
- Cash
- Average Revenue per Account
- Customer Acquisition Cost
- Customer Lifetime Value
- (LTV:CAC Ratio)
- Up-front Invoicing

Series B

Moving beyond Series B funding is not for the faint hearted.

The revenue expectations are high and forgiveness scarce. With such aggressive revenue goals, it is easy to see why so many companies run out of energy before reaching the Series C round.

The business strategy should be broadly established by this stage and with your foot still firmly on the 'driving revenue' pedal, your attention will turn to developing a credible growth strategy and building scalability.

Having found one vein of repeatable revenue in the previous funding round, the challenge in Series B is to do it again and again. You will need to further develop the handful of things that have been proven to work, whilst at the same time exploring new opportunities and revenue streams.

Plan Marketing planning



Build Driving revenue



Grow Building scalability



Series B

Of course, the team will need to grow to meet these new demands and a number of marketing specialists – like product marketing, content marketing and digital marketing – will probably be amongst your key hires.

Focusing on a handful of strong buyer segments, you will be able to streamline the customer journey– mapping your communications to the customer needs and pain points at each stage – and begin to automate more and more of your marketing processes.

In a nutshell, marketing innovation in the B round lays the foundations for scaling the business and creating the production efficiencies required for Series C funding.

Plan Marketing planning



Build Driving revenue



Grow Building scalability



Metrics

Investors will need you to report in new ways and measure not only performance but longer-term growth and value creation potential.

- Net Churn
- Up-sell and Cross-sell
- Gross Margin
- Cost of Goods Sold
- Cohort Analysis
- Expenses
- Forecasted Sales
- Sales Quotas
- Earnings Before Interest, Taxes
- Depreciation and Amortization (EBITDA)
- Customer Numbers (MoM and YoY)
- Revenue Growth (MoM and YoY)

Series C

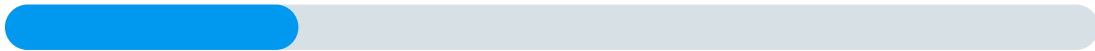
When you have secured Series C funding, you will know what has worked well in Series B and will be able to scale the business and improve operational efficiencies– whilst continuing to grow sales and drive revenue.

At this stage, strategy, creativity and innovation still have a role to play but the focus will often shift away from implementing new marketing programmes to optimising the existing ones – and increasing the return on investment (ROI).

Your marketing goals will become more achievable and success more predictable.

Strong management will be required as more mature marketing processes are automated and integrated into the wider business operations. Avoiding the formulation of silos – especially within the sales team and marketing department – will be a key challenge here and maintaining alignment and cross-functional collaboration is crucial.

Plan Marketing planning



Build Driving revenue



Grow Building scalability



Metrics

The range of performance indicators and the breadth of analytical reporting requirements will increase a lot at this stage.

- Deferred Revenue
- Marketing Penetration
- Segmentation Analysis
- Exploratory Analysis



Working hard – working smarter

As we've seen, the challenges that need to be overcome to secure funding at each stage of the startup journey are very different – but the one thing that remains constant is the need to attract customers, drive sales and grow revenue.

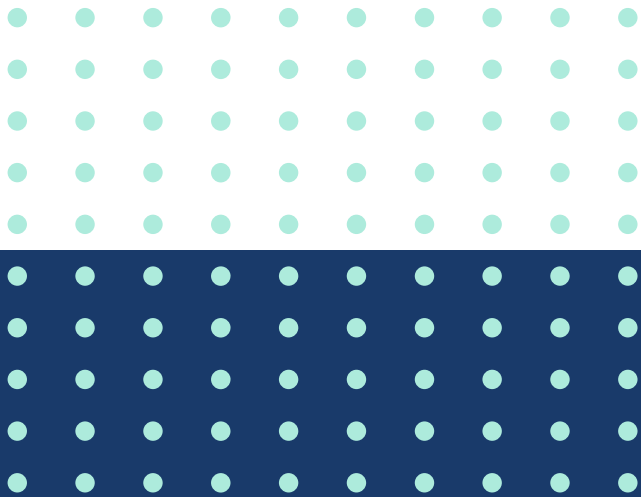
Unlike larger or more established businesses, tech startups don't always have huge budgets to throw at marketing. So, your biggest challenge is to drive revenue growth with a limited marketing budget and that means working smarter – more strategically. In competitive markets, there is no time to waste, so that means working harder too.

There are no shortcuts to delivering an effective tech startup marketing programme but there are some simple steps that you can follow and some good marketing agencies that can help to lighten your load – although not all will be specialist agencies.

Before we present our 6 stage process for startup marketing, let's take a step back and explore why you even need marketing in the first place.

Section 2

Why you need marketing





Why you need marketing

As an innovator and visionary, you probably never thought you'd have to worry about developing a new set of skills – especially not in marketing, communications and sales.

But as a tech entrepreneur and startup founder, you need to achieve the revenue growth levels that investors expect to see and ideally do it fast.

To grow revenue, you need to attract customers, generate leads and close sales and that's where marketing comes in.

Today's tech buyer

Welcome to the Incisive Edge guide to Account Based Marketing, or ABM. If business-to-business (B2B) marketing is a discipline, then tech marketing is a specialism. That's because the technology industry is different – it's more competitive and more fast-moving than more traditional sectors.

Customers are also becoming more and more sophisticated. Most purchases are now heavily researched online and many customers will only seek direct engagement with a sales team once they have sufficient information and knowledge to hand. Essentially, when they are much, much further into their purchase journey than ever before.

The number of people involved in a B2B purchase decision is growing all the time too – and the more complex the decision making unit (DMU), the harder it will be to reach and influence them.

Traditional marketing funnels move prospects through a defined set of sale stages – but that's not how your customers see the world. It's important to put your prospects at the heart of your marketing strategy and develop an approach that see things from their point-of-view – not yours.

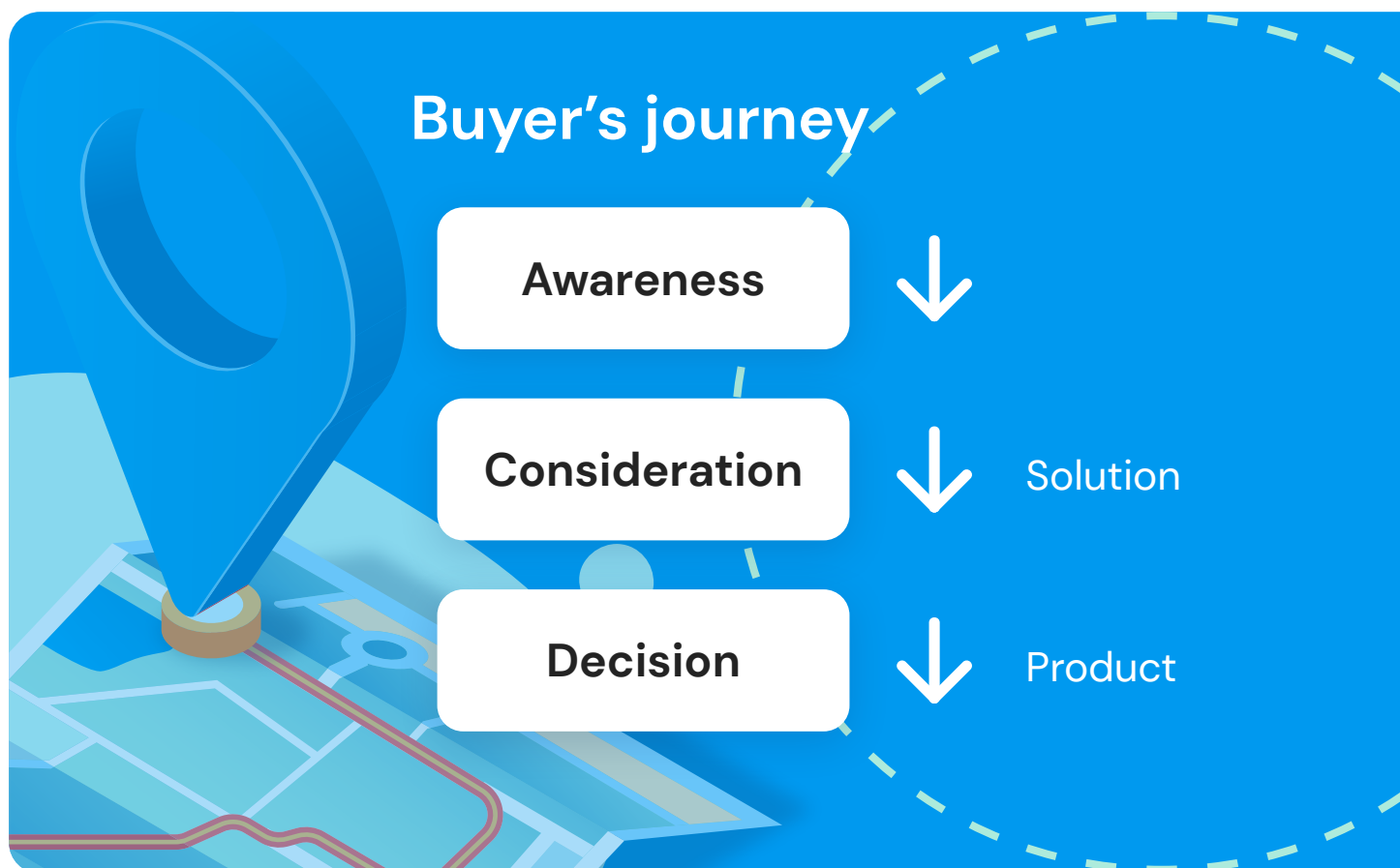
For tech buyers, the journey starts with them being aware that they have a problem to solve – not with them being aware that your brand exists. This is an often misunderstood aspect of awareness.

Your initial communications need to help them realise that they have a problem, rather than directly promoting your capabilities and offering. It is about them, after all.

Once they have established that they have a problem, they will actively research the topic and consider different ways to solve it – one of which may be to fix things internally and not look outside for solutions. It's only in the final stage of their buying journey, that they are ready to make a decision and compare a range of different products and services – hopefully including yours. And that is the role of marketing.

If you understand your prospects, you can provide useful and timely information to help nurture them through their customer journey. You can also explore ways to short-circuit the process and accelerate the sales cycle.

Ultimately, you need to inspire your prospects with a vision of what is possible – what their world will be like with your solution in it – and fill them with the confidence that you are the right partner to take them on that journey.

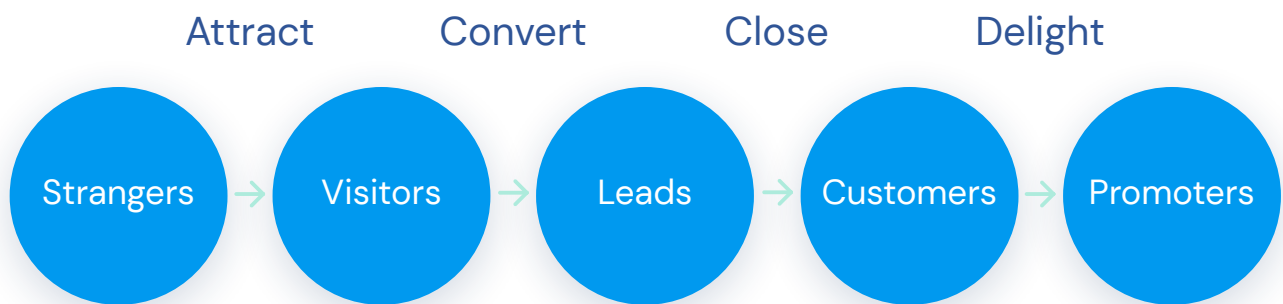



Feeding the sales team

Some B2B customer journeys can be completed online, without the need to interact with a member of the sales team. Unfortunately, most enterprise sales are not that simple – and some sales cycles can be much longer than others.



Marketing methodology





- It's generally the job of marketing to attract new customers and create qualified leads for the sales team to follow up and close. This is because it's often more efficient for marketing to generate leads at scale, than it is for the sales team to produce leads for themselves.

- This is a good division of labour too, as it means the sales team can use their skills and experience to focus on the value-added elements of the process – such as developing opportunities, building relationships and closing sales.

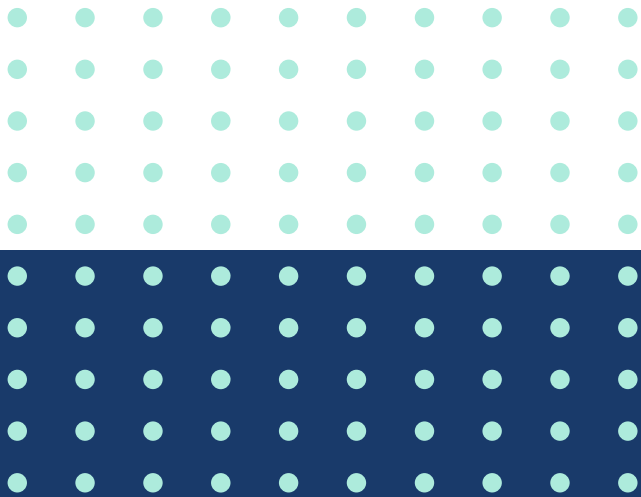
Ultimately, the goal of marketing is to engage your target audience and nurture them through their buying journey– ensuring that your website and campaigns are fully optimised to generate leads and drive revenue growth along the way.

Ok. You need **revenue growth** – pure and simple. You need a powerful startup **marketing programme** – no problem.

Let's show you exactly how to do that.

Section 3

How to market your StartUp



How to market your startup

As we said at the beginning, marketing is easy- but it can be hard too.

There is no secret to achieving growth – no special sauce and no silver bullet. As with many things, the devil is in the detail. Of course, nothing replaces strategic thinking, creativity and hard work – but we hope this guide makes your journey a little easier.

Top Tip

Here you'll learn the 6-stage process that many of the fastest-growing tech startups use to generate high-quality leads and drive sustainable revenue growth.

6 simple steps

Over the last ten years we've developed a proven methodology for planning and delivering startup marketing programmes – and we've honed it down to these six simple steps.

Research



Strategy



Website



Playbook



Execution



Reporting



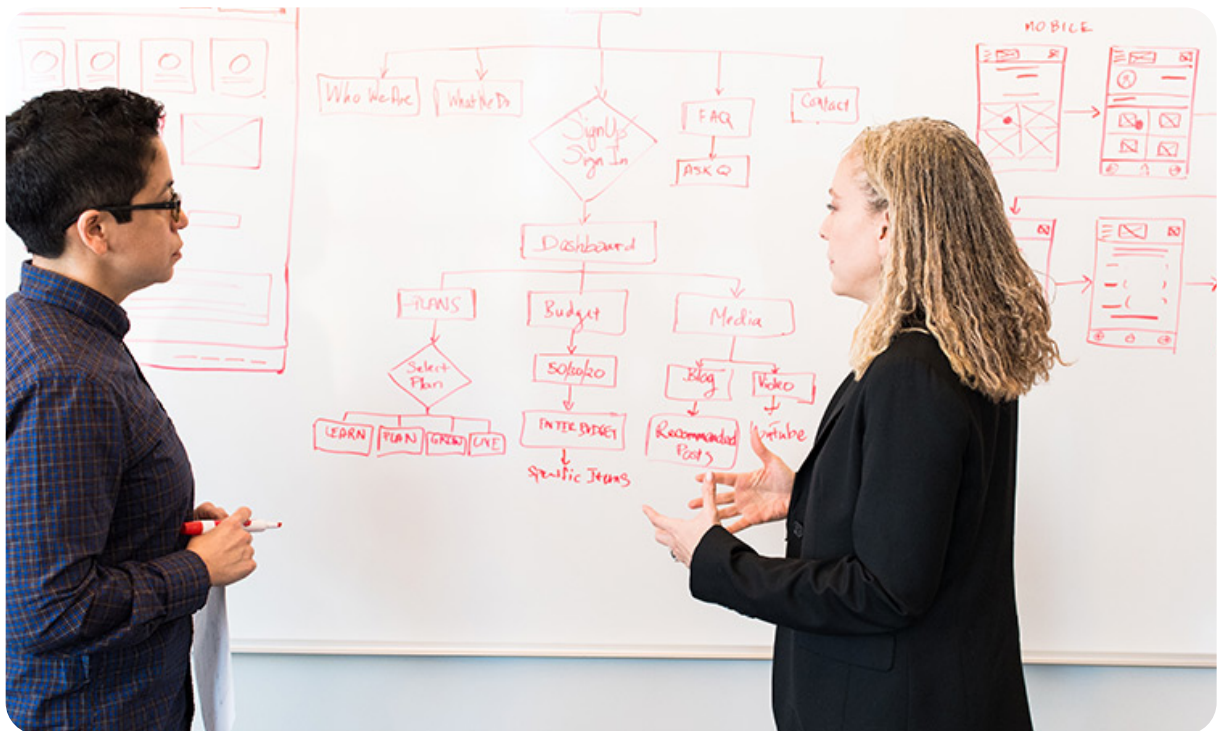


Buyer personas
Customer journeys
Competitive analysis

1. Research

A lot of research will already have gone into your wider business planning process – especially into establishing that there is a good product/ market fit. But when it comes to acquiring new customers in the real world, we need to delve deeper.

The foundations of a good marketing plan are built on solid research and there are three central planks to that strategic underpinning.



Buyer personas

Developing a deep understanding of your potential customers allows you to craft communications, content and creative that will resonate with them and drive engagement. Before identifying exactly who your buyers will be and determining which roles will make up their decision-making unit (DMU), you'll first need to establish your target audience and the characteristics of an ideal client. For example, will you be targeting consumers (B2C) or businesses (B2B), enterprise accounts or SMEs? Firmographic criteria such as company size, industry sector and geographic region can be a useful way to profile your chosen audience and even segment them into smaller groups for a more targeted approach.

Understanding the problems, challenges and pain points of your buyer personas will help you to see things from their perspective – giving them a name and a face will help you to identify with them as real people. And this will enable you to hook your messages on rational needs and anchor your stories on emotional triggers.

But you must be honest with yourself here - brutally honest.

This is not the time for thinking about how you would like things to be, but to focus hard on how they actually are. A good way to do this is to consider what genuine concerns your prospects might have and what sales objections they might come up with further down the line. This will allow you to be more pro-active, positive and impactful with your communications – heading potential issues off at the pass. Having someone from outside come in to play devil's advocate at this stage could prove invaluable.

Buyer persona profiles



Customer journeys

With your buyer persona profiles created and the decision- making unit (DMU) agreed, you can now start to think more broadly about their customer journeys – and more importantly how you can influence, accelerate and short circuit those journeys.

When we looked at today's tech buyer (page 13), we laid out the three stages to their journey– AWARENESS that they have a problem, CONSIDERATION of a range of potential solutions and finally, a DECISION on which is the best product or service for them to buy– and these will form the basis of your customer journey.

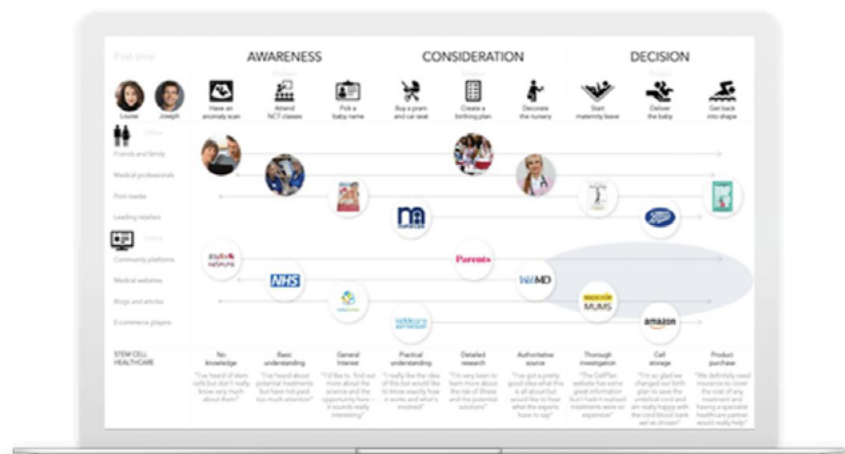
Once you've mapped out the steps of the journey in more detail, you can start to think about what kind of questions your prospects might ask at each stage and what sort of information they would find useful.

Important note

The customer journey will be different for each tech startup business – it will vary depending on the nature of the product offering, the target audience and the sales process – so the journey map will need to be built from the ground up each time. To help, we have a planning workshop exercise that we can share with you.

You can then layer on top of this, the type of content they like to consume, the places they go to learn to new things and the people who influence them the most. With this rich and detailed view of your customer's world, you can look for insights that will help to shape your marketing strategy and target your campaigns.

Customer journey mapping



Competitive analysis

You will already have researched the competition and spotted a gap in the market for your product or service.

This research is concerned with analysing how your competitors present themselves to the market – their key messages, brand positioning and visual identity– and what channels they use to connect with their audience.

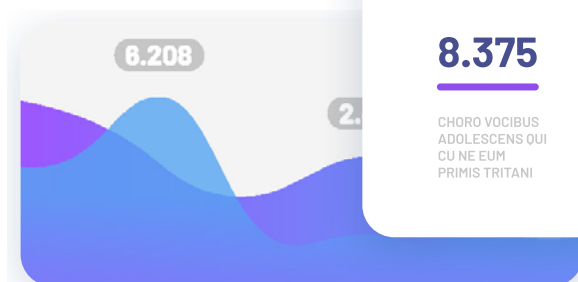
The point here is to ensure that your story not only promotes what you do but helps to differentiate your offering in the eyes of your customers – it needs to make you stand out from the crowd.

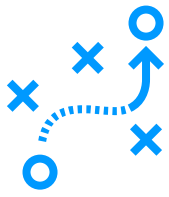
As Sun Tzu said; if you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles.

Understanding how your competitors are using digital marketing channels like search, social and content – there are some clever ways to look behind the scenes and find these things out – can yield invaluable strategic insights.

You can adopt the things that seem to be working well and ditch the things that don't – but most importantly it allows you to compete.

Analyze competition





Marketing objectives

Messaging platforms

Strategic blueprint

2. Strategy

Developing a winning marketing strategy – one that is integrated across channels and optimised to drive performance– seems like the obvious starting point for an ambitious tech startup, but surprisingly few have a detailed plan in place before they start. Perhaps the lure of easy-to-access tactical solutions is too great, but we would advise caution.

It's a cliché to say that 'failing to plan is planning to fail' but there is certainly some merit in it when it comes to marketing.





Marketing objectives

The first part of the strategic planning process is to agree exactly what your marketing objectives are – establishing precisely what you are seeking to achieve and how you will measure success.

With limited budget and resources, focusing your efforts on a set of achievable goals is imperative, as you won't be able to do everything at once. You'll need to find out what parts of your sales funnel are working well and where you need an extra push.

You need to know what specific challenges you are trying to overcome – for example;

- Do you need more leads to feed the sales team or better qualified leads to accelerate the process?
- Do you have enough qualified leads, but not enough high quality collateral for the team to close the sale?
- Do you need a way to reach more customers or a cost-effective way to keep prospects engaged throughout a lengthy sales cycle?

Messaging platform

Before you can start to create content and craft communications, you need to know what your story is – what your key messages are. Your story should be based on your buyer personas and their customer journey and take into account what your competitors are saying. It should be your story – it should be unique.

You'll need to develop a coherent framework of compelling messages that are aimed directly at your target audience – not at journalists or the public – inspiring them to act and overcoming their concerns. This messaging platform will inform your sales and marketing content and ensure consistency across communications and channels.

Any good doctor would perform a thorough investigation and make an informed diagnosis before writing a prescription. And it's the same with marketing.

Strategic blueprint

As a tech startup with limited budgets, the overriding strategic direction that your marketing takes will likely be a combination of these three tried-and-tested approaches. And this will be one of the first big marketing decisions you'll need to make.



Inbound marketing

Traditional outbound marketing interrupts and shouts to be heard. Inbound marketing attracts, pulling prospects towards your company when they are actively seeking solutions just like yours. Inbound cuts through all the marketing noise – so you can be heard above the competition.

Cost-effective marketing programmes that deliver results.



Content marketing

Content marketing is all about attracting prospects and converting them into paying customers by creating and sharing content that is relevant and valuable to them. The focus will be on designing and delivering a programme of strategic, structured and cost-effective content driven marketing campaigns that engage your target audience and nurture them through their buying journey.

Providing relevant content to attract, engage and convert your target audience.



Account based marketing

Account based marketing – or ABM – is a strategic marketing approach that allows you to target only the companies that matter most to you, with messages and content that are tailored just for them. This maximises the impact your communications will have on your target accounts. It also has the added benefit of flying under your competitors' radar.

Focusing your marketing budget on the companies that matter most to you.



Strategic blueprint

Once you've completed the research, planning and strategy stage, the output will be a strategic plan – a blueprint that can be used to implement a series of marketing campaigns.

Here are the main areas your blueprint will need to include:

Marketing Objectives

Your priorities, goals and challenges.

Target Audience

Your buyer personas and their customer journeys.

Communications Objectives

What you want your target audience to think, feel and do.

Messaging Platform

Your key messages, brand positioning and competitive differentiation.

Tactical Building Blocks

Your most effective content, channels and quick-win tactics.

Budget and KPIs

Your performance measures, success metrics and reporting framework.



**Strategy must always come
before tactics**



Brand positioning

User experience

Lead generation

3. Website

Whether your website is transactional or purely informational, it will be your virtual storefront – your window to the world. Your website will not only act as a repository for key content but should also be the central destination for people on other online and offline channels – such as search, social, events and paid media.

For many companies, their website is the most important marketing asset they own – and this is especially true for tech startups.



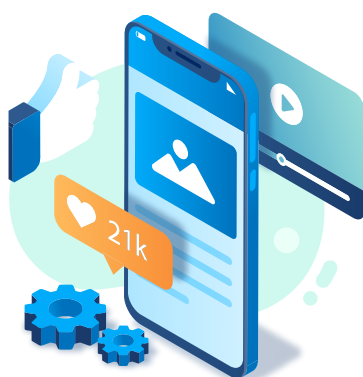


Brand positioning

Your website is what your prospects and customers will use to find out who you are, what you do and how you can help them. They will form an opinion about your products, your services and your business – and first impressions count. Even the best product offering can be let down by a poorly designed website that looks unprofessional and is difficult to use.

You need to decide upfront how you would like to be perceived by your target audience and agree how your brand should be positioned alongside your competitors. If your current website doesn't portray the desired image, then it may be time for a quick refresh or even a full-scale re-design.

A well-planned and well-designed website may be one of the best marketing investments you ever make.



User experience

Visitors to your website will have a particular goal in mind – whether they have arrived at your website following a search on Google or after reading a relevant social media post on LinkedIn – and you need to help them achieve that goal as quickly and easily as possible.

But that doesn't happen by accident.

The user experience (UX) needs to be carefully planned and designed to provide a frictionless journey – taking into account your buyer personas and the wider customer journeys that you created. You need to facilitate user journeys that allow your customers to meet their objectives, while allowing you to meet yours too.

Put simply, you need to engage your prospects and nurture them through their buying journey.



Lead generation

The overall look-and-feel of your website plays an important role in positioning your business in the mind of your target audience, but it's real job is to help generate leads.

Again, this is not something that happens by accident but is something that needs to be carefully planned.

For example; you can't insist that prospects give you their contact details before accessing even the most basic content on your website – but at the same time, you can't let them visit your website and leave without enticing them to get in touch directly or to exchange their personal information for a piece of valuable content.

Getting the balance right here is not easy, but it is what will turn your website into a lead generation machine – a marketing tool that is finely tuned and fully optimised to capture leads, convert sales and drive growth.



Digital channels

Content creation

Campaign planning

4. Playbook

With your website optimised to generate high quality leads, it's now time attract the visitors you need to convert into customers.

It's time to turn your strategic blueprint (page 25) into a growth-driven campaign playbook—using your tactical building blocks to create an actionable marketing plan and a repeatable process.

Content needs to deliver value before sales messages.



One of the biggest campaign planning decisions you will need to make is the choice of digital channels. You will then need to establish exactly how you will play tactically in each one.



Search

Search engines – like Google and Bing – provide an excellent opportunity to attract prospects that are actively looking for solutions like yours.

To make sure you are found though, you will need to understand the kind of things your prospects are searching for – we call that strategic keyword research – and ensure that your content and website is optimised so that it appears prominently in the search results when they do (SEO).



Social

Social media platforms – like LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook and Instagram – provide a great opportunity to reach a wide audience, share your content and deliver your sales messages.

They allow you to engage with relevant groups and connect directly with key prospects. The goal here should be to build your community and not just publish your content.

While many platforms are free to use, it would be wrong to see social media marketing as 'free' as it can take time, effort and resource to set up and sustain.



Blog

Publishing blog posts – which can be found by search engines and shared on social media – is one of the most powerful ways to attract visitors to your website, where you can convert them into leads.

Blogs can be the perfect gateway to deeper content and the start of a buying journey.

Regular blogging can also help to establish your authority on a chosen subject and position your business as a thought leader in your industry.



Paid media

Unlike digital display advertising, blog publishing, search engines and social media are marketing tactics that you can use without having to pay for. But there will be times that you want to give your marketing a little extra push and put some budget behind it.

You could pay LinkedIn to promote your posts to your target audience or pay Google to present your content at the top of the results page for any given search term (PPC).



Website

Your website will be one of the most important marketing assets you own. It will be the destination that you drive traffic to from all the other paid and organic channels.

But not all prospects should be sent to the same place. You may need to create dedicated 'landing pages' that are carefully designed to help them take the next step in their journey and maximise the opportunity for you to generate leads.



Content

The content you produce may start by explaining the products and services you provide, showcasing the customers you already work with and presenting the experienced team and credible organisation you have built.

But this information won't be relevant until your prospects are ready to make a decision – see the buyer's journey on page 14 – so you will need to create meaningful content focusing on the problem awareness and solution consideration stages too.



Email

Once you have attracted visitors to your website and converted them into leads, that is not the end of the story. Many prospects will not yet be ready to engage directly with your sales team.

Email provides the perfect way to stay in touch with your prospects – to gently nurture and guide them step-by-step through their buying journey and closer to a sale.

Regular emails and newsletters can also be a great way to keep your existing customers engaged and to uncover new cross-sell and up-sell opportunities.



Content creation

As well as creating just the right content to inspire, engage and inform your different target audience groups, it's also important to choose the best format for that content – and that will depend, to a large extent, on the nature of your buyer and their stage in the decision-making journey.

For example, some of your buyer personas may prefer shorter more 'snackable' content and something that is more visual – others may require something that is more substantial, formal and authoritative.

The context of the reader is an important consideration too. Perhaps a podcast or mobile-optimised content would be easier for people to consume while they are commuting to and from work.

Having your content professionally written and designed may make it more usable and impactful too and may also help to promote the kind of image you wish to portray.

Some popular content formats

- Whitepapers
- Ebooks
- Blogs
- Guides
- Video
- Case studies
- Infographics

When you've analysed your buyer personas and established the information they will require at each stage of their customer journey, it's likely that you will need more content than you can realistically produce in one go. And that's where prioritisation comes in again. You'll need to focus on the most important areas – in-line with your strategy – and develop a pragmatic content calendar that allows you to rollout the required content over time.

Campaign planning

This is where all the pieces of an integrated campaign come together – the target audience and customer journeys, the digital channels and content.

This is also where you need get ready for delivery – for campaign execution.

You'll need to establish exactly who is going to do what – whether that is your team or your marketing agency – and when. You'll need to figure out what tasks are dependent on others being completed first and what workstreams can be run in parallel.

Depending on the complexity of your programme, you may also want to create a detailed project plan to help manage the process.



Fast-track delivery

Campaign implementation

Sales follow-up

5. Execution

So, your planning is complete, your campaign playbook is signed off and your delivery schedule has been agreed. You, your team and your agency partners are ready to go.

But as Peter Drucker once said: plans are only good intentions unless they immediately degenerate into hard work.



Fast-track delivery

We've reached stage five in the six-step process and still we have nothing in-market – nothing new in the hands of our prospects, nothing new to engage and nurture them through their buying journey.

But as we learned in [The Tech founders challenge](#) (page 05), you need to deliver revenue growth to secure further investment – and do it fast.

There is no time to waste. What you need is a fast-track approach to delivery that gets you to market as quickly as possible – without taking any shortcuts that could negatively impact your overall performance.

The trick is not to skip any of these steps but to tackle them head on – to knuckle down, to do the hard work and to seek help where necessary. Being incisive about it, you need to work smart, work hard and work fast.



Implementation can be easy with the right tools and processes



Campaign execution

- Your marketing machine is now up and running. Your campaigns are all set up and generating traffic. Your website is optimised and delivering leads. Your content calendar is on schedule.
- Your team are performing, and your marketing agency is delivering.

Whilst campaign execution is only one small step in this overall startup marketing process, it is actually the one that accounts for the most time. It is the business-as-usual state you will be in once the upfront research, strategy and planning has been done. You will always be executing some aspect of your marketing programme – whether that is actively or more passively.

Sales follow-up

So far, we've talked about startup marketing, strategic blueprints, campaign playbooks and lead generation – but these are just the means to an end. What you need is revenue growth; more customers and more sales.

It may go without saying, but a key part of the process is sales follow-up. Ideally, your sales team will have helped shape the marketing strategy and given their input into the campaign planning.

Top Tip

Your strategic blueprint will ideally include some quick win tactics that you can deploy to start generating results sooner rather than later, but we would caution against jumping into tactical execution before the strategic planning has been done.

But when the leads are in, it is down to them to create the opportunities and close the sale. Feedback from the sales team is vital to ensure that marketing is delivering the right type of lead and the right quality of lead, the right quantity of leads and the right frequency of leads.

But on another, there is a more practical and mundane challenge. The leads need to be captured, the contact information needs to be stored and the engagement activity needs to be considered. At low volumes, this can be handled by email systems and spreadsheets, but as the business grows, thought will need to be given to more scalable solutions – like salesforce automation tools, customer relationship management (CRM) systems and marketing automation platforms.



Reporting framework

Performance measurement

Campaign optimisation

6. Reporting

Although reporting is the last step in this six-step process, it is actually where you need to begin. In the tech founder's challenge (page 05) we outlined the various metrics that investors will be monitoring and the performance targets they will expect you to hit.

In the first step of this process, we also explained that your strategy will be driven by your goals and objectives and that one of the most important parts of your strategic blueprint (page 23) will be the performance measures and success metrics that you agree upfront.



Buyer personas

With reporting then, we are simply closing that loop. You know what you need to measure at the highest level – the handful of key performance indicators (KPIs) that matter most. A reporting framework should be developed that cascades down from these primary financial and sales-driven metrics to more engagement-level measures.

For example, you would want to measure the number of visitors to your website and the number of times one of your blog posts was shared on social media – but these are not meaningful metrics in themselves. They are only important as they roll up into the next level; the more social shares you have, the more people will see your content; the more people that see your content the more visitors you will get to your website; the more visitors you get to your website, the more time they will spend engaging with you; the more time they spend engaging with you, the more leads you will create; the more leads you create, the more sales you can make and the more sales you make, the more revenue we will generate.

Tick follows tock.

Reporting and optimisation must be based on performance data



Performance measurement

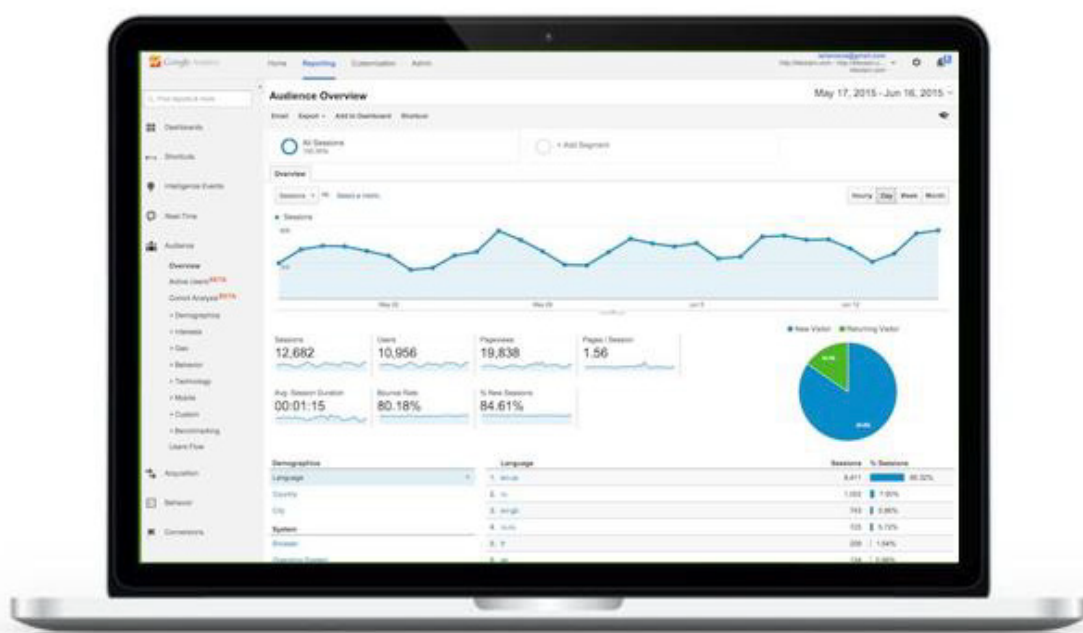
You can measure performance against your goals with these absolute numbers, but there is also a multiplier effect at each stage. To maximise revenue growth, you need to measure and optimise the conversion rates too; particularly conversions from visitors to leads, from leads to opportunities and from opportunities to sales. Improving conversion rates can often have a more dramatic effect on sales and revenue growth than simply increasing the number of leads.

Tactical performance metrics – like how well you rank on Google for a particular search term – are also important at the operational level. While they may not be that interesting to a potential investor, they can be extremely helpful when it comes to improving your overall campaign performance.

Campaign optimisation

As well as reporting externally to investors and other stakeholders and internally to sales teams and management, marketing also needs to understand how well different content, channels and tactics are performing so campaigns – as well as the website – can be optimised to generate more leads and drive revenue growth. As your marketing function evolves, you will be able to apply data and analytics more intelligently to improve performance and optimise.

Google analytics



Real world B2B experts

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We'll help you attract and connect with B2B buyers, designing your custom strategies and execution to deliver high-quality leads to convert more customers. Unlock stalled growth and find new opportunities to scale at speed and meet targets.

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About Incisive Edge

Incisive Edge is a strategy-first B2B marketing agency, expert in customer acquisition and specialists in tech.

Established in 2009, our team have years of experience delivering high quality strategies and strategic campaigns for our clients across the B2B landscape.

We're the digital marketing agency for growth-obsessed tech companies.