

# The best growth advice of 2024

24 tactics you can apply right now from Canva, Calendly, Clay & more



KYLE POYAR  
DEC 11, 2024



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Every week in [Growth Unhinged](#), I explore the hidden playbooks behind the fastest growing B2B startups.

The newsletter now reaches 61,500 subscribers (up from 38,000 last year) and has been viewed 2,400,000 times in 2024 (!). THANK YOU for your continued support 🙌


This year has seen 🔥 learnings from founders and leaders at a who's who of companies including 11x, Amplitude, Calendly, Clay, ClickUp, Copy.ai, folk, lemlist, Miro, Mutiny and Rows. Now feels like as good a time as any to reflect on the best of the best insights from 2024 (you can also catch up on the [2023](#) and [2022](#) editions).

Let's dive in 📌

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# Your 2024 S growth cheats

 **Finding product-market fit (PMF)**

**MEASURE WEEKLY RETENTION SPRINTS**

It took Jam seven failed launches before the eighth worked. What changed: waiting until it was bulletproof.

**Rows** **VALIDATE YOUR WAITLIST EMAILS**

Conversion of emails on the list for >6 months was almost 0%. Don't let bounces hurt your product launch.

**folk.** **DON'T DITCH WHITEGLOVE ONBOARDING**

While folk now has a self-serve option, manual onboarding sessions improve the odds of conversion by 4x.

**Iemlist** **BE PRESENT IN OTHER COMMUNITIES**

An early win: building a name in Facebook, Reddit, and Slack communities by answering people's queries.

**Building pipeline**

**MineOS** **SIGNUP FORM OVER BLURRED UI**

This experiment immediately spiked form completion during sign-up by more than 25%.

**Active Campaign** **LINKEDIN THOUGHT LEADER ADS**

The click-through rates have been "off the charts".

**LinkedIn** **SEE YOUR COMPETITORS' BEST ADS**

LinkedIn launched an ad library feature, which is a gold mine for identifying winning ad formats and messaging.

**CommandBar** **DISRUPT AN EXISTING CATEGORY**

Shifting from category creation to category disruption doubled CommandBar's growth rate.

**samsales** **SIGNAL-BASED WARM OUTBOUND**

Run advanced plays based on parameters like who worked for your best clients and changed jobs?

**ahrefs** **ORIGINAL CONTENT**

One example worth mimicking: Ahrefs' approach to "invented concepts" like their Middleman Method for SEO.

**Going account-based (ABX)**

**PARABOLA** **UNIFIED, ACCOUNT-BASED METRICS**

Parabola built out automated tracking of their ABX stages in <30 days, giving them a shared base truth for each target account.

**Mitiny** **HONE YOUR TARGET ACCOUNT LIST**

Treat your target account list as a program, not a one-off.

**Winning by Design**

Start with a ur  
a play type (l

**Memo**

Prospect dinne  
sales meeting

**DoWhatWorks**

Turns out, this

**INTERCOM**

Intercom was  
charge \$0.99

**HAVE THE WILLINGNESS-TO-PAY TALK**

Limitless monetized from early on. How they did it: rigorous A/B price testing and van Westendorp survey questions.

**Common Paper** **CONSIDER AN AUTOMATIC FEE INCREASE**

1-in-3 auto-renewals include an automatic fee increase. These are generally between ~5-8% per year.

**Iemlist** **FINALLY LAUNCH YOUR REVERSE TRIAL**

Iemlist did so this year. The result: a bottom-up acquisition stream, less friction for returning users, strong conversion rates.

**Embracing automation and PLG**

**clay** **STOP FAKE ACCOUNTS**

In just one month, Clay added >\$150k in incremental ARR and saved >\$175k in credit costs just by stopping fake accounts.

**Calendly** **REVAMP CTAS AND LEAD ROUTING**

Calendly increased leads from the website by 50% and qualified meetings by 40% — without an SDR qualification call.

**Rows** **MAYBE REMOVE YOUR HOMEPAGE?**

Rows let folks jump straight into the product, no signup required. New activated users per week increased by 4x.

**deputy\*** **REVISIT YOUR AUTOMATED EMAILS**

Don't let them fall victim to SaaS entropy.

**Canva** **REVISIT YOUR CANCELLATION FLOW**

What Canva gets right: personalization, loss aversion, and clever UX choices.

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**GROWTH UNHINGED** with Kyle Poyar

## Finding product-market fit (PMF)

- 1. Measure weekly retention sprints to make sure your product is truly useful.** It took Jam 18 months and seven failed launches before the [eighth finally worked](#). What changed? Waiting until the product was bulletproof. Two of the original five pilots had 19 week sprints — 19 weeks after starting the pilots.
- 2. Run your waitlist through an email validator.** When Rows went to open their waitlist, they found [conversion of emails on the list for >6 months was almost 0%](#).

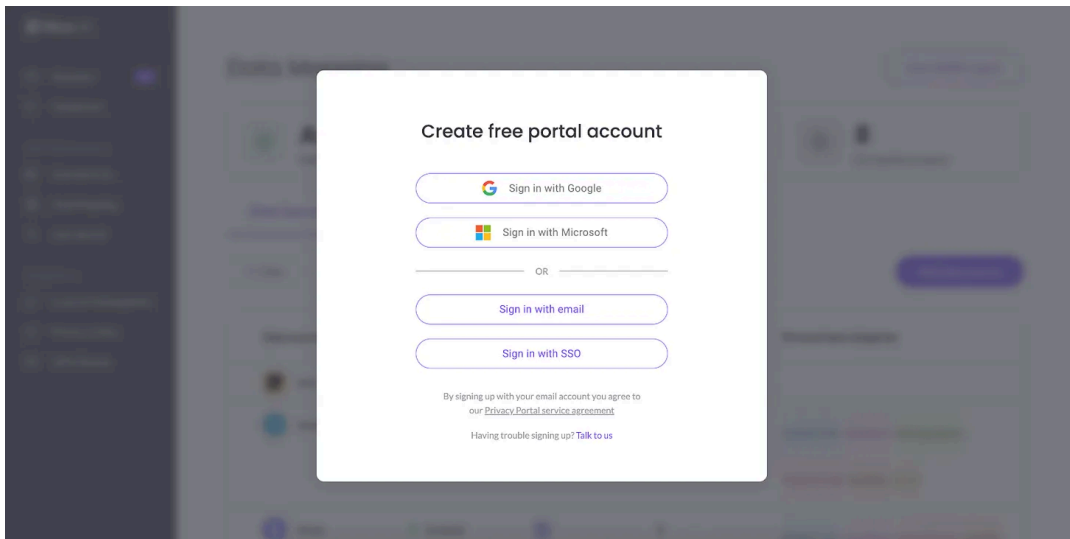
Bounces were high and non-bounces ended up in spam — hurting the launch and making it harder to serve those who *were* interested.

3. **Don't ditch white glove onboarding overnight.** folk — the CRM startup — won Product of the Month on Product Hunt. But they kept Superhuman-style white-glove onboarding, [running hundreds of onboarding calls](#) to develop an instinctive understanding of customers' pain points, goals, and alternative solutions. While folk now has a self-serve option, *manual onboarding sessions improve the odds of conversion by 4x.*

4. **Build a name in other communities.** lemlist has bootstrapped to \$28M ARR with 40% EBITDA margins. An early win: [building a name in Facebook, Reddit, and Slack communities](#) by actively participating and answering people's queries. The community goodwill was repaid in the form of hundreds of eager beta users.

## Building pipeline

5. **Test a sign-up form over a blurred UI.** Tom Orbach of the [Marketing Ideas](#) newsletter told me running this experiment at MineOS immediately spiked form completion during sign-up by more than 25%. (Don't miss his other favorite [marketing quick wins](#).)



6. **Run a LinkedIn thought leader campaign.** ActiveCampaign has grown to \$250M in ARR. Growth marketing leader Casey Hill told me [a recent winner](#) has been LinkedIn thought leader ads. The click-through rates have been “off the charts” (up to 7%). While attribution remains a challenge, Casey recommends marketing mix modelling for it (they use [HockeyStack](#)).

7. **See what your competitors are paying to promote on LinkedIn.** LinkedIn launched an [ad library feature](#), which is a gold mine for identifying winning ad formats, messaging and targeting strategies. (Another [idea](#) from Tom Orbach of *Marketing Ideas*.)

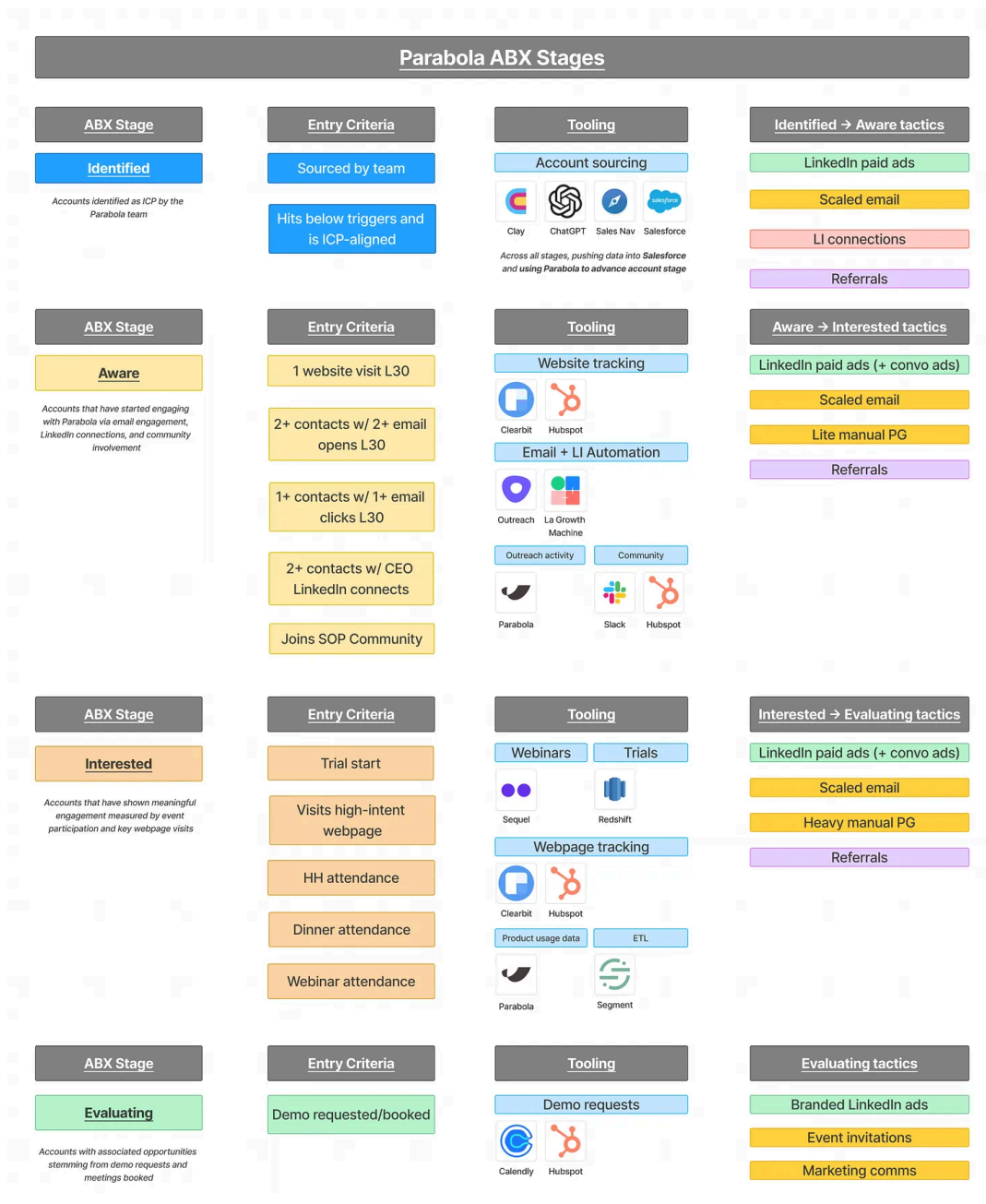
8. **Don't create a new category; disrupt an existing one.** CommandBar shifted to "easy mode" — disrupting an existing category — which helped them [double their growth rate](#). It allowed them to harness existing demand for the category and qualify buyers much more quickly than before.

9. **Tap into signal-based warm outbound.** Samantha McKenna of #samsales Consulting recommends [using Sales Navigator to run advanced plays](#) based on parameters like: (a) who worked for our company that now works in my territory?, (b) who worked for our best clients and has changed jobs?, (c) who do my execs know that work in our territory?

10. **Ditch SEO-bait content in favor of original content.** [Original content](#) is content that's unique, demonstrates out-of-the-box thinking, and provides additional value. One example worth mimicking: Ahrefs' approach to "invented concepts" like their [Middleman Method](#) for SEO.

## **Going account-based (ABX)**

11. **Shift from spray-and-pray to unified, account-based GTM metrics.** Parabola built out [automated tracking of their ABX stages](#) in <30 days, giving them a shared base truth for where each target accounts was in their buying journey (in their world: Identified, Aware, Interested, Evaluating).



12. **Hone your target account list.** It's tempting to spend 99% of your time on *engaging* accounts and only 1% of your time on *picking* accounts in the first place. That leads to generic and stale account lists, missing 1st and 3rd party signals for running campaigns, and limited back-testing on whether these accounts are where you have the best chance to win. Mutiny [started treating their target account list as a program instead of a one-off](#); the extra effort is paying off.

13. **Use the SPICED framework to orchestrate account-based plays.** WbD's Shari Johnston recommends starting with the unified message for each segment. From there, decide on a play type (1:1, 1:few, 1:many) and a target buyer (she suggests starting with the 'initiator'). Regardless of the play type, there needs to be a *value exchange*, it should *feel personalized*, and *customer-centricity* is key.

14. **Bring back (intimate) events.** Memo found that [intimate prospect dinners](#) (10-15 attendees) had off-the-charts conversion: 80% of attendees take a sales meeting, 50% of these become opportunities, 25-40% convert into customers. Revenue leaders at Miro, Jellyfish and Carta agreed.

## Turning pipeline into \$\$

15. **Stop showing social proof on your pricing page.** DoWhatWorks has analyzed more than 20,000 website experiments (and counting). This [test rarely worked](#) (see: Dropbox, Jotform, Glofox).

16. **Finally launch your reverse trial.** Sales automation tool lemlist [shifted from free trial to reverse trial](#) this year. The result: a bottom-up acquisition stream, less friction for returning users and strong conversion rates. (Meanwhile, Databox's reverse trial had a [6pp improvement](#) in activation rates.)

17. **Consider charging for units of work.** Technology companies are realizing they can't solely rely on seat-based subscriptions in an age of AI, automation and APIs where value is disconnected with how many people are logging in. [Intercom was an early adopter](#); they charge \$0.99 per AI resolution for their FinAI agent.

18. **Have the (willingness-to-pay) talk.** Limitless AI (fka Rewind) quickly attracted a waitlist of 300,000 people. They decided to monetize from day one according to founder Dan Siroker. [How they did it](#): rigorous A/B price testing and the van Westendorp survey questions.

19. **Consider an automatic fee increase.** Like or hate them, they're not out of the ordinary. New data from Common Paper finds that [one-in-three auto-renewals include an automatic fee increase](#). These are generally between ~5-8% per year. Said differently, you could be adding ~2 percentage points onto your growth rate with a relatively straightforward contract tweak.

## Embracing automation, efficiency and PLG

20. **Do something about fake accounts.** Up to half of your free trial signups may actually be *fake accounts*. They distract your sales team, deflate your conversion metrics, and inflate hosting costs. And you can fix it without adding friction for your *real* users. In just one month, [Clay added >\\$150k in incremental ARR and saved >\\$175k in credit costs](#) just by stopping fake accounts.

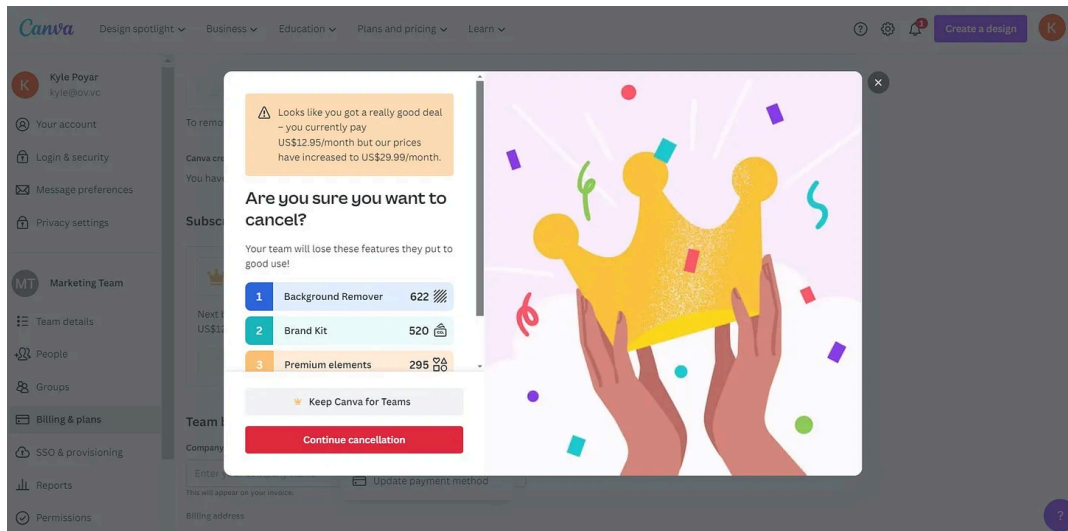
21. **Revamp website CTAs, lead routing, and qualification.** [Small changes helped Calendly](#) increase the number of leads from the website by 50% AND the number of

qualified meetings booked by nearly 40% — without an SDR qualification call.

22. **Maybe remove your homepage entirely?** Rows, the next-gen spreadsheet, introduced a ['loginless' new user experience](#). They removed the homepage and let folks jump straight into the product, no signup required. The project was a resounding success; the number of new activated users per week increased by 4x.

23. **Revisit your automated emails.** Simply put, you need a way to engage and nurture users *outside* of your product in order to draw them back. In a B2B context, email is ubiquitously adopted and still effective for driving both awareness as well as action. But email programs fall victim to SaaS entropy. It's time to [go back to the drawing board](#).

24. **Revisit your cancellation flow.** Earlier this year I went to cancel my Canva Teams account. The [cancellation flow was so good](#) I changed my mind (and went unexpectedly viral). What they got right: (a) reminded me I had an amazing deal, (b) created loss aversion by showing me the premium features I put to use, (c) made clever UX choices that nudged my decision.



## The top 5 *Growth Unhinged* newsletters of 2024

One final countdown to end the year: your top five favorite editions of *Growth Unhinged* as measured by page views and shares.

Drum roll please...

### #5 - [Your guide to GTM metrics 2.0](#)

At a fundamental level, our foundational GTM metrics — like traffic, marketing qualified leads (MQLs) and sales accepted leads (SALs) — make it nearly impossible to



understand where we stand with our target accounts and what influences those accounts to ultimately buy. If we're ever going to find out what works, we need a unified view of go-to-market (GTM) effectiveness.

#### #4 - [How AI apps make money](#) (with [Palle Broe](#))

We investigated 40 leading AI-native companies in the application layer to see what's happening on the pricing front. Spoiler: as of May, there was only limited pricing innovation (although things are slowly changing...).

#### #3 - [What I learned from tracking 443 SaaS pricing pages](#) (with [John Kotowski](#) and [Rob Litterst](#))

The PricingSaaS Index tracks 443 companies with at least 50 employees that have publicly available pricing information on their websites. In Q1-Q3 2024, 42% of companies in the index had adjusted their prices. We dive into the good, the bad, and the downright ugly of this year's pricing shifts, along with some of the wider trends across the industry.

#### #2 - [How to build your GTM strategy from scratch](#) (with [Maja Voje](#))

Many people mistake go-to-market (GTM) for "launch" or marketing in general. However, a GTM strategy is a set of activities that will propel your product to the scaling stage. The holy grail is to find at least one repeatable and scalable GTM motion that will drive your growth. GTM strategist Maja Voje presents three frameworks that will help you make your GTM journey faster and with less risk of failure.

#### #1 - [From selling access to selling work](#)

Technology companies are realizing they can't solely rely on seat-based subscriptions in an age of AI, automation and APIs where value is disconnected with how many people are logging in. We're moving away from charging for *access to software* and toward a model of charging for the *work delivered* by a combination of software and AI agents. Here is what's happening and what it means for you.

THANK YOU again for reading and being part of this community. As always, if you have a 🔥 growth story to share, simply hit reply.



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♥ Liked by Kyle Poyar

Bookmarking this one for sure, Kyle. Congrats on an epic year!

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1 reply by Kyle Poyar



Lee Roquet Dec 12

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♥ Liked by Kyle Poyar

Really great post, share, and insights, thank you!

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