Science of Growth Hacking

A concise 3-page overview of the science of growth hacking

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Errors  Accident, Afterthought, Inevitable

Prereqs  Idea + Team + Solution

Science  Learned + Democratic + Methodical + Experimental + Calculated + Additive

Funnel

1. Get Visitors
2. Activate Members
3. Retain Users

Disciplines

- Marketing
- Coding
- Product

Method  Question › Research › Hypothesis › Experiment › Data › Conclusion

Tactics

1. Inbound  Blogging, Guest Blogging, Podcasting, Guest Podcasting, Ebooks, Guides, Whitepapers, Infographics, Webinars, Conference Speeches, Mp3s, Videos, Slide Decks, SEO, Social Media, Contests, Marketplaces, Deal Sites, LOPA.

2. Outbound  Purchase Ads, Promotional Swaps, Affiliates, Direct Sales

3. Automated  Network Invitations (Phone Contacts, Email Contacts, Social Contacts), Social Sharing, API Integrations, Backlinks, Incentives, Organic.

4. Activate  Landing Pages, Copywriting, CTAs, Onboarding, Gamification, Social Proof, Pricing (Tiers, Discrimination, Naming, Trials, Discounts, Riskless).

5. Retain  Staged Traffic, Speed to Aha, Email, Alerts and Notifications, UI/UX, Exit Interviews, Red Carpet, Increase Value, Community Building, Happiness.
The Errors - There are certain fallacies around growth that a startup must avoid:

1. Accident - It is an error to think that growth is an accident, rather than planned.
2. Afterthought - It is an error to think that growth is important only after a product launch.
3. Inevitable - It is an error to think that growth is inevitable because of your technology.

The Prerequisites - There are certain prerequisites for growth that a startup must have:

1. Idea - You need an idea that could potentially meet the needs of a real market.
2. Team - You need a team that is knowledgeable and passionate about a real market.
3. Solution - You ultimately need a solution that does meet the needs of a real market.

The Science - Growth hacking is similar to science in many fundamental ways:

1. Learned - Growth hacking can be learned. Anyone has the potential to do it.
2. Democratic - Growth hacking is democratic. It doesn't matter if you're a nobody.
3. Methodical - Growth hacking is methodical. There is a process in place to do it.
4. Experimental - Growth hacking is experimental. You must try many different thing.
5. Calculated - Growth hacking is calculated. Conclusions are based on data, not instinct.
6. Additive - Growth hacking is additive. You are always accumulating new knowledge.
The Funnel - A growth hacker's primary goal is to move people through a defined funnel:

1. Get Traffic - This involves getting people to your product that don't know about you.
2. Activate Members - Once people are on your product they must take certain actions.
3. Retain Users - One they have taken actions you must keep them as long-term users.

The Disciplines - A growth hacker moves people through this funnel by using 3 disciplines:

1. Marketing - Traditional internet marketing is used by a growth hacker to get traffic.
2. Coding - Engineering is also used to generate traffic through code-heavy solutions.
3. Product - Typical product level decisions are used to activate and retain people.

The Method - A growth hacker also moves people through this funnel in a scientific way:

1. Question - What are you trying to figure out? Ex: Why do people exit our registration?
2. Research - What information could inform you? Ex: Read a related psychology study.
3. Hypothesis - What do you think will happen? Ex: Less fields will improve completions.
4. Experiment - How can prove or disprove hypothesis? Ex: Run an A/B tests with fields.
5. Data - What did the study show? Ex: Less fields did increase registration completions.
6. Conclusion - What are you going to do with this data? Ex: Decrease registration fields.

The Tactics - A growth hacker's use of the disciplines and method above generates tactics:

1. Inbound - This is when you give people a reason to come to your product on their own.
2. Outbound - This is when you go out and actively push people towards your product.
3. Automated - This is when you create hands off systems via code that bring people in.
4. Activation - This is when you get people to take desired actions within your product.
5. Retention - This is when you get people to become repetitive users of your product.

The Definition - There is a lot of confusion about what a growth hacker is, but now we know:

- A growth hacker is someone that uses marketing, product, and coding skills to scientifically grow and retain a user base.