



rev.space

The **B2B Growth** **Playbook**

How to Design an Effective GTM Strategy
Using Growth System Design™

Contents

1.0	
The Need for Change	04.
2.0	
What is a GTM Strategy?	06.
Is Your Current GTM Strategy Broken?	08.
3.0	
The 5 Blockers to Effective Scaling	10.
4.0	
Abandoning the Notion of the Quick Fix	12.
5.0	
What is a System?	14.
Thinking in Systems	15.
6.0	
The Growth System Design™ Framework	19.
Purpose	21.
Elements	22.
Growth Connectors	23.
7.0	
Growth Activities: The 6 Primary GTM Strategies	24.
Mastering the Symphony: Combining GTM Strategies for Maximum Impact	28.
8.0	
How to Implement Your GTM Strategy Using GSD	30.
Discovery Kick-off	32.
Purpose Review	34.
As-is System Design	35.
Opportunity/Impact Assessment (OIA)	38.
To-be System Design	40.
Planning	46.
Delivery	48.
9.0	
Keeping it Together: Overcoming Organisational Inertia and Resistance to Change	50.
Setting Expectations and Sticking to Them	50.
Alignment of Team, Goals, and Planning	51.
Creating a Process for Optimization	52.
10.0	
Ready to Put Theory into Practice?	54.

1.0

The Need For Change

Navigating the dynamic and ever-changing world of B2B commerce, where markets are constantly shifting, customer expectations are evolving, and technological advancements occur at a breakneck pace, it's clear that having a well-defined Go-To-Market (GTM) strategy is more essential than ever.

Over the past few years, the Go-To-Market (GTM) strategies of many B2B businesses have undergone significant transformations, adapting to a rapidly evolving commercial landscape. A study by Gartner highlights this shift, noting an increasing emphasis on digital channels, spurred by changing buyer preferences and the global pandemic's impact. The research points out that by 2025, 80% of B2B sales interactions between suppliers and buyers will occur in digital channels. This seismic shift underscores the transition from traditional face-to-face interactions to a more digital-focused approach in B2B sales and marketing strategies.

Furthermore, a report by McKinsey & Company echoes this sentiment, revealing that B2B companies are moving towards more streamlined, efficient digital-first interactions. The report indicates a stark increase in the adoption of self-service and remote interactions, with both suppliers and buyers showing a preference for digital self-service and remote human engagement over traditional sales interactions. This pivot is not just a reaction to short-term constraints but is part of a broader reevaluation of what effective B2B selling looks like.

In essence, these changes reflect a broader trend towards digital transformation in B2B sales and marketing. They signal a departure from conventional GTM strategies, which often relied heavily on in-person meetings and events, towards more agile, data-driven approaches

that leverage digital tools and platforms for customer engagement, lead generation, and sales processes. The key takeaway for B2B businesses is the need to embrace these changes.

If we were writing this even 6 months ago, this paragraph wouldn't be here, but it is also worth noting that the sands of consumer behaviour and business practice are shifting faster than perhaps at any time since the invention of the internet. There is clearly an enduring trend towards digital transformation, but is the trend away from face-to-face interactions here to stay? We're not so sure.

What we can infer from this is that GTM strategies need to be adaptable and able to respond to real-time market dynamics. As discussed by Vijat Tella in 'The New Automation Mindset' we need to create strategies and indeed companies that are anti-fragile. We need to engineer in plasticity, the ability and willingness to pivot, both in our processes and crucially our people.

In this playbook we will introduce you to Growth System Design™ – a revolutionary approach that goes beyond the standard GTM models, helping you plan for growth within a structured framework that considers all of the factors that contribute to growth, rather than having a simplistic focus on just the activities business hope will achieve growth.

This playbook is your guide to developing an impactful B2B growth strategy, guided by the core principles of systems thinking as you design an organisation-wide strategy for growth.

Redefining GTM in a Fluid Market Environment:

Gone are the days when conventional playbooks could cut it, especially in a world where digital interactions, data-driven insights, and a vast global market shape buyer behaviour. We begin our exploration by diving into current industry stats and market trends, highlighting the need for a transformative shift in the way we construct B2B GTM strategies. From the rapid integration of AI to the emergence of omnichannel orchestration approaches, our journey lays the groundwork for understanding the necessity of adaptation in today's market.

Unveiling Growth System Design™:

On this groundwork, we introduce Growth System Design™ – a comprehensive framework for strategy formation that considers the often disparate cross-functional teams that contribute to growth and re-engineers the way they interact into a unified, data-centric framework. We will illustrate how forward-thinking businesses leverage Growth System Design™ to revolutionise their GTM strategies, resulting in remarkable revenue growth and enhanced customer retention.

The Imperative of Data-Driven Decisions:

In today's data-rich era, making informed decisions is crucial for avoiding stagnation and fostering growth. We delve into the critical role of data analytics and customer insights in sculpting potent GTM strategies. With relevant stats and tested approaches, we show how businesses can use actionable data to predict market trends, customise customer interactions, and refine their growth strategies.

Encouraging a Shift in Perspective:

Equipped with the data and a deeper understanding of Growth System Design™, we challenge businesses to move beyond conventional frameworks, prioritise alignment, embrace innovative thinking, and craft strategies that effectively navigate current market complexities and pave the way for long-term success.

In the forthcoming pages, we unlock the B2B Growth Playbook, guiding you on a transformative journey that goes beyond the ordinary. It's time to revolutionise your GTM strategy, adopting a mindset that not only adapts to but also propels change. The future of B2B growth is on the horizon, and it starts with reimagining your approach to your Go-To-Market strategy.



2.0

What is a GTM Strategy?

Let's start with the basics. A Go-To-Market (GTM) strategy is more than just your sales and marketing plan, it's a comprehensive game plan that outlines how a company will reach its target customers and achieve competitive advantage. Imagine it as a roadmap, guiding you through the uncharted territories of the market landscape, ensuring you're not just wandering aimlessly but moving with purpose and direction.

A go-to-market (GTM) strategy is crucial, especially when launching a new product, entering a new market, or repositioning your brand. It's like preparing for a grand voyage. You wouldn't set sail without a map, right? Similarly, a GTM strategy equips you with the insights, tools, and directions to navigate the market's turbulent waters, ensuring your offering doesn't just float aimlessly but reaches its intended destination: your customers.

Now, let's get a bit more personal. Imagine you've created a revolutionary product—something you believe will change the game in your industry. The excitement is palpable, but here's the catch: no matter how groundbreaking your product is, its success hinges on your ability to deliver it to the right people, at the right time, through the right channels, and with a message that resonates. That's where a solid GTM strategy comes into play. It helps you identify your ideal customers, understand their needs and pain points, and tailor your messaging to speak directly to them. It's about making connections, building relationships, and creating value that's impossible to ignore.

In essence, a GTM strategy is not just about making sales; it's about crafting experiences that delight customers, solving real problems, and fostering loyalty. It combines elements of product development, marketing, sales, and customer service, ensuring they all work together harmoniously like a well-conducted orchestra. Each element has its part to play, from the first note of market research to the crescendo of a successful product launch.

But let's be clear: a GTM strategy is not a one-size-fits-all blueprint. It's as unique as your business, tailored to fit the nuances of your market, your product, and your organisational goals. It requires a deep understanding of your competitive landscape, a clear differentiation of your product, and an innovative approach to delivering value.

As we embark on this exploration together, keep in mind that crafting a GTM strategy is both an art and a science. It's about blending analytical rigour with creative storytelling, data with intuition, and strategy with execution. And remember, the journey doesn't end at launch. A GTM strategy is a living document, evolving as you gather insights, learn from your experiences, and adapt to the ever-changing market dynamics.



2.1

Is Your Current GTM Strategy Broken?

Before we delve into how to change your GTM strategy, some diagnosis is required, is your GTM strategy actually broken? In most cases it won't be, at least not entirely, most businesses with a completely broken GTM strategy cease to exist quite quickly. The difficult-to-manage issue is that of the partially broken or inefficient strategy. In this scenario, the business will effectively be bringing in leads and closing deals, but will be missing targets and simply not scaling at the rate it has targeted or indeed the rate of its competitors.

The following questions will help diagnose issues with your existing strategy and we will return to them later in the playbook to help begin reconstructing your GTM strategy for success.

FIGURE 1:
15 DIAGNOSTIC QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU DISCOVER IF YOUR GTM STRATEGY MAY BE BROKEN

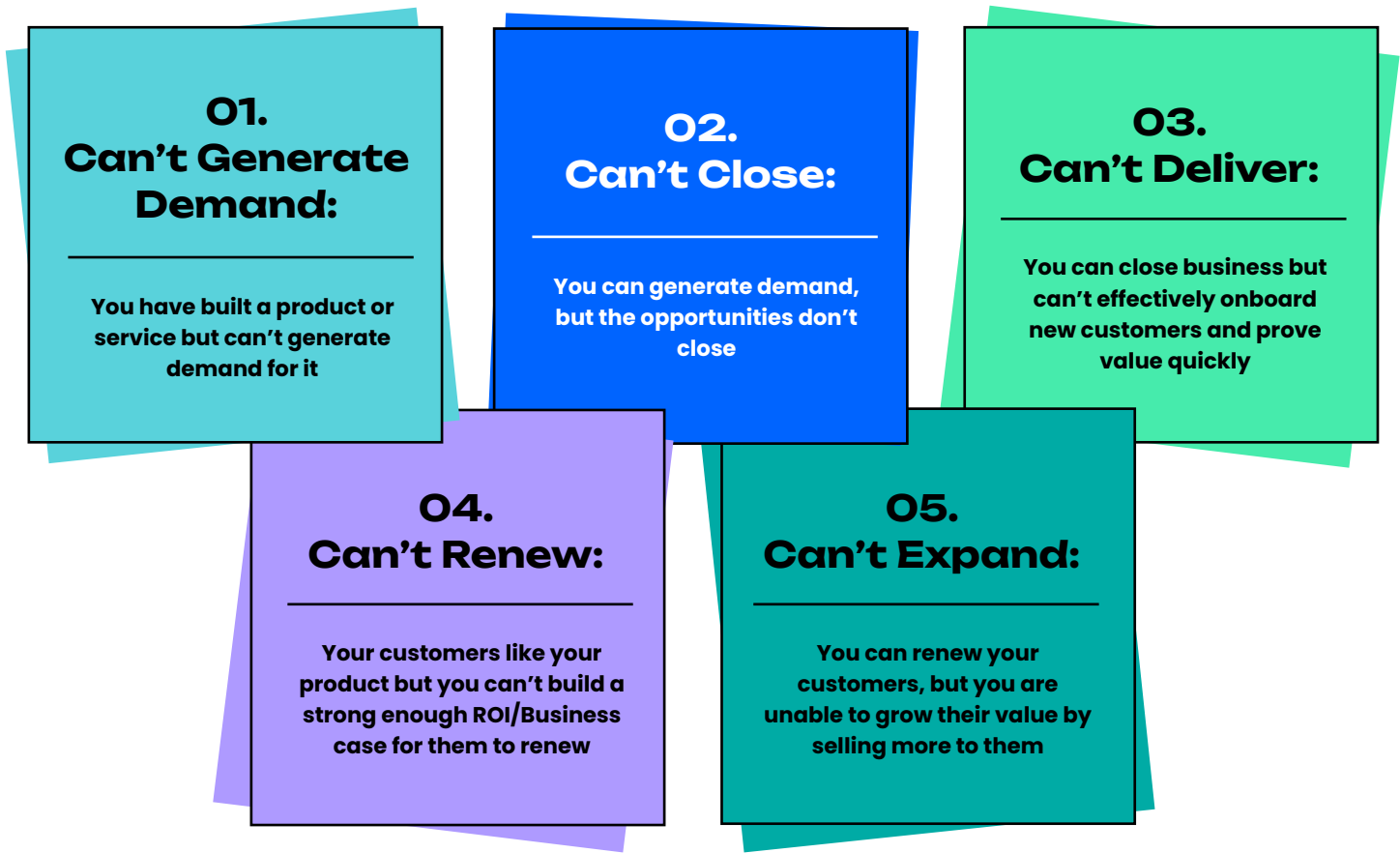
	✓ YES	✗ NO
Your business is relying on the efforts of individual sellers to hit targets, not an organisational sales playbook		
Sales, marketing and CS are out of alignment and don't talk regularly or effectively		
You can't accurately forecast sales more than a month or two ahead		
Discounting and custom pricing are common sales approaches		
Your team is not aligned to a clear organisational strategy for growth		
You always seem to be launching new sales and marketing initiatives		
You are struggling to retain customers / churn is killing growth		
Your competitors are winning more market share than you		
You are always late to enter the deal cycle with prospects		
Your team is always more reactive than proactive		
You are struggling to sell to larger customers		
Once you open deals they close way to slowly, if at all		

If you have ticked 'Yes' for more than just a few of these questions, it signals a notable exposure to potential growth risks associated with your Go-to-Market strategy. This exposure, if unattended, possesses the capacity to exert enduring adverse effects on your business over the long-term. Recognising these vulnerabilities prompts a call for closer scrutiny and the implementation of strategic measures to mitigate and safeguard against the potential negative impacts on your business trajectory. Keep these in mind as we explore further.

The 5 Blockers to Effective Scaling

As we have already discussed, an effective GTM strategy is far more than just generating leads, we have to consider and fine-tune every step of the journey from unaware prospect to growing the value of our existing customers. Scaling a business is a formidable journey, one that demands a meticulous understanding of the challenges that can impede progress. In this section, we delve into the core obstacles that hinder effective scaling, encapsulated by five critical blockers. Each blocker represents a distinct challenge, a potential stumbling block that, left unaddressed, could compromise the very foundation of your scaling endeavours.

FIGURE 2: THE 5 BLOCKERS TO EFFECTIVE SCALING



01. Can't Generate Demand: The Silent Storefront Dilemma

Imagine you've set up a beautiful store, stocked with dazzling products, yet no one walks in. That's the "Can't Generate Demand" challenge. It's not enough to have a fantastic product or service; people need to know it exists! The crux here is understanding your target audience and what makes them tick. It's about crafting a message that resonates and reaches them effectively. Have you ever wondered why some products, not necessarily the best in their category, become market leaders? It's often due to their exceptional demand generation strategies.



02. Can't Close: The Unfinished Symphony

Generating interest is one thing, but closing the deal? That's where the music often stops. Picture a symphony reaching a crescendo and then... silence. A myriad of factors can contribute to this blocker. Perhaps it's a misalignment between what your product offers and what the customer really needs. Or maybe it's a pricing strategy that doesn't match the perceived value. Effective closing is an art; it requires understanding the customer's pain points and decisively addressing them.



03. Can't Deliver: The Broken Promise

So you've closed the deal. Congratulations! But now the real work begins. Can you deliver on the promises made? The "Can't Deliver" challenge is like hosting a grand party and running out of food. It leaves a bad taste and tarnishes your reputation. Effective onboarding and quick value delivery are crucial. It's about setting the right expectations and then exceeding them. Remember, the first experience of a new customer sets the tone for your entire relationship.



04. Can't Renew: The One-Hit Wonder

Your customers like your product. Great! But if they don't see the ongoing value, they won't renew. Think of it as a one-hit wonder in the music world – popular for a while but quickly forgotten. Building a strong enough ROI and business case for renewal is essential. It's not just about having a good product; it's about continuously demonstrating its value and evolving with your customer's needs.



05. Can't Expand: The Stagnant Pond

Finally, the ability to expand your relationship with existing customers is pivotal. It's not enough to just maintain; you must find ways to deepen and broaden the relationship. This means understanding their evolving needs and how your portfolio can address them. Expansion is about recognizing opportunities within your existing customer base and leveraging them effectively.

Overcoming these five blockers requires a blend of self-awareness, customer understanding, and strategic action. It's about tuning into the market's rhythm and dancing to it, not against it. Each blocker, while challenging, provides an opportunity for learning and growth. As we continue, remember, scaling is a journey, not a destination. It's about building a sustainable, responsive, and evolving business. So, let's turn these blockers into stepping stones for your scaling success!

4.0

Abandoning the Notion of the Quick Fix

The tendency of business leaders, particularly in sales and marketing, to seek quick fixes or ‘silver bullet’ solutions when facing unmet sales targets is a well-documented phenomenon. This approach often manifests in the form of a tactical initiative, like a new marketing campaign or sales promotion, implemented with the hope of a rapid turnaround in results. However, this can be a shortsighted and ultimately ineffective strategy.

Renowned management consultant Peter Drucker emphasised the importance of understanding the depth of business challenges, cautioning against the lure of quick fixes. Drucker argued that effective management requires a comprehensive understanding of the organisational environment, suggesting that a focus on short-term solutions often neglects the underlying systemic issues.

A study published in the Harvard Business Review reinforces this view, revealing that successful, long-term business transformations are the result of systematic, comprehensive efforts rather than isolated tactical initiatives. The authors argue that while tactical changes can produce immediate results, they rarely address the deeper, systemic issues that are often the root cause of performance challenges.

In the context of sales and marketing, relying on quick fixes can lead to a cycle of short-termism, where the focus is on immediate gains rather than sustainable growth. This approach can overlook critical aspects like customer relationship management, market positioning, and product innovation, which are essential for long-term success. You can also add sustained and consistent activity to this list. A recent study by the Ehrenberg-Bass Institute for Marketing Science found that only 20% of business buyers are in the market over the course of a year and just 5% are in market per quarter. Now this figure is heuristic, it could be a little more or less in any given industry/quarter/product category. However,

recognising it and understanding its implications will have a huge impact on any marketing efforts your team are undertaking.

Moreover, a report by McKinsey & Company highlights that sustainable growth and performance improvement in sales and marketing are achieved through a holistic approach. This includes aligning the organisation's strategy, structure, processes, and people. It underscores the necessity of moving beyond the allure of quick fixes and addressing the systemic challenges and opportunities within the organisation.

While the appeal of a quick fix or silver bullet solution is understandable in the face of unmet sales targets, it is often a misguided approach. Sustainable success in sales and marketing is more likely achieved through addressing systemic issues, aligning strategy, structure, and processes, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement, as supported by the insights of thought leaders and credible business research.





5.0

What is a System?

In the academic field of systems thinking, a system is defined as a collection of interrelated parts or components that form a complex and unified whole. According to Donella Meadows, a pioneer in systems thinking, a system is characterised by its elements, interconnections, and function or purpose. This perspective is echoed by Peter Senge in “The Fifth Discipline,” where he describes systems as sets of things that interact to produce behaviour and patterns. Importantly, systems are often nested within other systems, indicating a hierarchy or scale, from small subsystems to larger, encompassing systems. This concept of nested systems highlights the interconnectedness and complexity inherent in understanding and analysing systems in a holistic manner.

Systems are all around us, from the plumbing in your house, to a sports team, to a forest to a company, to a country. By seeing these things for what they are – a set of interconnected elements, united by a common purpose, we can start to understand how they operate and ultimately to change them for the better.

5.1

Thinking in Systems

Systems thinking is a holistic approach to analysis that focuses on the way that different parts of a system interact with each other within the whole. It is rooted in the understanding that the components of a system are interconnected and interdependent, and that often the outcomes of the system are greater than the sum of its parts.

In business, systems thinking can be a transformative tool. It enables leaders and managers to better understand the complex interrelationships within an organisation and between the organisation and its environment. For example, a decision made in one department of a company can have cascading effects across other departments, influencing overall company performance.

Applying systems thinking in business allows for a more comprehensive understanding of organisational dynamics. It encourages looking beyond isolated issues or challenges to understand the broader patterns and structures that drive behaviours and results. This approach can lead to more effective strategies in areas such as change management, process improvement, problem-solving, and strategic planning.

In essence, systems thinking in business provides a lens through which the interconnected nature of various functions and processes is recognized, enabling more informed decision-making and fostering a culture of holistic understanding and continuous improvement and forms the basis of the Growth System Design Framework.

6.0

The Growth System Design™ Framework

Growth System Design™ is simply the practice of accepting that a business is in fact a system and can therefore have its operations optimised most effectively by considering it as an interconnected whole rather than a disparate kit of parts to be changed one piece at a time.

There is an often used quote I enjoy that explains why changing one piece at a time doesn't work, in the book Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance:

“

...If a revolution destroys a government, but the systematic patterns of thought that produced that government are left intact, then those patterns will repeat themselves ... There's so much talk about the system. And so little understanding.

”

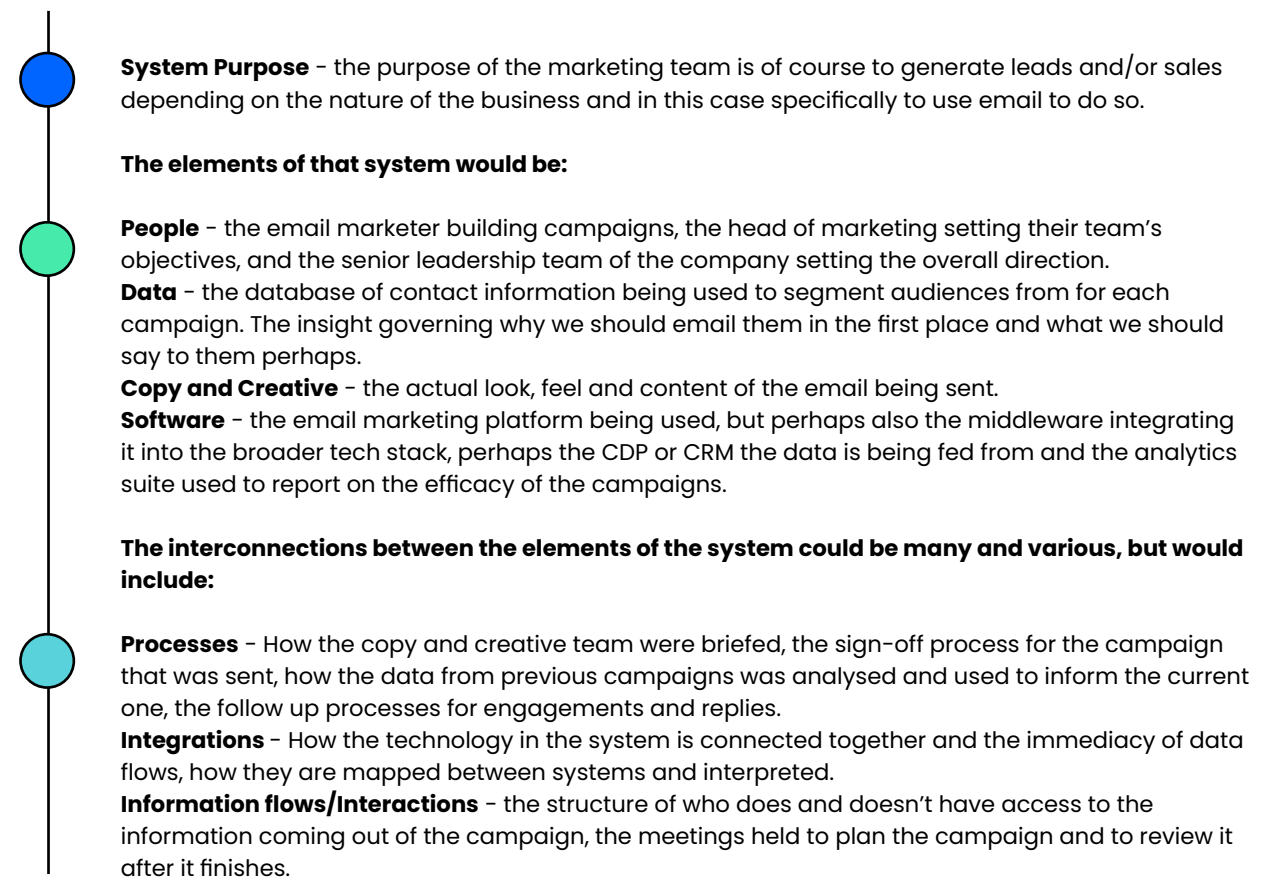
What it's fundamentally saying is that if you change just one element of the system (or in this example perhaps one sub-system within a larger system) you may see a small impact in the short term, but ultimately the system will simply course correct itself and continue as it was before.

There is a somewhat frightening trend in the business world today of trying to fix problems by buying technology, in fact the average mid-market business has a staggering 30% technology churn rate, meaning that nearly 1 in 3 pieces of software in the business are changed each year. Why is this so, you have to ask yourself? Well logically for one overarching reason - they are trying to fix a problem.

It's easy to hypothesise what that problem might be if we zoom in a little to a category of software, let's say it's an email marketing tool. You might then think that the performance of those emails wasn't so great, perhaps the open rate was low, suggesting poor deliverability or the functionality of the tool didn't enable the marketing team to design the emails to their liking and they felt this was hurting performance.

Well if we think about that email marketing team using the tool as an integral part of the system then we can start to unpack the problem a little more.

Let's map out this issue in the context of a system.



You can hopefully see that even in this relatively simple example of an email campaign the levers of success reach far beyond the point system used to send campaigns and yet the default position of almost every business when they think about their growth is to change one thing at a time. A new tool, a new campaign, a new team member, with the hope of a step change that will never materialise, piled high upon their shoulders.

Why is this?

Neuroscience has the answer. We have all no doubt heard the phrase – take the path of least resistance. Well did you know that your brain is actually hard-wired to make you take this path? A study by UCL found that our brain actually presents options that are difficult as less favourable – in fact I bet you it was doing so when you read that last section and thought about changing the system being described!

It stands to reason that changing the email marketing tool is far more preferable than attempting to change the operation of an entire department or the direction of an entire business, particularly as one person. In effect this explains the single biggest inhibitor to growth within organisations, it's just a bit hard.

Let's consider an example where this perhaps isn't the case. Many people in business will be familiar with the generally accepted principle that a startup is more agile, can move and change direction faster than a large corporation. The reason for this is actually related to system design. A smaller business with clear direction and strong leadership can change the function of its growth system more easily. There are less people to influence, fewer tools to change, fewer processes, that are less entrenched.

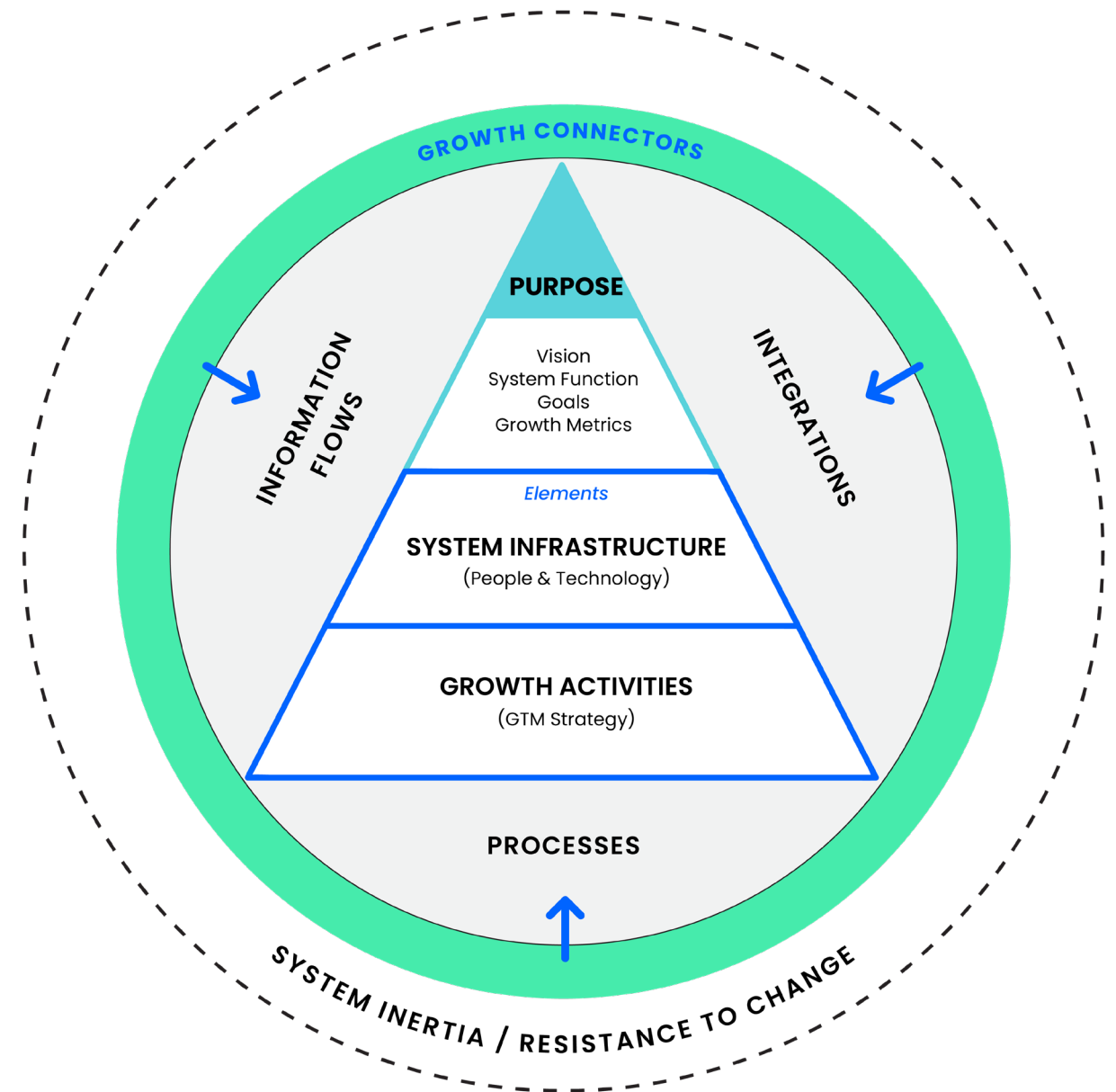
So what does this tell us? Well for one it shows that the function of a system can be changed, a start-up would call this a pivot. But mainly it tells us that to effect a step change to your growth curve the biggest obstacle will not be the changing of the elements of the system but the inbuilt inertia and resistance to change inherent within the system itself – your business.



The Growth System Design™ Framework

How do you actually design a growth system, or indeed redesign it? We have created a Growth System Design™ Model, which not only explains the growth system itself, but as we will outline, gives you a path to follow for designing the growth system of your own business or organisation.

FIGURE 3: THE GROWTH SYSTEM DESIGN™ MODEL



The Model is comprised of the same three types of components, as discussed earlier in academic systems theory – Purpose, Interconnections and Elements, let's unpack what those components are within the model:



6.1

Purpose

It all starts and indeed ends, with purpose. Purpose is not a singular, an organisation may have one vision and one mission, but many purposes. In system design we should not confuse the word purpose with the common uses such as a 'purpose driven organisation'. Purpose simply means what the system, or sub-system is meant to do.

For most businesses the overarching purpose is to make money, a marketing department's purpose is to generate leads, an events team within that department's purpose is to effectively communicate the businesses value through an unforgettable experience perhaps.

You can see that an organisation will have a great many purposes, depending on how far we zoom in, even to an employee level, where their purpose will likely be divergent from the core-purpose of the organisation but achieved through being great at their job.

The high-level purpose of the system or sub-system is important to note, but for the growth system designer it is important to keep in mind that a business is simply a collection of people and that those people (in most organisations at least) will have defined goals. Call them KPIs or OKRs or whatever, the point is that sitting just underneath high-level purpose will be organisational, departmental, team level and individual goals.

In most organisations, certainly most effective organisations, these goals will be underpinned by a set of specific metrics, typically surfaced in reporting or dashboards that track the progress towards attainment of goals. Therefore when we consider 'Purpose' in Growth System Design, we are considering 4 interconnected and often nested objects:

Organisation Vision: Where the organisation is trying to get to in the long-term

High-level system purpose: The function of the system or subsystem (make money or send emails etc)

System Goals: E.g. Sales Team = close \$1.2m in net new revenue this FY.

Growth Metrics: MQLs, SQLs, Opportunities, Deal Pipeline Value, Deal Probability etc

We need to consider and understand the relationship between every part of the purpose within the organisation when undertaking growth system design. Crafting the relationship between the many and various growth metrics, system goals and high-level system purpose to achieve the organisation vision is the foundation of Growth System Design.

6.2

Elements

In system design we consider elements to simply be the tangible elements that the system is composed of, as we explored earlier when discussing the email marketing system.

In Growth System Design we offer some sub classifications of elements to help guide our thinking:

System Infrastructure: The infrastructure in the system relates to the people and technology operating within the system. Technology can be defined as either hardware or software. The growth infrastructure is normally within the control of an operations team, such as revenue operations and is, in most B2B organisations, the physical capital that delivers the growth activities.

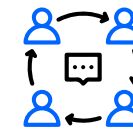
The second part of the system infrastructure is people, this may seem odd to classify people as infrastructure, but in system design they are simply units of human capital that have functions, characteristics and costs just the same as technology. We wouldn't suggest this being the guiding principle of your HR strategy, but when designing a system it is important to have the right number of people, with the right skills, delivering activity efficiently at the right cost.

Growth Activities: Growth activities, as we will expand on in a moment, are the specific GTM strategies employed by the organisation (using the system infrastructure to deliver on the purpose). The activities are in a nutshell the things our marketing, sales and customer facing teams do every day to generate revenue. They are the things most business leaders focus on when trying to effect a change in the growth trajectory of an organisation, but as we have already revealed, are only one part of the story.

6.3

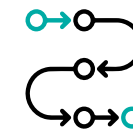
Growth Connectors

The final component of the Growth System Design model is Growth Connectors, these are the intangible glue binding together the system, ensuring that information and/or data flows between the elements in the system and allows us to not only report on the attainment of purpose, but in many ways controls its operation. If the system were an engine, the Growth Connectors would be the control modules, wiring loom and pipework that ensured the fuel, air and sparks found their proper place and proper rhythm.



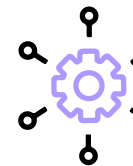
Interactions/Information Flows:

This is very simply the way that information is exchanged within the organisation and amongst its partners and suppliers, these could be meetings (physical or virtual) or even cards on Kanban board of a project management tool. The important thing is their design, cadence or rhythm if you will. In Growth System Design we measure their efficiency at ensuring that correct, adequate and timely information is exchanged across the organisation.



Processes:

Where would we be without processes, processes make the world go round and are the cornerstone of any scalable, repeatable activity. They govern everything from information sharing, to approvals to specific ways of working. Process design is as old as business itself. The problem with processes is that they are often undocumented, they are learned by rote, transferred, often imperfectly from person to person, or not as the case may be. The problem with rote learning is that it exists in the absence of critical analysis, it is 'the way we have always done it' and when you find these kinds of processes they are often difficult to analyse. The only way forward is to document them, as without documentation we have an imperfect view of the current system from which to start designing change. Growth System Design typically starts with defining the 'as-is' process, analysing it, and redefining it as a newly documented 'to-be' process.



Integrations (And automation):

In the modern world of business, particularly in a post covid world of remote working and sprawling tech stacks, the day to day life of most employees is dominated by the applications they have to use. The figures vary but most sources tend to agree that most mid-market organisations have around 100 software applications in use across the business. In each one of these systems lives data, entered into records or properties and IT or RevOps teams everywhere spend a lot of time making sure they talk to each other. This is where integration and its close friend automation fit in. Done correctly integration and automation should be a strategic initiative that eliminates manual data entry, equips all stakeholders with a single source of truth and ensures information from across the tech stack is transformed, made available or acted upon in any other application where it is required.

Crucially, in the modern business context, integration and automation is where processes come to life. What is critical is that when we have a modern automation tool, such as an iPaaS in your corner, we don't default to what is often called 'task-based automation' where the purpose is to paper over the cracks of an existing process by using integration to eliminate manual tasks. Modern automation technology and its ease of use gives you the ability to totally reimagine processes. When designing for growth this is a key area from which to derive competitive advantage.



7.0

Growth Activities:

The 6 Primary GTM Strategies

Earlier on we defined what a GTM strategy is in principle. This chapter delves into the six most prevalent GTM strategies, offering insights into their mechanics and how they can be leveraged for business success. Be aware there are other strategies, such as founder-led growth that are gaining momentum, but these are commonly held to be the most common approaches to growth.

01. Inbound Led Strategy

In contrast to the outbound approach, the inbound led strategy is like setting up a lighthouse that guides ships to your shore. Here, the focus is on creating and disseminating content that attracts potential customers to your business organically. This could be through blogs, SEO, social media marketing, and other forms of content marketing. The idea is to establish your brand as a thought leader in your space, thereby attracting customers who are seeking solutions that you provide. It's a more subtle approach, nurturing leads through valuable content and interactions.

02. Product Led Strategy

Imagine your product as the main character of your story. In a product led strategy, the product itself is the primary driver of customer acquisition, expansion, and retention. This approach often involves offering a free trial or a freemium model to allow customers to experience the product before committing to a purchase. It's particularly effective in the software industry, where users can easily try and adopt software solutions. The success of this strategy hinges on the product's ability to showcase its value proposition clearly and compellingly.

03. Community Led Strategy

Building a community around your brand or product can be an incredibly powerful tool. A community led strategy focuses on creating a loyal base of customers who are engaged, enthusiastic, and willing to advocate on your behalf. This could involve forums, user groups, or social media communities where users can share experiences, offer feedback, and help each other. It's about fostering a sense of belonging and connection around your brand, making your customers feel like they are part of a larger movement or family.

04. Event Led Strategy

Events can be a catalyst for generating interest and building relationships. An event led strategy leverages conferences, webinars, workshops, and other types of events to connect with potential customers. These events provide a platform for demonstrating your product, sharing expertise, and networking with industry peers. They can be particularly effective in creating memorable experiences and offering tangible value to attendees, thereby generating leads and building brand authority.

05. Partner Led Strategy

Two is company, three is a crowd, but in business, the more, the merrier. A partner led strategy involves forming alliances with other companies to expand your reach. This could be through co-marketing efforts, reseller agreements, or joint ventures. The idea is to leverage the strengths and customer bases of each partner to create new opportunities that might not be possible alone. It's a collaborative approach, pooling resources and expertise for mutual benefit.

06. Outbound-Led Strategy

In the realm of an outbound-led strategy, envision yourself as the initiator, the one who reaches out to potential customers. This approach is proactive and often seen as quite aggressive, synonymous with traditional sales tactics such as cold calling, emailing, or direct mailings. In practice, this is a significant part, for better or worse, of most B2B organisations GTM strategies. I think it is fair to say that this approach is also perceived as being quite effective, which is why it endures. To fully understand why this works we have to look deeper and at face value it is quite simple, it works because it facilitates and fosters human relationships. The question is, what sub-strategies exist to maximise the effectiveness of the outbound strategy. For this is where ABM comes in.

Outbound through the lens of Account-Based Marketing (ABM)

ABM is a highly focused business strategy in which a marketing team treats an individual prospect or customer like its very own market. A leading strategy for businesses with long sales cycles and relatively high deal values, it's about tailoring your marketing efforts to specific accounts in the business that you're targeting. Think of ABM as a precision tool in your outbound toolkit. Instead of casting a wide net (that is often full of holes) to dredge along the bottom in the hope of catching as many fish as possible, ABM is like fishing with a spear, targeting specific, high-value fish.

Incorporating ABM into your outbound-led strategy brings a host of benefits. It allows for more personalised and relevant marketing efforts, which can lead to higher engagement rates. ABM is particularly effective in B2B environments where making a connection with key decision-makers within a target account can significantly influence the sales process. It aligns marketing and sales efforts, ensuring that the messaging is consistent and targeted, leading to a more streamlined customer journey.

ABM also focuses on building long-term relationships with key accounts. This is crucial in an outbound approach, as it shifts the strategy from one-off sales pitches to nurturing valuable, ongoing partnerships. It's about understanding the specific needs and pain points of each account and tailoring your approach to meet these needs.

In practice, ABM involves creating personalised content, tailored messaging, and targeted campaigns aimed at engaging specific accounts. This could include personalised emails, bespoke web content, or targeted events. The idea is to create a unique and compelling experience for each targeted account, making them feel valued and understood.

In essence, by integrating ABM into your outbound-led strategy, you're not just reaching out to potential customers; you're reaching out to the right customers in the right way. It's a more sophisticated, targeted approach to outbound marketing that can yield significant returns in terms of customer acquisition and retention. This enhanced outbound strategy is akin to a sharpshooter in the world of archery, aiming with precision, leading to a higher chance of hitting the bullseye – acquiring and retaining high-value customers.

In summary, each GTM strategy offers unique advantages and can be tailored to suit different business models and market contexts. Whether you're a startup navigating initial market entry or an established company exploring new territories, understanding and adeptly applying these strategies can be a game-changer. Just like a captain must understand the winds and currents to navigate a ship, a business must understand and utilise the right GTM strategies to navigate the market successfully.



Mastering the Symphony:

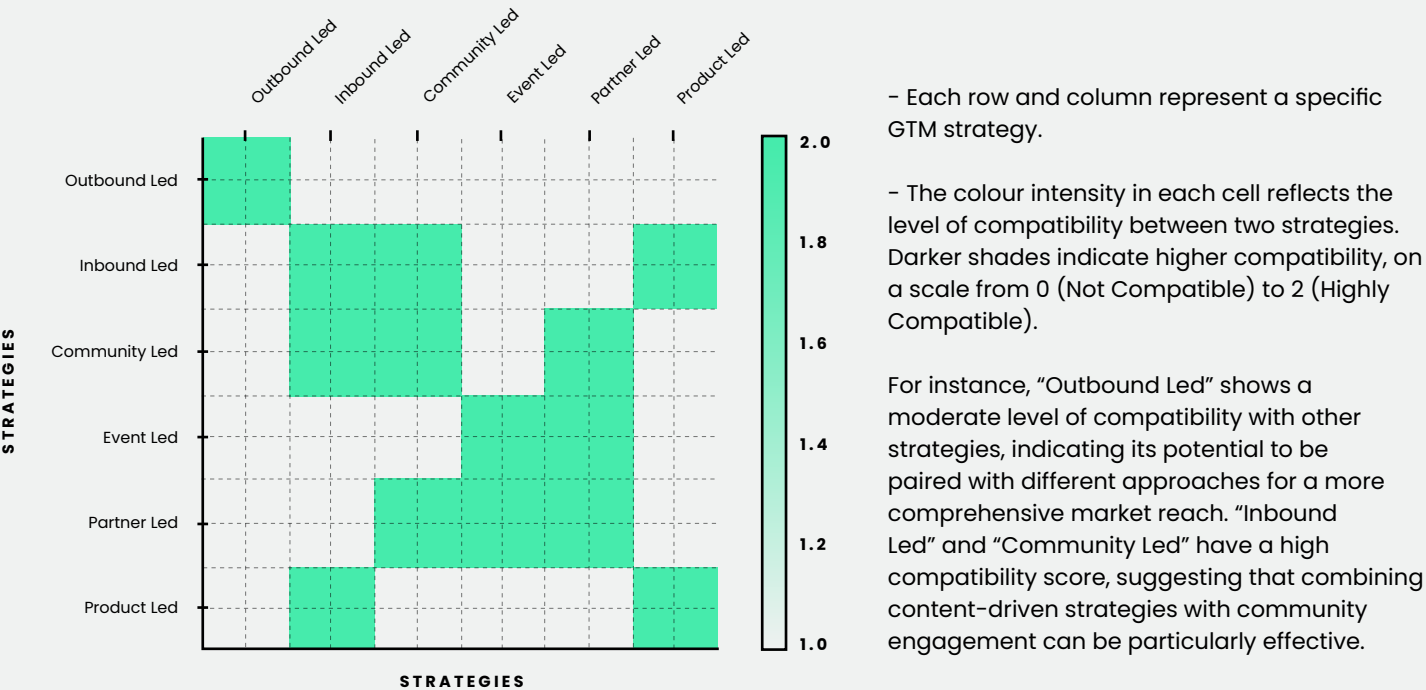
Combining GTM Strategies for Maximum Impact

After exploring the six primary Go-To-Market (GTM) strategies in the previous section, let's delve into the art of combining these strategies to amplify their effectiveness. Just like a maestro conducting a symphony, a business leader can orchestrate these strategies to create a harmonious and impactful market approach.

How to choose and when to mix

This matrix provides insights into how these strategies can be effectively combined:

FIGURE 4: GTM FIT MATRIX

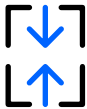


This matrix serves as a strategic tool for businesses to plan their market approach, helping them to align and combine GTM strategies for enhanced market impact and effectiveness.



01. The Dynamic Duo: Outbound Led and ABM

When paired, the outbound led strategy and Account-Based Marketing (ABM) form a dynamic duo. This combination is particularly effective in B2B markets where personalised, high-touch engagements are paramount. For instance, a tech company targeting large enterprises can use ABM to identify key stakeholders in targeted companies and then employ an outbound approach to initiate direct, personalised communication. This strategic alignment ensures that your outreach resonates with the specific needs and preferences of each account, increasing the chances of conversion.



02. The Inbound and Community Nexus

Merging inbound marketing with community-led strategies can create a powerful ecosystem of organic growth. This combo works well for brands that thrive on user engagement and loyalty. For example, a SaaS company could use inbound strategies to draw users with valuable content and then leverage community-led tactics to foster a space for these users to connect and share. This approach not only attracts new customers but also turns existing customers into brand advocates.



03. Event Led Meets Partner Led: Expanding Networks

Combining event-led and partner-led strategies can significantly expand your reach and impact. This is especially potent for companies in industries where networking and relationships are key. By hosting or participating in events alongside strategic partners, a business can tap into each other's networks, creating a larger, more diverse audience. This can be particularly effective for startups or companies entering new markets.



04. Product Led and Inbound: The Magnetic Pull

Integrating a product-led approach with inbound marketing can create a magnetic pull that attracts and retains users. This is particularly effective for companies whose products have a strong value proposition and can be easily experienced or tried out. The inbound efforts draw users in with compelling content, while the product-led approach gives them a firsthand experience of the product's value, leading to higher conversion and retention rates.



05. Community and Partner Led: Building Ecosystems

A community-led strategy paired with a partner-led approach can create a thriving ecosystem around your product or service. This is ideal for businesses that benefit from creating a larger ecosystem of services or products. By building a community of users and engaging partners who add value to your offering, you create a network effect that can exponentially increase your reach and impact.

In conclusion, the key to successfully combining GTM strategies lies in understanding your market, your product, and your audience. It's about finding the right mix that aligns with your business goals and resonates with your target customers. Like a maestro leading an orchestra, the successful integration of these strategies can lead to a powerful and harmonious market presence, striking the right chord with your audience and leading your business to new heights of success.



8.0

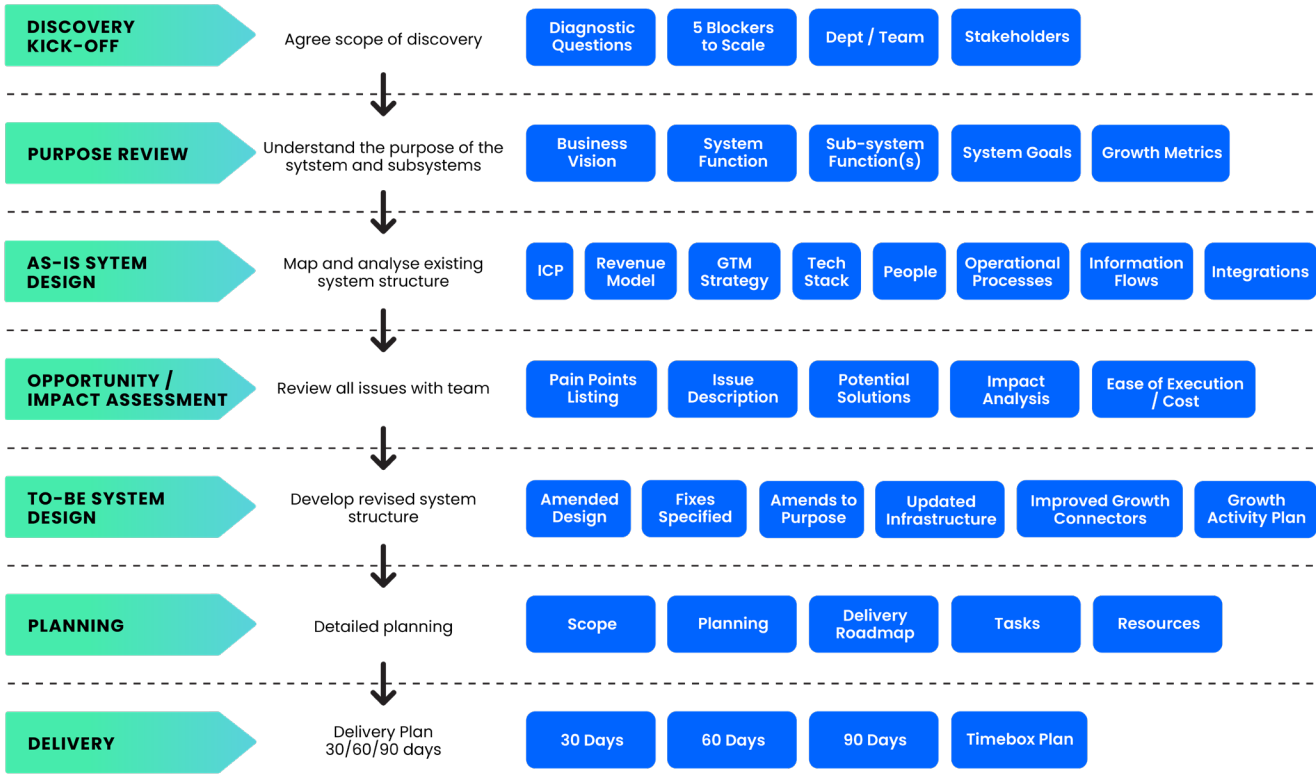
How to Implement Your GTM Strategy Using GSD

Putting a plan down on paper is great, but how do you actually work out where the gaps are in your current strategy? Earlier in the playbook we discussed some diagnostic questions and 5 common stages where your growth can be inhibited and these can now be used to get a quick fix on what is actually going wrong.

We would wholeheartedly recommend completing this exercise across the entire customer journey, but this can be best achieved in conjunction with a professional partner like a RevOpsLab. However, it is achievable at a more localised level when zeroing in on a problem area.

The Growth System Design Discovery Framework can be used to guide you through mapping your existing growth system, analysing it, designing an updated system and planning to implement it.

FIGURE 5: GSD DISCOVERY FRAMEWORK



8.1

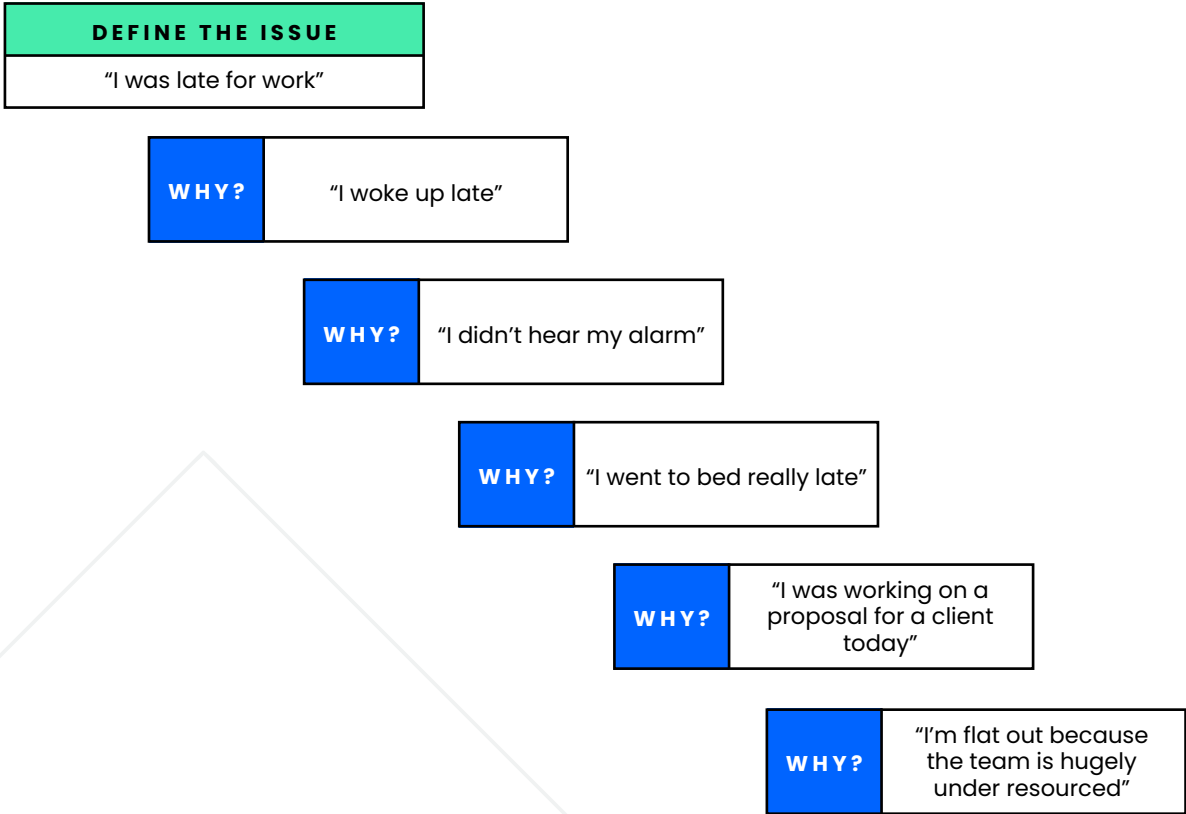
Discovery Kick-off

The kickoff of the Growth System Design Discovery process is a crucial phase in optimising your business’s growth potential. This section delves into the initial steps of this process, leveraging the 15 diagnostic questions and 5 blockers to scale, as discussed earlier. The discovery phase focuses on pinpointing areas of the system requiring urgent attention. It involves detailed engagement with various departments, key stakeholders, and individual contributors to gather a comprehensive understanding of the current state of the system or subsystem. This collaborative approach facilitates an in-depth analysis, leading to the creation of an ‘as-is system design’. This design serves as a baseline for identifying inefficiencies and areas for improvement, setting the stage for the development of a more effective and efficient growth system.

It is worth remembering that in system design we can’t look at any one part of the system in isolation, we must also take into or scope of work the adjacent subsystems, particularly those that directly impact the prospect or customer, a classic example of this would be looking at an issue related to not being able to close deals. We must take a deep dive into the sales org, but not without considering the inflow of leads from marketing and the contingent systems and processes in play, but also the work of pre-sales and the potentially even the product/market fit of what is being sold if the data directs us in that direction.

The purpose of the kick off is primarily to agree the scope of the discovery phase and bring key stakeholders into the conversation. In the kick off you will focus on the expectations of the stakeholders and will focus particularly on the process to arrive at the initial ‘as-is’ system design, which is as follows:

FIGURE 6: 5 WHYS PRINCIPLE



01. Initial Assessment:

Use the 15 diagnostic questions to assess various aspects of the organisation. This will highlight key areas needing attention.



02. Identifying Blockers:

Apply the 5 blockers to scale to identify specific challenges hindering growth.



04. Stakeholder Engagement:

Engage with departments, key stakeholders, and individual contributors to gather diverse insights into your initial assessment and identification of blockers. There are various methods you can use to collect initial feedback and this will be situation dependent, but keep in mind the principles of the 5 Whys. This is a great exercise for getting to the root cause of an issue, just don't feel you always need to ask why 5 times exactly in every situation, it will definitely become



05. Data Collection:

Collect quantitative data from relevant technology in associated parts of the organisation. The objective here is to validate and quantify the issues highlighted earlier in the process. Let's say we feel we aren't converting leads into customers at the right rate and we are missing target. We need to not just understand the conversion rate, but how this stacks up against industry benchmarks, how does this rate differ between individual sellers, industry verticals or organisation sizes. We then need to look at things like the reasons for loss recorded in CRM, where are the themes? If we don't have this, we need to collect it from the sellers directly. We then need to look backwards, where are the leads we are closing coming from vs the ones that aren't closing. What percentage of total leads are even being accepted by sales and so on.



06. Data Analysis:

Having collected data, we now need to use it to further drill down into the problem areas to give us the scope for the next phase. Remember to pull your stakeholders back in at this point to share the data. Try not to propose the reasons why things are how they are at this stage as the additional information that can be gained from open discourse on the data is as considerable as the potential for this to become adversarial.

This process ensures a thorough understanding of where the root of the problem lies and gives us a data driven starting point for the rest of the process.

8.2

Purpose Review

Having identified the initial focus area or areas from use of the diagnostic questions and blockers to scale and agreed the scope of discovery in the kick-off it will have become apparent which areas (or sub-systems) of the business are in the spotlight. As budding Growth System Designers you will no doubt now be seeing systems everywhere and the subsystems at play within the context of your broader organisational system should be defined at this point.

The reason being is that we will start assessing the current system from its very starting point – purpose. As discussed in section 6.1 an organisation does not have a singular purpose and we should initially start to document the vision of the organisation, it's core functional purpose, the functional purpose of the subsystems we are scrutinising. These may seem obvious, trivial even, but documenting them is crucial as we are trying to develop as complete a picture as possible and at this stage we don't know what we don't know, missing anything out is a potential lost opportunity to make a connection later in the process.

From here we get into the meat of goal analysis. Depending on the goal setting system used by the organisation the ease of access to these goals will be variable. Remembering we are looking not just at the goals themselves, but crucially the relationship between them. Our initial objective should be to create a sort of goal waterfall or hierarchy, showing how strongly the goals in the subsystem ladder up to the goals of the larger organisational system and its vision of its future state.

Our focus should be on fit and alignment. Do the goals of individual contributors directly align to the goals of the team itself, if all the teams in the department achieve their goals, are the departmental goals achieved by default? And so on.

What you will find typically is strong vertical alignment of goals. I.e. the goals of individual contributors will map well to the teams and departmental goals and on up to the wider organisational purpose. Goal conflict is typically most evident when you look at the horizontal alignment of purpose between teams. In a revenue system, the typical way to map this is between upstream and downstream departments within the typical customer journey. However, be aware that goal conflict can occur anywhere. Resource allocation is another source of goal conflict that occurs in a non-linear way. It is less prevalent in organisations with clear departmental budgets, but anyone who has ever heard their leadership team say "... that's a great idea, but we just don't have the budget." has experienced this type of goal conflict.

Finally, we look at growth metrics, here it is important to be focused rather than through, activity metrics are everywhere and we will never have the time to analyse all of them. Our preferred approach is to check for the presence of a 'north star' metric, if a team or department has a clear and commonly held understanding of how it is measuring success, then most likely this is a type of north star metric and your focus should be here when assessing alignment. If you are confronted by a myriad of packed dashboards then alarm bells should ring.

8.3

As-is System Design

In this section we focus on developing a comprehensive approach to mapping your current system. When getting the 'knack' of this process it pays to start small, try not to take on the entire revenue system of your publicly traded company at your first attempt!

The objective here is to create an accurate (but manageable) map of how your current system operates, paying particular attention to the 'human in loop' growth connectors we discussed earlier – information flows and processes. These are in many ways the hardest things to 'map' as they are often intangible and inconsistent. It pays to ask the same questions to different team members and build a composite view of what is really happening noting areas of high divergence for your pain points review later on.

When mapping a system it is typical to use the language of stocks and flows, there is not time for a detailed overview here (read Thinking in Systems – A Primer for more information), but in its simplest form a stocks and flows diagram would look like this:

FIGURE 7: A SIMPLE STOCKS AND FLOWS DIAGRAM



Essentially, what this allows us to do is consider the dynamic function of the system by looking not just at the elements in the system, but the 'fuel' flowing through it, be this leads, or opportunities, or emails, or whatever. The important thing to note is that we understand the behaviour of the system (in very simple terms) and can thus change the stock in the system by manipulating the inflows and outflows.

Depending on the system or subsystems you are mapping the elements within the system will be different. The important thing is to 'zoom out' far enough so that you see the system in its entirety. Some key topics you may need to consider during the mapping process are:

01. Market Mapping:

Identify your target audience, which involves understanding who your customers are and their needs. Typically this would include documentation of your Ideal Customer Profile (ICP), Target Account Lists (TAL - If using ABM) and Total Addressable Market (TAM). The crucial part of this is to document what is actually happening now, as opposed to what it may say on a presentation you have in the business. Recording variances between plan and reality are critical later in pain points analysis.

02. Product Mapping:

Clarify what your products or services are, focusing on how they meet the needs of your target market and how they stack up against the competition in the view of your target market. There is a sad fact that great sales and marketing teams can't overcome poor product market fit. This is an area of particular scrutiny if you have identified an issue relating to closing deals, but can also manifest itself at demand generation or renewals quite strongly.

03. Revenue Modelling:

Revenue modelling is typically concerned with the development of models to forecast revenue, considering different scenarios and market conditions. In growth systems analysis we take the view that when it comes to revenue growth we need to have a strong understanding of how our pricing may contribute to growth. Is the product too expensive, or too cheap? Is the pricing model too difficult to understand or too restrictive? Are our minimum contract terms hindering product appraisal, are we charging too much for onboarding etc?

04. Revenue Operations Analysis:

There are many definitions of revenue operations, but when we talk about RevOps we are referring to the mechanism for aligning people, processes, data and technology within the organisation. When mapping your as-is system, the RevOps structure is often a great way to overlay real customer experiences and thus this section will form the mainstay of your 'as-is' mapping.

The way we would normally start doing this is with a customer journey workshop where we capture the step-by-step customer journey through the part of the process within the scope of discovery, the digital and human touchpoints on this journey, the associated processes, technology, the data captured, the metrics used to measure success and crucially the issues reported by the team for each stage.

Once you have mapped how a customer flows through your RevOps systems and processes, you then need to overlay onto this diagnostics on how the system is functioning, three of the key areas that we tend to look at once the initial mapping is complete are these:

- a. **CRM Maturity & Adoption:** Assess the maturity and adoption rate of your Customer Relationship Management system to ensure it's fully leveraged.
- b. **Data and Insight Quality:** Ensure that the data collected is high-quality and provides actionable insights.
- c. **Pipeline Effectiveness:** Measure the deal velocity and close rates of your sales pipeline/s and individual sellers to assess its effectiveness.
- d. **Process Adherence:** Measure how closely the teams are following documented processes. If you see significant divergence here alarm bells should ring, as there is a chance that the process you have documented, may not be the actual process followed. Remember our objective is to capture things as they are NOT as they should be.

05. Demand Generation Strategy Evaluation:

The final element of our GTM System is Demand Gen. We have placed this at the end of our list of things to evaluate very purposefully, as whilst the mechanism by which we generate demand is one of the key defining factors of which GTM Strategy/ies we are using, it is not the be all and end all. Here we want to assess the effectiveness of your current strategy to identify areas of improvement. In B2B we always like to call out brand as a standalone area from our demand gen activities, simply because brand is under invested in by almost all brands from the mid-market down and is a critical pillar of long-term success.

- a. **Brand:** The age old question - how do you evaluate brand activity for effectiveness? You can trace back the under-investment we mentioned a moment ago to this very question and the inability of marketers and business leaders to quantify success. In a digital first world we have trained ourselves to value attribution above all else when planning for scale - if I do this, I get that, now I can scale my investment in this.

Brand activity isn't like that, it tends to be expensive and it tends not to have a direct effect you can measure in an analytics tool. It also has a long-tail, if you are doing it and stop, you don't notice the difference. If you aren't doing it and start, you don't notice the difference. It is so easy to come to the conclusion that therefore brand doesn't work, particularly when just 4% of marketers measure campaign effectiveness beyond 6 months. The thing is, brand does work, in fact there is data to suggest brand to demand gen spend should be split 50/50 to drive a sustainable pipeline.

We don't have the time or space here to dive deeper, but [this article from The Drum](#) does a good job at synthesising the argument for brand. The strongest part of which for us is the concept of 'mental availability', simply that people tend to evaluate and buy from the brands they can recall to mind.

When evaluating our brand activity for the purposes of 'as is' mapping, we need to a) answer the question - are we doing any?, b) what we are doing? and c) how are we measuring it, and finally c) what proportion of our budget are we spending on it. The answers to these will likely be very channel specific.

- b. **Demand Generation:** Finally we alight at what most people seem to define as a GTM strategy, which is what are we doing to generate demand? Now this is clearly super important and in our business what we spend a great deal of our time doing on behalf of clients. However, having done the rest of the analysis first and having clearly defined our system purpose we are now in a position to map and evaluate how the brand activity builds on top of these foundations.

The metrics uncovered in the Purpose Review will offer a great guide into the activity being delivered and therefore needing to be mapped. We are not trying to evaluate every single step in every cadence or journey here, in fact it is important not to get too bogged down in this section as typically a huge volume of activity takes place. What we are trying to map is:

1. **Touchpoints/Channels:** What are we using to convey information to the prospect, for instance emails, landing pages, forms etc?
2. **Technology:** What applications are we using to deliver these touchpoints technically?
3. **Processes:** As we move through the journey what processes are invoked, for instance qualification criteria, minimum required fields in CRM, hand-offs between teams of applications, enrollment and gateway criteria etc etc.
4. **Data:** What data are we collecting, at what point are we collecting it, how is this being enforced, where does the data go, is the data integrated across the tech stack and thus visible to all teams, what do we do with the data to derive insight from it?
5. **Measurement:** You will have already captured top level metrics in the Purpose Review, now is the time to map them to the point at which they are collected.
6. **Journey Map:** Finally we pull all of this into a flow diagram format that shows how a prospect moves through this journey. Typically this journey will have multiple starting points and perhaps entirely separate journeys all together based on the lead source or channel that the prospect originates from and what products or services they are looking to procure.

Each point in this section is crucial for understanding if your current growth system aligns with your business objectives and market opportunities. We find it easiest to add a section to your mapping document to capture issues by journey stage, as this helps significantly in [accelerating the opportunity/impact assessment in the next stage.](#)



8.4

Opportunity/Impact Assessment (OIA)

In this section, we delve into the process of opportunity/impact assessment, a critical component for any business looking to prioritise its initiatives based on cost-benefit analysis. It is worth noting that when we talk about 'cost', we are talking about both time, money, effort and opportunity cost and thus the efficient deployment of both human, physical and financial capital stocks. The OIA is the process we use for 'as is' system analysis, with the main objective being to promote system improvements to the 'to be' mapping section and beyond.

This process involves several key steps:

**01. Listing Pain Points:**

Start by identifying and listing the pain points or challenges identified in the as-is system design and earlier in the discovery process. This could range from operational inefficiencies to goal conflict issues.

**02. Describing Issues and Potential Solutions:**

For each identified pain point, describe the issue in detail and propose potential solutions. This step requires a thorough understanding of the problem and creative thinking in solution generation.

**03. Impact Analysis:**

Conduct an impact analysis for each proposed solution. This involves assessing the potential benefits and value-add to the business. Consider factors like increased revenue, market share, customer satisfaction, and operational efficiency.

**04. Ease of Execution and Cost Analysis:**

Evaluate how easy or difficult it would be to implement each solution, considering factors like required resources, time, and expertise. Then, conduct a cost analysis to estimate the financial investment needed for each solution.

**05. Cost-Benefit Comparison:**

Compare the estimated cost against the potential benefits of each solution. This will help in prioritising initiatives based on their return on investment (ROI).

**06. Decision-Making:**

Based on the above assessments, make informed decisions about which initiatives to pursue. Prioritise solutions that offer high impact at a reasonable cost and feasibility.

This opportunity/impact assessment process allows businesses to make **data-driven decisions**, prioritising initiatives that offer the **greatest benefit in relation to their cost and feasibility**.

8.5

To-be System Design

Designing an effective Growth System is crucial for any business seeking sustainable growth. In this section we explore the key components in building such a system and as such go beyond the simple documentation of a new customer journey and look beyond to all of the elements that make up the Growth System Design Framework.

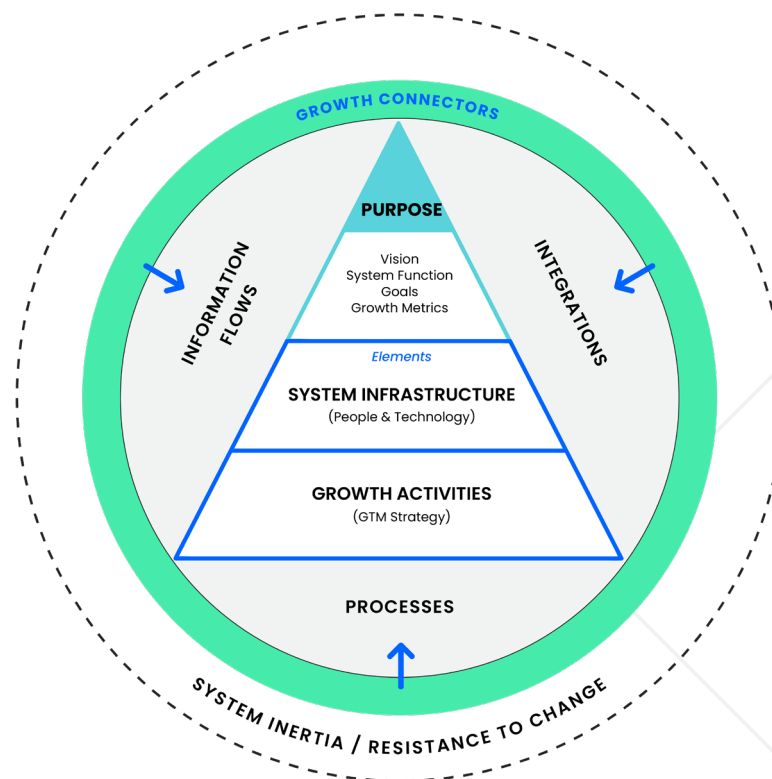
What we are striving for in this section is to take the synthesis of the previous four sections, with a particular focus on the issues identified and promoted from the OIA and work them into a 'to be' system design.

It may sound obvious, but it is worth noting that up to this point we have been in discover and evaluate mode, from this point forward we switch to solutioning. Whilst some solution ideation will have been done within the OIA to enable a judgement to be made about resource requirements it is in this section that we truly define the future state of the system in question.

It is also worth bearing in mind that it is not the role of the system designer to know everything there is to know about every element within the system and as such your stakeholders may change at this point as you pull in more technical resources to help you define what is possible.

At this point it is difficult to give precise direction as to how the process should be conducted as the type, size and behavioural characteristics of the system in question and the nature of changes promoted from the OIA will all have a bearing on the method by which you arrive at the 'to be'. However, in this section we aim to give you the guiding principles to use to ensure you maintain a system mindset and don't fall into the trap of focusing on individual elements in isolation.

FIGURE 8: THE GROWTH SYSTEM DESIGN™ MODEL [A REMINDER]



8.5.1

Purpose

As we said earlier, it all starts and ends with 'purpose' and as tempting as it may be to skip forward to the 'what' spend time first on the 'why'. The top of our GSD pyramid is Purpose and this is as important a part of the overall system design as anything else, as you will recall, a system without purpose is not really a system at all.

In the purpose review and OIA you will no doubt have spotted examples of goal conflict or misalignment and the job here is to create a clear hierarchical tree structure of goals that ladder up to the vision of the organisation. It is also worth noting any 'North Star' metrics within the system as discussed earlier as these will give your strongest indicator of system success or failure.

On our journey to refining our purpose/s we need to take into consideration and document all 4 sub-categories of purpose:

Organisation Vision: Where the organisation is trying to get to in the long-term

High-level system purpose: The function of the system or subsystem (make money or send emails etc)

System Goals: E.g. Sales Team = close \$1.2m in net new revenue this FY.

Growth Metrics: MQLs, SQLs, Opportunities, Deal Pipeline Value, Deal Probability etc

You may think that things like Organisational Vision and high-level system purpose will not change, but not interrogating these is a mistake. Organisations change, often far faster than their vision and mission statements, leave no question unasked and indeed unanswered here. **With this in mind, keep these two things in mind as you build your Purpose Tree.**

01.

Aligning on True Purpose:

Start by clearly defining and aligning with your organisation's core purpose. This alignment ensures that all growth strategies and actions are driven by a unified vision and mission.

02.

Measuring the Right Metrics:

Identify and focus on metrics that truly reflect the health and progress of your growth strategies. These should include key performance indicators (KPIs) that align with your business goals. Never get distracted by vanity metrics designed simply to show leadership charts that consistently go up and to the right. Finally, resist the temptation to keep a metric simply because it has always been reported on. Effective metrics are metrics people actually look at and use, the less the better,

It is also important to keep in mind that the Growth Metrics, the things you are using to measure GTM campaign effectiveness, are unlikely to be fully defined until you have completed the mapping process, so remember to return to your Goal Tree and validate its contents at the end.

8.5.2

Elements

The elements in the system are clearly a target rich environment when it comes to the OIA and we suspect most of your proposed updates will sit in this category. This is normal, but an overly strong bias towards the system elements should be a warning flag, as in system design the bits people can see and are targeted on are often the least broken. Ensure you have given proper scrutiny to Purpose and Growth Connectors as these are the most difficult to document and analyse and thus generally where the gold is buried when it comes to system improvements.

As discussed previously we group the system elements into two broad sub-categories – System Infrastructure, for which read people and technology (including data) and Growth Activities, the things we actually do, create, send and deliver to bring our GTM strategy to life. These two elements manifest themselves very differently within the system design. As Growth System Designers our focus is not on creating sales and marketing plans, as important as these are, it is on creating a system environment for these plans to succeed. As such our ‘to be’ system design may reference and inform updates to these plans, but it is not necessary for them to form part of the specific output of this phase.

Having said this, it is also where our documentation of the elements will start! Within the ‘As Is’ mapping and OIA you will have identified lead sources, channels, touchpoints and technology, as well as areas for improvement, these will all most likely form inputs, outputs or nodes within your system model. The reason we do this first more often than not, is that the GTM Strategy creates the external interfaces through which data is ingested into the system and it is the system infrastructure through which it flows once it has entered the metaphorical building.

01. GTM Strategy Design:

Design journeys that are scalable and adaptable. This involves mapping out workflows, identifying bottlenecks, and creating sub-systems that can evolve with the business. As we discussed earlier, the objective is to design out fragility and design in agility. What this means is that you need to design a strategy that harnesses the data you are collecting, but enables rapid utilisation of insight to effect micro-scale or even system-scale changes.

02. Creating Strong System Infrastructure:

Develop a robust Revenue Operations (RevOps) infrastructure. RevOps streamlines sales, marketing, and service operations, ensuring efficiency and alignment across all revenue-generating activities. Your system infrastructure must be defined by its performance against three critical factors:

- a. **Zero meaningful data loss:** One of the core tenets of RevOps is to create a smooth journey for a prospect from first touch all the way through to customer advocacy. To achieve this then we must pass the data we learn at every step in the journey along to the next application so that it can be utilised to best effect by the team that will deliver the next step of the customer journey.
- b. **Humans looped in only when valuable:** For many years it was thought that the pinnacle of automation was straight-through-processing (STP) and much was written about the ‘autonomous enterprise’. Much like flying cars, this was a vision of the future that hasn’t come true, not because it isn’t possible, but because it isn’t practical or even desirable. When we think about automation design now, we think about orchestration – the technology initiating the next step in the process, even if that next step is delivered by a person. The principle we must work within is that our expensive human resource is there to do things that applications don’t do well, like have sales conversations and not things like data entry.
- c. **Adoption first mindset:** What many years working with CRM has taught us is that the first stumbling block of any new working practice is adoption. No matter how clever and well researched your system design is, it will fail if it isn’t adopted. To combat this we must keep an adoption first mindset, where we must combine a strong understanding of the team’s who will be doing the doing with high-levels of empathy. We must put ourselves in the shoes of the ones who will have to adopt your system design, simplicity is key and ongoing training, resources and team champions are all great tools in ensuring that our new system design has the desired effect on growth.



8.5.3

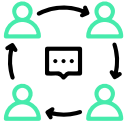
Growth Connectors

We said earlier on that the greatest impact to be derived from Growth System Design was through the alignment of purpose and the optimisation of the Growth Connectors and it's here we land last but by no means least.

When we talk about Growth Connectors in reality what we are talking about is the flow of information around an organisation. This can be through people or through technology and applications. In this area we straddle and harmonise the three worlds of automation, process design and what in many of today's organisations is the domain of the Chief of Staff.

We are seeking to take a system view of how we collaborate to deliver growth and many of the things we will tackle here will have been mentioned, perhaps just in passing in the initial phases of the discovery process. The markers to look out for are those throw away comments that include phrases like - "if someone just told us", "if only we had known this earlier", "we never speak to", "that isn't recorded anywhere" or "we have to ask the customer the those questions again".

Here we are also looking behind the scenes of any goal conflict uncovered in the purpose review. Simply put, it is unlikely goal conflict would exist if communication was effective. Finally we are also addressing any instances of double entry or manual entry of data at this phase.



01. Ensuring Information Flow:

Here we are looking to establish practices that guarantee the free flow of information across departments and relevant external stakeholders. This transparency is vital for making informed decisions and maintaining agility. However, we have to be very specific here about what we mean by 'the flow of information'. It is tempting to believe that just because something exists in a place where it can be accessed by another team or even team member, that it has been accessed and more to the point understood. Keep in mind the concept of knowledge transfer, because for us it better emphasises the receiving of information and not just the transmitting.

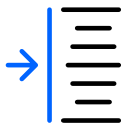
It is also important to keep in mind the role of 3rd party suppliers and partners in this flow of information. Agencies and consultants bear special mention here, we have seen time and again organisations that hire 3rd parties for their expertise but then cut them out of internal decision making and collaboration. Bring your entire team together irrespective of what the company name is on their payslip. Similarly with companies that have a channel model, build partner collaboration into your overall system design.



02. Role of Integration and Automation:

Leveraging technology to integrate and automate processes not only improves efficiency but also ensures consistency in actions and decisions across the organisation. We are huge advocates of iPaaS tools like Workato as we have seen the transformative power they can have on organisations or most sizes.

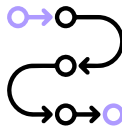
The iPaaS tool should be viewed not just as the mechanism for getting data between systems, but as the engine for orchestration of all of your GTM activities and processes. It has the power to enable you to reimagine how work gets done in your organisation not just by automating manual tasks but totally rearchitecting them with the use of AI and composable architecture approaches.



03. Management Rhythm for Alignment and Information Flow:

Developing a management rhythm that fosters regular communication and alignment within teams is critical. This top down approach underlines the aligned and unified approach being adopted or already in practice and short-cuts any interdepartmental politics.

This rhythm should include regular meetings, reporting, and updates that keep everyone on the same page. It is important to sync things like 1:2:1 meetings about the achievement of personal objectives with the way team and departmental objectives are managed up through the organisation. Really what we are concerned with here is the management of progress towards purpose and the better this can be systematised the faster the purpose will be realised.



04. Process Design & Documentation:

Processes are the cornerstone of any scalable organisation, but so rarely are they effectively created and maintained. As laughable as it seems, the key is to have a process for processes! Good process management is typified by the following:

- **Process Standardisation:** We suggest standardising and categorising your processes, create standard formats or templates for a P1 process right the way down to a P3 process or even beyond, where P1 is a process of the greatest importance.
- **Process Storage:** It is also critical to have a central process repository where processes can be accessed and maintained. We like Bit.ai as it is relatively inexpensive and simple to use, as well as allowing you to iFrame in Miro documents, which means they can be nice and visual, as well as including links to more information or associated systems etc.
- **Process Design:** The document is not the process, the established way of working is (whether you like it or not) this is why it pays to design for implementation, prioritising simplicity and reinforcing with resources and training to ensure adoption as we discussed

Incorporating these elements into your Growth System Design will lay a strong foundation for sustained growth and success.



8.6

Planning

Implementing the new Growth System Design involves a strategic and comprehensive approach. It is one thing to commit something to paper, quite another to bring it to life within the organisation. This is where implementation planning comes in. Ultimately what we are trying to do is ease the new plan into the day to day operation of the organisation as seamlessly as possible without interrupting the day-to-day running of the revenue engine.

Naturally the bigger the change the more disruptive it will be, but using the following steps (or better yet a skilled project manager!) will help:

Project Scoping:



Initially, define the scope of work outlined in the new system design. This involves identifying the specified fixes from the design documentation relating to purpose, infrastructure, growth connectors and of course to the GTM activities themselves specified in the activity plan.

Project Planning:



Next, develop a detailed plan. This should include setting clear goals, timelines, and milestones, the “Project Management Body of Knowledge” by PMI is a great guide to detailed project planning.

Delivery Roadmap:



Create a delivery roadmap to visualise the timeline and sequence of activities. This roadmap should align with your strategic objectives and include key milestones, as suggested by Roman Pichler in “Agile Product Management with Scrum”.

Task Creation and Allocation:



Break down the strategy into specific tasks and allocate them to appropriate team members. This ensures that each aspect of the new system design is effectively managed.

Resource Requirements:



Assess the resources needed, including budget, personnel, and technology. “The Lean Startup” by Eric Ries emphasises the importance of efficient resource management in successful strategy implementation.

Implementing a new or updated Growth System requires careful planning, clear communication, and efficient resource management. By following these steps, businesses can enhance their chances of success. As we will discuss in section 9.0 the key to a successful implementation, is about ensuring that you bring the organisation along with you and in so doing overcome resistance to change. Project planning is key, but effective communication will make the greatest difference to your chance of success.

8.7

Delivery:

Harnessing 30, 60, 90-Day Plans for Accelerated Project Success

In the practice of Growth System Design, the creation of 30, 60, and 90-day implementation plans is pivotal. The reason being is that they create a framework for effecting noticeable change quickly. As you have discovered, Growth System Design is all in the planning and this takes time to get right, when we move to implementation it is important to move quickly and prioritise the way the team feels about the changes. These timeframes serve as critical milestones in the implementation process, helping to timebox activities and demonstrate early progress, thereby accelerating time to value.

30-Day Plan:

The initial 30 days focus on laying the groundwork. This includes finalising the project team, setting up communication channels. The goal is to establish a solid foundation and gain quick wins to prove value within this first month of the delivery phase.

60-Day Plan:

The next phase involves deeper system integration and beginning to implement strategic initiatives. This period is crucial for reviewing initial results, making necessary adjustments, and intensifying efforts in key areas.

90-Day Plan:

This final phase is about solidifying gains and ensuring sustainability. By now, the updated system should be functioning effectively, and the focus shifts to optimising processes and documenting best practices for future scalability.

These staggered plans enable a structured approach to project management, ensuring that each phase builds upon the successes of the previous one. This methodology not only demonstrates progress but also ensures that the project stays on track and achieves its objectives within the set timeframe.



9.0

Keeping it Together: Overcoming Organisational Inertia and Resistance to Change

As we have discussed, in the journey of business growth, crafting your Go-To-Market (GTM) strategy using systems thinking principles is a significant growth accelerator. However, crafting your plan is just the start, implementation is everything. When managing change, there will always be those that try to derail you, be they well-intentioned meddlers or dyed-in-the-wool naysayers navigating away from the many siren calls of strategic failure. It is important to keep the following three points in mind.

9.1

Setting Expectations and Sticking to Them

The first step in a robust GTM strategy is defining purpose. This involves defining goals, milestones, and performance indicators. As Meadows highlights in “Thinking in Systems,” clear objectives provide direction and focus. Sticking to these expectations ensures consistency and aligns efforts with the overall vision. However, just because we have purpose, doesn’t mean we have clearly articulated it to all stakeholders.

Staying the course towards strategy success requires all parties in the organisation to stay focused, stay aligned and crucially to stick to the plan or at least a continually optimised version of it. To do this the number 1 tool you have in your toolbox is to not overpromise. In business, as in life, a desire for instant gratification is commonplace and big changes take time. It is important to make this very clear at the start. In the early stages of the plan success will not be measured in sales, it may not even be measured in leads. What it will be measured in will be individual to the business and the strategy they choose to follow. It could be community members, engaged target accounts or new channel partner conversations.

Whatever it is, the death knell of any new strategy is a lack of definition about what success looks like and how long it is going to take, make sure this is clear to all stakeholders before you start. It is perhaps also worth mentioning that just because you told them something, doesn’t mean they have internalised and accepted it, check understanding, early and often and make sure this understanding goes all the way to senior leadership.

9.2

Alignment of Team, Goals, and Planning

The alignment of your team with the business goals and plans and indeed with each other cannot be compromised. Peter Senge’s “The Fifth Discipline” emphasises the importance of shared vision in fostering commitment and enhancing team performance. Ensuring every team member understands and works towards common objectives is vital for strategic coherence and effectiveness.

Lack of alignment is one of the most common causes of strategy failure and more often than not this comes down to goal conflict. As much as frameworks like OKR promote top down goal setting, rarely do we see this working in practice. This isn’t a failure of the framework, but the application, with departmental and individual contributor goals optically ladder up to the organisation objectives and vision, but not being cross-checked for alignment with the goals of other departments and teams.

A classic example of this is seen time and again between marketing and sales. Let’s say the business is a scaling software company and want to double sales YoY, they have a great solution and want to build greater awareness of the way their product solves key issues in a number of industry vertical related use cases. Marketing teams, particularly in the world of B2B, typically default to a content marketing led playbook and thus measure performance in the number of MQL’s generated. If you are trying to build awareness of a product and a detailed understanding of its merits, content can be a great option. The goals for this team then naturally becomes related to the number of MQLs they can generate and of course the easy mistake to make is to think more = better. We don’t have time to go into the issues related to even describing a content download as an MQL (spoiler alert – a single

content download is not an MQL). However, the point is more often than not all of these ‘MQLs’ are passed to sales to qualify and begin selling to.

Sales on the other hand may have a goal of developing accounts they have some sort of a relationship with by multi-threading and getting into a detailed discovery process and building a groundswell of awareness of the way the product is uniquely positioned to solve for the issues identified.

When both of these plans are presented back to leadership they both optically relate to the organisational goal and the plans are approved. Now we all know what happens next. Sales are busy, they are having exciting conversations that can lead to revenue. Marketing are working hard making great content and creative and deploying their ad budget for an efficient CPA. Marketing pushes all of these MQLs to sales to qualify, or at the very least sales accept, and.... Nothing. Sales is too busy, they say the leads are not high enough quality to spend their time on, this becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Marketing complain their strategy would work if only sales would do their bit, sales complain they get no inbound enquiries. The process has broken down.

Aligning cross-functionally from the goal setting and planning phase forward is a critical success factor. Stress test this and consider it from the perspective of the prospect journey from lead to customer, remove any blockers early and remember – people will do what they are measured on.



9.3

Creating a Process for Optimization

Lastly, establishing a continuous process for optimization is essential. This means regularly reviewing and adjusting strategies based on feedback and performance metrics. According to Kim Warren in “Strategy Management Dynamics,” this iterative process enables businesses to adapt and evolve their strategies in response to changing market dynamics.

The continuous optimization of a Go-To-Market (GTM) strategy is an iterative and dynamic process, essential for staying relevant in the ever-changing business landscape. **This process involves several key steps:**



In-depth Market Analysis

Beyond surface-level data, delve deeper into market analysis. This involves understanding customer behaviour, competitive landscape, and emerging trends. Advanced analytics tools can provide actionable insights.



Iterative Approach

Adopt an agile methodology. Make small, frequent adjustments to your strategy rather than large, infrequent overhauls. This approach allows for more flexibility and rapid response to market changes.



Incorporate Customer Feedback Loops:

Regularly gather and analyse customer feedback. This can be through surveys, focus groups, or social media listening. Understanding customer needs and experiences is crucial for refining your GTM strategy.



Cross-Functional Collaboration:

Ensure that there is seamless communication and collaboration across different departments. Marketing, sales, product development, and customer service teams should work in synergy to provide a unified approach to market strategy.



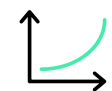
Performance Monitoring:

Use Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and metrics to continuously monitor the performance of your GTM strategy. This includes sales growth, market share, customer acquisition costs, and customer satisfaction scores.



Learning from Successes and Failures:

Analyse both successful initiatives and failures to understand what works and what doesn't. This learning is invaluable in refining future strategies.



Staying Ahead of the Curve:

Keep an eye on industry innovations and technological advancements. Embracing new tools and techniques can give you a competitive edge in your GTM efforts.



Sustainability and Scalability:

Consider the long-term sustainability and scalability of your GTM strategy. It's important that the strategy not only addresses current market conditions but is also adaptable for future growth.

By continuously optimising your GTM strategy with a focus on market trends, customer feedback, cross-functional collaboration, and performance monitoring, you can ensure that your business remains agile and responsive to the ever-changing market dynamics.

In conclusion, by setting clear expectations, ensuring alignment, and creating a process for ongoing optimization, businesses can effectively use systems thinking principles to drive growth through their GTM strategy.



10.0

Ready to Put Theory into Practice?

In this playbook we have delved into the application of Growth System Design to GTM planning and by now you should have a clear understanding of what is possible by applying systems thinking to your organisation.

For those wanting to go deeper a detailed book on the subject will be available later on in 2024, but in the meantime why not get in touch with us to discuss your own organisational challenges. [connectedABM is part of rev.space group](#) and our strategy team are able to help you connect the dots to growth with support in designing your own growth system, as well as implementation support in the realms of digital product design, performance marketing and search, revenue operations as a service, IPaaS projects and account-based marketing.

Get in touch to change the growth trajectory of your organisation.

rev.space