



# Data-Driven Growth Hacking

## What High Growth B2B SaaS Companies Do Differently

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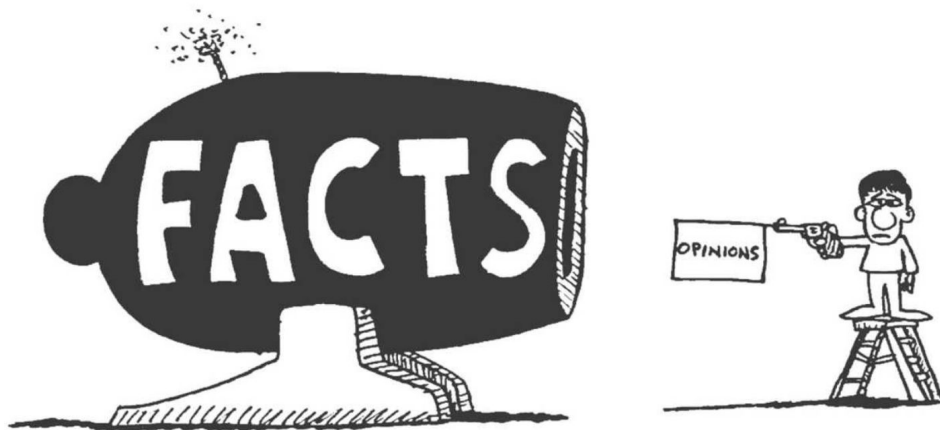
## Patterns Of High Growth Companies

In working with many B2B SaaS, Marketplace and other Online companies over the last 10 years, I discovered a clear pattern that leads to rapid revenue growth. Contrary to popular belief, the pattern isn't a silver bullet in the form of a growth hack, tactic or tool. Rather the pattern is all about a different process, or system if you will.

This article is about the number one system that sets the high growth companies apart, and I dare to say there is not a single high growth B2B SaaS company without some form of this system in place. On the other end of the spectrum: I haven't seen a single low growth B2B SaaS company, who implemented this system, not be able to at least double their growth speed in a matter of months.

**“There is not a single high growth B2B SaaS company  
without some form of this system in place”**

I call this system Data-Driven Growth Hacking. In case you unsuccessfully tried growth hacking before, bear with me, as data-driven growth hacking is a different beast, and I'll also cover anti-patterns you might have fallen for in the past. One of which is the low growth trap, which I'll cover next.



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## The Low Growth Trap

Most of the companies I've worked with fell for what I call the "low growth trap". The first step to high growth is to learn to recognize this trap, so you can avoid it or get out of it.

The cycle starts with one of the founders reading or hearing about a growth hack or tool that worked great for another startup. Something like: "Google advertising", "Blogging / Content Marketing", "Find partners to sell us", "let's integrate with that CRM so we're on their marketplace", "high priced version for large companies", "just hire more salespeople", "let's try a new niche" or "let's copy this cool new feature from a competitor, it will drive growth". Note that all of these ideas are rather big, vague and would require weeks to get running.


The next step is endless opinion-based discussions about the various ideas, where everybody in the team tries to defend their idea, but nobody has any hard data that their idea will actually work for your situation. Depending on company culture, one of two things will happen: The same weekly discussion repeats over and over with the same soft arguments, again and again, until at some point some decision is made, which disappoints everyone whose idea wasn't chosen. Or the founder takes a gamble based on his gut feeling without much discussion, and the team feels a bit less involved moving forward.

**"Endless opinion-based discussions, but nobody has any hard data that their idea will actually work"**

Then, the implementation starts, often taking a month or two, where everybody works relentlessly on this latest idea, full of optimism. The idea is then launched but i.e. the costs of the google ads are massive, with just very few signups, or nobody reads the blog, or the sales guy isn't increasing sales, or the response of the new niche isn't great and the new feature isn't causing any magic growth.

The failure is quickly covered up by vanity metrics, which make the idea sound like a success, but they are not related to growth, i.e. "10 people used the new feature", "the sales guy talked to 10 customers", "we got 10 likes on the blog".

**"The failure is quickly covered up by some vanity metrics, that make the idea sound like a success"**



However, nobody is really fooled, and soon negative, generic and unhelpful conclusions are drawn like (and these all come from actual customers): “We tried Google but it doesn’t work (we got burned and we’ll never touch that again)”, “Facebook / LinkedIn /etc doesn’t work”, “Content marketing doesn’t work, we have proven that”, “Adding more features doesn’t increase growth, and look, dropbox is a simple product too right”, “Salespeople are too expensive to work for our business model”.

The pain of the sense of failure is often so strong, that actual rational conclusions don’t surface. More rational conclusions would have been: We set ourselves up or failure by going all-in on these big ideas, without having hard data to tell us if they will work or not. Concluding from one try, that these directions don’t work, is closing the door too early on directions that could contain the gold.

“We set ourselves up or failure by going all-in on these big ideas, without having hard data to tell us if they will work or not”

The final step is that after a few months, the past failure has been forgotten and all the past ideas come back to the table, now defended even more fiercely because those ideas will certainly work better.

At this point the cycle starts again, disappointments start piling up and the motivation & bank account keep shrinking. I truly hope you are not in this cycle, but in case you are, being aware of it is a big step in getting out of it. Let’s now jump to the healthy alternative cycle that high growth companies use instead.

Are you in the low growth trap, and could you use some help getting out? You can **work with me for free for 14 days**, [click here](#) to find out more.















# Data-Driven Growth Hacking System







The two core components of Data-Driven Growth Hacking (DDGH) are:

- 1) Rapid Experimentation
- 2) Data-Driven Decision making

## Experimentation Process

Rapid experimentation means coming up with big ideas that might increase revenues and then breaking them down into the smallest possible experiments you could do to find out if the idea might work. The rapid part means every week at least one experiment starts that typically cost just a few hours to implement. Rapid experimentation leads to high growth because you are learning at a faster rate.

Test Card	
Test Name	Deadline
Assigned to	Duration
STEP 1: HYPOTHESIS	
We believe that	
Critical:   	
STEP 2: TEST	
To verify that, we will	
Test Cost:   	Data Reliability:   
STEP 3: METRIC	
And measure	
Time Required:   	
STEP 4: CRITERIA	
We are right if	

Learning Card	
Insight Name	Date of Learning
Person Responsible	
STEP 1: HYPOTHESIS	
We believed that	
STEP 2: OBSERVATION	
We observed	
Data Reliability:   	
STEP 3: LEARNINGS AND INSIGHTS	
From that we learned that	
Action Required:   	
STEP 4: DECISIONS AND ACTIONS	
Therefore, we will	

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## Some experiment examples

Sales experiment example: Let's say your sales team is having trouble reaching your leads or free trial users via phone, which is essential to selling your product. One idea might be that people are easier to get on the phone if they can schedule a time to be called that is put into their calendar. An experiment to test that might be to just redirect your contact form to a calendly.com meeting booking page and see how many people book. And if that seems to be working, you could consider automatically emailing people after 10 minutes if they haven't scheduled a call yet.

Marketing experiment example: You have a SaaS product for Dentists and you are considering expanding into the Doctor and Physical Therapists niches. These markets would, of course, require special landing pages, special features, pricing, etc. The riskiest assumption, however, is that these people are interested in your product at all. So instead of building new ads/landing pages/features at all, I would focus on testing the riskiest assumption first, which is, if these roles are interested in your product in the first place (and if they are, which of the 2 is most interested)? The simplest test would be changing your existing FB ad a little to target these two new groups (yes, you can target those on FB too).

Product experiment example: Let's say you are considering a big new feature that would cost at least 2 months of development. Instead of completely developing it, I would just add the button for the feature on the product dashboard, and see if anybody clicks on it at all. If people click on it, this is measured, and the user gets a message like "This feature is not yet available".

## Experiments Versus Bigger Investments and the Product Roadmap

Experimentation doesn't mean you never go for big new features or marketing funnels anymore, which I call Roadmap themes. It only means you typically do a few experiments in that direction first, to find out if the investment would make sense, before going all in and doing those bigger investments. In practice this means that developers allocate a certain percentage of their workweek to experiments. Since you do experiments and themes in parallel, it's not the case that your roadmap themes are waiting for experiments.



## Summary - Rapid Experimentation



### High Growth

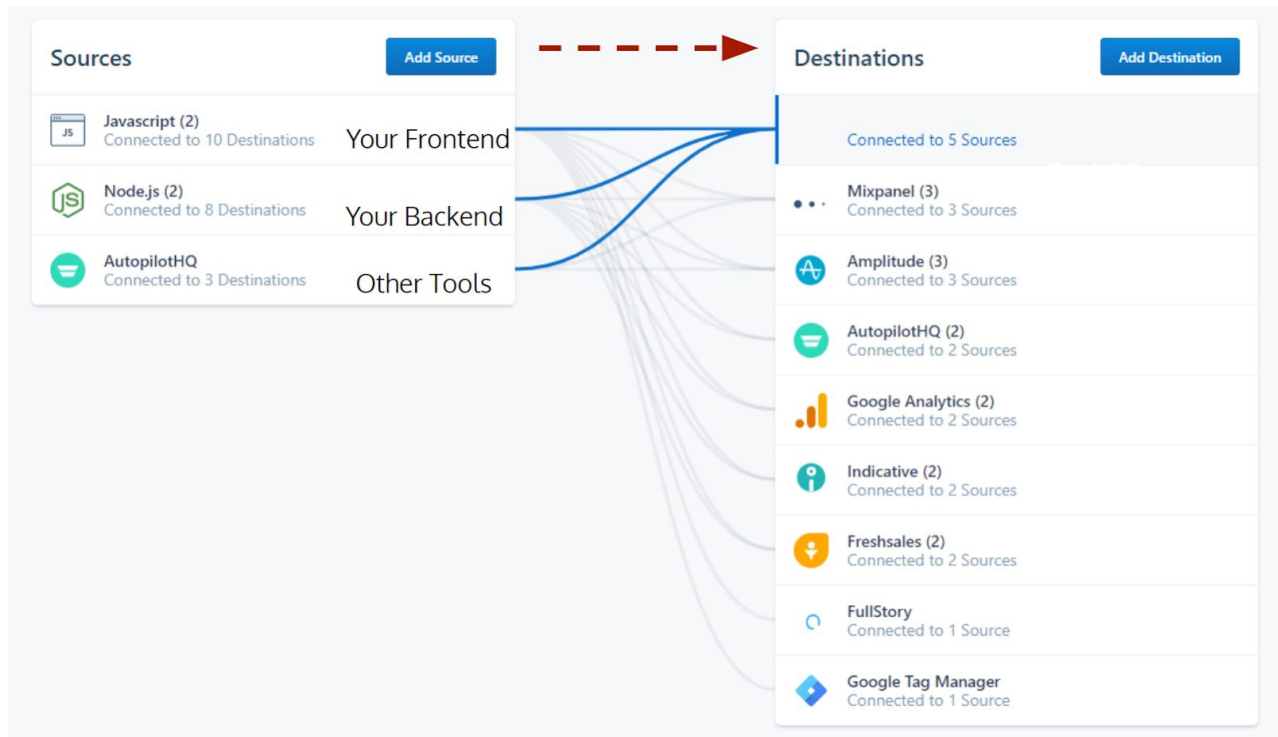
We start experiments every week  
Experiments cost a few hours or days to implement  
Experiments & Ideas backlog  
Experiments across Marketing, Sales, and Product  
Experiments have a clear hypothesis and success metric  
Learnings are written for every completed experiment  
Bigger investments (weeks of implementation) only after a few experiments and data analysis  
2-month product Roadmap  
Hacking together funnels and experiments with tools like zapier, unbounce, typeform

### Low Growth

We start something big every quarter  
"Experiments" costs weeks or months  
No tracking of experiments  
Experiments only in Marketing or Product  
Experiments are todo's instead of hypothesis  
No written learnings  
Implement ideas that cost weeks directly if we like them  
12-month product roadmap  
Developing everything in-house

## Data-Driven Decision Making

Experimentation and Data-Driven Decision Making are Siamese twins: Experiments generate new data for decision making, and data is used to prioritize experiments and Roadmap themes. Just like how high growth companies run 10x more experiments, they also collect and use 10x more data. i.e. they have tools setup to track every click of every user and measure what percentage of users drop off in every stage of their CRM sales funnel, they know their churn, and how their revenues are improving month over month and why.



### Level 1: Management KPI's

Being data-driven and growth focussed all start with knowing your revenues and the KPI's driving that revenue. I call this management KPI's, which high growth companies track and discuss weekly. It's a cliché, but you can only improve what you can measure, and if you don't look at these KPI's every week it's very easy to get distracted by the hundreds of distractions that hit a startup founder every week. My team tracks all these KPI's for all our clients, and it costs us less than 30 minutes per week, so there is no reason not to do it, or have somebody do it for you.

Below is an example of such a report (download xls/google version [here](#)). This is the longest possible version, once you pick the most relevant KPIs for you it's typically only half as long.

KPI	Week 47 17 Nov	Week 48 24 Nov	Week 49 1 Dec	Week 50 8 Dec	Week 51 15 Dec	Week 52 22 Dec	Definition
<b>Aquisition &amp; Traffic Sources</b>							
New Visitors	1,242	1,328	1,262	1,363	1,254		First time Unique visitors on the public part of the website
Search - Organic	564	620	570	525	525		All numbers in this section exclude users with an adblocker
Referral - Organic	108	101	95	101	99		
Social - Organic	34	36	37	35	37		
Search - Paid	32	29	29	27	28		First time Unique visitors from paid search advertisement
Display - Paid	28	27	29	30	30		First time Unique visitors from display advertisement
% Visitors to Marketing Leads	8.1%	7.5%	7.9%	7.3%	8.0%		
Marketing Qualified Leads	100	100	100	100	100		Marketing qualified leads. Potentially interested buyers you can contact to nurture and qualify (i.e. PDF download)
<b>Acquisition - Paid Sources</b>							
Facebook - Clicks							Number of clicks
Facebook - CPC							Cost per Click (Pounds)
Facebook - Leads							
Facebook - Cost Per Lead							Cost per MQL (i.e. left email for ebook)
<b>Facebook - Conversions</b>							Number of new SQLs (contact form or meeting)
<b>Facebook - CPA</b>							CPA, cost per aquisition of a SQL (contact form or meeting)
Google - Clicks							Number of clicks
Google - CPC							Cost per Click (Euro)
<b>Google - Conversions</b>							Number of new SQLs (contact form or meeting)
<b>Google - CPA</b>							CPA, cost per aquisition of a SQL (contact form or meeting)
LinkedIn - Clicks							Click (to a landing page)
LinkedIn - CPC							Cost per Click (to a landing page)

*Zoom in if too small to read. Continued on next page.*

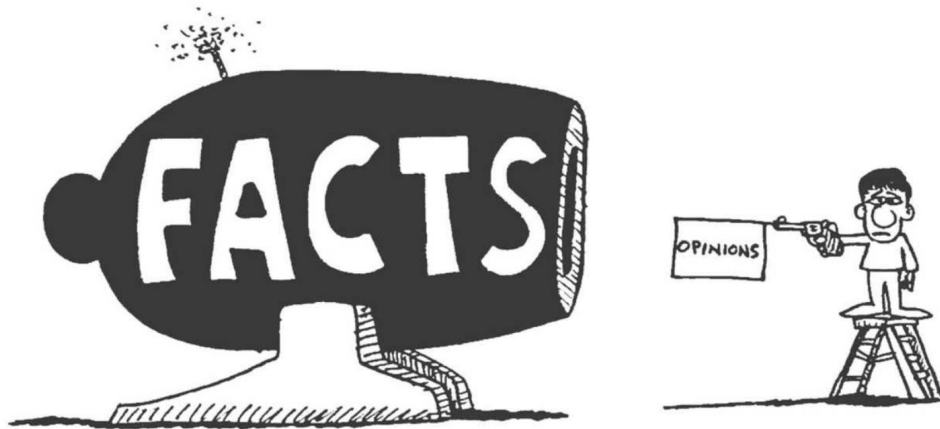
KPI	Week 47 17 Nov	Week 48 24 Nov	Week 49 1 Dec	Week 50 8 Dec	Week 51 15 Dec	Week 52 22 Dec	Definition
<b>Referrals &amp; Partners</b>							
Signups via user referrals	3	3	3	3	3		
Signups via Affiliate partners	2	2	2	2	2		
<b>Activation</b>							
New Users (trial)	102	93	88	93	103		Registrations, excl users with adblockers (30%)
% Visitors to (Trial) Users	9.0%	9.3%	8.5%	9.4%	9.2%		First time visitors who converted to Users
Completed Onboarding	24	22	23	22	23		Users who did certain actions that makes them 9x more likely to subscribe.
New Highly engaged users	18	17	15	17	18		
% Signup to Highly engaged	19%	18.1%	18.8%	16.9%	16.1%		
% Signup to Retained in week 2	10.8%	10.7%	11.4%	10.9%	11.8%		
% Signup to Retained in week 3 (post trial)	7.1%	7.4%	7.2%	6.7%	6.0%		Retention of new users in the last 30 days, in Week 3
<b>Revenue - High Touch Sales Funnel for Enterprise product</b>							
% Visitors to SQLs (submitted contact form)							
Sales Qualified Contacts							Sales Qualified Leads: People who have shown an immediate interest in your service that you can contact via email (or
Meeting Scheduled							
% Leads to Conversations							
New Conversations							Number of unique clients with one or more interview/sales conversion/demo/etc calls with
Qualified							Lead who is BANT (or similar) qualified
Demo scheduled							
Quote provided							
In Quote follow up stage							
% SQLs to Subscribed							
<b>Revenues - Total</b>							
% Trial to Subscribed (stripe)	5.0%	5.4%	5.5%	5.6%	5.8%		Ratio between first time subscriptions and trials in this week (backend measurement, so incl adblockers)
Subscribed - Count	12	13	12	11	11		
New MRR added this week							Invoiced revenues
New total MRR							
Total Invoiced Revenues							
<b>Value Delivery &amp; User Satisfaction</b>							
WAU	354	350	362	350	325		Weekly active users in the app
Value Provided: Users who did event X	160	168	175	172	147		Users who did event X (which is the core way users get value from the app)
NPS							
<b>Retention of Subscribers</b>							
Subscriber Retention - in Week 3	78%	71%	72%	73%	66%		The 2nd week after subscribing in last 30 days
Subscriber Retention - in Month 2	65%	63%	66%	66%	60%		Retention of new users in the last 90 days, in Month 2
Churn in last full month			8.4%	Only after month end			Cancellation % of all subscribers.
<b>Productivity</b>							
Experiments started							Number of growth hacking experiments started.
Roadmap themes completed							
Tickets completed							
Hours of work completed							

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## Level 2: Operational Drilldown Data

However, to prioritize experiments, or measure how well an experiment performs, we need to drill down deeper into the data. We need to know what percentage of users clicked on a button, or what the retention was of users who used a certain feature or clicked on an email. This is what I call operational data. I sometimes call it drill-down data, because for every data point in your KPI report everybody should be able to click on it to verify it and drill down deeper.

Traditionally you need to hire a Business intelligence developer to set up a data warehouse for this and analyze the data. But with modern data and (free) analytics tools, no development is needed and everybody can run their reports with very little training.



Would learn how to automatically track this data and create this weekly report? You can **work with me for free for 14 days**, [click here](#) to find out more.



Example Dashboard of Operational level Reports, zoom in if too small to read

Core Reports - Rete... > Retention of new users

Retention: Retention Analysis

Start Event:

Return Event:

Group By:

Filters:

Compare Users:   vs.   vs.

Date Range:  grouped by

First Time

Everybody should be able to run reports without specialist knowledge

Session with 25 events currently ongoing for 21 minutes

a few seconds ago

The screenshot displays a user session tracking interface. At the top, a summary bar shows four events: 'Totango - Execute Query' (2), 'Dashboard - View Dash...' (1), 'Internal - Switch User' (1), and 'Share Link - Facebook' (1). Below this, a list of events is shown with their timestamps and associated actions:

- 4:23 PM**: Viewed /beta/app/funnel
  - Click on div.analysis > Change on input#s2id\_autogen1091\_search.s... > Click on div.input > Click on div.input >
  - Click on i.svg.svg-plus > Click on div.analysis > Change on input#s2id\_autogen1476\_search.s... > Click on div.analysis >
  - Totango - Execute Query > Query - 2-5 second queries > Click on div.analysis > Click on div.analysis >
  - Share Link - Facebook
- 4:42 PM**: Viewed /beta/app/list/cached
- 4:42 PM**: Internal - Switch User
  - Submit on form
- 4:42 PM**: Dashboard - View Dashboard
- 4:44 PM**: Viewed /beta/app/list/2658074
  - Click on div.actions > Click on button.add.l.button.b-white.has-icon.... > Change on input#s2id\_autogen8\_search.sele... >
  - Click on input#s2id\_autogen260\_search.sele... > Change on input#s2id\_autogen260\_search.se... > Totango - Execute Query

*High growth companies literally track every click*

## Summary: Data-Driven Decision making



### High Growth

Management level Weekly KPI report with 15+ KPI's

Across the board management KPI's: Marketing, Product, Sales

Management team discuss KPI's every week

Tracks all user behavior down to every click

Knows what user actions drive conversion and retention

Detailed reports Online Sales or CRM Sales funnel performance

Detailed reports on onboarding and retention funnel performance

360-degree customer view of all user actions in all tools

All data goes through a data hub that all tools connect to without dev

Track, categorize and count user feedback

Uses data to personalize onboarding



### Low Growth

Some order-related KPI's from Stripe

Some vanity metrics on how the latest marketing campaign is doing

Maybe ad hoc discussion about revs and churn

No idea of exact steps users took

Thinks retention and churn are the same thing, if analyzed at all

Only the outcome of funnels is measured (orders)

No product level funnels

Google Analytics, maybe some mixpanel. (this is where I start crying)

BI, Data warehouses, developing data integrations

No consistent tracking of user feedback

Onboarding emails tell users to do things they already did

Would you like to find out what **your growth bottleneck** is? And what experiments I would try first? You can **work with me for free for 14 days**, [click here](#) to find out more.

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## BONUS: Growth Hacking Anti-patterns

### **Tool-itus**

A condition where finding out about a new tool (i.e. CRM, marketing automation tool) creates so much excitement that the tool is quickly bought, with high hopes it will automatically create amazing results. The cure for this condition is the careful weighing of growth ideas first and choosing an idea before even starting tool selection.

### **Training-itus**

A condition where finding out about a new training that promises amazing results creates so much excitement that is quickly bought, with high hopes the newly revealed secrets will create massive growth. Often followed by doing 2 modules, not implementing anything and moving on to the next course. The cure is the careful weighing of growth ideas first, realizing how much you already know or can find from blog and trying those ideas before becoming an expert in AI-based personalized video-based Facebook advertising.


### **Product strategy**

When talking to founders they often ask me to give feedback on their product strategy or help formulate one. What lies beneath this question is the belief that if you select the right product strategy, massive growth will follow. This sadly is a very common and persistent belief of founders who never worked in a high growth early-stage startup.

**“The belief that if you just select the right product strategy, massive growth will follow is a very common with founders who never worked in a high growth startup before”**

There are two main flaws in this belief in strategy. First of all: a strategy that worked for another company in the last will likely not work for you. As you are probably working in a different market, at a different time with a different product. You most likely have a different type of problem to solve; with different pricing, different growth stages, and a different team.

The second issue is that this magic strategy is often defined in just a few parameters, i.e. we sell a solution to this problem, to that market, and what makes us unique is that we're easier to use and better in solving the problem, and our new growth strategy is content marketing and facebook ads, and integrate with tool X. Often strategies like these are set on a combination of gut feeling, personal experience, and anecdotes of what worked well for other companies. In other words, you are making big decisions without much data to support them, often justified by the fact that you don't have that data. The high growth way is to still have big ideas, but first to try small experiments in that direction to see if you're right, and also never just bet on one idea,



but try out several ideas in parallel. You can still sort your experiment ideas by gut feeling if you lack the hard data, but then within 2 weeks, you will have data to decide if you want to keep moving in the same direction or rather one of the other ones.

You also have to realize that growth doesn't come from one marketing funnel that you set up once. Or one key product feature you implement once. As every founder of a successful product will tell you, their product and marketing funnels are a result of hundreds or thousands of small incremental experiments. So instead of obsessing about the right product strategy, it's better to get on with it and make sure you are starting experiments every week, so you can learn a bit every week, and grow every week.

### **Product Roadmap**

It's a bit of a trend to have a Product Roadmap or even a tool for it. Which in my opinion is just as silly as having a Roadmap for your personal life. As the Agile manifesto says, it's more important to adapt to change than to have a plan. The Roadmap of agile, high growth startups looks like a sorted list of roadmap themes. Some basic rules: A roadmap theme is at max 6 weeks of work, excluding UX design. Only keep the top 5 or so items of the backlog sorted by priority. Sort them based on hard data from experiments and your analytics tools. Decide on the next roadmap theme together with your cofounders, based on the data. If there is no data, a roadmap theme will never go into design or implementation.

### **Best Practice-itus / Magic Growth Hacks / Chasing Fata Morganas**

The belief that there are some growth hacks or best practices out there, that lead to massive growth and work for any situation. Usually spread by vendors of these tools or services. Often resulting in the unfounded confidence in going "all in" on this big idea, which then fails after a few weeks or months, which kills motivation for a month, after which the cycle is repeated. Typically accompanied by generalized and destructive conclusions like "facebook doesn't work for us" or "integrations don't work for us"

**"In working with online B2B startups for over 10 years I never encountered a single growth hack that always works"**

In working with online B2B startups for over 10 years I never encountered a single growth hack that always works. When I start working with a new client I never have the same growth hack or tool I start with (the only thing we always start with is setting up the right analytics/data tools so we can actually find out growth bottlenecks and learn if experiments are working).

I do like to use certain tools, advertising platforms, onboarding tactics, etc based on many years of experience and seeing what works for my clients. However, I could not recommend you any of these without first knowing where your growth bottleneck is, and even then, we would have to do experiments to find out which ad/onboarding changes / etc would work best for you & your audience.

### **“... does not work for us” - Generalized statements and bold speak**

“We tried growth hacking, but it didn’t work for us”, “This niche is saturated, we need to go into a different niche”, “We can grow by just hiring more salespeople”, “Facebook advertising doesn’t work for us”. I hear statements like this very often when talking to founders. To me this is a clear sign that they are in the “low growth trap”, started to believe their b\*shit and probably stopped making progress while looking for the magic strategy. The reason I can say this with some certainty is because the statements are so generic that it is unlikely that they have data that even partly supports their claim. I.e. there are endless types of facebook ads and targeting you can run, not to mention endless ad texts and visuals. It’s OK to have a strong gut feeling about something, and if that feeling is stronger than any of your other ideas, then don’t waste any time and run a small experiment against it.

Would you like to find out what **your growth bottleneck** is? And what experiments I would try first? You can **work with me for free for 14 days**, [click here](#) to find out more.

### **We really can’t break this big strategic idea into smaller experiments**

This is probably the most common growth hacking concern I hear, and it’s a result of people just not having enough experience with breaking big ideas into small tests. Every big idea can be tested with small experiments, period. Want to know if a new market would work? Create Facebook ads and measure and compare the click-through rate. Want to know if your customers are interested in that big new feature? Do a survey, and make a fake button for it. Want to know if a new pricing model would work? Test it out in New Zealand or during sales conversations. Want to know the biggest pain for customers in doing X? Conduct interviews, surveys, FB ads. Want to know if a feature would reduce churn or increase onboarding activation? Create surveys, a competitor analysis, a fake button or build a very small version of it. Would a new pitch work better? You can A/B test it on your landing page builder. You should, however, realize you’ll never get, nor need statistically significant data. But all you need is enough data to compare and sort ideas, which you rapidly test, which puts you 10 steps ahead of the pack who are likely sorting on gut feelings.

**“Every big idea can be tested with small experiments, period.”**

### **The Panic Pivot of Everything AKA changing all the legs of the chair at once.**

When growth is stalling, jumping to a new product, in a new niche, with new pricing, with a new sales channel, with a new pitch or at least a combination of two of these. This is setting yourself up for failure. Because you’re creating a massive risk for failure by going into multiple unknowns as once. The healthy pattern is to always test just changing one of the above at once rapidly, and then moving to the next one if needed. High growth companies grow like an oil spill from one niche to another, instead of jumping from one side of the board to another.

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“High growth companies grow like an oil spill from one niche to another, instead of jumping from one side of the board to another.”

### **Small ideas for Small experiments**

Experiments should always be the smallest and easiest way to test a hypothesis or the riskiest part of an idea. However, the idea behind the experiment should be big, i.e. the belief that training your customers more, so that they get more results, will lead to more software sales. Sadly, what often happens is that the ideas become small, i.e. Let's try to change the button color on the homepage, or replace the image of the man with a smiling woman. It's fine to test this out on a Saturday afternoon, but this is not growth hacking, so don't bother the team with it. And don't expect amazing results unless your button is currently nearly invisible.

### **Our Marketing Founder / Contractor does the Growth Hacking**

This is based on the assumption that Growth (hacking) is just a marketing thing. This is silly for many reasons, like the assumption that the quality of the product doesn't have a big impact on growth (users are smart and well connected), or that product-market fit means a market that fits the product needs to be found. Rapid growth only happens when all primary disciplines (Product, Marketing, Sales) are involved, and all founders are involved in prioritizing the experiments and roadmap.

“The assumption that product-market fit means a market that fits the product needs to be found (is silly).”

### **Testing several changes in one experiment - Not really A/B testing**

In a proper A/B test you only make one change, i.e. you change the text on your homepage button from “Book a demo” to “Contact us”. You define a clear metric, i.e. booked calls, and you run both variants long enough on parallel. However, what often happens is that at the same time the google ad was changed (which influenced the type of website visitors) the phone number was made mandatory, and to top it all off, by lack of A/B testing software or a good landing page builder, the variants were not run in parallel (conversion isn't the same every week) and for too short of a period. This was a marketing example, but similar things apply across the board, another example is slightly changing the product onboarding and not properly measuring the effect. Make this mistake often and long enough and your revenues will shrink due to wrong conclusions.

### **Not setting a clear hypothesis and metric beforehand**

Let's say you improved your google ad texts. After running the ad for two weeks your marketer declares the experiment a success because the cost per click went down and you got more clicks. After a few months, however, your revenues went down because the ad was over-promising, causing fewer people to become paying customers. This is a common case of vanity metrics, where the marketer either wanted to make a good impression or didn't have the time/knowledge/tools to correctly track when people subscribe. The remedy is spending a bit more time on defining and reviewing your experiment hypothesis and metrics beforehand.

## Bonus: High Growth Way Of Thinking

Startups often fall for the “low growth trap” because they approach growth with the wrong mindset. The list below will help you recognize and replace low growth thinking and actions with high growth ones.

### High Growth

We gradually expand into new neighboring markets, countries, features

Consistent small improvements that are close to current product and market.

Prioritization of ideas based on risk, chance, potential reward

We admit we are never certain if our ideas will work

Supporting data we have for ideas comes from users or user behaviour

We have frank team discussions about our ideas and supporting data

Open minded and constantly challenging our ideas

We first make small bets and spread our bets

We test if an idea will work before going all in

We're not afraid of high risk ideas

We don't mind if experiments fail

We rollback things that didn't work

Founders select ideas together

Growth means the constant improvement to Marketing, Sales funnels and Product

We focus together on the biggest growth bottleneck across marketing/sales/product

Growth ideas backlog

Our discussions are based on hard data.

We cut discussions short if we don't have any hard data

### Low Growth

Launching completely new products for different markets with different features.

Jumping from one "strategy"/niche to another every quarter

ROI calculations, investment business cases

We are convinced of our own ideas

Evidence we have for ideas comes from competitors or our own experience

The CEO sets the priorities / “strategy”

Convinced, defensive, sticking to ideas

We go all in on one big idea and spend weeks on implementation

Roadmaps / Strategies / big risky bets

Preference for cloning "proven" ideas from competitors

Fear of failing ideas

We never roll something back

The marketing person does growth


Growth means generating more leads

Marketing/Sales/Product do their own things

Separate Product and Marketing idea backlogs

Endless, opinion-based, discussions about ideas

We keep on talking about ideas and try to choose the best one based on gut feeling and “logic” .



Consistent experimentation that suddenly and unexpectedly gives at least a 5x boost to a core KPI every now and then

Spending months on big ideas that don't pay off and demotivate the team.

Would you like to find out what **your growth bottleneck** is? And what experiments I would try first? You can **work with me for free for 14 days**, [click here](#) to find out more.

