



Gala Grigoreva

Startup Marketing: Organic Growth Mastery

**Femme Forward Female Startup Founders
27 May 2024**



Chief Marketing Officer Adsterra

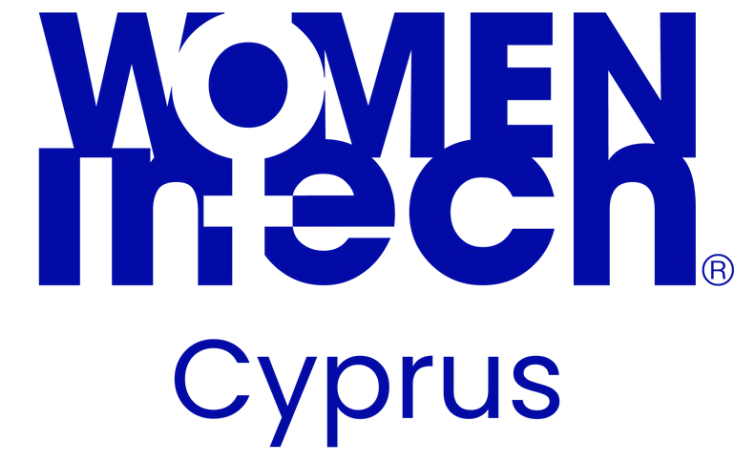
- Over 13 years in B2C and B2B marketing, 9 years in IT
- Certified business mentor and growth tracker
- Community leader of Women in Tech Cyprus
- Workplace Happiness & NLP coach practitioner
- Kundalini & Business Yoga coach





W/A

[Click to watch](#)



- Monthly meetups on various topics
- Educational program “Advocate For Yourself”
- Women in STEM Forum in September 2024
- The “Role Model” program from September 2024



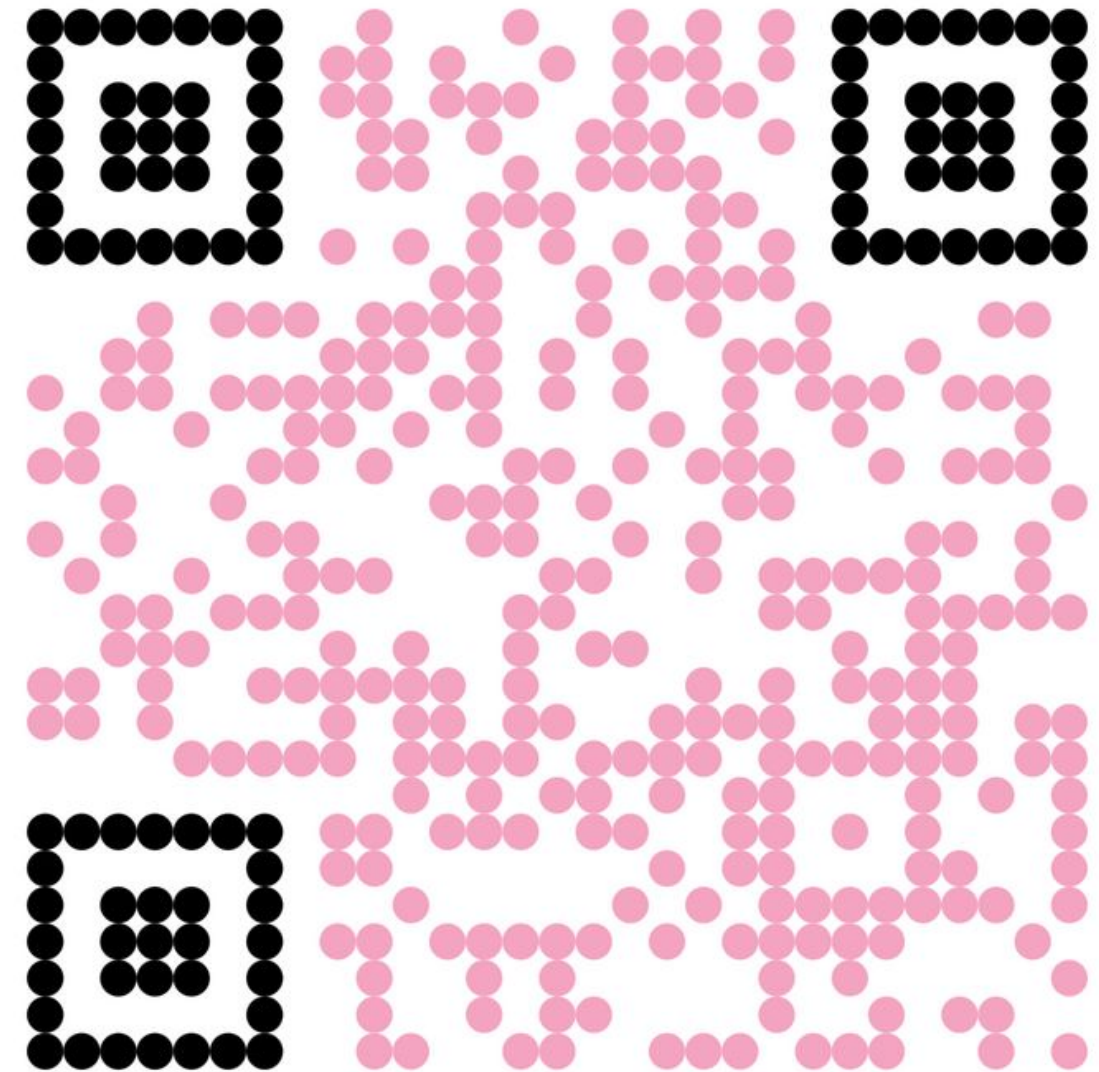
— YOGA —

Join our Workshop "Resilient I Am"

1 June 2024
13.30-15.30
Yoga at Home
Studio,
Limassol



Join my yoga circle to be more
balanced, productive, creative,
resilient, harmonious.



Why marketing is crucial for startups



- Helps validate product-market fit
- Builds brand awareness and credibility
- Drives customer acquisition and growth
- Supports fundraising efforts **(investors look into marketing & sales!)**

Marketing doesn't start with sales. It starts with identifying your market and problems/needs of your target audience.

Priorities



Your Motivation/Values FIRST

Product SECOND

Acquisition & Growth THIRD

Branding when you have a loyal audience. Without it, it's just a name.



Founder Values



Let's do a quick exercise in pairs!
8 minutes

7 WHYS to each other:

Why do you want to launch a startup/your own business?

One of the quizzes that may help you find your life values
<https://personalvalu.es>

The 16 Basic Desires of Human Nature

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
|  | Acceptance: the desire for positive self-regard |  | Order: the desire for structure and stability |
|  | Beauty: the desire for aesthetically appealing experiences |  | Physical Activity: the desire for muscle exercise |
|  | Curiosity: the desire for understanding |  | Power: the desire for influence of will |
|  | Eating: the desire to consume food |  | Saving: the desire to collect things |
|  | Family: the desire to raise children and spend time with siblings |  | Social Contact: the desire for companionship with peers |
|  | Honor: the desire for upright character |  | Status: the desire for respect based on social standing |
|  | Idealism: the desire for social justice |  | Tranquility: the desire to avoid experiencing anxiety and pain |
|  | Independence: the desire for self-reliance |  | Vengeance: the desire to confront those who frustrate or offend us |

The biggest mistake

To make a product without asking for feedback from potential customers or even understanding what the product is all about.



AHA Moment

**PEOPLE DON'T
BUY PRODUCTS
OR SERVICES.**

**THEY BUY
SOLUTIONS TO
A PROBLEM**

Product Value

- You might copy some other product.
- You might improve some other ideas.
- You might have a unique idea and truly innovative product.

Always think what value you bring and highlight it in your communications.

Sometimes people don't need innovation. They just need things to get done, quickly, easily, at an affordable cost. Help them find you!



The ideal marketing cycle

Stage I.

■ CONCEPTUALIZE SOLUTIONS OF HOW YOUR PRODUCT ADDRESSES SPECIFIC PROBLEMS

You have an idea for a productivity app designed to help freelancers manage their projects and time more effectively.

Customer Group 1: Freelancers struggling with time management and deadlines.

Customer Group 2: Freelancers needing better client communication and invoicing systems.

■ CONFIRM THE EXISTENCE OF THESE PROBLEMS

Conduct interviews with potential users.

- Speak to 20 freelancers about their biggest challenges in managing projects.
- Discover that many freelancers are using multiple tools that don't integrate well, leading to inefficiency.

■ ATTEMPT TO SELL YOUR SOLUTION

During interviews, pitch your productivity app and gauge interest.

- Pitch: "Would you be interested in an app that combines time tracking, project management, and invoicing in one place?"
- Validation: Ask if they would be willing to prepay for early access or sign a commitment to buy once it's available.
- Outcome: Secure 5 prepayments from freelancers who express strong interest.

The ideal marketing cycle

Stage I.

DEVELOP AN MVP THAT DIRECTLY SOLVES THE IDENTIFIED PROBLEM.

Create a basic version of the productivity app focusing on the most critical features.

- Features: Time tracking, project dashboards, and invoicing.
- Launch: Release the MVP to the prepaying customers for feedback.

COLLECT FEEDBACK, ENCOURAGE REPEAT PURCHASES, AND REFINE THE PRODUCT.

Gather insights from initial users to improve the app.

- Feedback: Users report that the time tracking feature is excellent, but the invoicing system needs more customization options.
- Refinement: Update the invoicing feature based on user suggestions.
- Encouragement: Offer discounts or additional features for customers who provide detailed feedback.

ACHIEVE INITIAL SALES MANUALLY TO PROVE DEMAND.

Prove demand by making direct sales efforts.

- Sales Effort: Reach out to freelancer communities, forums, and local meetups to demo the app and secure new users.
- Manual Sales: Personally onboard new users, explaining the app's benefits and features.
- Outcome: Achieve 50 initial sales through these direct efforts, proving demand for the product.

Give your eyes some rest!



The ideal marketing cycle

Stage 2.

■ TAILOR YOUR VALUE PROPOSITION FOR EACH CHANNEL.

• Facebook:

- Value Proposition: "Boost your freelance productivity! Our app helps you stay on top of deadlines and manage client communications effortlessly."
- Target Audience: Freelancers engaged in creative fields and social communities.

• YouTube:

- Value Proposition: "See how our app can transform your freelance business! Watch tutorials on project management, time tracking, and client invoicing."
- Target Audience: Visual learners and freelancers looking for practical, step-by-step guides.

■ USE THESE CHANNEL TO ATTRACT CUSTOMERS.

Facebook:

- Run targeted ads promoting the app to freelancers.
- Share user testimonials and case studies on your business page.

YouTube:

- Create and share engaging videos demonstrating how the app solves common freelance problems.
- Collaborate with influencers in the freelance space to review the app.

The ideal marketing cycle

Stage 2.

DEVELOP CLEAR LANDING PAGES, MESSAGES, AND SALES TOOLS FOR EACH CHANNEL.

- Facebook:

- Landing Page: Emphasize community and ease-of-use. Use visuals and testimonials from happy users.
- Sales Tools: Free trial offers and a chatbot for instant support.

- YouTube:

- Landing Page: Include video tutorials, feature demos, and a sign-up form for a free trial.
- Sales Tools: Engaging video content and downloadable user guides.

SECURE YOUR FIRST SALES IN EACH TARGETED CHANNEL.

- Facebook:

- Use targeted ads with a call-to-action for a free trial or demo.
- Host a live Q&A session on your Facebook page to answer questions and drive sign-ups.

- YouTube:

- Include a clear call-to-action in your video descriptions directing viewers to your landing page.
- Run YouTube ads targeting freelancers, offering a free trial.

The ideal marketing cycle

Stage 2.

CONVERT OCCASIONAL SALES INTO A STEADY STREAM BY INVESTING RESOURCES STRATEGICALLY.

Facebook:

- Regularly update your page with new testimonials, feature updates, and success stories.
- Use Facebook Insights to refine your ad targeting and improve ROI.

YouTube:

- Maintain a consistent posting schedule with new tutorials and user success stories.
- Partner with more influencers and sponsor videos to reach a broader audience.

Again, some rest!



The ideal marketing cycle

Stage 3.

■ ENSURE CUSTOMER ACQUISITION COSTS ARE LOWER THAN THE REVENUE GENERATED.

Track marketing spend and conversion rates from each channel. For example, if you're spending \$10 on Facebook ads to acquire a customer who generates \$15 in revenue, continue to optimize ad spend and targeting to maintain or improve this ratio.

■ INCREASE CUSTOMER ACQUISITION FROM EACH TESTED CHANNEL.

Scale up campaigns on proven channels. For instance, if Youtube ads have a high conversion rate, increase your budget and refine your ad targeting to reach more freelancers. Use A/B testing to continuously improve ad performance.

■ GROW INTO NEW CHANNELS WITHOUT COMPROMISING EFFICIENCY.

Test new channels like Instagram or Reddit ads with small budgets initially. Measure CAC and conversion rates closely. Once a new channel proves profitable, gradually increase investment.

■ GROW INTO NEW CHANNELS WITHOUT COMPROMISING EFFICIENCY.

Add features like advanced project analytics, integrated invoicing, or premium support. Promote these features through in-app notifications, email campaigns, and landing pages tailored to highlight their value. Offer free trials or discounted upgrades to encourage adoption.

The ideal marketing cycle

Stage 4 which NEVER ENDS.

- Focus on retaining customers and measuring their satisfaction FROM THE START!
- Continuously improve your product based on customer feedback.
- Use marketing metrics to gauge your product's success.



Share in the chat what will make your clients keep on using your product

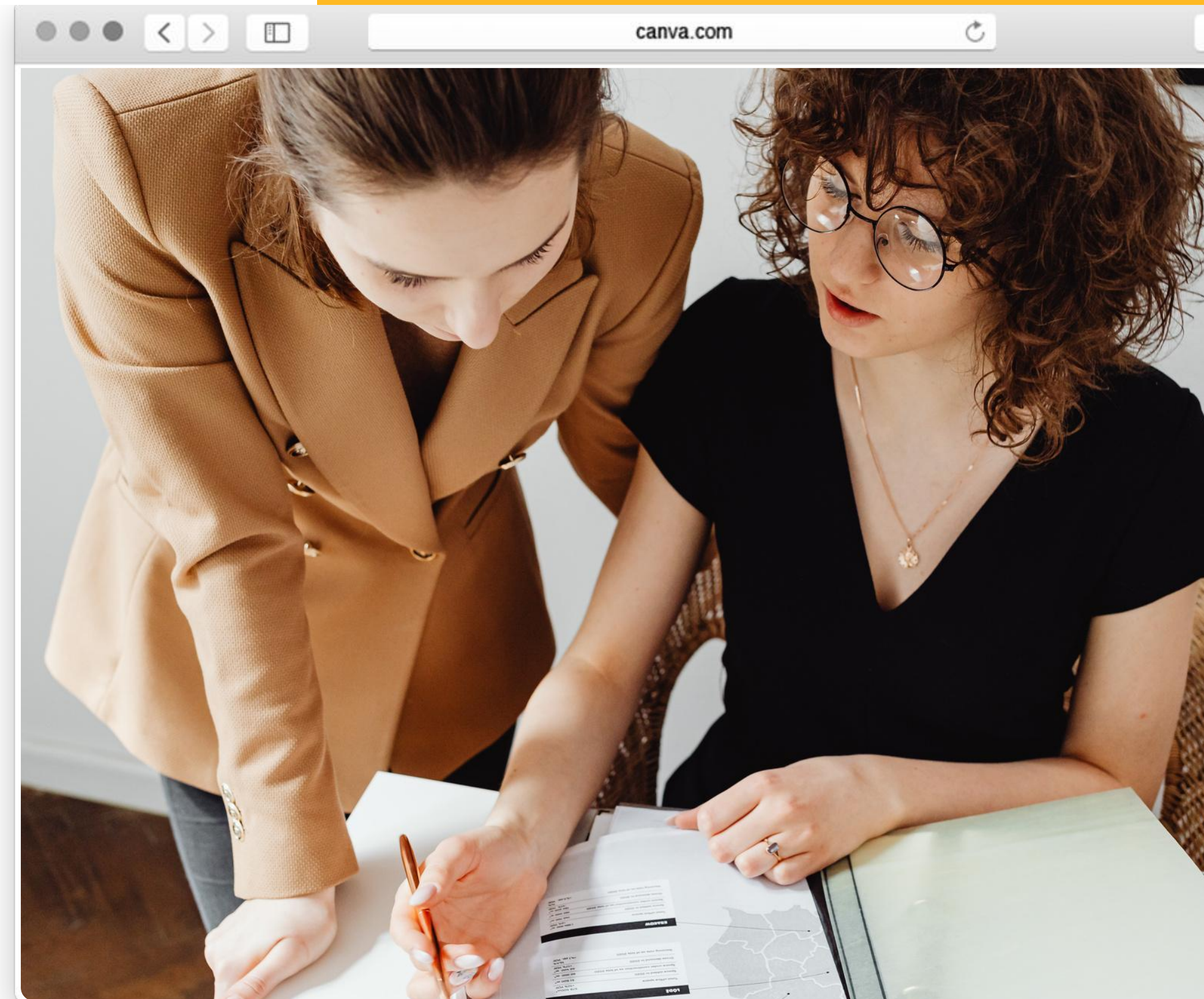
Random Acts of Marketing

- **Selecting channels randomly from a checklist without a strategy.**
- **Equally distributing efforts across various marketing channels simply because everybody's doing it.**
- **Initiating channel campaigns without the necessary content, messaging, or creative assets to support them effectively.**
- **Choosing channels without considering how they cover the marketing funnel or target specific segments.**
- **Attempting to utilize every possible channel, resulting in insufficient time and resources to achieve meaningful impact in any one area.**

“Strategy without tactics is the slowest route to victory. Tactics without strategy is the noise before defeat.”

Sun Tzu

Many startups begin with tactics for the sake of doing something. It's better than doing NOTHING! But worse than strategizing.



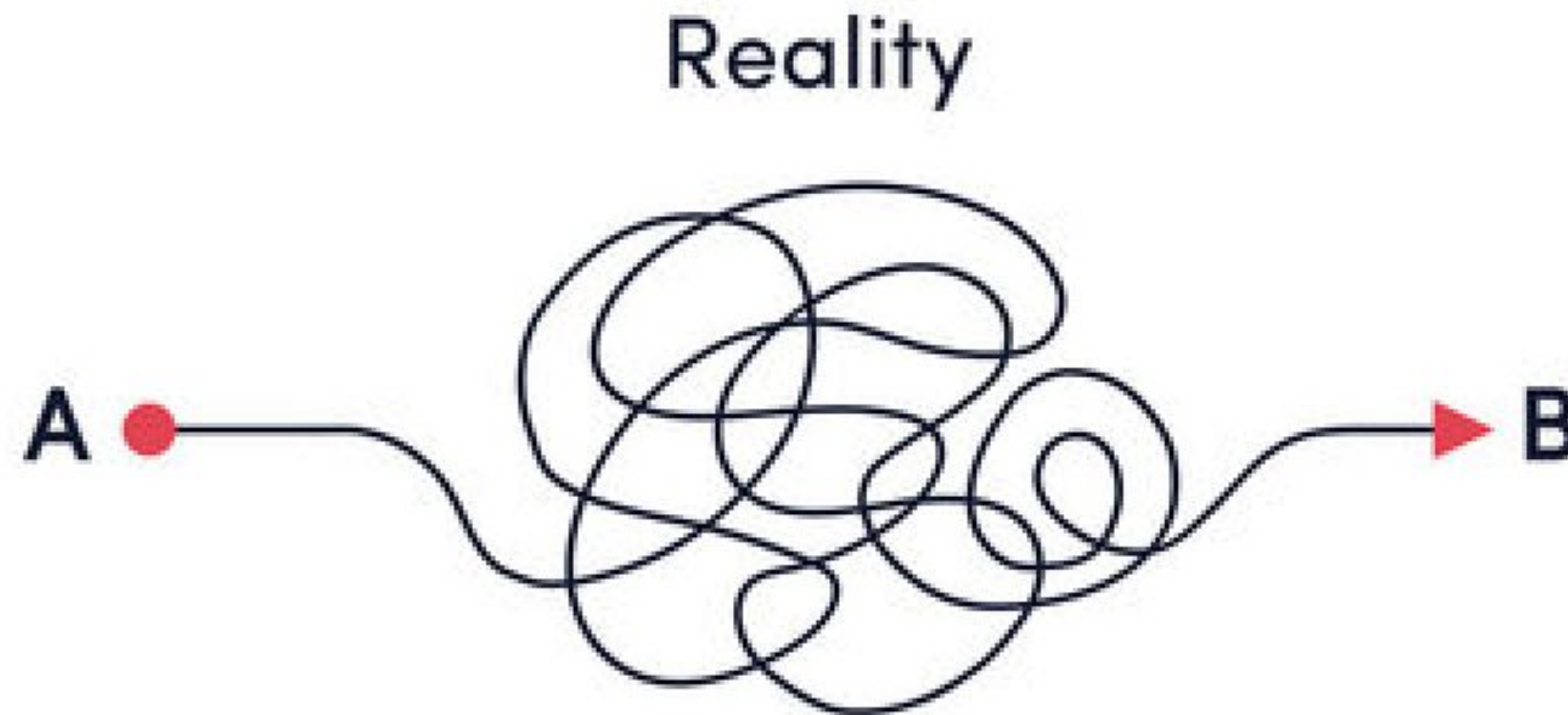
Strategy is...

A general (non-detailed) plan for the company's utilization of core competencies and resources to achieve the current objectives.



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A general (non-detailed) plan for the company's utilization of core competencies and resources to achieve the current objectives.



Go-to-Market Strategy

a comprehensive plan that outlines how a startup will launch its product or service into the market to reach its target customers effectively and achieve competitive advantage. It involves:

- identifying the target audience (WHO?),**
- defining the value proposition (WHAT?),**
- choosing the right marketing and sales channels (WHERE?),**
- detailing the steps necessary to achieve market penetration, customer acquisition, and growth. (HOW?)**

**Lots of
research
first!**



Target market analysis



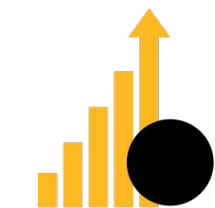
Target segment analysis



SWOT analysis



Competitive analysis



Business model and funnel

Target market analysis



Total addressable market:

Total freelancers globally: 100 mln

Average annual subscription fee: \$200

TAM: \$20 bln

Serviceable addressable market:

Freelancers in Targeted Regions(North America, Europe): 40 mln

Adjusted fee: \$300 (higher willingness to pay in these regions)

SAM: \$12 bln

Serviceable obtainable market:

Market position and competition analysis: you can capture 5% of the SAM

SOM: \$600 mln

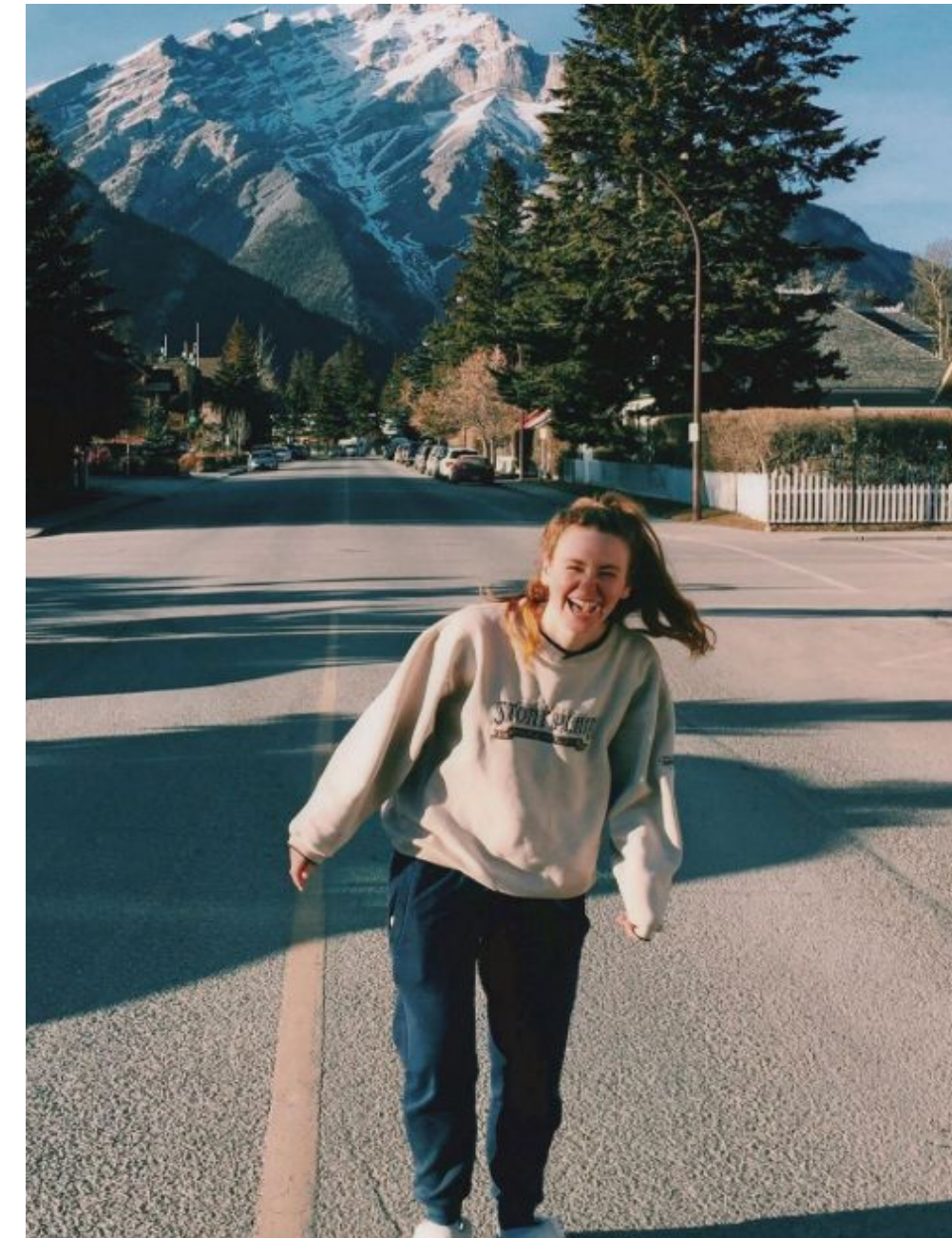
Target segment analysis



Your best-fit target customers who care a lot about your unique value.

Target market: individuals who work independently, offering their skills and services to clients on a project basis.

Target segment: digital nomads who embrace a location-independent lifestyle, often traveling while working. Pain Points: seamless project management, communication across different time zones, and organization while traveling. Values apps that integrate with travel planning and time zone management features.



Click on the picture to download the Buyer Persona template with an example.
Copy and use!

SWOT analysis



Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Innovative Concept: The app integrates AI-driven time-tracking features that analyze freelancers' work patterns to optimize productivity and provide personalized recommendations for improving efficiency.</p> <p>Entrepreneurial Spirit: The founder has a background in freelancing and firsthand experience with the challenges of managing multiple projects, which fuels their passion and commitment to developing a solution that addresses freelancers' pain points effectively.</p> <p>Agility and Flexibility: The startup adopts an agile development methodology, allowing for rapid iterations and continuous improvement based on user feedback obtained through beta testing and early access programs.</p> <p>Lean Operations: By outsourcing non-core functions such as customer support and leveraging cloud-based infrastructure, the startup minimizes overhead costs and focuses resources on product development and marketing initiatives.</p> <p>Network and Connections: The founder taps into their network of freelance contacts, industry influencers, and startup communities to recruit beta testers, secure partnerships with freelance platforms, and gain visibility within the target market.</p>	<p>Limited Resources: Bootstrapping the startup with personal savings and a small seed funding round restricts the budget for hiring additional developers and conducting extensive marketing campaigns to promote the app's launch.</p> <p>Lack of Brand Recognition: Competing against established productivity apps with recognizable brands and loyal user bases poses a challenge in gaining traction and credibility among freelancers who are already familiar with existing solutions.</p> <p>Development Challenges: Integrating third-party APIs for seamless integration with popular freelance platforms and ensuring compatibility across multiple devices and operating systems require technical expertise and may encounter delays during implementation.</p> <p>Market Inexperience: Despite the founder's domain knowledge in freelancing, navigating the competitive landscape of productivity software and understanding shifting user preferences demand ongoing market research and strategic adaptation to emerging trends.</p> <p>Risk of Failure: The inherent uncertainty of startup ventures and the possibility of unforeseen setbacks, such as technical glitches, negative user feedback, or market saturation, present risks to the startup's viability and long-term success.</p>
Opportunities	Threats
<p>Untapped Market Potential: With an estimated 59 million freelancers in the US alone and a projected global workforce shift towards independent work, there is a sizable and growing market for productivity tools tailored to freelancers' needs.</p> <p>Early Mover Advantage: Launching the app ahead of competitors allows the startup to establish brand recognition, secure a loyal user base, and set industry standards for innovation and user experience in the productivity app market.</p> <p>Strategic Partnerships: Partnering with freelance platforms such as Upwork and Fiverr to offer exclusive discounts or bundled services to their users can drive user acquisition and generate recurring revenue through referral agreements or revenue-sharing arrangements.</p> <p>Scalability: Implementing a subscription-based pricing model with tiered plans that cater to freelancers' varying needs and budgets enables the startup to scale revenue streams and expand its user base globally through targeted marketing campaigns and localization efforts.</p> <p>Market Disruption: Leveraging emerging technologies such as blockchain for transparent payment processing and decentralized project management features can differentiate the app from competitors and disrupt traditional freelance marketplaces with more equitable and efficient solutions.</p>	<p>Competitive Pressure: Established productivity apps like Trello and Asana offer similar project management features and have larger marketing budgets and user bases, posing a threat to the startup's market penetration and user acquisition efforts.</p> <p>Market Saturation: A crowded marketplace with an abundance of productivity apps targeting freelancers makes it challenging for the startup to differentiate its offering and gain visibility among potential users inundated with competing options.</p> <p>Technological Disruption: Rapid advancements in AI and machine learning technologies may render the startup's initial features obsolete or insufficiently innovative, necessitating ongoing investment in R&D to stay competitive and meet evolving user expectations.</p> <p>Regulatory Challenges: Compliance with data privacy regulations such as GDPR and CCPA imposes legal and operational burdens on the startup, requiring robust data protection measures and transparent user consent mechanisms to mitigate regulatory risks and safeguard user trust.</p> <p>Economic Uncertainty: Economic downturns or changes in freelancer income levels due to factors like changes in client demand or regulatory changes can impact freelancers' willingness to invest in productivity tools, affecting the startup's revenue projections and growth trajectory.</p>

Let's practice!
10 minutes

[Copy the template and do your own SWOT analysis](#)

Competitive analysis



Competitive Products Research ☆ 📁 ☁

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2	Product	Website	Link on store	Company	GEOs	Target Audience(s)
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[Copy the template and do your own competitor research](#)

Business model



Freemium Model

Free Basic Version:

- **Features:** Basic project management (limited projects), time tracking (limited entries), and basic invoicing (limited invoices per month).

Paid Premium Version (Subscription Plans):

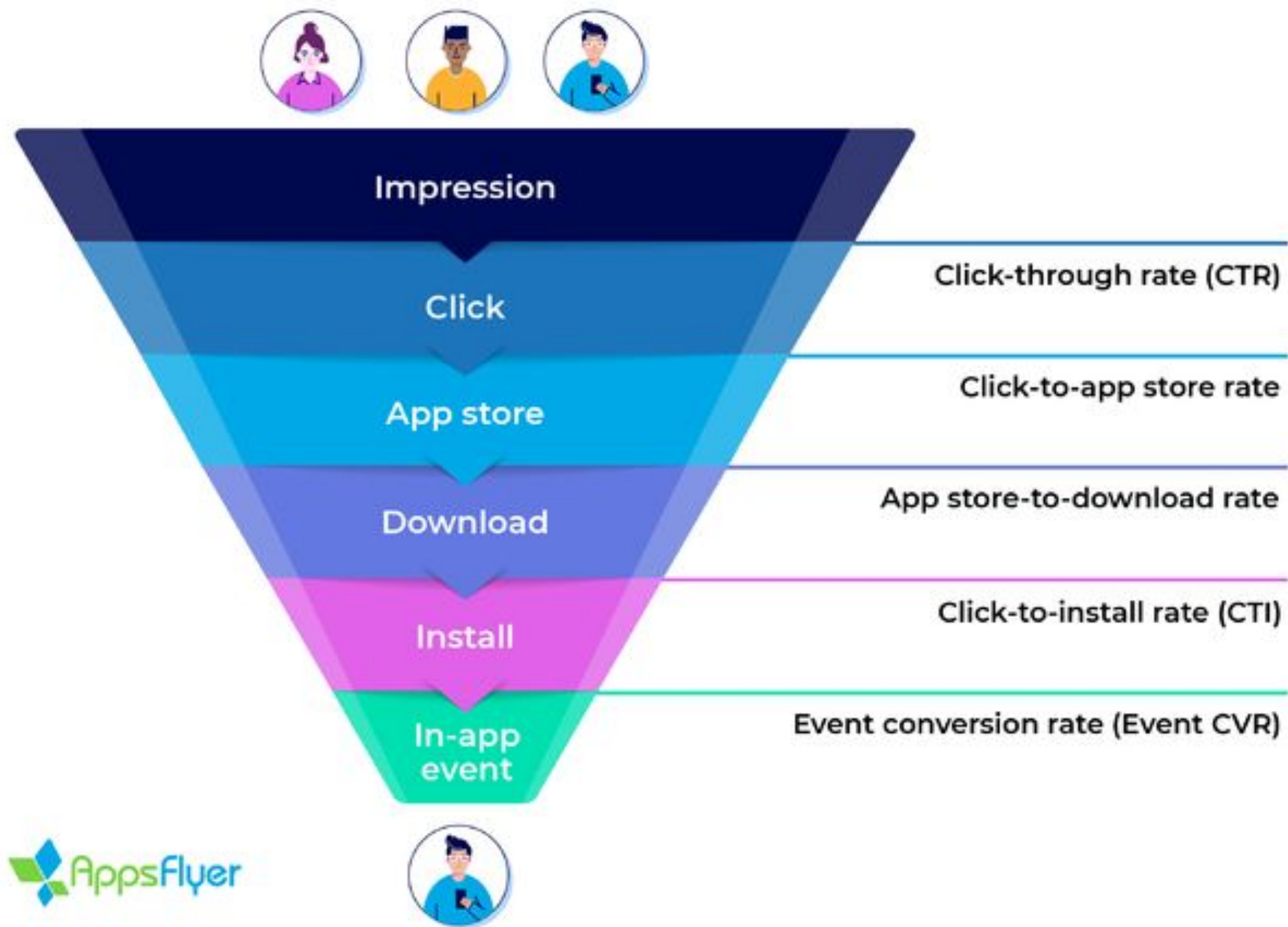
- **Price:** \$9.99 per month.
- **Features:** Unlimited projects, advanced time tracking (with reporting and insights), unlimited invoicing, custom templates, and priority customer support.

Annual Subscription:

- **Price:** \$99 per year (equivalent to \$8.25 per month).
- **Features:** Same as monthly subscription, with a discounted rate for annual commitment.

Early Adopter Discount:

- **Offer:** 20% discount on the annual subscription for the first 100 users who sign up within the first month of launch.



Funnel

STEP-BY-STEP CUSTOMER JOURNEY, FROM ATTRACTING ATTENTION WITH A MESSAGE TO PURCHASING A PRODUCT OR SERVICE/SUBSCRIPTION, OR COMPLETING ANOTHER CONVERSION.

Business goals



Specific: Develop and launch a productivity app for freelancers within 9 months, offering advanced time tracking with reporting, unlimited invoicing, and priority customer support.

Measurable: Achieve 50K app downloads within the first 6 months after launch, with an average rating of 4.5 stars or higher on app stores.

Achievable: Utilize existing development resources and expertise to build a robust app with the specified features. Secure partnerships with freelance communities for promotional support.

Relevant: Address the growing demand for productivity tools tailored to freelancers.

Time-bound: Complete app development, testing, and launch within 9 months. Implement a marketing strategy to drive app downloads and user engagement.

Let's practice

15 minutes

7 min. Create your business goals for the period through May 31st 2015.

8 min. Validate your goals as to the example in pairs 4 minutes each.



■ Marketing metrics

- Adoption Rate **(AR)**: % of acquired users keep using your product
- Customer Acquisition Cost **(CAC)** less than Customer Lifetime Value **(LTV)**
- **Churn Rate** (% of customers who stop using the product) vs **Retention Rate**
- Monthly Recurring Revenue **(MRR)** or Annual Recurring Revenue **(ARR)**: Revenue from fees each month/year
- Daily or Monthly Active Users **(DAU, MAU)**
- Steady **growth** of installs, signups, user base, profits, etc.

"What investors and the C Suite really want to know is whether your marketing is growing the company in a profitable way."

Tony Mastri, MARION Integrated Marketing

Ok, now!

How about free organic growth?



Well, not free actually...

Content Marketing:

- **Blog Posts**

Productivity tips, project management, time tracking, and freelancing best practices.

How to Use: Optimize for SEO with relevant keywords to attract freelancers searching for productivity solutions. Share posts on social media and in relevant online communities.

- **Guest Blogging**

Contribute guest posts to popular freelance and productivity blogs.

How to Use: Include a backlink to your app's website to drive traffic and improve SEO.

Good! Continue

Digital PR & listings:

- Publications

Productivity tips, project management, time tracking, and freelancing best practices.

How to Use: Negotiate with relevant platforms. Optimize for SEO with relevant keywords to attract freelancers searching for productivity solutions. Share posts on social media and in relevant online communities.

- Product Listings

List your app on popular startup and productivity tool review sites.

How to Use: Encourage satisfied users to leave positive reviews on App Store and Google Play and ratings to boost visibility and credibility.

What else?

Social Media Marketing:

- LinkedIn

Share articles, updates, and success stories.

How to Use: Engage with freelancer groups, participate in discussions, and post regularly to build a professional presence.

- Twitter

Post short tips, updates, and links to your content.

How to Use: Use relevant hashtags (e.g., #freelance, #productivity) and participate in Twitter chats related to freelancing.

- Facebook

Create a Facebook page and join freelancer groups.

How to Use: Share content, interact with followers, and post updates about app features and user success stories.

Tell me more

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) or ASO:

Optimize your store app page or website/blog content with relevant keywords, meta descriptions, images, tags, etc.

How to Use: Ensure your mobile app and website follow the best practices and rules for high ranking. Regularly update content to keep it fresh and relevant.

- **Backlink Building**

Get featured on industry websites, directories, listings, and blogs.

How to Use: Reach out to influencers and bloggers for reviews and mentions, focusing on high-authority sites. It can be perfectly combined with Digital PR.

Sounds complicated. Next?

Email Marketing:

- Newsletter

Send regular newsletters with tips, updates, and exclusive offers.

How to Use: Build an email list through your website, blog, and social media channels. Offer incentives like free trials or eBooks to encourage sign-ups.

- Drip Campaigns

Create automated email sequences to nurture leads.

How to Use: Segment your audience and tailor the content based on their engagement and interests.

Sounds boring. Smth creative?

Community Engagement:

- Online Communities and Forums

Participate in relevant forums and online communities such as Reddit, Quora, and freelance platforms.

How to Use: Answer questions, provide value, and subtly mention your app where appropriate.

- Webinars and Workshops

Host free webinars and online workshops on productivity and project management for freelancers.

How to Use: Promote these events through your content marketing and social media channels, and collect attendee emails for follow-up.

Hey, how about influencers?

Partnerships and Collaborations:

- **Influencer Collaborations**

Partner with influencers in the freelancing and productivity niches.

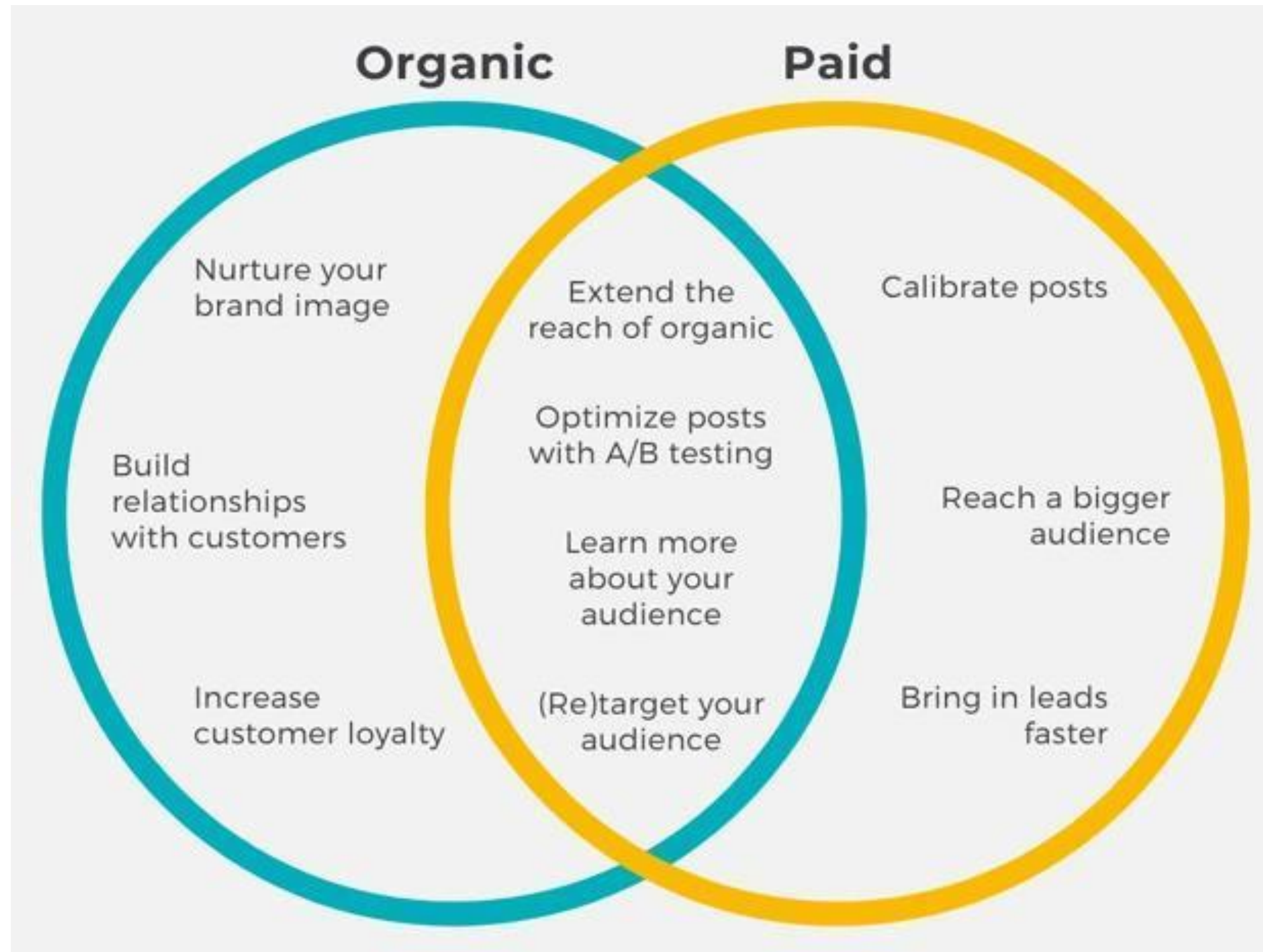
How to Use: Offer them free access to your app in exchange for reviews and social media mentions. In many cases you'll need to pay.

- **Affiliate Programs**

Create an affiliate program to encourage users and partners to promote your app.

How to Use: Provide affiliates with marketing materials and track their referrals.

Organic vs Paid



**Don't choose.
Blend!**

What marketing channels to use?

It depends on your product, market, segments, etc

The most scalable channels with high risk:

- Paid acquisition
- SEO
- Virality (Word of Mouth)
- Conversion Optimization
- Sales
- Partnerships (maybe)

Unscalable channels with low risk:

- Getting your tribe to use the product
- Posting among your local community
- Guest writing on niche blogs
- Cold-emailing potential users and influencers
- Engaging with potential users over forums or social media
- Partnering with a blogger/YouTuber
- Getting covered in niche press outlets, like the tech press

Let's practice

10 minutes

■ WHAT?

What do you actually do?
Why is your product needed? What value does it bring? Let's craft a value proposition.

■ WHO?

Who are you selling your product to? Reflect it in your positioning.

■ WHERE?

Where does your audience, your potential customers, locate?
Through what channels can you reach them?

■ HOW?

What specific actions will you take in your marketing channels and how?

[Copy this file](#) and complete it for each marketing channel. Now look at your business goals again and create a marketing plan of what you've written but with the goals, timelines and resources indicated for each channel. **Make sure your marketing goals meet your business goals!**

Free or low-cost tools to use

1. **Google Search Console** to measure organic success and website health
2. **Google Analytics** to measure your overall marketing success
3. **Google Forms or Typeform** for surveys
3. **ChatGPT** for generating texts
4. **Midjourney** for generating images
5. **Selzy or MailChimp** for email marketing
6. **Canva** for working on graphic design
7. **Trello** for task management
8. **Miro** for brainstorming ideas and customer journey mapping
9. **Youtube or Zoom** for webinars and onboarding videos
10. **Notion** for working with information (wiki, check lists, reports, etc.)

I haven't included any links to the tools on purpose, so that you can realize when you search for them on Google by their brand name, you drive brand organic traffic to their website. This is the best outcome when your brand is known, referred to, and searched for by warm leads, who are more likely to buy. 😊



Let's connect!

FREE GROWTH TRACKING SESSIONS

ONLY FOR FEMME FUTURE PARTICIPANTS

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■ **LINKEDIN**

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/gala-grigureva/>

■ **TELEGRAM**

<https://t.me/galagrigureva>