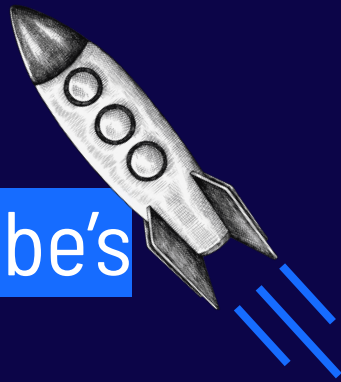Growth Tribe's

Growth Hacking Process:
A Step-By-Step Guide

Growth Hacking Unveiled: Your Step-by-Step Guide to Accelerated Success

Welcome to the world of growth hacking - a bustling field where innovation, data and strategy converge to drive unparalleled business expansion.

If you've ever wondered how startups achieve rapid growth with limited resources or how established business pivot to seize new opportunities, you're about to learn how.

Who is this for?

This ebook is for budding entrepreneurs, marketers looking to supercharge strategies, and business leaders seeking to reignite growth.

We've crafted this guide to cater to a diverse audience, from beginners wanting an introduction to growth hacking to seasoned pros hungry for fresh insights.

No matter your experience level, if you're driven by a desire to achieve growth and embrace cutting-edge approaches, you're in the right place.

Why is it needed?

In today's high-speed digital landscape, traditional methods alone aren't always enough to cut through the noise and stay ahead of the curve.

The business world demands agility, creativity and an unwavering focus on results. This is where growth hacking becomes your best friend.

By delving into the growth hacking process, you'll learn a transformative approach that combines data-driven decision-making with rapid experimentation, enabling you to uncover hidden opportunities, optimise strategies, and realise exponential growth.

What to expect?

In this guide, we'll cover what growth hacking is, how it differs from digital marketing and walk you through the growth hacking process, step-by-step. In addition, we'll support your learning with case studies and practical insights in a manner that anyone can comprehend.

Ready to Unlock Your Potential?

Growth
Tribe

Index

Here is what you get!

Growth Tribe

Let us explain!

Chapter 01

Defining Growth Hacking

Growth
Tribe

Buzzword or Breakthrough?

Digital marketing is no stranger to trendy buzzwords spreading through the airwaves like wildfire. So what does that mean for growth hacking? Is it another fancy term reaping its 15-minutes of fame. Or is it something more? Let's find out.

What is Growth Hacking?

To answer this, we'll quote Sean Ellis, former marketer at Dropbox and the person responsible for coining the term "Growth Hacker" – *"In its purest form, growth hacking refers to a set of strategies that scale the acquisition and retention of a company's user or customer base. At its core, growth hacking was designed to help startups achieve massive growth using relatively low budgets."*

Sean goes on to define a growth hacker as "a person whose true north is growth."

In essence, what Sean's referring to is a *mindset*. Growth hacking uses principles, strategies, and processes to enable growth, but it's much more than a rigid marketing method. Growth hacking is the embodiment of a person's desire to accelerate growth through creativity, rapid experimentation, and iteration.

Growth hacking is where **boldness** collides with **bravery**, driven by **data.**

Why Growth Hacking Matters

90%
of startups fail
within the
**first five years.**

10%
fail in the
first year.
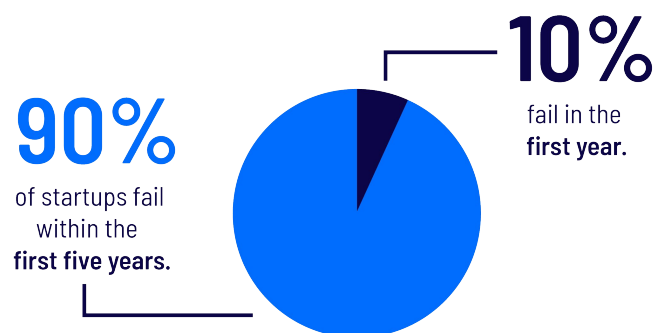
Why? Well, 56% of the problems are owed to marketing issues but primarily, it's due to having a lack of **product-market fit** (we'll get into this a bit later).

In short, companies are not correctly identifying the right market, or the right product, or both.

Traditional marketing methods are stable and proven, but in the ultra-competitive landscape, they can struggle to address unique business challenges. Therefore, relying solely on them can cause problems.

Growth hacking provides a viable alternative, enabling businesses to pivot sharply, adapt to shifting trends, and discover untapped opportunities for growth.
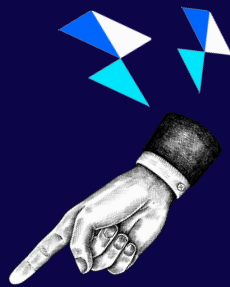
Growth
Tribe

Growth Hacking vs Digital Marketing

What's the Difference?

Growth hacking and digital marketing are used interchangeably which leads to confusion for newcomers interested in either. But, there are key differences in how each of these disciplines approach the act of marketing. Let's compare.

Digital Marketing & Digital Marketers

Digital marketing focuses on lead generation and increasing conversions using digital channels and tactics. Digital marketers use social media marketing, email marketing, and content marketing to attract, engage and convert customers at various stages of the marketing funnel.

Speaking of which, a marketing funnel looks like this:

Awareness & Problem Recognition

Interest & Information Search

Consideration & Evaluation

Intent & Commitment

Conversion & Purchase

Loyalty & Advocacy

Top of the Funnel
This is the lead generation phase. Marketing attracts pottential customers and increases brand awareness.

Middle of the Funnel
Marketing works alongside the sales team. Provide valuable information that helps the customer make their decision.

Bottom of the Funnel
The emphasis is on great customer service. Try and retain the customer for life and convert them into a raving fan.

In order to attract customers at the top of the funnel (and move them downwards), digital marketers will often work on longer project cycles and campaigns, with healthy advertising budgets to drive results. Growth hackers on the other hand, typically work under very restrictive budgets.

When we consider the methods that digital marketers use, we think of these:

➔ **Social Media Marketing:** Creating content and promotions on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and YouTube.
➔ **SEO Marketing:** On-page and off-page SEO which includes creating and optimising content so that it ranks on search engines.
➔ **PPC Marketing:** Creating pay-per-click advertisements to achieve marketing goals.
➔ **Email Marketing:** Sending emails to subscriber lists that nurture leads, inform customers, or promote products and services.
➔ **Content Marketing:** Creating informative, educational, and entertaining content used to build awareness, generate leads and establish authority in an niche.

Growth Tribe

What's the Difference?

Growth Hacking & Growth Hackers

So if a digital marketer is concerned with attracting, engaging, and converting customers, it would be fair to say that a growth hacker focuses on the same thing.

But instead of optimising one stage of the funnel, they look to expedite growth at every stage of the customer journey.

Regardless of the department, a growth hacker seeks to grow the business. Heavily reliant on data, growth hackers tend to be tech-savvy people that aim to optimise conversions and use A/B (split) testing to find what works best.

Some examples of departments for growth hacking include:

Marketing

The creation and promotion of content are used to attract, engage and retain customers. This includes:

➔   Blogs
➔   Whitepapers or e-books
➔   Visual and audio content

Product Development

The process of taking a product from concept all the way through to marketing and sale. Growth hackers run experiments at different stages of development to help refocus efforts on customer retention and engagement. Growth hackers use these sorts of tools:

➔   Chatbots
➔   Gamification
➔   SEO

Engineering

The process of creating, testing and managing a product's development.

A growth hacker might look at the various stages of development and run experiments to speed the process up. What they're looking for here, is the "product market fit." A company's work is complete when they have a product that perfectly meets the needs of its user.

Growth
Tribe

Growth Hacking Process
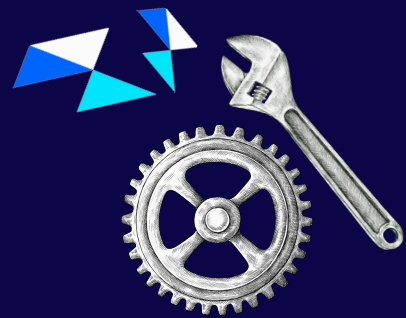
From Idea to Execution

Now we get into the heart of growth hacking - the process that transforms visionary concepts into tangible, scalable growth. In this chapter we'll guide you through a systematic and results-driven approach that growth hackers use to identify opportunities, design experiments, and drive rapid expansion.

Let's not waste any time!

Find Product-Market Fit

Even great ideas can fall flat. You might have an excellent product, an eager fanbase, and a slew of channels primed for promotion. But if you haven't done your due diligence and established whether it's the *right* product for the *right* market, it'll likely fail anyway.

How do you find product-market fit? In reality, this looks different for every business. The goal of a SaaS company won't be the same as a sportswear brand. But there are some steps you can follow in the right direction:

➔   **Define Your Target Audience & Buyer Personas**
Conduct market research that tells you who your customers are, how your product serves them, and gather enough information to create a buyer persona. Check the video below for more.

How To Find Out Exactly What Your Customers Want (4 Market Research Tips)

➔   **Learn Your Customer's Needs, Intimately**
Now it's time to go a step further. Conduct exploratory research methods such as interviews, surveys, questionnaires and more to dig deeper into your customers' needs and challenges, characteristics, feature priorities, perceptions and perspectives.

➔   **Define Your Value Proposition**
This is your unique selling point that differentiates you from your competitors. It's the reason people will choose you over them.

To determine what that is, ask these questions:
- What are your customer's biggest gripes?
- What features does your product offer to solve this?
- Why is your solution better/different to a competitor?
- What elements of your brand, company, ethics, and values make you stand out?

Growth
Tribe

➜ **Build your Minimum Viable Product (MVP)**

Your MVP is a version of your product featuring the most basic and essential functionalities. Doing this helps you to find out what features resonate with customers and speeds up the development process.

➜ **Test Your MVP with Real Customers**

With your prototype available, it's time to test it with a limited audience batch. Gather feedback through surveys, interviews, and analytics tools to measure which elements of your product satisfy the customer, and which ones need revising.

➜ **Iterate and Improve**

Take all of the insights and feedback gathered from previous steps and put them into practice. Make adjustments and tweaks, collaborate with other departments, then retest your MVP until you reach product-market fit!

How Do You Know When You've Reached Product-Market Fit?

There are two popular methods to determining product-market fit:

➜ Sean Ellis' Very Disappointed Method: This involves surveying your users, asking how they'd feel if your product ceased, and segmenting their responses. If 40% or more of your users would be "very disappointed" then you've reached the threshold for product-market fit.

➜ Brain Balfour's Trifecta Approach: You assess whether your product has some form of strong organic top line growth, has good retention, and your users are using it correctly. If you can answer yes to all three - you have product-market fit!

3 Prerequisites for Implementing Growth Hacking

➜ Business Model Canvas - to map out the details of your business.

➜ Value Proposition Canvas - to identify and base decisions around customer needs.

➜ One Metric That Matters (OMTM) - to prioritise the most important stage of your customer's journey.

Growth
Tribe

Implement the G.R.O.W.S. Process

In 2016, we developed a 5-step loop for growth hackers to run continuous experiments. Since its inception, the G.R.O.W.S. process has become an industry-leading methodology.

It consists of these 5 stages:

1. **G**ather Ideas
2. **R**ank Ideas
3. **O**utline Experiments
4. **W**ork, Work, Work
5. **S**tudy Data

Check out this video for a quick overview.

1. Gather Ideas

Business Intelligence
User Interviews
Analytics
Usability Tests

2. Rank Ideas

Prioritization
Framework
B.R.A.S.S.
P.I.E.
I.C.E.

5. Study Data

Hard and Sodt Data
Learning
Systemize

Metric

G
R
O
W
S

4. Work, Work, Work

Cross Skilled Teams
Weekly Sprints
Working Agile

3. Outline Experiment

Minimum Viable Experiment
Time Box
Qualitive Results

Growth Tribe

Now let's break each step down into more detail.

1. Gather Ideas

Assuming you've completed the prerequisite steps, you should have an understanding of the biggest problem your customers face. Also known as the One Metric That Matters (OMTM). With this knowledge, you can start gathering ideas for possible solutions.

Here are some tips for your brainstorming phase:

➔ Use heatmap tools to understand how users interact with your website
➔ Use competitor analysis to measure industry standards
➔ Involve all the departments and individuals for a wider perspective
➔ Get live feedback from usability tests

What you're aiming for is to gather a large stock of ideas. These will act as your backlog for future iterations as you loop back to this step.

2. Rank Ideas

This step is about prioritising your ideas. Growth hackers don't typically have access to large budgets to test ideas, so you need weigh up which solutions will be most beneficial to your customers.

Don't worry, you won't be relying on intuition, there are two frameworks you can use to rank ideas:

➔ B.R.A.S.S. Framework: *Blink, Relevance, Availability, Scalability and Score* (BRASS) helps determine which acquisition channels to test first.
➔ P.I.E. or I.C.E. Frameworks: Which stand for *Potential, Importance and Ease* (PIE) and *Impact, Confidence and Effort* (PIE). These frameworks are used for experiments concerning retention, referral and conversion optimization.

B		R		A		S		S
Blink Gut Feeling		**Relevance** Product/Channel Fit		**Availability** Ease + Cost		**Scalability** Does it scale?		**Score** Multiply
1 - 5	x	1 - 5	x	1 - 5	x	1 - 5	=	BRASS Score

The ideas with the highest scores shoot to the top of your list, these will be the experiments you run first. Bear in mind, that depending on your specific business, some metrics will be important than others, so assess ideas accordingly.

Growth Tribe

3. Outline Experiments

Growth hackers are masters of efficiency, which is why outlining your experiments is a must. It will save time, effort and resources in the long run.

After you've decided which experiments to run, consider these factors in your planning process:

➜ **Length of the experiment:** Think about the optimum duration to yield the best results. Consider the length of time it takes to produce certain metrics, for example, traffic stats, click-through rates, and page visits, will generally work on 30-day cycles.

➜ **Check your resources:** Do you have the right tools and equipment to run the experiment? Invest in necessary tools before you start to avoid disruptions and inaccuracies.

➜ **Who's involved?:** Organise which departments and members will be collaborating on the experiment, this will help speed things up and avoid delays.

➜ **Track the data:** Growth experiments are fast and frequent, be sure to measure the results for KPIs and to inform both your growth teams and stakeholders.

➜ **Launch date:** Have a firm start time for your experiment, again, speed is everything with growth hacking so don't let planning drag on. Get up and running ASAP.

4. Work, Work, Work

Now you can finally run the experiments. Most growth hackers utilise Agile Methodology here with "sprints". These are shorter, incremental cycles to test ideas rapidly. We recommend using Scrum Boards to help to keep track of backlogs, who's working on what, and what still needs doing. Keep communication flowing between teams too, this also ensures you stay on track.

5. Study Data

This is arguably the most important step of the entire process. Studying the data is what tells you if an experiment has succeeded or failed.

Keep in mind though, failure is the currency of growth hacking. It'll happen often, and it should. In any case, make sure to interpret your results into visual data like tables, charts and dashboards that can be presented to team members and stakeholders. If your data reveals new insights, add these ideas to your existing backlog for future experiments.
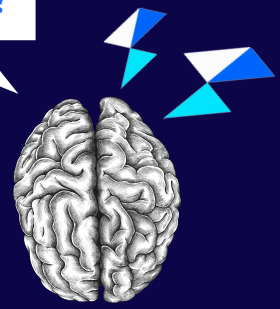
Congratulations! You've completed your first growth hacking experiment. So what's next? You guessed it, heading back to the start of the loop and going again!
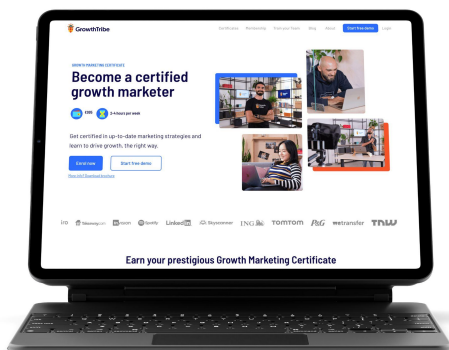
Become a certified growth marketer!

Chapter 04

Growth Hacking Examples

Real-World Growth Hacking Examples

They might be household names now, but these top-flight companies weren't always the shining examples of success we know them as today.

To get their fledgling businesses of the ground, each of them implemented growth hacking tactics for rapid growth.

Here are some notable examples:

Airbnb

Challenge: Struggling to gain traction in a crowded travel market.

Solution: Leveraging Craigslist, a popular classified listings website. Airbnb allowed users to post their listings simultaneously on Craigslist, automatically populating both platforms. This increased visibility and tapped into a massiver user base.

Results: The growth hack led to a significant surge in user acquisition and exponential growth.
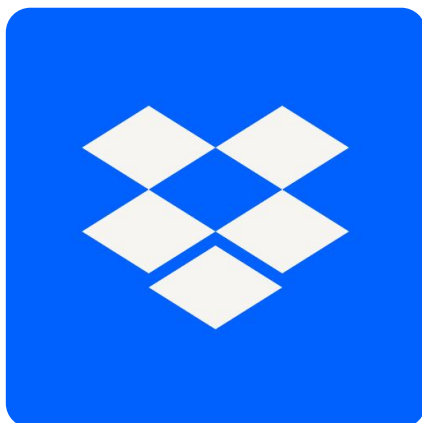
Dropbox

Challenge: Trying to stand out in a a hyper-competitive cloud storage market.

Solution: Implement a genius referral scheme whereby users gain free, additional storage with every referral.

Results: The simple, yet effective scheme led to a 60% increase in signups. Dropbox's users became brand advocates, driving new acquisitions while promoting engagement among existing users.

Growth Tribe

Real-World Growth Hacking Stories

Hotmail (Outlook)

Challenge: Expand the user base for its free email service.

Solution: Hotmail added a simple and unobtrusive message at the footer of every email: "Get your private, free email at Hotmail.com."

Result: This viral growth hack turned millions of users into unwitting brand ambassadors. As recipients saw the message, their curiosity led them to sign up and within a year, the user base grew to 12 million users. ```````````

Tinder

Challenge: Quickly grow the user base amongst a crowded dating app market.

Solution: Tinder created a two-sided incentive. Users had a limited amount of interactions per day, but could increase this limit by inviting friends to sign up.

Result: The approach encouraged users to refer friends to the platform, driving rapid acquisition through a sense of exclusivity and FOMO. The user base grew rapidly and is now a dominant player in the dating app arena.
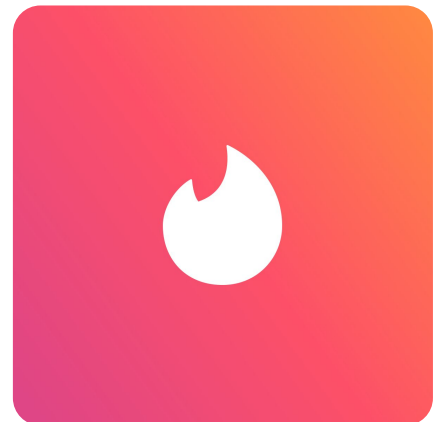
LinkedIn

**Challenge:** Trying to build a robust networking platform by attracting and engaging new users.

Solution: LinkedIn introduced the "People You May Know" feature, which utilised a user's existing connection to suggest new ones.

Result: This feature leveraged the user's social graphs, tapping into their professional relationships to recommend relevant connections. It significantly increased user engagement and user connections on the platform, and remains a main driver of LinkedIn's growth.

Growth Tribe

All you need to know

Growth Hacking Resources
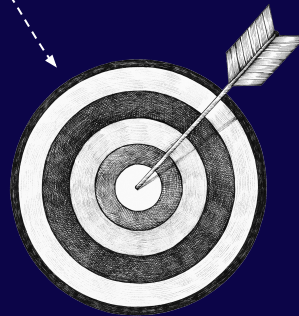
Where Inspiration Lives

You've learned so much about growth hacking, well done! In this section, we'll provide valuable resources to help fine-tune your knowledge and explore its dynamic world.

Growth Hacking Guides
1. Growth Hacking Stats & Trends for 2023
2. Ultimate Guide to Digital Marketing
3. The Marketing Funnel Guide
4. Customer Journey Map
5. What is Conversion Rate Optimisation?
6. The Pirate Funnel (AAARRR)
7. Agile Methodology

Growth Hacking Influencers to Follow
- Andrew Chen
  - Blog
  - LinkedIn
- Brian Balfour
  - Blog
- Eric Peters
  - LinkedIn
- Noah Kagan
  - Blog
  - LinkedIn
- Sean Ellis
  - Website
  - LinkedIn

Best Growth Hacking YouTube Channels
1. Growth Tribe
2. Neil Patel
3. HubSpot Marketing
4. Wes McDowell
5. GaryVee
6. Jason Whaling
7. Ahrefs

Best Growth Hacking Tools
1. UpGrow
2. Expandi
3. Zapier
4. ChatGPT
5. Hotjar

Growth Tribe

Why Growth Tribe?
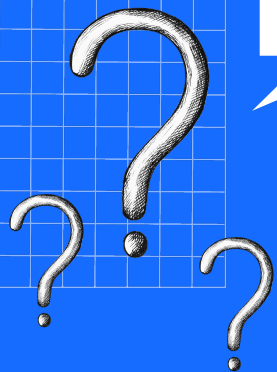
GrowthTribe

Who are Growth Tribe?

We're a digital learning partner for both individuals & organisations, empowering learners with fundamental & high in-demand digital skills like Growth Marketing, Digital Marketing, Data Analytics, UX Design and Digital Leadership and Project Management.

We help our learners and partners acquire future-proof digital capabilities through **actionable, hands-on and engaging courses, all on-demand and blended.**

35000+
Global
Alumni

1000+
Companies
Trained

Holon IQ
Top 100 EdTech
Company 2022

9/10
Satisfaction score
corporate programs

FAQs

Let us explain!

Growth Tribe

Frequently Asked Questions, Answered

If you have a query that isn't answered here and want to know more,
contact our support team [here](#).

1. **What is growth hacking and how does it differ from traditional marketing?**

Growth hacking is a data-driven and iterative approach. It focuses on achieving rapid business growth, often through creative and unconventional means. Unlike traditional marketing, which may involve broad campaigns and long-term planning, growth hacking centers on rapid experimentation, quick iterations, and scalable tactics aimed at acquiring and retaining customers efficiently.

2. **Is growth hacking only for startups, or can established businesses benefit too?**

While growth hacking gained its initial popularity with startups, its principles are applicable to all businesses. Established businesses can leverage growth hacking techniques to adapt to market changes, discover new revenue streams, and rejuvenate their customer base. The key is to adopt a mindset of innovation and agility.

3. **What are some essential skills for growth hackers?**

Growth hackers possess a blend of technical proficiency, creativity and analytical acumen. Key skills include data analysis, A/B testing, SEO, content marketing, social media savvy, coding basics, and a deep understanding of user behaviour. The ability to identify patterns, derive insights from data and implement rapid experiments is crucial.

4. **How do you measure the success of a growth hacking campaign?**

Typically, success is measured according to campaign KPIs. These include metrics like user acquisition rate, conversion rate, customer lifetime value (LTV), engagement metrics, viral loops, and revenue growth. The emphasis is on tracking metrics that correlate to business growth.

5. **Are there ethical considerations in growth hacking?**

Absolutely! Growth hacking focuses on innovation, experimentation and growth but it's essential to operate within legal and ethical boundaries. Deceptive or manipulative tactics will only damage a brand's reputation and lead to negative consequences. It's all about delivering value and maintaining trust with your user base.

6. **How can I get started with growth hacking for my business?**

First, start by learning your target audience and their pain points. Then, identify key growth drivers and experiment with different channels and strategies. Finally, collect data, analyse results, and iterate based on your findings. Learn from other growth hacking case studies and network with professionals in your field.

Ready to grow?

Let's get started!

Growth
Tribe