

CUSTOMER-CONTENT FIT

A FRAMEWORK FOR PRODUCING CONTENT
THAT DRIVES LEADS

The problem with most B2B content marketing is that it lacks what we like to call
"customer-content fit"

Most companies immediately jump to creating content without thinking about how their content will strategically attract their customer.

You do that because you **think** it's obvious
what content appeals to your customer.

And you end up creating content that's **more or less** on topics your customer is interested in.

"We sell sales software, and look, all our content is about sales. What's wrong with that?"

Here's an example

6 Steps to Creating a Successful Sales Plan

Creating a sales plan from scratch can be overwhelming. This can make it easy to overthink things.

Some people immediately start crunching numbers to define sales quotas. Others compile a list of product features that they can pack into a marketing strategy.

However, a good sales plan should *never* be crafted to meet the needs of your company, or to move product. A successful sales plan should be crafted to meet the needs of your customers.

Elements of a Successful Sales Plan

As we explore this topic, we will cover these six essential elements to designing your sales strategy:

The problem is that most B2B SaaS and service companies don't sell to beginners. They sell to people that have been in the industry for years.

Imagine you're selling a **sales prospecting tool** - the audience that you're selling to has years of sales experience

Imagine you have a **B2B marketing agency**, you're likely selling to marketing directors, VPs and c-level executives

Those people aren't interested in beginner level content.

Do you think creating content like this will attract that
15 year veteran in sales?

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We like to call this type of content **Mirage Content**

The problem with content like this
is that it's **high level**.

The good news is I'm going to show you how to produce content that does drive your target audience, but first I want to show you some examples.

FUNDERS CLUB

Funders club is a seed stage VC fund that lets individuals also invest in world class startups.

FundersClub Why FundersClub Who We Are Portfolio More ▾ Log In [Join](#)

Invest in the world's most promising startups

Diversify your investment portfolio with insider access to highly vetted startups from Silicon Valley and beyond in just minutes.

[Join FundersClub for Free](#) or [Contact Us](#)

Forbes THE WALL STREET JOURNAL **CNMoney** The New York Times **WIRED**

We did a workshop with them in San Francisco.



One of the “customer” segments they’re trying to attract is amazing startup **founders**.

DONE IT BEFORE

FROM TOP INCUBATORS

RAISED ANGEL OR SEED

SHOWED SIGNIFICANT
TRACTION

Let's dissect one of their blog posts "for founders"...



FOR FOUNDERS

FundersClub Series A Checklist

By Christopher Steiner and Boris Silver • Dec 6, 2016

With a decent idea, a good team and some grinding, many founders can put together a seed round of up to \$2 million. Series A rounds, however, usually involve institutional venture investors that set the bar higher.

Building a company to the point where it can expect to get past the Series A crunch is hard enough, but landing the Series A, even with a worthy company, takes a lot of work and planning.

We've circumvented some of that work with this Series A checklist that can help a startup ready itself for the rigors and scrutiny that come with trying to raise this major investment. Operating as founders and investors here at FC, we've seen the

This post checks a lot of boxes...

- ✓ They're looking to fund Series A.
- ✓ Fundraising is a huge pain point for founders.
- ✓ The post is long (1903 words).
- ✓ The blog is beautifully designed.

But in our workshop with them, we were able to show them why this post is a mirage in a few minutes.



Do any of their experienced founders actually need a series A checklist?

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Hint: This is a million dollar question.

Look at your own company's content.

Do your best customers **actually need it?**

Do they actually need top 10 sales tips?

Do they actually need to know what marketing tools 30 experts recommend?

Do they need an introduction to growing a mobile app?



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We asked them...



...they didn't.



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Does the introduction paragraph immediately hook a founder coming out of YC or 500 startups that has gone through this whole process once before?

FundersClub Series A Checklist:

1. Investor deck (10-20 slides) and presentation:

At the Series A, investors want to deeply understand the narrative of the team, the company, and the market. You should have a point of view or a thesis behind what you are building and be able to communicate that in a clear way with supporting evidence. Some of the best companies were contrarian bets at the time they raised their Series A, and you should be prepared for skepticism by presenting a clear line of thinking. Identify which risks you have already de-risked in whole or in part and identify which risks you still need to address after the Series A.

2. Company Financials

Founders should have a tight understanding of their company's costs and revenues.

3. Business Metrics

This is where startups need to differentiate their own execution and approach to the market from competitors and market players. What approach have these founders

- MRR: Monthly Recurring Revenue
- CAC: Customer Acquisition Cost
- LTV: Customer Lifetime Value

6. Practice

You'll want to practice the pitch and presentation. Ask a founder friend, ideally one who has raised a Series A before, or an existing friendly investor for a walkthrough

Do these experienced founders not know they should include these things in their investor pitch?

Or that they need an investor pitch?



But on the surface, an article like this
looks like it should be good.

On a topic relevant to their targets.

Blog design is beautiful.

Decently long.

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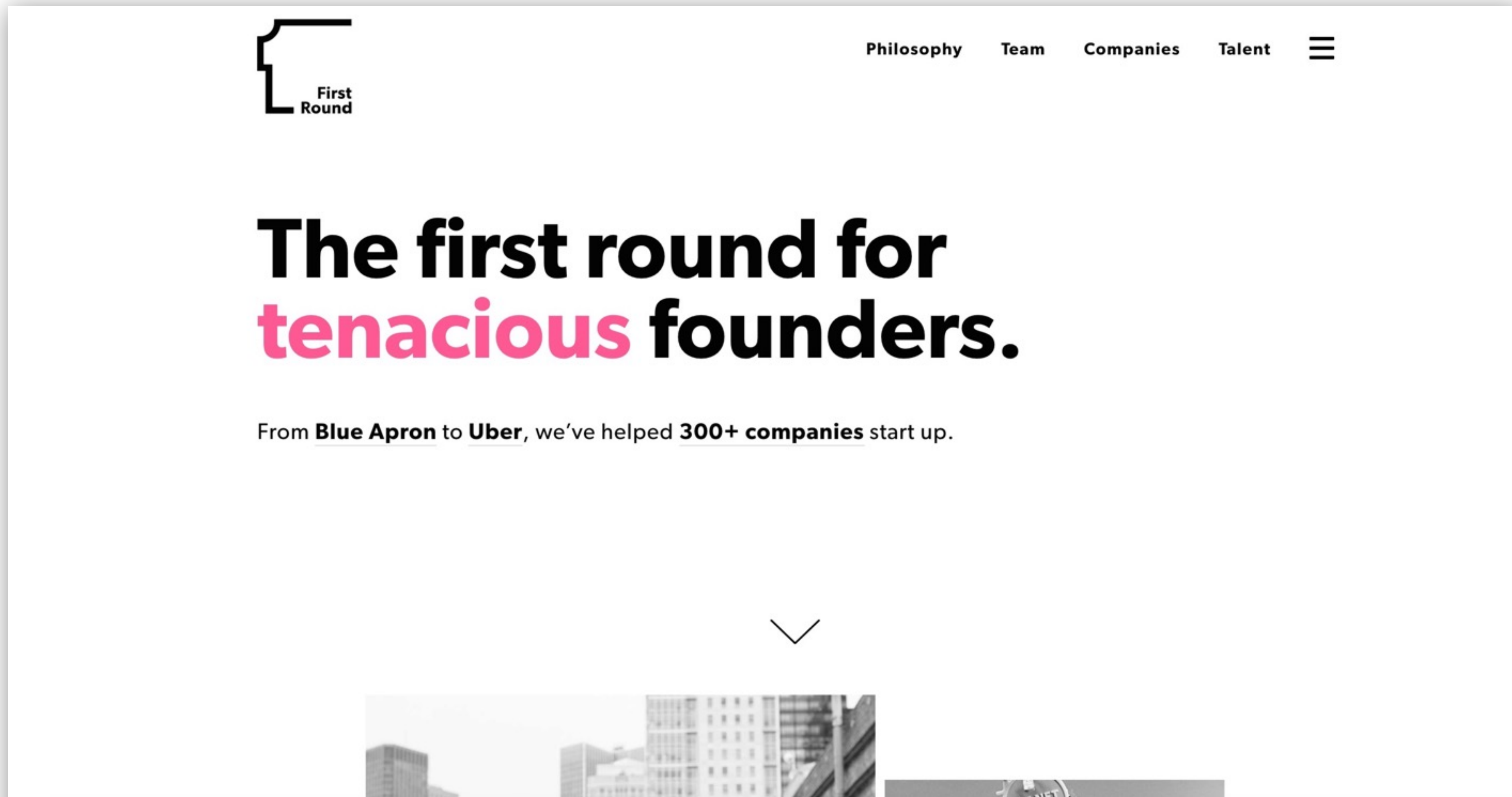
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Let's look at a counter example from a competitor of Funders Club...

First Round Capital also targets early stage startup investments.



Their blog “First Round Review” is one of the most respected startup publications in the industry.

**First Round Magazines:
Find the insights you need to
build great things.**

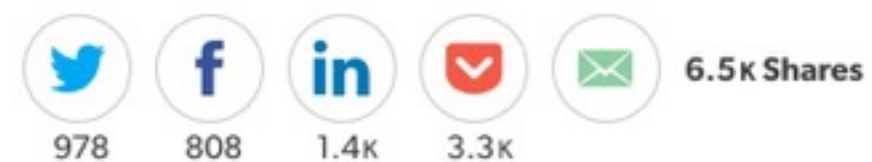
Management Magazine Snag the Best Advisors for Your Startup, from Best-selling Authors to Fortune 500 CEOs Make Operations Your Secret Weapon - Here's How The 30 Best Pieces of Advice for Entrepreneurs in 2016 See all 115 articles	People & Culture Magazine A People Ops Veteran on Navigating the Gnarliest Conversations Three Powerful Conversations Managers Must Have To Develop Their People Turbocharge Your Recruiting Machine — Here's How See all 74 articles	Product Magazine Leslie's Compass: A Framework For Go-To-Market Strategy My Launch Lessons from 37 Minutes in an Amazon War Room ClassPass' CMO on How and When to Invest in Product Marketing See all 55 articles
Women Magazine Snag the Best Advisors for	PR & Marketing Magazine The [Adjective] [Number]	Engineering Magazine Your Database is Your Prison

Let's dissect one of their articles to learn why...



Product

The Power of the Elastic Product Team — Airbnb's First PM on How to Build Your Own



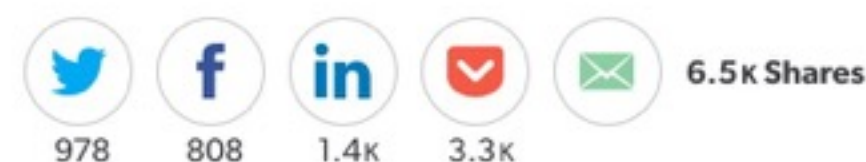
[Jonathan Golden](#), Airbnb's very first product manager and now Director of Product, knows that flexibility can get you far in his line of work. Last year, it even got him to Cuba.

While the island nation had always been effectively closed to Airbnb, the reestablishment of diplomatic relations with the U.S. in 2015 opened a door — a door the company's leaders wanted to walk through quickly. "We



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Think about how different this article is from the Series A checklist.

Do founders think about their product team?




Do founders like to learn from successful startups?

Do people like to read stories?



Product

The Power of the Elastic Product Team — Airbnb's First PM on How to Build Your Own

     6.5k Shares
978 808 1.4k 3.3k

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Compare this to the "sales tips" Google results.






Are there tons of articles like this that all say the same thing?

No.



Product

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 978  808  1.4k  3.3k  6.5k Shares

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What makes this stand out?

It's insanely **specific**.

That's the difference between **mirage** content, and content with **customer content fit**.

Major lesson: Your articles should actually address a real pain point or be actually interesting to your target audience.

It's easy to discard this example as "too hard" because First Round has access to lots of successful companies.

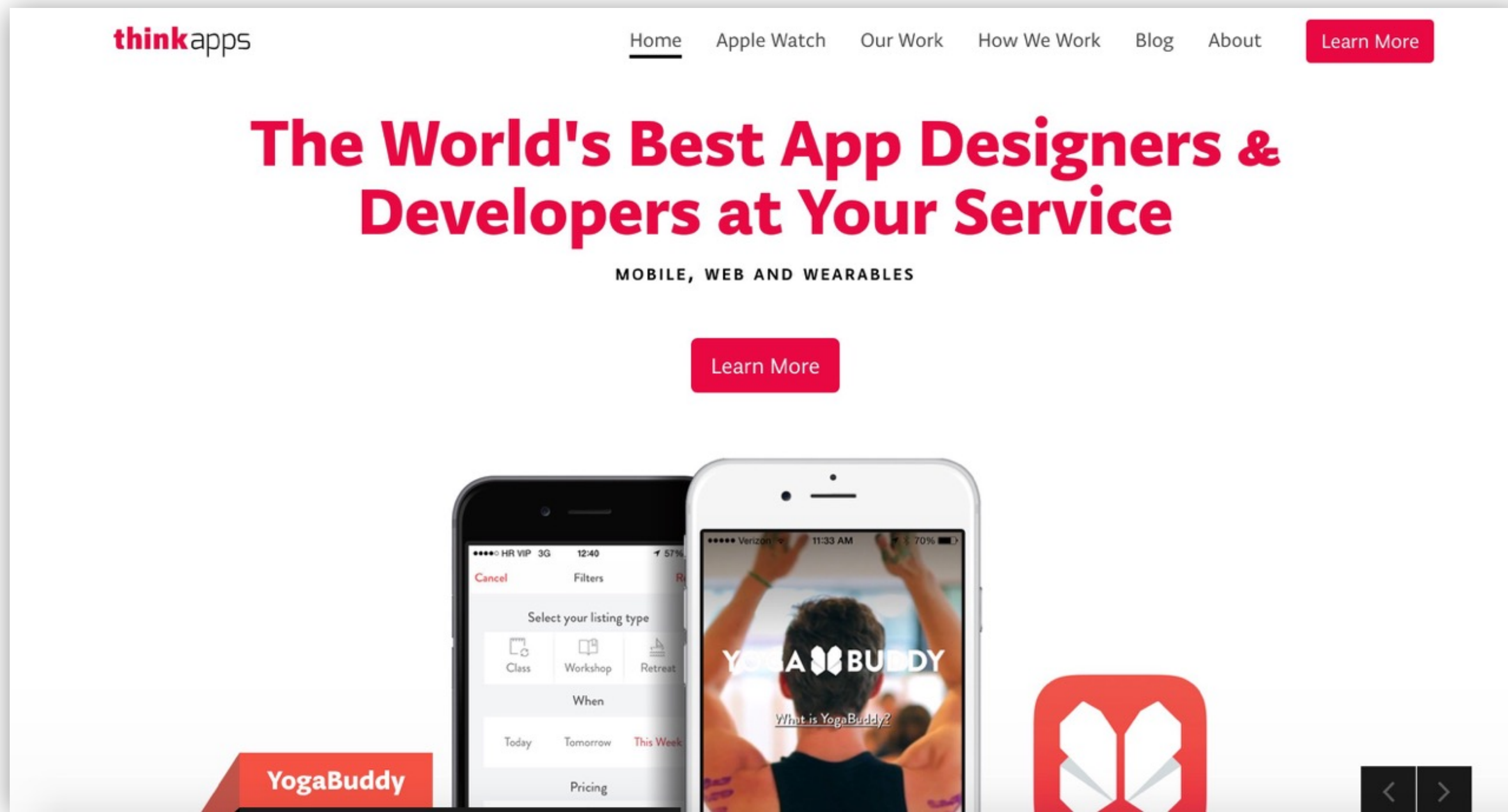
But the point is not to interview someone famous.
It's to be highly specific in topic.

So let's look at 2 examples to show that this can be relatively simple (if the legwork is done upfront).

THINKAPPS

Lastly, we want to show you an example from an agency, of how user research and highly specific content can land valuable deals.

Think Apps was a mobile app design agency.
Benji ran content for them.



Their ideal customer

ABOUT TO BUILD
A MOBILE OR WEB APP

HAS \$40,000+ BUDGET

SERIES B OR HIGHER
STARTUP

TYPICAL BUYER:
PRODUCT MANAGER

THINKAPPS: COMPETITOR EXAMPLE

GROW & CONVERT

Many competitors are producing content like this.



Aug 02, 2016 [x]cube LABS
Digital Transformation Insights Weekly July 27 – August 2



Jul 29, 2016 [x]cube LABS
How Digital Entertainment Is Ushering In A New Era In The Field Of Media & Entertainment



Jul 20, 2016 [x]cube LABS
5 Benefits Of IOT In Financial Services



Jul 14, 2016 [x]cube LABS
5 Ways Mobile Is Transforming The Insurance Industry



Jul 07, 2016 [x]cube LABS
Why Mobile App Design Should Be Essential To Your Mobile App Strategy?



Jul 07, 2016 [x]cube LABS
How To Measure The Success Of Enterprise Mobile Apps






It's easy to arrogantly shake our heads, but think about it, those articles are all technically about mobile app development.

...and the company develops mobile apps.

In doing customer research, I found that many prospects, right before buying, had the same question:

“Should I develop on iOS or Android?”



 Tarun Agarwal Aug 25 Share on    

iOS vs Android — it seems to be the defining battle of the mobile age. Here's some advice regarding iOS vs Android development. (Or should we say Android vs iOS development?)

If you're looking to build a mobile app for the first time, you may be wondering which platform you should build your app on first: iOS vs Android.

Typically it's best to build an app on one platform, get feedback, iterate, test, and improve — then build on the other platform.

Here is an overview of the pros and cons of iOS

So we developed a short piece of content to discuss this exact pain point.



It's not long (706 words).

But, the specificity, which came from the user research brought in ideal clients.






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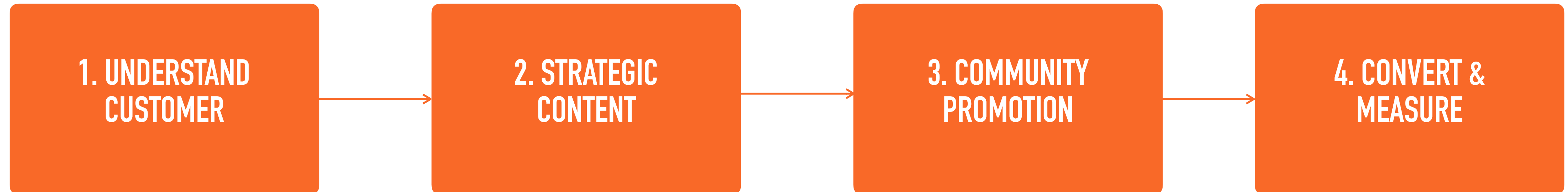
Paired with the right call to action (Module 4), this single 706 word article helped close 6-figure deals.

That's the power of the **customer content fit.**

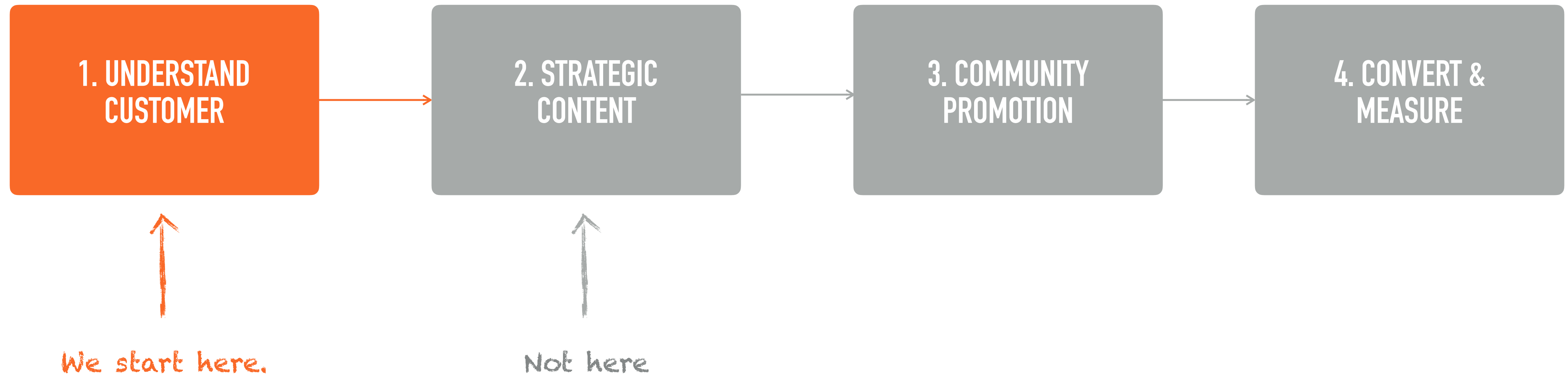
Now let's get into how to do this
yourself

GETTING CUSTOMER-CONTENT FIT VIA USER RESEARCH

We use **customer focused** content marketing.

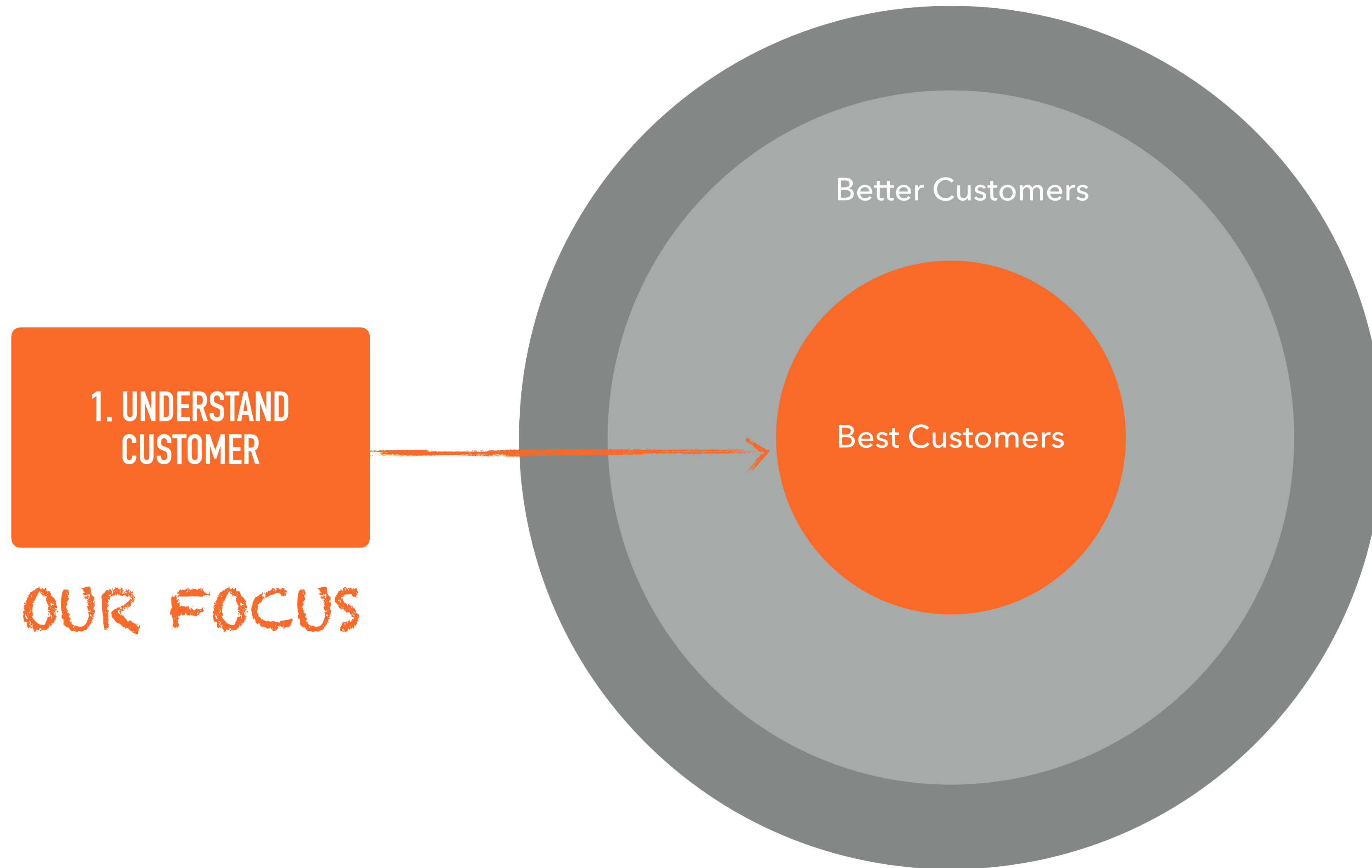


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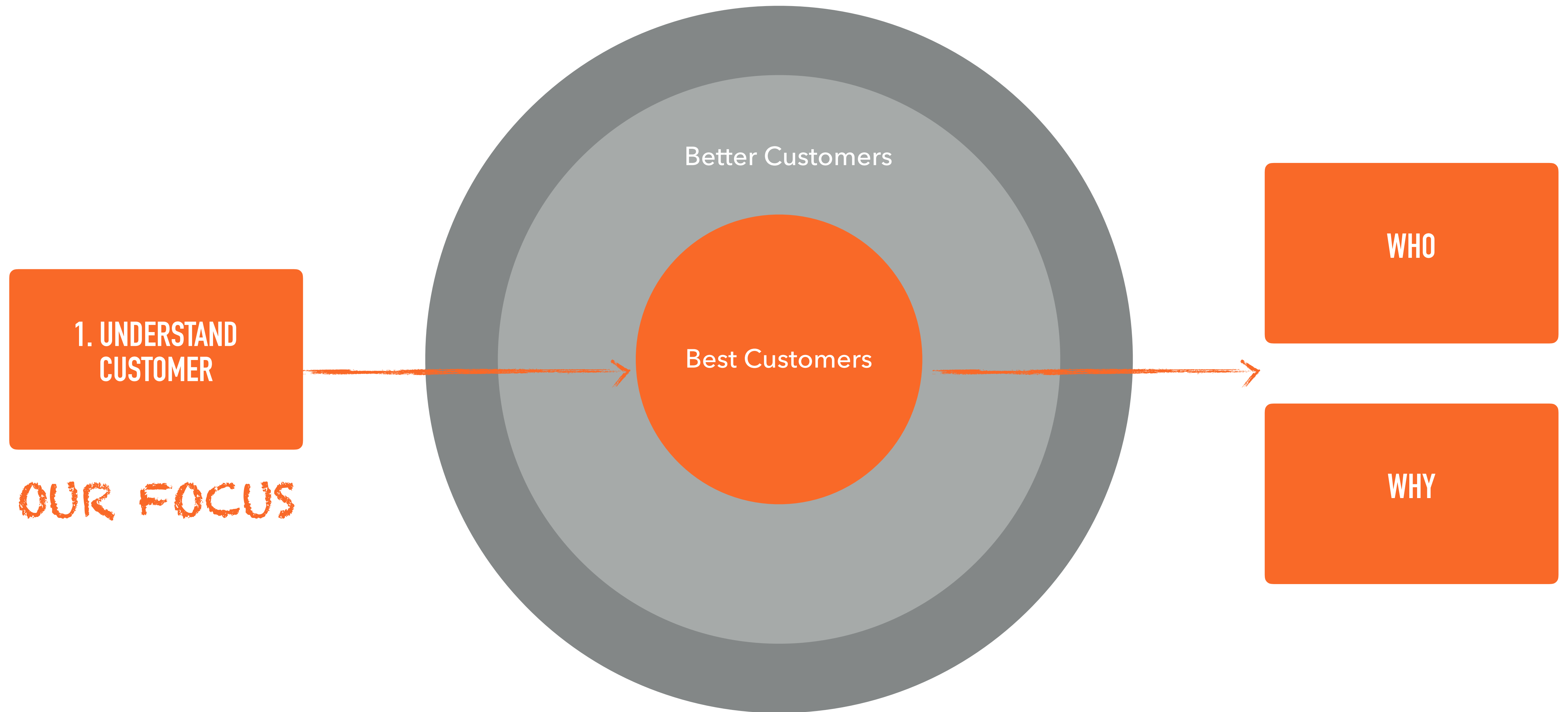
BEST CUSTOMERS, NOT ALL CUSTOMERS

GROW & CONVERT



BEST CUSTOMERS, NOT ALL CUSTOMERS

GROW & CONVERT



1. Who are the best customers

...so we know who to target and write content for.

WHO ARE YOUR BEST CUSTOMERS

GROW & CONVERT

We want to figure out:

What companies are best for you?

What verticals?

Who in the organization is the buyer?

What revenue range?



DEFINE YOUR BEST CUSTOMERS

GROW & CONVERT

Find who your best customers are in your CRM

The screenshot shows the PipelineDeals CRM interface. At the top, there is a search bar and navigation tabs for Home, Companies, Deals, People, Calendar, Documents, Goals, and Reports. The 'People' tab is active. Below the navigation, there is a section titled 'HOT AND WARM' with a star icon and a toggle for 'Simple' and 'Advanced' views. A message indicates '24 people matched. There are 222 people in your account.' Below this, there are several action links: 'Add person', 'Import', 'Export', 'Save filter', 'Manage filter', 'My filters', and 'Select columns'. A table displays a list of leads with columns for Photo, Name, Company, Info, Owner, Status, Source, Tags, Type, Next Task, Next Task Due, and Notes. A context menu is open over the 'Next Task' column, showing options: 'Show filter criteria', 'Rename', and 'Delete'. The table contains the following data:

Photo	Name	Company	Info	Owner	Status	Source	Tags	Type	Next Task	Next Task Due	Notes
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text" value="Search"/>	Select		Select	Select	Select	Select	Select			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Catherine Zeta-Jones			Kris Knowles	●	Import	Celebrity	Lead			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cate Blanchett			Kris Knowles	●	Import	Celebrity	Lead			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Blake Lively			Kris Knowles	●	Import	Celebrity	Lead			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Carrie Underwood			Kris Knowles	●	Import	Celebrity	Contact			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mila Kunis			Kris Knowles	●	Trade Show	Celebrity	Contact			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hugh Jackman			Kris Knowles	●	Import	Celebrity	Contact	Archive Lead if no Response	11/28/2011	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Daniel Craig			Kris Knowles	●	Import	Celebrity	Contact	Archive Lead if no Response	10/11/2011	

For most B2B companies, it's some combination of these...

SHORT SALES CYCLE

HIGHER ACCOUNT VALUE

LOWER CUSTOMER
SUPPORT

LONGER RETENTION

Talk to your **team members** to get anecdotal evidence from them.

2. Understand everything about them.

...so we can create amazingly **specific content**

...and **promote** where they hang out.

- What product related pain points do your customers have? (More than just “they can’t do it themselves”)
- What non-product related pain points do they have?
- What objections do they have to your product/service?
- What does a day in their life look like?
- What are their goals? (Remember these are people, not companies)
- Where do they hang out online?
- Who do they trust for industry recommendations?

1. Talk to your customers and ask them open ended questions
2. Talk to your team members who are in contact with prospects/
customers
3. Survey your customers
4. Talk to prospects who fit your best customer profile

fieldboom.com/survey-questions



50 Survey Questions To Better Learn About Your Customers

fieldboom.com/survey-questions

➔ **1. What is the primary benefit that you have received from (product or service name)?**

This question will help identify what your customers value most from your product or service. Knowing this information can help you craft more effective marketing copy based on this value.

➔ **2. What are the top three benefits you get from (product or service name)?**

Again, this information can be used to identify the top benefits your customers receive from your product. You can then use their answers as you write landing or product pages—instead of just assuming what these benefits are.

➕ **3. How would you feel if you could no longer use (product or service name)? Why?**

TURN LEARNINGS INTO CONTENT IDEAS

GROW & CONVERT



modernweb Articles ▾ Hire A Team

Building a Frontend WordPress theme

by [Trevan Hetzel](#) on February 16, 2015

Frontend Development 1 Comment

The modern web is always changing, and this article is more than two years old.

 + REST API + 



modernweb Articles ▾ Hire A Team


How Cars.com Developer Mac Heller-Ogden Convinced His Bosses to Adopt Node.js

by [Nathan Collier](#) on July 17, 2017

Backend Development, Featured 8 Comments

This article is more than six months old, and some specifics have likely changed.

Sponsored by



How Cars.com Transitioned to Node.js

TURN LEARNINGS INTO CONTENT IDEAS

GROW & CONVERT



The 15 best sales podcasts in 2017 for startups and salespeople

13 February 2017 by Leadfeeder



Backloading Past Data	Yes, 30 days standard, more on request	No	No
Automatic Visitor Identification	Yes	Yes	Yes
Automatic Lead Scoring	Yes	Yes	No
Email Alerts	Yes	Yes	Yes
Page Tracking	Yes	Yes	Yes
Google Analytics Integration	Yes	No	No
CRM Integration	MailChimp Salesforce Pipedrive Zoho Web CRM MS Dynamics	Salesforce Zoho Microsoft Dynamics	Zapier Salesforce Integration to MailChimp & Zoho through 3rd party applications Many Others

Lead Forensics vs Hubspot vs Leadfeeder

28 September 2017 by Otto Peura

THANK YOU

GROW & CONVERT

Thanks! Questions?
@benjihyam on Twitter



GO LIGHT OUR WORLD (GLOW) is a registered 501(3)c organization that is dedicated to diminishing poverty with solar solutions.

GLOW strives to cultivate compassion for the Earth and all living beings through authentic acts of selfless service.

The organization provides a variety of solar solutions through micro-loan systems to rural, impoverished communities around the world.

