

How to Tell Your Startup Story

10 decisions that define your startup DNA

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February 7th, 2017



Hi, I'm Dave Sloan!



Founder of BigTalker

Product Management at both large and early stage companies

I've helped dozens of startups tell their startup story and execute their [product strategy](#)

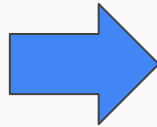
palm



What is a strategy deck?

Pitch deck

1. Intro
2. The problem
3. The solution
4. Traction
5. Market size
6. Sales strategy
7. Partners
8. Revenue model
9. Competition
10. Team

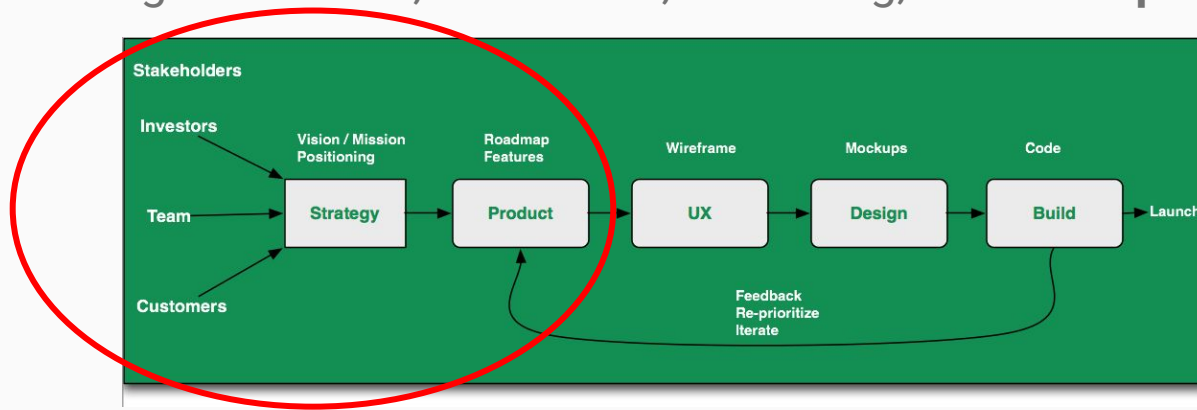


Strategy deck

1. Who are we?
2. What do we believe?
3. How do we position ourselves?
4. How do we differentiate?
5. Who is our enemy?
6. Who are our target customers?
7. How do we measure success?
8. Where do we fit in ecosystem?
9. How do we acquire customers?
10. What are we going to build?

Why do we need a strategy deck?

- Helps motivate and sync the entire team, leads to product plan.
- Specifies what you are and aren't. Clarify your story.
- Ties together vision, customers, marketing, sales and **product**



Every employee impacts the outcome, makes an impact

Who are we?

- X for Y - high level
- Elevator pitch - 2-3 sentences
- Blurb on website - About us

BigTalker is Yelp for professional development

BigTalker provides companies with 'soft skills' training programs to develop and retain employees. Workshops focus on core teamwork and communication skills.

About BigTalker

BigTalker is a trusted marketplace for onsite training, guest speakers, seminars and workshops. Find your team's next training session or team building exercise. Check community generated reviews and ratings to find the next inspirational speaker for your team.

BigTalker focuses on providing employees with onsite training in critical soft-skills. There are unlimited online video education platforms, but tangible, career enhancing skill-building comes from being trained and mentored in person on the right topic by the best trainers. **Employees who feel they are learning and developing their career on the job will stay longer.**

Interested in posting a talk or finding a talk that's not listed? [Contact Us](#)



What do we believe?

The Facebook logo, consisting of the word "facebook" in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font, is centered within a dark blue rectangular box.

Mission

To give people the power to share and make the world more open and connected.

Vision

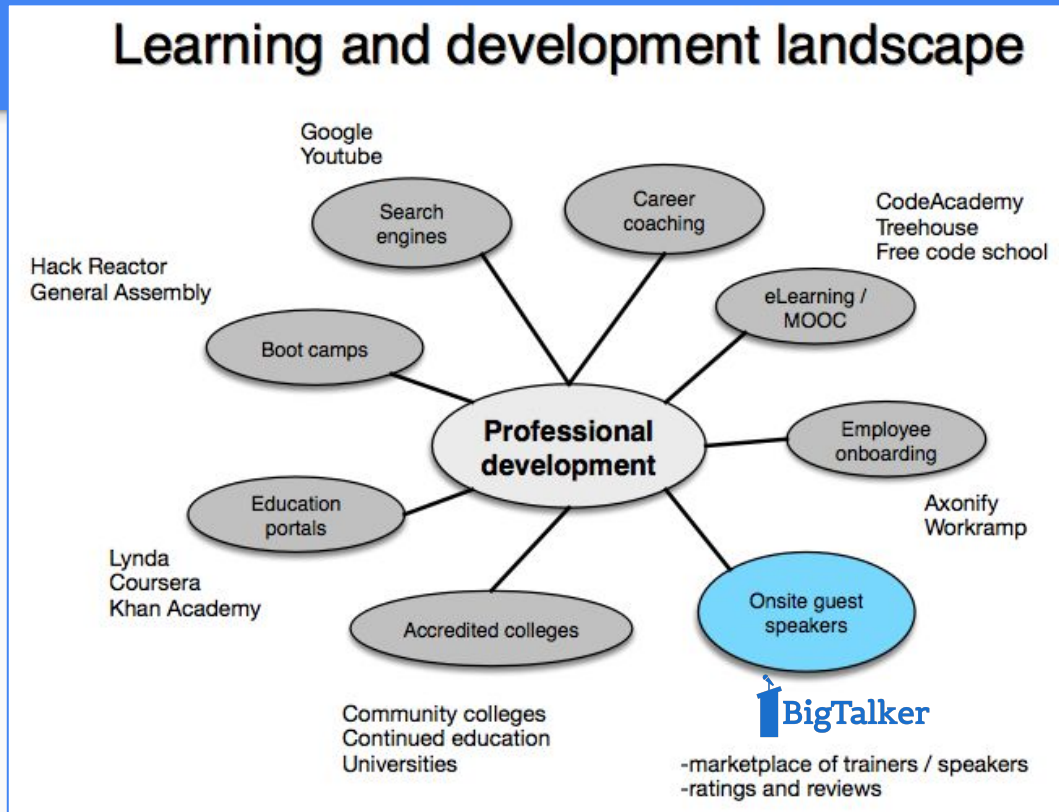
People use Facebook to stay connected with friends and family, to discover what's going on in the world, and to share and express what matters to them.

Values

Be bold. Focus on impact. Move fast. Be open. Build social value.

How do we position ourselves in the market?

- How are we creating a new category?
- How are we changing the rules?
- How are we not just copying competitors in a crowded market?



How do we differentiate?



VS



1. Native desktop apps
2. Better at mobile
3. Better organized

Who is the enemy?

- 37 Signals - Basecamp: “Microsoft Project sucks.”
- Apple: existing smartphones, Samsung, Android
- “Wordpress is not for Enterprise”



What problem are we solving?

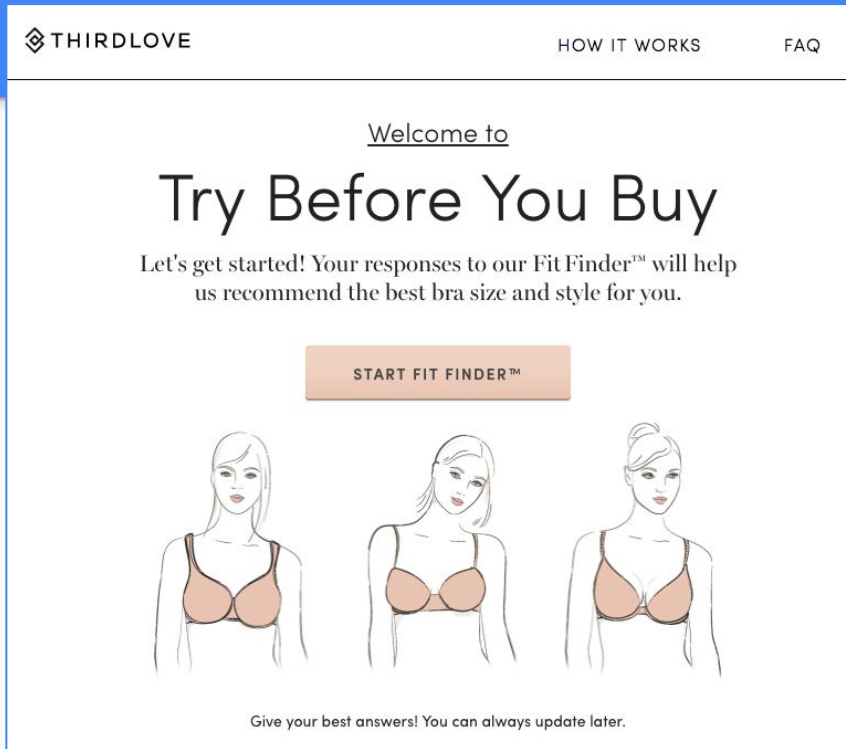


Convince us the problem is real.



What problem are we solving?

“80% of women wear the wrong bra size.”



The screenshot shows the top navigation bar with the ThirdLove logo, 'HOW IT WORKS', and 'FAQ'. The main heading is 'Welcome to Try Before You Buy'. Below this is a sub-heading: 'Let's get started! Your responses to our Fit Finder™ will help us recommend the best bra size and style for you.' A prominent orange button labeled 'START FIT FINDER™' is centered. Underneath the button are three line-art illustrations of a woman's torso wearing different styles of bras: a full-coverage bra, a balconette bra, and a plunge bra. At the bottom of the section, a small text line reads: 'Give your best answers! You can always update later.'

THIRDLOVE

HOW IT WORKS

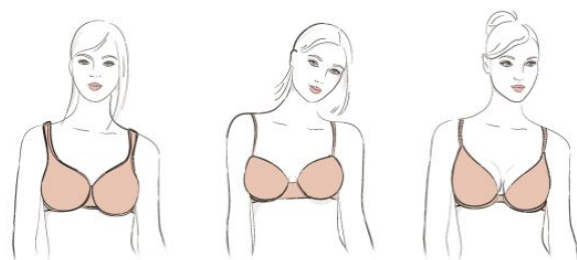
FAQ

Welcome to

Try Before You Buy

Let's get started! Your responses to our Fit Finder™ will help us recommend the best bra size and style for you.

START FIT FINDER™

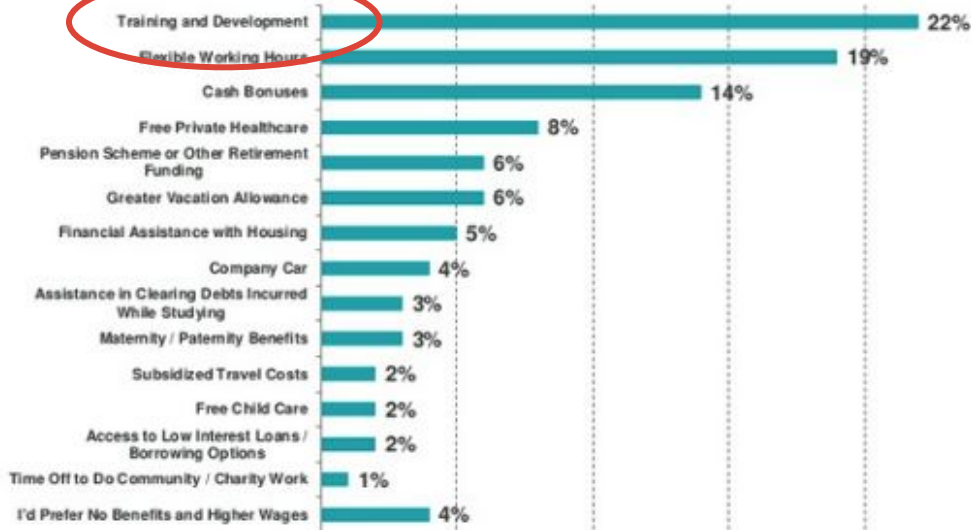


Give your best answers! You can always update later.

What problem are we solving?

Millennials' Most Valued Work Benefits =
1) Training & Development 2) Flexible Hours 3) Cash Bonuses

Which Three Benefits Would You Most Value From an Employer?
% Ranking Each 1st Place, Global

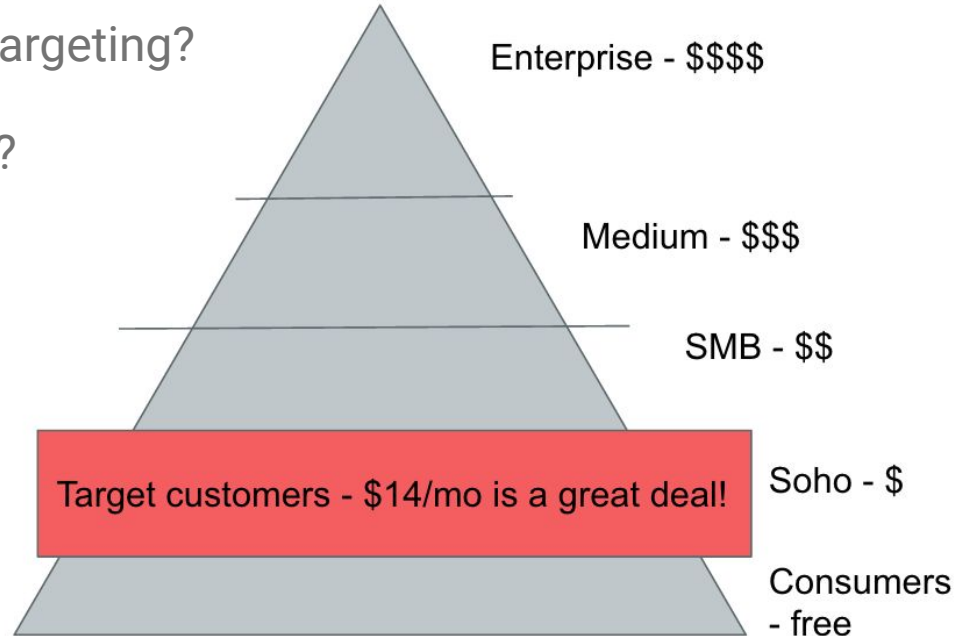


BigTalker: “Employees want on the job training more than any other work benefit.”

Who are our customers?

Who are we targeting? Who are we NOT targeting?

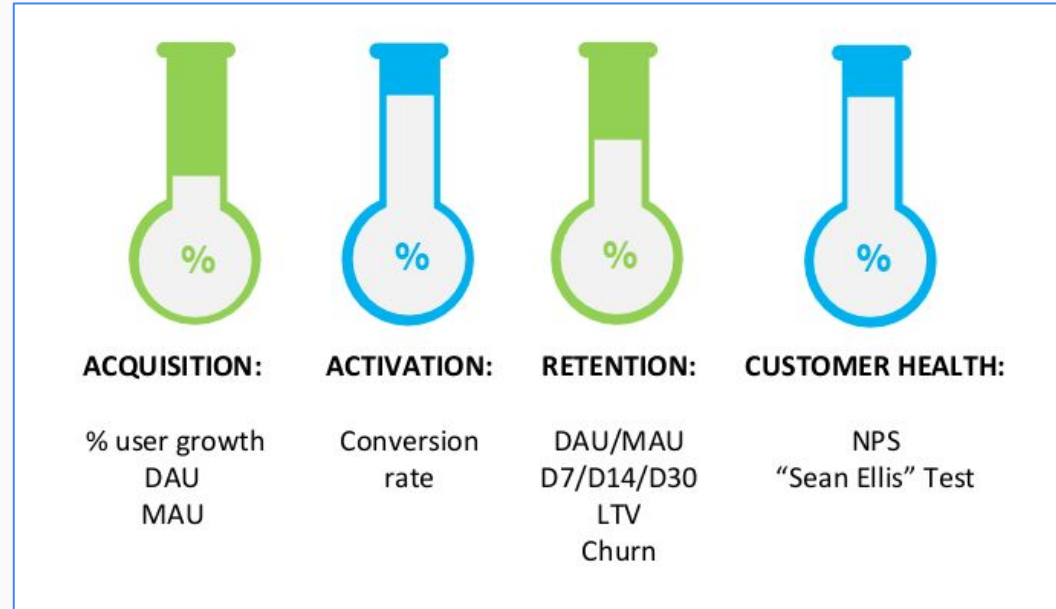
How do we identify our target customers?



How do we measure success?

Identify your specific KPI

How do we NOT measure success?



Source: Ha Nguyen, Omidyar Network

How do we show customer traction?

At BigTalker's first workshop

- 100% of attendees want more professional development sessions.
- 92% want to learn more about the workshop topic.
 - "I learned so much, and loved the way Kim made mindfulness relatable and practical. I've already started using some of her tips at work."



How do we show traction?

- Research the problem, validate
- Beta testing
- Custom market research!

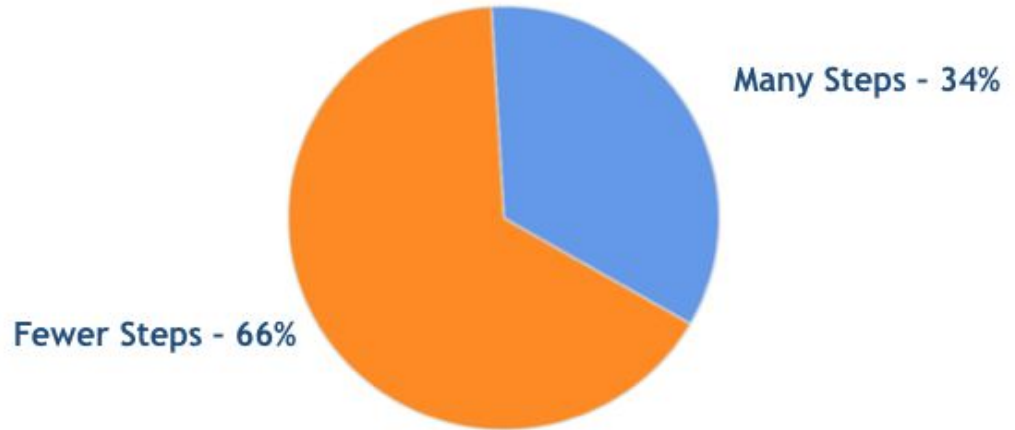
What secret do you know about the market that no one else knows yet?



Key finding: Most respondents prefer simplicity

“If you were to ‘build-your-own’ product online, what extent of customization would you prefer?”

66% prefer “Simple. Fewer steps. Fewer configurable options.”
34% prefer “Highly Customizable. Many steps. Infinite configurable options.”



Takeaway: Simple customization flows appeal to a broader audience

How do we fit in the ecosystem?

Where do we fit in the value chain?



How do we acquire customers?

Inbound vs. outbound

Paid vs. non-paid

Direct sales vs. channel



What are we going to build?

The startup story is reflected in the product roadmap

What are priorities? Themes?

What are we NOT building?

What is strategic vs customer requested?

Launch date	March 7th	March 21st	April 15th	June 7th
Version	Full Service 1.0	FS 1.1	Self-Service 1.0	SS 1.1
theme	Core functionality	Collaboration	SEO	Security
Core functionality	Contact list Logo upload Footer Migrate old sites	Global notifications Migrate v2		
Sign-up flow	Login on new marketing site	Qualify sign-ups as self-serve or enterprise	Redesigned sign-up flow - frictionless Go to Admin page first, first time user	
Collaboration		Basic permissions	Status of accepted invites Email verification - only if clicks Inbox for invites Multiple email strings with "," Cannot invite duplicate users (mixed permissions) Customize avatar photo More levels of permissions Create approved assets Create orgs? Page specific access	Set up sub-domain, assign Messaging system Live inline editing with others
Editor	UX refresh Contact list with simple map	Redesign Add Pages card Redesign Settings card Redesign Statistics card Redesign Pages card Contact list with mobile map		
Analytics	Total visits per day Granular page count (like photo) per day Month, 3 months, year	More granular Mobile vs. desktop page hits		
SEO	Basic	Edit SEO fields	Advanced SEO	

Summary: What is our startup story?

Define and socialize the startup story

Write your employees into the company story - **a sense of purpose motivates them**

1. Company description
2. Vision, mission, values, mantra
3. Competitive landscape
4. Differentiation
5. The problem we are solving
6. Target customers
7. Success metrics (KPIs)
8. Where we fit in the ecosystem
9. Customer acquisition plan
10. **Product Roadmap**

Discussion

Thank you!

Dave Sloan

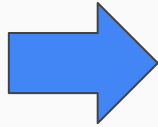
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appendix

What is a strategy deck?

The pitch deck

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The strategy deck

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3. How do we describe ourselves?
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