



25 GROWTH
HACKS **X**

25

GROWTH HACKS

for your inspiration

In this white paper, we'll showcase 25 companies and the hacks they performed to realize growth. If you've heard about growth hacking before, you'll probably know about the frequently cited examples from giants such as Dropbox and AirBnb. So, we've decided to dig a little deeper and found some other awesome unconventional examples. Growth hacking can be implemented at companies of any size. It doesn't require many resources, nor does it always have to be digital. We've included both online and offline growth hacks to give you some ideas :-)

Get inspired and get ready to change your mindset! #LetsGrow

RevelX



HACK #1: HOTMAIL

WHO

Hotmail, a free email service

THEIR CHALLENGE

Finding people to sign up and use their service.

THE GROWTH HACK

Hotmail launched a referral campaign. At each email footer, they added the following phrase: "PS. I love you. Get your free e-mail at Hotmail".

RESULTS

Hotmail first launched in July 1996. 18 months later, they had over 12 million users and were acquired by Microsoft.

Funnel stage

Referral

Channel

Email



The
World's
FREE
Web-Based
Email

© 1996-1997 Hotmail. All rights reserved.



HACK #2: LISTERINE

WHO

Listerine, a company that sells mouthwash

THEIR CHALLENGE

Listerine had troubles marketing their product mouthwash to customers.

THE GROWTH HACK

They came up with a medical condition: Halitus (Latin for 'breath') + Osis (sounds rather medical) = Halitosis. Listerine ran advertisements talking about the unmarried Edna, who remained single as she watched her friends getting married. It's not that she wasn't a great gal! It's just, she had this condition..

RESULTS

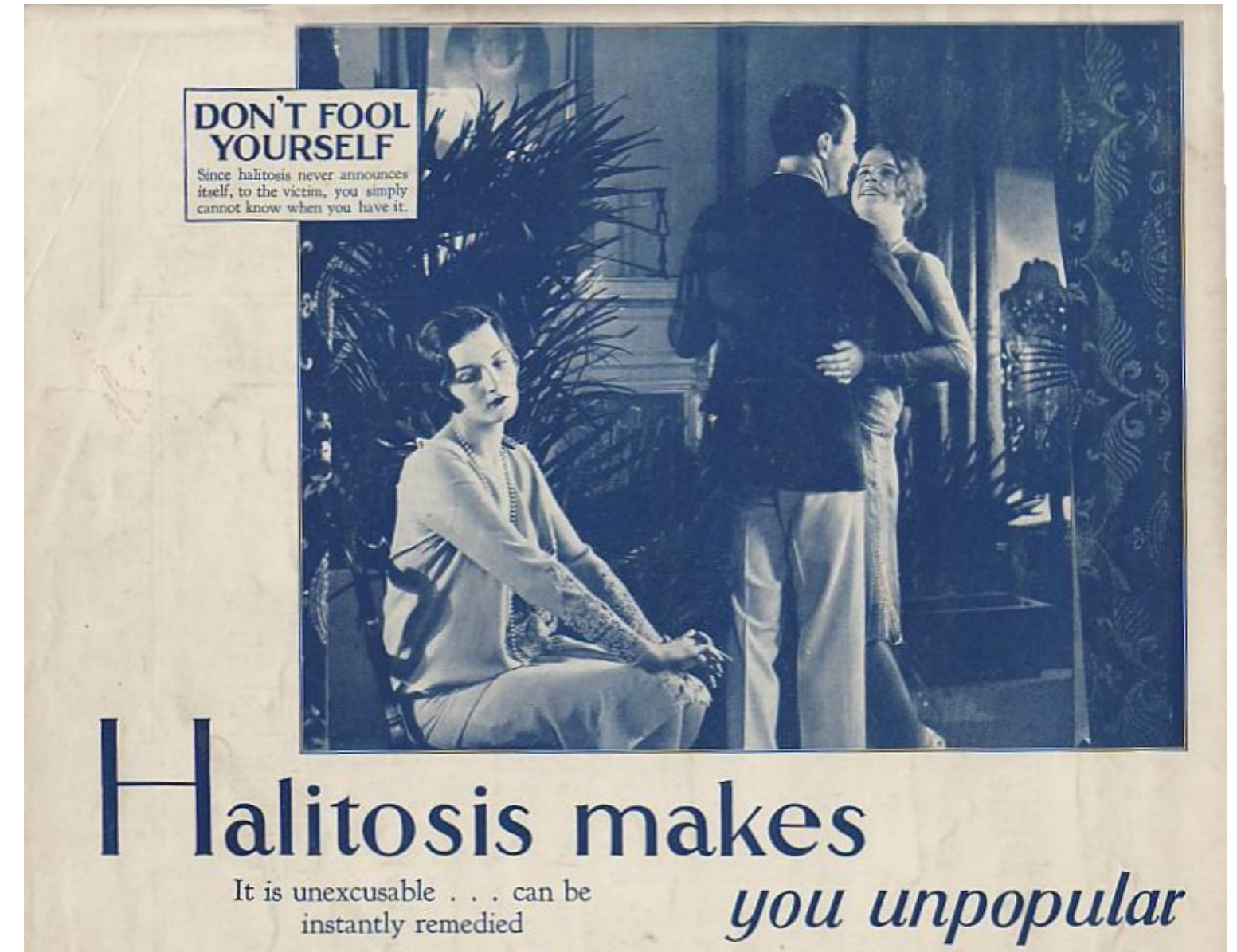
People began to believe that they had a condition which could be treated with antiseptic, not just an embarrassing flaw that had to be covered up. So, Listerine basically created a problem for the solution they had already created.

Funnel stage

Acquisition

Channel

Offline ads



LISTERINE[®]



HACK #3: SPOTIFY

WHO

Spotify, an online music streaming service

THEIR CHALLENGE

Spotify was looking for tactics to increase its user base.

THE GROWTH HACK

They created a Facebook integration in 2011. It allowed users to post the tracks that they're listening to on Facebook.

RESULTS

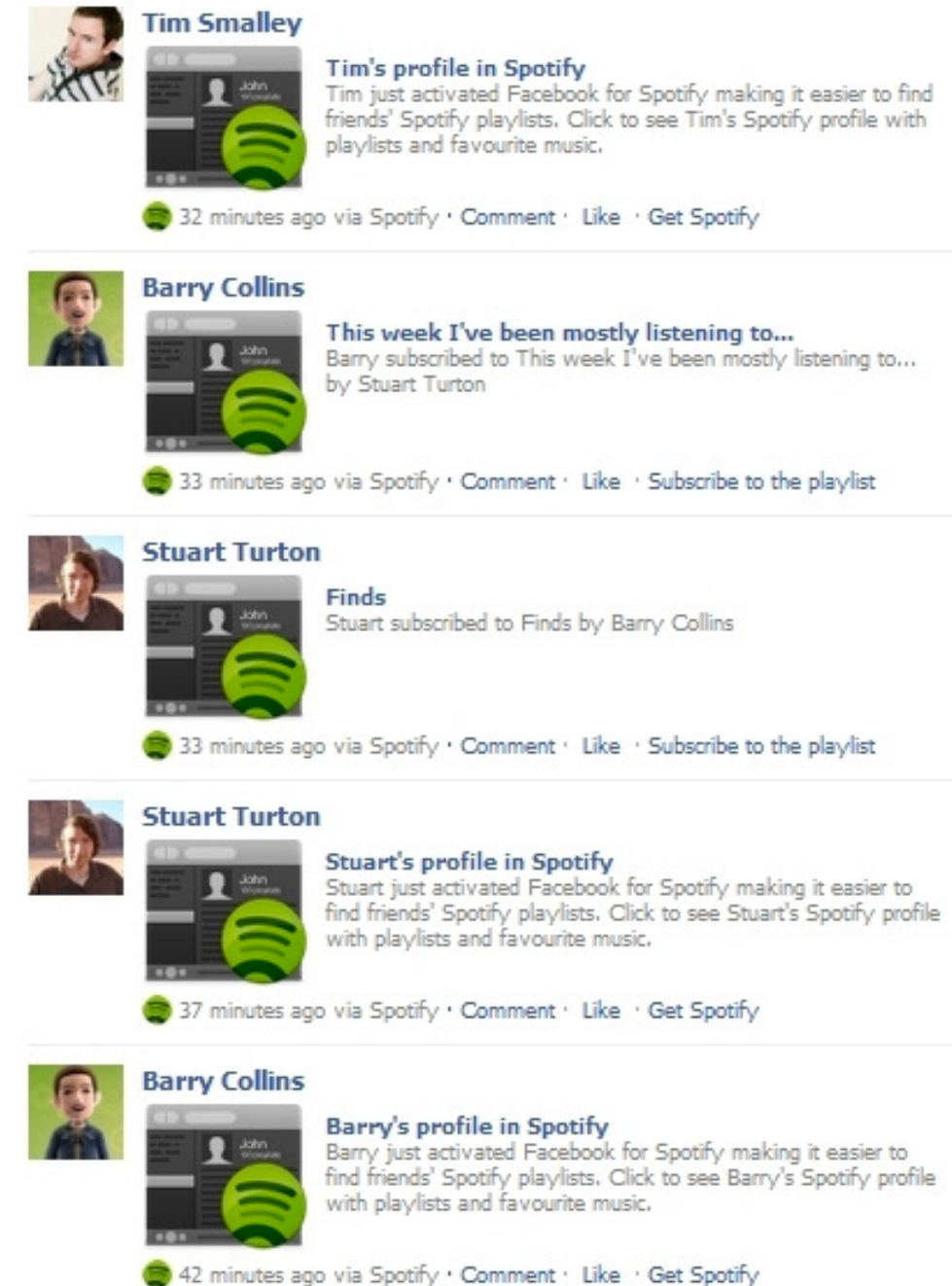
As a result, Spotify was placed in front of everyone on Facebook. Its user base grew exponentially.

Funnel stage

Awareness/Acquisition

Channel

Facebook



HACK #4: DROPBOX

WHO

Dropbox, a cloud based service for file storage

THEIR CHALLENGE

Dropbox tried Google AdWords in the early days, but the cost to acquire new customers was higher than the average customer lifetime value.

THE GROWTH HACK

Dropbox introduced an easy-to-use referral program: invite your friends and get extra storage space.

RESULTS

It was cheaper and more effective than ads. Also, in a 15-month period, the company went from having 100,000 users to having 4 million users.

Funnel stage

Referral

Channel

Email



Dropbox

Get up to 16 GB of free Dropbox space!

Invite your friends to join Dropbox, and for each one who installs Dropbox we'll give you both 500 MB of bonus space. If you need even more space, [upgrade your account](#).

mikethetiger@lsu.edu Send

More ways to invite your friends

Invite your Gmail contacts Copy link Share on Facebook



HACK #5: AIRBNB

WHO

AirBnB, an online marketplace and hospitality service, enabling people to lease or rent short-term lodging

THEIR CHALLENGE

Finding people to use their platform.

THE GROWTH HACK

Airbnb understood where to find their target audience online. So, they used the existing platform Craigslist (similar to Marktplaats). By providing an option for homeowners to automatically post to Craigslist, Airbnb reached more potential users.

RESULTS

A lot of free traffic and exponential growth. Today, Airbnb has over 12 million rental locations and over 100 million users worldwide.

Funnel stage

Awareness/Acquisition

Channel

Existing platform:
Craigslist



Hi, Stephanie Cl | My Account | Log Out

Post a room

Post to Craigslist

[Return to My Listings](#)

Listing to post: Master Suite (last posted 12 days ago)

Title for Craigslist post:

Remind me when it is time to re-post


[POST TO CRAIGSLIST](#)
or do it manually

← Click Post to Craigslist button

Craigslist Preview

Showcase review from Giusti S

Interested? Got a question? [Contact me here](#)



Bed in private room

\$115 per night
Includes:
• No smoking

Description
3rd person \$20/supplement per night. Max 3. Newly opened elegant Brownstone Guest house with all the charm of a boutique hotel while enjoying a cheap vacation as a true New Yorker. Located in the same House as "Victorian room" and "chic apt/Artist's apt. Master suite - brick wall Brownstone - "W hotel" queen size bed + sofa bed. Beautiful brand new whirlpool private bathroom - fully equipped with linens, towels, wifi, Digital TV, DVD, fridge. House located on brownstone tree-lined quiet street. first floor of the house used as lounge, art gallery for guest (coming mid-march 09). all studios and apartments located on 2nd and 3rd floor. Small restaurants, supermarket, ... [Read full description.](#)

Recent review (7 total)
Giusti said " Nous venons de rentrer de New York , où nous étions logés chez Stéphanie . C'était vraiment formidable : la localisation est parfaite : métro tout proche , quartier très calme , beaucoup de petits restaurants tout autour , sans compter les églises ... (magnifique messe de Pâques avec gospels juste à côté de notre logement) . L'accueil est très agréable , et j'ai eu tout de suite l'impression avec Stéphanie d'être reçue par "la cousine d'Amérique" , qui fait tout ce qu'elle peut pour rendre notre séjour confortable et réussi . On gardera un excellent souvenir du "Studio Chic (magnifique décoration , bain à jacuzzi ...) de Stéphanie et de ses deux craquants petits garçons . Rendez vous pour un prochain séjour , sans hésitation . Simone "

Location
Harlem neighborhood. 2.5mi to Metropolitan Museum of Art, 3.9mi to The Museum of Modern Art (M...), and 4.1mi to Bronx Zoo. [Other nearby points.](#)



HACK #6: DE BEERS

WHO

De Beers, known for creating diamond engagement rings, wedding rings and other diamond jewelry

THEIR CHALLENGE

During the 1930s, the price of diamonds collapsed, and the gemstones were also out of fashion with the younger generation. De Beers had to find a way to increase the demand of diamonds.

THE GROWTH HACK

De Beers created the concept of an “engagement ring”, associating love and marriage with diamonds. It suggested that the size of the diamond was a reflection of the size of a man’s love for his woman.

RESULTS

Men everywhere saved for months to afford the biggest and the best diamond(s). It is now so engrained into western culture, that the overwhelming majority of proposals simply can’t go ahead without a (diamond) ring.

Funnel stage

Awareness/Acquisition

Channel

Offline ad



DE BEERS
JEWELLERY



HACK #7: PRODUCT HUNT

WHO

Product Hunt, a website that lets users share and discover new products

THEIR CHALLENGE

Product Hunt started as a newsletter about new apps & product launches, but soon became a community-driven platform after getting significant traction. The challenge was to make visiting the Product Hunt website a habit for its users.

THE GROWTH HACK

Product Hunt responds to the internal trigger FOMO (fear of missing out) of its users. They do so by reassuring that with every visit, the users are up-to-date with the newest products.

RESULTS

Today, Product Hunt is the most popular platform to launch and discover new apps

Funnel stage

Retention

Channel

Email



Home Collections

Get the best new product discoveries in your inbox daily!

Your email

Today January 24th

- ▲ 174 **Skala Color (Mac)** M
An extraordinary color picker for designers and developers
- ▲ 114 **Userbrain** M
Weekly videos of users testing your site
- ▲ 80 **Odrive**
Your folder to everything online
- ▲ 87 **What'd You Do Yesterday?** M
Stories of what people did yesterday
- ▲ 66 **Sendy version 2.0**
Send newsletters, 100x cheaper



HACK #8: PUMA

WHO

Puma, a sports brand

THEIR CHALLENGE

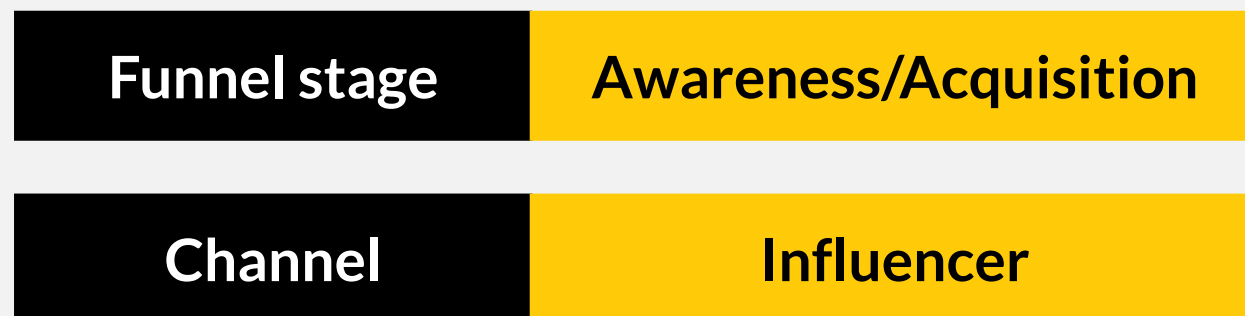
Promote the new Puma King soccer boots.

THE GROWTH HACK

During the World Cup Final of 1970, Puma asked Pele to make a last-second request to the referee to tie his shoelaces. The cameras were all on the world's greatest footballer.

RESULTS

Everyone knew about the new shoes. Puma was publicly affiliated with the best footballer in the world at that time.



HACK #9: HUBSPOT

WHO

HubSpot, a marketing and sales platform that helps companies attract visitors, convert leads, and close customers.

THEIR CHALLENGE

Finding users for their platform.

THE GROWTH HACK

HubSpot has extensive, but costly features. So, they use a 'lock-in' strategy. The CRM product becomes 100% free. For smaller companies, they have a 90% discount.

RESULTS

With the successful use of 'lock-in' effect, they attracted more users. HubSpot became one of the most popular all-in-one marketing platforms on the web.

Funnel stage

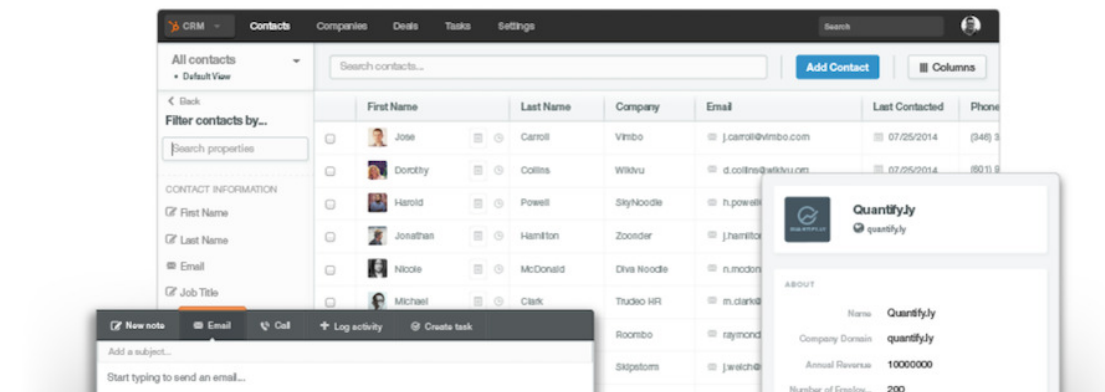
Activation/Retention

Channel

Website



THE FREE HUBSPOT CRM
ORGANIZE, TRACK, AND SELL
WITHOUT COMPLICATIONS OR
CONFUSION.



HACK #10: SHAZAM

WHO

Shazam, a mobile app that helps users identify songs

THEIR CHALLENGE

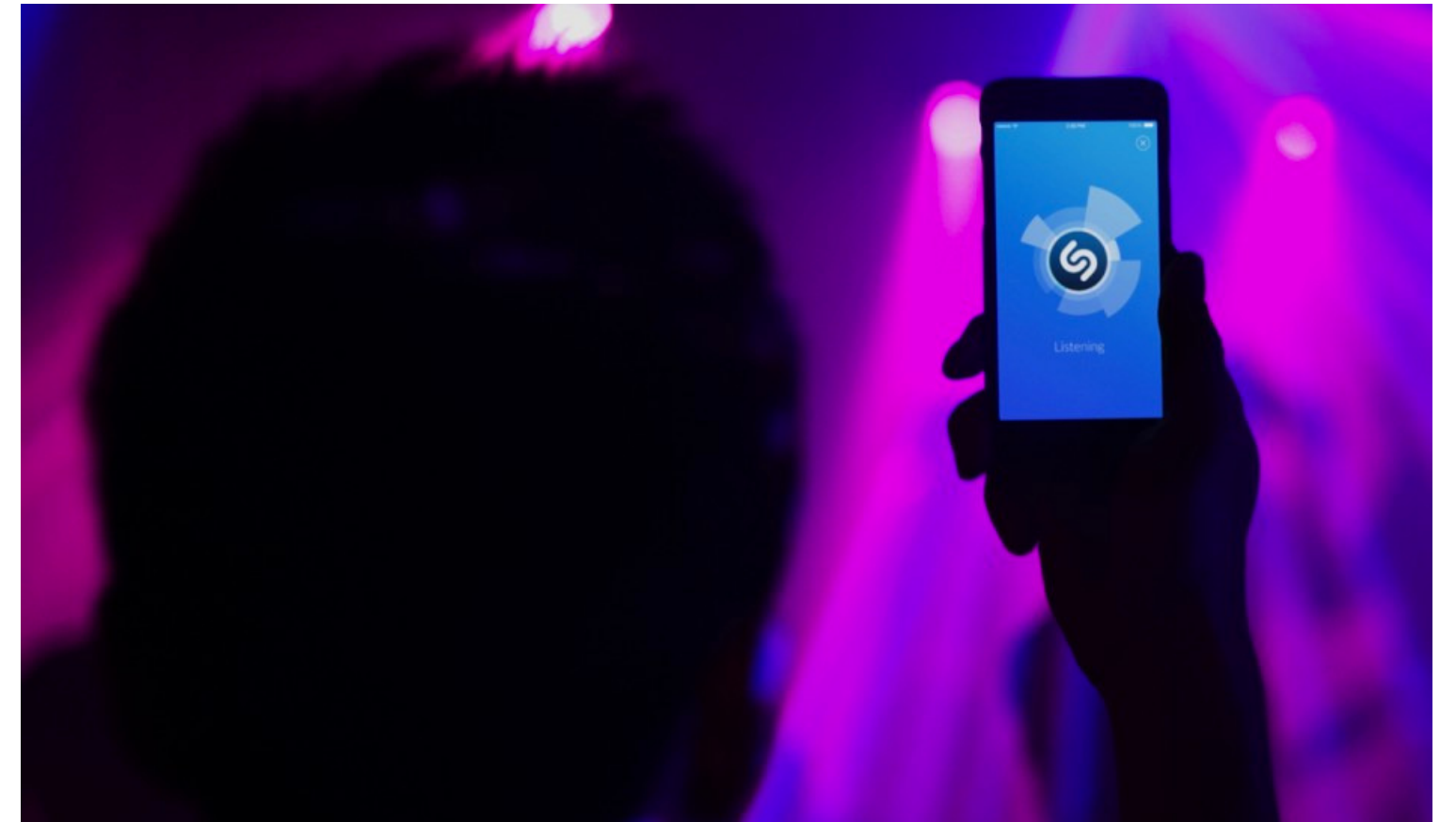
Increase brand awareness Shazam, and acquire new users.

THE GROWTH HACK

Background noise made it hard for the software to do its work, so Shazam encouraged users to hold their smartphones up to the speakers. This raised questions from bystanders about what the user is doing. Shazam turned a problem to their advantage.

RESULTS

Today, there are over 1 billion Shazam app downloads.



Funnel stage

Awareness

Channel

Word of mouth



HACK #11: THE ECONOMIST

WHO

The Economist, a weekly magazine-format newspaper

THEIR CHALLENGE

The newspaper wanted to increase revenue subscriptions.

THE GROWTH HACK

The Economist used the power of suggestion. They decided to have a 'made up' product. Both option 2 'Print subscription' and option 3 'Print & web subscription' cost \$125.00.

RESULTS

16% bought option 1, 84% bought option 3. When option 2 was removed from the pricing, 68% bought option 1 and 32% bought option 3. The decoy price raised revenue approximately 43%.

Funnel stage

Retention

Channel

Website



Economist.com	SUBSCRIPTIONS
OPINION	Welcome to The Economist Subscription Centre Pick the type of subscription you want to buy or renew. <input type="checkbox"/> Economist.com subscription - US \$59.00 One-year subscription to Economist.com. Includes online access to all articles from <i>The Economist</i> since 1997. <input type="checkbox"/> Print subscription - US \$125.00 One-year subscription to the print edition of <i>The Economist</i> . <input type="checkbox"/> Print & web subscription - US \$125.00 One-year subscription to the print edition of <i>The Economist</i> and online access to all articles from <i>The Economist</i> since 1997.
WORLD	
BUSINESS	
FINANCE & ECONOMICS	
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY	
PEOPLE	
BOOKS & ARTS	
MARKETS & DATA	
DIVERSIONS	

The
Economist

HACK #12: CANDY CRUSH

WHO

Candy Crush, a very addictive mobile game

THEIR CHALLENGE

Wanted to grow their existing user base.

THE GROWTH HACK

Candy Crush limited the amount of 'lives' in the game to 5 and made people wait 30 minutes for a new 'live' to be generated. When a user used 5 lives, he had the possibility to ask lives from friends via Facebook.

RESULTS

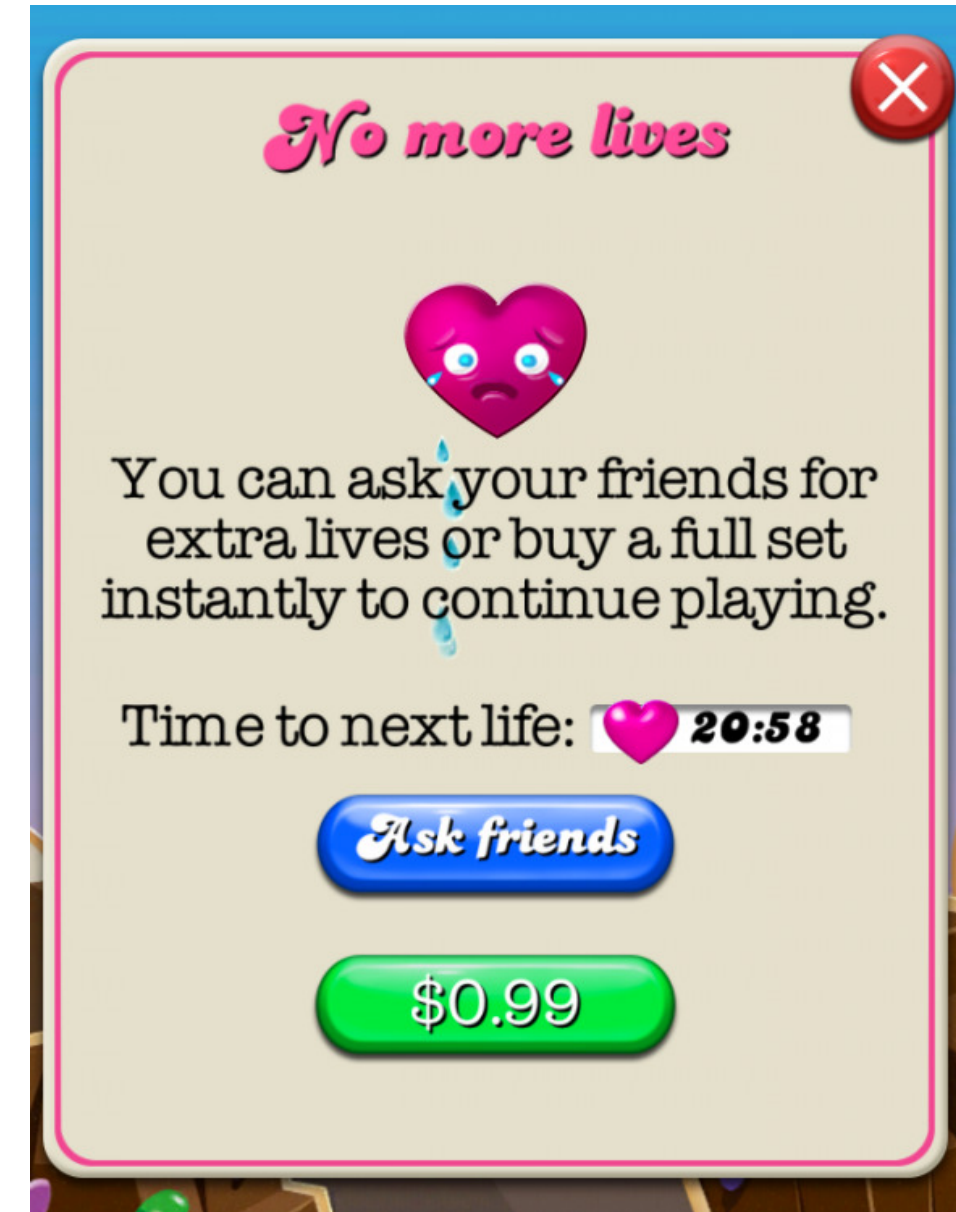
Users were actually asking friends for lives via Facebook, and also asked them to sign up for the game. This resulted in a growing number of game users.

Funnel stage

Referral

Channel

Facebook



HACK #13: YOGURBERRY

WHO

Yogurberry, a Yogurt bar that sells frozen yoghurt by weight

THEIR CHALLENGE

Sell a lot more yoghurt.

THE GROWTH HACK

Replace the small, medium and large size cups with just 1 large cup.

RESULTS

The large cup encouraged customers to fill it with more frozen yoghurt and toppings. This resulted in larger overall purchase.

Funnel stage

Revenue

Channel

Offline



yoguriberry
Natural Non-Fat Yogurt



HACK #14: PINTEREST

WHO

Pinterest, a social media platform to share and store ideas and content

THEIR CHALLENGE

Build a user base of active users.

THE GROWTH HACK

Pinterest made their service 'invitation-only'. The exclusivity effect made potential users feel special.

RESULTS

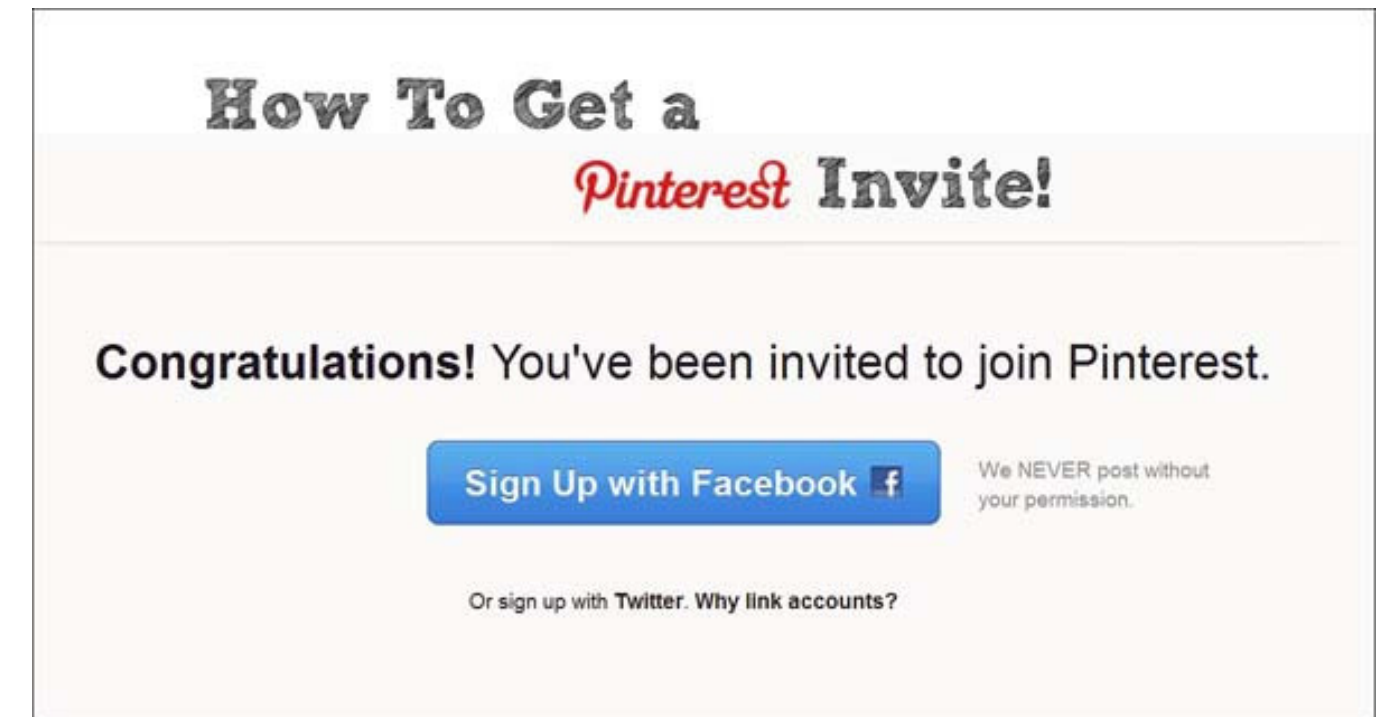
All new users actively started to fill the Pinterest Platform.

Funnel stage

Activation

Channel

Email



HACK #15: PAYPAL

WHO

Paypal, an online payment solution

THEIR CHALLENGE

Tried to figure out the lowest cost per acquisition of a new member.

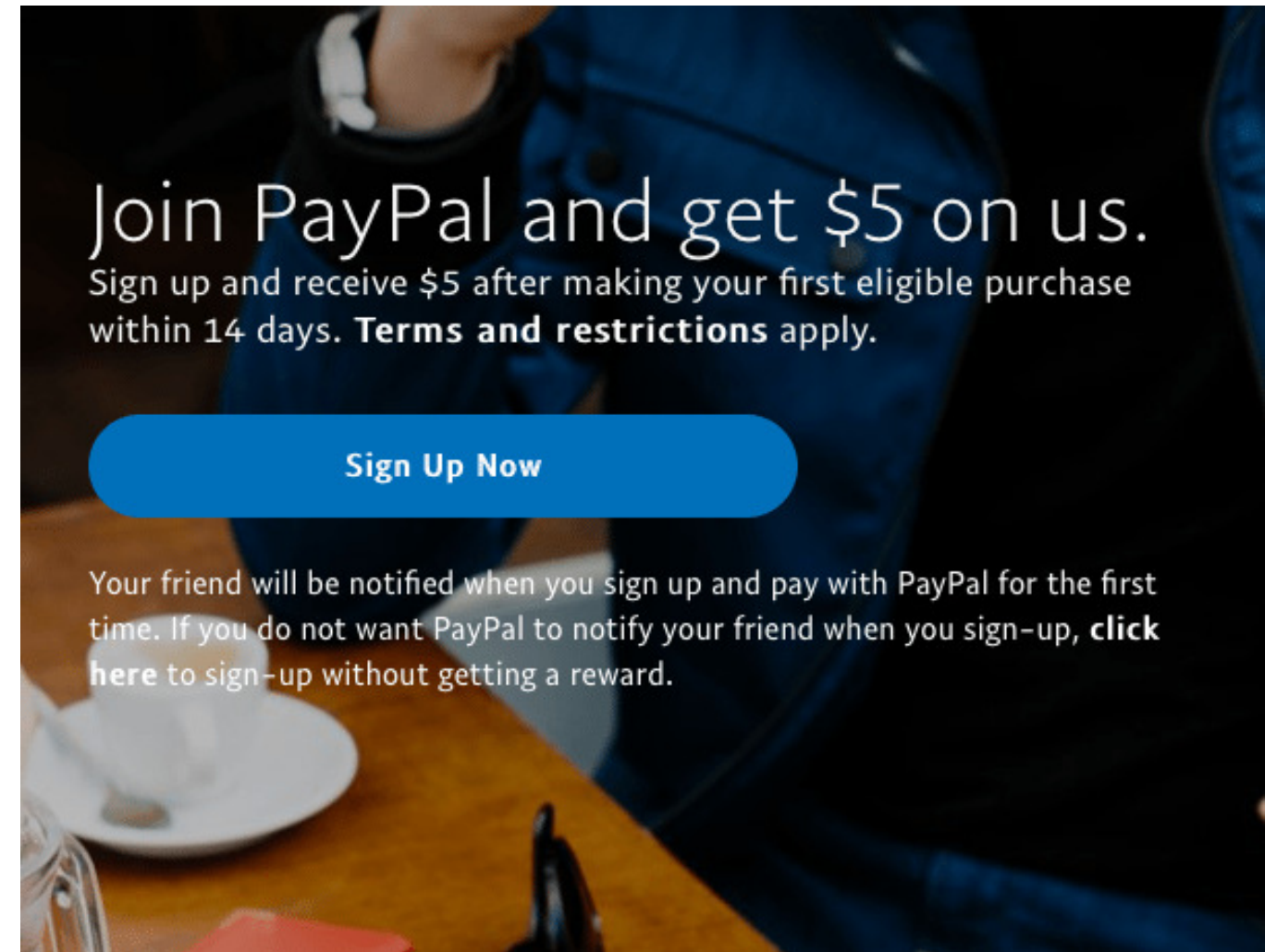
THE GROWTH HACK

Invite-a-friend email campaign. People would get paid real dollars when their invited friends joined PayPal.

RESULTS

PayPal's user base grew from 1 million in March 2000 to over 5 million in August 2000.

Funnel stage	Referral
Channel	Email



HACK #16: STARBUCKS

WHO

Starbucks, an American coffee company and coffeehouse chain

THEIR CHALLENGE

Get more people to share the brand name Starbucks.

THE GROWTH HACK

Write customer's names on cups, but misspell them on purpose.

RESULTS

Consumers shared pictures of their cup with friends on social media significantly more often when their names were spelled funny.



Funnel stage

Awareness

Channel

Offline



HACK #17: BESURED

WHO

Besured, a health insurance for Dutch students

THEIR CHALLENGE

Enter a highly saturated market, targeting students who still were insured via their parents.

THE GROWTH HACK

Offline flyering, with a sealed envelope in mailboxes of student houses with the text "Do not show this to your parents. It made students curious. The offer inside was a money-back offer when students applied for the insurance.

RESULTS

Thousands of students applications were generated by the offline campaign.

Funnel stage

Awareness/Acquisition

Channel

Offline



Bye bye, dure zorgverzekering

Hello Besured!

De zorgverzekering voor studenten
én young professionals ↘

Klik hier

BESURED

Be smart.

HACK #18: CREW

WHO

Crew, a marketplace that helps you find designers and developers for your website or app

THEIR CHALLENGE

Gain more traction.

THE GROWTH HACK

Crew launched a side-project, Unsplash. It is a website that offers free hi-res photos every day.

RESULTS

With over 1 billion views, Unsplash became the #1 referral website for Crew.

Funnel stage

Acquisition

Channel

Side-project (website)



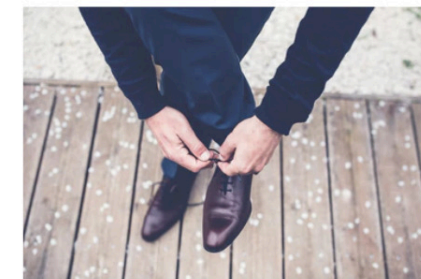
Unsplash

Free (do whatever you want) high-resolution photos.

A project by Crew.



[Submit a photo](#)



Crew

HACK #19: INSTAGRAM

WHO

Instagram, the biggest and fastest growing photo sharing platform, owned by Facebook

THEIR CHALLENGE

Not enough traction, therefore not enough new users.

THE GROWTH HACK

Instagram made it possible to automatically share the edited photos from Instagram on other social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter.

RESULTS

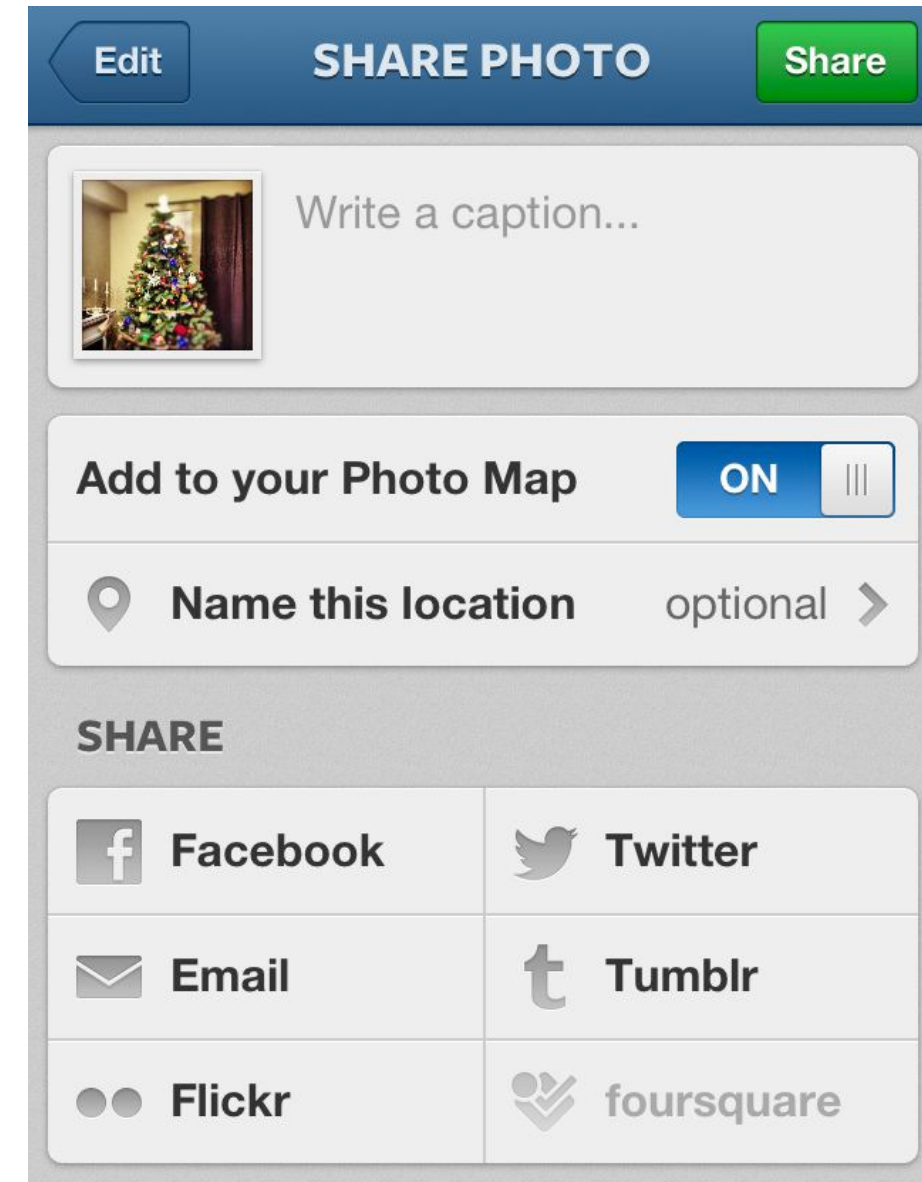
Double digit growth of the user base, mostly via Facebook.

Funnel stage

Awareness

Channel

Social Media Platforms



HACK #20: ZENDESK

WHO

Zendesk, a customer support service

THEIR CHALLENGE

They discovered via keyword research that a lot of people were Googling “Zendesk alternative”. Customers were looking directly for competition of Zendesk.

THE GROWTH HACK

Zendesk launched a second brand: “Zendesk Alternative”. They started a funny content marketing campaign in favor of Zendesk on a specially created website.

RESULTS

Zendesk Alternative became the #1 search result in Google. After the campaign, the website was automatically redirected to Zendesk’s original website.

Funnel stage

Awareness

Channel

Website



zendesk



HACK #21: LOYALTY CARDS

WHO

Carwash Venues

THEIR CHALLENGE

Make sure people come back to wash their cars (retention).

THE GROWTH HACK

Replacing original stamp cards with new 'pre-stamped' stamp cards. The original cards of the carwash had 8 blank spots, after each carwash session you'd get 1 stamp, after 8 sessions you could redeem your full card for a free carwash session. The new cards had ten spots, of which 2 were pre-stamped by the carwash venue.

RESULTS

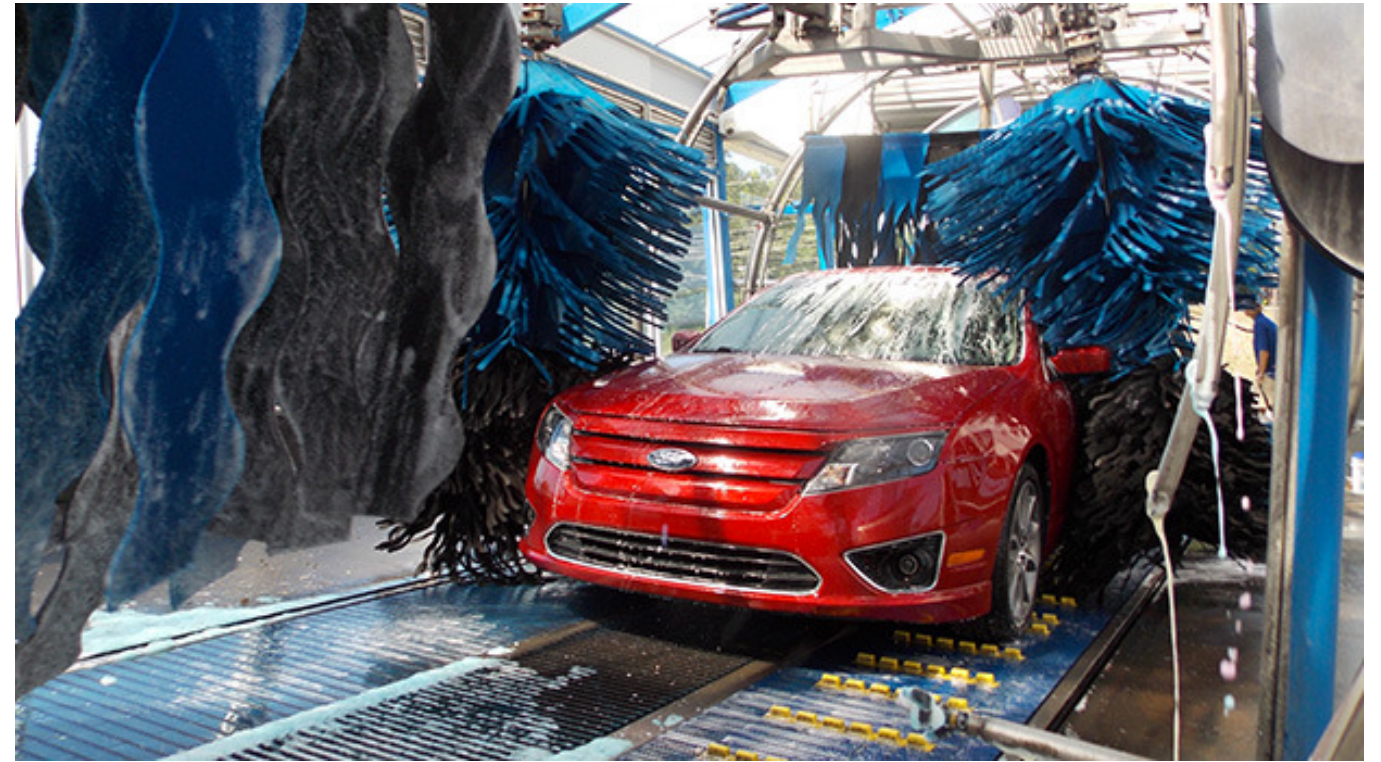
The psychological effect of simply giving away 2 stamps, while people still need to 8 paid sessions for 1 free session, was stunning: pre-stamped cards resulted in 178% more repeat business than unstamped ones.

Funnel stage

Retention

Channel

Offline



Unstamped cards vs Pre-stamped cards

Unstamped Card



Pre-stamped Card



HACK #22: WHATSAPP

WHO

WhatsApp, one of the major players in the direct messaging space

THEIR CHALLENGE

WhatsApp wanted to be the replacement of the not-so-efficient message services offered by telecom providers.

THE GROWTH HACK

Invite friends for WhatsApp via SMS. There is no fun in a messaging app when your friends are not on it.

RESULTS

WhatsApp replaced 90% of traditional mobile message services within a year.

Funnel stage

Referral

Channel

Word of mouth



HACK #23: TRIPADVISOR

WHO

Tripadvisor, one of the major hotel recommendation and review sites on the internet

THEIR CHALLENGE

Outsmarting the competition by being on top of the Search Engine Optimization (SEO) game.

THE GROWTH HACK

By adding new reviews daily, the website's' findability on search engines grew gradually. The exponential growth in Awareness started when TripAdvisor launched their badging system. Hotels and restaurants were asked to display the badges on their websites and offline in their venues.

RESULTS

By doing so, visitors of their websites and venues were made aware that they could review the venue on Tripadvisor, resulting in more recommendations and thus in better findability for both TripAdvisor and the venues.

Funnel stage

Awareness/Acquisition

Channel

Other Websites & Offline



HACK #24: ICEBUCKET CHALLENGE

WHO

Ice bucket challenge, a campaign to increase awareness ALS

THEIR CHALLENGE

Create awareness for the ALS Disease, worldwide.

THE GROWTH HACK

'User generated content' and the power of social proof and authority. Nominated persons were challenged to be filmed while throwing a bucket of ice cold water over themselves and then were asked to nominate a peer to do the same.

RESULTS

The campaign went viral, resulting in a global phenomenon. World famous people like Bill Gates, Mark Zuckerberg, and many more participated. It was all about taking part and rising to the challenge.

Funnel stage

Awareness

Channel

Offline



HACK #25: YOUTUBE

WHO

YouTube, the largest video sharing platform on the internet, owned by Google

THEIR CHALLENGE

YouTube wanted to make their platform the number 1 go-to solution when it comes to video sharing.

THE GROWTH HACK

They made it very easy to post YouTube videos on any website with an easily adjustable frame, making it possible to 'embed' videos by simply pasting a code into your own website or blog.

RESULTS

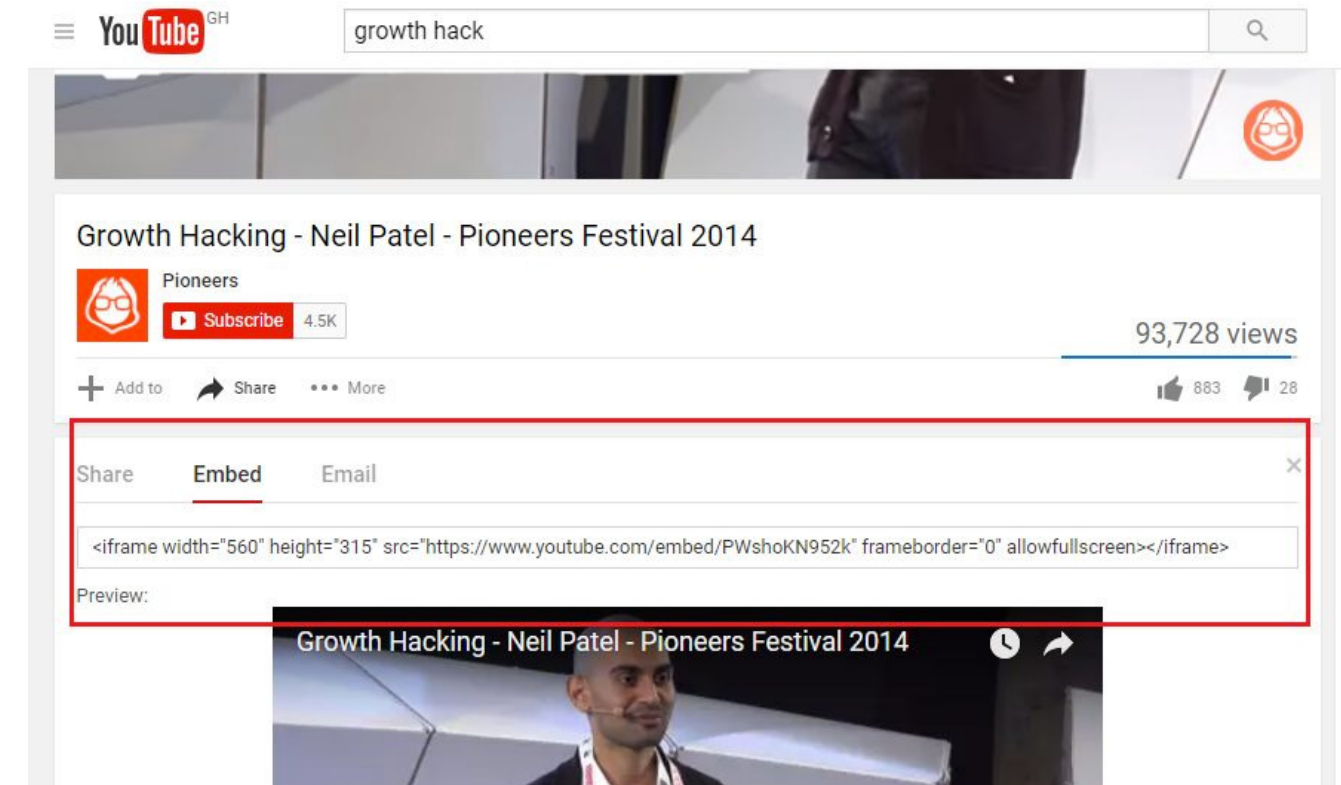
With the launch of this function, YouTube exponentially grew its reach via millions of other websites, creating an enormous awareness for their brand as a video sharing solution.

Funnel stage

Awareness

Channel

Other Websites



www.revelx.co

We hope you got inspired!

At RevelX, we help companies
realize *double digit* growth.

Curious what we can do for you?
Feel free to get in touch!

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