How B2B Tech Companies Actually Grow

A practical guide for founders and SMEs tired of shortcuts and hype.

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>From the author

There's no shortage of people claiming that a handful of tactics can unlock growth. In reality, these quick fixes deliver little more than a short-lived sugar rush and, at worst, become hustle porn that irritates your buying community and does nothing to build a sustainable brand, pipeline, or revenue engine.

Tactics only work when they sit on top of a clear strategy. In this guide, we outline the foundations you need in place before any tactic, new or old, trendy or traditional, can actually move the needle.

We are not suggesting that this is a definitive guide; whole books have been written on these topics, and each could be a significant work stream, but the aim of this guide is to suggest where to start.

This guide is for those who are starting out, starting again, or want to review or reset what's happening today.

Ian Truscott

Managing Partner

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>Introduction

Broadly speaking, growth for B2B tech companies stalls for three reasons:

- **There is a poor market fit** - Not just product functionality, but also how the technology is positioned or priced.

- **There is poor market awareness** - Buyers either don't know the solution exists or don't understand why is matters.

- **Poor execution against the opportunity** - There is good market fit and awareness but sales and marketing are not executing against that opportunity.

Early-stage founders feel this immediately: they're new to the market, trying to make noise, but often miss the positioning mark and soon hit the ceiling of founder-led selling.

More established companies feel it more slowly: the market shifts, new entrants appear, messaging drifts, and referral-led growth plateaus.

This practical six point guide is for any B2B tech company looking to address these three challenges.

Let's go....

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>A Six Point Plan

1. The Market
2. The Positioning
3. The Demand
4. The MV-GTM Engine
5. The Content
6. The Metrics

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1 The Market

> Who are they?

This might sound basic, but surprisingly few B2B vendors that we speak to have a current Ideal Customer Profile (ICP) defined, and of those that do, it is not considered relevant; the leadership team feels that it is poorly defined, outdated, maybe done years ago, and therefore not used.

Early-stage companies tend to target everyone because they haven't validated their buyers yet. Established SMEs often assume they already know their buyers, but still cast a wide net — usually because they're uncertain about which niche within their audience offers the strongest commercial focus.

As Seth Godin might say they don't know their tribe.

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1 The Market

> Why this matters

A very clear, focused ICP is a competitive advantage, according to research from Hubspot, **68% of companies found that deals closed faster with a clear ICP** and an understanding of the buyers.

It also brings focus to all the other steps we list in this guide, because if you are off with this, you are either going for too broad a market or the optics are slightly off, and you are aiming at the wrong niche; none of what we share here will be effective.

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1 The Market

> **What you need**

- **ICP clarity** - Define the firmographics (industry, company size, geography, revenue - whatever data points are relevant to your solution), the organizational pain you are solving, what triggers a buying motion and what corporate metric or goal your solution would impact.

- **Buyer clarity** - Define the personas of the buying group that the ideal customer might assemble, who they are, what their needs are, how you help them choose (beyond the product, features, and functions), and the journey they might follow.

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1 The Market

> Outcome

A sharper, evidence-based understanding of today's real buyer, not based on last year's assumptions, or a hypothetical aspirational view of future buyers.

2   The Positioning

> Why pick a lane?

Every B2B tech vendor needs to decide which "lane" they compete in, a clear category or positioning that tells buyers where to slot them.

If you don't choose your lane, buyers will, and you risk becoming "that weird thing no one recognises".

Being too different might feel innovative, but being in a "market of one" is commercially lonely and usually unprofitable. What you really need is a mental shelf for the buyer to put you on - a category buyers already recognise and search under.

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② The Positioning

> **Why this matters**

Because buyers, even savvy, enterprise buyers, don't start with your product. They begin with a problem and look for solutions they understand.

They don't search for "Company X's brilliant new system," they type in something familiar: "CRM for legal firms," "no-code data tools," "cybersecurity for SaaS."

If you don't fit into a known category, they won't find you. And even if they do stumble across you, they'll struggle to compare you with anything. That uncertainty creates friction. It slows decision-making, increases their mental effort to understand you, and often results in no decision at all. In short: if buyers can't mentally place you, they can't buy you.

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② The Positioning

> What you need

- **The buyer's frame of reference** - Before you position anything, you need to understand how buyers already think about the problem you solve. This means uncovering the language they use, the categories they recognise, and where your solution naturally fits in their mental model. Without this, any positioning work is guesswork.

- **A claimed category** - With the buyer's worldview in mind, intentionally select the category you want to compete in, not the one the market will assign you by default. This involves identifying the closest recognisable lane, clarifying your angle within it, and ensuring the story is simple enough to be repeated by customers, sales teams, and partners.

- **Validation and alignment** - Once the lane is chosen, the whole organisation needs to line up behind it. Your messaging, sales conversations, content, product narrative, and partner ecosystem must all reinforce consistent positioning. This is where you test the story with real buyers, gather feedback, and make sure the business can consistently and confidently show up in the category you've chosen.

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2 The Positioning

> **Outcome**

A clear, confident position in a buyer-recognisable category, backed by a simple, repeatable narrative that sales, marketing, and customers can all use consistently.

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3 The Demand

> The size of the market

As we discussed in positioning, you need to establish your relevance to the category in which the buyer mentally pictures you.

The next step is to understand:

- The demand for the category within the broader market.

- The proportion of that category you can address.

- The level of awareness of your approach within the category.

Ultimately, the demand for your product.

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③ The Demand

> The size of the market

Category demand tells you whether buyers care about solving the problem at all. Awareness tells you how mature their understanding is. And solution demand reflects whether they see your approach as credible or known.

We also need to consider the awareness of our target buyer in your ICP, from problem awareness to revenue, as the buyer will be somewhere on this journey:

Problem awareness → **Category awareness** → **Solution demand** → **Preferred solution**

When we understand the level of demand for the category, our position in the category, and whether potential buyers are aware of the problem, we can estimate the market size and the likely demand.

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3 The Demand

> ## Why this matters

Without market demand, no amount of graft or hustle in sales and marketing will generate revenue, however well we do the rest of the steps outlined in this guide.

It is also essential to understand the buyer's awareness, as this will guide the sales enablement and marketing investments needed - for example, if this is a new or immature category, you will need to invest in educating the buyer on the problem, this new approach to the solution, as well as your product.

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3 The Demand

> What you need

- **An understanding of the category** - Research the demand for the category as a whole, how the buyer sees it, how your ICP solves the problem today, the price point, and the potential value.

- **Define your place in the category** - Understand the competition, the incumbents to challenge, and the awareness of your solution in that market.

- **Your slice of the category** - Define what is a realistic Total Addressable Market (TAM) within that, expressed as a percentage of the value of the category.

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③ The Demand

> Outcome

A grounded, evidence-led understanding of the real demand for your solution. What buyers know, what they don't, and what it will take to win your share of the category.

This prevents wishful thinking and ensures your GTM engine is built for reality, not hope.

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4 The MV-GTM Engine

> What is an MV-GTM Engine?

Once we understand the true demand for our category and solution, the next step is building a repeatable engine to capture and convert that demand.

The MV-GTM Engine is your Minimum Viable Go-to-Market Engine, the essential people, processes, and technology you need to stimulate demand, capture opportunities, and sell.

Not every company needs a huge team, with an expensive stack, the latest shiny distractions, and the cool kids at the agency. Most early-stage companies and B2B tech SMEs overspend on tools and underspend on clarity around their sales processes, metrics, and messaging.

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4 The MV-GTM Engine

> Why this matters

Most B2B tech companies, whether they're young or established, mistakenly believe that growth comes from more activity: more content, more outbound, more tools, more campaigns, more people. But growth actually comes from consistency, and consistency only comes from having a simple, repeatable GTM engine.

A Minimum Viable GTM Engine matters because it replaces gut-feel and randomness with a simple, repeatable process for growth. Without it, companies rely on individual effort, produce disconnected activity that doesn't generate revenue, suffer from misalignment between sales and marketing, and struggle to forecast or scale effectively.

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4 The MV-GTM Engine

An MV-GTM engine clarifies your ideal customer, messaging, processes, and metrics, enabling a predictable pipeline rather than lucky wins.

When building a new team, it prevents the waste of critical sales and marketing resources by ensuring the basics work before adding headcount or spend, and for established teams, it provides the structure needed to get to the next level of growth.

Put simply: an MV-GTM engine turns good intentions and sporadic success into consistent, compounding, and predictable growth.

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4 The MV-GTM Engine

> What you need

- **A clear website and digital presence** - This should communicate value instantly, supported by a content rhythm linked to the needs of the ICP and buyer, that stimulates demand, not random acts of content.

A basic, functional CRM - A simple CRM with a clean, addressable dataset that is relevant to our ICP, buyer, and those that influence a deal, set up with simple nurture and communication sequences and campaigns that are connected to the channels appropriate to our audience (email, social, paid ads, etc.).

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4 The MV-GTM Engine

A sales playbook - Develop a blueprint document that turns random wins into repeatable revenue. Without a playbook, each rep builds their own version of the pitch, qualification varies wildly, and deals depend on luck or gut feel.

A feedback loop between sales and marketing - This builds a clear understanding of the target market, relevant awareness, and revenue-focused reports (not vanity metrics), and a clear GTM process from initial awareness through the sales process to customer advocacy and reference.

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4 The MV-GTM Engine

> Outcome

A simple, repeatable commercial engine that aligns sales and marketing, creates a predictable pipeline, removes dependence on gut-feel, and provides a scalable foundation for growth.
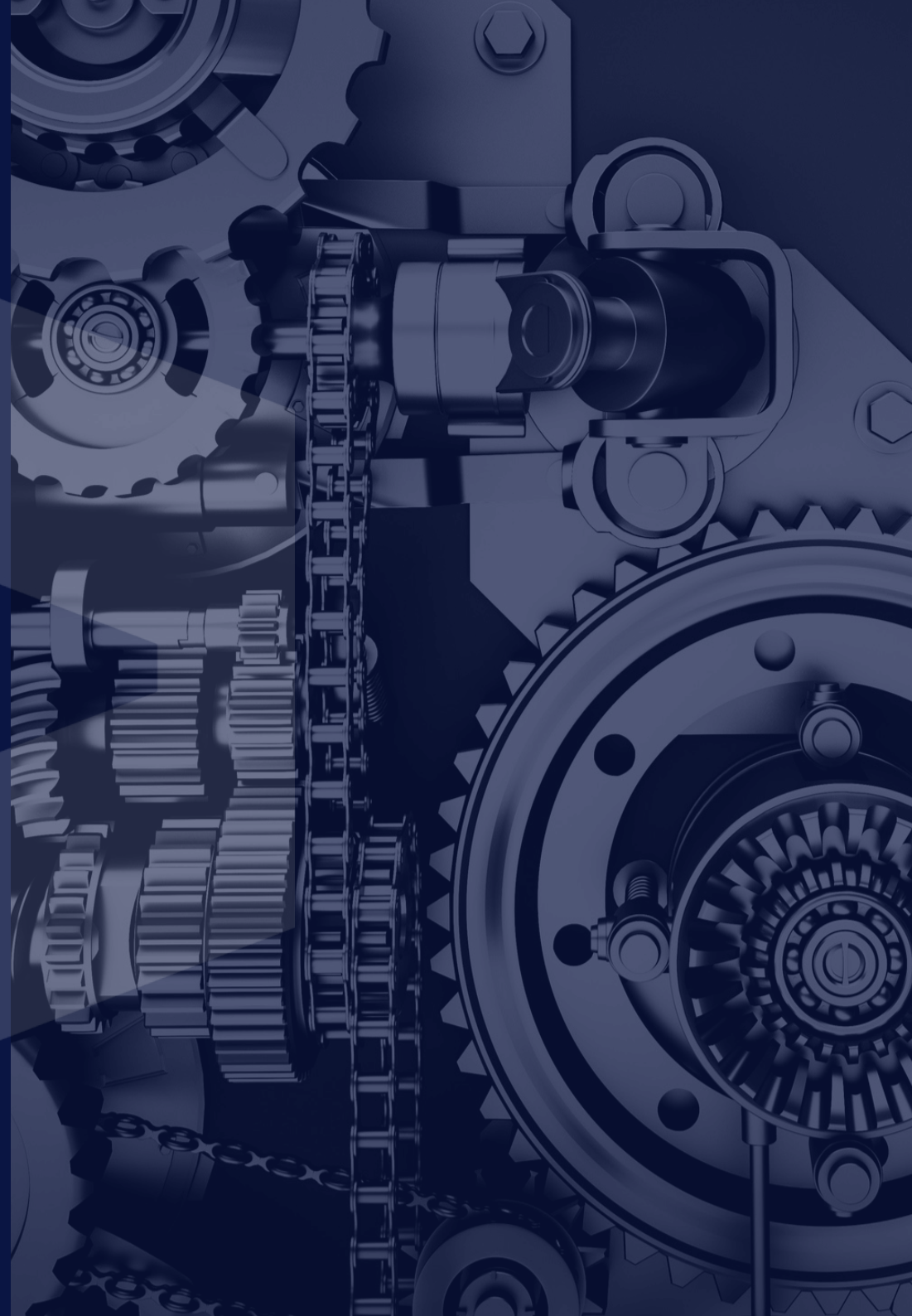
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> Build trust, not more noise

Once we have our GTM engine running, we need content to fuel it and to expand and execute on our positioning.

There is a common belief that the answer is simply "more content". But volume alone doesn't build trust. Content only creates commercial impact when it is credible, consistent, and anchored in a clear strategic narrative that serves both the buyer and the business.

5 The Content

5 The Content

For early-stage companies entering a new or evolving category, the priority is to educate the market, articulate the problem, and establish credibility for your approach.

For more established B2B tech SMEs, content plays a different role: differentiating within a crowded category, reinforcing your positioning, and demonstrating why you are the safer, smarter, or more relevant choice.

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5 The Content

> Why this matters

Across both scenarios, the shift in buying behaviour is the same. Buyers no longer rely on salespeople to make sense of the market. They conduct their own research, build their own shortlist, and often form an opinion before speaking with a vendor.

Content is now your first salesperson, your most consistent salesperson, and the one that scales the fastest.

Its job isn't to fill channels. Its job is to build the trust required for a buyer to choose you, often long before you know they exist.

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5 The Content

> What you need

- **A clear story** - A narrative that explains the problem, your category, your point of view, and why your approach matters. This is the spine of all content.

- **A messaging matrix** - A structured articulation of your narrative for each audience, ensuring consistency across sales, marketing, leadership, and product.

- **A strategic content plan** - Not a calendar of posts, but a purposeful plan aligned to buyer awareness, demand creation, and revenue priorities.

- **Content for the buyer journey** - Assets that support buyers at each stage, from understanding the problem to evaluating approaches to selecting a vendor, ensuring you are present, helpful, and credible throughout the journey.

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5 The Content

> Outcome

A credible, consistent presence in the market that builds awareness and trust with buyers long before they enter a sales conversation and positions your business as the logical, low-risk choice when they do.

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6 The Metrics

> **Metrics That Matter
(and Metrics to Ignore)**

At Velocity B, with our mantra that the purpose of the commercial collaboration of sales and marketing is to create ART (Awareness, Revenue, and Trust), the ultimate metric for any growing tech company is, of course, revenue.

Even if a company is well funded and still on a path to profitability, revenue is still the ultimate metric; while it may not be required to cover payroll, it does provide potential investors and the broader market with proof of product fit and demand.

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6 The Metrics

But having a commercial target alone is not a strategy; it's the culmination of activities across sales and marketing that build awareness and trust that form our strategy to create revenue, which we need to focus on.

We need to build a set of activities with defined objectives that ladder up to this ultimate goal, each with a clear set of metrics.

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6 The Metrics

> Why this matters

We need to ignore the noise and irrelevant metrics that distract from this focus. Just because we can doesn't mean we should in this instance, especially if it leads us to focus on what's easy to measure (like vanity metrics) and not metrics that will drive actual business value.

The maxim, "what gets measured, gets managed", often misattributed to Peter Drucker and used to encourage a culture of measuring everything, ignores the fact that what gets measured drives behavior, consumes our management resources, and can distract us from the numbers we really need to focus on.

One of the biggest risks to a smooth-running MV-GTM Engine is a set of misaligned or irrelevant metrics.

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6 The Metrics

> What you need

- **Clear company objectives** - You might be surprised, not every company has these stated, but we suggest the OKR model, where an objective is stated with a key result (the metric).

Regular reviews ensure you maintain a consistent inspection cadence to check progress and performance, and that the metrics we've selected continue to reflect the business priorities.
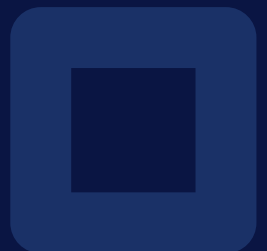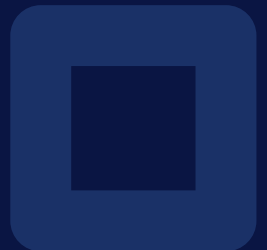
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6 The Metrics

- **Awareness metrics** - Metrics that are not for vanity (more awareness for awareness' sake) but awareness metrics that contribute to the company's objectives, for example, measuring share of voice, content relevancy, and engagement within our niche of category, ICP, and buyer.

- **Revenue metrics** - Start with having a defined sales process and focus on how quickly opportunities move through it (pipeline velocity), measuring coverage at every stage, and the critical win rates.

- **Trust metrics** - Measure trust through content engagement, newsletter subscriptions, downloads, social shares and recommendations, and commitment to your product, including customer satisfaction, renewals, and referrals.

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6 The Metrics

> Outcome

A measurement framework that serves the real goals of the business, avoids vanity metrics, and creates the clarity needed for confident, commercially sound decisions.

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Cut the hacks
Build the fundamentals
The rest will work

There's a lot of noise out there - hacks, frameworks, hot takes, and quick fixes.

But real growth in B2B tech isn't found in shortcuts. It's built on foundations: a defined market, a clear position, genuine demand, a functioning GTM engine, content that earns trust, and metrics that drive the correct behaviour.

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>Conclusion

When you have the fundamentals, everything gets easier: sales conversations sharpen, marketing becomes more effective, your team aligns, and your pipeline becomes more predictable.

You don't need to transform everything at once. Pick one area, tighten it, test it, then move to the next, and you'll find that progress compounds quickly when it's pointed in the right direction, and it compounds even faster when you repeat the basics consistently.

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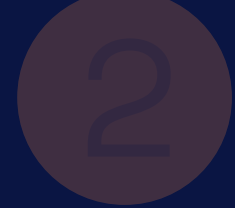
>Conclusion

Hopefully, this brief guide has made it clear that none of this is complicated.

Get it right, and you won't need noise, gimmicks, or the latest shiny tactic as you'll have something far more valuable: a business that buyers understand, teams can execute, and revenue can scale.

That's how B2B tech companies actually grow - without the shortcuts and hype.

And we can help, please get in touch

🌐 https://velocity-b.com
hello@velocity-b.com

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