

Actions startups
must get right to
avoid losing time,
money, and
market position



13 Strategic Marketing Imperatives Every Startup Must Get Right

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With thanks to my clients and the entrepreneurs, investors, and subject matter experts who contributed their insights.



But first, a bit about you...





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A bit about me...

- Strategist
- Global marketing exec
- Customer insights professional
- Iconic brand building
- 25+ years experience
 - Cornell: Johnson School Advisory Board
 - UW: Foster School of Business Executive Education Advisory Board
 - Guest lecturer
 - Executives in Residence consulting
 - Business plan competition judging
- Fernow Consulting (2000)
 - Help companies innovate more successfully
 - Startups
 - Fortune 500 enterprises
 - Visionary non-profits

Intrapreneur Roles



PEPSICO



NORDSTROM

Sample Clients



Medify
When you need to know

...T...**Mobile**...



Ivytalk

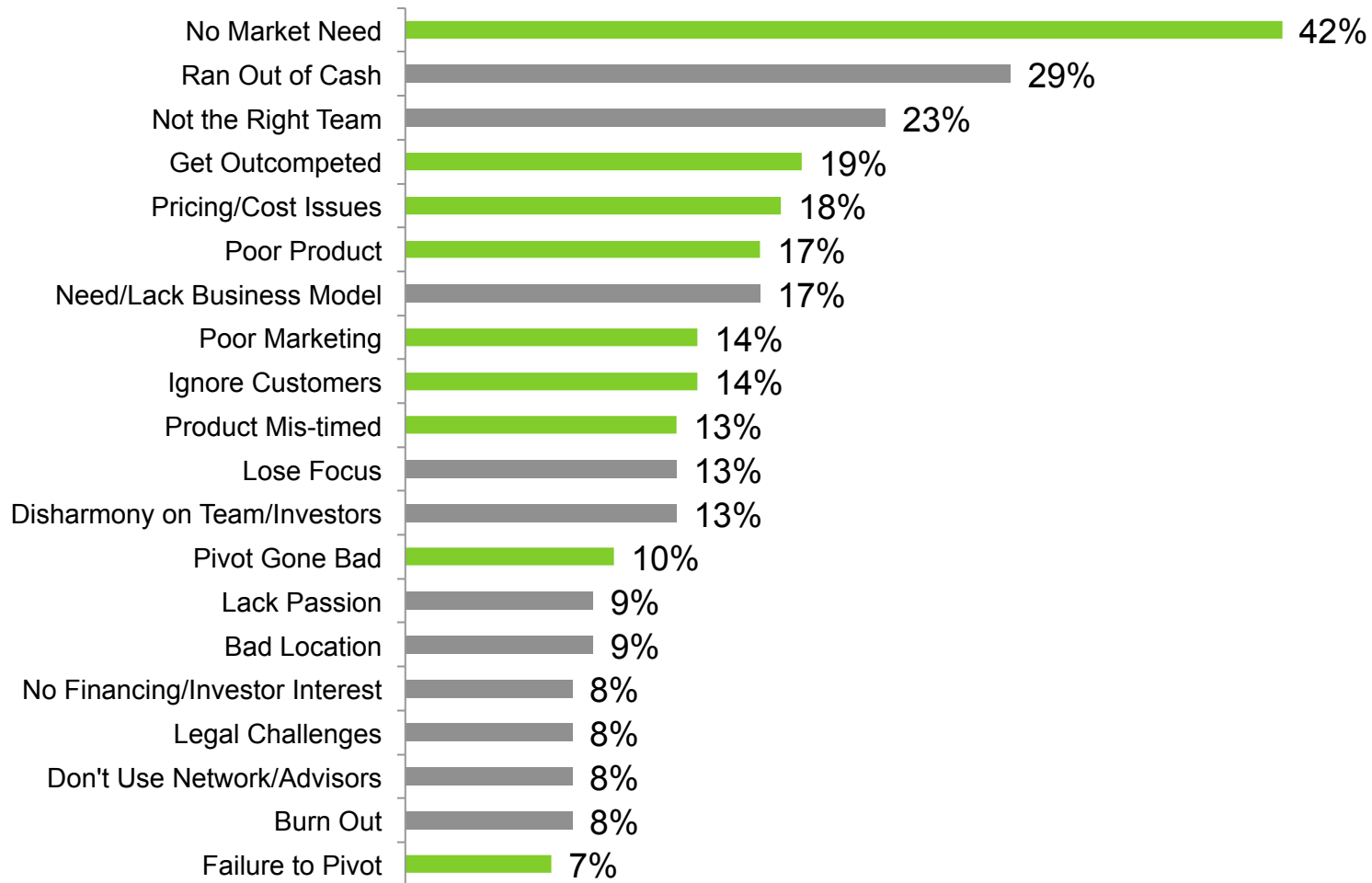


**KING
COUNTY
LIBRARY
SYSTEM**





Marketing can make or break your startup's success





What exactly *is* marketing?





1. Validate the market need

Validate the **market need** exists, and sharpen your knowledge of the opportunity



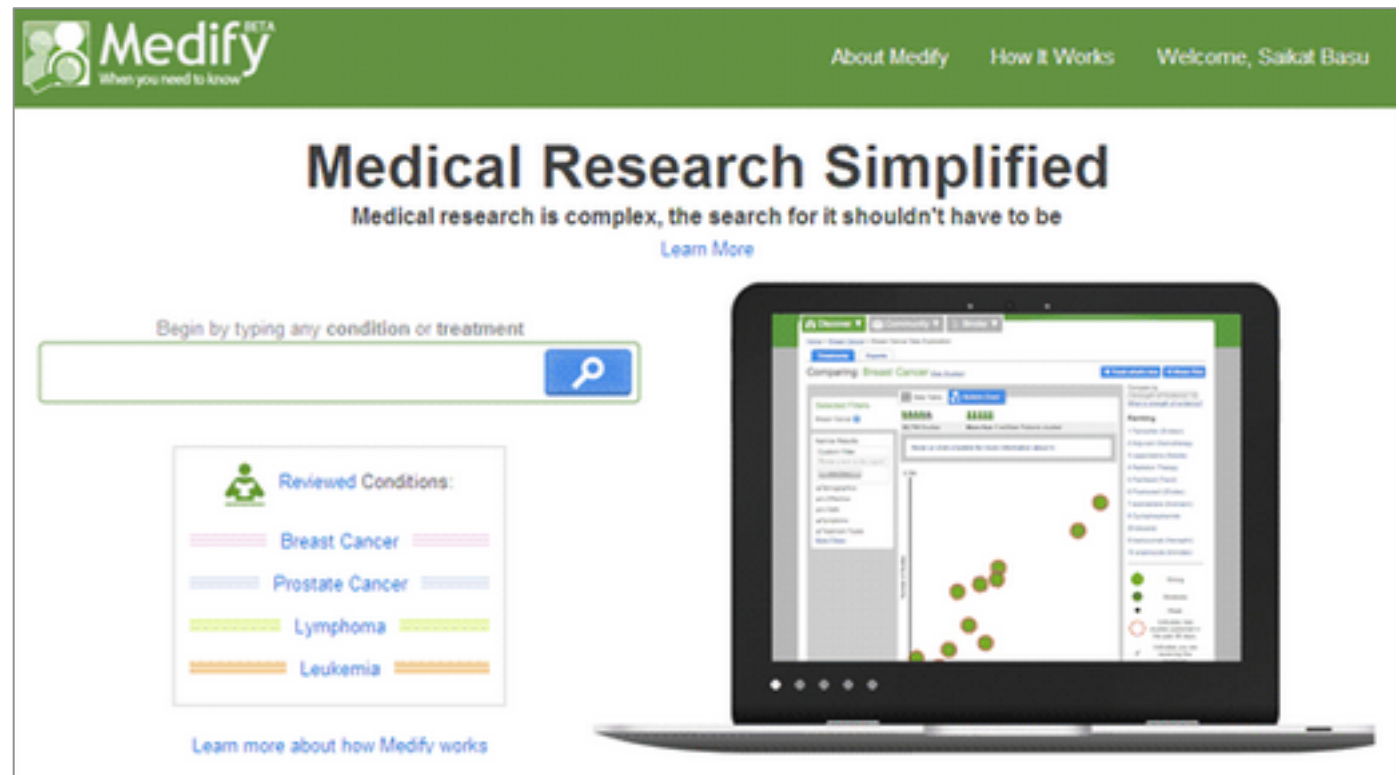


2. Understand your eco-system

Identify and talk to...

- **Consumer segments**
- **Channels**
- **Strategic partners**

Understand their
needs and purchase
process



How best to activate
network effects?

Go to market strategy?

- **B2B**
- **B2B2C**
- **B2C**

Prioritize...

- **Target customers**
- **Buyers**



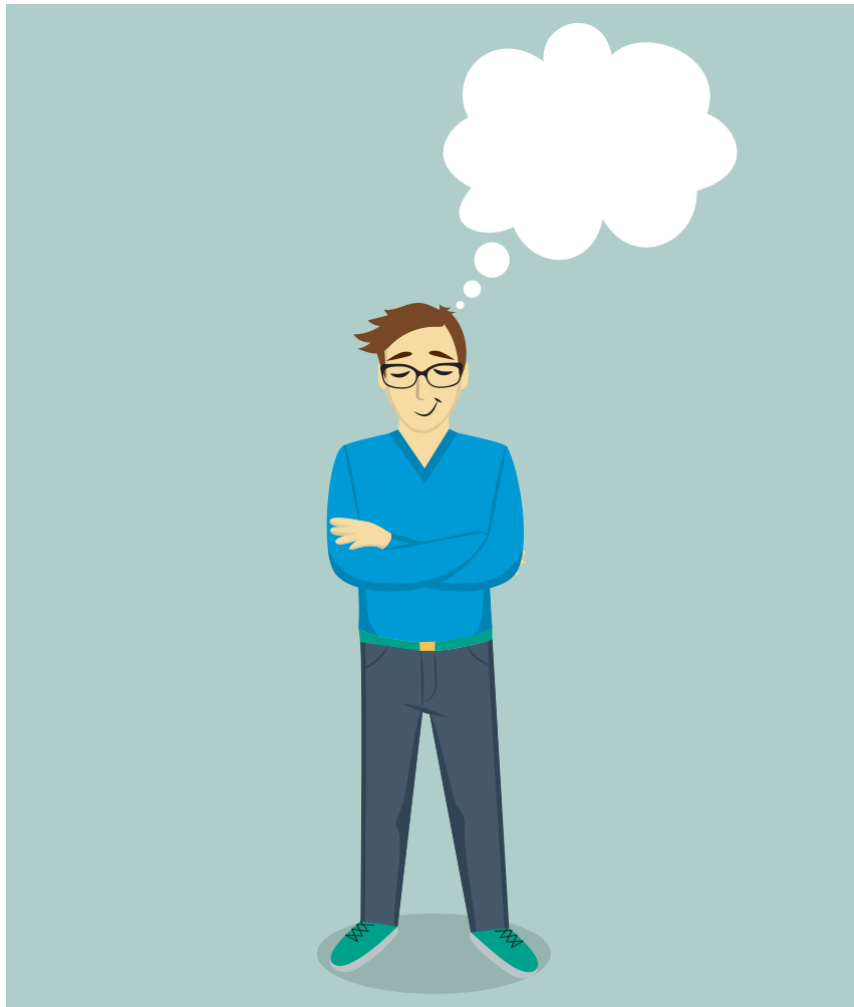
13 Strategic Imperatives for Startups



1. Market need
2. Ecosystem



3. Develop your **positioning**



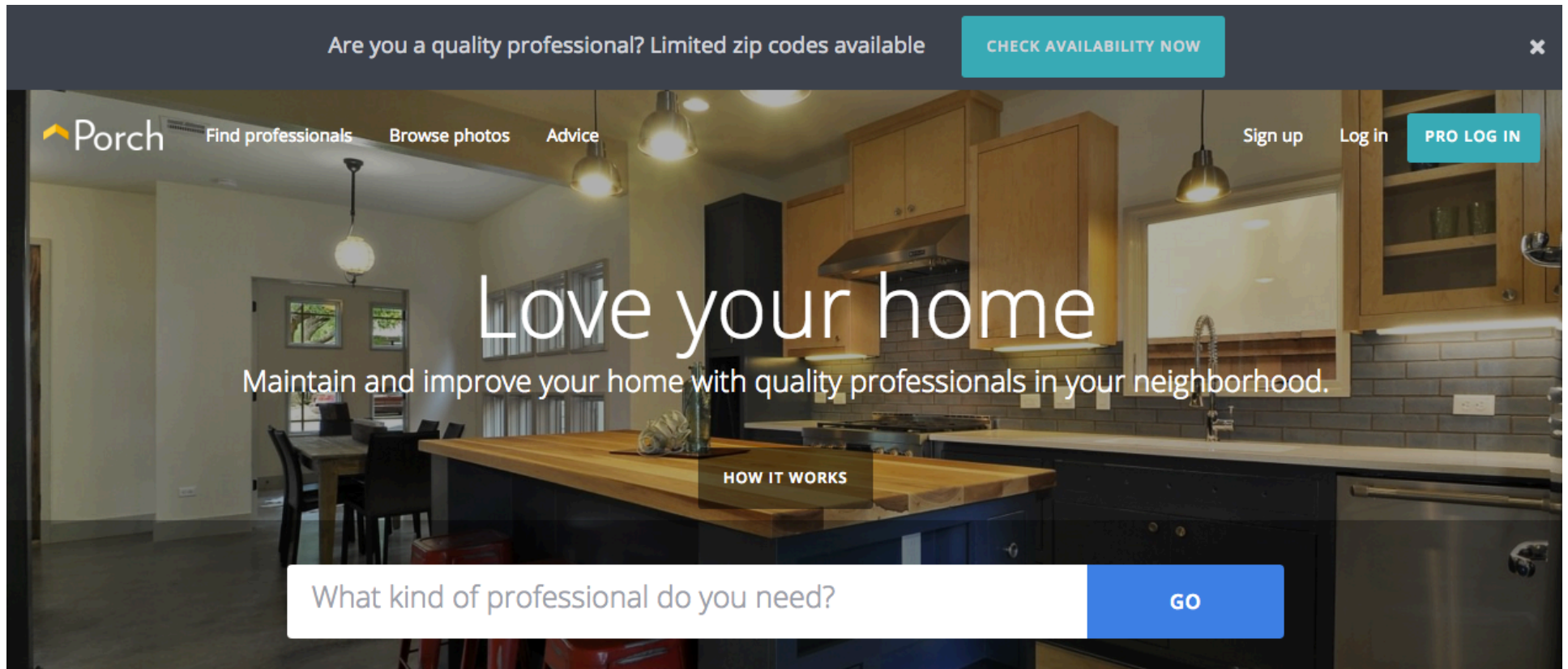
How do you want your target audience to **think and feel** about your brand?

- Target
- Their unmet need
- Category / frame of reference
- Benefits
- Reasons why *only you* deliver
- Ultimate benefit

Guides everything you do



4. Develop your brand identity



Company / product brand names, logos, and brand look, tone and feel



5. Define the end-to-end **customer experience**

Consider all touch points

What will make it...

- Memorable
- Complete
- Disruptive

Identify **growth and profitability levers**

What must you do superbly well to...

- Acquire customers
- Earn their loyalty
- Build a scalable, sustainable business

You've got to start with the customer experience and work back toward the technology – not the other way around.

Steve Jobs





6. Inform the **minimum viable product**

Work with your technical team to help inform the **minimum viable product** – the “basic” version from which you will learn and develop a stronger product-market solution





7. Secure the intellectual property



Techstars helps companies - do more faster™

Logo and brand trademarks, URL, taglines, etc.



13 Strategic Imperatives for Startups



- | | |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Market need | 3. Positioning |
| 2. Ecosystem | 4. Brand Identity |
| | 5. Experience |
| | 6. Minimum viable product |
| | 7. Intellectual property |



8. Develop a high performance team

What types of marketing tasks will you need performed?

What talent do you need to deliver it?





9. Bring on the right customers

Beta customers

who you can get
early traction with
and learn from

**“Most valuable
customers”** who
are highly
profitable or
influential





10. Marketing strategy and go-to-market plan

Marketing strategy

- Product
- Price
- Place / channels
- Promotion decisions

Go-to-market plan

- Activities needed to launch and sustain the business
- Assigns responsibilities and budget

Include your **learning agenda**, **KPIs**, and **contingency plans** for likely competitive response and performance +/- forecast



11. **Execute** the go-to-market plan

Deliver marketing activities in your plan

Track KPIs,
diagnose +/-
performance gaps
and adjust





13 Strategic Imperatives for Startups



1. Market need

2. Ecosystem

3. Positioning

4. Brand Identity

5. Experience

6. Minimum viable product

7. Intellectual property

8. Team

9. Customers

10. Strategy and go-to-market plan

11. Execute



Revisit and refine
assumptions –
repeatedly!





13. Plan for **expansion**



Consider which investments will yield the greatest returns



13 Strategic Imperatives for Startups



- | | | | |
|----------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Market need | 3. Positioning | 8. Team | 11. Research |
| 2. Ecosystem | 4. Brand Identity | 9. Customers | 12. Expansion plan |
| | 5. Experience | 10. Strategy and go-to-market plan | |
| | 6. Minimum viable product | 11. Execute | |
| | 7. Intellectual property | | |

Which are most important for your particular situation?



Questions?

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