

Frameworks

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3-4 minutes

A successful framework distills the complex, and in that synthesis, gets to a timeless insight. That's always my aspiration, to varying degrees of success.

Here's a running list of frameworks I've written on a range of topics.

Recipes to build enduring, mass-market businesses:

- **10x and Cheaper** — What do Airbnb, Amazon, Netflix, Uber, and WhatsApp all have in common? They created a 10x better product and made it cheaper by recasting cost structures of incumbents.
- **Saving people money** — Fintech edition for 10x and Cheaper. It's not just about being able to buy something better for less. This recipe also applies if you help someone do more with their money.
- **Democratizing development** — If you can democratize something that is valuable but previously the domain of a few specialized talents, you can dramatically expand (and capture) a market. In this (very old) post I talk about this framework with a focus on software development.
- **Rocks, Sand, Water** — We know that consumer companies fight a zero-sum game for a user's attention, but some companies find it easier to get that DAU than others. Why? A framework for thinking about how a consumer divides their time up in a day.

Product / Strategy

- **Hierarchy of Engagement** — How to build a consumer software product that endures.
- **Hierarchy of Marketplaces** — How to build a marketplace that "wins". **Focus (Level 1)**, **Tip (Level 2)**, **Dominate (Level 3)**.
- **Hype Cycle of Features** — In a company, excitement for features follows a hype cycle. First inflated expectations, then, with rare exception, the trough of disillusionment. Great product organizations realize when they are in the midst of this cycle, and push through to the slope of enlightenment by iterating on the feature, not abandoning it for the new shiny ball.
- **Listen to your users, and ignore them too** (Lesson #3) — Your loudest users — the users who complain when you ship something they don't like, and post in your Facebook Group their feature requests, are a blessing and a curse. Without them, you wouldn't have a company. But to reach your next 100m users, you need to be willing to ignore them.

Organizational / Hiring:

- **The Mitochondria in Startups** — The mindset that makes a 10x employee in a startup. How to identify, retain, and reward these special individuals.

Measuring your business

- [The Four Stages of Using Data to Manage your Startup](#) — I believe startups go through four phases of using data. First, you must ignore it and lean on user research and first principals. Then, you drown in data and have to figure out what matters. Next, data actually becomes necessary to make decisions, but beware relying on it entirely! And last, if you are lucky to get there, you have to consider the impact of things in your system.

Other

- [Transition from Operating to VC](#) — I think of the transition from operating to VC as a process of getting a train on the tracks.
- [Learning cycles](#) — Seek out jobs that teach quickly, not just offer you a steep learning curve.