

MAKING THE LEAP

Successful Products as a Web Agency



Caveat Emptor

Leave now if this isn't what you want!



Covered: Business Decisions for Products

- Motivators, Priorities, MVP, Marketing, Resourcing, etc.

Not Covered: Technical, Design or Other Considerations for Products

- How to build a product, Technical Infrastructure, Frameworks, Modules, A/B Testing Techniques, etc.

Target Audience

You will get the most out of this talk if you:



- Make things for clients
- Have an idea or prototype
- Wonder about your next steps

Gorton Studios 2001 - 2015

- Websites for Clients: Strategy, UX, Design, Content Strategy, Development, Support

NodeSquirrel 2011 - Present

- Secure Offsite Backup for Drupal and WordPress

Pantheon 2015 - Present

- World's Best Website Management Platform (Seriously - come by the table for demo!)

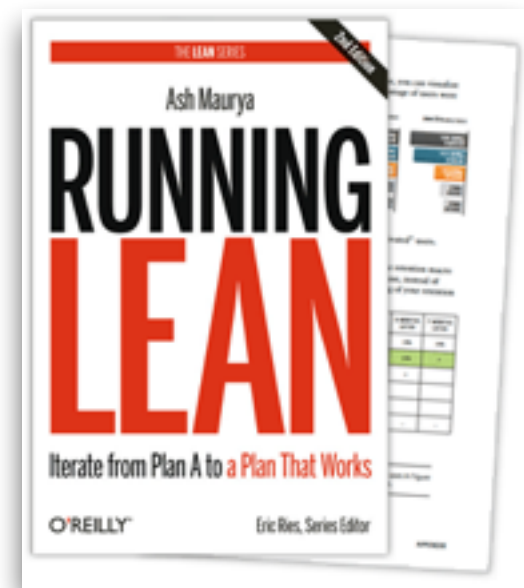
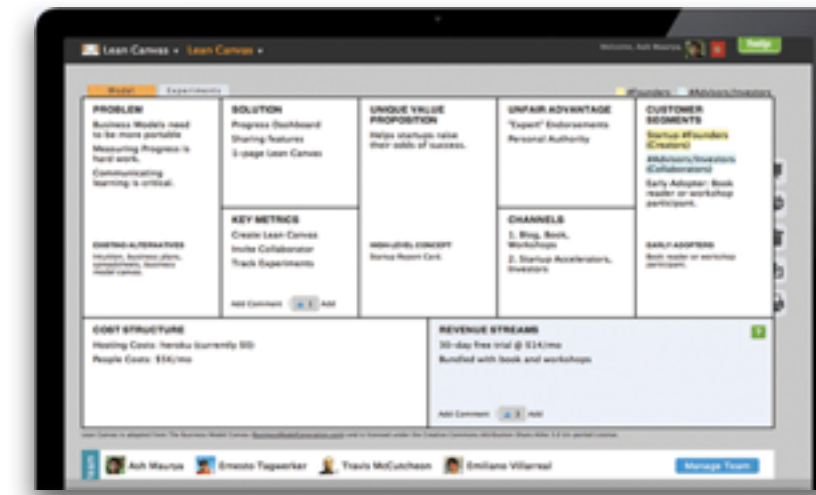
Services companies should not build products.

Success Stories in Drupal



One page business model that identifies how your product solves a problem and how it will make money.

See: <http://leanstack.com>



“Iterate from Plan A to a Plan that Works.”

“Being lean is not about being cheap but being efficient with resources.”

Ryan Szrama - Growing a Drupal Based Product Business

<https://latinamerica2015.drupal.org/session/growing-drupal-based-product-business>

Before You Start

Define some things



Goals - Why are we doing this?

Success - What will make this a success?

Methods - How will we find the time and money to do this?

MVP - What is the smallest version of this that we can build?

Marketing - How will people hear about this?

Goals

Why would anyone do such a thing?

- Fun
- Learning
- Internal Need
- Lead Generation
- Thought Leadership
- Profit



Goal Pros + Cons



	PRO	CON
FUN	Fun	Won't Always Be Fun
LEARNING	New Skills	Focus
INTERNAL NEED	Solved	Product is overkill
LEAD GENERATION	Sales Prospects	Cheap Clients
THOUGHT LEADERSHIP	Higher Rates	Burden of Maintenance
PROFIT	Money	Less Than Hourly Rate

NodeSquirrel Goals



NodeSquirrel	PRO	CON
FUN	Fun	Won't Always Be Fun
LEARNING	New Skills	Focus
INTERNAL NEED	Solved	Product is overkill
LEAD GENERATION	Sales Prospects	Cheap Clients
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 OpenPublish	PRO	CON
FUN	Fun	Won't Always Be Fun
LEARNING	New Skills	Focus
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Define Success

Know where you're going



What do you call success?

- If you don't know where you're going, you might not make it there.

Hard Decisions

- Is it worth the time and money we're investing?
- Should we add a new feature?
- Should we hire someone to work on this full time?

Define Success

Know where you're going

“Define what success and failure are for you. How much time/money are you willing to invest and what results will tell you when to pull the plug? We didn't do this very clearly for Drupalize.Me at the start.... Having a limping, half-baked product could be damaging to morale as well and do strange things to your culture.”



- Addison Berry
Product Owner, drupalize.me

Methods

Bootstrapping Your Product

- Nights and Weekends
- “Free Time” inside firm
- Money to buy dedicated time



Methods: Pros & Cons

	PRO	CON
FREE TIME	You Have It	You Don't Have Enough
MONEY	You Have It	You Don't Have Enough
NIGHTS & WEEKENDS	Fun & Learning	Business?

NodeSquirrel	PRO	CON
FREE TIME	You Have It	You Don't Have Enough
MONEY	You Have It	You Don't Have Enough
NIGHTS & WEEKENDS	Fun & Learning	Business?

Understand Your Methods

Staff Accordingly

“Giving your product space to grow (dedicated staff, etc.) is essential, but have a plan for how it strengthens your service business. If it's not directly symbiotic, start treating it as a separate business immediately, even if you haven't formed a new entity around it.”

- Alec Reynolds
COO, Kalamuna



MVP

Where you need to get

A Minimum Viable Product is the smallest thing you can build that delivers customer value (and as a bonus captures some of that value back).

<http://leanstack.com/minimum-viable-product/>



Featur-itis is BAD

Don't Build Too Much

“As a product owner, you are your own worst enemy. It is very easy to go down in the hells of featuritis. Build a minimal product and make sure that people who use it come back and keep using it more and more. Until you have that, don't waste time on adding additional features: No amount of chrome can fix a broken engine.”



- Kristof Van Tomme
CEO Provonix, WalkHub

- Problem being solved
- Identity
- Audience
- Path to Market
- Pricing



- Problem: Offsite Backup
- Identity: NodeSquirrel Name, Brand, Logo
- Audience: Anyone running a Drupal site
- Path to Market: Backup and Migrate
- Pricing: \$5 (now free)



Different Motivators

	PRO	CON
FUN	Fun!	Won't Always Be Fun.
LEARNING	New Skills	Can't Know/Do/Master Everything
LEAD GENERATION	Sales Prospects	Cheap Clients
THOUGHT LEADERSHIP	Higher Rates	Burden of Maintenance
PROFIT	Money	Versus Hourly Rate

Different MVP

Profit or Fail Quickly!

Landing Page

Signup Form

Google AdWords

Metrics



You need customers more than you need features.

Audience Participation Time!

Not convinced? How many of you ...



Manage Drupal Websites?

Had heard of NodeSquirrel? (before this)

Knew what it was? (knew that it involved backup)

Thought it was a great idea?

Tried it?

Bought it?

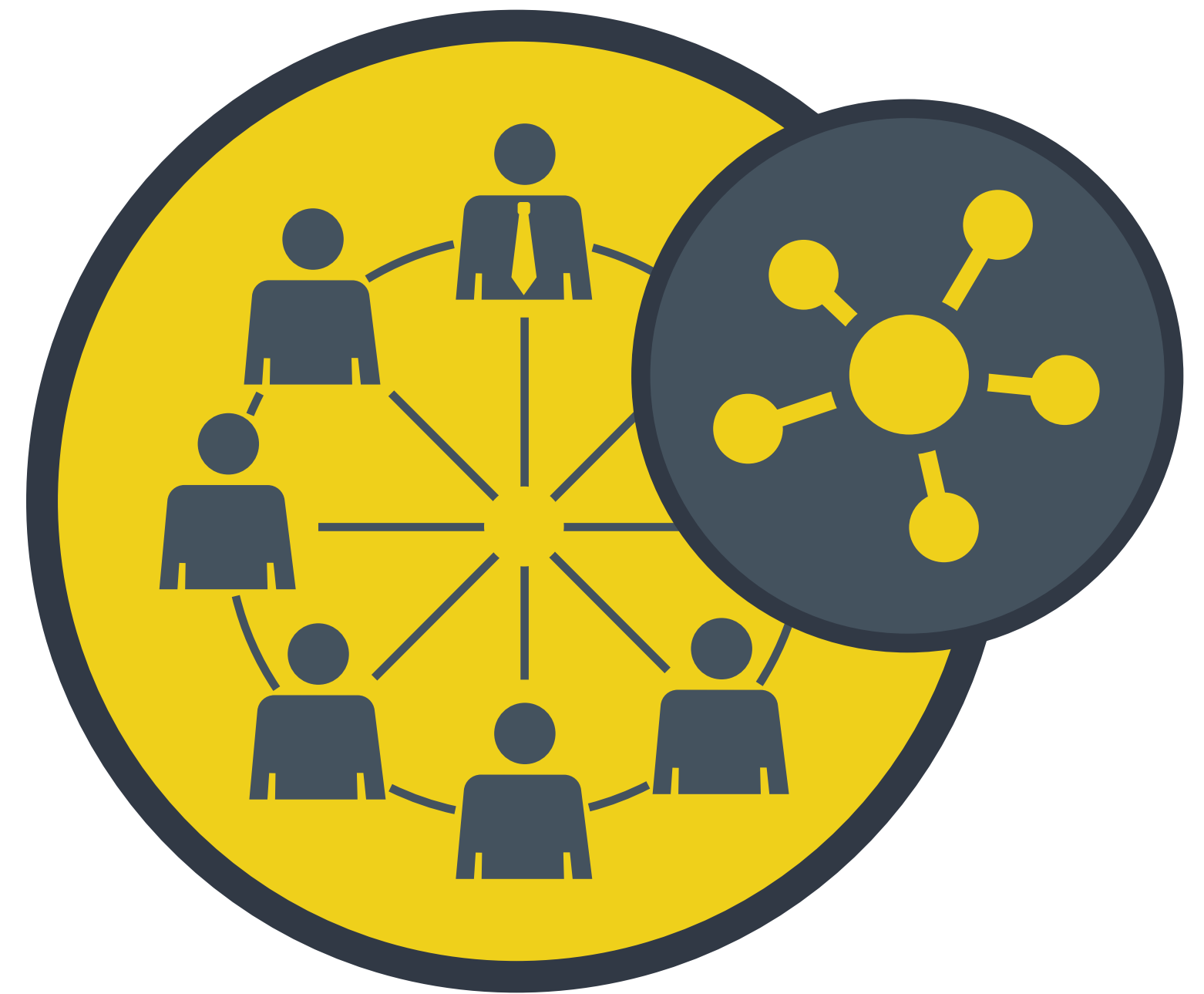
Marketing

How soon do you need a full time Marketing person?

Web Agency: ~25 - 30 people

Product: ~3-4 people

Pantheon: ~80 people. Our Breakdown:
Marketing, Support, Engineering: ~20 each



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MVP - What is the smallest version of this that we can build?

Marketing - The most important job once the MVP is out.

QUESTIONS

