// WHO PAYS · THE GTM THESIS · CHECKLIST

Is It Time to Hand It Over?

Founders should sell and market themselves first. These are the signs it's time to bring someone in, and the order to do it in.

- [ ] **Deals from strangers keep closing**
  Not just from your network. And the type of customer you win has stayed the same for about two quarters.
- [ ] **You can write down who buys and why**
  Who the buyer is, the typical deal size, the pitch that works, and who to say no to. Otherwise your first hire spends months figuring that out.
- [ ] **Demand is bigger than your calendar**
  There are more good conversations than you can take.
- [ ] **You're managing freelancers instead of growing**
  Landing pages, ads, content, each with a different freelancer, and you're the one holding it together.
- [ ] **You're three to six months early**
  Hiring a first marketer usually takes three to six months. If you wait until you're desperate, you lose two quarters.

A simple order

Judgment first, then people who execute, then automation.

01 **Sell it yourself first.** Close 10 to 20 customers, some from cold outreach, until the type of customer stops changing.

02 **Write down who buys and why.** Buyer, deal size, the pitch that works, who to say no to.

03 **Make your first hire hands-on.** Salespeople first if you sell through sales. A product marketer or demand person if the bottleneck is the message or the leads.

04 **Get senior judgment early, even part-time.** Someone has to own who you sell to and why.

05 **Add a GTM engineer after the strategy is set.** Automation makes a working motion faster, and a broken one fail faster.

06 **Hire the VP or CMO when there's a team to lead.**

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From "Who Should Run Your Go-to-Market, and When to Hire Them" · Who Pays, the GTM thesis