the **Statutes Statutes Statutes Business, but not as you know it**

Make products people want



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Who made this issue?

John Willshire

John V Willshire set up Smithery to solve a problem that kept cropping up in his previous life as Chief Innovation Officer at PHD in London – a lot of organisations try to apply innovation in silos, rather than threaded through the whole business. Now working across Strategy, Prototyping, Design and Culture change, John is finally finding a lot of use for an eclectic background in economics, market research, music, marketing and media. @willsh

Janna Bastow

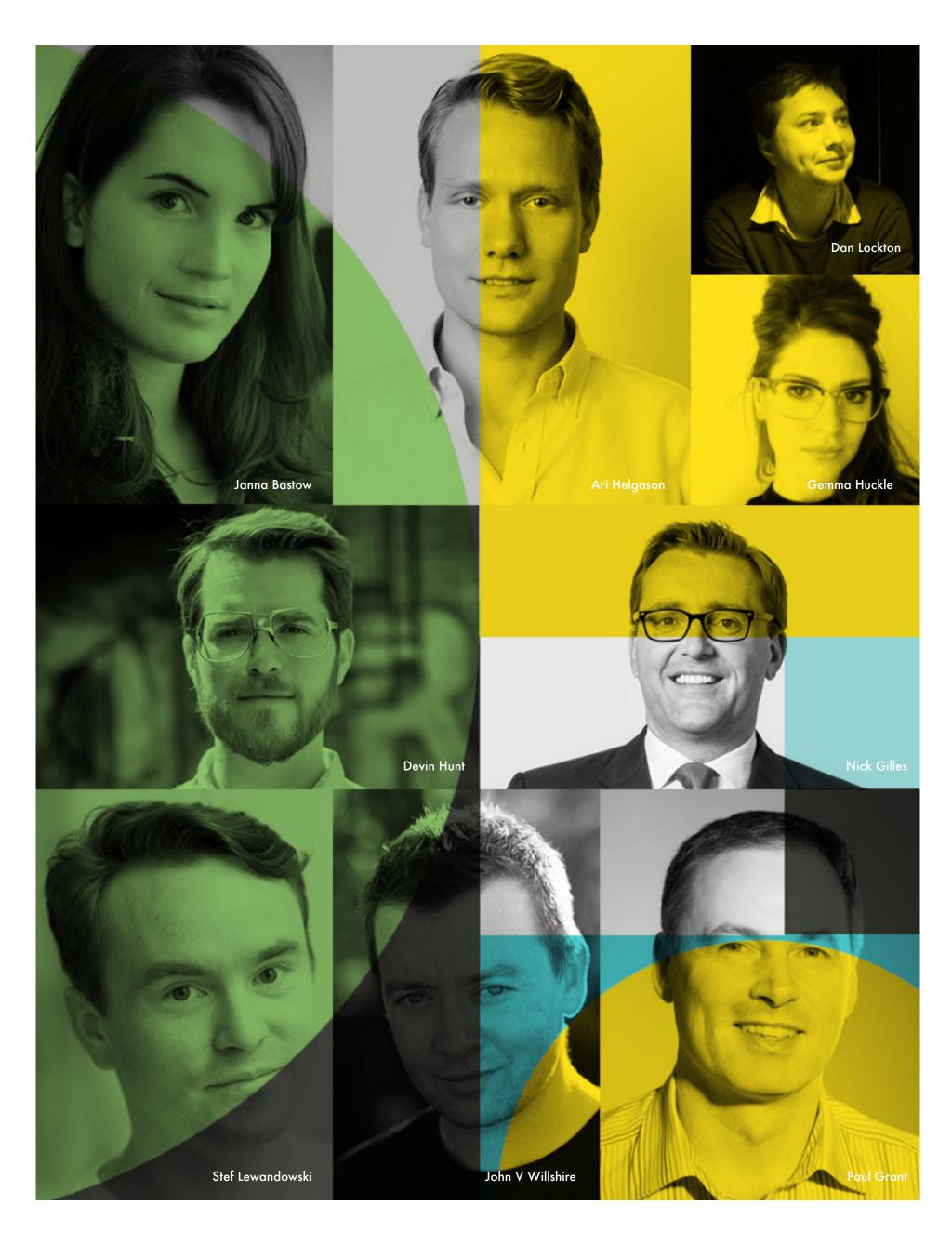
Janna Bastow comes from a user-centric design background and has extensive experience building digital products. As a product manager always looking for better tools, she co-founded and is CEO of ProdPad, product management software that helps you manage your roadmap and your product backlog. She is also co-founder of Mind the Product, a global community and series of events, articles and jobs for Product Managers. @simplybastow

Ari Helgason

Ari is an early stage tech investor at Dawn Capital in London, investing in enterprise software, cybersecurity and the Internet of Things. Before becoming an investor, he co-founded SaaS sales and workflow management business World on a Hanger and e-commerce fashion marketplace Fabricly.com, operating in London and New York. @arihelgason

Dr Dan Lockton

Dan Lockton, PhD is a research tutor in Innovation Design Engineering at the Royal College of Art, London, and a senior researcher at the Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design. Dan specialises in design for behaviour change, particularly for social and environmental benefit, created the Design with Intent toolkit, and is currently working on public engagement research around driverless cars as part of GATEway. He also does consultancy. @danlockton



Paul Grant

As an entrepreneur, Paul Grant raised funds for his own business which he exited in 2003. He then joined a private equity company, Capital Partners, where he headed up the business angel division. Paul has worked with many investors, bankers and venture capitalists to fund early-stage companies and over the years has uncovered an approach to raising capital that works. He is keen to share with you what he has learnt as an entrepreneur business coach and an industry insider. Paul also runs a monthly workshop at the British Library called How to Find the Right Investors. @TheFundingGame

Devin Hunt

Devin Hunt is a designer & entrepreneur focused on the intersection of design, tech, and entrepreneurship. He is a partner at Founder Centric where he works with startups, accelerators, and universities helping them build better products & companies. He co-founded Lyst, a fashion tech company based in London.

He is a YCombinator alumnus who has founded multiple companies (and only sunk a few of them). He has raised venture capital in both the US and Europe, received accolades for his product designs, and even made Paul Graham laugh. Once. @hailpixel

Stef Lewandowski

Stef is a technologist and artist. He repeatedly builds early stage technology products and businesses as well as experimental hacks and artworks. He is chair of governors at a primary school, where he is also collaborating around a product to inspire children about technology. You'll also find him advising and supporting startups, particularly in his role as Venture Partner with the Ignite accelerator. @stef

Gemma Huckle

As head of content, Gemma is passionate about the power stories have to inspire and engage people on an emotional level. She's also fascinated with technology and how it is making our lives easier, more enriched and more mindful. @gemma_huckle

Nick Giles

Nick is co-founder of Seven Hills, the highly acclaimed campaigns firm. The business was founded to generate momentum for Britain's explosive growth companies and most exciting entrepreneurs. @nick_giles

Digital | Building Building | with Bytes

From The Editor

This issue has a strong focus on product development. Some of the highlights include Dr Dan Lockton, on building products that change human behaviour. Dr Lockton also brings attention to the limitations of methods used for testing in virtual environments when applied to real world situations. Devin Hunt, Co-founder of Lyst, provides a briefing on the different 'engines of growth' that allow a product to scale. Master hacker and CTO of Makeshift, Stefan Lewandowski takes the seriousness out of producing a 'minimum viable product' and the 'build, measure, learn' cycle, suggesting an alternative, more playful approach.

Irrespective of what and how you build, I believe that at the heart of any product development process is kaizen. Kaizen is a Japanese word for 'change for the better.' It involves constantly going back to the product and asking the question of 'what do we need to improve in order to change the lives of our customers for the better?' In answering this, we can become more resourceful and focus our energies in the areas that really benefit our community. This practice is at the core of how we approach our product at the Startup Magazine.

Product development is a journey, not a destination. Even once your startup has grown up, I hope that you will never stop striving for ways to delight your customers, even if that means starting again and creating something entirely new.

> Natasha Hussein Editor natasha@thestartupmag.com

How to make the leap from seed funding to Series A

by Ari Helgason

There has never been a better time for London-based businesses to raise seed funding. Private investors are incentivised by the Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme (SEIS); new Angellist syndicates are springing up every week and there is plenty of fresh money in seed venture funds.

However, the capital available in Series A and beyond has not kept up with this growth. With more seed-funded businesses, the competition for follow-on funding is intensifying, and a growing number of businesses fail to raise their Series A. Raising a round from institutional investors is very different from raising from angels, and so it is important to start preparing early.

It has become a cliché that founders should always be fundraising. As soon as you raise your seed round, preparations for your Series A should begin. Fundraising is often considered a painful distraction, and so is left too late. However, with the right preparation you can maximise your chances of a successful follow-on raise.

What can entrepreneurs do to maximise their chances of raising follow-on funding?

Set clear, measurable goals

Have a clear vision for how to get to the metrics that will allow you to raise a Series A. Many entrepreneurs are vague about their one-year plan. Investors do not expect you to know exactly where you will be in five years, but it is important to have a plan that allows you to either be profitable or in a position to raise follow-on funding 12–16 months after your seed round. A seed stage company is like a science experiment. You start off with hypotheses about how things will work. You then figure out how to test those hypotheses. Hypotheses may include that you can build a product, that there will be demand for that product and that you can profitably acquire customers. Come up with the quickest way to test your assumptions and set clear, measurable milestones. Investors focus on risk; the more aspects of your business you can de-risk by your next round, the better.

Sanity-check your goals

Investors look for different, but generally predictable, metrics for different types of businesses. For example, if you have a SaaS business, expect to be able to show around \pounds 100k in monthly recurring revenue (MRR), with strong momentum and a good ratio of customer acquisition cost:lifetime value, along with indications of low churn rates. Research the metrics shown by comparable businesses that have raised recently. There are no hard and fast rules, but make sure you understand investor expectations. It is common to see entrepreneurs wasting time raising at the wrong stage because of different expectations.

Leave a buffer

Once you start spending money it is difficult to scale back. Deadlines are missed and things take longer than expected. The more runway you have when you begin raising, the better your negotiating position. So whatever runway you think you need, add a four to six month buffer to give yourself room to manoeuvre. If you miss your targets, consider raising a bridge rather than jumping straight into raising a big round. It can be dangerous to try to raise a Series A before you are ready. If you attempt, but fail to close a deal, you should wait at least six months before trying again. You may be better off raising a bridge round from existing investors, or from new angel investors. Just make sure that this one lets you hit the necessary milestones.

Symptoms of an ailing startup – how do investors spot the weak? by Rio Hodges

Your startup is ready to look for the next level of investment. With a proof of concept, slick presentation deck, and confidence to pitch to institutional investors, you have decided it is time to shine on the venture capital stage.

However, flashy tactics and showmanship cannot dazzle venture capital firms. Backgrounds in entrepreneurship and years of experience analysing both business models and founding teams means you are pandering to the experts. These experts have seen the full spectrum, from great startups to questionable ones, investing only in the companies they have confidence in.

The million-dollar question, or rather the billiondollar question for some of these new companies, is simple: what do venture capital firms look for?

Stephan von Perger, of Wellington Partners, can help answer this question. Wellington Partners, a London-based VC firm, has invested in companies like Hailo, Yplan, and Spotify to name a few. In doing so, Wellington has made a big name for itself, identifying some very impressive companies early on.

Stephan says that from the perspective of a VC

firm, there are some very clear signs that a business will either succeed or struggle. Here are some of the distinct red flags that Stephan has seen in his experience that would indicate that a startup is not ready for investment.

Founding team

You need a smart, put-together team. A small business is only as good as its founders and employees, and there are some pretty clear signs that your team or business may not meet their required standards:

- A team lacking relevant experience with no background in the industry they are trying to be successful in.

- Co-founders who do not want to commit to working fulltime.

- Founders who cannot distinctly identify their role in the business.

Simply put, successful startups are built by high impact teams. Your team dynamic is impossible to fake in a pitch. A lack of commitment to the product and the team is an easy way to spot that a company is not ready for higher levels of investment.

Technical foundation

You are not required to be a coding genius as the CEO of a tech startup. However, the technical portion of your company is crucial from the perspective of a VC, says the investor. Dangerous signs from a company that is lacking technical foundation include:

 Lack of a co-founder with technical background.
No ownership of IP for the software or technology behind the business. - Outsourcing all of the technical product development in the early days.

Though there are plenty of quick and accessible methods of outsourcing work, successful companies need to know how they got to the product that they are trying to sell. This does not just apply to technical work: outsourcing pitch deck production and investor outreach to bankers and advisers can equally be frowned upon by early stage investors.

History of the business

VC firms are constantly investigating a company, including past events and developments that the company and its founders have gone through. If you have got skeletons in the closet, VC firms will most likely find out whether you address them openly or not, such as

- A co-founder who has 'mysteriously' left the company.

- Previous investors who have decided to no longer support you after their initial investment.

- CEOs who cannot appropriately answer all basic questions about key aspects of their business during a pitch meeting.

Do not make it a secret, says Stephan. Addressing the past, even if it is potentially negative is important in order to be transparent. Acknowledging former mistakes and using them to inform how you move forwards is key to showing your commitment to a business that has learned and grown from its previous shortcomings.

Forewarned is forearmed. Knowing what a VC firm looks for in a company can make the difference between success and failure in fundraising. Being sure that you do not exhibit any of the characteristics mentioned will increase your likelihood of securing investment.

Terms to watch out for when negotiating with investors by Paul Grant

First, the disclaimer: I am not a lawyer. This article is intended to offer guidance from an entrepreneur's point of view. One of the biggest challenges for entrepreneurs is finding capital. Typically, after six to nine months of searching for capital, endless meetings and many disappointments, the entrepreneur finally gets an offer to invest, in the form of a 'term sheet'. Many entrepreneurs grasp this offer with both hands. In time, it could be a very costly mistake unless they take the time to study the terms. To make this a little easier I have highlighted six red flags to watch out for:

1. Drag and Tag

This could be dangerous if a larger company wants to buy your company and you are not ready to sell. This clause can give the rights for investors to 'tag' along with an offer to buy other investors' shares. Then, if the percentage of shares being sold tips over a pre-agreed majority (which could be between 25–75%) they can 'drag' you along on selling your company to another organisation. The key here is to make sure the agreed majority in the term sheet is high enough to need your approval before your company can be sold.

2. Bad leaver

Investors know things can get really tough for a startup. If the founder suddenly gets a high-paying job offer back to the safety of corporate land, it can sometimes be too much of a temptation. The worst 'bad leaver' clause means that unless you become seriously ill or die you are a 'bad leaver', which means you only get the nominal value of the shares you own and have to leave the company. A better way of negotiating this clause is to give more reasons to be a good leaver, and for each year that passes you have more of a right to the full value of the shares, even as a 'bad leaver'.

3. Investor approvals

As soon as you sell any shares to investors, it nearly always comes with a list of approvals. At a basic level, this may mean you cannot issue more shares, change the company structure, secure a business loan, increase your salary or make any major purchases without their approval. Some investor approvals can run into pages, all but the previous examples are likely to be negotiable.

4. Liquidation preference

This is often used by venture capital firms as a way of compensating for crazy early stage valuations. It means that when the company gets sold, their original investment is liquidated and paid back before the sale value is divided according to shareholding. In a worse case scenario, it can be a '2x preference' clause, which means double their original investment back before anything left is shared out. Obviously if the sale of the company is not very good, then you could end up with very little or nothing after this clause has kicked in.

5. Pre-money valuation and the option pool

Pre-money valuation is what the company is worth before any investment is put in. Post-money valuation is what the company is worth after the investment is put in. For example, a company is worth \pounds 3m pre-valuation. After the investor has put in \pounds 1m he now has a 25% equity stake and the company is worth \pounds 4m. What to watch out for is a VC suggesting you need an 'option pool' to attract management. A standard 20% option pool will come in at the 'prevaluation' reducing only your shareholding, not that of the VC. Using the example above you will now have 60% instead of 75% of the company.

6. Anti-dilution

This is used by investors to protect themselves against a future funding round having a smaller valuation than the one they participated in. If this happens their shares get heavily diluted. There are many types of anti-dilution causes and none of them are good news for an entrepreneur. It can often mean your shares are the only ones that get diluted and in some cases it can also be difficult to raise future rounds. The best way to protect yourself is to make sure your valuation is sensible to start with.

Some of these terms seem scary and perhaps I have painted a black picture. Most angel investors and venture capital firms are just interested in a fair dea, but all want to protect their investment. From your side of the fence, it is in your interest to keep as much control as possible and secure a large share of any exit. It is a game. Just remember to watch out for the terms I have listed and hire a very good investment lawyer.

Have you ever really thought about what the question is? by John V Willshire

For four years I have been running Smithery, where the simple mantra we have built the business around is 'Making Things People Want > Making People Want Things'.

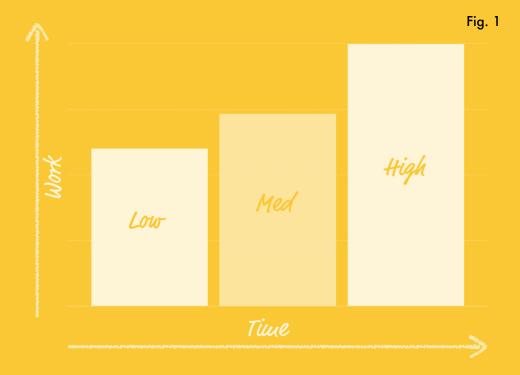
You will notice it is a balanced expression; it is not an either/or, because every business has to 'Make Things People Want' and 'Make People Want Things' at some stage.

Given the way the internet has radically altered the way we find, share, love and hate the products and services we use, it is vital for any business to get that balance right. For startups, this means finding the perfect product/market fit, before accelerating growth.

So here is a very simple question you should ask at every stage of that journey: improve or share? Do you concentrate on the next iteration of the design? Or show what you have to more people to get feedback?

It is hard to do these two things simultaneously, so the question helps you find balance and direction between those two decisions. This means it frees you to concentrate on doing the right thing rather than just doing the next thing.

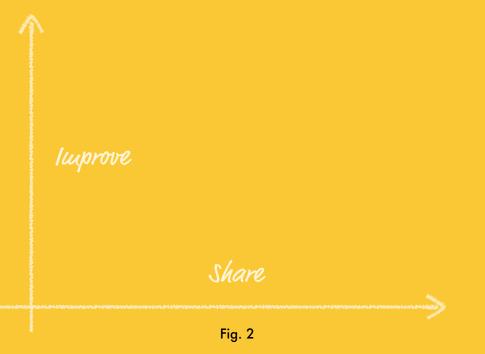
Here is a simple diagram to help demonstrate the approach. Think about the frequently used 'low/medium/high fidelity' device (Fig. 1), which people often use when talking about the different stages of developing a new product. This idea is dominated by time as the major axis; it tells us what we should do, and when, moving sequentially from left to right. The vertical axis, the only other dimension left, then tells us how much work we put in.



Once you notice time being used as an axis, you will see that it is used

in a lot of design process models; they start on the left, and move through a series of steps to the right hand side.

Time can be a useful motivator, of course, hurrying a team to the next stage. But what if the next stage is the wrong stage? Nobody likes to feel they have 'failed', and to go back a step. By turning this model into something that makes better, explicit use of improve and share, we can mitigate that risk and encourage good discipline.



Let's make our horizontal axis share and our vertical axis improve (Fig. 2). Share means getting feedback from people, be it qualitatively (speaking face to face) or quantitatively (usage data). Improve means gradually resolving the design itself by adding in more detail, refinement, features, fixing bugs, smoothing look

and feel. We can still use low, medium and high to describe the type of activity carried out.

When we think about the share axis, low might be sharing effectively and often within the team, medium is well

structured qualitative discussion with those on the outside of the design process (users, experts, colleagues), and high represents quantitative feedback from multiple users.

In the case of the improve axis, low means sketching out with pen and paper (or making models by hand), medium means working up the look and feel a user might see, and high is a working prototype to test in action.

Thinking in these two dimensions, rather than a simplistic three-step process, we can create a nine box grid (Fig. 3).

How does this work? Well, start bottom left, with small teams of people quickly work up rough representations. Then the

0	Low	Med	High	Share
Low				
Med				
High				
Impl	rove			
lun	MAR.			

usefulness of the model becomes apparent; you choose what to do next. Stop and ask 'should we share, or should we improve?'. To decide which is right, you just need to think about the benefits of each.

Are you able to use the product you have in front of you to ably present the idea to people to gauge reaction? Will you be able to take that feedback and build a better version, or confirm hypotheses about the current one? If so, then you should share.

Alternatively, have you a surfeit of unrealised ideas around the product that you cannot get across well? Should you take the ideas away, spruce them up a little, sweat the thinking a bit, make a new prototype? Then that is fine, you are talking about improve.

Whichever you choose, you will see by stripping out time as an axis, we introduce a sophistication that informs the process at every step.

But time has not been lost from the model altogether. Instead, it becomes a more passive descriptor of the process, as you draw out your journey across the map. Different journeys across the map take different amounts of time, as illustrated (Fig. 4).

There is no right or wrong path through the model; it is about whatever is the most appropriate thing to do given what you see in front of you. Imagine it as a game of snakes and ladders; it does not matter what specific path you take through the board, there are many ways to win.

Using this balanced approach to development, where you are asked to share with users at each step (or to justify why you won't), means you are more likely to Make Things People Want, rather than reaching the end of your process and having to Make People Want Things.

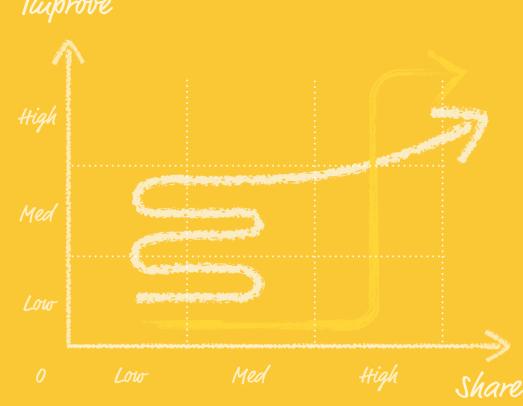


Fig. 4

Play to learn before you build to learn

by Stef Lewandowski

'Computer science', 'software engineering', 'information architecture', 'systems integration', 'data science' – why is it that everything to do with modern technology has to sound so serious all the time?

Such terms have their place, but is a softer, more playful side of the industry being left behind because we lack words to describe some of the more, well, fun stuff that is involved in making digital things?

We have all heard the mantra of 'build, measure, learn' – a perfectly sensible way to build a startup business. Begin with the assumption that you are wrong, set out experiments and iterate by measuring how successful they are.

This all sounds very sensible, and that is the problem. It is a model that is all about being sensible. I am just not convinced everything we as startup people want to make should be reduced to data capture and measurement. What about inspiration and joy? Doesn't it mean we are only building things that can be immediately validated? Doesn't that lead to really boring startups tweaking dull landing pages to extract an extra 0.1% conversion rate?

I have found that some of the things that I have built that I keep bringing up in conversation are the ones that have a little humour, are a bit silly, or that are based on passion and a sense of play. Often they are the tiniest little things that were more about sketching and fun than they were about 'engineering'.

Like 'Twadio', an afternoon experiment to make a 'silent radio station', where you play the song in your head, or a visualisation of the internet of things around you now, or a cryptographic quilt, or TehGuardian, the Guardian website except with a few extra typos and mistakes inserted randomly.

I have made each of these things while 'sketching with code' and they are really just throwaway hack day projects. Not building, measuring and learning, but hacking, playing and learning.

Are such things a waste of time? Possibly, but only if you also categorise practicing and self-improvement as waste. For me, by doing lots of silly, playful hacks I have been learning about how to build digital products.

Some of the one-weekend hacks I have made might look pointless and throwaway. But exercising and having fun about repeatedly building a tiny version of an idea means that when I do hit on a good idea I am operating on muscle memory and instinct. I think 'Oh this bit is easy, I've got some code I wrote for something else', which often happens when I am building things now! Others tell me similar.

Getting good at going fast accelerates your ability to learn what you should be making. 'A prototype is worth a thousand meetings' as they say. A lot of my experimentation has happened at home over the kitchen table, and now it is not just me. Having children has had a huge impact on the way that I work. There is so much playfulness that we forget as we get older and I seem to have regained some of that because of them.

If you are lucky enough to have kids then messing about with electronics, paint and cardboard is a great way to spend an afternoon. The kids learn lots from you, but if you are like me, you will find that some of that play rubs off on you too. Through them I have discovered I enjoy drawing monsters all the time. I was not expecting that!

Making tiny throwaway prototypes to explore potential directions is a great way to learn about a problem or an area of interest. In the 'minimum viable product' approach we put a lot of emphasis on the 'build' and 'measure' parts of the cycle. Playing and prototyping are all about the crucial 'learn' part of the mantra.

Through this playful process, I have made a few things now that people tell me they enjoy using. For instance, most of the support messages I get on Attending are along the lines of 'I love it! There's a bit of a bug here but I still love it!' I think that lovableness probably stems from the playful attitude I had while messing around in my spare time right at the beginning.

The fun you are having building a software product leaks through your code into the way people experience it. And having people that 'love' what you have made as a result are a huge benefit to making a successful business.

So before you get into the world of 'build, measure, learn' for your next project, maybe spend a little time on the 'hack, play, learn' side of things and allow yourself to explore your idea like a child might. You might find that it is a great way of building a 'minimum lovable product'.

Building products that grow: a brief overview of the engines of growth

by Devin Hunt

We spent six months building our first software product. As recent graduates, new to the business of startups, we built it much as you would expect: in a vacuum with absolutely zero user feedback.

Still, youthful enthusiasm knows no bounds, and hopes ran high as we launched by doing the only two things we could think to do: putting the website live, and contacting the one journalist who would take our calls.

We drank a celebratory toast and sat back to wait for the sweet, sweet revenue to roll in. As you may have guessed, it did not.

My cofounders and I had made the classic mistake of first-time entrepreneurs. We obsessed about the product and ignored all the 'business stuff', including (but not limited to) marketing, sales, and traction. We had believed that if we created something amazing – something wholly unique and inspired – it would sell itself. Product launches rarely (read: never) play out this way. Making this assumption is a grave error. So how does one create products that can sell; that can 'grow'? All good product launches have two things in common:

1. People actually want the product.

2. It has an engine of growth in place.

Let's skip over the first point and look at the second.

An engine of growth, as coined by Eric Ries in The Lean Startup, is simply the broad strategy through which customers are found and kept. There are three types: paid, sticky, and viral. All products leverage at least one of these, usually multiple. Understanding how each engine works is key to creating a product that can grow.

Paid growth

Paid growth is the most understood and most common: money is spent to acquire a customer who then generates more revenue than it cost to attract them. Paid growth is as old as business itself: advertising, storefronts, door-to-door salesmen. These are all forms of paid growth. Paid growth is also the easiest to misuse. Throwing money at ad campaigns and sales teams is the easiest way to make it appear that a company is performing well when it is really losing money.

Sticky growth

Sticky growth is all about customer retention and is often used in subscription businesses. The product and entire business model are designed to lock customers in for the long-term. They may stay engaged because you have created a useful and life-affirming product, or due to a more devious agenda (e.g. data lock-in or contractual obligation).

Viral growth

Viral growth happens when each customer attracts at least one more. Virality is an attribute of the product, not of the clever marketing or sales. This means that creating a witty video or cat image does not constitute virality. To create sustainable viral growth, the viral hook must be a core part of using the product; slapping a share button on an app does not make it viral. What actions can the customer take that naturally invite more users? Common examples include project management apps (where you invite your team), file sharing apps (where you invite the recipient), and social apps (where you invite your friends).

Software entrepreneurs of the 1980s did not have to worry about how they grew. That was the job of the sales and marketing teams – a paid engine. While paid growth remains viable, we now have other options. Figuring out how your product will grow is as important as figuring out what your product does. At the end of the day, if your product is not in your users' and customers' hands, it is not a success. Waiting till launch is a fool's errand; start prototyping and experimenting with your engines of growth today.

To learn more about the big three engines, check out The Lean Startup by Eric Reis (theleanstartup.com). For lots of options on how to actually do it, get Traction by Gabriel Weinberg and Justin Mares (tractionbook.com).

Product management in agencies and startups: What is the difference?

by Yoav Farbey

The principles of product management are generally the same across the board: product managers are responsible for the successful delivery of product releases. But in every company the role of product management is slightly different, depending on the circumstances and culture of each enterprise. There are also clear differences in the product manager's role when you compare what they do in an agency with what they do in a startup.

Here is an insight into some of the differences between product manager roles in agencies versus startups at different stages in the product development cycle.

At the initial stages of product development

At a startup, the product manager works closely with founders, taking time to understand the business needs and technology requirements for the company's product. Once the full feature list is defined the product manager works closely with design and UX to visualise these features and to prepare for user testing and feedback. The product manager prioritises features according to user feedback, de-prioritising or removing features that received a negative response during user testing.

At an agency, however, the business rules and list of

desired features come from the client, and a client may even choose to push ahead with features that are not received well in research, or do not make sense. If this happens, the product manager's responsibility is to argue the case for taking rational decisions and try to convince the client to change their mind.

During the development process

The development process in an agency is very similar to that in a startup. Product managers start this process by documenting all the features and writing tickets for those features into a tracking system such as JIRA, Trello or Pivotal Tracker. The style that the tickets are written in depends on the individual company rather than on whether the company is an agency or a startup.

The product manager explains the requirements to developers, and then works through the list of tickets with the team to get an estimate of the difficulty of each ticket. This creates an estimated product backlog for the development team to work from.

At an agency, the development team needs to work to a deadline determined by the client. This means the product manager needs to juggle what can realistically be achieved in the given time frame to get as many of the client's requested features finished as possible. Often, this means that the product manager is continually busy conducting back and forth negotiations between the team and the client.

This process is usually easier at a startup because negotiations between the team, the product manager and the other stakeholders all take place in-house, and everyone should be committed to the same goals. When it becomes clear that a feature will not be ready for the first release it can be postponed until the next release.

At product delivery

After an agency delivers a finished product to a client, it may signal the end of the product manager's involvement, at least for some time. Developing long-term plans with a client may be the responsibility of different members of the agency team.

In contrast, the product manager at a startup generally continues to work with different parts of the business to develop the longer-term road map. The measure of success in a startup is the success of the product, while in an agency the measure of success that really matters is whether the client was happy with the work that was delivered.

Working with stakeholders

At a startup, the product manager works closely with key stakeholders, such as the CEO and the business development team, to make sure the product that is delivered will help the business succeed. Here the product manager and the other stakeholders have a shared goal, which is to move the business forward, along with the success of the product in the marketplace.

At an agency, the goals of the client and of the product manager are not necessarily aligned in the long term. The success of the client's product is usually way beyond the control of the agency's product manager, who will not have the same sort of influence on the business team that they would have if they were part of the same company.

It is evident that there are significant differences between the role of the product manager in a startup verus in an agency. However, it is important to remember that the one thing that product managers always have in common is – for however long they are responsible for a product – to ensure that it is a success.

Perfecting your product by Janna Bastow

A healthy affinity with risk-taking lies in the heart of most prominent entrepreneurs. But building a successful digital product rarely happens by accident.

At the core of your product, you should define your product vision. There is no set formula for a good product vision, but it needs to be clear and compelling, and outline where you want to see your product in the next five or so years. Most importantly, it should be something your entire team is bought in on.

The Product Management process itself is cyclical, seven steps revolving around this product vision. While managing your product, you will find that you move from one stage to the next and back again:

Idea management

Great startups begin with great ideas; and inspiration comes from a variety of sources. Your team members will be one such source of ideas, as well as your customers and early adopters. Idea management is a critical stage in product management that will help you to get the most out of this inspiration.

Make sure it is easy for your team and customers to see what has happened to the ideas and suggestions they have made in the past. It is recommended to log these ideas in a product backlog like ProdPad, where they can be easily fleshed out and surfaced later.

Specifications

Your development team usually cannot work from just a one line idea, though it does not mean you need a massive product requirements document (PRD) either.

Rather than meticulously detailing how something will be built, specifications and requirements should provide the product development teams with the necessary information to make those decisions themselves. The best way to do this is to start with defining the problem you are trying to solve.

Determine what will be built, how you will know that it is complete and how you know that the product is achieving its objectives.

Roadmapping

An important aspect of product management is

roadmapping. A product roadmap is simply an artefact that communicates the direction you're going in order to meet your product vision. It communicates where you are and how you intend to proceed. It outlines high-level product initiatives and distinguishes priorities.

How you structure your roadmap is not necessarily important, though it is essential to remain flexible. Ideas and expectations are subject to change based upon the results of your continued experimentation and investigation, and your market, competition and resources are almost certainly not going to remain static.

Prioritisation

During the prioritisation phase, you will take a closer look at your backlog and roadmap. Your goal is to determine what will bring the most value and therefore what order you will look to tackle each idea, feature or initiative.

You will need to compromise and identify the changes that will have the greatest impact with the least amount of effort and maintain a balance between immediate gains and product evolutions with long-term benefits.

Delivery

All of this planning and specifying culminates in the delivery stage. To deliver your product, you will work closely with marketing, engineering and support teams.

While you will hand things over to your developers, you need to make yourself available to answer questions. You can make everyone's lives easier by considering in advance the answers our team will need in order to complete their tasks. As much as possible, include technical specifications, prototypes, design mock-ups and user stories and feedback.

Analytics and experimentation

There is no point in building a product if you are not measuring its success. Without that insight, you cannot test and improve your product in order to best understand what your users value most.

Your metrics, such as acquisition, engagement, retention, growth and revenue, will vary greatly depending on the nature of your product.

Customer feedback

Along the way, you should be gathering feedback from your customers to understand the value of your product and to determine what changes would be most appreciated.

Your product must fit the market. The best way of doing this is to expose your customers to new products before building even begins. Share prototypes, use wireframes, listen to their feedback and remain open to criticism.

During usability testing, pay attention to the customers' non-verbal cues such as hesitations or mistakes and develop tests to understand the problems and implement solutions.

Your vision for your product, as well as this ongoing product management process, will be a huge determining factor in not just your product but in your whole company's success. To think like a product manager, ask lots of questions, and remain flexible on the details but stubborn on the vision. Understanding understanding: two ways to include people in behavioural design by Dn Dan Lockton

You are probably something of an early adopter. You are reading this magazine, after all. But let's imagine - say, in 2018 - you decide to try one of the new driverless taxi-on-demand shuttles everyone is talking about. What does that experience look like? What is your decision process, from initial interest, to engaging with the service, to understanding how to use it? How does the design of the vehicle, service, and communications around it influence those decisions? What would cause you to change your behaviour more fundamentally and make driverless cars part of your daily commute, part of your everyday life? How would the process be different for someone else with different needs, abilities, and priorities? What would it take, across society more widely, for this kind of behaviour change to happen on a large scale?

Design, and its effects on behaviour, are crucial to the process.

Using design to change behaviour is a seam running through people's interactions with everything from smart cities to social media, Amazon Dash to driverless cars, a huge variety of Quantified Self wearables and the Internet of Things.

Many of these products and services, software and hardware, are based around the premise of getting 'users' to do something differently, by design. Sometimes, they are things people sign up for explicitly – e.g. fitness goals, or diet tracking –and in other cases it is about influencing or, frankly, deceiving people into doing things they would, not have otherwise chosen to do. In one way or another, these treat people's behaviour as a problem that can be 'solved' through technology—what Evgeny Morozov terms solutionism.

And there are a lot of startups in this space, often drawing on ideas from behavioural economics (the ubiquitous Nudge by Richard Thaler and Cass Sunstein), gamification, or the psychology of habit formation.

Some of these ideas have been applied more successfully than others: one of the advantages of the digital context is that it makes it much easier to do the kinds of A/B testing and rapid iteration, which can be very difficult in realworld behaviour change attempts. That, perhaps, ought to enable a flourishing of innovative and ultimately effective products.

But there is something missing from many of these approaches: actually learning from people themselves. You find out what people do, but not why they do it.

People are complex, and different people behave differently at different times; when we treat people like

engineered components to be specified, with fixed properties to be exploited, we miss something pretty fundamental.

If you were trying to persuade friends or loved ones to do something differently, you would talk to them face-toface, and you would learn from what you already know about them. You would know that different people, at different times, need to be talked to in different ways, and you would adjust and adapt how you communicate according to the context and nuances of the situation. You would treat people like people, rather than 'users' whose behaviour needs to be changed. And the same goes for design.

Every piece of design 'encodes a hypothesis about human behaviour', as Adam Greenfield puts it, and we cannot avoid this. But we can challenge and refine the models we have, through working with people – from the bottom up – to understand the contexts and nuances of everyday life, and decision-making in real situations rather than the abstracted assumptions embedded in top-down approaches. We can understand people better through understanding people's lives better. A great current example is the Government Digital Service, whose strong focus on embedding a programme of research with real people throughout its development process, to understand the diversity of users' understanding – and design with this in mind – contrasts with the Behavioural Insights Team's approach of treating the population as a vast, co-opted sample for randomised controlled trials on behaviour change.

I want to suggest two approaches for innovating around behaviour change in a much more people-centred way, and they both involve understanding:

Understand what people are trying to do

People are usually trying to solve some kind of

problem, and 'behaviour' is often a consequence of that. For example, there is a lot of work on behaviour change around energy, which assumes that people care about numerical feedback on their total energy use, but through research with people, in real everyday decision contexts, we found that – perhaps obviously – people are not trying to use energy, but trying to achieve other things, such as warming up the house, cooking meals and getting clothes clean and dry. And people find ways to solve those problems: they satisfice, to use Herbert Simon's term.

Learning from how people go about solving problems, and what they perceive those problems to be, can help reveal needs, and be a spark for innovation – compare the concept of paving the cowpaths. What are people trying to do? Can we help them solve their problems in a way that changes their behaviour, is the process helping them solve their problems better?

Understand what people are trying to do, and help them do it better.

Understanding how people understand the world

Back in the 1980s, Don Norman introduced the cognitive psychology concept of mental models to interaction designers, including the basic observation that the understanding a designer (or developer, or marketer) has of how a system works and what it does is often different to the understanding that users may have themselves. And the interface – and how it represents that system – is the mediator between these models. We might think, in an era of increasingly 'seamless' interaction and minimal interfaces, that users' understanding does not matter so much, but the meanings, associations

and expectations that people have about what is 'behind the scenes' of a system necessarily affect people's behaviour. In

our driverless cars example, one early finding from looking at public comments on news stories is that many people imagined them to be vehicles that were remote-controlled and guided by someone (or a computer) remotely, rather than actually autonomous. This perception affects trust in the system and potentially the willingness to try it in the first place.

So, doing research with people to understand the diversity of their understanding, how they think systems work or should work, and how that understanding affects their behaviour, can be an important part of the design process. For example, in work on energy use, we found that the metaphors and mental imagery people use when thinking about energy could enable the development of new kinds of feedback interface that better match people's understanding.

Is it better to help people understand the complex systems with which they are engaging, or simply to make the 'right' behaviour as easy as possible? We might think that a seamless 'don't make me think' state is more desirable, but look at the rise of Quantified Self technology – essentially tools for helping people get access to the complexity of their own bodies, rather than hiding it away. Do we want people to be 'power users' in their own lives? Both approaches have their merits, and adherents, and insights from actual research with people will be informative in both. You will find out why, and not just what.

Behaviour change does not have to be negative: it can be about helping people solve the problems they face in everyday life. Designing with people rather than for people means understanding people's lives: the contexts and nuances of people's everyday experience and interaction with systems, and innovating on that basis. And there is really no substitute: talk to people.

In the battle for attention the best business story wins

by Nick Giles

We live in an information-rich and timepoor world. A constant barrage of advertising messages and social media updates surrounds our lives, and people have learned to tune out. One American research centre estimates the average human attention span to be eight seconds, a third shorter than it was fifteen years ago, and even less than that of a goldfish.

Our hyper-connected lives have led to a degree of disconnection that poses a major challenge to brands.

Namely, that one of the most important currencies for any business has also become one of the scarcest in this market: trust. When people are more cynical, less willing to believe in brand promises and less equipped with the time to think, it becomes harder than ever for businesses to break through and connect with customers. Moreover, a slew of corporate scandals and the hangover from the crash of 2008 have left the private sector with reputational damage that has not yet fully healed.

In this challenging environment for business, those

that stand out have something to say, as well as something to sell. Brands can still win the trust of consumers, but only if they are deemed to be authentic and credible. Companies – both old and new – need more than a good product. They need purpose, a reason for being, and a mission that people can both believe and buy into.

The idea of purpose in business is by no means a new one, but it is more important than ever at a time when the battle for the hearts and minds of consumers is paramount. People want to see businesses that do good, not just those that do well for themselves. Take Patagonia, the ethical clothing brand whose adverts encourage consumers not to buy clothes they do not need, and which has committed to 'reimagine a world where we take only what nature can replace'.

Patagonia was founded in 1973, one of a generation of businesses whose social purpose arguably emerged from the influence of the 1960s counterculture: the desire to strike out against the corporate and political norms of the day. The businesses we see emerging today are equally purpose driven, and believe in the ability of business to solve social problems: a good example is Ella's Kitchen, the baby food brand that works to combat child obesity; or Uber, the taxi app that has committed to tackling traffic congestion in some of the world's biggest cities.

These are companies who seek to change the way the world lives, works and moves. Companies are growing at a rate much faster than their predecessors, building global customer bases and sky-high valuations in just a few years. Uber, now considered the world's most valuable start-up, was founded in 2009; rental platform Airbnb has facilitated bookings for over 25 million guests in over 34,000 cities in its seven years to date.

These are businesses that have, in what would have been an unthinkably short time by the standards of a decade ago, scaled to become world-beaters. Backed to the hilt by venture capitalists, they look unassailable from the perspective of companies just starting out. But there is a lesson in their rapid rise to fortune: today's market is one where success is closer to hand than it ever has been, with the right idea, the right application and, above all, the right approach.

Having worked closely alongside a host of British success stories for the last five years, and interviewed entrepreneurs from around the world for a new book, Mission: how the best in business break through, my advice to aspiring and emerging startups would be this: spend the time you need on product and concept development, but be sure to invest as much time in working out what you are trying to achieve and for what purpose. Set an ambitious mission for your business that can be the guiding star both for getting a venture off the ground and for getting past the challenges of growth. Be able to say not just what your product or service does, but why it really matters – why you were motivated to do it and for whom.

Write down, hone and practise the story you are telling to the marketplace: satisfy yourself of the wider significance of your business model, because that is exactly what you will have to do with investors, customers and interested parties in the months and years ahead. This is a market where the ability to advocate for your business and why it matters sets apart the great from the merely good. Often in business today, the best story wins out, and you need to make sure that you are the one who tells it.

Why user experience is the ultimate expression of your brand by Gemma Huckle

Brand: it is not what you say it is; it is what customers say it is. Whether you like it or not, your brand is a manifestation of the experiences people have when they interact with it at any level.

User experience – or UX – is much more than how a user works their way through your product or service online. Experience now extends beyond digital, and allows a customer or prospect to interact with your brand at any touchpoint.

As a result, 'experience' is as much about brand identity and culture, as it is your product. The fact that brand perception has evolved and shifted from logos to experiences is fundamental to how users interact with companies today, and yet too few companies realise this – keeping 'marketing' and 'UX' teams separate, with little common understanding. UX has a huge impact on the success or failure of a brand. The ultimate goal is to provide customers with an overall positive experience.

Thanks to the growing digital landscape, branding and user experience have been brought closer together in recent years, and it is a mistake to treat them in silos. Unfortunately, some designers, brand managers and marketers still think of user experience as unrelated to branding. When in fact, user experience needs to be placed at the very core of a brand while staying true to its overarching purpose.

Another common challenge startups in particular face is that many UX designers are not typically marketing-savvy. But user experience and product marketing are part of the same flow because how people experience your brand is part of the way you tell your story to the world. Intertwine some narrative into your user journey to make them feel part of your story too.

If your UX is not true to your brand, its fundamental mission, or is not providing value; customers and users will go elsewhere. Without good user experience, your brand means nothing. It is as simple as that.

What users want

Put simply, UX is the brand. Every single detail has to be considered, and you need to lead with a brand experience that fits the needs of your audience. But UX is not just about how things look and feel; it is also how something works. Understanding this distinction is critical – the experience every customer, prospect, colleague and supplier enjoys in each and every interaction with your company becomes your brand. And in a digital world, where people have easy access to your brand 24/7/365, where they choose what content they engage with, they want the experience to be painless, beautiful and concise. Users want speed, accuracy, convenience, relevance, ease and value.

Brandable experiences

As UX becomes the dominant brand strategy, it is important to note that usability alone will not create a brandable

user experience that yields returning customers.

It is also critical that you align brand offerings with usability. If you have got fractured promises, a beautiful design and user flow is not going to fix the fact you have got a bad offering – it will only disrupt the experience even further. For example, if you say you offer customer service support in realtime on your website, and the user fails to get a response from a team representative, they will not have a good experience as your promise failed to live up to expectation.

Even though it can be easy to get distracted and veer away from your core purpose by thinking about UX as a separate thing, what you really need to be doing is creating a UX-centric business model, where experience glues brand, humans and your product or service together.

When it comes to the branding experience, no one likes surprises or feeling confused. Therefore, the first step to progress user experience is to start the conversation with your employees and customers.

Kick things off by talking them through your brand's core purpose: who we are, what we care about and what we are doing to make a difference. Do they understand your mission and is it in line with their previous experiences? Giving your customers and employees ownership of your brand purpose will help them truly understand it, feel it and love it. The result? A human-centred story driven by deep customer insight that will create the most compelling reason for customers to engage with your brand over hundreds of competitors.

Embedding your 'why' into every experience will provide your brand with transformative insight in the real lives of real customers. So put UX at the heart of your brand, and your brand at the heart of your UX. Make it user-first, and make it remarkable.

Interview with Alex Shebar, London Community Director at Yelp by Natasha Hussein

What is your background and how did you come to work at Yelp?

I went to school in the USA at Syracuse University and received dual-degrees in Newspaper Journalism and English and was hired as a journalist at a major newspaper in Ohio. But it was after that when real life really began. I started a project in my spare time called Watch This. Our goal was to watch the 100 greatest films of all time, publicly, in a year, which we did. It was such an amazing time and we screened fantastic movies, from the original King Kong for 500 people in the city's public square to Raiders of the Lost Ark in the theatre where Steven Spielberg originally premiered the film. We had an amazing following for these events throughout the city. At the same time, Yelp saw what we were doing and were searching for their first Community Manager in the city and I fit the profile. I've been with Yelp for almost five years.

Tell us about your role as London Community Director at Yelp. What is an average day like for you?

My role differs daily. My main goal is to introduce

people in London to the amazing businesses that make up this city. So I'm online, answering questions, reading new reviews, on our social media, helping people out when they need it. And sometimes I'm offsite, chatting with business owners, going to local events or throwing my own ones. We've done everything from Behind the Scenes tours of Wicked to a 1,000 person party showcasing the best of Local London in the summer (with street art, liquid nitrogen ice cream, stunt bikes and the works!) We're actually working right now on London's first micro pig pop-up, which will both showcase an amazing venue that people still don't know, The Proud Archivist, as well as talk about the trend of owning micro pigs and the realities of keeping them as pets. Everything I do is to show off London through the site. The idea is to get people as excited about London as possible through using Yelp to discover, or rediscover, their city!

Why is community important? What are some of the ways in which Yelp has cultivated a strong community of Yelp enthusiasts that have turned it from a startup in 2004 to the publicly listed company it is today?

Community is the heart of Yelp, it can't be stated more clearly than that. Our users are the best tastemakers of whatever city they live in – they're the ones who know the new spots, the openings, the closings, where to go and where to avoid wasting your money. When our yelpers talk about a location, people listen and often make plans to go there, and business owners listen and make changes to their businesses to make them better. And so we have to listen to what the community wants and what it needs and work hard to remain authentic to them. It's why we have community managers across the UK and the world. We know you can't run London the same way you run Manchester or Rome or San Francisco or Hong Kong. Every city is different and every city is filled with unique people, so we work hard to make every city feel unique. It may be Yelp all over the world, but each Yelp community has its own feel.

What does Yelp do when a community member is displeased with Yelp?

When one of my community is unhappy, my job is to listen, learn, explain and hopefully work with them to come to a solution. I'm very easy to find. I'm all over Yelp, I'm the same handle (@YelpLondon) on all our social media, Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, etc. Not to mention, I'm constantly on Yelp itself. If they want to find me, they can, and that's done on purpose. I want to be out there and able to answer any issues they have. If it's something I can't do on a local level, then I'll get them to the right person at HQ. But usually any questions or concerns when it comes to London, I can help out with and try to do so as fast and effective as I can.

What can early stage companies do to enchant their community?

The first step for any company is to figure out who their community is. Not just your typical demographics of things like age, sex, location, etc, but specific things like if their communities have shared hobbies or interests. What they do for work and what they do after work. The better you know who your community is, the better you'll be able to talk to them and serve their needs. Stop thinking of them as clients or customers and think of them as people. Treat them the way you would want to be treated by a company. Also, up your social media game, I mean, the first word in social media is 'social'. Don't just use it as a way to advertise what you're doing. Chat with people, again, like people. Make them feel like they belong in your community because they do actually belong there.

Have there been any books that have made a profound impact on the way you view the world?

A book recently that really changed my way of thinking as a community manager was The Martian by Andy Weir. It's an amazing novel about an astronaut accidentally trapped on mars and the attitude he takes to solving the problems of staying alive. It's literally life or death for him, but he tackles every issue with humour, intelligence and creativity. It's a great way to look at any problem that comes out your own life. I also like the story behind the book. Weir had his book rejected by publishers, so put it on his own site for free, chapter by chapter. It built such a natural following that he selfpublished, where it exploded in popularity, and then got picked up by a professional publisher. I love that the author had the same can-do attitude as his character, very inspiriting indeed.

Who inspires you in your career?

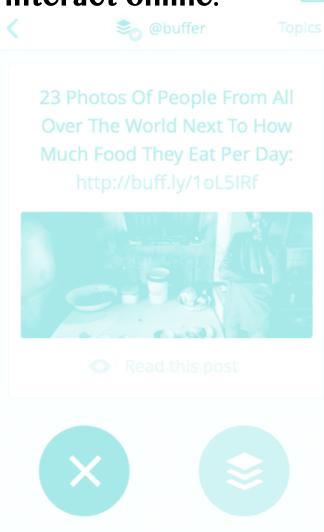
My boss, Colleen Curtis, is one of the most impressive people I've ever seen. She doesn't waste time, shuts down meetings if they're not going anywhere and has a constant attitude of doing things for the right reason. She taught me that if you're doing something because it's always the way it's been done and not asking, 'Why?', or at least, 'Are there ways we could be doing this better?' then change the way you're doing things.

How to turn your phone into a productivity powerhouse by Rio Hodges

Your phone can become a great tool to automate, organise, and create when you are on the go. With the right apps, you can make your company do the work of seven people even when you might only be a team of two. Organising your calendars, social media presence, documents, and daily tasks are the best way to ensure your time is dedicated to the activities that have the highest impact on your business. These six apps will lower your workload, and improve the way you interact online.

Daily

If you do not have the time to carefully curate content to share on your startup's social media feeds to promote your company, Daily by Buffer is the app for you. Daily provides suggested content that you can either pass on, or add to your Buffer stream from inside the app. Giving you the option to read the content or quickly add



the link after reading the headline, you can choose exactly what kind of content you want to share. Once you have found the content you like, you can either schedule when to post, or share it immediately with your followers.

Scannable

This simple app from Evernote allows you to scan your paperwork for electronic storage. Receipts, documents and business cards can instantly be digitised to help you live a paper free life. Not only can you create electronic copies, but you can also connect to Evernote, allowing you to sync documents on all of your devices. The minimalist design of Scannable makes it simple to quickly scan multiple pages. After scanning, you can even connect to LinkedIn, turning business cards into contacts instantaneously.

Sunrise

Sunrise Calendar consolidates your Google, iOS and Exchange calendar accounts in one place. With an infinite scroll interface, the app allows you to view events in one row and switch between dates easily. Users can subscribe to particular calendars, such as American sports, national holidays and religious events, allowing users to personalise their feed. Sunrise eliminates the unnecessary steps of switching between apps to schedule events, providing a single, simple platform to organise your life.

Handle

Handle creates to-do lists by incorporating your email accounts and calendars into the app, minimising the

need to switch between tools. You can sync Handle to your computer through your Dropbox account, as well as use a Chrome extension for desktop. Handle can be set to generate notifications once you reach specific locations. The app also allows you to group tasks into long-term projects, eliminating long lists of disorganised items.

IF

IF is an app based on the online platform If This Then That (IFTTT). IF allows you to automate online tools, reducing the time taken to coordinate things manually. It works by creating recipes, where you can open online channels like Gmail, Instagram, Buffer, and connect them to other platforms you use. For example, users can have tweets using their hashtag automatically retweeted, keep an archive of all tweets in a Google Doc once released, save tagged photos in Dropbox and even automate alerts to your phone if it looks like it is going to rain tomorrow. The possibilities are endless.

30/30

This app sets a timer for all of the tasks you want to complete. You can reprioritise tasks, edit their icons, and set your specific time. When time is up, the app alerts you so you can either stop working or adjust the rest of your schedule. Compartmentalising your time throughout the day has proven effective for many. 30/30 is based on the Pomodoro Technique, a time management method based on studies that people who work in 25 minute intervals with short breaks in between are far more productive and have higher levels of concentration throughout the day. 30/30 offers an easy way to see what tasks you have for the day and how much time you want to devote to each one specifically, setting up short breaks for you so you can be as efficient as possible.

Double shot – getting coffee and getting work done in Tech City

by Rio Hodges

Shoreditch, the heart of the London startup scene, has some fantastic working spaces disguised as coffee shops and cafes. From the social and upbeat to the quiet and focused, coffee shops near the Silicon Roundabout offer a great alternative to the office, often serving as places for personal work, collaborative meetings and connecting interesting people. Here is a sample of some of the coffee shops to visit when you are looking to get work done in a creative space or meet someone in a stimulating and motivating environment.

Shoreditch Grind

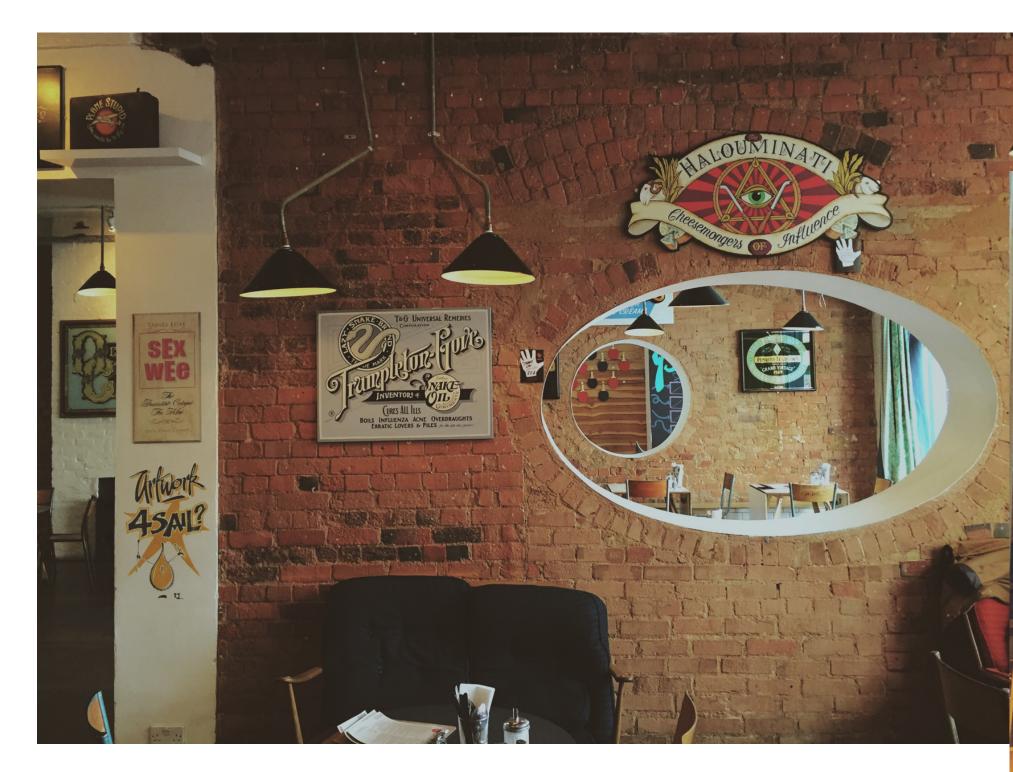
This coffee shop is centrally located in the London startup scene, a stone's throw away from Old Street Station, making it a convenient place to touch base with someone. However, as it is often busy, focusing on independent work can be a challenge. There are well-lit counters that line the windows, offering a spot for two or three people to chat. For more structured meetings or collaborative efforts, there are bigger tables in the centre where a group can meet. The menu is simple, providing customers a quick bite in a lively and accessible location.



Address: 213 Old Street, EC1V 9NR Website: shoreditchgrind.com

The Book Club

The Book Club, located just off of Great Eastern Street, is a large venue that features an all-day menu, great meeting spaces and a vibrant nightlife. The design of the interior is rustic with large tables suitable for a team as well as smaller tables for more intimate meetings. The Book Club offers a full breakfast, lunch and dinner menu, meaning you will never go hungry throughout your working day. To blow off some steam, the lower floor features a football and ping pong table. They also host a selection of events, including performances, storytelling and workshops. The Book Club provides a very quiet environment in the mornings for productive work and transforms into a vibrant social setting at night for those looking to learn new skills, enjoy live entertainment, extend their network, and relax.



Address: 100–106 Leonard Street, EC2A 4RH Website: wearetbc.com

Ozone Coffee Roasters

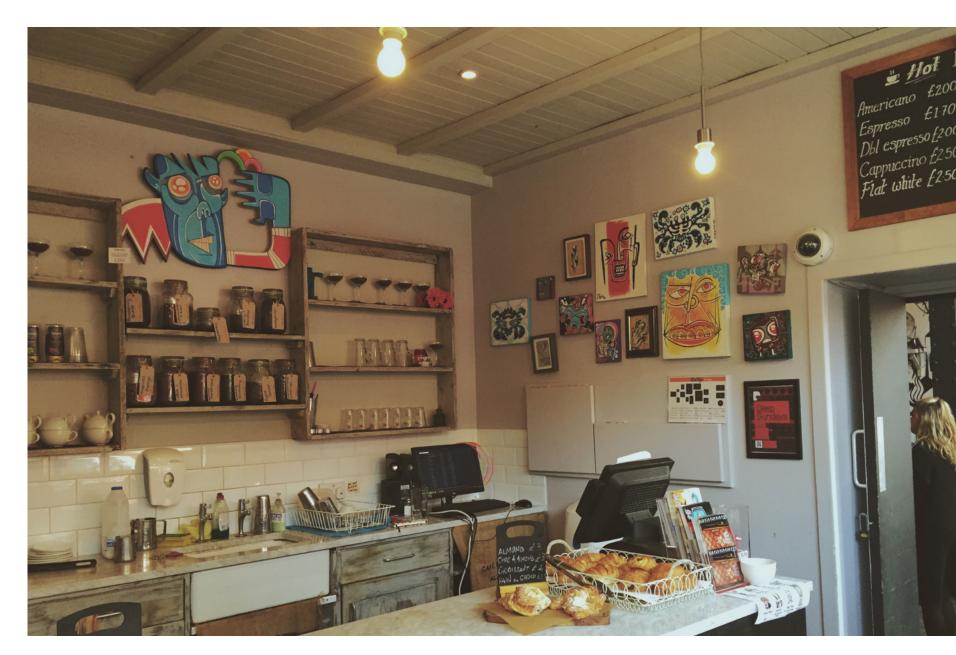
Ozone is not your usual coffee spot. In fact, Ozone is a coffee roaster that distributes their beans to other coffee outlets around the world. Their central location in Shoreditch is therefore a combination of booths and counters suitable for meetings and personal work, as well as spaces dedicated to educating customers about coffee. The kitchen is prominently featured behind the cafe with booths and other seating arrangements for people who want more of a meal. Downstairs you can take a peek at the roasting process, as well as meet with your team in cosy areas designated for five to seven people. If you are interested in learning how to make a perfect cup of coffee, Ozone teaches lessons on making a great espresso and mastering other brewing methods.



Address: 11 Leonard Street, EC2A 4AQ Website: ozonecoffee.co.uk

Translate

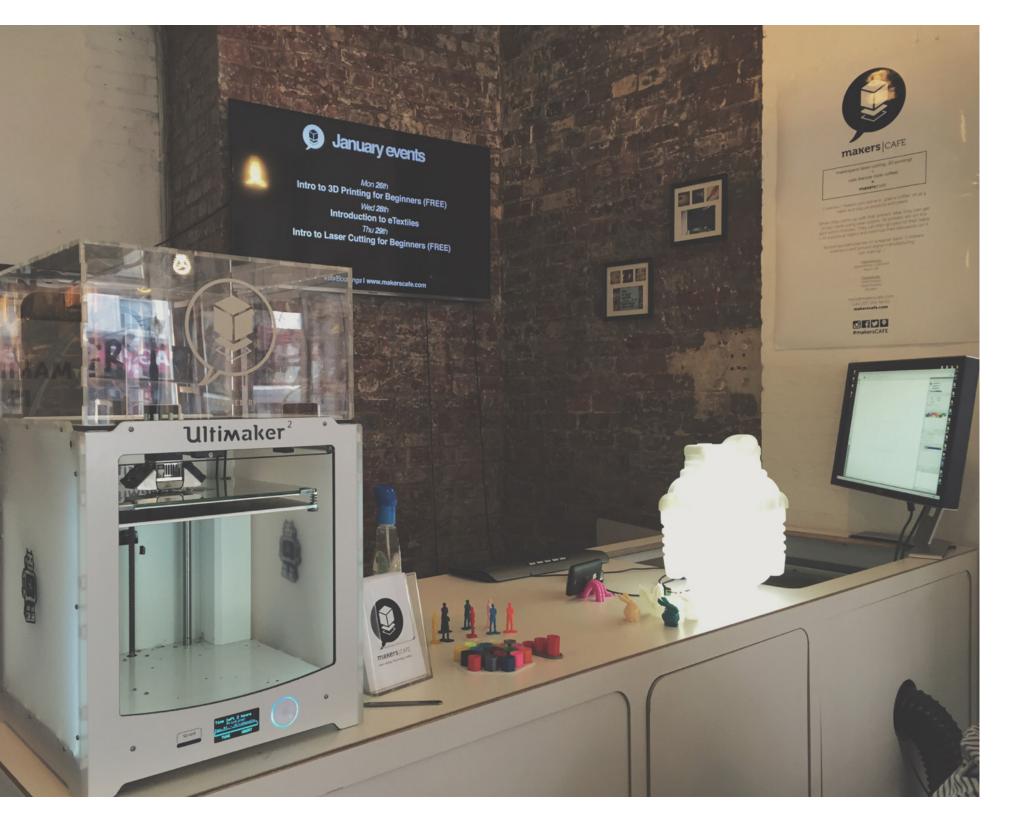
This cafe, much like the Old Shoreditch Station, is more than just a typical coffee shop. The cafe is actually featured in between a hostel and a restaurant/bar. That means a great mix of people at different times of the day. This is more of a networking location than a working space because of the limited seating in the cafe itself. At any time of day, however, there is a place to sit in the bar/restaurant, and a constantly changing group of people coming in and out of the venue. Boasting some great nightlife events and a location close to the heart of the London startup scene, Translate is a mashup of personalities and interests. It might be the place where you find the developer you need, co-founder who is passionate about your idea, or friend who can help you with your business.



Address: 12–14 Kingsland Road, E2 8DA Website: translateshoreditch.com

The Old Shoreditch Station/Makers Cafe

As one of the most unique cafes in London, the Old Shoreditch Station is both a comfortable cafe and a 3D printing space. With three separate rooms, the Old Shoreditch Station suits all tastes and needs. The largest room in the centre has ample seating, including comfortable couches. The Makers Cafe is constantly in motion with more than four 3D printers and a laser etching machine working on projects. Customers can work on their designs and learn how to print their own prototypes.



Address: 1 Kingsland Road, E2 8DA Website: makerscafe.com

Timberyard

Timberyard is ideal for entrepreneurs who prefer to work out of the office. The two-level coffee shop has plenty of drink options from chai tea lattes to hot chocolate, and their food items are hard to resist. A cascading layer of food greets you as you walk in, including cakes, sandwiches, pastries and more. Timberyard offers customers reservable working spaces downstairs, where you can collaborate and spread out. For a more laidback feel, customers can stay upstairs with some small individual tables, sofas, and counter space. This Shoreditch location is relatively quiet in the mornings, which can be great for productivity or as a place to unwind.



Address: 61–67 Old Street EC1V 9HW Website: timberyardlondon.com

Fix

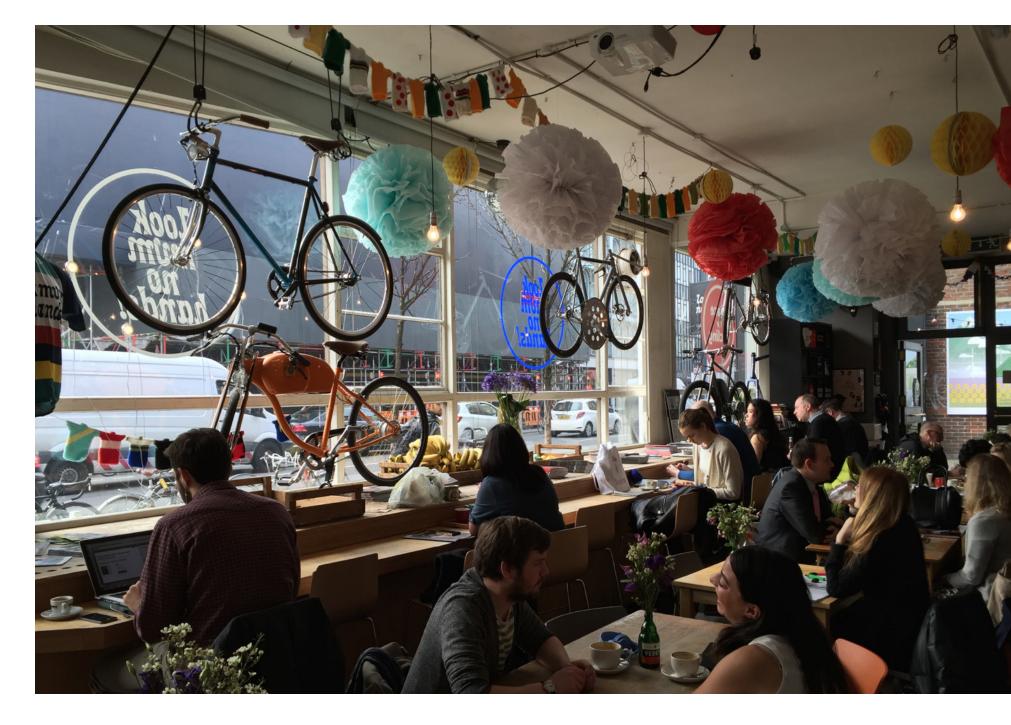
Fix offers a more casual working and meeting space. With bright patterned designs and a ceiling peppered with refurbished chandeliers, Fix certainly stands out. Though their food menu is limited, Fix has locally roasted blends of coffee as well as guest blends, giving returning customers a chance to try something new each time. The big leather couches in the back corner of the store serve as a great casual meeting place to catch up on the week or simply relax and socialise. Fix has a list of smoothies on their menu if you are in the mood for more than just coffee.



Address: 161 Whitecross St, EC1Y 8JL Website: fix-coffee.co.uk

Look Mum No Hands!

Filled with gears and hanging bicycles in the window, Look Mum No Hands! is an eclectic space to work and chat. An open floor plan offers customers plenty of room to work. However, this openness also gives people an opportunity to meet with one another in a relaxed and social setting. Whether you are there to get your bike fixed or to try one of the many food items on the menu with a cup of fresh coffee, Look Mum No Hands! is a unique mixture of style and function. Look Mum No Hands! is also an interesting option for evening gatherings, with an outdoor patio area and planned events for those looking for an interesting location to bond with their team after hours.



Address: 49 Old Street, EC1V 9HX Website: lookmumnohands.com

Collaborative comunities – where to learn and connect online by Rio Hodges

Attending real world networking events can be inconvenient, having to be in a particular place at a particular time. These events are often exhausting, time consuming and are inappropriate for finding immediate answers to your most pressing questions. Engaging in online communities, however, may be the solution to this by cutting through the small talk and getting straight to the answers. Likeminded members of online groups can help to answer questions and make connections that help your progress. Here are the places you need to be connecting online.

Reddit

r/startups

Reddit is the king of communities, ranging from the diehard Arrested Development fans to the Photoshop masters who can edit Vladimir Putin into a full figure skating leotard. There are however, hundreds of subreddits dedicated to serious topics, one of them being r/startups.

This subreddit is a forum with people in the startup community posting jobs, questions, advice, and anything else that could potentially help fellow entrepreneurs. Much like the culture of Reddit in general, r/startups prohibits people selling their products within the group. This eliminates the heap of spam you can get in Facebook groups where only a small percentage of posts are helpful and the rest are adverts or pleas for clicks. If you would like to get even more specific, r/startups features a column of suggested subreddits like r/entrepreneur, r/marketing, and r/venturecapital. Reddit can be a fantastic place to find niche communities, thought-provoking posts, and users that can turn into some valuable connections to have in the future.

Slack

#Startup

Slack has evolved beyond a tool for teams to communicate with one another internally, into an essential

platform for communicating with likeminded people all over the globe. An example is the #startups channel, managed by Startup Foundation, with over 1,500 members and 27 specific channels; there are plenty of discussions to either get involved with or simply read through.

There is an application process to get access to the group with a one-time €20 fee. The Startup Foundation says this is to ensure that you are committed to making a valuable contribution to the growing community. Though a little more exclusive than other startup communities, #Startup offers a level of depth and knowledge that is hard to come by.

#TechLondon

A smaller community specific to the Greater London area is #TechLondon, with over 1,200 members and more than 25 channels. You can meet people on #skillshare that are willing to help you out on your project, or get some exercise advice on #health-fitness when the startup life is taking a toll on your body. A great place to start can be on #introductions where you could potentially meet your next co-founder, developer, or mentor. Getting involved is key and making your voice heard in a smaller community can be easier and more fruitful.

Google+ Communities

Every company has a Google+ account to ensure they do not lose out on whoever might be on the

network, but is it really particularly popular? Generally, it is the social media outlet that gets little attention, lacking enthusiasm from the public who would rather stick to Facebook and Twitter.

Google's Communities, however, can be very useful. With plenty of options, such as Entrepreneurs & Startups as well as location specific communities like Startup Australia, Google+ provides extensive choice. The difference between Facebook groups and Google Communities rests in the culture behind the two. While adding someone on Facebook to build a relationship or ask them questions may be too upfront, Google+ is different. More business and network oriented, adding someone to your circles or contacting them can be more appropriate and therefore get you further in terms of connecting online.

All things considered, a face-to-face networking event and online forums/communities cannot be treated as the same animal. Learning the specific conventions and cultures of both is essential to being successful in growing your network. The key is, therefore, to balance both. Attending informal networking events like Silicon Drinkabout, engaging in hackathons or participating in networking can expose you to great people, but to answer your specific question on finance might require a helpful internet user willing to comment on your post. The combination of the two will ultimately lead to a depth of knowledge and understanding to help you succeed as an entrepreneur.

Interview with Aaron O'Hearn, Cofounder, Startup Institute by Yoav Farbey

Aaron O'Hearn is co-founder of Startup Institute, an organisation that provides people with the skills and mindset that they need to be high impact individuals within high growth technology companies. Startup Institute runs eight week programs in New York, Boston, Chicago, London and Berlin.

Who is Startup Institute aimed at?

We're focused on working with people who want to make a difference in the world, who care about growth in themselves and in their career, and who believe in doing good work.

How does Startup Institute stand out against its competitors – what makes Startup Institute special?

We're focused on a cross-disciplinary experience, which emulates life in an actual high-growth company. The programme itself is designed to help people discover what they love and pave the path for them to do that professionally. We do that in two ways: 1) educating them on the skills and expertise required and 2) coaching them on the mindset they'll need to succeed in that environment.

Where did the motivation for Startup Institute come from?

It's quite simple actually; while I was running Special Projects for TechStars Boston, I spoke to dozens of companies trying to understand where their biggest pain points were. Overwhelmingly they were related to talent. Then we'd ask them a few questions: what they were looking for in people, and from there – if we were to show them a person who looked like the one they described, would they hire them? The answers to both of those was a resounding yes; at which point we said, 'Okay. We know what we need to build'.

Did you have any concerns when starting your business, if so what were they?

Seriously? Hundreds. Would graduates get hired? Could we find great people for the programme? What would the business model look like? Who was our real customer: the company or the student? How would we expand, and how quickly?

What is your business background, and what got you interested in startups?

I studied Innovation and Entrepreneurship at University; however what really got me sucked in was meeting someone who encouraged me that I could build an environment that I wanted to exist and work in.

I had no idea what that meant until the group I had

started on campus became the community for the risk takers, hustlers and the folks that didn't fit anywhere else. We fed off one another and the energy to start was contagious.

Startup Institute is a global business, how did you plan your global expansion – why go to Berlin and London?

Startup Institute represents a fundamental building block in any high-growth ecosystem: talent. Without talent, it's hard for companies to grow with all the capital that's deployed. London and Berlin represented ecosystems that were coming together and needed this building block in order to really grow.

How did you initially raise funding for your company?

We bootstrapped the company for the first 18 months. During that time, I'd become close with a number of mentors and people I considered to be incredibly valuable for advising the future of the company. As we advanced in conversations, I asked them how they would finance the company if they were running it. Their response was to raise capital; from them. Once that happened, the company took on a new pace, and we recently closed a Series A and will likely take more capital again in the future.

What do you think made your funding campaign successful?

We'd built a meaningful business. We had revenue, customer traction and community participation. All of which were proof points that we were on to something.

What has been your greatest achievement so far?

Our greatest achievement so far has been creating an experience that has been transformational for so many people. It's literally changed the course of people's lives; that's not something most people get to do in their career. I am moved by the love letters we receive from our alumni.

In the coming year, what would you like to achieve with your business?

We have a strategic plan that we're pushing on, there are five key priorities for the business that the entire company is aligned to. Personally, I'd like to see us launch a program that focuses exclusively on alumni.

What has been your most valuable lesson so far since starting your business?

Don't wait to take the important decisions. It's really easy to put off difficult, and often critical decisions regarding the strategy, plan or people. Waiting to make those decisions only makes them more complex and heavy.

Finally, if you could give one piece of advice to someone thinking about starting a business, what would it be?

Go all in. If you're going to do it, you have to do it. You can't launch a company by being half-committed. If you're not fully committed yet, go and work for a startup; learn on someone else's dime, develop a network and core expertise in an area you want to found then commit.

Interview with Willem Sundblad and Peter Brand from Oden Technologies

by Natasha Hussein

Oden Technologies is a company cofounded by friends Willem Sundblad and Peter Brand. Their mission is to help manufacturers use data to help improve the efficiency of factory processes, including minimising machine downtime and optimising stock levels while getting the right information to the right people to empower more effective decision making.

What problem does Oden Technologies solve for the manufacturing industry?

On a high level our solution makes manufacturers more efficient and sustainable. Decreasing rejection rates and machine downtime, while freeing up more production capacity.

The problem is that manufacturers today don't have the tools to analyse and optimise their production – specifically, using data to make decisions. The data exists, but in the past it's been very difficult to connect and use the data in a simple way. Instead, operators and factory managers make production decisions based purely on experience and anecdotal evidence. We're giving them the tools to take decisions based on data.

What have people's objections to Oden been and how have you dealt with them?

Many industrial players immediately want to put us in pre-existing categories of industrial software (like Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) or Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) systems). From the beginning we often need to explain that we're delivering a new way of approaching their factories.

The buzz around the Industrial Internet of Things or Industry 4.0 that has been increasing in the last year has helped prepare our audience for the idea of the Smart Factory.

We still see more objections in Europe than in the US. One example is cloud computing. European manufacturers still see cloud services as something new and dangerous, and some may even have policies that data can't physically leave factories. This will change, since cloud services have become pervasive in all other areas of our lives. We realise manufacturing is just one of the last frontiers.

More objections will come – whether to the concept of how we approach making industry efficient, or to the technology employed to execute that vision. As long as we find the early adopters and deliver value we will be in a good position when the market warms to the actual application of everyone's 'smart factory' and Industry 4.0 talk.

What are the main tasks you are working on now and what is your vision for Oden Technologies in the coming years?

Right now all of our focus is on building the best possible solution for our first client. It all comes down to the quantifiable value that we can deliver to them and that's the only thing that we're focusing on now.

The Smart Factory revolution is happening, it is still in its nascent stages but doing things right with our first customer and first niche (cable manufacturers) will allow us to move to other sectors in manufacturing. In a few years when the market is ready for widespread adoption we can be the go-to provider, known for painless implementations and quantifiable results year-on-year.

What has been the highlight of your journey so

The highlight is absolutely getting our first trial customer on board with our product vision. It's a highlight because it was hard – they really picked the solution apart, but in the end got really excited and will now promote to the market that they are using Smart Factories powered by Oden Technologies.

far?

What have you learned about disruption?

Everyone will question you. Some will think you're mad, and want to raise as many objections as possible

off the bat. But when you show real passion, dedication and continued progress, people will get really excited and open doors you didn't think existed. When you're working on a real problem and show tenacity, you attract other mad people who also want to do something challenging and difficult. It has been incredible to see what type of doors have been opened to us in terms of mentors, collaborators, and potential investors, and I think the main reason is that we're shooting for the moon with this.

Have you learned anything about yourselves that you didn't know before you embarked on this journey?

You learn that as a co-founder of a small company, you need to be extremely resourceful with your time. If you learn to ask the right questions and leverage your network, you can get way more done than you originally thought, across disciplines you never would have normally touched.

How has working on Oden technologies changed both your, personal and professional lives?

It's a bit of a cliché but the personal life has taken a toll, neither the time nor the money is available for it at the moment. On the other hand, since we're so passionate about Oden we're now enjoying every day of the week instead of just the weekends. We couldn't imagine working on something other than this.

Outside of Oden Technologies, what are your interests? Are there any activities you take pleasure in that recharge you for your work?

Willem: Hiking, mountaineering and skiing, I guess you could sum it up as leaving the office and getting out in the mountains.

Peter: Are bars a hobby? Mostly running and reading – both take your mind off daily tasks and let you recharge, but still stimulate other creative juices that have great carry-over effects.

What books have inspired you as people and what is it about them that have resonated?

BOLD by Peter Diamandis and Great by Choice by Collins and Hansen. They touch on the possibilities our current and future world holds, and how to apply yourself to those.

What suggestions do you have for evaluating an opportunity before embarking upon it?

Is this something that you are truly passionate about? If this succeeds, would you be happy if you were working on it for the next 30 years? Don't chase money, chase a passion. If you're chasing money you'll be like a dog chasing its tail, but if you're chasing a passion, everything else will follow. Interview with Clemens Weisshaar, co-founder of studio KRAM/WEISSHAAR and creator of the Robochop

by Natasha Hussein

Clemens Weisshaar is half of the dynamic duo that lead Studio KRAM/WEISSHAAR – a design studio in Munich and Stockholm that has worked with technology-driven companies including Audi and Prada.

What is the Robochop?

Robochop is an interactive robotic installation that produces objects made by people from across the world, designed on a web interface.

How will the Robochop change the manufacturing industry as we know it?

Robochop heralds the age of universal connectivity – where factories, logistics systems and end users interact seamlessly.

How did you fund the creation of the Robochop?

Robochop was commissioned by GFT – the initiators of CODE_n and supported by CeBIT, EY, Salesforce, EnbW, TRUMPF and KUKA.

Please talk to us about the journey it took to produce the Robochop. Who was involved? What was it made from?

Robochop is mostly made of existing hardware, infrastructure and intellectual property. Our part is simply plugging it all together by developing the code that orchestrates the interplay between man and machine.

Tell us about the reception to the Robochop. As with all innovations, there are always sceptics. What scepticism have you faced and how have you dealt with it? Who has been most embracing of the Robochop?

I can't remember much scepticism. There are certainly people who accuse us of destroying our own profession – that of a designer. We find that rather amusing.

You have studied both at Central Saint Martins and at the Royal College of Art. What moved you to become a designer? I wanted to design things – new, exciting things that cause a reaction in the stomach of those who see and use them.

You were an assistant to renowned designer, Konstantin Grcic. How has he influenced the work that you do today?

I spent my formative years in Konstantin's office and owe him a lot. Konstantin works in the tradition of the Italian school of design, where the designer is not an employee of a company but rather a sparring partner of a visionary entrepreneur. Great design can only happen when there is a mutual vision and a lot of trust, because without that who would risk doing bold new things? Robochop is, in a way, the perfect example where Ulrich Dietz, chairman of the board at GFT Technologies supported us in this rather daring venture with everything necessary to pull it off.

From the Robochop to the car sharing programme you put together for Audi, many of studio KRAM/WEISSHAAR projects are heavily technology driven. Was it always part of your vision in life to be involved with technology?

I have always been interested in technology and machinery. On my uncle's farm I watched and learned, from a very early age, how to operate and fix machines. Firstly a motorbike, the Zündapp 50ccm at age 12. I spent most of my childhood and youth with dirty fingers and open knees. My first computer was an IBM 8088 with Hercules Graphics. I believe that cultural history and history in general is better described by the evolution of technologies than by battles and assassinations. Plus I have always had little patience for anything nostalgic.

Tell us about your relationship with you your partner, Reed Kram. What are the defining characteristics of your relationship that mean KRAM/ WEISSHAAR do such compelling work?

KRAM/WEISSHAAR is a do tank. We act. We like trying things out rather than worrying too much. That is the spirit of our practice. Plus we are both very curious people.

As a designer, how do you select between the multitude of potential creative solutions available to a given brief?

We work very analytically and find inspiration often in complications or where there is friction. In the end the best idea wins and everyone on the table knows what idea that is. It really doesn't matter whose idea it is because we act as a unit. There is always a formula to crack, a logic to be found even when things are messy. In other words the solution almost arrives automatically when there are enough bright minds involved.

What else is KRAM/WEISSHAAR working on?

Protective Gear for competition motorsports for

SPIDI, large public LED lighting masts for a great company called EWO, an autonomous vehicle that doesn't have wheels, a new architecture for CODE_n 15 next year in Hannover, a very sophisticated custom camera system for Audi, a restaurant in Stuttgart and a few other things we can't talk about yet.

Are there any books you have read that have really impacted your thinking?

Mythologies by Roland Barthes, Walden by Henry David Thoreau, Operating Manual for Spaceship Earth by Buckminster Fuller, An Engineer Imagines by Peter Rice,

The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction by Walter Benjamin, and The Machine: As Seen at the End of the Mechanical Age by Pontus Hulten.

What strategies do you use for cultivating and maintaining a constant mindset of innovation and creativity?

Reading, speaking to exciting people and riding motorbikes.

What advice do you have to those who are entering the hardware space?

To do it rather than to think twice. There is so much to rethink and yet there are great opportunities ahead as the line between physical and virtual vanishes.



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