



From Early Traction to Repeatable Revenue: A Tactical Guide for Scaling Early-Stage Startups

Your Product is Great, But Is the World Listening?

As a fellow SaaS founder, I know the struggle of building a product that you believe is simply great and everyone needs it to then realizing the **hard part is getting others to believe in it.**

The real challenge is creating **demand**—making people feel like they **need it urgently.**

This playbook is a step-by-step guide that takes you from zero to three million in 20 steps:

- by building **real traction**, scaling **credibility**, and **scaling your product.**

Your Handbook for Scaling Your Product & Creating Demand

Hey, I'm **Alper** — GTM Partner for founders scaling from traction to repeatable revenue, exited SaaS Co-founder & CRO.

- In this guide, I'm breaking down **how to build and execute a Go-To-Market (GTM) roadmap**—whether you're just getting started or scaling from 1 to 10.
- This playbook is your shortcut: a no-fluff summary of the strategies I used to bring thousands of leads (both MQL, SQLs) **in the early traction stage to our start-up Flowla**, plus other proven tactics I've seen, tested, or executed at previous startups.

You'll find **real-life examples, actionable templates, and detailed explanations** to help you move fast.

- Use it as a reference
- Skip to the parts that match your current stage
- Copy the playbook, run it, iterate, and win

How can I help you to grow your startup from 0 to 1 or from 1 to 10?

Before we start, thanks for reading this playbook, I hope you find it useful!



ACTION:

Please share your feedback with me directly on [linkedin](#), and feel free to post about this playbook or share with others if you find it useful.

I'm an exited founder and sales leader with 15 years experience in sales and growth.

1. You can **check out my [website](#)** or book a call to discuss your growth **strategy [here](#)**

2. **Check out my one-pager** on how we can work together and DM me on linkedin or at alper@fortegrowth.co or add me on slack 🙌
3. **I work with early stage startups in different capacity, from equity-based advisor to Fractional CRO/ CMO, best way is to DM me and we can have a chat. No strings attached!**



Want more GTM tips like this?

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Signs to follow in this guide:



Let's make it happen: Use it as a reference, follow the steps to implement yourself



Use my 📁 Templates: Use the provided template to shortcut and action from day 1



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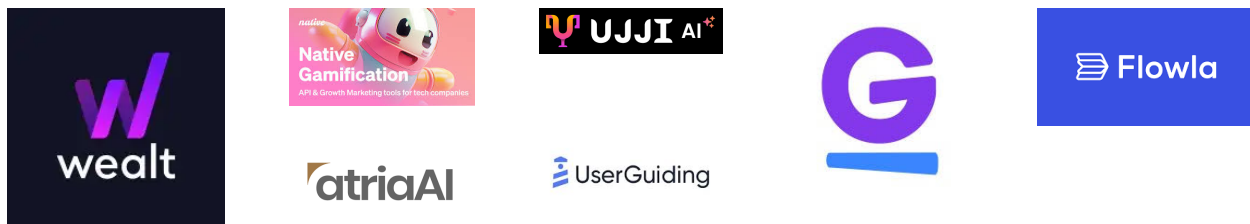
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How can I help you to grow your startup from 0 to 1 or from 1 to 10?

Let’s dive in

As lovingly used by early stage start-ups like:



▼ Three core questions of growth


Having built my own B2B SaaS startup and worked with scale-ups and early-stage teams, I've seen the **same GTM challenges repeat over and over**.

For startups between **pre-seed and Series B**, the road to **Product-Market Fit (PMF)** often comes down to three core questions:

? How do we generate demand—consistently and sustainably, without blowing up CAC?

? How do we convert that demand into revenue—whether through PLG, SLG, or a hybrid model?

? How do we onboard, activate, and upsell customers to maximize LTV and retention?

 **Bonus:** Check out my other guides:



- [Executing Your Outreach Strategy](#)



- [Growth Tactics for B2B Startups](#)



- [High Response LinkedIn outreach templates](#)

Before we begin, I'll suggest taking a day or two to audit your current GTM strategy.

When I start working with a startup to build their revenue engine, I do this exercise:

▼ Use This Framework to Review Your GTM Strategy

Whether you're a **founder leading growth** or an **early-stage operator owning GTM**, your first move should be to **create a clear, actionable GTM Roadmap**.

This isn't just a strategic exercise—it's a **foundational step** to driving growth.

👉 **This is essential, not optional:**

- ✓ Align your co-founders around a shared vision
- ✓ Build a short-to-long-term plan you can execute
- ✓ Show investors you're serious, structured, and ready to scale

Self-Review Your GTM Strategy

When I work with startups—whether in an advisory, consulting, or hands-on role—I follow the same process I used to scale my own SaaS company.

You can **run the same process yourself** using this [GTM One-Pager Questions Template](#).

Here's how:

1. GTM Audit

Start by assessing your current position with the linked template.

2. Independent Reflection

Each co-founder fills it out separately—take a walk, reflect solo, and come prepared.

3. Collaborative Workshop

Come together for a half-day session to align on answers and lock in your strategy.

4. Write the Roadmap

Capture the essentials in a 1-page GTM roadmap that outlines your growth strategy over the next **90 / 180 / 360 days**.

Check out these real examples for inspiration:



- [GTM Strategy for Seed Stage Startup](#)



- [GTM Roadmap for LegalTech Startup](#)

▼ Or Work With Me to audit your GTM in a 2-4 Week Sprint

If you'd rather move faster with expert input, I offer a sprint format where we **co-create your GTM strategy** and kick off a **3-month traction plan**.

Here's what that looks like:

👉 GTM Strategy Workshop

A deep-dive session with the founding team to craft your GTM roadmap. I come in with hypotheses, interviews, and this key mindset:

"If this were my startup, how would I grow it?"

👉 Monthly Action Plan

Based on your stage and goals, we create a monthly execution plan broken into **bi-weekly sprints**—just like product teams do.

👉 Bi-Weekly GTM Sprints

Focused on:

- Generating leads

- Converting them into paying customers
- Iterating based on real traction

This framework is designed to **move fast, stay focused, and generate early wins**—without wasting time or budget.

No-fluff GTM Execution towards \$3M and beyond

Step 1: Validate the Problem and Find Message-Market Fit

Get Real Feedback from Prospects

Before building your product, you need to ensure the problem exists and that prospects see it as **urgent**. You need to confirm that the problem you're solving is **real** and **urgent**. The key here is getting **feedback from your first users** on how they perceive the product and its value.



Let's make it happen:

- **Talk to 10–20 prospects** who fit your target ICP and ask them how they're solving the problem today.
- Visit **industry events**, post on **LinkedIn** for feedback, and **use real customer feedback** to adjust your messaging. Your goal is to get reactions.
- Focus on the **language your prospects use**
 - Analyze their language and integrate their terms into your messaging (avoid your own jargon!). It matters more how they describe it than the

other way around.

- **Example:** For Flowla, we realized early that our messaging around reducing complexity didn't resonate until we positioned it as a **"one single link to close more deals"** because people couldn't visualize the product in their heads without a concept of what the actual product is.

Why It Matters:

Message-Market Fit means you're speaking the language of your customers and **reducing friction** for your sales process.

Your product's value might seem clear to you, but your audience might not see it that way. A great product needs to be framed in a way that resonates with your customers.

Key Questions:

- **Is your product a painkiller or a vitamin?**
- **Can you explain it in 30 seconds?**
- **Are customers excited to talk more after they understand it?**

✓ **Action:** Define your **jobs-to-be-done** and **value proposition** for each persona.



Use my 📁 **Templates: Value & Messaging Study** to crack message-mkt fit.

Step 2: Define Your ICP & Buyer Personas with Precision

Avoid Wasting Time—Focus on Your Best Fit Prospects

As a founder, time is limited. Focusing on the right target is critical.



Let's make it happen:

- **Be laser-focused** on your **ICP**—don't overthink and try to serve everyone.
- Use tools like **Ocean.io** to identify **like-for-like customers** and find common pain points.
- **Buyer Persona:** Who are the decision-makers? What roles do they have? Understand their motivations and needs.

Why It Matters: Defining your **ICP and persona** early on helps you **focus your efforts** on customers that are more likely to convert and provide meaningful feedback.

At early stages, this is often referred to as the Early Customer Profile, as some early customers may become irrelevant as the product evolves.



Action: Define your ICP & Persona in a way that is actionable for your sales & marketing activity.



Here's a simple template for your ICP-Persona study.

Step 3: Build a Tribe of 100 True Fans

100 True Fans: How to Build a Community That Drives Word of Mouth

True Fans is a concept coined by **Kevin Kelly** that says you don't need a million customers to succeed, just **100 true fans** who love your product and will spread the word.



Let's make it happen:

Once you've nailed your ICP, it's time to build your **tribe**. This will serve as your **early growth engine**.

- Leverage your **network** to ask for **referrals**.
- **Join niche communities** (Slack, LinkedIn groups, forums) where your ICP hangs out, and share value-driven content.
- Don't just wait for them to come to you—create content like **educational blog posts**, **webinars**, and **free resources** that speak directly to your ICP's challenges.

Why It Matters: Building a **tribe of 100 true fans** generates organic word-of-mouth growth and provides social proof that others will follow.

- **From 0 to 10 customers:** Focus on **delivering exceptional service** and building **one-on-one relationships**.
- **From 10 to 100 customers:** Use early customer success stories to drive **referrals** and expand your tribe.
- **From 100+ customers:** You now have a **tribe** that will amplify your brand, help test new ideas, and become your best advocates.

Step 4: Create an Outbound Strategy to Test Messaging

Outbound marketing is a powerful tool—not for scaling yet, but for **testing and refining your message**. Think of it as a **learning loop to find your Message-Market fit**.



Let's make it happen:

- Run **targeted campaigns to test different angles** and **value propositions** to see what gets replies. If your messaging is too generic, you'll get ignored.
 - Keep the tests to 400 prospects, divided into batches of 80 with 5 different messages and sequences to A/B test

- Use simple tools like **Apollo** or **HoneySales** (under \$100/month) to **automate outreach**—but keep it **highly personalized**.
- A good **cold email reply rate** is **2-5%**. If you're hitting **5-10%**, you're onto something—double down on what's working.
- **Tip:** Don't lead with a hard sell. Offer insight, ask thoughtful questions, and position yourself as a helpful expert—not just a seller.

Why It Matters: Outbound lets you **validate your messaging quickly**, giving you real-world data on what resonates. Once you've found your most effective messages, **then** you can think about scaling.

✅ **Action:** At the early stage use a mix of linkedin outreach, events & speaking opportunities as well as low-volume email outreach to get early traction and crack message-mkt. fit.



Use my 📁 **Template: to get started with outbound**  **Executing Outreach: Find Message-market fit & then scale**

Step 5: Spend 1-2 days mapping the buyer journey & focus on building “Moments of Trust”

Understand the Path Your Customers Take to Purchase

You have a great product. That's great!

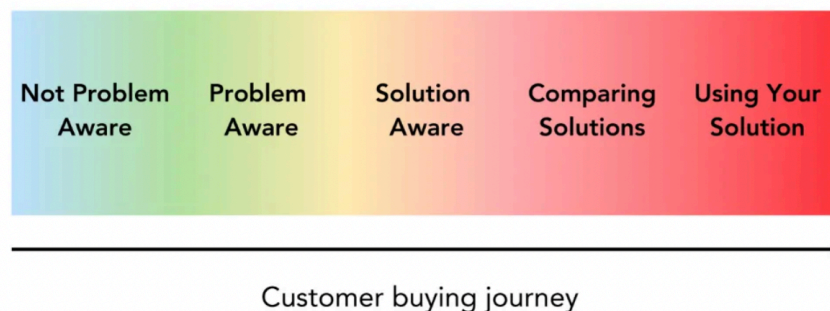
Now you need to build:

- Authority: show you are the expert
- Credibility: show others are using it, it's safe
- FOMO: don't miss out on the value

And eventually TRUST which is the basis of sales!

Your prospects will be at different stages of awareness, some will be more ready to try/ buy, others will require education and to build trust.

Simply put:



Check out [Pierre Herubel's work](#) on this.



Let's make it happen:

It's important to understand how potential prospects move from being unaware of the problem/ solution to stumbling upon your website, booking a demo with you and buying.

So you need to understand and document:

- **Pre-purchase:** Where are they researching solutions? Are they checking reviews, watching videos, reading testimonials?
- **During the process:** Are they interacting with your content (blog, webinar, eBooks)? are they asking friends? checking your linkedin or website to see if you exude trust or not?
- **Post-purchase:** How do you retain them? Do they become advocates and refer others?

Here's a simple framework to stay on of the decision making process:

- **From 0 to 10 customers:** Understand **pain points** through one-on-one calls. Use this feedback to improve messaging.
- **From 10 to 100 customers:** Focus on **customer education** with more refined messaging and optimized **follow-ups**. Start creating content for your website, and owned channels.
- **From 100+ customers:** Systematize the **journey** with **content funnels** and **automated sequences** to **nurture** leads at scale.
 - For example 10 outreach campaigns running in parallel - message and sequence changes by how they came into contact with you: cold, saw you on linkedin etc.

Why It Matters: Mapping the **customer journey** allows you to create **trust-building** content that guides prospects through the decision-making process, improving conversion rates.

Step 6: Build a Simple, Effective Toolstack

Don't Overcomplicate Your Toolstack—Keep It Simple

Your toolstack should **empower** you to test quickly without **over-investing**.



Let's make it happen:

- Start with **simple tools** like **Google Sheets**, **Apollo**, and **Dripify**. Keep it under \$100/month for now.
- **Test small batches**—start by sending out **10-20 personalized emails** and track the results manually before automating.

- **Tip:** Over time, as you scale, invest in **CRM tools** like **HubSpot** or **Salesforce**, but don't rush.

Why It Matters: A **simple toolstack** helps you iterate quickly without wasting time on sophisticated platforms that you may not need.



Check out my   [Essential Toolstack for Early Stage GTM](#) to keep it lean while getting the job done.

Step 7: Build an Inbound Engine

Inbound → Outbound: Why They Must Work Together

Outbound only works when it's built on a strong inbound foundation.

Without trust, cold outreach falls flat—no matter how good your copy is.

Your prospects will *always* check:

- Your LinkedIn profile, Your company website, Your content presence, Any visible social proof

If they don't find anything that builds trust or shows credibility, they won't respond.

ALSO!

Inbound marketing is a **long-term growth engine**. It's not just about traffic—it's about building **authority**, increasing **organic visibility**, and attracting your **ideal customers**.



Let's make it happen:

- Build a **content hub** with SEO-driven blog posts that answer your **ICP's questions**.
- Create content across the full funnel:
 - **Top of Funnel (Awareness)**: Blog posts, LinkedIn content, podcasts.
 - **Middle of Funnel (Consideration)**: Case studies, webinars, success stories.
 - **Bottom of Funnel (Conversion)**: Demos, free trials, consultation offers.
- At Flowla, we launched an **expert round-up blog** featuring industry leaders. It got us **organic backlinks** and media coverage, which drove consistent traffic.
- Repurpose your content: a blog post can become a carousel, a video, or a newsletter.

Final word here:

A strong inbound engine positions your brand as the **go-to expert** in your space. With consistent, valuable content, you'll build trust, drive organic leads, and **reduce dependency on paid channels** over time.



Hiring: Tip In the beginning you might work with a generalist or outsource your content work like initial linkedin posts and some blog posts. Then as things pick up you'll need a head of content & community to drive inbound-led-outbound growth

Step 8: Use Expert Roundups to Build Credibility

Feature Industry Experts to Gain Exposure

The best way to get noticed is to **feature others**—this builds relationships and brings exposure.



Let's make it happen:

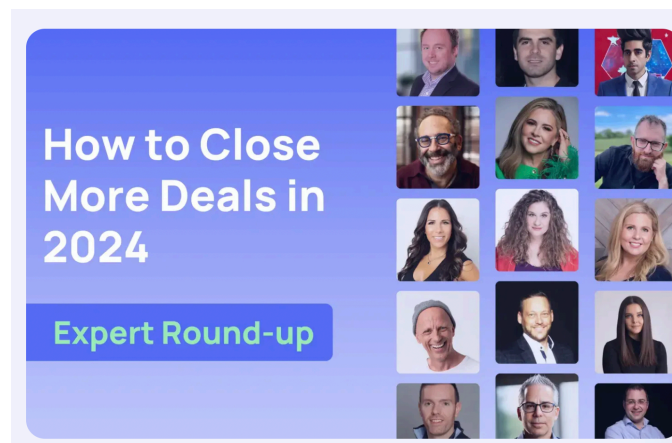
- **Reach out to 10–20 industry experts** and invite them to contribute to an **expert round-up**.
- **Promote these experts** through your channels and ask them to share the content.
- **Tip:** By featuring experts in your content, you'll get the **credibility** that drives more traffic.

Why It Matters: Expert roundups build **trust**, **social proof**, and **help you get featured** on high-traffic platforms.



Here's an example to get you started:

<https://www.flowla.com/blog/tactics-to-close-more-deals-in-2024>



Step 9: Combine Inbound and Outbound for Growth Loops

Inbound and Outbound Work Best Together

A growth loop works when **inbound and outbound** strategies complement each other.



Let's make it happen:

- **Outbound** should bring **leads** into your funnel, and **inbound** should **nurture** them into conversions.
- Make sure your **LinkedIn** profile and **website** feature **consistent messaging**.
- **Tip:** When a prospect receives an outbound email, they should see **consistent messaging** on your LinkedIn profile and website, creating a seamless experience.

Why It Matters:

Growth loops ensure **synergy** between inbound and outbound, resulting in a more **efficient** and **sustainable growth engine**.

Outbound only works when it's built on a strong inbound foundation.

Without trust, cold outreach falls flat—no matter how good your copy is.

Your prospects will *always* check:

- Your LinkedIn profile, Your company website, Your content presence, Any visible social proof

If they don't find anything that builds trust or shows credibility, they won't respond.



Real-World Example:

I worked with a startup sending hundreds of cold emails every week. They were paying £2K/month to an agency to “optimize” messaging. Open rates were okay, but responses? Almost zero. Why? Because when prospects clicked through to learn more, they found:

- An empty LinkedIn page
- A weak website
- No content or credibility signals

Even the best outreach fails if what comes *after* the email doesn’t convert interest into trust.

Step 10: Cracking Founder-led Sales & Creating a structured sales process

Growing beyond your first customers and warm leads → searching for repeatability in the cold word

A repeatable, scalable sales process is the key to predictable revenue.

For many founders this might be an afterthought, something to think about when the team scales to 5-10 sales people or so.

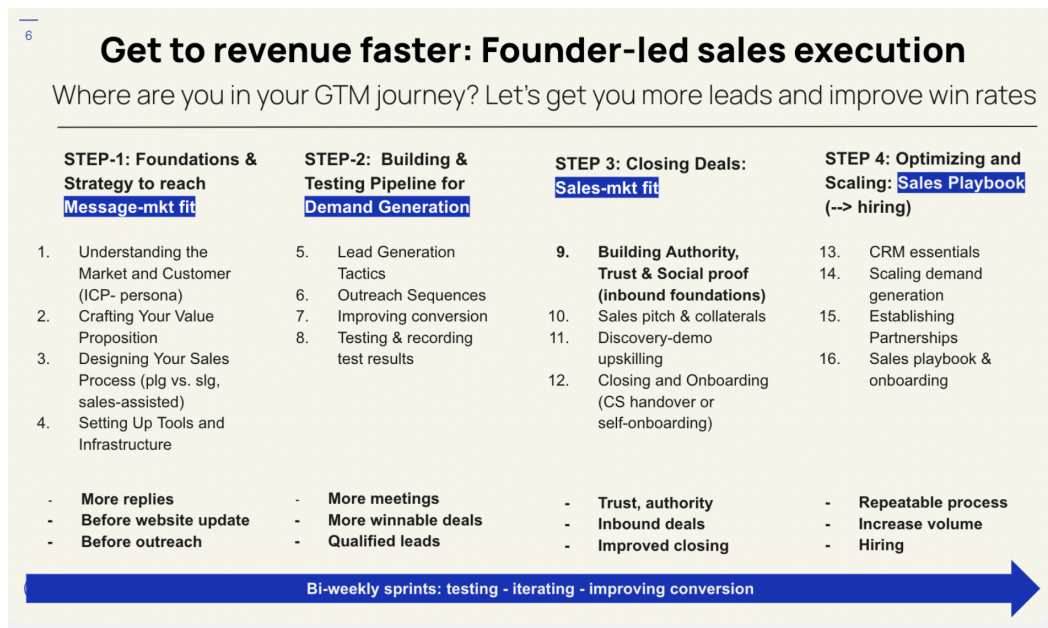
It shouldn’t be!

Having a playbook to iterate at the end of every week can increase your win rate drastically.

Every time I run a founder-led sales accelerator, founders ask for one thing: a sales playbook tailored to their business. I can help build one for you—or you can take inspiration from the

one I use. Here's a break-down of steps to nail founder-led sales and then create your own playbook.

Here's a snapshot of my Founder-led sales Accelerator that boosts your lead gen. and closing skills in a matter of 12 weeks.



Let's make it happen:

Develop a **sales playbook**:

- Map out your sales process from **lead generation to discovery calls, product demos, follow-ups, and closing**.
- **Refine** the process regularly. After refining Flowla's sales process, we reduced **sales cycles by 30%** by focusing on more structured **follow-ups** and **qualifying leads** better.

- We also tested with free sign-ups. vs book a demo, different pricing strategies, Sales-CS hand-over



Why It Matters: A documented sales process allows you to **optimize** every step of your sales cycle and **scale** effectively.

Here's the Hubspot example [Hubspot playbook](#)

And here are examples from a **sales playbook I created** with all relevant elements captured in one place such as: **(DM me to discuss this further for specific sales playbooks.)**

- company and product info, how we sell, messaging, objections etc.

allowing quicker onboarding and iterating the process on a monthly basis for:

- improved win rates, shorter sales cycles, clear roles & processes

Flowla Sales Playbook

Tags
Empty

Learnings for September 23' & Iteration

🔥 Quicker conversion: what we need to sell more!

Company Overview ✅ (4 axis for the website)

Pain points to solution ✅

Products ✅

Pricing ✅

Process ✅

Personas ✅

Messaging 📧

🔥 G2M & Lead gen:

Content architecture:

CRM Guide

Compensation

KPIs

Resources

Process ✅

• What are the main steps of your sales process?

- 1 Sign up to Discovery
- 2 From Discovery to Closing
- 3 Pipeline reviews

• On what timeline/cadence do you contact customers?

- LinkedIn outreach based on backlog
- Mail outreach
- Content

• How do you reach customers? Email? Phone? In-person?

• What is the normal timing for moving customers from prospects to closed deals?

- Currently +1 month, usually 1-3 months sometimes more

• Guidelines for how to speak to customers? Etiquette recommendations?

Learnings for September 23' & Iteration

• Three main things we need:

- Get closer to pain, closer to money ✅
- Be cool, be rich content ✅
- Be easy to start - low cost of investment ✅

GET CLOSER TO PAIN, CLOSER TO MONEY

• Pain: 3 reasons your deals die & Flowla is the cure:

- Complexities & mis-understanding
- Unknowns
- Sales rep mis-steps
- You're bleeding deals and Flowla is the cure - not a vitamin

BE EASY TO START

• Consultancies work on specific needs and need a tangible input to start working with you:

- they work on: playbook, onboarding, scaling, building & improving sales team, methodology
- build templates to get started: my first sales team onboarding, enterprise playbook, sales team onboarding, medipic

*Content of a sales
playbook*

*How to capture
processes*

*Recording learnings &
improvements*

Step 11: Refine Acquisition Channels: Combine Scalable and Non-Scalable Channels for Sustainable Growth

Grow Your Product with a Balanced Approach

Scalable channels like paid ads and SEO are crucial, but don't overlook **non-scalable tactics** like **guerrilla marketing**, **networking**, or **partnerships**.

Use a **hybrid growth strategy**:




Let's make it happen:

- **Scalable:** Paid ads, SEO, product virality.
- **Non-scalable:** Partnerships, networking, **influencer marketing**, **guerrilla marketing**.

Why It Matters: **Non-scalable tactics** generate **short-term buzz**, while scalable channels lay the foundation for **long-term growth**.



I highly recommend reading through my  **How to: Pick the right marketing channels & Growth tactics?** guide to decide which ones suit your needs better.

Step 12: Create Founder Brand

Use LinkedIn to Create a Virtuous Loop, Have All Your Team Chime In on the Effort to Grow the Impact of Your Content Strategy

Your founder brand is one of your biggest leverage points—especially in the early days.

People trust people more than logos. Founders who show up consistently on LinkedIn (or Twitter/X) build **authority, credibility, and relationships** that directly convert into pipeline, partnerships, and press.



Let's make it happen:

- Post **2–3 times per week on LinkedIn** with a mix of:
 - Lessons from building the product
 - Tactical how-to posts related to your ICP's pain points
 - Behind-the-scenes stories and customer wins
- Show your **face and personality**
- Use **storytelling** to build trust and narrative consistency

- Tag your team. Get them involved in resharing or even posting.
- Use tools like **Taplio**, **Shield App**, or **Folk's LinkedIn CRM**

Why It Matters:

Creating a **founder-led content loop** builds top-of-funnel awareness, warms up outbound leads, and generates **trust at scale**. When your whole team joins in—marketing, product, sales—you multiply your reach, narrative, and impact.



My **How to LinkedIn like a Pro - No Fluff** guide is coming up next. Follow me to stay in the know!

Step 13: Test and Optimize Non-Scalable Growth Channels

Test Non-Scalable Tactics Each Quarter

Non-scalable channels can give you **quick wins** and **build momentum**.



Let's make it happen:

- Every **quarter**, test **non-scalable growth channels** like **affiliate marketing**, **events**, and **partnerships**.
- Sponsor **small events** or create an **affiliate program** to drive **referrals**.
- Try **guerrilla marketing** tactics—like creating **viral campaigns** on social media with a small budget.

Why It Matters: Non-scalable tactics generate **buzz** and **exposure** that you can leverage to build a **community** and **early traction**.

Step-14 : Test Multiple Growth Channels and See what works



Growth hacks deep-dive:

14.1 Build Partnerships and Leverage Affiliate Marketing

Use Partnerships and Affiliates to Scale Faster

While paid ads and inbound marketing can work, non-scalable tactics like **partnerships** and **affiliate marketing** can give you a big boost in the early stages.



Let's make it happen:

- **Find complementary brands** or businesses that share your ICP and create **co-marketing partnerships**.
- **Affiliate programs:** Offer **incentives** (commissions, rewards) to individuals or businesses who refer paying customers to you.
- At Flowla, we grew through **strategic partnerships** with sales-related influencers and product demo platforms that aligned with our target audience. We also offered **affiliate commissions** for new customers brought in by our network.

Why It Matters: Partnerships and affiliate programs bring **trusted traffic** to your product, accelerating growth with minimal upfront investment. They're non-scalable but provide **immediate traction** and brand credibility.



My **How to Get Others to Resell You like a Pro - No Fluff** guide is coming up next. Follow me to stay in the know!

14.2 Sponsor Industry Events and Join Communities

Get Exposure by Sponsoring Events and Joining Industry Communities

Sponsoring events and becoming active in industry-specific communities are powerful ways to gain **visibility** and build **relationships**.



Let's make it happen:

- **Sponsor relevant industry events**—whether online webinars, conferences, or podcasts. As a sponsor, you get **visibility** and **credibility** in front of your target audience.
- Join **Slack channels**, **Reddit threads**, and **LinkedIn groups** where your ICP hangs out. Share your **expertise** and **engage with the community**.
- At Flowla, we sponsored **sales events** that catered to SaaS founders and offered a **co-branded webinar** on how to streamline sales processes, which drove a lot of **qualified leads**.

Why It Matters: Events and communities give you **direct access** to your ICP, helping you build **trust** and **expand your network** without needing paid ads.

14.3 Guerrilla Marketing: Create Buzz with Low-Cost, High-Impact Tactics

Generate Buzz with Creative, Low-Cost Marketing

Guerrilla marketing is about thinking **outside the box** to create attention with minimal spend. It's all about **creativity** and **authenticity**.



Let's make it happen:

- **Create viral content** that's quirky, surprising, or emotional. For example, share a **behind-the-scenes story** of how your product was created or highlight a **customer success story**.
- Try **flash mobs**, street art, or **social media challenges** that can go viral within your target market.
- Famous Example: **Dollar Shave Club's** viral launch video turned a simple **product demo** into a massively popular marketing campaign. Use humor and storytelling to grab attention.
- **Tip:** Guerrilla marketing works best in **small bursts**. Create something that **gets shared** fast, and make sure it aligns with your **brand values**.

Why It Matters: Guerrilla marketing generates **huge exposure** and creates a **buzz** around your product with **minimal investment**. It can be a great complement to your scalable strategies.

14.4 Use Product Launches to Create Buzz and Drive Demand

Leverage Product Launches to Get Immediate Attention

A successful product launch creates an **immediate influx of attention**, and you can leverage this for both inbound and outbound efforts.



Let's make it happen:

- **Launch on Product Hunt** to get early feedback and traffic from an engaged audience.
- Host a **launch event**—even if virtual. Provide sneak peeks of new features, offer special discounts, and create **excitement**.

- **Create a countdown** and promote the launch through **email lists, social media**, and **partner networks**.
- **Tip:** For Flowla, we combined our Product Hunt launch with a **series of webinars** and an **exclusive offer** for early adopters. The buzz we created helped us secure **early customers**.

Why It Matters: Product launches create **short-term buzz** and **drive urgency**, but they also help build long-term awareness and **trust** in your brand.

14.5 Get Featured on Review Sites and Industry Publications

Build Social Proof and Authority by Getting Featured

Getting your product reviewed by industry publications and featured on review sites builds **social proof** and **authority**.



Let's make it happen:

- Submit your product to review sites like **Capterra, G2**, and **Trustpilot**—these are often trusted by your ICP when they're deciding on software.
- **Reach out to industry blogs and journalists** to get featured. Offer **guest posts** or **interviews**.
- At Flowla, we submitted our product to **Capterra** and **G2**, and we had customers leave testimonials that helped us **gain trust** from others looking for similar solutions.

Why It Matters: Getting **reviews** and **features** on trusted platforms gives your product **credibility** and **visibility**, helping you attract more customers.

14.6 Create Webinars and Lead Magnets to Capture Leads

Use Webinars and Content to Nurture Your Audience

Webinars and lead magnets are a great way to **educate** your audience and capture **qualified leads**.



Let's make it happen:

- Host **free webinars** on a topic your ICP cares about (e.g., “How to Close More Deals in SaaS” or “Maximize Sales Efficiency in Remote Teams”).
- Offer **free resources** like **guides, checklists, or templates** in exchange for **email addresses**.
- **Tip:** At Flowla, we hosted **webinars** featuring **industry leaders**. These webinars were promoted through **social media** and **email marketing**, capturing leads that converted into customers.

Why It Matters: Webinars and lead magnets let you **build trust** with your audience while **collecting valuable leads** that can be nurtured into customers.

Step 15: Build SEO to Grow Organic Traffic Over Time

SEO Is a Long-Term Play, But It Pays Off

SEO is a **slow burn**, but it provides **consistent** and **cost-effective** traffic over time.



Let's make it happen:

- Start with **long-tail keywords** that align with your ICP’s pain points. For example, “how to streamline sales workflows in SaaS” or “best tools for SaaS sales teams.”
- Write **valuable content** that answers these questions and **optimize** for **SEO**.
- **Tip:** At Flowla, we grew from a mere thousand **visits a month** to **over 10,000 visits** a day in a year by consistently writing **SEO-optimized content** and

building **backlinks**.

Why It Matters: SEO may take time, but once you rank for **relevant keywords**, the traffic becomes **predictable** and **scalable**.

Step 16: Paid Ads: Test and Scale Once You've Found Fit

Focus on Paid Ads Only After Validating Your Product-Market Fit

Paid ads can **accelerate growth** once you know your messaging works and you have a **customer base** to target.



Let's make it happen:

- Start with **Google Ads** for search intent—target **high-converting keywords** related to your product.
- **Test different ad platforms:** Once you've optimized for Google, try **LinkedIn ads** to target decision-makers or **Instagram ads** for brand awareness.
- **Tip:** At Flowla, we began with **Google Ads**, and once we had consistent conversions, we scaled with **LinkedIn Ads** for lead generation.

Why It Matters: Paid ads provide the ability to **scale** once you've validated your messaging and customer base. Use them strategically to **boost growth**.

Step 17: Build a Scalable Sales Process and see where you can improve win rates

Streamline Your Sales Process to Close Deals Faster

Once you have **qualified leads**, having a **scalable sales process** in place will allow you to convert faster.

- Develop a **sales playbook** that outlines the **discovery process**, how you handle **objections**, and the **closing process**.
- Use tools like **HubSpot** or **Salesforce** to track leads, measure **conversion rates**, and **automate follow-ups**.
- **Tip:** Refine your sales process based on **feedback loops** and **data**. Track how your initial **conversations** evolve into **closed deals**.

Why It Matters: A scalable sales process accelerates deal closures and allows your sales team to be more **efficient** and **consistent**.

Step 18: Measure, Optimize, and Iterate Every Quarter

Test, Analyze, and Scale

Always be iterating and refining your strategies based on data.



Let's make it happen:

- At the end of each **quarter**, review your progress. Which channels are driving **the best ROI**? Which ones need improvement?
- Test one new **non-scalable tactic** every quarter—whether it's **guerrilla marketing**, **influencer partnerships**, or **events**.
- Use **KPIs** (Key Performance Indicators) like **conversion rates**, **cost per lead**, and **customer acquisition cost** to measure **success**.

Why It Matters: **Iteration** and **optimization** are key to continuous growth. Testing new tactics and **refining existing ones** will help you scale smarter, not harder.

Step 19: Capture Everything in a Central Playbook and Prepare to Hire

You've run the experiments. You've found what works. Now, **codify it**.



Let's make it happen:

- Document your growth playbook with:
 - Clear messaging frameworks
 - ICP definitions
 - Content strategy and top-performing content examples
 - Outreach templates that actually worked
 - Lead magnets and landing pages
 - Sales scripts and objection responses
 - Funnel metrics: what channels are converting at what rate?
- Create a **Notion or Google Docs-based wiki** to share with new team members.
- When hiring your first **salesperson, growth hire, or content marketer**, use this playbook to onboard them faster and keep them aligned.
- Build out **SOPs (Standard Operating Procedures)** so the things you did manually can now be repeated—and eventually automated or delegated.

Why It Matters: A central playbook reduces onboarding time, improves execution, and keeps your early growth experiments from getting lost. It's the foundation of a team that can scale without reinventing the wheel every time.

Step 20: Create Growth Loops Across Sales, Marketing, and Product

Growth doesn't live in one function. It compounds when **everyone contributes** to traction.

Your goal: Turn content, product, sales, and community into a **self-reinforcing flywheel**.



Let's make it happen:

- Align sales, marketing, and product teams around **shared growth goals** (e.g., traffic, leads, demos booked, activation rate).
- **Build internal rituals:**
 - Weekly content syncs across teams
 - Monthly retro on growth experiments
 - Quarterly playbook updates based on new learnings
- **Empower team members to build their own brands and amplify your content strategy:**
 - Encourage marketing & sales to post insights on LinkedIn
 - Feature team members in case studies, podcasts, and blogs
 - Turn product updates into public stories—not just changelogs
- **Use customer feedback and success stories to feed the content engine → content drives traffic → traffic fuels signups → sales closes those leads → product retains them → those users generate more stories.**

Why It Matters: Growth loops make your company more resilient. They reduce your dependency on one tactic and create a **system of momentum** that works in the background—even when you're not pushing.

How can I help you to grow your startup from 0 to 1 or from 1 to 10?

Thanks for reading this playbook, I hope you find it useful!



ACTION:

Please share your feedback with me directly on [linkedin](#), and feel free to post about this playbook or share with others if you find it useful.

I'm an exited founder and sales leader with 15 years experience in sales and growth.

1. You can **check out my [website](#)** or book a call to discuss your growth **strategy [here](#)**
2. **Check out my [one-pager](#)** on how we can work together and DM me on linkedin or at alper@fortegrowth.co or add me on slack 🙋
3. **I work with early stage startups in different capacity, from equity-based advisor to Fractional CRO/ CMO, best way is to DM me and we can have a chat. No strings attached!**
4. If you're in London, you can join our monthly "Founder Therapy" drinks too.
5. I also host a whatsapp group / community to share GTM and growth hacking ideas with fellow early-stage founders, DM me if you want to get included.