

THE ULTIMATE
**GROWTH
HACKING**

SOURCEBOOK



ROCKETSHIP



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INTRODUCTION

What's That? "Yet Another Compendium Of Atari-Era Marketing Tactics!" We Hear You Softly Groan To Yourself

"Aren't there enough guides on growth hacking floating about the internet already?", you then rightfully ask aloud. "There's blah and blah and blah, and then there's also blah, blah, blah". Agreed. No, really, we know that and – just like you – we've read most of them.

But Where Is All The Cool New S@#T?

But you know what? After pouring over far too many blog posts and needlessly shovelling through various resources created by an ever-growing cadre of 'growth hack3rz', we got sick of coming across the "same ol', same ol'" examples.

Just because Hotmail did something considered to be a marketing "hack" in the 90's doesn't mean that it is just as relevant in today's cut-throat startup world saturated with SaaS startups of every which flavour.

What about all of the new and shiny tactics that cutting-edge marketers are using to blaze today's growth hacking trails? Or, to put it another way: "where is all of the cool new s@#t?" As it turns out, scattered across the far (and not so far) reaches of the startup blogosphere.

The Quest For The 'Growth Hacking Holy Grails'

After doing some further digging through the digital startup catacombs, we realized that there is no single, regularly-updated resource of startup marketing hacks.

So, as any true entrepreneurial type would do, we decided that this is not good enough. It was time to launch our own quest for the 'Growth Hacking Holy Grails' out there!

Launch said quest we did and the result is this collection of modern growth hacking case studies.

Our aim was to complement the more established resources already available and, if you're a die-hard Growth Jedi Master, then you may have seen these hacks referenced elsewhere. However, the format that we've adopted will still make for worthwhile and educational reading.

How's that for a double cheese pizza?

Disclaimer

And while we don't make any claims that using the hacks in this 'Sourcebook' will turn you into a startup marketing Michael Jordan, our hope is that you'll at least be able to sink a few three-pointers by the time you've gone through it.

Now lace up your standard-issue startup founder flip-flops (we know you can't afford Air Jordans yet), it's game time!

ACQUISITION

Mturk + Google News API = Press

THE HACK

Get Press Coverage Using Mechanical Turk & Google News

AARRR STAGE:

Acquisition

GROWTH PROBLEM:

Gain Publicity For Your App

Explanation:

You know that you need publicity. The problem is that you're no PR extraordinaire and, most likely, neither are your co-founders. But you do want the glory of being featured on the front page of TechCrunch or TheNextWeb. Boy, do you want the glory! Sorry, but so does every other SaaS founder on the planet.

This hack is meant to provide a way for you to target your publicity efforts so that you get the most bang for your buck and substantially increase your press coverage.

Just Hack It:

- Scour Google News for reporters who have already covered apps similar to yours. If your app is SO 'stealth mode' or 'uniquely out-of-this-world' then seek reporters who may have experience Use <http://press.customerdevlabs.com/> to turn your search results into a convenient spreadsheet (yes, there's an app for that!)
- Upload your list to Mechanical Turk in orders to automate the process of finding each reporter's contact details (you don't really want to sift through several hundred news listings, do you now?)
- Voila, you now have a list of reporters that is as long as your arm. Now is the time to polish off your press kit. Or start working on one...
- Make sure to embargo your press release but be aware that some large news websites can't stand this practice!
- Setup alerts for web and social mentions using your favorite tools.

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://customerdevlabs.com/2013/09/24/google-news-api-mturk-press/>

Use Visual.Ly For Content Distribution

THE HACK

Use Visual.ly To Increase Your Content Distribution

AARRR STAGE:

Acquisition

GROWTH PROBLEM:

Get Your Infographic Noticed

Explanation:

You have poured your heart and soul into creating an awesome infographic. Not one that you got made on Fiverr but an expensive, visually exciting one that you paid a pricey designer or agency to create for you. This is, of course, in addition to the hours that you've invested into the research and writing of it.

Your 'Top 10 Reasons That Being a Growth Hacker Isn't All That It's Cranked Up To Be' is now finished and your trigger finger is ready to start pressing 'Post' on your Facebook, Pinterest and SlideShare accounts. Hold on a second, are you a growth hacker or not? What you should start doing is distributing your infographics on more niche websites.

Visual.ly brand themselves as the 'information design community', yet it's a website that most content marketers don't now about. Because of its specialized nature, Visual.ly also gets attention from journalists who are always on the hunt for topical and relevant visuals to share with their readers.

Just Hack It:

- Register for a free account on Visual.ly
- Upload your infographic
- Sit back and start counting the digital eyeballs
- While you're at it, here is a list of other websites that you can submit your infographic to for free:

<http://infographicsarchive.com/>

<http://graphs.net/>

<http://www.loveinfographics.com/>

<http://www.ucollectinfographics.com/>

<http://visualizing.org/>

<http://www.bestinfographics.co/>

<http://www.coolinfographics.com/>

<http://infographicsdirectory.blogspot.com/>

<http://www.infographaholic.com/>

<http://infographicdatabase.com/>

<http://infographic-directory.com/>

<http://www.infographichost.com/>

<http://infographicpics.com/>

<http://infographicplace.com/>

<http://www.infographicportal.com/>

<http://www.nerdgraph.com/>

<http://nfogfx.com/>

<https://shithotinfographics.wordpress.com/>

<http://submitinfographics.com/>

<http://theinfographics.blogspot.com>

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://www.slideshare.net/BuzzFork/8-traffic-growth-hacks-chris-bolman>

Scientific Blogging

THE HACK

Treat Your Blogging Like A Science

AARRR STAGE:

Acquisition

GROWTH PROBLEM:

Analyze Your Blog In Order To Improve Your Post Virality

Explanation:

If you ever tried to improve your copywriting chops, then you may have come across a book called 'Scientific Advertising' by Claude Hopkins. In his popular work, Mr Hopkins lays out a framework for creating effective advertising.

One of the most important points that he emphasizes is the need for copious amounts of testing and measuring. And as an A/B-wielding growth hacker you wholeheartedly agree, right? But this ain't the Summer of Love and blogs are one of the most effective 'ads' online.

So it's time to take your blogging and make it all scientific. But apart from analyzing the heck out of your posts with Google Analytics and running heatmaps, what else can you do?

Here's a hack that will help you to gain a better understanding of your blogging in order to improve the virality of your posts methodically. Just like a real growth scientist would.

Just Hack It:

- Download Import.io as this is the tool that you will use to scrape your blog
- Create a crawler with Import.io and let it loose on your blog in order to extract everything, including meta-data
- Export your data to Excel or Google Sheets
- Now, go to SharedCount and upload your list of exported URLs – this will show you how much social love each post got
- Now export the data from SharedCount and combine your blog meta and social sharing data using the VLOOKUP function
- You can then play around with the data by combining various bits of meta information with the social data to see what insights you can glean.
- In addition to being a growth hacker, you are now officially a Blogging Growth Scientist.

Source Or Inspiration:

<https://www.growthhacker.tv/recipes/?id=1362>

Adding App To Chrome Web Store

THE HACK

Adding SaaS App to Chrome Web Store

AARRR STAGE:

Acquisition

GROWTH PROBLEM:

Increase Exposure for Your SaaS App

Explanation:

According to the browser usage stats published at W3Schools, more than 60% of those who access the internet do so using Google Chrome. That's more than half of the online population! What's more, sales of Chromebooks are surging and have surpassed 5 million units in 2014.

As a growth hacker, this makes adding your app to the Chrome Web Store a no-brainer for the purpose of gaining additional exposure. Not only that but an even lesser known hack is that you can also add your website too! Just imagine the added traffic-generating benefits of such a simple move.

Hopefully, you don't need further convincing that this is a wise investment of \$5. So, let's get down to the business of actually adding yourself to the Chrome app ecosystem.

Just Hack It:

- First, make sure that your app adheres to Google's design principles. Basically, make sure it's not ugly!
- Then follow the Google Developer step-by-step instructions to get your app on the Store. You can also read a simplified version on the Reliablysoft site
- There are also a few additional steps that you can take to make your app stand out:
 - Pay particular attention to the promo image that you use. Once again, try not to stray too far from Google's guidelines
 - Choose the right category for your app. This one seems like a no-brainer but it can make a noticeable difference to whether people find you in the first place
 - Get (???)
 - You can read additional tips from Ecquire to see how they've hacked the growth of their Chrome extension.

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://www.growthhacking.biz/6-great-hacks-for-user-growth/>

<http://ecquire.com/blog/how-to-get-more-chrome-extension-downloads/>

Groovehq Viral Sign-Up Form

THE HACK

Creating a 'Viral' Sign-Up Form

AARRR STAGE:

Acquisition

GROWTH PROBLEM:

Acquiring Multiple Users at a Time

Explanation:

Why acquire only one user at a time when you can get two, three, four or even more in one fell swoop? While this may sound like a utopian pre-launch dream it is a possibility if you just implement this one little hack.

Sure, you may already have a landing page for your app that allows people to leave their email and join your 'waiting list' but, often, that's where the buck stops. However, you want your buck to keep on buckin' until the Twittersverse is awash with mentions of your digital creation.

The solution is to provide your users with a viral sign-up form. Those who share your app with x-number of their friends get to go on your launch list. Those who share more get to move higher up the wait list. Simple, right? But you just wait until this hack is live!

Just Hack It:

- This is how the process works:
 - Your future 'waitlister' signs up using an email opt-in form
 - After signing up, they receive a custom URL that can be shared with their friends
 - The URL is trackable and you set up an email autoresponder series to send emails notifying the waitlister every time someone has signed up as a result of their invites
 - Once they have invited the required number of people, they get a final email advising that they are now officially on your launch list.
- Of course you could code this all up yourself or but why reinvent the wheel? Here are some WordPress plugins that will help you to implement this system quickly and easily:
 - Viral Sign-Ups – this one is free for up to 10,000 subscribers and you can probably afford to pay for it
 - KickoffLabs' Viral Signup Form Plugin – plans start at \$29 per month but it comes with a whole heap of other handy growth hacking tools.

Source Or Inspiration:

<https://www.groovehq.com/blog/early-wins>
<http://blog.forkly.com/a-viral-launching-soon-form/>

Acquire Customers Using Hacker News & Reddit

THE HACK

Create a Hacker News & Reddit Marketing Strategy

AARRR STAGE:

Acquisition

GROWTH PROBLEM:

Tapping Into Niche Communities to Increase Exposure

Haxplanation:

You may be an avid reader of Reddit or Hacker News (HN), but do you actively use these sites to promote your app? Most likely the answer is a big fat “NO”. Don’t worry, you’re not the only one guilty of this growth hacking blasphemy. After all, it’s not that different from a barista getting sick of drinking his or her own coffee. Or something like that..

But the good news is that it’s not too late to make a course correction and tap into these awesome communities to acquire early adopters. This will pay particularly large dividends if your product’s user base overlaps with the psycho-demographics of these sites’ audiences. Also, remember that tech journalists and other tech glitterati frequent both of these.. So if you get it right, you could strike publicity gold.

Read on to learn how to effectively pimp your wares on these niche sites.

Just Hack It:

1. For both sites, the key is to tailor your content:
 1. If you’re posting to Reddit, then add something along the lines of “Dear Redditors” or “Hey [Sub-Reddit] to the title (feel free to get creative).
 2. HN readers aren’t as in love with themselves (sorry, Redditors), so the ego stroking might not have to be as strong here. But as always, a little caring before sharing goes a long way.
2. For HN, turn your post title into a clickable link to your website, which will help with driving traffic to your site and can help you to get on the front page.
3. For Reddit, it also pays to address the Sub-Reddit specifically and somehow reference something relevant to the group.
 1. Before posting anything, do a lot of research of the Sub-Reddit to see what usually gets traction and, more importantly, what doesn’t. As every Sub-Reddit is
 2. Getting virality on Reddit requires a different approach to that of other social networks. Word of warning: you will be pulled up on your marketing “BS” so make sure that you can back up whatever you claim.

Acquire Customers Using Hacker News & Reddit (CONTINUED)

THE HACK

Create a Hacker News & Reddit Marketing Strategy

AARRR STAGE:

Acquisition

GROWTH PROBLEM:

Tapping Into Niche Communities to Increase Exposure

3. our number one goal should be to contribute quality discussions and content rather than blatant self-promotion. Redditors aren't a fan of this and you'll do yourself more harm than good by being the 'marketer' in the room.
4. Respond to all of the comments (even from the haters, as Reddit has plenty of those) and watch your street cred grow.
5. But it's not all about HN and Reddit. Depending on your app, there are numerous other online communities that could be perfect for promoting yourself on – Inbound.org, GrowthHackers.com, etc., etc.
6. Keeping up with updates on each individual site can be tedious, so you can use an aggregator for this purpose:
 1. <http://www.newscombinator.com/>
 2. <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.hackplan.one>
 3. <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/one-one-app-to-read-them-all/id944173670>
7. The moral of the story is to search for online communities that are relevant to your product and then engage with them in a genuine way.

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://blog.idonethis.com/first-5000-users/>

Buy PPC Ads Around Events To Promote Product

THE HACK

Use PPC Ads to Promote Your App During Events

AARRR STAGE:

Acquisition

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Piggyback Off Events

Explanation:

How many events can you think of that occur in your industry that would be great as a platform for promoting your SaaS app? Problem is, it normally costs a pretty penny to be an exhibitor and, as a startup founder, you don't normally have the means to attend all of them (or any of them).

That's no reason for you to not try and 'growth hack' your way into the biggest gatherings of the year, virtually. If you already have a solid content strategy in place, then your editorial calendar will already have most of the relevant happenings referenced in it.

But it's not all about organic content, as you can also use paid advertising during these events in order to tap into the buzz. Google Adwords is perfect for this. Now pick the event of your choice and follow the instructions below.

Just Hack It:

- Firstly, if you don't have an editorial calendar and no content strategy in place then the Content Marketing Institute have a great free guide that can help you to develop one
- Once you know what events you want to target, do some keyword research and general brainstorming to figure out what keywords event-goers may use
- If it is a new event for which keyword data is not readily available, you may have to make some educated guesses and then test different keywords during the event. A good starting point is different variations on the event's name
- Keep in mind, that people start research events early so you may want to run different ad campaigns on the lead-up to the event, while it is going and potentially even after it has finished.

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://labs.openviewpartners.com/top-10-startup-growth-hacks-2015/>

Email 'Pre-Targeting'

THE HACK

Email List
Pre-Targeting

AARRR STAGE:

Acquisition

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to 'Warm Up'
Your Email List

Explanation:

You have that nice long list of emails opt-in emails that you want to utilize for your growth hacking purposes. The email list may not even be an opt-in one and but we're certainly not here to judge... The point is that you want the emails sent to that list to have as high an engagement rate as possible. Easier said than done, especially if the list wasn't organically grown in the first place.

But there is a way to get yourself in the good books – or, in this case, inboxes – of your future email recipients. It involves what is known as email 'pre-targeting'. If you know what retargeting is then this is essentially the opposite of that. Read this comprehensive post on Moz.com if you need a refresher or introduction.

But retargeting is retroactive whereas growth hacking is all about embracing the future. So is pretargeting, which works by allowing you to get your branded ads in front of the email list before they receive the first piece of communication from you. This makes the ensuing email a lot less 'cold' and should increase your open rates.

Just Hack It:

- There are a number of online ad platforms available for you to carry out your pretargeting campaigns on: Facebook, Twitter, Gmail Adwords and others.
- They all have their own name for their retargeting service but the logic is similar – you upload a list of emails and ads are then served targeting those specific individuals:
 1. Facebook calls it 'Custom Audiences'
 2. Twitter calls it "Tailored Audiences"
- Upload your email list following the instructions on Facebook or Twitter
- Don't worry about having a CTA as the goal is to create familiarity with your brand. You're 'warming up' the list, remember?
- Once you've successfully finished your campaign, then your subsequent email blast will be less likely to fall on deaf ears.
- Sit back and enjoy the higher open and click-through rates. You've deserved them!

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://sixteenventures.com/saas-growth-hacking-email>

Share On Hacker News Link

THE HACK

Bring Hacker News to Your Website

AARRR STAGE:

Acquisition

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Better Tap Into the Hacker News Community

Haxplanation:

“Hacker News is what Reddit once used to be.” This is a sentiment that you may hear echoed in the tech startup community. Whether you agree with this or not is irrelevant. What’s relevant is that HN remains a community of hardcore startup hackers who all closely follow the happenings in Silicon Valley’s startup scene.

There’s no arguing that getting your post on the front page of HN can pay off in spades. This applies to both customer acquisition and publicity. If you want to better integrate your website with this powerful news source then keep reading.

Just Hack It:

- If you want a lo-fi solution without having to install anything then you can always manually add something like “Discuss on Hacker News: <http://LinkToHackerNewsPost>” at the end of of your blog posts
- If you want to fly the HN flag high then go and install the Hacker News Button – this is the easiest and most visually appetizing way to build a bridge to HN
- You can also get all geeky with it and host your own Hacker News button server but this is mostly for the hardcore HN fan
- Whatever you do, it’s bound to pay off and be appreciated by the HN community. Just remember: “once a hacker, always a hacker”, so just keep it real...

Source Or Inspiration:

<https://bountify.co/blog/host-your-own-hacker-news-button-server>

LinkedIn 'Creepy' Visitor Tracking

THE HACK

Track Which LinkedIn Users Visit Your Website

AARRR STAGE:

Acquisition

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Identify the People Visiting Your Site

Haxplanation:

LinkedIn is a powerful social network that is often underutilized in growth hacking circles and is often ignored by SaaS startups in favour of other networks. However, LinkedIn provides a lot of interesting options for acquiring customers. With a user base of 330+ million professionals, you would be foolish to ignore this as a growth hacker.

One unique feature of this network is the ability to track other LinkedIn users who view your profile. This is something that neither Facebook nor Twitter provide. As a growth hacker, you definitely want to make use of this.

One way of 'hacking' this feature is by implementing a bit of code on your website that allows you to see which LinkedIn users visited. For this to work, the user has to be logged in to their account and you need to have a paid LinkedIn Premium account. With these two conditions met, you could have a very powerful tool in your marketing arsenal.

Just Hack It:

- Register for a LinkedIn Premium account. The cheapest option is the 'Job Seeker' account, which still lets you see who's viewed your profile
- Add the following HTML code somewhere into the <body> tag of your page: ``
- Here, XX represents your LinkedIn ID page
- Now logged in LinkedIn users who visit your website will show up in your profile on the "Who's Viewed Your Profile" page. Magic!

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://andrisatteka.blogspot.co.nz/2014/10/creepy-visitor-tracking-using-linkedin.html>

<http://blog.makensi.es/post/3679713636/fingerprinting-your-visitors-using-social-networks>

Match Content Marketing Pop-Ups Or Hello Bar Offer To Page Content

THE HACK

Increase Conversions on High Bounce-Rate Pages

AARRR STAGE:

Acquisition

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How To Minimize 'Funnel Leakage' On High Traffic Pages

Explanation:

After spending a considerable amount of time developing your blog, the virtual blood, sweat and tears have paid off. You now have a number of posts on your blog that drive a considerable amount of traffic to your site. The flipside of this is that they may not be the highest-converting pages.

Once a visitor has landed on your page, they typically don't have any incentive to stick around and move on to the next thing that catches their fancy. Usually, the 'next thing' is not on your website.

But this is something that you can – and should – take care of. As a growth hacker, you need to maximize the return on your content assets by turning as many of your visitors into subscribers or leads. Think of this hack as being the anti-'bait and switch.'

Just Hack It:

- Undertake a 'bounce rate stocktake' using Google Analytics to identify pages with excessively high percentages
- Find an incentive that you could provide to visitors of each of those pages, such as a free eBook, whitepaper, report or other relevant content resource
- The important thing here is to make sure that the incentive matches up with the content in your post. This shouldn't be too hard to figure out as your blog topic will suggest the freebie
- If you want to get even more 'jiggy with it', you can try and match the content freebie to the stage of the buyer journey that a visitor of the page could be at. Doing so would significantly increase the perceived value of your incentive
- The way to implement this is to use Hello Bar or any one of the numerous opt-in form popup plugins. You can always A/B test these to see what works best
- As always, don't forget to keep track of the relevant statistics afterwards.

Source Or Inspiration:

<https://blog.kissmetrics.com/double-your-leads-instantly/>

Crowdsourced Translations To Increase Your International Customers

THE HACK

Crowdsource The Translation of Your App

AARRR STAGE:

Acquisition

GROWTH PROBLEM:

Targeting Non-English Speaking Prospects

Haxplanation:

The World Wide Web is a big place. The English speaking portion of it accounts for only 55% off all of the content on the internet. By performing a very simple calculation, it becomes obvious that your SaaS app is missing out on a whopping 45% percent of the world's non-English speaking population. But what to do?

Get creative, that's what! One of the lesser-known hacks that Facebook did was to build an entire stand-alone app that allowed users to translate the website into their language of choice. A more recent example is BuzzFeed who partnered up with language-teaching app Duolingo. The hack involves getting Duolingo's app users to translate English phrases into their native language as part of their language training program.

While these hacks aren't as easily replicable as your vanilla growth hacks, the thinking behind them should inspire you to start looking at news ways of scaling your application.

Just Hack It:

- There is actually no ready-made hack for this so you'll have to activate your brain cells to pull this one off
- Share whatever you come up with and we'll be happy to feature you in the Sourcebook!

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://www.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304500404579129590411867328>

<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?v=75505423022>

Use Customer Quotes To Back Up Each Feature

THE HACK

Use Customer Quotes to Back Up Each Product Feature

AARRR STAGE:

Acquisition

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Boost the Credibility of Your SaaS Product

Explanation:

Credibility. It's what many new SaaS and tech startups struggle with and, some, sorely lack. And it's definitely not easy when apps disappear into the digital nothingness, often, without even so much as a sneak peak. Like wannabe actors who just can't beat their stage fright.

There are also those startups that stick around for just long enough to burn through their series A round but then turn into a black hole once the 'fun money' dries up. Nothing more than a sad landing page with a one-sentence apology to show for the good times.

While users are getting increasingly more tolerant of this general state of affairs, there's nothing like a good bit of old school social proof to make your startup stand out. Here's an easy hack to help you to just that. Hint: it involves using testimonials...

Just Hack It:

- You're no doubt aware of best-practice guidelines that say to have user testimonials on your website to increase its perceived credibility
- And no doubt, you've put up a couple of testimonials for good measure. Somewhere towards the end of your trendy parallax scroll one-page website. The very end
- Here's a thought: why not add a customer testimonial under EACH feature that you shamelessly plug? This way, your testimonials are less generic and more believable. As every good copywriter knows, specifics sell!
- Hack over – get back to selling...

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://blog.statuspage.io/how-we-increased-our-conversion-rate-by-311-percent>

Using Social Urls Not Optimized For Search

THE HACK

Engineer Your URLs for Social, Not Search

AARRR STAGE:

Acquisition

GROWTH PROBLEM:

Getting More Social Shares for Your Blog Posts

Haxplanation:

As any good SEO will tell you, search-optimized URLs are a staple in any Google-friendly digital marketing diet. Using the right URL slugs will set you off on your climb to the top of Mount Google.

Depending on the keyword difficulty, it could become the start of your 'journey of a thousand steps' or, if targeting longtail keywords, a quick 'hop and a skip' to the coveted number one spot in the SERPs.

Yet, times are changing, and social optimization is often just as, if not more important than optimizing for search spiders. This hack may mean sacrificing your search traffic but the gamble could pay off in helping to more viral social posts. Look no further than your favourite LOLCat article on BuzzFeed for proof of this approach.

Just Hack It:

- Firstly, get your nervously-shaking SEO specialist out of the room and reassure him that he's not losing his job... yet.
- Then knock back your favourite beverage (alcoholic or not – your choice) and start brainstorming your URL slug title just like you would a viral headline. With no regard to Google's Bot army.
- In fact, think how you can actively fight the Google Bot invasion with your creativity, wit and wisdom. It's like every creative writer's dream come true, embrace it. You are now a growth hacking lover AND fighter.
- For inspiration, check out these gems from BuzzFeed, ViralNova or UpWorthy
- Or if you're slack then just use the Upworthy Headline Generator
- We know which options you've just chosen...

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://digiday.com/publishers/lol-wut/>

The 'Skyscraper' Content Marketing Technique

THE HACK

Use 'Skyscraper' Technique for Producing Awesome Content

AARRR STAGE:

Acquisition

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Bolster Your Content Marketing

Explanation:

Content marketing is hard work. There's a reason they call it 'feeding the beast'. And the more you feed it the hungrier it gets. It's easy to run out of content ideas and then think about running for the hills in order to get away from this content-crazy civilization of ours. But don't give up yet! There is an easier way to do this.

Think about the number of blog posts and articles that you've seen after reading which you've thought to yourself: "I could expand on that and make it my own." Well, that is our Growth Hack of the Day for you. Here's a more detailed explanation of what you need to do.

Just Hack It:

- Do some sleuthing for content that ranks highly or is fairly visible in your industry. You can do this using apps such as BuzzSumo, Topsy and others
- Take your newfound content, analyze it and then graft your own brilliant thoughts and ideas on top of it
- Package your thoughts into a brand-spanking new blog post and reach out to the same people who promoted the original piece of content
- There, no more searching in the abyss with a flashlight for content inspiration! It is now at your beck and call.

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://backlinko.com/skyscraper-technique>

ACTIVATION

Commitment Checkbox

THE HACK

Increase App
Activation Using an
'Involvement Device'

AARRR STAGE:

Acquisition

GROWTH PROBLEM:

Increasing App
Sign-Ups

Explanation:

An 'involvement device' is any method of getting visitors of your website or users of your app to get more involved over and above just reading your "marketing fluff". In the 'offline' world such devices have been used in direct marketing for decades.

These include physically manipulating some part of the direct mail piece, such as including a 'scratchy' part to the letter or using stickers that recipients then play around with. Anything, really, that prompts interactivity and involvement.

In the online world, involvement devices take many forms: 'commitment checkboxes', questionnaires, calculators or any number of digital tools that your customers may find useful and increase your app's 'stickiness'. Increasing customer involvement on a page is a sure-fire way to increase conversions and SaaS app sign-ups.

Just Hack It:

- Below are some examples of involvement devices being used by startups:
- Commitment Checkbox – allows you to draw a user in by ticking a box prior to engaging with application
 - Tools:
 - › Moz – Open Site Explorer
 - › Wordstream – AdWords Performance Grader
 - › Hubspot – Blog Topic Generator
 - › ContentForest – KeywordKiwi
 - › SEOBook – SEO for Firefox
 - › Etc.
- Now use the above as inspiration and go brainstorm some involvement devices that could increase activations for your app!
- Remember, it's all about YOUR audience and their needs.

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://www.conversionvoodoo.com/blog/2010/07/11-conversion-rate-increase-with-a-%E2%80%9Ccommitment-checkbox%E2%80%9D/>

Gleam Focus On Upgrade Path

THE HACK

Create an Upgrade Path for Your Users

AARRR STAGE:

Acquisition

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Upsell Your SaaS App Users

Explanation:

Over the course of your digital life, it's safe to say that you've signed up for more 'free' SaaS app trials than you can shake a mouse at. Most likely, the majority of these apps did a lousy job of upselling you on their premium version. The result? You used the app until the trial period ended and then moved on to the next shiny new app.

Now you are on the other side of the fence and you're thinking of how to stop your users from doing what you've been doing all of this time. Of course you want a different fate for your product. You want freemium users to become paid ones and for those on your intro plan to upgrade to your premium "everything and the kitchen sink" version.

So, here's the deal: you MUST focus on optimizing your user upgrade path and here are some ideas for how to do this.

Just Hack It:

- When designing your product's upgrade path, ensure that you don't give away every feature straight away. Make users 'work for it':
 1. For instance, allow certain features to be 'unlocked' only if the user spreads the news about your app on their own social networks
 2. If you want to be less militant about things, they can just follow one of your social profiles to enable a feature(s)
- Develop in-app tips in order to guide the user through your features, pointing out what is and isn't available in their current version
- Set up an email drip campaign that introduces users to features they don't yet have access to in order to tease them into upgrading
- Create case studies showing how users of your app's premium version have achieved their goals as a result of using the paid features
- As some Silicon Valley oracle with a goatee once said: "a user journey of a thousand upgrades begins with a single activation"
- Get them to take that step!

Gleam Focus On Upgrade Path (CONTINUED)

THE HACK

Create an Upgrade Path for Your Users

AARRR STAGE:

Acquisition

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Upsell Your SaaS App Users

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://blog.gleam.io/16-growth-hacks/>

<https://www.woopra.com/blog/2013/04/10/how-to-build-and-optimize-an-onboarding-funnel/>

Canvas4life – ‘Like’ To Get \$1 Off

THE HACK

Using Monetary Incentives to Activate Users

AARRR STAGE:

Activation

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Activate Users Without Going Freemium

Explanation:

You’ve heard the adage that “nothing in life is free.” That includes your app, of course. You didn’t launch it to keep eating Ramen noodles and living in a car for the rest of your days. And “no,” living out of your car is not a growth hack, as cool as you think that may sound!

Anyway, we’re not here to talk about the vagaries of bootstrapping or your poor diet. Let’s talk activation and how to give your users something that will help move them through your growth funnel.

But when we say ‘something’ this doesn’t mean you have to get all ‘freemium’ in order to get users to activate. You can use small incentives or promotions in order to achieve the same desired effect. Read on to find out how.

Just Hack It:

- Offering small incentives in order to help convert is nothing new. What is new is how to build these incentives into your app
- For instance if you run an ecommerce startup, at the final stage of the checkout process, you can get users to ‘Like’ or ‘Tweet’ in order to receive a certain amount off their order
- You can take this concept even further by offering larger discounts at the point of purchase if a user signs up to your newsletter
- This growth hack serves the double purpose of giving the user a tangible benefit in return for what is a low-commitment action while providing you with an additional opportunity to market to them.

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://blendah.com/post/63167877608/5-undercover-growth-hacks-you-should-have->

Use Linkydink To Share Curated Email Newsletters With Customers

THE HACK

Use Link Sharing Software to Grow Your Community

AARRR STAGE:

Activation

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Easily Stay Top-of-Mind With Users

Explanation:

Email is still the killer app, especially when it comes to converting users into paying customers. However, putting together a full-blown email marketing strategy takes time and a lot of effort to properly execute. Especially when your startup is in its infancy, free time is a luxury and there may be more urgent growth opportunities that you need to first pursue.

So, how do you solve the dilemma of regularly showing up in your user's inboxes without having to commit a hefty amount of time to creating a full-blown email strategy? Read on to discover an app that can save your bacon and keep the MailChimp monkey off your back. For now.

Just Hack It:

- The answer to your email marketing allergy is link curation and it is the growth hack that helped launch ProductHunt
- To make use of this awesome hack, register for an account at Linkydink. It will only cost \$5 to expand your group beyond 5 subscribers. A fair price to pay for what will expand your acquisition channels with minimal time investment
- Now you can start subscribing users left and right to your curated 'link blasts' without having to worry about setting up autoresponders, drip campaigns and other such nonsense (at least, for now)
- The key is to keep your links relevant to your users, which will help you to avoid unsubscribes and keep your product at the top of their minds
- Give it some time and those conversions are bound to start happening sooner or later
- Who said that email marketing needs to be hard?

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://pando.com/2014/01/16/3-startups-that-launched-without-writing-code/>

Figure Out Where To Put Your Registration Page

THE HACK

Registration Form Placement for Maximum Activations

AARRR STAGE:

Activation

GROWTH PROBLEM:

Where to Place Registration Form in Onboarding Process

Haxplanation:

“Now where did I place that registration form again?” you ask yourself. Having tested different placement options so many times you can't even remember where in that complex onboarding process you managed to stick it.

And you're right about trying different placement options – getting this right can significantly impact your activation numbers. Getting the registration process right is similar to hiring a concierge for an upmarket hotel. If your app professes to be the equivalent of a 5-star resort experience but your registration form is as shady as a hotel concierge in Amsterdam's Red Lights district then the user is unlikely to click that 'Register' button.

To continue the hotel metaphor, if you get the 'meet and greet' with your app then that first experience will color the way they perceive the rest of their stay. Let's see how you can hack the registration process.

Just Hack It:

- There is only one real way of finding out where to place the registration form and that's by analyzing the heck out of your analytics
- Your goal is to show the benefits of becoming a user of your app prior to them registering
- So make sure to not place the form too early in your onboarding process as that may actually discourage users from activating
- While this isn't so much about the placement of the form, ensure that you minimize registration friction by providing a social login option
- For entertaining commentary as well as insightful onboarding knowledge, read UserOnboard.com's 'UX teardowns' of the most popular apps. It talks about much more than just registration and can help you to learn from some of the most well-known tech startups
- Now that you've seen where things can go wrong and what mistakes to avoid, go and turn your app into the Ritz Carlton of your industry!

Figure Out Where To Put Your Registration Page

(CONTINUED)

THE HACK

Registration Form Placement for Maximum Activations

AARRR STAGE:

Activation

GROWTH PROBLEM:

Where to Place Registration Form in Onboarding Process

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://www.kenontek.com/2014/01/12/growth-hacker-dan-mcgaw-shares-his-wisdom/>

<http://www.sitepoint.com/improving-apps-onboarding-ux/>

Scrap Your Free Plan

THE HACK

Get Rid of Your Free Subscription Option

AARRR STAGE:

Activation

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Activate Paying Customers Faster

Haxplanation:

Free plans are a pricing option that most SaaS founders don't even debate when launching their app. "Sure, we'll have a bare-bones introductory plan that allows users to try our app at no cost" you say. Not so fast.

While an ever-increasing number of user sign-ups is a great vanity metric to see in your analytics dashboard, it's not what your investors want to see. That's right, they want to see activations. Followed very, very closely by cold, hard dollars. And a free plan does not a dollar make. Kapish?

Your counter-argument may be that you'll eventually convert your freeloafers into honest, paying user-folk. The reality is not so straightforward. The likes of Pandora, Dropbox, Evernote, Automattic and MailChimp have all faced challenges with converting their free users and many other startups have scrapped their free plans. Keep in mind that a large number of non-paying users is a significant drag on your limited startup resources!

Just Hack It:

- Charge for your product from the get-go!
- Ask for money up-front!
- Get credit card details before signing on a user!
- Do you get the picture yet?
- If you want to explore the business models that can help you to hack revenue faster (and have profitable activations) then read 'The Customer Funded Business'
- Repeat after me: "There's no money like ca\$hmoney". Now, go hustle for that startup dolla'!

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://www.softwarebyrob.com/2010/08/18/why-free-plans-dont-work/>

Different Landing Pages Depending On How Traffic Arrives To Site

THE HACK

Adapt Landing Pages to Your Acquisition Channels

AARRR STAGE:

Activation

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Make Landing Pages Relevant to Increase Activation

Explanation:

Your landing pages can make or break your marketing campaign. Read that again: MAKE or BREAK. We're talking about any campaign. Whether you're managing AdWords, reaching out to custom audiences on Facebook or remarketing using the Google Display Network. ALL of these promotional methods require well-built landing pages.

There's no point in spending money on paid advertising unless your landing page is going to have your back on the conversion front. With AdWords, it's even less optional to have a great landing page as this affects everything: from your cost-per-click to whether your ads will even show in the first place.

Paid channels aside, your email campaigns and social promotions also require the services of your high-converting landing page. Once you've acquired the user using any paid or organic channel, activating them comes down to following conversion-centered landing page design best practices. Read below to see how to achieve this.

Just Hack It:

- Have ONE goal for each landing page that you create. Your pages' attention ratio needs to be 1:1, meaning that there shouldn't be more than one link on the page. And that link should be your CTA (call-to-action)
- Your CTA needs to be the starting point for your landing page design and it will change depending on the traffic source of your arriving visitor
- For each acquisition channel, you need to think how it may affect your landing page:
 - Regardless of the channel, Message Match is critical. This refers to how well the wording of your ad matches the headline and sub-head text on your page
 - For Facebook ads, display ads or any other visual ad, you also have to ensure design match. This is to do with how well the design of your ad matches the landing page design

Different Landing Pages Depending On How Traffic Arrives To Site

(CONTINUED)

THE HACK

Adapt Landing Pages to Your Acquisition Channels

AARRR STAGE:

Activation

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Make Landing Pages Relevant to Increase Activation

- In addition to considering the acquisition channel, you also need to account for the following:
 - While it may seem obvious, the landing page has to display correctly on each device. This is crucial so make sure that your page is either responsive or adaptive
 - The page length will be determined by your visitors' awareness stage. As a rule of thumb, the less they know, the longer the page needs to be!
- Go through Unbounce's 50-point conversion checklist to make you haven't missed anything
- Also, the aforementioned Unbounce app allows for Dynamic Text Replacement which, together with AdWords' Dynamic Keyword Insertion, lets you change ad and landing page text on the fly to match your user's search query. This feature is truly awesome!
- You are now a growth-hacking landing page expert and with great power comes... The responsibility to activate your users like there ain't no tomorrow!

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://unbounce.com/landing-pages/checklist/>

Use Reassurance Copy

THE HACK

Build Trust With
Yours Users Using
Reassurance Copy

AARRR STAGE:

Activation

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Gain Your
Users' Trust And
Allay Their Fears

Explanation:

The World Wide Web is a big and, for many users, scary place. Especially when it comes to any situation that involves providing credit card details. Particularly when it comes to new and unknown apps. And there's good cause for this. Especially, given the high-profile cases of growth hacking 'going bad'

Most startups never make it into the big, beautiful world known as the 'product launch'. Given the astronomical startup failure stats, it makes sense that users are negatively biased against signing up for one more 'launch list.' They're even more biased against actually paying for the thing when it comes time to activate their subscription.

Of course in order to activate users for YOUR SaaS app, you know that users have no choice but to eventually part with this information. The same applies on a smaller scale when visitors to your landing page need to disclose personal info such as their name or email address.

Your task then becomes to growth hack your visitors' or users' worries and win their trust. Trust can be built in a number of ways and one nifty way to do so is to use 'reassurance copy.' Read below to find out what this is and how it can benefit your activation rate.

Just Hack It:

- Closing any sale, online or offline, involves overcoming buyer objections. Your SaaS app would usually do this by translating its numerous features into tangible benefits
- However, writing reassurance text involves shifting your focus away from the product itself and putting it squarely on the users' underlying emotional state, their fears about the transaction. This is about addressing the 'Conviction' part of the AIDCA sales formula
- On your landing page forms, this could involve not just showing the benefit of downloading your ebook but stating how the user's email will and – just as importantly – won't be used. Tell them why any additional information is required and provide context

Use Reassurance Copy

(CONTINUED)

THE HACK

Build Trust With
Yours Users Using
Reassurance Copy

AARRR STAGE:

Activation

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Gain Your
Users' Trust And
Allay Their Fears

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- For any ecommerce transaction, this could be additional text that addresses security or privacy concerns
 - In essence, whatever you believe your users need to know beyond product benefits in order to activate is what you should address with reassurance copy
 - Now go forth and win over your user's hearts, not just their minds...

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://www.allgoodcopy.com/2014/01/reassurance-in-copywriting/>

<http://blog.rejoiner.com/2013/06/10-customer-delighting-checkout-usability-techniques/>

Not Allowing Users To Sign Up To Paid Version Until They've Used Free Version (Picmonkey Or Optimizely)

THE HACK

Forcing Users to Register For a Free Plan Exclusively

AARRR STAGE:

Activation

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Increase Activations of Your App

Explanation:

Who'll say no to something free, right?

Are you serious?! In the digital world, nearly everything is given away for free. With the explosion of content marketing, you now have to actually sell your free content as hard as the product itself.

So, the answer is: most people will say 'no' to a freebie.

These days, it actually takes a lot of work to persuade someone to accept something that is free. Users are just too weary.

However, this doesn't write off the fact that free app subscription plans can still be used as a great customer acquisition tool. The trick is to maximize the opportunity and work very hard to ensure your activation rates cover the opportunity cost of having all of those non-paying accounts. The burden of supporting a high number of free users can potentially tank your startup if you get it wrong.

But if you do go down this path, wowing your user with your product and your startup's overall customer experience is non-negotiable. And you really have to believe in the quality of your product. Because your success hinges on it. Let's look at how to achieve this.

Just Hack It:

- Trello and Optimizely are examples of SaaS apps that start their users off on a free plan by default. As a result, both startups have been successful in acquiring substantial business in the enterprise space. This is due to the lack of an initial financial commitment on their prospects' part
- However, offering such an option has to match your business model and target customers

Not Allowing Users To Sign Up To Paid Version Until They've Used Free Version (Picmonkey Or Optimizely) (CONTINUED)

THE HACK

Forcing Users to Register For a Free Plan Exclusively

AARRR STAGE:

Activation

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Increase Activations of Your App

-
- Such an option may not work as well for B2C as it does for B2B startups
 - Given that only 25% users of free users convert on average, the trick is carry out constant free trial optimization.
 - Now go get 'em tiger!
 - And then optimize, optimize, optimize, to ensure that your free users are converting into paying ones. Otherwise, you might as well be running a charity...

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://www.quora.com/Why-did-Optimizely-change-their-pricing-structure-to-only-include-a-Free-and-Custom-option>

<http://sixteenventures.com/free-trial-optimization>

'Enclose' Shopping Cart Process

THE HACK

Enclose Your Shopping Cart

AARRR STAGE:

Activation

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Decrease Cart Abandonment Rates

Haxplanation:

You see it time and again in your ecommerce analytics reports: the user happily bounces through your funnel without so much as a cloud of doubt on their way to the checkout horizon. Then once they get to your shopping cart. Boom – they're gone! Cart abandoned.

What just happened?

Checkout abandonment is a b... bad deal. And common. All too common. In fact, the lowest percentage of online shopping cart abandonment rates is estimated at 69.1%. That is pretty high for what is meant to be the 'lower' percentage! Let's now explore how your shopping cart can avoid becoming yet another ecommerce statistic.

The answer: 'enclosed checkout process'. That is what will make all the difference to your conversion rates and activations. And this growth hack doesn't just apply to ecommerce businesses but to your SaaS app also. You do have a checkout process, don't you?

Just Hack It:

- Take all of those fancy menus and buttons in your nav pane. Now 'strip' them out as if you were turning an old rust bucket into a hot rod
- Because that's what you're doing. You're transforming your ol' clunker of a shopping cart into the equivalent of a show-stopping street machine
- So, take out all of the necessary nav elements and just leave your company logo. This becomes the ONLY means of escape now. Does this remind you of anything?
- If you answered 'landing page' then this reward sticker is for you! Because this is what your cart is now, the most lucrative kind of landing page

'Enclose' Shopping Cart Process (CONTINUED)

THE HACK

Enclose Your Shopping Cart

AARRR STAGE:

Activation

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Decrease Cart Abandonment Rates

- Definitely keep all of the important links: delivery options, returns policy, contacts details and the necessary legalese. BUT turn them into lightbox pop-ups or overlays rather than links that take the user off the page
- Allow users to navigate back and forth through the checkout process in case they need to change any information. This is so that they're not forced to click the browser's 'back' button.
- NEVER let your users click the back button...
- You can also experiment with including a 'live chat' option such as Zopim or Olark
- 69% abandonment rate? Pfft, not with this bad boy that you've just built.

Source Or Inspiration:

<https://econsultancy.com/blog/64142-why-online-retailers-should-enclose-the-checkout-process/>

<http://www.salecycle.com/cart-abandonment-stats/>

Open-Source Alternative To Bounce Exchange

THE HACK

Use Exit Pop-ups
Without Breaking
the Bank

AARRR STAGE:

Activation

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Implement
Exit Popus on a
Bootstrapper's
Budget

Haxplanation:

Exit intent apps are The Bizness for increasing your on-page conversions. Caught a user navigating away from the checkout mid-way through their order? Bam! Special offer pop-up.

See a visitor sneaking their way towards the 'Back' button while reading your blog. Bam! Email subscription opt-in form.

Notice a slowly cursor inching towards the browser's address bar while browsing your home page? Bam... Bam... Bam!

Yes, this must be conversion heaven...

The only thing that isn't really awesome about apps like Bounce-Exchange and their ilk is the price. As in, it's not inspiring at all. Can your bootstrapped startup really afford to spend a minimum of \$3,995 per month on an exit intent popup app? C'mon!

And, yes, there are now cheaper alternatives. However, there are a couple that we would like to bring to your attention due to their growth hacker-friendly price: free. Growth Hacker, meet your new on-page conversion marketing sidekick.

Just Hack It:

- There are two notable open-source alternatives:
 - The cute-sounding Ouibounce
 - And the very meat-and-potatoes alternative, Exit-intent plugin. Hey, nothing wrong with having an app that clearly says what it does and then does what it says. If only more apps were as clear about their purpose in life...
- Both solutions require a bit of coding to get them up and running. The payoff is that, once deployed on your website, they won't cost you a cent to run

Open-Source Alternative To Bounce Exchange (CONTINUED)

THE HACK

Use Exit Pop-ups
Without Breaking
the Bank

AARRR STAGE:

Activation

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Implement
Exit Popups on a
Bootstrapper's
Budget

-
- If, for any reason, you're not convinced that free is better than several thousand dollars per month, then have a read of this comparison of Ouibounce and Bounce Exchange
 - Now just think about it, even your monthly intake of coffee costs a magnitude more than something that will help you to convert users by the hundreds or thousands
 - Now THAT deserves a celebratory \$5 latte!

Source Or Inspiration:

<https://github.com/carlsednaoui/ouibounce>

<http://www.seoblog.com/2014/03/review-ouibounce-alternative-bounce-exchange/>

Add A Bit Of Mystery

THE HACK

Growth Hacking with
Easter Eggs

AARRR STAGE:

Activation

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Surprise
Your Users

Haxplanation:

Mystery. No, not the Austin Powers kind. We all know there's only one International Man of Mystery and he don't come cheap. Maybe when you hit that \$1 billion IPO... But then you'll be too busy partying to do any growth hacking. Perhaps, even partying with Mr Powers himself. Groovy...

Anyway, let's get back to the topic at hand.

Mystery. The kind that makes you sit up and pay attention. The kind that leaves easter eggs in our apps. What? No, not the the chocolate variety you gorge yourself on over Easter break.

You knew that apps have hidden features, didn't you? That kind of easter egg.

Perhaps, this is a hangover that grey-haired developers have nursed all the way from the days of Atari's Adventure or the younger nerd generation have carried into their programming jobs from holding too many Halo all-nighters. Its a well-known fact that many startups have added hidden features into their products.

Why are easter eggs a good growth hack? Because they are unexpected. They rattle our social media-numbed brain-cages, and our brains like a good shake once in a while. So, why not surprise and delight your users into activating their subscription? It just takes a bit of imagination.

Just Hack It:

- Ready, set... Now unleash the full power of your creativity.
- Straight after, tell your developer to implement your genius idea
- Word of warning: it's probably not safe to let your dev unleash HIS imagination as you may end up with some Star Wars or Dungeons and Dragons-related *surprise*. Sorry, devs...
- Don't believe us? Type "use the force luke" into YouTube's search bar
- For inspiration, check out these entertaining startup easter eggs (fortunately, they're not all Star Wars related):
 - YouTube's Snake game – press left and up keys on your keyboard when a video is playing
 - Wistia's Dancing Employees – when on their 'About Us' page type 'dance' on your keyboard

Add A Bit Of Mystery

(CONTINUED)

THE HACK

Growth Hacking with
Easter Eggs

AARRR STAGE:

Activation

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Surprise
Your Users

- Google's Barrel Roll – type in 'do a barrell roll' into the search field
- Firefox's 'About' Feature – type in "about:robots" into the search bar
- Snapchat's Secret Filters – just read this BuzzFeed guide
- Now that your creative juices are flowing think of how you can send your users on an easter egg hunt. They'll love you for it!

Source Or Inspiration:

<https://blog.captainup.com/engaging-website-design-5-unpredictability/>

<http://andrewchen.co/easter-egg-marketing-how-snapchat-apple-and-google-hook-you/>

Set Up A Progress Meter Of Some Kind

THE HACK

Add a Progress Bar to Your SaaS App

AARRR STAGE:

Activation

GROWTH PROBLEM:

Getting Users to Properly Activate

Explanation:

Your users are busy. And impatient. And distracted. And have the attention span of a goldfish. Seriously.

They're not going to diligently go through each step of your onBOREDing process. They're not... Just get over it. Well, most of them won't but you definitely want them to. Your activation numbers depend on it.

So, how do you get your app to hold your users' interest long enough to activate? You have to do something that will keep them glued to the screen, that's how. In short, you need to growth hack your users' attention spans.

But it's not as science fiction-like as it sounds. And it definitely doesn't involve brain transplants, lobotomies or strange mechanical contraptions. Just a nice little progress bar for your most crucial activation processes in order to show users where they are in the process (and how little they have to go.)

Just Hack It:

- There are a few names for this: "progress meter," "progress bar," "completeness meter," or our favorite, the "are we there yet?" indicator". Just kidding, that last one we made up
- If your front-end website or blog is built on WordPress then you are in luck. Check out these progress bar WordPress plugins
- Outside of WordPress, you could use jQuery progress meter plugins
- Then again, you can always 'roll your own' completeness indicator with the help of a developer
- Phew! These instructions are now 100% complete.

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://blog.ghost.org/ghost-onboarding/>

Create An 'Aha' Moment (Shopkick Example)

THE HACK

Give Your Users That 'Aha!' Moment

AARRR STAGE:

Activation

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Wow Your Users Into Activating

Explanation:

Have you ever sat in front of an app, any SaaS app... And then it hit you! Not literally, of course.

This app that you have been using is actually pretty awe-inspiring. So amazing, in fact, that you wouldn't mind finally paying for it after milking the free plan for several months. This is what is known as an "Aha!" moment.

And it's normally what leads users to finally activate their subscription and part with their hard-won pesos, dollars or pounds. Of course, your 'aha' moment is when the money appears on your account but this isn't about you. It's about your users.

Here's how to strategically engineer such a moment of revelation and hack your CX (customer experience) in the process.

Just Hack It:

- As with most any growth hacking undertaking, it all starts with analytics. Don't guess – let the numbers suggest a solution!
- In this case, you need to scour your Google Analytics, Kissmetrics, Mixpanel and any other analytics tool you use. What you're looking for is information about the app features that are most popular with your users. That's your quantitative analysis done
- Now you need to talk to some users either in real time or via surveys. There are plenty of options for getting your users feedback, both on-page and off-page
- Once you've married up the quantitative with the qualitative, you need to use your growth hacking common sense and figure out what features to really focus on
- Great, your users should now be 'Aha!'-ing left and right when using your SaaS app. Maestro, your growth hacking symphony is complete!

Create An 'Aha' Moment (Shopkick Example) (CONTINUED)

THE HACK

Give Your Users That 'Aha!' Moment

AARRR STAGE:

Activation

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Wow Your Users Into Activating

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://venturebeat.com/2014/08/02/turning-growth-into-traction-7-tactics-top-growth-teams-use-to-engineer-their-growth/>

<http://blog.trak.io/saas-onboarding-do-you-really-know-what-the-aha-moment-is-for-your-product/>

Create A Gamification Framework

THE HACK

Gamify Your SaaS App

AARRR STAGE:

Activation

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Keep Users Engaged

Explanation:

Apps today aren't what they used to be. As in, an app never used to go about bossing you through its onboarding process. Or tracking your every interaction and then invading your inbox to tell you that you haven't done this or that.

It's kind of scary because apps are starting to do what your mom used to but without the giving you the benefits of a free meal or accommodation for putting up with the nagging.

Think back to how many times that incomplete progress bar on LinkedIn has gnawed away at your subconsciousness. Yeah, we hate it too because getting it to 100% just seems like too much work! But that is exactly why YOUR SaaS app needs a gamification framework.

Not because you will annoy your users into activating (although that may well be a nice side-effect). The real point is to add some of that video game magic into your otherwise less-than-thrilling accounting app. Ok, that was a little harsh but stay with us...

Gamifying your in-app experience can do wonders for everything, from activation, to retention and all the way through to referral. Follow along to learn how to get your game on.

Just Hack It:

- To get inspired, read this long list of gamification success stories compiled by the Enterprise Gamification Consultancy
- Then read this excellent in-depth article about developing an Octalysis gamification framework
- The author of this framework has also created a free tool called the 'Octalysis Tool', which will help you get started with the gamification design process. Just don't get too 'World of Warcraft' on your users straight away. Your accounting app's bean-counters may not be as receptive to your innovative thinking as your raised-on-video-games brain may lead you to believe...
- Just saying...

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://www.yukaichou.com/gamification-examples/octalysis-complete-gamification-framework/>

RETENTION

Curating Relevant Custom Deals And Discounts For Your Email Subscribers

THE HACK

Curate Deals & Discounts for Your Email Subscribers

AARRR STAGE:

Retention

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Value to Your Users Using Email

Explanation:

SaaS app users are constantly bombarded with transactional email, which often follow each and every action they perform within an app. This is in addition to all of the subscription and other mail that they receive. Stop it already!

To state that this is slightly annoying is as much an understatement as saying that your inbox is slightly full. Unless you're one of those 'Inbox Zero' types, your Gmail is most likely OVERFLOWING with unread mail.

This brings us to the following point: if you're going to add one more thing to read into your users' already-chaotic, information-overloaded lives, it better add value. Especially, if you send out a regular subscription email, which you should be doing. Read [below](#) to find [out](#).

Just Hack It:

- The keyword here is 'abundance'. As in: found a cool deal for an app related to your one? Share it with your users in your next email blast!
- Found a rock-bottom discount for another app that could be useful to your users? Share it with them!
- If you do this on a regular basis then your users will see that you're thinking of them. And who wouldn't like that?
- If you want to take this even further then you can collaborate with other SaaS companies to create custom 'packages':
- A good example of this is The Productivity Pack that Pocket app 'hacked' together for their users
- Or Groove's Small Business Stack
- Could you do something similar in your industry? Sure you can!
- Remember, when you scratch your users' backs, they'll scratch yours. And that means they'll stick around for longer.

Curating Relevant Custom Deals And Discounts For Your Email Subscribers

(CONTINUED)

THE HACK

Curate Deals & Discounts for Your Email Subscribers

AARRR STAGE:

Retention

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Value to Your Users Using Email

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://getpocket.com/blog/2015/01/the-ultimate-productivity-bundle-185-worth-of-premium-services-to-award-winning-apps/>

<https://www.groovehq.com/software-stack>

Collaborate With Users On Product Development

THE HACK

Involve Users in Product Development

AARRR STAGE:

Retention

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Involve Users in Improving Your App

Explanation:

When was the last time you got your users involved in shaping your product? No, really involved? We're not talking about quickly throwing something on UserTesting.com before pushing your new feature to production.

We're talking about actually building something from the ground up in close collaboration with your current or future customers. You know, the REAL lean startup way of building a product. If you're being honest with yourself then you realise there may have been some shortcuts taken on the road to attaining true 'leanness.'

If, after doing a fair amount of soul-searching, you can still say hand-on-heart that you've actually followed the lean approach to a T. Then we salute you!

For the rest of us growth hackers, read on to find out how to create better products by getting your users involved from the outset.

Just Hack It:

- Before you start entertaining the idea of creating an app – any app – you need to find out that there's actual demand for it. How? By getting your users involved in its development.
- Even if you're just looking at implementing a new feature. Ensure your users are involved! This is best achieved by iterating on bare-bones prototypes while getting constant feedback and input from your users.
- ProductHunt have used Invision for prototyping their iOS app. However, there are a huge number of prototyping tools available. Pick the one that works best for your situation.
- For creating new features, you can get users involved by running in-app surveys using tools such as Apptentive and others
- Also, don't forget about good old email replies and encourage these in your communications with a user
- There's no better way to retain a user than to have them co-create a product with you or make them aware that their voice is heard

Collaborate With Users On Product Development (CONTINUED)

THE HACK

Involve Users in Product Development

AARRR STAGE:

Retention

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Involve Users in Improving Your App

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- Don't 'masturcreate' a product in isolation. Find willing partners and start doing some serious app baby-making together!

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://blog.leadpages.net/rise-product-hunt-5-growth-hacks-silicon-valleys-new-favorite-website/>

Customize Customer Content Using Orbtr

THE HACK

Use Contextual Marketing to Customize Content

AARRR STAGE:

Retention

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Personalize The App Experience for Paying Users

Explanation:

Context marketing. Its the as-yet-unexplored frontier of digital marketing. But wait, wait, waaait... Context? Marketing? Before you get all Sherlock Holmes on us and leave this page to explore the netherworlds of Google, we'll clarify what we mean.

For our purposes, context marketing refers to personalizing a website's content based on the visitor's previous history of interacting with your startup. Not just your website, not just your email drip campaign, not just your paid advertising but ANY and ALL of these channels.

It is no mean feat to achieve true context personalization and would usually require an expensive marketing automation suite such as Hubspot with their Content Optimization System. However, this awesome app makes it possible to carry out context marketing even on your Ramen budget.

Just Hack It:

- Just so we're all on the same page, let's give an example of how context marketing works:
 - A new visitor, who has never been to your website before, lands on your home page and sees the same generic message that every other first-time visitor would
 - However, after downloading a white paper and submitting their details via a form that same visitor sees their name on returning to your site. Creepy? Only if you make it so
 - For the purposes of retaining your current users, such a personalized approach actually makes a lot of sense Sounds cool, right? But Hubspot's COS system may be beyond your reach at this stage
- Well, ORBTR and its contextual marketing widget may just be the answer. In addition to dynamic content, this full-blown marketing automation suite can integrate with most of the apps in your current growth hacking toolkit

Customize Customer Content Using Orbtr

(CONTINUED)

THE HACK

Use Contextual Marketing to Customize Content

AARRR STAGE:

Retention

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Personalize The App Experience for Paying Users

-
- Here's how to actually contextualize your website:
 - Place a code snippet in strategically chosen parts of your WordPress site (it only works with this CMS)
 - Configure your 'Orbits' to trigger different messages depending on your user's past actions
 - With such personalization, your users won't have a choice but to be over the moon about using your app
 - To top it off, this amazing piece of tech only costs \$99 per month!

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://vimeo.com/72851585>

<http://mashable.com/2013/05/03/contextual-marketing/>

Establish 'Success Milestones' With Customers

THE HACK

Create Success Milestones for Your Users

AARRR STAGE:

Retention

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Ensure a Smooth Onboarding Process

Explanation:

Value. It's what you provide to your customers. It's the reason they subscribe to your app. It's the reason you're in business. To provide value.

But at what stage of your onboarding process is this value delivered to your user? Don't worry if you can't definitively answer this question. Most startups can't. But you should be able to and here's why: unless you know when that value was experienced by your user, how do you know when your onboarding process ends?

And here's the deal – we're not referring to 'onboarding' in the sense of getting your user from 'A to B' as in showing them what's 'under the hood' of your app. We're referring to the moment when they get a tangible benefit out of it.

Also, don't confuse your user's definition of success with your own: a user becoming a paid customer presents value to you not to them! Read below to figure out how to define success for their (and your) sake.

Just Hack It:

- There's no deeply scientific methodology here. Not even a formula that you need to memorize. Just an answer to a simple question will do the trick:
 - Ask your different customers the following: "how do you measure success and what would they like to achieve by using my app?"
- That's it, it's that easy. The answers will vary based on their user persona and you should pay attention to each answer very, very carefully. You're aiming for quality here, not quantity
- Remember, you want to uncover the 'blue sky' solution to their problem, the one that no one else has unearthed yet
- After meditating on the chicken-scribbles in your Moleskine, choose the ones that best apply (or that you can decipher) to your app and turn them into success milestones for your onboarding process
- Sounds so simple but all too many startups get this part wrong
- But you're not one of them anymore. Enjoy the accolades – the M&M's are on us!

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://sixteenventures.com/customer-onboarding>

‘Cause A Problem’ To Reach Out To Customers

THE HACK

Cause a Problem
Intentionally to
Reach Out to Users

AARRR STAGE:

Retention

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Get Users
to Contact Customer
Support

Haxplanation:

You're intently staring at your screen, trying to get something important – no – crucial done. That one big task, which will tip the balance of your day's productivity on the 'getting shit done' scale. And then your SaaS app crashes. OMG! WTF! NOOOO!!!

But then... As if by magic, you see an email pop up in your inbox from the Customer Success team of this already-foresaken app developer (which is now on your 'to unsubscribe as soon as I find a suitable alternative' list). In a very excited, slightly self-indulgent tone, the mail points out that their system has picked up on a problem with your app instance but the issue has already been fixed by their developers.

They also offer you a 30% discount on their annual subscription as an apology. "WOW! That's some pretty outstanding customer support" you think and straight-away reply thanking them for saving your day. You then promptly take the app off your 'to unsubscribe as soon as I find a suitable alternative list' and purchase their annual plan. In short, you are now a BELIEVER.

But guess what? You just got Growth Punk'd! (now THAT would be a cool show)

Just Hack It:

- Wha?! Let me repeat that. Growth. Punk'd.
- "But, why? They seemed so nice!"
- Uh-huh, that's what they all say. Anyway, you have just experienced a very clever hack from the 'customer success as marketing' playbook
- If you think about it, it's Psychology 101: save the princess, be the hero. And that's exactly what you are now. A princess...
- Now that you know, don't be so gullible next time. Look after yourself in that gangster's paradise a.k.a. the SaaS startup world
- And definitely have a think about whether you can ethically replicate this hack for your own users
- Just be careful how you do it – the last thing you want is to lose any customers this way. Not everyone is as gullible, princess...

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://sixteenventures.com/saas-marketing-growth-hacks>

Start Your Own Social Network With Spot.im

THE HACK

Start Your Own Social Network

AARRR STAGE:

Retention

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Create an Active User Community

Haxplanation:

Facebook-schmacebook. When was the last time it did anything for your startup? Sure, the uber-network helps you to talk to users directly and acquire new customers using its marketing tools. But it always costs you a pretty penny, doesn't it?

Ultimately, it is not a channel that you own and everything that you do on the network helps to grow Facebook and Facebook alone. It is rented space. And the rent will keep going up as long as 'supply & demand' swings in a network's favor. The same goes for Twitter, LinkedIn, G+ and any other proprietary platform where your audiences live.

"But that is the nature of social media," you argue. It's not like you can go and build your own network from scratch. Well, do we have an early Christmas present for you! There IS now a way to create your own social network – read on to find out how.

Just Hack It:

- Creating your own social network – now THAT is one Mega Hack. I mean, we all know how much time and effort the titans of social media have invested into their own networks – *cough* BILLIONS *choke* of dollars *cough*, and just as many lines of code
- So, creating your own social network seems almost too utopian to be true, right?
- Wrong! All thanks to a visionary startup, Spot.IM, having an owned media channel that is also your very own social network is within the reach of your eager little hands
- To make it even more exciting, instead of having to write millions of lines of code, you have to write none. Copy. Paste. Done. Ta-da! You now have your own social network. Not as cool as owning your own private tropical island but, hopefully, you'll now have more people to talk to
- Growth hacking can be a lonely place...

Start Your Own Social Network With Spot.im

(CONTINUED)

THE HACK

Start Your Own Social Network

AARRR STAGE:

Retention

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Create an Active User Community

- Alrighty, Facebook, justice has now been served. Now smile because your user retention rates have just skyrocketed!
- (But don't go deleting your Facebook Page just yet).

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://techcrunch.com/2014/10/22/spot-im/>

Use Retargeting To Provide Individual Onboarding By Founder

THE HACK

Remarket & Retarget to Users At Different Stages of Onboarding

AARRR STAGE:

Retention

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Communicate With Users Throughout Onboarding Process

Explanation:

Remarketing and retargeting tools are very effective for user acquisition. And don't get us wrong, you definitely should be using them for this purpose. It will make a noticeable difference to your conversion metrics, no doubt about it.

But as a growth hacker, your job – no, your duty – is to think outside of the square. And that means finding novel applications for run-of-the-mill marketing tactics and tools. So, let's now brainstorm together.

Remarketing and retargeting are great ways of continuing the conversation with your users beyond your website. This could include anything, from stalking them around the interwebs with the help of display networks, Facebook and other social networks or via other marketing channels, such as email.

Now, picture for the a moment that you could apply this very same tactic to your existing users at different stages of the onboarding process or even throughout their . Let's explore this further.

Just Hack It:

- Let's start with a few examples of how you could use remarketing / retargeting for the purposes of delighting your current users:
 - Suppose your user has nearly completed the onboarding process but there's just one more step to go until they get to 100%. You can set up a retargeting campaign to display ads to them reminding the user to complete this specific step
 - Now, let's take the example of someone who is fully activated and has gone through your full onboarding cycle. You believe that one of your upcoming webinars would be beneficial to them. You then run a combined remarketing and retargeting campaign to get them to register
 - You've just release a new killer feature that you believe will delight your users to no end and you want to communicate this to those who haven't logged into your app for the last month. Run a retargeting campaign and, presto! Those users were blown away by the feature and are now actively using your product once again

Use Retargeting To Provide Individual Onboarding By Founder

(CONTINUED)

THE HACK

Remarket & Retarget to Users At Different Stages of Onboarding

AARRR STAGE:

Retention

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Communicate With Users Throughout Onboarding Process

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- Novel, right? There are too many applications of this to mention here so now it's time for you to growth hack the s@#t out of this tactic!

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://www.it-engelhardt.de/brennan-dunn-6-tricks-helped-triple-saas-growth-rate-microconf-europe-2014/>

Winning Back Customers By Implementing Features They Asked For

THE HACK

Win Back Customers
By Implementing
New Features

AARRR STAGE:

Retention

GROWTH PROBLEM:

Winning Back
Customers Who
Cancel Their
Subscription

Explanation:

It's the end of the road. You've done all that you can. You've pulled out all of the stops. You have no marketing ammo left to fire. You tried and you failed. Yet another subscriber is cancelling their subscription because your product just didn't rock their world.

Before you get all lachrymose and start making a habit out of wallowing in self-pity, just ask yourself: "is there really the end of the road?" And then: "what would Tony Robbins do?" We'll tell you one thing – he definitely wouldn't give in to self-pity! Plus, it's like they say in sales, a 'no' brings you one step closer to 'yes.' Or something like that.

You can still salvage the situation and even 'hack' it to your advantage. How? By hopping into your Gmail and following the instructions that follow.

Just Hack It:

- A cancellation is the perfect opportunity for you to find out exactly where your app isn't cutting the mustard in terms of features
- You can automate the process with surveys and feedback bars. However, the data needs to be analyzed manually and regularly
- Make a note of the feature(s) that the customer was missing. You can even create lists of feature requests and then start grouping your cancelled users under them
- That way, you can add the best requests to your product roadmap
- When the feature is developed, you can re-engage with those customers who cancelled and significantly increase the chances of them becoming users again
- If you think this sounds simple then you're not wrong. But try it anyway and don't be surprised when your win-back rate skyrockets!

Winning Back Customers By Implementing Features They Asked For

(CONTINUED)

THE HACK

Win Back Customers
By Implementing
New Features

AARRR STAGE:

Retention

GROWTH PROBLEM:

Winning Back
Customers Who
Cancel Their
Subscription

Source Or Inspiration:

<https://colibri.io/growth-hacking/5-unbelievable-growth-hacking-success-stories/>

Use Promoter.io To Measure NPS

THE HACK

Hack Together a Net Promoter Score

AARRR STAGE:

Retention

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Measure User Satisfaction Without Going Broke

Explanation:

Ah, the Net Promoter Score (NPS) a.k.a. 'The Ultimate Question 2.0.' A real marketing research institution. As far as digital marketing goes, anyway. The system was developed over a decade ago and has been the metric du jour of corporate marketing departments ever since. Its sole purpose is to measure customer loyalty.

Yes, things are different in the growth hacking world that we inhabit. Instead of worrying about such nonsense as NPS, we're obsessing over DAU, WAU, MAU, LTV and other TLAs that make the brain hurt a little for the uninitiated. But, the NPS is not as old-school as you may think.

In fact, other tech startups have found it very useful. So, wipe that holier-than-thou snicker off your face because you may learn something new about your users. The real issue of implementing NPS for a startup is actually the cost of implementing it. For instance, Promoter.io charges \$49 for a month for asking one question.

Surely, there must be a way to hack this? You betcha! Read on to find out how, our fellow haxor.

Just Hack It:

- The mechanics of an NPS survey are pretty straightforward. A customer is asked the following question:
 - "How likely is it that you would recommend our company/product/service to a friend or colleague?"
- They're then asked to provide a rating on a 10-point scale that ranges from 'Not at all likely' to 'Extremely likely'
- That's it – that is the NPS. That looks like something that should be open-source and free, right?
- But of course, there is a way to hack it and avoid further taxing your already-overtaxed MarTec stack budget
- There are two things you need to do first:
 - Register for a basic plan with Wufoo
 - Download an NPS survey template from Sendwithus.com

Use Promoter.io To Measure NPS (CONTINUED)

THE HACK

Hack Together a Net Promoter Score

AARRR STAGE:

Retention

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Measure User Satisfaction Without Going Broke

- Follow the instructions on how to get Wufoo and Sendwithus to work harmoniously together and start saving some serious coin
- All the while, your users will keep you informed on what they think of your product
- A true win-win.and then start grouping your cancelled users under them
- That way, you can add the best requests to your product roadmap

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://blog.sendwithus.com/measuring-nps-with-wufoo-and-free-survey-templates/>

Announcing New Product Features

THE HACK

Notifying Users of New Features

AARRR STAGE:

Retention

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Communicate Product Development to Users

Haxplanation:

It has probably happened to you before. And probably not just once: you log into your favorite app and start clicking around only to find that a menu item that you use is gone. Or there is a new button where there was nothing but whitespace before. "Grrr, why wasn't I ever notified about this by the app developers?!" you fume.

This is a scenario that plays all too often with SaaS startups. A new feature is rolled out and, due to time pressure, or a general lack of method, customers are left to figure things out for themselves. Or an announcement is made on the company blog (that, at most, 10% of their users read) and things are left at that.

Do you see any important lessons here for your startup? Hopefully so, because adopting such a slack approach to new product feature announcements is sure to leave your app's users, at best confused, and most likely quite aggravated. Read on to find out how you can improve this for the benefit of your retention rates.

Just Hack It:

- First off, figure out a general plan for how you will announce features to your users. Via your blog? Email? Social media? In-app messaging? Hello Bar-type announcement? Pop-up overlays?
- While it pays to use as many channels as possible, pick the main ones that your users pay attention to and become religious about posting updates there every time a new feature is pushed
- In terms of the in-app experience, make sure that, regardless of how you decide to communicate features updates, these updates are clearly visible in your interface
- An informed user is a happy user. A happy user is mana for your retention statistics. Keep your users informed!

Source Or Inspiration:

<https://onsaasproducts.wordpress.com/2011/05/14/announcing-new-product-features/>

Notifying Users Of Bugs That Have Been Fixed Without Their Reporting This

THE HACK

Notify Users of Bug Fixes They Haven't Reported

AARRR STAGE:

Retention

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Proactively Reach Out to Users

Explanation:

Software bugs, they're as much a reality in a startup as their IRL bedbug brethren are in a 2-star motel. Which is to say that you shouldn't sweat about it too much but put a process in place to deal with the situation proactively.

That way when something does go wrong, you are able to fix the situation quickly. If your tech co-founder is worth his salt then you should already have a continuous integration process in place to squash those pesky bugs in a jiffy. If not, then you should definitely look at implementing continuous deployment if you're ever to become a true lean startup.

But do you really think that fixing bugs your users report is going to blow their minds? Of course not, it's part of their expectation. Your job is to hack this expectation to turn ordinary users into your product's evangelists. Here's how.

Just Hack It:

- To really light up your users' craniums with delight, why not tell them about bugs that have been fixed that they weren't even aware of?
- Now THAT is going above-and-beyond, and something that your users are sure to appreciate
- In order to implement this, make sure that you have a robust back-end reporting system in place that monitors errors in real-time. Once again, talk to your tech co-founder
- Then set up an autoresponder template in your transactional email system that will automatically send the user an email advising that the bug has been fixed
- Congratulations! You have just managed to hack an army of zealous evangelists for your product...

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://blog.statuspage.io/5-steps-to-5000-in-monthly-recurring-revenue>

Use Craigslist To Recruit Usability Testing Participants

THE HACK

Use Craigslist as Usability Testing Tool

AARRR STAGE:

Retention

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Cheaply Find People for Usability Testing

Haxplanation:

We both know that usability testing is crucial to your app's success. You can think that your new feature is killer and will have your users jumping with joy. But that's what YOU think. Recall that the whole point of usability testing is to put your own assumptions aside in order to hear it 'straight from the horse's mouth.'

And usability testing is not something that happens once. It needs to be an ongoing feature of your weekly retrospectives or, perhaps even, your daily standups. If done right, usability testing will become a key contributor to your product's evolution and ultimate success.

On a tight startup budget, there is only one teeny-weeny barrier to implementing a full-blown guerilla usability testing methodology. Where do you find new users to test your app with? We have your answer below.

Just Hack It:

- Craigslist. Yes; really!
- While you may not have thought of CL as being a suitable recruitment channel, marketing research agencies have been recruiting on it for quite a number of years
- The beauty of using Craigslist is that you can find users for both in-person and remote usability studies
- Just bear in mind that the demographic and psychographic profiles of those who respond to your ads may not necessarily fit that of your app's users
- If your startup is a B2C one that targets a broader consumer base then Craigslist could be the ideal solution for you
- If not then it's definitely still worth experimenting with as an acquisition channel
- Honestly, is there anything that you can't get done with the help of Craigslist?

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://www.measuringu.com/blog/finding-users.php>

Use Problems To Build Additional Loyalty

THE HACK

Use Crises to Strengthen Users' Loyalty

AARRR STAGE:

Retention

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Turn an Unexpected Crisis Into an Opportunity

Explanation:

It. Happened. You've come face to (ugly) face with your First Major Crisis. That point in your startup journey that you hoped would never arrive. Or at least come later rather than sooner. But it has. And you now have to deal with it mano a mano.

It could be anything: you've missed your publicly announced launch date, your database was hacked, your startup was featured in Techcrunch... but for the wrong reasons, you lost your stuffed Sesame Street Big Bird lucky charm, the coffee you bought at your startups incubator's cafe wasn't hot enough, [insert worst nightmare here], etc.

Such moments separates the entrepreneurial (wo)men from the wantrepreneurial boys or girls. But we know that you're not about to start crying into your (Sesame Street) pillow. You're a real growth hacker with skin as thick as a rhino's. You're going to make the most of this situation and even turn it into an opportunity.

Yes, YES! Time to kick some ass! Oh, wait. But how?

Just Hack It:

- Whatever the issue may be, don't panic!
- Then download Headspace app to your iPhone, sit down with your legs crossed and spend 10 minutes in meditation
- Feeling at least a little better now? Great, let's proceed...
- Regardless of the particular crisis at hand, your number one priority should be to ensure that you keep communication channels open with your stakeholders (fancy word for everyone who's somehow affected by your startup's existence: users, partners, investors, haters, losers, and the list goes on...)
- Primarily, it is your users that you need to focus on in the first instance. Why? Because they pay your bills
- But definitely don't forget the media. Why? Because, if you do, they'll kick your ass harder than Bruce Lee kicked Chuck Norris's

Use Problems To Build Additional Loyalty

(CONTINUED)

THE HACK

Use Crises to Strengthen Users' Loyalty

AARRR STAGE:

Retention

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Turn an Unexpected Crisis Into an Opportunity

- Make sure to profusely apologize for whatever you managed to screw up. This step applies even if it's not your fault – no one really cares
- Continue communicating and grovelling away to your stakeholders, admitting all of your faults
- Right, THIS is the Aikido move where you turn your problem into an opportunity by writing a case-study or hosting a webinar – or whatever – that will help to shed your startup in a better light and take the heat off what you did
- Now, this is also important, make sure that you don't repeat the mistake next time!
- Better yet, prepare in advance. Know exactly how to deal with such situations where a certain oblong object hits a proverbial fan.
- Consider yourself warned!

Source Or Inspiration:

<https://www.groovehq.com/blog/downtime>

Set Up Automatic Feedback ‘Check Ins’ At Fixed Intervals

THE HACK

Gather User Feedback on a Regular Basis

AARRR STAGE:

Retention

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Gain Constant Feedback from Users

Explanation:

Gathering user feedback is great. All of those positive comments about your app that warm the cockles of a growth hacker's heart. Now. Let's gently bring you back to the reality that is the findings of your last survey: you were missing crucial features, your customer support sucks and email newsletter is pretty dull.

Whoa, no cockle-warming here. Just the cold, hard truth that comes with asking paying customers what they really think about your product and service. While it may not be heart-warming, it's certainly priceless. Admittedly, you were so broken over the results of the previous survey that it will be sometime until you can face reality again.

Come on, Little Miss Daisy, suck it up! No one said that the truth doesn't hurt. You really need to just get over yourself and start collecting such feedback not when your bruised ego has recovered but ALL THE TIME. Now, let's show you how to go about this.

Just Hack It:

- The problem with conducting ad-hoc market research is that it paints an incomplete portrait of your user
- This means that the data collected ultimately provides little actionable value and will be inconclusive at best
- The way to hack this is to check in with your users on a consistent basis. Whether this is monthly, quarterly or annually, it's the regularity that matters not the frequency
- Setting up regular feedback 'checkpoints' for the same cohort of users will also allow you to see how their opinion of your app has changed over time. This will really let you keep your finger on the pulse of your product's growth and maturity over time
- See, that wasn't so bad, was it? In return for having to tolerate the sharp pain of harsh criticism you now have a higher retention rate and happier users
- Give yourself a pat on the back. Because your users certainly won't...

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://blog.intercom.io/5-mistakes-we-all-make-with-product-feedback/>

‘Socialize’ Your App Experience

THE HACK

Make Your App More Social

AARRR STAGE:

Retention

GROWTH PROBLEM:

x

Haxplanation:

Adding social sharing options to your app is not what we mean here. We’re referring to adding a deeper, social element to your product.

It may seem strange but many of your users could really do with a friend. Now, we’re not suggesting that YOU become their BFF. Or that you need to care so deeply about your users that you start getting involved in their personal lives. You’re a growth engineer not a psychologist after all.

But you know what makes some apps go viral? Nope. It’s often not their feature set. Nope. It’s not their polished interface. Nope. It’s not their fabulous customer support. Although, all of these are contributing factors they are not the cause. What is the cause then of certain apps’ popularity. We’ll let you in on a little secret...

People are interested in other people. We’re social animals by virtue of the last million years of evolution. And we often crave interaction with other humanoids just for the sake of it. Video game developers know this and purposefully design their apps to tap into this deeply felt human need.

Take World of Warcraft for example. There’s even an addiction test that helps you to see just how bad your particular case is to this video game. And that comes down to creating a great social experience. Now, let’s see just how to hack your user’s psyche.

Just Hack It:

- I hate to disappoint you but there’s no one clear-cut way to make your app more social. It all depends on what it is that you help your users do
- However, dating apps are a great example of hacking into our need to be social. Their business model depends on this: Tinder, OKCupid et al are great examples to study if you want to learn more. You may even meet someone yourself (it’s OK, you don’t have to thank us)
- Lyft Line, MeetUp are also great examples of startups that have used our need for socializing into profitable businesses
- What could you do to increase the appeal of your app to your user’s prefrontal cortex?

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://www.benjiham.com/marketing/lyft-converted-brand-loyalist/>

REFERRAL

Make Sharing Easier With An Upvote Website Widget

THE HACK

Place an Upvote Widget on Your Blog

AARRR STAGE:

Referral

GROWTH PROBLEM:

Increasing The Stickiness of Your User Community

Haxplanation:

How do you get people to interact with your blog? Not to just read the occasional post or two. But to get all goey inside when their inbox lights up with an email about your latest blog post. THAT kind of interaction.

Running a blog is hard. You slave over it day-after-day, week-after-week, month-after-month. At times, it consumes more of your mental space than thoughts of your life partner. OK, that one may or may not be true but we can probably all agree that it can be mentally taxing.

Why not get a reward for all of that effort and sweat-equity that you've invested into your beautiful WordPress baby?

Sure, you can install sharing buttons all over the show and implement a ton of other complex 'gamification' tricks to give your visitors more reason to stick around. However, there's a nice simple hack that can save you from going down the bazillion sharing buttons route and still considerably increase your blog's 'stickiness.'

Just Hack It:

- What do people really, REALLY like doing on sites such as BuzzFeed or Reddit?
- No, not looking at LOLcat photos...
- No, not creating useless listicles on every conceivable topic...
- Here it is: they like having a direct say in what content becomes popular and what content gets relegated to the bottom of the virtual junk heap
- Users of such sites like to be HEARD. They do so by promoting the content that catches their fancy...
- Even if the only thing they choose to have a say in is upvoting the thousands LOLcat meme they've seen that month
- And that's our keyword: upvoting. It can do wonders for your blog's metrics
- The Love It Pro WordPress plugin puts this upvoting power in your reader's hands without the hassle of having to implement a full-blown gamification framework

Make Sharing Easier With An Upvote Website Widget (CONTINUED)

THE HACK

Place an Upvote
Widget on Your Blog

AARRR STAGE:

Referral

GROWTH PROBLEM:

Increasing The
Stickiness of Your
User Community

- Now your readers can upvote the content that they like most and, in return, feel more invested in your blog's success
- In return, you feel good because you know that someone, somewhere, kind-of cares. Kind-of...
- Getting kudos has never been so easy!

Source Or Inspiration:

<https://pippinsplugins.com/products/love-it-pro-for-wordpress/>

Crafting Awesome Outreach Emails To Influencers

THE HACK

Craft Awesome Influencer Outreach Emails

AARRR STAGE:

Referral

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Reach Out to Influencers Effectively

Explanation:

The startups who crack the 'word-of-mouth code' and get referrals from their users and industry mavens are ones who know what to ask for. And how to ask for it. The last part is crucial because you may know exactly what you want to achieve with your outreach and who to contact to make it happen.

However, in order to get influencers to care, you need to know not just what to ask but how to broach the subject. Influencer outreach is an interesting combination of PR, SEO and audience development. So if your message is lackluster then that alone can stop your influencer marketing campaign dead in its tracks.

If the outreach email is so crucial, why do so many startups get it wrong? Why are so many growth hackers' attempts at influencer outreach end up yielding minimal-to-no results? Because they use the wrong messages. Read below to find out how you can hack such messages.

Just Hack It:

- The success of your outreach emails rests on two components: effective copywriting and some PR know-how
- As far as copywriting is concerned, the following can help you write emails that get read:
 - Your subject line is the most important part of your outreach email. If your subject line copy is drab then what you write in the email itself won't matter as no one will ever open it
 - › Personalize the email subject as much as possible
 - › Make it simple so that it communicates your message clearly. If you get all fancy-shmancy then the effectiveness of your subject line will suffer. Remember, always go for clarity over cleverness
 - › Use the 'cliffhanger principle' to get your subject line to build suspense and make the reader want to know what comes next
 - › Make it seem urgent and use language that is actionable. Your goal is to get the influencer to open your email

Crafting Awesome Outreach Emails To Influencers

(CONTINUED)

THE HACK

Craft Awesome Influencer Outreach Emails

AARRR STAGE:

Referral

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Reach Out to Influencers Effectively

- Once your influencer has clicked into the email, your job is to seal the deal:
 - › Think of your email as a landing page. As with a landing page, there needs to be a high degree of message match between your subject line and your email copy
 - › Make it personal. For influencer outreach this is especially important as, unlike other marketing tactics, you're looking to establish a one-on-one relationship
 - › Sell the benefits of your content and how this can be of interest to the influencer's own audience
 - › Keep your email brief, don't waffle
 - › Use bullet points in order to make the copy even more digestible
- From a public relations standpoint, here are some hacks that you can use:
 - This may seem obvious but do reference relevant content on their blog or publication – you want to somehow tie in your content with this. This is part of establishing context for why you're reaching out to that influencer specifically
 - If possible, provide exclusivity to the journalist or blogger. If this isn't possible, then think of another way to sweeten the deal
 - Don't give away everything – your job is to captivate the influencer in order to follow up with you
 - Make your call-to-action crystal-clear – tell them what you want them to do with your content
- If you use all of the above to reach out to targeted influencers then your success rate is bound to be high
- Before you know it, you'll be rubbing shoulders with the mavens in your industry and referrals will be pouring in
- That's the power of a well-crafted message!

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://www.buzzstream.com/blog/influencer-outreach-emails.html>

Free Plan For Bloggers

THE HACK

Provide a Free Plan
for Bloggers

AARRR STAGE:

Referral

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Get
Influencers to
Use Your App

Explanation:

A PR push is something that typically happens right before your app is due to launch. 'The Push' normally manifests itself in a sudden surge of outreach activity. For obvious reasons, every editor and blogger is your new best friend. Your social media channels are abuzz and you're cranking out profile updates like some kind of content vending machine.

Then your flurry of updates starts dying down in the ensuing weeks and slowly, gradually, little by little... Dies off. Your new 'best friends', whom you thought would feature your press releases and write some endearing reviews of your app, never even end up opening your emails. Yesware doesn't lie! Your press kit is now gathering pixel dust in your public Dropbox folder.

Sorry to be so harsh, but if that's how you launch your app then you deserve to be ignored! Building relationships with influencers and the press takes time and patience. A cold email with a press kit attached won't do. Read on to find out how to hack this.

Just Hack It:

- Getting into the good books of journalists and bloggers is a dream come true for any growth hacker. Often, an article about your app can be the make-or-break moment for your SaaS startup
- Whereas with tech journalists, the process can be trickier – not to mention, often more expensive due to PR costs – influential bloggers in your niche are a much more realistic target for your outreach efforts
- Plus, bloggers are often not as jaded a crowd as your typical journo. It is time that you started treating bloggers like the cyber-royalty that they are
- One great hack that HitTail have come up with is providing a free plan for bloggers in return for a review of their app
- That's right, that's all you have to do. What blogger will say 'no' to a freebie?
- Get this right and watch your referrals stats soar!

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://autosend.io/blog/growth-hack-examples/>

Targeting Influencers Using Followerwonk, Klout Or Brand24

THE HACK

Use Social Analytics Tools to Find Influencers

AARRR STAGE:

Referral

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Find Influencers to Build Relationships With

Explanation:

We are all drowning in a sea of information and the only way to keep our heads above the water is by filtering the noise. Most people, including your users, do this by finding individuals whom they consider to be influential in their chosen niches and then ignore most of the other noise. Such influencers become gatekeepers of relevant content and can become a growth hacker's best marketing allies.

In fact, a well-timed cold email, Tweet or LinkedIn InMail message to the right influencer can catapult your app from relative obscurity straight into the SaaS big leagues. Reaching out to influencers, if done right, is one of the most effective ways of quickly hacking growth for your startup.

Which is all well and good, you say. But how do you find relevant influencers in your industry? How do you then ensure that they actually sit up and start paying attention to your product? Read below for solutions.

Just Hack It:

- The key to finding influencers is by using the multitude of tools that are available for this purpose
- These person-to-person marketing tools consist of social media analytics and monitoring apps. They can be used to find out whom your users pay attention to and where relevant conversations are happening online
- Some of the most popular apps for analyzing and growing your social graph include: Followerwonk, Topsy, Klout or Buzzsumo
- You also need to monitor the conversations that your users are engaging in. Tools like Brand24, Mention and Talk Walker can all help you with this task
- Now that know who your influencers are, it's time to take action! Mention them in your social conversations, reach out to them with cold or warm emails, connect with them on their chosen social networks, etc.
- Just get off your backside and start making it happen...

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://www.growthhacking.biz/6-great-hacks-for-user-growth/>

The Samuel L Jackson Email Hack

THE HACK

The Samuel Jackson Way of Getting Users to Share Emails

AARRR STAGE:

Referral

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Get Users to Share Your Emails

Haxplanation:

“Everybody knows, when you make an assumption, you make an ass out of you and umption.” That’s Samuel L Jackson dishing out some street wisdom in the movie *The Long Kiss Goodnight*.

Now how does this quote relate to getting users to share your emails? Well, the problem with a lot of what we do in marketing rests on the fact that we make assumptions that may not necessarily be true. This especially applies to growth hacking. It’s your job to push the marketing envelope further, which can’t be done without assuming certain things about users.

One of the most dangerous assumptions made by growth hackers is that their emails are so awesome that users will go out of their way to share them with friends. Wrong! But we’re all human. It’s time you got introduced to the Samuel L Jackson Email Hack.

Just Hack It:

- Everyone is lazy by nature. Any additional steps that need to be taken or hoops to be jumped through will activate the lazy gene in your app’s users. Straight away. Guaranteed. Guess that that means for your emails?
- That’s right, you’re lucky to have them read, let alone shared. However, you can hack this by creating pre-made ‘Forward to a Friend’ emails following this process:
- Write your referral email copy, including the CTA
 - Include a link to your offer landing page in the body
 - Dump it into Mlto.tk to create a pre-populated email
 - Add hyperlinks to relevant parts of the message
 - Wham-bam-thank-you-ma’am. You’re done!
- So as Mr Jackson so eloquently put it, don’t make an ass of yourself by assuming that users will forward your emails

The Samuel L Jackson Email Hack

(CONTINUED)

THE HACK

The Samuel Jackson Way of Getting Users to Share Emails

AARRR STAGE:

Referral

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Get Users to Share Your Emails

- There, you've just simplified life for your user. In return, their 'thank you's' in the form of invites will increase your referral rates.

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://okdork.com/2014/06/18/the-samuel-l-jackson-marketing-hack/>

Send Email To Users Who Haven't Referred A User

THE HACK

Email Users Who Haven't Referred Someone

AARRR STAGE:

Referral

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Increase Referrals from Existing Users

Explanation:

No matter how great the functionality your app. No matter how amazing its UX. No matter the customer support that comes attached to your subscription plan. Regardless of any other positives that your product may possess. Some users just won't refer their friends.

Or they may take such a long time to refer someone that you know there must be some way to get them to do so sooner. Obviously, your goal is to get them to take action as soon as possible. Here's how to hack email referrals.

Just Hack It:

- For this hack to work, you need to have some way of tracking referrals
- This can be achieved by using apps such as KISSmetrics, Mixpanel, or even Google Analytics if configured properly
- You then need to configure your transactional email app such as Mandrill, SendGrid, or Mailgun to send out an automated email if the user hasn't referred anyone after a certain period of time
- You can also use apps such as Autosend.io to achieve similar lifecycle marketing functionality
- The email can contain something along the lines of:
- Thanks for using our app
- This email contains a promo code that gives you and a friend a free month of our app
- Let us know if you want more promo codes and we'd be happy to send these.
- The message needn't be complex. What's important is that it is much more personal than just providing a 'Share with a Friend' link, which NO ONE actions
- The goal is to automate the process so that users who are on the fence about referring someone will start doing so.

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://growthhackingpro.com/4-must-email-growth-hacks-arent-using/>

Automated Email About Connecting On LinkedIn (Wordstream Example)

THE HACK

Automated LinkedIn Connection Request

AARRR STAGE:

Referral

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Establish Personal Connections with Users

Explanation:

Most startups, even those in the B2B space, don't actively use LinkedIn for their marketing. Many growth hackers also aren't aware of its numerous benefits as a marketing tool and, as a result, don't focus much on 'hacking' it.

However, LinkedIn is a powerful network that stands out above the rest due to its focus on professionals. If used correctly, it can provide a very personal way to stay in touch with users. Especially, if you are a founder or growth hacker in a B2B startup then you should be eating LinkedIn connections for breakfast.

The only problem is that in order to connect with a user, you have to manually send them a connection request which – unlike Twitter – they can choose to accept or decline. And unlike Twitter, you can't automate the process. Also, some professionals are iffy about connecting with people they haven't done business with.

Here's a way to overcome these challenges.

Just Hack It:

- For this hack to work, you need to have some way of tracking referrals
- This can be achieved by using apps such as KISSmetrics, Mixpanel, or even Google Analytics if configured properly
- You then need to configure your transactional email app such as Mandrill, SendGrid, or Mailgun to send out an automated email if the user hasn't referred anyone after a certain period of time
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- The email can contain something along the lines of:
- Thanks for using our app
- This email contains a promo code that gives you and a friend a free month of our app

Automated Email About Connecting On LinkedIn (Wordstream Example) (CONTINUED)

THE HACK

Automated LinkedIn Connection Request

AARRR STAGE:

Referral

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Establish Personal Connections with Users

-
- Let us know if you want more promo codes and we'd be happy to send these.
 - The message needn't be complex. What's important is that it is much more personal than just providing a 'Share with a Friend' link, which NO ONE actions
 - The goal is to automate the process so that users who are on the fence about referring someone will start doing so.

Source Or Inspiration:

WordStream email

LinkedIn Referral Hacks

THE HACK

Increase B2B Referrals Using LinkedIn

AARRR STAGE:

Referral

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Grow Referrals for a B2B Startup

Explanation:

Ah, LinkedIn. The marketing achilles heel of most growth hackers. So much so that most don't even know the first thing about growing their own professional network on the platform. Let alone, using it effectively for the benefit of their startup.

LinkedIn must not be underestimated as it is a fantastic tool when it comes to getting referrals for your B2B startup. However, you have to take an active stance in increasing your customer base via the network. That means you have to actually ask prospects for referrals and it's much more labor-intensive than with other SaaS referral tactics.

However, the time expended can help you to grow your referral base quickly. Another benefit is that you'll establish a much more personal connection with your prospects and users than on other networks.

Just Hack It:

- With B2B startups, your marketing tactics are often a new-school rendition of time-tested B2B marketing approaches
- This hack is definitely a modern twist on an old networking classic. Namely: starting a professional group
- The more relevant your group topic is to your app's core purpose and your prospects' professional interests, the easier it will be for you to get referrals
- Once you've created the group, invite all of your existing customers to join
- Then go prospecting for potential customers whom you share a connection with and invite them to join the group also. Because you're the moderator, you can invite people without actually being connected to them

LinkedIn Referral Hacks

(CONTINUED)

THE HACK

Increase B2B Referrals Using LinkedIn

AARRR STAGE:

Referral

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Grow Referrals for a B2B Startup

- As soon as a prospect joins your group, you can send them a 'warm' connection invite saying something along the lines of:
 - "I notice that you're connected to my client who has been using our app to help solve problem X. As you operate in a similar space, I wanted to reach out as our product could potentially help you solve this problem too."
- Because you already have a connection in common and you're the group moderator, this automatically turns a 'cold call' into a warm one and gives you added credibility
- There, you just hacked LinkedIn referral marketing! That wasn't so scary, was it? No go and learn what else you can do on this network.

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://www.slideshare.net/tcleenewerck/growth-hacking-presentatie-ii-social-media-linked-in-only>

Using Addthis To Customise Sharing Buttons

THE HACK

Customize Sharing Buttons

AARRR STAGE:

Referral

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Tailor Blog Experience to Users

Explanation:

When was the last time that you ended up on a blog that had a number of social sharing options... Except the one that you prefer? This is one of those few times that you actually decided to share something straight from someone's blog with no way of doing so. Talk about a loss for the author!

Or the blog had a million-and-one sharing buttons... All with zero shares next to them. Which straight away takes away from the credibility of the article and makes most users much less likely to share it. Social proof, or the lack of it, tends to have a powerful effect on our choices in life. Even if they're as small as sharing an article online.

When it comes to social sharing buttons, neither too many nor too few is a good look. But with users' social network preferences being so diverse, how do you strike a middle ground? How do you help visitors shout about your blog from their figurative rooftops? Here's a way to hack this.

Just Hack It:

- To sweeten the deal even further, this hack involves a ready-made solution
- All you have to do is grab the AddThis plugin, install the Javascript code on your website and away you go
- To make things even better-er, AddThis will now look at the other cookies on a website and then display the visitor's preferred social sharing buttons
- We know! How cool is that? And it involves very little effort on your part
- Now that's what we call growth hacking!

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://mixergy.com/course-cheat-sheet-growth-hacking-2/>

Create An 'Invite A Friend' Thank You Page

THE HACK

Create 'Invite a Friend' Page After Someone Subscribes

AARRR STAGE:

Referral

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Further Capitalize on New Subscribers

Explanation:

Consider this scenario. You've just opted into a new email subscription. Most likely, you ended up on a 'thank you' page that said something along the lines of: "Thank you for subscribing. You'll soon get a bland email from us asking you to confirm your subscription. Please, pretty, please don't accidentally delete it and, just in case, check your spam folder."

Seems a pretty logical confirmation page to show your new subscriber, right? Wrong! Think about it. Your visitor was impressed enough by your content to subscribe to your newsletter. Out of the hundreds of millions that are out there. At that precise moment in time, they're in the most compliant state that you're likely to find them.

You definitely DON'T want to then show a generic "Thank you... blah blah blah" page. Read below to learn how to seize such golden opportunities.

Just Hack It:

- What you need to do now is capitalize on your new subscriber's euphoric state and hit them with a confirmation page that asks them to do something
- That 'something' can be telling their friends about your product or getting them to sign up to your webinar. Whatever it is that you ask for, the goal is to strike while the iron's hot!
- The landing page needs to be simple and hyper-focused on your CTA
- There's not much more to it than that. This really is a simple hack that will help to channel your subscriber's positive feelings into increased word-of-mouth for your startup
- By the way, if you use their landing page app, LeadPages offer a free page template to save you having to develop one from scratch.

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://blog.leadpages.net/free-download-tap-word-mouth-marketing-invite-friend-thank-page/>

Optimize Invitee Onboarding

THE HACK

Optimize the Onboarding Process for Referred Users

AARRR STAGE:

Referral

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Enhance Onboarding Experience for Referrals

Explanation:

Your referred customers are finally starting to trickle in and sign up for your app trial. Perhaps, their friend gave them such a raving review of your app that they even used your promo code to sign up for a paid subscription.

Job done! Really?

Do you really think so? Before you start high-fiving and back-patting, you need to step back and look at your onboarding process. Again? Yes, again! Because your job is just starting.

The invitee onboarding process need to be just as awesome, if not more so, than it was for the original user who referred them. Your app now has a lot of expectations to live up to! If the experience is less than stellar then you may as well scrap your referral scheme altogether.

Just Hack It:

- First of all, you need to really commit to creating an onboarding process that will blow your invitees' heightened expectations out of the water
- No, seriously, ensure that this is not an afterthought! This is the cause of most referral schemes not living up to expectations
- Remember that this person is now your app's VIP user
- You can try to maximize feelings of goodwill by thanking the new user for taking up their friend's invite and providing additional incentives or discounts
- If you succeed in making this user's experience unbelievably great then the fact that they were referred will make them much more likely to invite their friends. Think of it as a referral daisy chain
- Before you know it, you'll have built a word-of-mouth marketing machine with a very loyal customer base

Optimize Invitee Onboarding (CONTINUED)

THE HACK

Optimize the Onboarding Process for Referred Users

AARRR STAGE:

Referral

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Enhance Onboarding Experience for Referrals

-
- It is every startup's dream and you will be one step closer than most by carefully thinking through your invitees' onboarding
 - May the Referral Force be with you...

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://sixteenventures.com/invite-hacks>

Make Multiple ‘Asks’ For Referrals

THE HACK

Ask for Referrals Multiple Times

AARRR STAGE:

Referral

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Get Referrals After a Failed First Attempt

Explanation:

In life, you get what you ask for. This equally applies to your SaaS startup, where your progress is based on asking everyone, from investors to users to anyone else who will listen, to support your cause. But it's the customers who will support you in the most important two ways: paying for your product and inviting their friends to do the same.

So, you need to keep asking them. Ask them to sign up. Ask them to activate their subscriptions. Ask them to refer a friend.

And you do. You ask your users to invite a friend. Once. And they usually don't take you up on the offer. So, for whatever reason, you give up on making any further attempts at asking.

As a result, your users do nothing. And your referral rates are nothing to write home about. No surprise there! Now let's see how we can hack this whole process.

Just Hack It:

- Ask...
- Ask again...
- Ask yet again...
- No, seriously, keep asking until you're blue in the face
- In fact, go and build this into your onboarding and marketing strategy
- Did your user just subscribe for a trial? Great! Ask them to invite a friend right there in the app – create a large overlay screen that they just can't miss
- Did they just pay for their first subscription? Great! Send them an email to thank them for their custom and... yip, ask them to invite a friend
- Did they just invite a friend? Great! Ask them to invite five more.

Make Multiple 'Asks' For Referrals

(CONTINUED)

THE HACK

Ask for Referrals
Multiple Times

AARRR STAGE:

Referral

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Get Referrals
After a Failed First
Attempt

-
- The more you work on creating a referral engine out of your app the more referrals you'll get. It's a self-fulfilling prophecy
 - To paraphrase NFL coaching great, Vince Lombardi, "asking is not a sometime thing; it's an all-time thing..."
 - Never stop asking.

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://sixteenventures.com/invite-hacks>

Explain Your Referral Program

THE HACK

Explain How Your Referral Program Works

AARRR STAGE:

Referral

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to the Decrease the Anxiety of Inviting a Friend

Haxplanation:

The unknown. We are psychologically designed to fear it. To avoid it. Because the unknown is a scary place. And our brains are hard-wired to save ourselves from the tyranny of not knowing. Because, to our brains, the unknown is as bad as death itself.

A good lesson to take out of this for any growth hacking endeavour is to do your best to remove your users' fear of the unknown. Whether it's your landing page or drip campaign or Facebook ad, the more you can remove the anxiety of not knowing what's 'around the corner', the more likely users are to comply with your requests.

Don't get us wrong, the element of surprise is necessary in marketing. But when it comes to actions that involve a high degree of implicit trust, such as providing credit card details or – yes – asking a friend to use your app, surprises are best left out of the picture. Here's how to increase your referral rate by ditching the element of surprise.

Just Hack It:

- Many referral schemes ask the user to click on a magical 'Refer to Friend' button without providing any context as to what may actually happen behind the scenes
- With all of the hacking (the criminal kind) scandals that are a daily fixture of the evening news, most people are wary of clicking on 'magic' buttons of any sort. Especially, if it can potentially harm their reputation with friends
- As you can see, asking someone to refer your as-yet-unproven app to a friend is actually a pretty tall order. Especially, if your explanation of how the process works starts and ends with a one-line sentence
- This is not good enough! You need to make things X-ray clear when explaining your referral scheme:
 - Provide a high-level overview of what's involved
 - Explain the invite mechanics and show the message(s) that will be sent
 - Tell them how they'll be rewarded as a result

Explain Your Referral Program (CONTINUED)

THE HACK

Explain How Your Referral Program Works

AARRR STAGE:

Referral

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to the Decrease the Anxiety of Inviting a Friend

-
- Do this and your referral scheme will be a cut above the rest leading you to – you guessed it – many more referrals
 - Demystify the unknown and reap the rewards.

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://www.referralsaasquatch.com/best-saas-customer-referral-program-example/>

Springsled Gamified Referral Emails

THE HACK

Gamifying Referral Emails

AARRR STAGE:

Referral

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Keep Referrers Engaged

Explanation:

There is a whole raft of things that you can gamify in your startup. This runs the gamut in terms of complexity: from creating an entire community around your product with voting, badges and other involved gaming elements, through to something as elementary as installing an upvote widget on your blog.

You can do as little or as much gamification as time, money or skill will allow. But one thing is certain – you need to gamify at least part of your product. There is nothing quite like adding game mechanics to help increase the adoption of your product, retention of users and, you guessed it, growth of referrals.

Gamifying the referral process can be a surefire way to increase the number of invites sent out and accepted by your users. Read on to discover how to hack this.

Just Hack It:

- A prominent feature of a gamified product is the use of progress meters of all sorts both in the app itself as well as at other user touchpoints, including email
- For referrals specifically, you can set up a progress meter that tracks the number of invites that a user sends out
- You can then create an autoresponder series that will trigger emails telling the user just how much of a boss they are for inviting their friends. This is while showing them just how close or far they are from their referral target
- This simultaneous ego-stroking and reality-checking will keep users engaged throughout the process and maintain their interest in achieving your goal
- Hack gamification referral emails in this way and you're guaranteed to open the invite floodgates
- Just make sure that your app can handle all of the new user sign-ups
- Your technical infrastructure is pretty robust, right? For your sake, we hope so.

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://roy.roypovarchik.com/2014/07/springsled-users/>

Show A Dancing Cat

THE HACK

Use Gimmicks to Increase Referrals

AARRR STAGE:

Referral

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Get Users Interested in a Referral Program

Haxplanation:

Ahhh, dancing cats. That old meme classic. They got millions of views when YouTube first launched and, without fail, they still get millions of views today. Technology has evolved and bandwidth has increased. But dancing cats haven't lost their strangely entertaining appeal.

In fact, most Hollywood actors don't have such staying power. Or get as many views (or have such killer moves.) But let's circle back a little. What is the connection between waltzing cats and increased referrals? Or growth hacking for that matter?

Well, a lot if you want to seriously hack the number of invites that your users send out. Young grasshopper, you are about to discover the most kung-fu of all referral hacks.

Just Hack It:

- Where do we start? Um. Find a cat that dances. It's doesn't have to be a professional dancing cat by the way. Even your furball will do. Er. Um. Record a video on your iPhone. Er. Edit the video and choose some corny song for the background track. Um. Job nearly done actually.
- Now, use your video as bait to get users to refer their friends. You're probably thinking, will this really work? C'mon!!! Who wouldn't refer a friend for the chance to see a kitten bust a move?
- "Instant gratification, here I come" is what your user's brain will scream with delight
- Seriously though, as stupid as the idea sounds, the end result is that your invites will steadily climb. Let's just write it off as a scientific mystery...
- And it doesn't have to be a dancing cat by the way. In fact, it doesn't have to be a dancing anything. Whatever silly gimmick you can come up with that gets people laughing, talking and sharing is hack-worthy
- Just make sure that your gimmick isn't lame, otherwise you'll do yourself more harm than good
- And be mindful that the line between out-of-this-world-awesomeness and just plain bullcrap is a very fine one. Good luck tip-toeing it!

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://blog.strikingly.com/tips-and-how-tos/how-a-dancing-cat-doubled-our-conversion-rate/>

REVENUE

Decoy Effect

THE HACK

Use 'Decoy Effect' to Price Your Subscriptions

AARRR STAGE:

Revenue

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Increase Revenue Through Pricing Plans

Explanation:

What do we really know about what we want? Psychologists believe – not that much. And our minds can be easily tricked into choosing options that aren't often in our best interests. Sometimes these choices may even be detrimental to maximizing utility for us as consumers.

For example, let's examine the concept of 'value.' Value is a relative term and, logically, it has no absolute worth. It's a proven fact that a 'fair' price can be different for the same product or service depending on circumstances and context.

As a growth hacker, you need to use this psychological loophole to maximise the perceived value of your SaaS subscription plans. Here's a neat hack to help you achieve this with minimal effort.

Just Hack It:

- Psychologists call it the 'decoy effect' and it is a pricing hack that can really help you to increase sales of your premium plans, if done right
- In fact, you would've seen it used in the pricing of many goods and services but probably never gave it too much thought
- The basics of this pricing technique are that, instead of having two pricing plans – say, an entry-level one and a premium one – you add a third, 'decoy' plan
- Say, you charge \$20 per month for your no-frills, starter plan and \$50 per month for your everything-and-the-founder's-kitchen-sink one. The majority of your users will typically end up going with the starter plan. We're all cheap skates...
- By introducing a third 'mid-tier' plan, you make the choice less obvious. Say, you price your new plan at \$30 per month and allow users to gain access to most of the features of your premium plan, save a couple
- Now users are more likely to go with the mid-tier plan due to their having an additional comparison point. See, value IS a very relative concept

Decoy Effect (CONTINUED)

THE HACK

Use 'Decoy Effect' to Price Your Subscriptions

AARRR STAGE:

Revenue

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Increase Revenue Through Pricing Plans

- Try it, and watch your revenue grow...
- Still don't believe us? Next time you're in your local cafe, pay attention to which of the three cup sizes people usually tend to go with
- Growth hacking is all around you!

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://technicalmarketing.io/cro/saas-pricing-technique-decoy-effect/>

Establish Partnerships

THE HACK

Establish Partnerships with other

AARRR STAGE:

Revenue

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Grow Revenue Through Partnerships

Explanation:

You scratch my back, I'll scratch yours. This business tenet has been fundamental to the growth of companies long before The Internet was even so much as a twinkle in Tim Berners-Lee's eyes.

Even tech startups have been using partnerships ever since Microsoft started bribing PC manufacturers into bundling their operating system with every new computer shipped.

So, what's different for SaaS startups? In one word: nothing. What worked hundreds of years ago still works today. That's the good news!

However, as a growth hacker, this territory may be more foreign to you given the virtual nature of most of the BizDev activity you're used to. That's OK, we'll gently guide you through this strange land where suits are worn daily and cigars are still smoked. You better believe it...

Just Hack It:

- A little skeptical that old-school business tactics can help you growth hack your way to glory in today's API-driven world?
- In that case, Uber is a fantastic example of how a modern tech startup has strategically used partnerships to grow at a phenomenal rate
- Partnerships are actually not as daunting as the thick stack of legal paperwork that comes part-and-parcel may make them seem
- Sure, they involve a lot more people interaction than you may be used to but growth hacking is growth hacking, whether it's offline or online
- Here's what you can do to sell the value of a strategic partnership to another startup:
 - Sell the benefits of partnering with your startup and how your product can add value to the other startup's business
 - Align your vision around a common goal that you both share

Establish Partnerships

(CONTINUED)

THE HACK

Establish Partnerships with other

AARRR STAGE:

Revenue

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Grow Revenue Through Partnerships

- Carefully think through the logistical and legal aspects of the relationship. Yes, this is where it gets boring but just keep the ultimate goal in mind and have good legal advice on hand for when the deal is ready to go through
- Keep it agile! Startups operate in a world that is uncertain by definition so ensure that there is flexibility built into the relationship. This way, when the market moves, your strategic partnership will move with it and continue to make money for both you and your business partner
- Hopefully, you now see that old-school is just as effective as nu-school, as Neil Patel pointed out in his article
- Bring back the three-martini lunch we say!

Source Or Inspiration:

<https://medium.com/@devonaedwards/uber-and-tripadvisors-click-to-uber-deal-fc891c7977b6>

<http://e27.co/startup-marketing-101-the-art-of-strategic-partnerships-part-2-of-2/>

Unbundling Your App Features

THE HACK

'Unbundle' Features to Grow Revenue

AARRR STAGE:

Revenue

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Grow Revenue by Offering New Plans

Haxplanation:

So, you have your free plan. And then you have your high-end plan. And then there's the pricing desert that lies between these two. A barren wasteland littered with the bones of cancelled subscriptions and full of buzzards, a.k.a. your competitors, circling and waiting for your current users to get tired of your free plan's spartan features.

However, these users are not willing to sacrifice their firstborn in order to access your feature-rich but overly pricey 'premium' plan. And the real problem here is that you have not provided them with an in-between option.

Don't be ashamed though – plenty of other startups don't think through their pricing policies with enough care. It's not just you! But. BUT! That doesn't mean you can continue to keep users pinned between the pricing equivalent of a rock-and-a-hard-place.

See how you can hack your revenue by switching up your pricing plans.

Just Hack It:

- The trick here is to take your current top-end plan and 'unbundle' it
- Sound familiar? It's what your airline does when it tells you that you have to pay for your salted peanuts and Adam Sandler movie. True, this can be a bummer in certain situations
- But your app is not one of those situations. Because such a pricing strategy can substantially grow your revenue and profit almost immediately
- You first need to scrap your free plan, No, really. Just get rid of it
- Then take a good, hard look at your analytics. Or better yet, do that AND go ask your customers about the features they value and why they value them
- When you have a pretty good handle on this, you can start to create a tiered pricing structure that will deliver value to your different users
- For simplicity's sake, stick to the pricing 'rule of three' and design three pricing plans

Unbundling Your App Features (CONTINUED)

THE HACK

'Unbundle' Features to Grow Revenue

AARRR STAGE:

Revenue

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Grow Revenue by Offering New Plans

- Just be careful about how you roll this out to your current customers who may not be very receptive to a radical change in price
- For valuable customers, you can always keep them on your old plans in perpetuity as long as there's a business case for continuing to do so
- There, you've just tripled your revenue!
- Money talks, free plan walks.

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://blog.mention.com/3-little-changes-increased-average-revenue-per-account-arpa-296/>

Making Your Financials Transparent

THE HACK

Bare Your Financial Metrics to the World

AARRR STAGE:

Revenue

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Increase Financial Transparency

Haxplanation:

“OMG – You’re totally naked! I mean, your startup is totally naked!”

“Dude! We can TOTALLY see all your financial bits.”

“Your MRR looks pretty gross by the way. And you seem to have accumulated some fat around your COCA. Go join a growth hacking gym or something!”

“Hey, is that a gray hair on your cLTV?”

“No, you really need to join a growth hacking gym... Actually, with such high churn rate levels, you’ll probably end up in a startup accelerator sooner rather than later.”

“It was pretty brave of you to let it all hang out like that, by the way. We’ll give you that! Kudos, man!”

“Thanks for the support... Douchebags! Hopefully the shareholders and investors won’t take this the wrong way. I mean, we’re definitely not a bunch of flashers here or anything. Just a bunch of guys who believe in transparency.”

WHAT. Was. That. All. About? Read below to find out how you can hack your financial reporting

Just Hack It:

- This hack calls for a disclosure: it may not grow your revenue straight away. Or, potentially, ever
- However, it’s not out of the question that it may contribute to revenue growth in some indirect way in the future
- It could even substantially do so depending on the startup that you have
- So, what’s all this commotion about then? Well, publicly exposing your financial metrics to the world is the new hip thing in Silicon Valley
- Now the real question is, are you brave enough to do the same?

Making Your Financials Transparent

(CONTINUED)

THE HACK

Bare Your Financial Metrics to the World

AARRR STAGE:

Revenue

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Increase Financial Transparency

- It does take some cohomies to show your financials for all of the world to see. But then again, sharing is caring
- And what have you really got to lose? Unless, of course, you're a growing startup and the whole 'size matters' thing bothers you
- However, it's a good way to act as if you've already hit the big time
- Think of it as a roleplay for your eventual Unicorn club membership
- Now, if you could just get to \$5k MRR before the seed money runs out then you'll be well on your way!

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://ivankreimer.com/buffer-revenue-dashboard/>

<https://open.bufferapp.com/buffer-public-revenue-dashboard/>

The 6 Key Startup Metrics

THE HACK

6 Key Metrics You Must Worship

AARRR STAGE:

Revenue

GROWTH PROBLEM:

Which Metrics Should be Religiously Tracked

Explanation:

You started in the growth hacking game because you get excited by numbers. Crazy numbers, that is. Like growing your users base 6000% in under a year. Or hacking revenue growth to 300% month-on-month. You know, those kind of numbers. As a growth hacker, you never signed up to learn a new language though.

MRR. LTV. CMRR. MAU. DAU. CAC. MQL... Blah! Need we go on? Sad but true, metrics are as much a part of the growth hacking game as your gold plated iPhone 6. Oh sorry, are you not one of the co-founders of Facebook? In that case, as much as your desktop drum set.

But you have no choice. A growth hacker lives and dies by the metrics! So, put on your oversized hipster glasses, grab a soy latte and prepare for a session of rote learning. And here you were thinking that growth hacking was all about beating the co-founders at table tennis...

Just Hack It:

- So, let's get down to this metrics business. Out of all of the crazy acronyms that you should be tracking, there is a small list of those that will fill your phone's inbox with smiley face emoticons from your investors
- That alone is worth the price of filling your brain cavities with more senseless acronyms
- Without further ado, meet your new best (nerdy) friends:
 - **Churn – your arch-nemesis.** The one metric you need to beat into submission until it's as small as a mouse. See customers cancelling? Kung-fu their asses with a discount – that'll do it. For now.
 - **CMRR (Contracted Monthly Recurring Revenue)** – this mouthful of a metric measures something important. Just don't try to work it out at home – best left to the big-wig growth hackers at places like Amazon
 - **Cash** – this one needs no introduction. If you ain't got much of this then you need to start hustling
 - **LPC (Lifetime Profit per Customer)** – shows you how much you're really making from each sucker, ehm, user over the course of their custom with your shady operation. Pretty useful stuff but a little hard to compute

The 6 Key Startup Metrics (CONTINUED)

THE HACK

6 Key Metrics You Must Worship

AARRR STAGE:

Revenue

GROWTH PROBLEM:

Which Metrics Should be Religiously Tracked

- **Customer Acquisition Cost Ratio** – you know all that VC money that you've been blowing on 'marketing' over the last few months? Well, this metric will tell you how long it will take to recoup it all. One of the more depressing numbers to look at so don't bother with it on Fridays
- **Cost Per Acquisition** – you know this one. Oh yeah – you KNOW this one. It's the one the CEO always tells you to keep under control. But then you go and try that new awesomes ad exchange or upload a new custom audience into Facebook. Remember, admitting you have a problem is half the battle
- There... Wipe the sweat off your glasses and get back to reading BuzzFeed. Just the fact that you (sort-of) know what these mean puts you well ahead of the pack
- Ok, ok. Go and get yourself another soy latte – you deserved it!

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://readwrite.com/2010/09/05/6-saas-metrics-you-should-trac>

The Whole Annual Enchilada

THE HACK

The Whole Annual Enchilada

AARRR STAGE:

Revenue

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Get Customers to Commit to an Annual Plan

Explanation:

Discounts are bad. Bad, bad, bad. Bad for revenue, bad for profitability, bad for the perceived value of your product and bad for your self esteem (no point in denying that you, as most other ‘treps, attach your self-worth to your startup’s success).

What horrors can overenthusiastic discounting wreck on your startup?

For one, you start attracting the wrong crowd. Users who buy apps – or most other things, actually – solely based on price are not the same ones who will support your startup through thick and thin. Nope, they’re the “take it and run” types who will also overload your support team with their bitching and moaning about anything and everything. And we mean everything.

Most importantly, you’re giving away revenue. Imagine a big bag with a green dollar sign decal on it that is so full that it has cash spilling out onto the table, which can barely support the bag’s weight. Yes, you’re leaving all those bags on that table for no good reason. That’s money that could go to extending your startup runway.

It has also been found that discounting hurts your customers’ LTV figures and that’s not a good thing either. Sure, there’s a place for smart promotions but they should be the exclusion rather than the norm.

So, are there any mitigating circumstances where offering a discount is justified and good for your startup? There is one important exception to this rule – read on to find out what it is.

Just Hack It:

- So, given all of the negatives of discounting, when does it actually make business sense then? Two words: annual subscriptions.
- Annual subscriptions are the SaaS equivalent of the whole enchilada. Your cash runway is bolstered and extended for a whole year. You also get a user who is committed to your app. At least as much as a user can be these days.
- And, of course, such loyalty – and certainty for your startup – deserves a discount.

The Whole Annual Enchilada (CONTINUED)

THE HACK

The Whole Annual Enchilada

AARRR STAGE:

Revenue

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Get Customers to Commit to an Annual Plan

- But how much of a discount do you offer?
- You may tell yourself that 10% or 15% is a good-enough reason for someone to make a leap of faith with your product but is it really enough to entice someone? Think of it this way: would you personally sign up for a whole year for such a discount?
- “Go big or go home” is definitely the preferred way to go with annual discounts. Within reason, of course.
- The key is to know how much margin you have to work with and base your discounting decision on this.
- Offering a 30% discount, or more, will have much more potential to spark a user’s interest in your annual plan.
- As long as it is profitable for you then there’s no reason to not experiment with deeper pricing discounts on your annual plan.
- Now sit back and savour the moment because this is as much certainty as you can hope for on your startup journey.

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://blog.trak.io/39-actionable-growth-hacking-tactics-part-5-of-5/>

<http://sixteenventures.com/annual-pre-pay-renewals>

<http://www.priceintelligently.com/blog/saas-discounting-strategy-lowers-ltv-by-over-30-percent>

Know When To Hold'em And Know When To... Hide'em

THE HACK

Know When To Hold'em and Know When to... Hide'em

AARRR STAGE:

Revenue

GROWTH PROBLEM:

Getting Customers

Explanation:

"You've got to know when to hold 'em. Know when to fold 'em. Know when to hide 'em. So switch your exit intent popup on. You never count your money when someone's viewing your pricing page. There'll be time enough for countin' when the transaction's done."

Ok, we may have changed a word or two in Kenny Rogers' (in)famous lyrics. They also probably sounded better in their original form. Probably... But we had to do so in order to deliver a pretty important lesson in revenue hacking. So, where's the connection between Kenny's cowboy classic from 1978 and your startup's revenue in 2015?

While your desire to be an open book to your potential customers is admirable, honesty is not always the best policy. Sorry, let us rephrase that so that it doesn't sound so unethical: sometimes you need to save the best for last. Or in Kenny's immortal words: "know when to hold'em."

If Kenny's butchered lyrics haven't given the hack away already then read on to find out just what we're on about.

Just Hack It:

- So, what's all this kaffuffle about holdin 'em and hidin 'em, and all that? And why are you taking revenue hacking advice from a wannabe cowboy?
- Putting the cowboy thing aside for a moment, the gist of this hack is that you save your best offer for when your visitor is just about to leave your pricing page. That's what the "hold 'em & hide 'em" is all about.
- The exact execution of this tactic involves using an exit intent pop-up app to display a pricing discount message that triggers based on a visitor's activity on your site.
- Some apps that can help you achieve this include: Rooster, Optimonk, Sumo.me, OptinMonster, etc.
- For instance, you can set your app to only appear if your visitor has been on the pricing page for a certain amount of time, or if they abandoned their shopping cart mid-way through the checkout process.
- The message can say something along the lines of: "Don't go just yet! Here's a discount that you can apply immediately to get 25% off your first month's subscription." Or it can say anything else you believe will get them to convert. Just don't grovel.

Know When To Hold'em And Know When To... Hide'em

(CONTINUED)

THE HACK

Know When To Hold'em and Know When to... Hide'em

AARRR STAGE:

Revenue

GROWTH PROBLEM:

Getting Customers

- To use a poker metaphor, not giving a discount up-front is the equivalent of not playing your hand too early in the game. This, in turn, saves precious revenue.
- As a final word of advice, we'll once again defer to the eternal wisdom contained within the lyrics of 'The Gambler': "If you're gonna play the game, boy, ya gotta learn to play it right."
- Now that you know how to play the revenue game right, go and get your startup's poker-face on.
- You probably never thought that you'd be able to learn a growth hack from a country song now did you?

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://sixteentreasures.com/pricing-page-discount>

Transaas... Shit! How Do You Spell That Again?

THE HACK

TranSaaS... Shit!
How Do You Spell
That Again?

AARRR STAGE:

Revenue

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Enhance the
SaaS Pricing Model

Explanation:

The SaaS subscription. That steady-paced revenue workhorse of the startup pricing world. When it began coming into vogue at the start of the third millennium, most tech companies were still peddling perpetual licenses at a few hundred or thousand dollars a pop. Where is your perpetual licensing now, Microsoft Office?!

Well, it still haunts certain dark corners of the B2B space. But, for the most part, startups view one-off licenses in the same way they do buying a Windows laptop over a Macbook. Namely: it's something your dad did back in the 90s for the purpose of being able to work from home *cough* play non-stop Doom *cough* over the weekends. And those days are long gone... Or in the words of some unnamed startup hipster: "if it ain't Mac, it's whack!"

In the same way, the thinking around SaaS subscriptions has also evolved over the years. An example of this is the rise of subscription ecommerce startups. Shaving-as-a-Service? Shoes-as-a-Service? Kids-Clothing-as-a-Service? Cup-a-Joe-as-a-Service? Vino-as-a-Service? Bro-as-a-Service? Holy-moly-flying-chihuahua, where does the madness end?!

But more importantly, what's next? Where is the new frontier of SaaS pricing? Apparently, just like in the auto industry, the immediate future may be in hybrids. Now let's take this slick, new TranSaaSional pricing model for a spin, shall we?

Just Hack It:

- This ungodly-sounding linguistic creation is a portmanteau of transactional and SaaS. TranSaaSional. Get it?! Uh... yeah... Let's just move on.
- The gist of this pricing approach is that it's about supplementing your fixed subscription revenue with a volume-based variable pricing scheme.
- What does TranSaaS... What does TranSaaS... Ugh, forget it. What advantages does this pricing model have over a straight-up SaaS subscription then?
- Oh, not much. Just the ability to blow your annual revenue forecast out of the water. Not to mention the ability to finally throw away your cardboard sign that reads "will provide XX features for a few pesos per month."

Transaas... Shit! How Do You Spell That Again?

(CONTINUED)

THE HACK

TranSaaS...Shit!
How Do You Spell
That Again?

AARRR STAGE:

Revenue

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Enhance the
SaaS Pricing Model

- Adopting TranSaaSional pricing allows you to remove the revenue ceiling as your sales are now directly tied to that of your customer. Pretty nifty revenue hacking, huh?
- There can be slightly different ways of implementing this depending on your overall business model. Publishing your pricing may or may not be the best solution for your particular startup.
- The trick is to demonstrate just how much value your product delivers in exchange for the added transaction fees the customer will have to pay. Find a way to tie your scalable pricing to measurable results and you have a surefire formula for a revenue fiesta.
- Now, if someone could only give this tongue-twister a better name...

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://johngreathouse.com/saas-subscriptions-are-great-transaasional-pricing-is-better/>

<http://labs.openviewpartners.com/transaasion-new-take-on-saas-pricing-model/>

Optimizing Your Most Important Page

THE HACK

Optimizing Your Most Important Page

AARRR STAGE:

Revenue

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Price Your Product

Explanation:

The power of pricing right. There's no point in arguing about the potent effect it has on your bottom line. Or your top line. Or any other line that influences the amount of money your startup rakes in.

Hit the pricing "sweet spot," and Christmas will be much funner for you and your company this year. Get it wrong and, well, you won't be any different from the millions of other tech casualties who contribute to the 90% startup failure statistic. Yes, pricing is THAT important. Getting your pricing right is not just an exercise in management accounting, it's the foundation of your overall growth hacking strategy.

Yet, a recent study of the top 270 SaaS pricing pages discovered that only 20% of startups use customer development or a value-based approach to setting their prices. The other 80% use a combination of "scientific" guesstimation and the age-old tactic of aping your competition. Even worse, there are those startups who are still stuck in the industrial revolution, and base their pricing on production costs.

If you publish your pricing, which most SaaS startups do, then your pricing page arguably becomes the most important part of your website. Now let's inject some science into the "art" of pricing and hack some more revenue through your pricing page.

Just Hack It:

- You can already breathe a sigh of relief because your pricing page doesn't have to be a visual masterpiece. Simplicity is actually key. The goal is to communicate your value in the most efficient way possible while still keeping things interesting.
- Following are some things that you can do to optimize your pricing page:
 - Don't overwhelm leads with a laundry list of features for each pricing tier and make sure that you're not repeating yourself. There's nothing worse than drowning a potential customer in details they don't need to know.
 - But at the same time, communicate enough to ensure that the difference between your various plans is understood as well as the incremental value that each pricier plan provides.
 - Snazzy up the names of your pricing tiers to bring them to life. If you can muster the creative inspiration, try to avoid using the worn-out "Basic-Premium-Enterprise" naming scheme for your pricing tiers.

Optimizing Your Most Important Page

(CONTINUED)

THE HACK

Optimizing Your Most Important Page

AARRR STAGE:

Revenue

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Price Your Product

- Put your pricing into context. A good example of this is mentioning things such as “For the price of a cup of coffee per week” or “For less than a dollar a day” etc.
- Finally, a simple pricing page doesn’t mean that it has to be ugly. A well-designed, yet minimalistic, pricing page will help to enhance the overall perception of your pricing.
- If you can get your hands on a good designer then visually show the differences with the help of illustrations or design metaphors.
- Never underestimate the power of design, even when it comes to pricing!

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://www.priceintelligently.com/blog/bid/185284/Price-Intelligently-s-1st-Annual-SaaS-Pricing-Page-Pageant>

<http://www.priceintelligently.com/blog/bid/191579/A-Study-of-the-Top-270-SaaS-Pricing-Pages>

Create Revenue Streams For A Profit Flood

THE HACK

Create Revenue Streams for a Profit Flood

AARRR STAGE:

Revenue

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Diversify Your SaaS Revenue Streams

Explanation:

One-trick pony. This idiom doesn't just apply to a startup that's banking on a single feature to lead it to stardom. It just as equally applies if you only have one source of revenue that you're relying on to keep your startup in the black (or barely alive).

And a one-trick pony is not something you want your startup to be. You want it to be a glorious unicorn or even that most rare of mythical beasts, the decacorn. But guess what? Especially in the initial stages of your startup's growth, relying on a single income source may not just jeopardize your IPO dreams, it can actually put your startup's very survival under threat.

The wrongful assumption made about SaaS startups is that their sole revenue earner is customer subscriptions. While subscriptions are a great way to keep the lights on and your fridge stocked with a variety of tasty beverages, it's not the only to make a pretty penny.

The beauty of running a SaaS company is that you don't have to limit yourself to any single stream of income but, rather, combine different ones to create a mighty revenue flood. Read below to find out how to make this happen.

Just Hack It:

- Recurring monthly or annual subscriptions can be a great primary revenue stream for your SaaS business. But why limit yourself?
- Here are some secondary revenue streams that you tag on to explode your earnings:
 - **Provide reporting and data analysis services** – pretty self-explanatory and, depending on your startup, this can become an easy revenue add-on.
 - **Charge extra fees** – this can also potentially be an easy win as you can charge for anything: from the initial setup and onboarding through to processing and transaction fees or increasing storage capacity. However, these fees need to be justified as customers can potentially get annoyed if this isn't clearly communicated from the start.

Create Revenue Streams For A Profit Flood (CONTINUED)

THE HACK

Create Revenue Streams for a Profit Flood

AARRR STAGE:

Revenue

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Diversify Your SaaS Revenue Streams

- **Charge a premium for customer service** – this may not work as well for a B2C startup as it could for a B2B business. For B2B products that are complex or specialized it may be much easier to justify such fees.
- **Offer professional services** – this involves any form of consulting over-and-above supporting your core product offering. It can include such things as providing custom reporting or data analysis services, as mentioned earlier.
- **Publish content** – we're talking about going beyond the content you create for marketing purposes and actually creating a book or a standalone publishing entity that produces paid content on a relevant topic. This is a great way to turn yourself into a thought leader in your industry.
- **Engage affiliates** – affiliate marketing is a significant revenue stream for infoproduct peddlers of every ilk but there's no reason why you can't launch an affiliate program to help your SaaS's top line.
- **Create a 'white label' solution** – this means that you let your clients on-sell your solution under their own brand. While lucrative, it is important that this revenue model doesn't detract from or affect your core SaaS offering.
- **Manufacture hardware or devices** – this is a tactic used in certain industries, which helps to bolster your income by selling a custom gizmo that enhances or supports your app in some way. It can also create vendor tie-in, which can end up improving customer retention significantly.
- **Charge for API access** – offering access to your startup's underlying technology to other developers is a great way to make a buck. But marketing and servicing API customers is quite different and the added costs of this need to be factored into your planning.
- **Advertising** – the reason we chose to include this revenue stream last is because, in order to make advertising work, your product has to be designed around this monetization strategy from the ground up. Selling advertising is a significant commitment of resources and it shouldn't be taken lightly.
- It's worth noting that some of the above income streams can become the foundation for a startup's entire business model. So it pays to stay close to your customers and keep close tabs on what revenue models are working and which aren't.
- Your goal is to find the right mix of revenue sources.

Create Revenue Streams For A Profit Flood (CONTINUED)

THE HACK

Create Revenue Streams for a Profit Flood

AARRR STAGE:

Revenue

GROWTH PROBLEM:

How to Diversify Your SaaS Revenue Streams

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- As your startup evolves, who knows, a secondary income stream may just become your main profit driver. You won't know unless you try...

Source Or Inspiration:

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/neilpatel/2015/03/26/11-revenue-streams-for-saas-business/>

<https://s3.amazonaws.com/16v/7+SaaS+Revenue+Streams+with+Details.pdf>