

The Founder Build System

Six stages from zero brand to a market that knows your name, for technical founders entering a market where nobody has heard of them.

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You cannot get customers without credibility, and you cannot get credibility without customers.

You have a great product but nobody knows who you are. This is the loop that breaks it.

Six stages. Each one earns the next. The whole thing runs on the founder to start with, and the last two stages are built to need you less. The weeks are a planning example to adapt, not a benchmark.

1

Trust foundation

Week 1 to 2. Your audience needs to believe you are credible before they will listen.

2

Product articulation

Week 2 to 4. Explain the product in your buyer's language, not engineering jargon.

3

Value communication

Week 4 to 8. Broadcast where your audience actually lives.

4

Social proof

Week 8 to 10. Get other people to vouch for you, systematically.

5

Community building

Week 10 to 12. Build a network of allies who amplify.

6

Brand virality

No fixed date. The aim: the brand spreads without you in the room.

Trust foundation

Week 1 to 2. Your audience needs to believe you are credible before they will listen to a word about the product.

- Optimise the LinkedIn profile. The headline speaks to buyer pain, not your job title.
- Write your founder manifesto. A public declaration of what you stand for.
- Show up consistently, for example three posts a week.
- Share authentic vulnerability. The journey, not just the wins.

THE TRUST TEST

Can a stranger Google you and, inside two minutes, understand what you are expert in, who vouches for you, and why you are different?

Product articulation

Week 2 to 4. Can you explain the product in your buyer's language?

- **The monster you fight.** What problem exists?
- **Why now.** Why is this urgent today rather than next year?
- **Your unique approach.** A philosophical difference, not a feature list.
- **The outcome.** What becomes possible?

Exercise. Interview three customers. Extract the exact phrases they use to describe your value, and use those words instead of yours.

Value communication

Week 4 to 8. Publish where your audience already spends time. A starting mix to adapt:

Share	Type	What it does
70%	Authority	Teach what you know deeply
20%	Credibility	Showcase results, customers, achievements
10%	Relatability	Behind the scenes, the founder journey

Example day	What runs
Monday	Authority. A technical deep dive, or a change in your market
Wednesday	Credibility. A case study or an achievement
Friday	Relatability. An event recap or a personal story

Social proof

Week 8 to 10. With the customer's consent, turn a win into a testimonial and a case study.

ASK STRAIGHT AFTER A SUCCESS

What result did we achieve? What was different? Would you record a two-minute video?



Community building

Week 10 to 12. Thirty allies as a planning example, chosen on purpose rather than collected.

How many	Who	Why them
5	Similar founders	Peer support and honest read on what is working
10	Industry influencers	The people your ICP already follows
10	Target customers	Engage long before they are ready to buy
5	Partners	Distributors and complementary products

Engagement protocol. Follow, comment thoughtfully, share with your own point of view, DM to thank, then look for the collaboration.

Brand virality

No fixed date. The aim: a brand that spreads without your direct involvement. Signs to watch for:

- **Product-led.** The dashboard itself says who built it.
- **Marketing-led.** Customers tag you without being asked.
- **Engineered.** One speaking slot leads to the next one.

THE LITMUS TEST

Are customers bringing you other customers without being asked?



If buyers know you and not the company, start with you.

Compare who engages with the company page and with your own posts. If yours reach the right people and the company's do not, that is a routing decision, not vanity.

Start with the personal brand. Move to the company brand once there is something for the company account to inherit; as an example, this plan allows about twelve months. Starting with the company page risks a page that reads like an empty room.

Then multiply yourself

You are one person. There are four ways to clone the parts of you that do not have to be you.

Four clones

1

Documentation

Turn your brain into playbooks. Your pitch, your discovery questions, your email templates, your LinkedIn strategy, your voice guide. If it only exists in your head, it cannot be handed over.

2

AI

With permission to use the call transcript, feed it in, anonymised where appropriate. Analyse the sales conversation, draft the follow-up, pull post ideas.

3

The team

One example order, once the motion is written down: SDR, content marketer, AE, then part-time senior marketing leadership. Time each hire to the documented motion, not a calendar month.

4

Senior help, part-time

While you are still finding the motion, consider senior expertise part-time over junior expertise full-time. You are buying judgement, not hours.

THE ORDER THAT MATTERS

Document first. Automate second. Hire third. A hire dropped into an undocumented motion has to invent the job before they can do it.

What to check, month by month

Month	Check	Evidence
1	LinkedIn optimised, posting on schedule	Profile-view baseline recorded, posts published as planned
2	First inbound message from a target buyer?	Outbound meetings booked and counted
3	Motion documented well enough for a first hire	First testimonials collected, with permission
4	Share of pipeline from inbound tracked	A first speaking slot pursued

THE SUCCESS METRIC

When strangers recognise your name before they recognise your company's, it is working.

These are checks to set and adapt, not promised results. Nothing in here is fast. In stages 1 to 3 the numbers look small and the effort feels large, so set the measures and review dates in advance rather than judging week by week.



We build and run your go to market and marketing, from strategy to sales.

We build it, run it and keep improving it, then hand it to your team or keep running it fractionally.

Positioning, the content engine, outbound infrastructure, CRM, automations and the sales process. You own all of it.

If this playbook described your company, check whether the gap is effort or the system underneath it.

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