

MEDIAKIM

BUSINESS PRINCIPLES

Find the Starving Crowd: Why Demand Beats a Clever Idea

The most common startup mistake is falling in love with a product before checking that anyone is hungry for it. Demand first, product second — here is why.

A MEDIAKIM INSIGHTS RESOURCE PACK

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Here is a thought experiment from Alex Hormozi. If you had to open a food stand and your goal was to outsell everyone, which advantage would you choose: the best location, the best product, the best persuasion skills — or a starving crowd? The answer is the crowd. Hunger beats everything else.

The market is the first decision, not the last

Most founders work in the wrong order. They perfect a product, then go looking for people who might want it. The businesses that win start with demand: they find a group of people with an urgent, expensive problem, and then build something to solve it. A good offer to a hungry market beats a brilliant offer to an indifferent one.

> **FIGURE**
>
> What matters most, in order: the market beats the offer, and the offer beats your persuasion.

Notice the order. Your cleverness with words — the marketing — matters least. The offer matters more. But the market, the starving crowd, matters most of all. You can fix a weak offer; it is very hard to manufacture demand that is not there.

How to tell if a crowd is actually hungry

- Are people already spending money trying to solve this problem (badly)?
- Is the pain urgent and recurring, not occasional and mild?
- Can you find where these people gather and talk about it?
- Do they describe the problem in their own words, often and emotionally?

If the answer is yes, you have found hunger. Your job is then simple to state, if not easy to do: feed it better than anyone else. If the answer is no, no amount of branding or persuasion will rescue an offer aimed at people who are not looking.

> **A QUIETER THOUGHT**
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> There is something good buried in this. A real business begins by paying close attention to other people's genuine needs — not by admiring your own idea. Loving your neighbour, in commercial terms, often starts with simply listening to what they are actually hungry for, and then serving it well.

The bottom line

Do not start with what you want to sell. Start with who is hungry, and what they are already trying to buy. Find the starving crowd first — then build the thing that feeds them. Demand is the foundation; everything else is built on top of it.

Sources

- Alex Hormozi, $100M Offers — the starving crowd and the order of leverage (market > offer > persuasion).
- Gary Halbert — the original starving-crowd thought experiment.

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