#TRACTIONCONF 2015 NOTES

#TractionConf 2015 Notes by Unbounce

Hi there!

Thanks for downloading the TractionConf 2015 notes by Unbounce. We sent a notetaker, Dan Levy, to the first ever TractionConf in beautiful Vancouver, BC to document the entire conference. That meant we did the heavy lifting while you, and all the other attendees, could sit back, relax and just enjoy the sessions. What you'll find below is the fruit of our labor. That's 1.5 days, 91 speakers and moderators and 25 sessions - all packaged into this pretty PDF for you.

Enjoy the read, and please let me know if you have any questions or concerns. I'm always here to help.

Sincerely,

Chelsea Scholz
Jr. Campaign Strategist at Unbounce

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A Bootstrapper's Guide to $100 Million ARR

Markus Frind, Founder and CEO, PlentyOfFish

By the time he hired first employee, already had 15 million users, 10 million in revenue

First hires were CS

90% of traffic is mobile – questioning whether they even need to support a website any more

Hired devs to create iOs and Android native apps – would have died if they didn't

Revenue

Some ads, mostly subscriptions – optional upgrades (freemium)

A/B test – added "popular" on upgrades page may generate millions in revenue

Took out first TV ad last month – TV is actually cheaper that online (better ROI)

As different demos adopt mobile, dating market gets bigger – Tinder has drawn more people in as well

99Designs: How did we get here?

Patrick Llewellyn, *CEO 99designs*

- Started as a game to improve design skills
- Bootstrapped growth by word of mouth for 3 years

5 Factors that gave us traction:

1. Built community before product
   - Engaged with influencers, explored market opportunity

2. Focused on the product – customer support and marketing were very lean
   - Were beta customers of AWS and got mentioned by CEO as c

3. Built trust through customer support and 100% money back guarantee
   - Set up customer support center in SF
   - Customers would call them to validate that they're real
   - Saw conversions rate go up

4. Initial customer were tech-savvy early adopters

   - Support from AWS
   - Mentioned in Tim Ferriss' book
   - Got inbound calls from investors because their portfolio companies were using 99D

5. Invested in PR

   - Don't underestimate importance of PR

6. Set up shop in Silicon Valley

   - Close to capital and influencers

7. Going international with a MVP approach

   - Acquired 12designer, Berlin and LegoChef, Rio

- Platform now offers 7 languages, supports 12 currencies
- Treat every country manager as a startup
- Next step: Asia – Just raised series B from Recruit to set up shop in Japan

Ready? Set? Grow!

Panel:

Allen Lau, *CEO, Wattpad* [@allenlau](#)

Dinesh Thiru, *VP Marketing, Udemy* [@dinesh9](#)

Mada Seghete, *Co-founder, Branch Metrics* [@mada299](#)

<u>*Moderated by:*</u> *Sumeet Jain, Director, Intel Capital.*

What key metrics are you tracking?

Dinesh: Two metrics are revenue and student happiness

On revenue side, it's actual purchases. Learned you have to look at mix of quantity and quality of users you're acquiring. Some monetize better than others.

On happiness side, look at NPS (net promoter score) – "How likely are you to recommend X to a friend or colleague?" Found that was a strong indicator of student happiness.

Found that users who reported higher NTS also had higher lifetime value (connected two metrics)

Allen: Main metric is # of monthly active users (because their main rev stream is advertising, numbers of users are key)

-At one point, shifted to "daily signups" when they needed to fill up the funnel

-Recently added secondary metrics: Revenue

Mada: Primary metrics is number of integrations

Allen: Also look at qualitative metrics – user feedback, to make sure customers are happy

Mada: Biggest channel is WOM referrals – how they measure customer happiness – also send out customer surveys asking how likely they are to recommend product (like qual version of NPS)

Learnings over time

Allen: Bootstrapped for about 5 years before they raised capital. Had to focus on revenue before they had funding because he needed to eat. Once they had capital were able to focus on driving user growth. In last year, began looking at business models and zeroed in on advertising – so user growth and revenue now go hand in hand.

Mada: Were super focused on referral program at the beginning and didn't stop to look at how people were actually using product. When they did, discovered they were a very different company than they'd thought and referrals were just a small part of their value prop.

Resolving differences with investors

Allen: Investors were actually the ones who encouraged them to remove display advertising and go from revenue generating company to user growth-focused company (ended up doing some A/B tests and finding optimal balance between ads and UX, finding compromise)

The Future of a Brand

Joseph Thompson, VP Marketing, BuildDirect (former GM, amazon.com)

While distribution options, speed of change and data points have changed, at the core branding is essentially the same

- Don't let new channels change your brand

Ask yourself:

1. How is your brand helping people achieve their goals?
2. Is your communication opening hearts and minds? Your customer has to be the hero of your story
3. What medium is right for your message?

…that's the order you should think about it in, but too often it's the reverse. Folks starts with the medium instead of how your brand is helping solve people's problems.

Some of the best companies doing it right are also some of the youngest – ex. Google, AirBnB

So what does the process actually look and feel like?

Gillette Case Study

- Were trying to get traction in a market where electric shavers dominated. Spoke to women who said they were attracted to men who had clean wet shave
- Started a whole "wet shaving is sexy" meme on TV and social before they introed the brand
- Transformed "inconvenient" into SEXY

Engineering the Customer Experience

Jeff Lawson, *CEO, Twilio [@jeffiel](#)*

- A/B testing followed through to perfection would make every site into a porn site
- Pick path for the company you want to build and take to market
- Building something you care about and solve problems you're feeling allows you to circumvent things like focus groups
- If you lack conviction for what you're building, all the time and energy won't feel worth it
- Started Trilio to bring communications to software −developers were an untapped market, no one saw them as viable customers
- When developers know and love a tool, companies take notice because they know it can have a huge impact on the business
- Investors weren't biting, but they had actual customer data that said it was a good idea
- Main takeaway: Have conviction about product you're creating and customer you're serving and let that be your guide

Building a Three-Sided Marketplace
Bastian Lehmann, *Postmates CEO* [@basti](#)
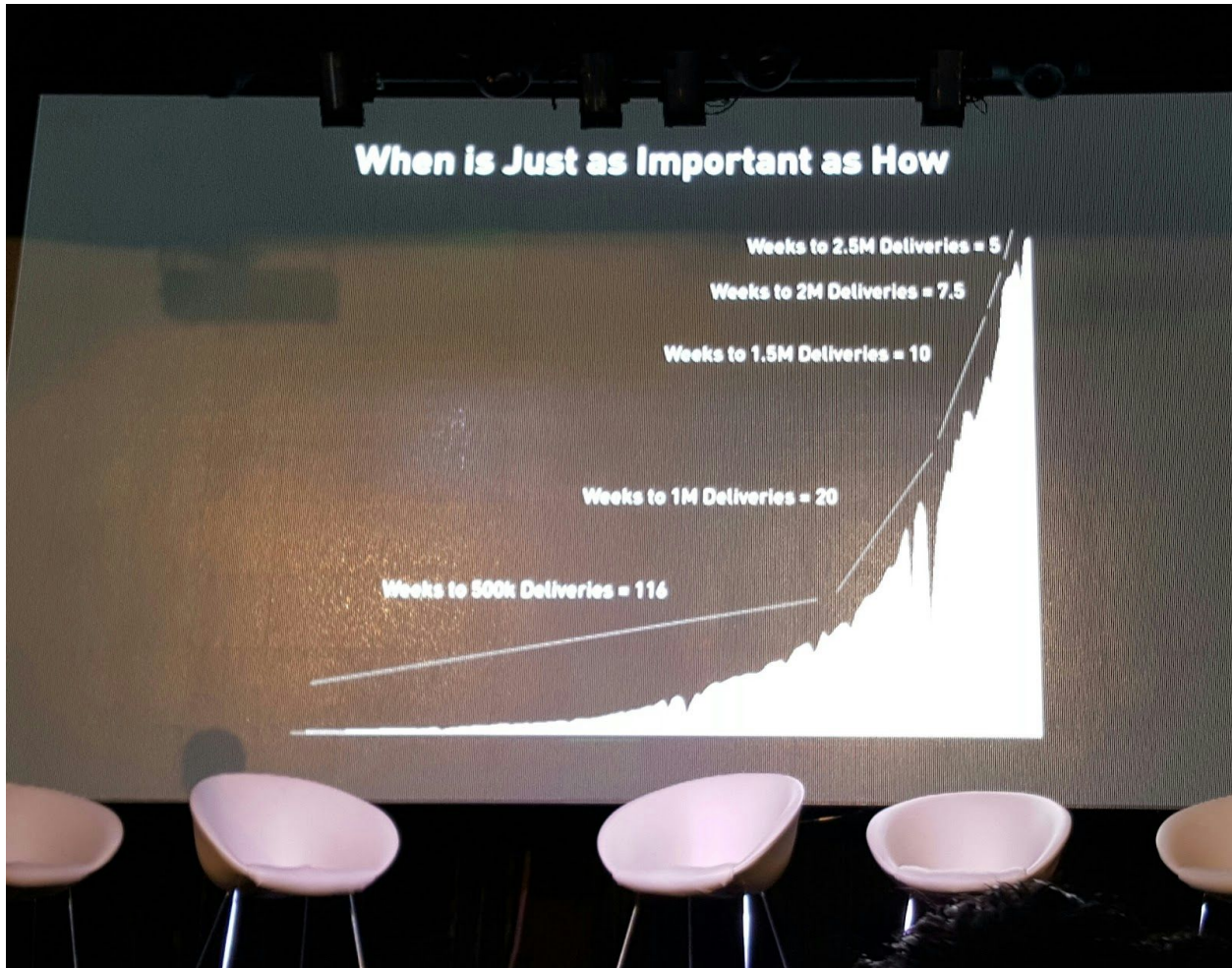
"When is just as important as how"

Postmates is like a "remote control for your city" – largest on-demand delivery service in the U.S. – Deliveries by 80,000 merchants in 30 cities

Recently signed deal with Starbucks but until recently, focused only on supply (couriers) and demand (customers) – completely ignored the merchants (simply loaded their menus into system) – sent couriers in disguise as regular customers

Somewhere around 1.5 millionth delivery, decide to stop ignoring merchants – wanted to start engaging with third side of the marketplace once they had velocity and negotiating power to take to the table

If you start engaging with third-parties too early, you have to compromise on product

Beauty of three-sided marketplace is that you'll eventually be able to monetize from all three sides:

Merchants – Get a cut once they have leverage, demonstrate value
Couriers: Can negotiate good rates and sell them insurance, gear, etc.
Customers: Duh

Global Warfare

*A fireside chat with **Rajen Ruparell**, Groupon's advisor and former Chief Dealmaker*
[@rajenruparell](#)

- Company City Deal was acquired by Groupon
- Turning point when they negotiated a deal with Cineplex Odeon - took huge risk by purchasing movie tickets upfront

Forging successful partnerships – comes down to focus – don't get distracted by big brands if it's not in your DNA

SEO is Dead?

Casey Winters, *PM Growth, Pinterest [@onecaseman](https://twitter.com/onecaseman)*

How do I know what box I'm in?

- What keywords are relative to my business:
- who, what, where, when and how (answer these questions with keywords related to your business)
- plug those keywords into google adwords keyword planner

What is good SEO?

- short answer: really good landing pages (use Unbounce ;))
- long answer: relevant and authoritative

Relevance: On Page Factors

- Title tags
- HTML tags
- Text
- URL
- The rest of the relevance factors are a little more complex....
  - Uniqueness
    - Google takes a look at your webpage copy and they go to all their other pages and compare - they'll index and rank things that are unique only = good content
  - Freshness
    - A page that is updated recently or often
  - Where keywords are located
    - If you have a keyword that you're trying to rank for and the only place it's located is in the footer, rather than the body copy, it's not going to do as well
  - Diversity of content types
    - text, video, etc.
  - Number of links on the page
  - Ad blocks on the page

Authority: Off Page Factors
- Quantity of external links to your page and your domain
- Quality of external links to your page and your domain
- Anchor text of links
  - How are they linking to you when someone else links (ie, Pinterest)
- Metrics from search engines e.g. bounce rate and CTR
  - If someone clicks on a Pinterest link and immediately clicks back that's a clue to google that the user didn't get what they needed and you're going to rank lower
- Content area of external links
  - content area > footer
- Diversity of link types

Prerequisites: Discoverability and Readability

- Search engines use spiders or crawlers to DISCOVER pages across the web
- They READ any content they find on those pages

- - text = great
    - flash, javascript, ajax, images, video = not good!
  - So, in order to succeed you need to be DISCOVERABLE and READABLE

You're bought in: What's next?

- SEO is not *marketing* - it's engineering and product driven
    - you typically need to make a lot of changes to your site to increase performance
        - you don't need an SEO expert to tell you what those changes are - you just need to run experiments
- Experiments:
    - adding content/pages
    - improving uniqueness
    - helping search engines find your content
        - any SEO experiment framework is different than anything else you see/run: you change the content
- You can't experiment on attracting links
- If you don't try to build authority, every one of your competitors will - do it

I only have a mobile app. Should I care?

- The principles matter the same whether you're a mobile app or a website
- You're still thinking about ranking and visibility

Full presentation slides available on caseyaccidental.com

The Holy Grail of Traction

Brian Balfour, *VP Growth, HubSpot* [@bbalfour](#)

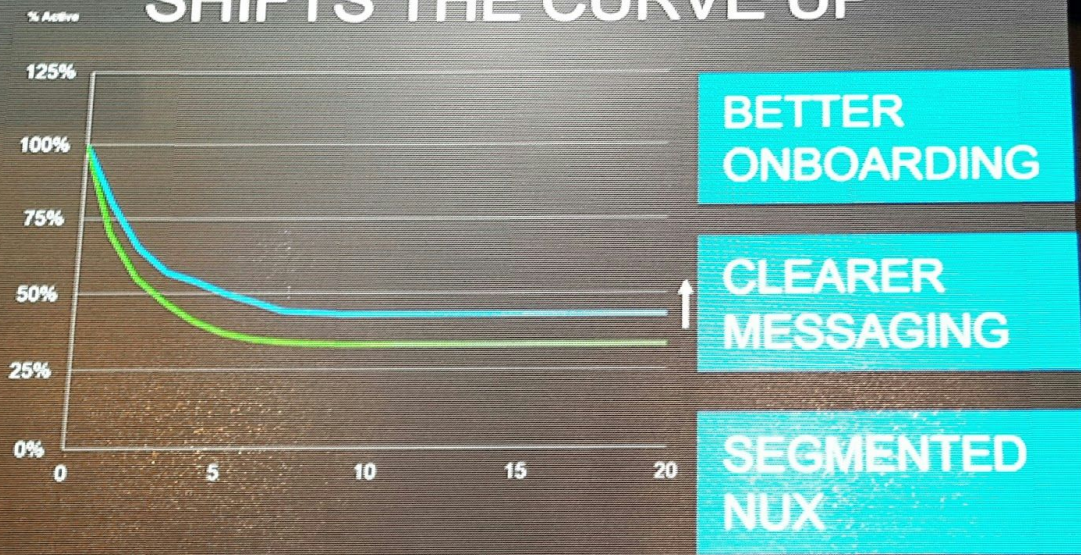**If you have poor retention, nothing else matters.**

As you increase retention you increase LTV and can afford a higher CPA – you can spend more at the top of the funnel

As you increase retention, you increase virality and decrease eCPA

As you increase retention, you increase upgrade rates, and decrease payback period

GOOD RETENTION
GRAPH CREDIT: DAN WOLCHONOK - SR PM @ SIDEKICK

Brian Balfour :: @bbalfour :: http://www.coelevate.com

BAD RETENTION
GRAPH CREDIT: DAN WOLCHONOK - SR PM @ SIDEKICK

Brian Balfour :: @bbalfour :: http://www.coelevate.com
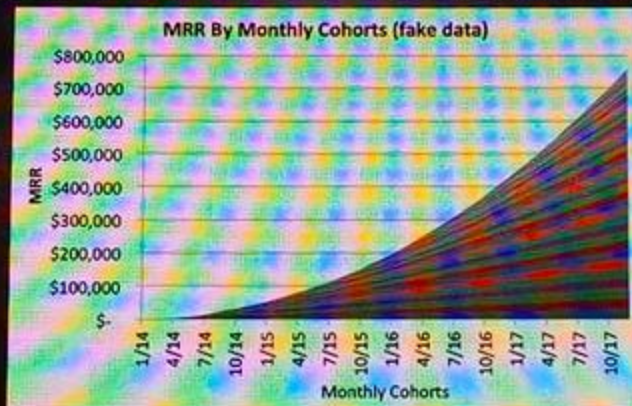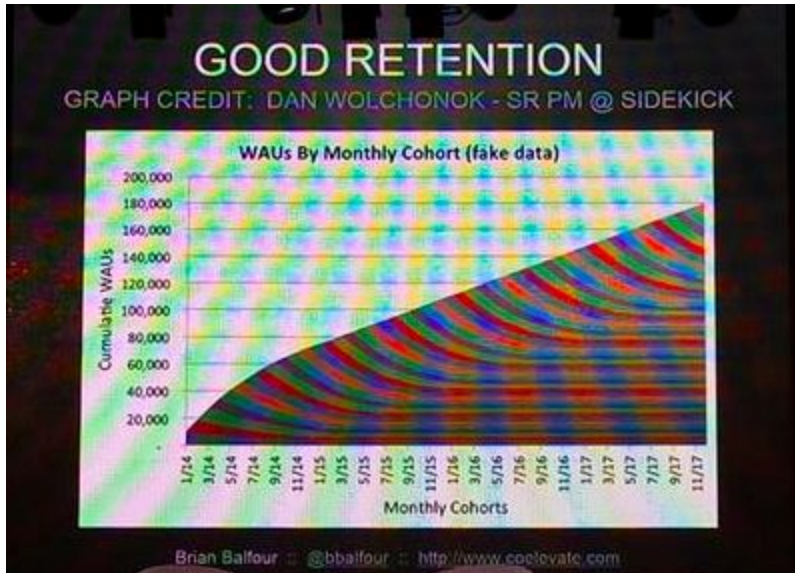
To understand and optimize retention you need to break it down into actionable pieces:

1. Week One Retention – Get users to experience core value as quickly as possible (better onboarding, clearing messaging, segmented NUX - new user experience based on who the person is)
2. Mid-term retention – Get users to create habits around core value (re-wire)
3. Long-term retention

>>Notice he didn't say anything about NEW FEATURES – plenty you can do to increase retention without developing new features

How We Figured Out Improvements at Sidekick

- Segmentation – Corporate vs. Personal email (corporate had much better W1 retention)
- Quant Indicators – Quantitative behaviors between those who churned and those who didn't
- 1:! Qual Data – Extremely targeted emails to users, asking them open ended questions

Findings

- Most didn't have time to figure it out
- Others didn't find value or understand product
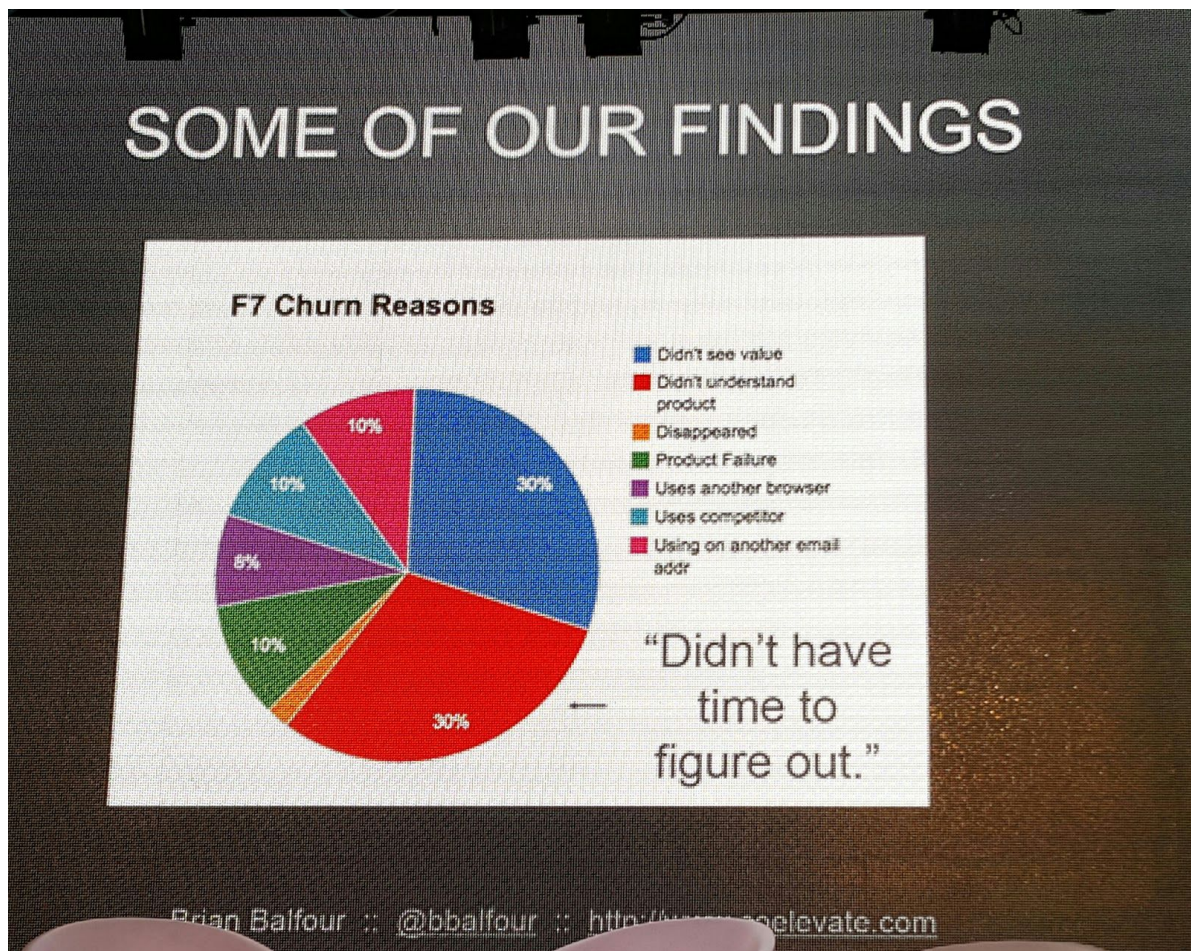
Strategies that worked

- Separating new user experience from core application
- Segmenting experience based on persona – di
- Switching user context (encouraging use of work email)
- Testing medium of education
- Content

Lean Analytics - Metrics that Matter

Ben Yoskovitz, *Co-author, Lean Analytics and VP Product, VarageSale* @byosko

As entrepreneurs we put reality distortion fields around ourselves

"Build, Measure, Learn" – Things tend to fall apart at "measure"
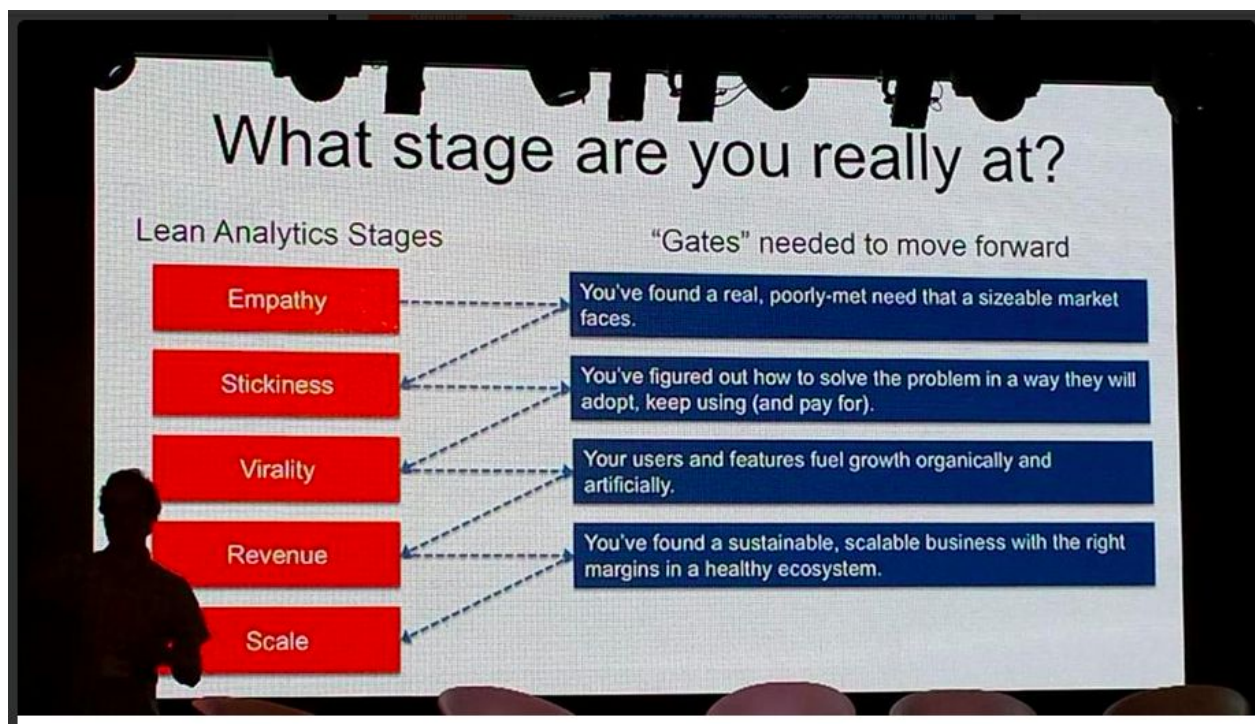
Lean Analytics Stages

Empathy – You've found a real, poorly-met need that a sizeable market faces

Stickiness – You've figured out how to solve the problem in a way they will adopt, keep using (pay for)

Virality – Your users and features fuel growth organically and artificially
Revenue – You've found a sustainable, scalable business with the right margins in a healthy ecosystem

Scale – Biz dev, growing sales team, APIs, partnerships (depends on the business)

>> Most startups fail at the stickiness phase (but don't know they've failed yet)

Lean Analytics Cycle

Pick a OMTM à Draw a line à Find a potential improvement à Without data, make a good guess/With data, find a commonality à Come up with a hypothesis à Make a change or (ideally) design a test à Measure the results à Did it move the needle? à Success! OR Pivot OR give up L
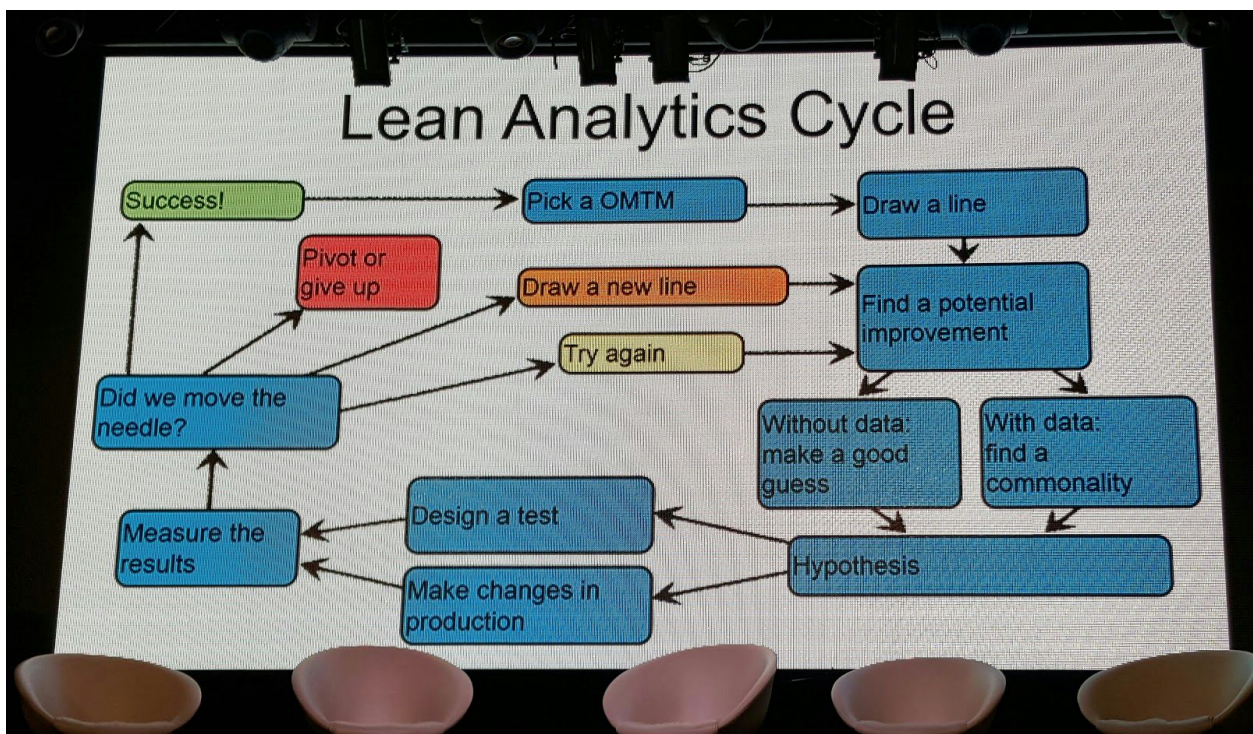
6 Unorthodox Funnel Optimization Strategies Guaranteed to Double Your Growth

Neil Patel, *Co-founder, KissMetrics & CrazyEgg* @neilpatel

1. Flip around your funnel

   · Conversion optimization is like dating – you need to get to know people before asking them to marry you.
   · Get people to play around with product before signing up

2. Give people a reason to stick around

   · Think of Virus software – they tell you when there's a problem. Let users know about errors or things they can be doing better.

3. Stay top of mind

   · Train people to click by asking for micro-commitments – from clicking on a link to watching a video, to putting in an email address
   · Make sure you give before you ask

4. Create a quiz
   · Start with 5 questions
   · Use images when possible
   · Limit your choices per question to 4

5. Make signing up easy

   · Log in with Twitter, FB, LinkedIn, etc.
   · Tried it at KISSmetrics – sign up with your Google account – increased signups by 59.5%

6. Get personal

   · People want to feel special – dating sites are good at it

- Use geo-based data throughout your funnel – call people out by name and location – i.e. "Ready to find the love of your life in Vancouver?"

Optimizing for SaaS Monetization

*A fireside chat with **Selina Tobaccowala**, President & CTO, SurveyMonkey [@selinato](#)*

Quantitative vs. qualitative data

No week where they're not A/B testing – but need to combine with qualitative data (surveys)
"Data trumps gut"

Free vs. Paid

Trying to do both self-serve and sales-driven enterprise at the same time as a startup would be very difficult

If there's anything that's driving usage and virality, keep it free

The more you can get people using features of the product before they have to upgrade, the better for conversions (don't bait and switch –indicate that it's a paying feature beforehand).

Testing prices – just go ahead and do it. Try to keep prices consistent for users across devices, but make sure to always honor lower price if customer sees it.

Pricing individual features vs. bundling – bundling is more practical. Try to offer three options because customers tend to pick the one in the middle.

6 Unorthodox Funnel Optimization Strategies Guaranteed to Double Your Growth

Product is Growth, Growth is Product

Alex Mehr, *Co-founder, Zoosk @alexmehr*

- The key to user growth is nailing the **Primary Atomic Use Case** = The most frequent way that a typical user interacts with your product over and over
- Successful products have a singular purpose
- PAUC is sometimes a series of actions (can be a loop)

Primary: It's the main thing people do

Atomic: The use case simplified as much as possible

Use case: People usually care about what the product does – not how it's done

Examples

- Facebook/Twitter – check out newsfeed, post, check our newsfeed (loop)
- Car – go from point A to po
- Landline phones – Dial and talk
- Smartphone – Click on an app, interact, click home button, click another app

Things to consider

1. What is my PAUC?
2. Can I imagine a world where millions of people are doing this PAUC

The Age of Useless Information

<u>Panel:</u>

Michael Litt, *CEO, Vidyard [@michaellitt](#)*
Mark Cunningham, *President, D&B Cloud Innovation Center (Founder of Crystal Reports & Indicee) [@markcunningham](#)*
Nick Mehta, *CEO, Gainsight [@nrmehta](#)*
Sameer Dholakia, *CEO, Sendgrid [@spdholakia](#)*

<u>Moderated by:</u> *Umair Akeel, Partner, Bessemer Venture Partners*

Email is not dead

Sameer: Email is still the hub of your online identity, almost 5 billion email addresses out there. Not going anywhere.

Michael: I wouldn't be sitting here today if it weren't for email. Lots of things you can do to augment that experience (like with video).

State of Data

Mark: In the enterprise world, data is a nightmare. How do you get data from old, cumbersome legacy systems? In startup world, so many awesome tools – less friction involved in getting access to data.

Nick: Customers are constantly dropping breadcrumbs for you – every time they don't open an email, pay their invoice, etc. "The customer is telling you things and you're just

ignoring it." Often the data is stuck in accounting or customer success or marketing. Save the data!

-You need to have someone own your data strategy for customer acquisition. Not just a marketing thing.

Sameer: New data scientist = Engagement scientist

Mobile

Michael: People more engaged with video on mobile than desktop – some operation systems (Android) force a full-screen experience

Sameer: Marketers want to be able to orchestrate across channels. Ex. start with SMS push notification, then send email, then in-app message.

>>Remember that your mobile users are the same people you're marketing to on other channels

Build vs. Buy: How Young Companies Can Grow Faster, Smarter

Daniel Saks, Co-founder & Co-CEO of AppDirect [@danielsaks](https://twitter.com/danielsaks)

How to plan for the long term and think about the journey from Day 1

How do you sustain growth beyond initial traction?

1. Establish a growth strat
   - A "contained" growth strategy (via Peter Thiel)
   - Ex. Facebook – launched with Ivy League, universities and beyond
   - AppDirect focused on segments (telecom, retail, etc.) and then geography (Canada, North America, etc.), devices

2. Develop network effects
   - Decided to start with Telecom and signed key client: Bell in Canada (then expanded to different telecoms)
   - "Magnetic Momentum"

3. Innovation framework
   - Alpha: Explore new ideas
   - Beta: Prove the metrics
   - Scale: Scale the business
   - Have a team focused on exploring and validating new ideas and markets

Case study: billing

- Do we build, partner or buy a billing platform? Ended up acquiring JBilling.
  - Vision alignment, culture alignment and clarity of execution key when exploring partnerships or acquisitions

  It's never too early to plan for growth!

Long-term Short-term See-Saw

Eliot Horowitz, MongoDB Co-founder & CTO [@eliothorowitz](#)

1. Spark

- Around 2007, decided to build database for new company. Realized database was better than the product, so focused on that.
- Databases aren't typically fun to use – too much time spent around DB, not enough building product and company

2. Combine

- Combine your original idea with the existing thing out there that already works
- Don't reinvent the wheel unless you absolutely have to

3. Mature

- Optimize it!
- Balance short term and long term goals

Case Study: Storage Engines

- Weren't going to be able to get to it on roadmap – had the idea but couldn't execute for three years (SPARK)
- Decided to acquire the best storage engine company out there (COMBINE) – weren't interested in innovating in that area
- Integrated it into their existing product (MATURE)

The Fastest Way to Drive Startup Growth

Phil Fernandez, *Marketo CEO*

The recipe for sustainable growth:

- Acquire new customers
- Grow lifetime value
- Build brand advocates

Think about how your business is building personal relationships with customers

How do you create a shared purpose with everyone in your ecosystem? Customers, employees, partners, etc.

- Build a community!

Growth Hacking - Myth or Reality?

<u>Panel:</u>

Aatif Awan, *Head of Growth, LinkedIn* [*@aatif_awan*](#)

Ivan Kirign, *CEO, YesGraph (former Growth at Dropbox)* [*@ikirigin*](#)

Nate Moch, *VP Growth, Zillow* [*@natemoch*](#)

Robert Cezar Matei, *Head of Growth, Quora* [*@rmatei*](#)

<u>*Moderated by:*</u> *Frederic Lardinois, TechCrunch*

Rob: An optimization-minded approach to marketing (tough getting called a #growthhacking got him a lot of Twitter followers)

Ivan: There are a lot of sheisters out there.

Aatif: Growth hacker is the new "social media guru"

Successful growth hacks/tactics

- At **LinkedIn**: SEO and endorsements/recommendations
- **Zillow**: Content – publishing research, studies, surveys. Key is to become an expert in your industry.

- Collecting people's emails is key to continued engagement
- Often "hacking" is just another way to say "good product development"
- **Quora**: Force people to sign up in order to see content (though they've relaxed that recently)

Organizational design

- Need a champion for growth on every team
- Can't be the only ones responsible for metrics
- At AirBnB, growth team learned Android so they can go and make changes themselves (!)
- Nate: At small companies, every needs to be growth-minded. At Zillow, every team owns their KPIs – growth team helps them stay growth-minded

Metrics
- Nate: Have to track whole funnel, but focus on conversion goal
- Aatif: Zero in on one key metric
- Rob: If you're just optimizing for short-term metrics that can lead you down some bad places. Don't lose track of customer experience.
- When A/B testing email, you're always going to test your way to sending more email. How do you measure negative affect? **Quora** looks at unsubscribe rates – assume cost is 4x unsubscribe rate (rule of thumb).

Apps

Rob:
- Harder to get traction on apps than websites – barrier to install super high
- Apps that encourage sharing (Twitter, Vine), apps that require you to get friends to join you (Snapchat, Draw Something), apps that get PR (it still matters!) have best shot at getting traction

Content is Queen

Lynda Weinman, *Lynda.com* @lyndaweinman

Recently sold to LinkedIn for $1.5 billion

Summerhill: A Radical Approach to Child Rearing – book that changed her life

Went to Evergreen independent school. Important tenet: "You're responsible for your own education"

Early Macintosh adopt-er, made animated visualization on her Mac for Star Trek V (first person to animate on PC for major motion picture)

First book was a bestseller, opened a web design training centre – made $1.7 million in revenue in first year

Started making DVDs, realized medium wasn't important – her calling was education

Key ideas behind Lynda.com

- Bite-size, searchable
- Provide context – How what, why, when, where?
- Complement in-person teaching, don't replace
- Credible, approachable, real-world reachers
- Interdisciplinary
- Anonymous

What I Did

- Believed in myself
- Stuck my neck out
- Proved that I had marketability
- Tried and iterated - never took no for an answer
- Didn't take no for an answer
- Followed my heart and passion
- Thought deeply about my audience

- Seized the opportunity – went ahead and made it happen
- Listened to others and to myself

Why LinkedIn

- One of the top companies to work (culture and people were always important
- Want to be a household name, have a bigger impact

"Learning is not the same thing as education" – need to teach people how to innovate, collaborate and fix the world

"Education is a tarnished brand; learning is a pristine brand"
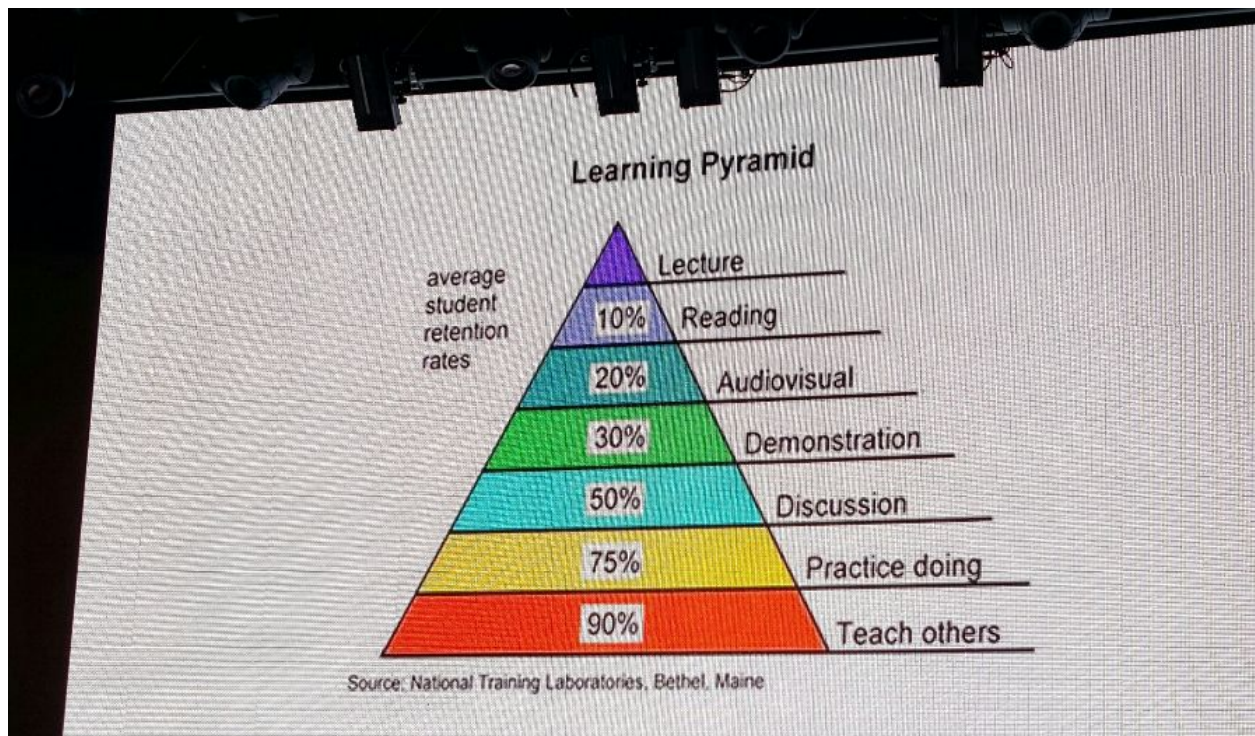
Zero to Billion @ Breakneck Speed
Ryan Holmes, CEO of Hootsuite [@invoker](#)

First roadblock = Finding product market fit

"Build something around the big waves" – Don't get distracted by the small things

Need for HootSuite came out of agency team's pain around managing different social media accounts

Build a great product, start small and iterate

Don't use AdWords to artificially prop up adoption of the product – you create crutch and when you take it away, the product can't stand on its own

Outlasted TweetDeck, Seismic and other companies because they invested in product instead of advertising or PR

Localization – comes when the timing is right. Focus on influencers in new markets.

As CEO of founder your job is to tell the story of your product and get people excited about it

"I would not start a social relationship platform today" – but it is a great time to raise funds

"IPO is a step along the way – it's not the finish line" – wants to build a company on the scale of Adobe, Salesforce in Canada

Partners have made hundreds of thousands of dollars off HootSuite ecosystem –

The DNA of Traction

Justin Mares, *Co-author, Traction Book* *@jwmares*

- Most startups fail not because the product sucks, but because they can't get traction
- Traction traction traction traction traction
- The bullseye framework
    - Brainstorm – ex. Dropbox used referral program – something competitors weren't doing
    - Prioritize – is it easy to test? what's the potential impact? do learnings scale across products?
    - Test – test test test test test
    - Double down – focus on what you know works

Building a Growth Cavalry

Panel:

Aaron Ginn, *Growth, Everlane (former Head of Growth @ Stumbleupon)* @aginnt
Dave Zohrob, *Growth & Venture Hacker, Angellist* @dzohrob
Viraj Mody, *Engineering Manager - Growth, Dropbox.* @virajm

Moderated by: **Manny Padda**, *Managing Director, PM Search*

What is a growth hacker?

Dave: "Nerds doing marketing"

Viraj: At a small startup, everyone's a growth hacker

Aaron: Hire generalists – people willing to do what the company needs them to do

-Someone who emphasizes data over opinions – no ego

Dave: Curiosity is key characteristic of a growth hacker

How do you find them and onboard them?

Aaron: Product managers, people who have been filtered through your network, steal them from companies you respect

How do you learn to become one?

Aaron: Go through a painful situation – he was at a failing company and learned through survival

Dave: Read a ton about growth hacking – but then go ahead and do it.

What are some of your biggest mistakes?

Dave: It all starts with your product. If it's not amazing and there's no market fit, no amount of growth hacking is going to matter.

5 Common Startup Growth F-ups

Aliisa Hodges, *Growth Manager and 1st Business Hire, Mixpanel* @aliisahodges

1. You focus on quantity over quality

   - Don't forget to focus on retention
   - Building customer success team had huge impact on reducing churn (were a bit late in the game)

2. You slacked on the signup funnel

   - Don't let one team dictate entire signup funnel
   - Require authentication on mobile immediately

3. You don't ask for referrals

   - Give people badge to put on website - builds credibility and drives signups

4. You don't A/B test

   - You don't know you're doing a good job unless you're testing it
   - Test emails, landing pages, website copy, etc.

5. You don't have 1 metric that matters

   - Vanity metrics aren't actionable – they don't tell you how to make your product better
   - At MixPanel, it's "Reports viewed"
   - Choose 1 metric and obsess over it

The Mobile Growth Ninjutsu

Panel:

Alexander Peh, *Head of Mobile, PayPal Canada* [@alexanderpeh](#)
David Mausolf, *Head of Acquisition, Lyft* [@mausolf](#)
Dinkar Jain, *Sr. Product Manager, Twitter* [@dinkarjain](#)
Joseph Thompson, *VP Marketing & Communications, BuildDirect (former GM at Amazon.com)* [@josephthompson](#)

Moderated by: **Mada Seghete**, *Co-founder, Branch Metrics.*

Mada: Best way to learn is through stories

Alexander: PayPal still lives and breathes growth

Every panelist: Looooooves Vancouver :-)

Dinkar: First step in expanding into new market/localizing is figuring out what people on the ground want and are saying about your brand

In mobile, you have to respect the user's intent and they rarely want to do anything fancier. Keep it simple, smartypants.

Dave: How do you get people to engage with and pay for your product when you don't have any brand awareness? They focused on premium channels like Vimeo. Saw that it was worth it.

Alexander: At PayPal, they can throw money at just about anything. Pioneered Uber-style referral marketing.

- Acquisition is easy – activation is tough

- Putting an email and password on mobile device is a **pain in the ass** – changed it to phone number and 4-digit pin and usage skyrocketed

Lesson: Catering to mobile users is all about **reducing friction**

Joseph: At Amazon, created **Amazon Shorts** – 30-60 second videos that brought the product the product to life. Drove mobile engagement through the roof.

- Connect **mobile and email** as much as possible. Over 90% of people trust Amazon ratings and reviews – so they allowed customers to rate products easily through email.

Mistakes

Alexander: Late in the game in adopting mobile – only realized about 4 years ago that asking folks to input all their info via mobile was a bad idea. Wasted millions of dollars trying to convince people PayPal is "safe"– should have just told people it's **easy**.

David: Made mistake of paying drivers an hourly rate to make sure drivers were always available. No incentive for drivers. Instead, started offering people free rides. Demand shot up, but supply couldn't keep up. Eventually learned how to pair operations and supply together but it was a very painful and costly process.

Dinkar: If you're going for something rich and immersive, go through video. If not, stick to templates and standards. Don't get too fancy with mobile creative unless it's a video. Otherwise, it will take forever to load and won't get enough clicks to recoup the cost.

Organic vs. Paid

Dinkar: Either way, you need to start with the value you're offering users, number of user goals that were completed and return on capital.

David: Start with organic. Use learnings to feed into paid later on. Get analytics infrastructure and goals in place before you start tackling organic vs. paid question.

Joseph: Trust metrics (social proof) are underappreciated. People want to know someone else has vetted product for them. Don't forget to include reviews and testimonials on mobile.

-Every piece of software we design moving forward will be designed mobile first. Mobile growth has always been underestimated.

DON'T LET YOUR TAKEAWAYS ESCAPE YOU

A CALL TO ACTION

That's a wrap, folks! We hope these notes were helpful for you and you were able to enjoy TractionConf to the fullest (without being glued to your laptop).

One of the themes that kept coming up during the conference was the importance of trying new things and always A/B testing your ideas. Unbounce can help you experiment with landing pages to do just that.

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