VALIDATE YOUR IDEA AND GET CASH FLOWING

INTRODUCTION

Before physically building a product or delivering a service, you should query your prospects and engage with them to see if they would be interested in purchasing your idea; see if you can Validate An Idea.

Just like all ideas, they grow. But instead of trying to perfect it before launch, get paid for development and build what your customers are looking for.

This eBook will show you exactly what I did to launch Hatch's 1000 Four program. We made $1,250 in a few days with 10 people buying. We had nothing developed other than the concept of delivering some sort of premium content for business growth.

SPEND LESS TIME AND MONEY FIGURING OUT WHAT SELLS!

ORIGINS

It was back 12 months ago and I had just spoken at the tedX event at Old Dominion University. My talk was on companies that should be lean and efficient. I used the term 1000 four, which describes what a community focusing on starting and growing 1000 four employee companies, instead of trying to recruit the opposite: four 1000 employee companies.

Two days later I came up with taking that concept and turning it into a program that helps new and growing entrepreneurs. I didn't know what I wanted to do with it or how I would do something with the program, just that I thought the target prospects may be looking for resources like this.

I put together some sample language of what I thought would be provided, which was content, workshops and courses geared to those types of entrepreneurs named above. I put together a simple landing page which was text based on what I thought would be delivered, premium content basically. And I offered lifetime access to this program for $125. I had no idea about pricing, but I picked a number that I thought would gauge interest enough and went with it.

I did this my showcasing my tedX talk instead of just selling. I wanted folks to understand my passion in helping them. I wrote to them in emails and in social posts.

DAY ONE

The 1000 four person campaign is focused on changing the mindset of how our region tries to build companies. We realize its ambitious, but if you look at our numbers currently, no one would have thought those would have happened either in three years. We want to help launch and grow and be a piece of 1000 businesses, whether that be through Start Norfolk, Hatch, workshops or through our classes focused on action-driven development.

Currently, we plan to organize one Start Norfolk every year, in the fall, in conjunction with ODU and their entrepreneurship program, which we helped develop. Along with that we are developing additional classes, seminars and workshops throughout the year on specific topics. Ex. Launching your business for $1000.

To do such projects, we need to bring in additional resources: teachers, equipment, advertising, talent, etc. Specifically, we will be creating content that will accessible throughout the world via our Hatch website.

For Several of our events and programs we look at creating local initiatives with national flare. We firmly believe that while we must focus on retaining talent, that at the same time we need to focus on attracting talent to the area. We do this in many ways, bringing speakers in from around the county, Webinar sessions, etc. by doing this, we enhance our chances of being featured in National publications, such as Entrepreneur Magazine, like we were last August.

We have three goals that will work along with our 1000 four campaign.

1. Help launch businesses
2. Help train employees for those businesses while actively helping with recruitment
3. Educate and market our region as a hub to start and grow ones business.

While 1000 four person companies may seem unobtainable, we know that if we focus our attention on the creation and growth of startups, will we have a far better opportunity for our businesses to grow into larger companies with hundreds of employees.

As you may have seen, our local economy is almost 100% reliant on the public sector. Our campaign is created around diversifying our economy, while leveraging our strengths in commercializing and growing private sector companies.

Check out my recent Ted talk on this subject. startnorfolk.com/start-norfolk-founder-tedx-hampton-roads/

Pictured above is all we had on day one. Just sample text on a page.

I didn't know what type of material would really be provided, but I was broad enough to see if anyone would pursue. At this point, I had a landing page with Call To Action Buttons linked to a PayPal button for $125 and a couple of emails prepared to send. I sent it out and also pushed it on social media. No big plan here, just a landing page and some simple expectations.

And just a few days later, we had 10 sales at $125 each for a total of $1,125! All this by not knowing if there was interest or not. In my head, I knew that if we only had 1-2 sales I would just refund, but to hit double digits in a few days with a decent price range, I knew we were on to something. Below I've broken down the few steps we did to validate and qualify our concept.

VALIDATE YOUR IDEA IN 6 STEPS!

1 MAKE IT EASY TO UNDERSTAND (FOCUS ON EARLY ADOPTERS)

2 INCENTIVIZE

3 UNDER SELL + OVER DELIVER

4 OFFER FOR SHORT PERIOD OF TIME

5 PRIORITY TO TARGET CUSTOMERS

6 MAKE IT EASY TO BUY

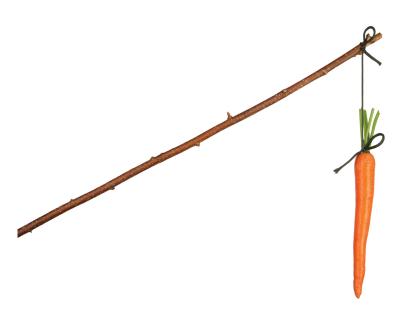# 1 MAKE IT EASY TO UNDERSTAND (FOCUS ON EARLY ADOPTERS)

When validating an idea, you likely have a following of some sort. A following of people who have bought from you in the past or friends who frequently like, comment or share your content. What type of key-words or language do they typically communicate with you in. Try to tailor your language to that specific audience. Example: If your followers are typically younger males, speak in younger male tongue not old lady words. (I love all people)

People who tend to be early adopters, i.e. the ones you are looking for, are ones that will buy into a con-cept. Take an inventory of who has communicated with you like this and add them to a list of prospects.

Give this some meaning, but also show what it would cost it they don't buy. In this case, a customer would be buying at $125 for life. If they decide not join, they would spend $1,500 over three years. That's $1,375. Big difference.

3 UNDER SELL + OVER DELIVER

Since you are not exactly sure what may work and may not, its key here to not oversell. You don't want someone expecting something and never receiving it here. It's safe to undersell here and offer one feature or something small with leading folks to know that more is expecting to come with customer collaboration.

4 OFFER FOR SHORT PERIOD OF TIME

One of the key elements to a purchase is to limit the amount of time allowed to buy. Why? When you give people outs, they tend to take them. We offered lifetime for one week. After that, we never offered it again and never at a price this low.

5 PRIORITY TO TARGET CUSTOMERS

Don't waste your time on people who are not prospects or those you think may be the wrong fit. Now, I'm not saying don't offer this to them because you could be wrong and they may want in. What I am saying is spend 80 percent of your time on prospects and the other 20 percent on the others.

6 MAKE IT EASY TO BUY

At the end of the day, the goal with validating an idea is to verify with some sort of data. In this specific case, money was the piece of data. For others it could be signing up for an email list or downloading an e-book. Another example would be signing up for a new app. Whatever the outcome, make sure you are using data to give you your answer not your ego.

We tracked this data point by reviewing who purchased the lifetime offer. For those interested in making the purchase, we had a hyperlinked buy now text or that said Lifetime access for $125 that took prospects to a PayPal link. Once they signed up, we had an email ready to send them welcoming to the program.

In just one week, we were able to validate our membership idea.

Fast forward to now, August 30, 2015. 1000 Four is going strong and we are constantly tweaking our content for our members. With an exclusive site only for members launching in the coming weeks.

1. **MAKE IT EASY TO UNDERSTAND (FOCUS ON EARLY ADOPTERS)**

2. **INCENTIVIZE**

3. **UNDER SELL + OVER DELIVER**

4. **OFFER FOR SHORT PERIOD OF TIME**

5. **PRIORITY TO TARGET CUSTOMERS**

6. **MAKE IT EASY TO BUY**

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