

STARTUP MARKETING STRATEGIES

1. Vitamin vs. painkiller

Five questions to ask yourself –

- Do you have a problem or a feature? – “Mobile access” is a feature, not a problem. E.g. I don’t really want mobile access to my tax return. A lot of startups have a feature idea at their core, not a pain point, mostly because the initial idea was created by an engineer.
- Do you have a specific target market? – A telltale sign of a feature looking for a problem is to target “everyone” or “small business”. Saying everyone needs your product doesn’t mean a trillion dollar opportunity. It just means you don’t understand the problem.
- Can you describe the person who will use your product? – How, where and when do they work? What are they doing exactly that causes them ‘pain’? What alternatives do they look for? Can you draw a picture before they use your app and after?
- Is the pain measurable? – Any convincing CEO can make you believe that bad UI is as painful as a root canal. But how do you measure it? Extra clicks? Time lost? Money lost due to errors? If you can’t measure the pain you have two problems: 1) you might be wrong and 2) you can’t tell if your solution is an improvement.
- Is it verifiable? – Sure, you may find some way to quantify pain but how do you verify with the people who matter, i.e. users? Have you identified ways to double check, like surveys, focus groups or one on one interviews?

<http://flowventures.com/tag/pain-points/>

2. Target a niche.

“Better to make a few users love you than a lot ambivalent.

Ideally you want to make large numbers of users love you, but you can't expect to hit that right away. Initially you have to choose between satisfying all the needs of a subset of potential users, or satisfying a subset of the needs of all potential users. Take the first. It's easier to expand userwise than satisfactionwise. And perhaps more importantly, it's harder to lie to yourself. If you think you're 85% of the way to a great product, how do you know it's not 70%? Or 10%? Whereas it's easy to know how many users you have.”

<http://www.paulgraham.com/13sentences.html>

3. Recruit customers manually and offer amazing customer care

“You should take extraordinary measures not just to acquire users, but also to make them happy.”

<http://paulgraham.com/ds.html>

You only need one strategy –

1. Identify pain vs. pleasure
2. Identify niche target group
3. Gain entry to target group
4. Offer amazing customer care
5. Test, test and test again