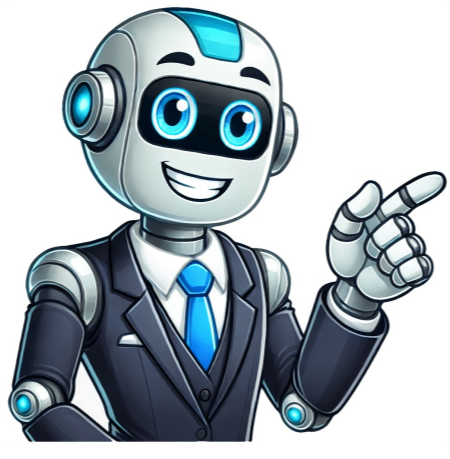


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your website to build trust with potential buyers. Make sure to strategically place these testimonials and reviews where potential customers will see them during their decision-making process. 8. Offer a free or trial version of your product. One of the best ways to get your startup out there is to offer some kind of version of your product/service for free — and it's worked for many businesses already. Canva, Dropbox, Zapier, and HubSpot are all high-profile tech companies offering a free/trial version of their product or service to let people try before buying (or upgrading). As people use them and realize how great these products are, they feel compelled to buy the full, "unlimited" version for all the bells and whistles. Great, right? But getting people to use your product — and inherently talking about how good it is as a result — is all about lowering the customer's acquisition costs. What many businesses do with a freemium model is offer current trial users a discount on the full price of the software. This is significantly more appealing than paying the full price and can potentially convert more leads into paying customers very, very quickly. Also, for those who don't convert to paying customers with this offer, it enables you to understand what features or parts of your service are lacking. You can: Ask for feedback from trial users who didn't convert to understand the pain points. Make targeted changes based on user feedback and behavior patterns. Roll out improvements strategically to test their impact on conversion. Track which features drive the most upgrades to inform product development. For maximum effect, cross-reference what you offer against the main issues your buyer personas have in relation to technology like yours. Consider adding features to your product/service to address these problems (where possible). Maybe produce a roadmap and show people what they'll be getting. Transparency is a great way to increase users. Lastly, bear in mind that this approach does come with the risk that people might not want to upgrade to the full version. That said, be as clear as you can with what users can get from the full version and highlight how valuable it can be for them. Keep your coolest features under wraps! 5 Startup Marketing Tactics to Explore in 2025 Marketing trends come and go, but 2025 is showing us which tactics drive results for early-stage companies. These five approaches are gaining significant traction because they focus on efficient growth, helping startups build momentum without requiring massive budgets or large teams. Build a niche community. I'm part of several thriving startup tool communities, and Buffer's Discord channel stands out as a prime example. They've created a space where users share social media strategies, troubleshoot problems, and connect with other marketers. Source What makes these communities work isn't size — it's relevance. On Slack, Reddit, or Discord, the most engaging groups focus on solving specific problems. Product Hunt runs a focused Slack community for makers, while Notion's Reddit community shares templates and workflows that help users get more value from the tool. Choose the right platform for your audience. Slack works well for professional communities that need real-time interaction, while Reddit is better for long-form discussions and knowledge sharing. Pro tip: Start your community with just 10-20 highly engaged members. Give them exclusive access to your product updates and make them feel like true insiders. These early members will set the tone and help attract others. Use generative AI to speed up your workflow. Generative AI can help startups punch above their weight class when it comes to content production and research. I use it to brainstorm content angles, summarize market research, and turn long-form content into social posts. But there's a catch: AI works best as a strategic assistant, not a replacement for human insight. I use AI to create a custom research workflow. Experimenting with different tools like Claude, ChatGPT, and Perplexity helped me pinpoint the strengths of each and create a system that improves my writing. You can also use tools like HubSpot's Breeze platform for an AI assistant that supports your entire customer platform. Use AI to suggest multiple headline variations. Identify repetitive tasks where AI can save you time while you focus on strategy and maintaining your brand's unique voice. Pro tip: Create a "prompt library" in a simple doc where you save your most effective AI prompts. Group them by task type (research, headlines, content repurposing) so you can quickly reuse what works. Build a personal brand on LinkedIn or Instagram. I watch founders get this wrong all the time; they hide behind their company logo instead of showing up as themselves. Yet some of my favorite startup tools caught my attention because I followed their founders' journeys on LinkedIn or Instagram first. Take Marie Martens from the form tool Tally. Her open posts about building in public and sharing revenue numbers built an audience — before the product took off. Building your brand doesn't mean becoming an influencer. Share your authentic building journey, what you're learning, and the problems you're solving. Use HubSpot's Social Media Management tool to schedule and track engagement on your posts. When you do this consistently, you create momentum for your product. Pro tip: Block 30 minutes every Monday to batch-write three personal posts about your startup journey. Focus on specific lessons learned rather than generic advice — share the exact process, numbers, or tools that moved the needle. Create short-form video content that converts. I've been putting off creating short-form video content because I thought I needed fancy equipment and editing skills. Every time I open TikTok or LinkedIn, I see competitors getting massive engagement with simple videos shot on their phones. I'm finally planning to experiment with video this quarter, starting small with 60-second tutorials and behind-the-scenes glimpses of my work process. I plan to use HubSpot's Marketing Analytics to track which social channels drive the most engagement and conversions from my videos. My research into successful B2B videos shows three principles worth following: Keep videos under 90 seconds, open with the main takeaway, and include a clear next step for viewers. While I can't share personal results yet, I'm convinced enough by other founders' success stories to make video a priority. Sometimes, we have to push past our comfort zone to find marketing channels that work. Pro tip: Record your first 10 videos without posting them. This practice helps you find your natural style and confidence before going live. Plus, you'll have a content bank ready when you start posting consistently. Use no-code tools to validate marketing experiments I used to wait weeks for developer resources before testing new marketing ideas. But, after discovering no-code tools, I'm able to validate concepts in hours instead of months. Last month, I wanted to test if my audience would sign up for a weekly newsletter about startup marketing metrics. Instead of building a full landing page, I used HubSpot's Landing Page Builder to create a simple signup form in 30 minutes. After driving some traffic to it with LinkedIn posts, I learned that open rates for "marketing metrics" resonated more than "growth tips" — a valuable insight before I invested in a full content strategy. My go-to stack for quick marketing tests includes Webflow for landing pages, Zapier for connecting tools, and Airtable for tracking results. The best part? Most of these tools have free plans that are perfect for early validation. When an experiment works, I can either keep using the no-code version or build a more robust solution. Pro tip: Before building anything, create a simple spreadsheet with three columns: "Assumption to Test," "Success Metric," and "Minimum Viable Test." This framework prevents overbuilding and keeps experiments focused. The Best Strategies Use a Combination of Ideas and Tactics If you want to get the best possible results when it comes to marketing, you need to focus on what works. I've learned that while there are loads of different ways to achieve your goals, it's always better to focus on the most high-impact and cost-effective, and as a startup owner — I'm willing to bet you already know how important that is. The best strategies use a combination of what I've mentioned above and then analyze their performance to determine which ones require more or less investment. No matter what you do, remember that your marketing activities are only as good as your goals and targeting. Editor's note: This post was originally published in April 2020 and has been updated for comprehensiveness.