

---

# **GROWTH OPTIMIZING**

## THE NEW DIGITAL MARKETING MINDSET

---



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b> .....	3
<b>CHAPTER 1</b> Harnessing Digital Growth Optimizing .....	5
<b>CHAPTER 2</b> The Growth Optimizing Philosophy and Mindset .....	8
The lean startup mindset .....	9
The entrepreneurial mindset .....	10
<b>CHAPTER 3</b> Define Your Audience for Growth .....	11
Building buyer personas .....	12
<b>CHAPTER 4</b> Brand Promise and Market Fit .....	13
<b>CHAPTER 5</b> Understand the Sales Funnel .....	16
<b>CHAPTER 6</b> Develop a Growth Optimizing Team .....	18
<b>CHAPTER 7</b> Focus on Data .....	20
<b>CHAPTER 8</b> The Analytics Platform .....	22
<b>CHAPTER 9</b> Execute Your Growth Experiments .....	24
Identifying your goals and KPIs .....	25
Running the experiment .....	25
<b>CHAPTER 10</b> Rinse and Repeat .....	27
<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	29

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We have entered a new digital era—one in which walls between data analysis, coding, and marketing have dissolved. In the new era, large marketing campaigns have been replaced by a mindset of smaller experiments and incremental testing. Now, marketers are much more technical and analytical, and no longer depend on developers.

Growth Optimizing is a data-driven, lean approach to digital marketing. This new model is designed to utilize the vast array of ingenious online marketing tools and techniques. It focuses on how to obtain, maintain, and multiply your customer base in a scalable and efficient way.

In this eBook, we explain the process that can lead to massive growth, helping your business reach new heights by leveraging analytics, creativity, and experimentation. The goal is to shift your perspective towards a new, growth-oriented mindset and illustrate new ways you can grow your online business.

You might be wondering what the key differences are between traditional digital marketing and growth optimization. Growth Optimizing focuses on company growth and profitability as measured by customer signups, retention, referrals, and new sales, as opposed to traditional digital campaigns that focus on top-level results such as traffic, likes, and shares.



Explore this eBook to uncover:

- The growth optimizer's mindset
- How to build winning marketing teams
- How to choose the best strategies to implement
- How to measure your successes and failures
- How to learn from these implementation cycles to constantly optimize and grow

Growth Optimizing draws inspiration from many of the the most successful digital startups, utilizing a number of different tactics. The process is part agile marketing, part building the right teams, and part data and strategy development. Thinking differently is at the heart of this technique. How do we do things in a new way, to beat out the fierce competition that utilizes the same traditional, digital marketing techniques you've been using—techniques that are fast becoming a part of the past?

Good digital Growth Optimizing requires you to be creative. You need to experiment constantly and understand quickly what is working and what isn't. A big part of this process relies on using data and measuring all activities, to quickly focus on successes and eliminate failures.

## WHAT ARE...

**AGGREGATED MARGINAL GAINS:** the process of making small gains in a number of areas, that add up to something greater.

The core idea of Growth Optimizing is to test a marketing technique quickly and cheaply. Growth optimization means experimenting early and often, seeking aggregated marginal gains. You don't want to look for a silver bullet, but you do want to test lots of small steps. The Growth optimization mindset says that rather than having one web page, have a series of web pages and work out which one converts the best. Then, analyze the outcome to optimize, iterate and build on what is working.

Growth Optimizing works because it is built on running A/B tests, creative analysis and the ability to identify emerging trends and opportunities before others do. A good Growth Optimizing campaign grows out of a team with diverse experience, each member contributing a different strength—including creative, strategic, and data-driven skill sets.

# CHAPTER 01

HARNESSING DIGITAL  
GROWTH OPTIMIZING

Now that you know what Digital Growth Optimizing is, how do you use it? It always starts with identifying the area in which you want to grow your online business. It requires coming up with a measurable strategy or experiment. Once the experiment is completed, growth optimizers use the results to determine what worked and what didn't. Knowing this information allows the optimizer to determine whether they should increase further investment or drop the tactic and try something new.

## THE GOAL OF GROWTH OPTIMIZATION

Growth optimization is designed to acquire and retain customers, usually by increasing site traffic and optimizing your conversion funnel to produce quantifiable results. It requires experimentation and a certain amount of experience. A growth optimizer is someone who throws out traditional thinking and replaces it with ideas and tactics that are:

TESTABLE

TRACKABLE

SCALABLE

## GROWTH OPTIMIZING IS AN ITERATIVE APPROACH

Many of the greatest Growth Optimizing successes cannot be easily copied, but the mindset and the approach can be duplicated. Think of it as an iterative process, consisting of four steps:



A true Growth Optimizing program lives at the intersection of data, product, and marketing. Here are examples of some Growth Optimizing thought experiments to try. Ask yourself:



Management guru Peter Drucker once said that if you cannot measure it, you cannot improve it. Successful Growth Optimizing gives special attention to measuring—or analytics. Although it may not be particularly exciting, it is difficult to be successful without using these data-related methods.

True growth optimizers are great at understanding data. Measuring results of different tactics is not only a basic part of digital marketing, it just might lead to that “aha!” moment—the discovery that reveals a new path to exponential growth.

# CHAPTER 02

THE GROWTH OPTIMIZING  
PHILOSOPHY AND MINDSET





The difference between Growth Optimizing and traditional digital marketing is the mindset. Growth Optimizing is focused on a clear objective, to grow an online business. Digital marketing, on the other hand, is often concerned with top level statistics such as gaining more likes, tweets, and brand awareness. If they want to achieve success, growth optimizers need to use their creativity to come up with innovative ways to grow sales and leads.

There is a typical misconception among marketers that assumes the way to get more leads and sales is simply to do more marketing. Many companies have grown their presence online with very limited marketing budgets. So, what are the magic marketing approaches that can generate more growth with limited cost? The stock answer is to build strategies that include viral features. It is easy to talk about building viral features, but isn't it a whole lot harder to actually build them and get results? Growth Optimizing techniques can be modeled and recreated through leveraging influencers, online PR, social media, split testing, building microsites, capturing email addresses, and mining data to understand market opportunities. We'll dive deeper into these concepts later on in this eBook.

## **THE LEAN STARTUP MINDSET**

A couple of years ago Eric Ries wrote a book called *The Lean Startup*, which would have a huge impact on all startups. The book's philosophy spoke to building software quickly, a practice he called creating a Minimal Viable Product or MVP. The next step is to bring this MVP to market as quickly as possible, in order to learn from users what they like and dislike about the product. Built into the process is a measuring stage, in which key performance indicators measure such results as signups, time on-site, shopping cart abandonment, and others. Measuring the success and failure of your MVP means you can fail quickly while at the same time learning in the most cost-effective way what works and what does not.

This is the same build, measure, and learn philosophy found at the heart of a Growth Optimizing campaign. Try out a new marketing technique, measure how well it did, throw out or rework areas that are underperforming, and keep the areas that are doing well. Rinse and repeat the process until you have one fantastic marketing campaign.

## THE ENTREPRENEURIAL MINDSET

A key aspect of Growth Optimizing is to think like an entrepreneur, keeping a startup mentality even if you are operating in a large or well-established company. A startup mentality means learning and adapting quickly. It means always trying to grow your business while at the same time staying focused on the bottom line. One aspect of entrepreneurship that often gets lost as a company grows, is the ability to keep experimenting until you hit on the next big idea that will take your company to new heights. Building and executing experiments is key to growth and includes constantly iterating until the desired goals are achieved.

Startups have small budgets and limited time, making it important to build and test quickly. Limited budgets require every growth optimizer to accurately measure costs, which in turn means tracking as many aspects of the digital campaign as possible. The more data points tracked, the better your likely outcome. Essential points to track include traffic, conversions, user retention, and return on investment (ROI).

## COMMON TRAITS OF THE GROWTH MINDSET

Now that you have embraced the lean startup mentality and the entrepreneurial mindset, what else will it take to become a successful growth optimizer? Here are some of the characteristics you need to nurture:



Be a constant learner



Be a creative problem-solver



Focus on moving the needle



Be obsessed with growth



Live and breath digital marketing

WHAT IS...

**A MINIMAL VIABLE PRODUCT (MVP):** a strategy for developing a new product with the minimum number of features to test customer response.

# CHAPTER 03

DEFINE YOUR AUDIENCE  
FOR GROWTH



Any good marketing program starts with defining your target audience, and Growth Optimizing is no different. The clearer your understanding of the people your marketing is trying to reach, the easier it is to create campaigns that meet the needs of your audience.

### **BUILDING BUYER PERSONAS**

We begin by defining Personas, or examples of your idealized customers. This includes understanding their needs and concerns, and where they're going online to get answers to their questions. In fact, the most important factor in understanding your Persona is how they consume content. If you don't understand this, you can easily invest your precious marketing budget in the wrong places.

# CHAPTER 04

## BRAND PROMISE & MARKET FIT





Defining your Unique Selling Proposition (USP) or brand promise is the next step. Here you need to decide why people buy from you versus your competition, how you can be different, and which differentiators you can own as part of your brand promise. Many companies skip this step and end up with me-too product offerings. Me-too marketing often degenerates into a price war where no one wins, and can spiral downwards on the internet to a point where price comparisons are readily available. A growth optimizer mentality, by contrast, leads you to decide how to get hold of your piece of the market. This means asking questions like, “what do people really care about in my industry?” and “which people can I turn into loyal followers?”

Here are some successful examples of USPs, showing how a unique system or benefit differentiates the product from others:

- Anacin, “Fast, fast, incredibly fast relief.” In 1952, a TV commercial capitalized on Anacin’s “special ingredient,” caffeine, by suggesting limitations of other aspirin and repeating, three times, the differentiation proposition: fast.
- M&M’s: “Melts in your mouth, not in your hand.” 1954[9] M&Ms patented hard sugar coating that prevents chocolate from melting in warm hands, made it a candy that could be carried by soldiers in the field, unlike other brands.
- Head & Shoulders: “clinically proven to reduce dandruff.” 1961. Research showed that Pyrithione Zinc effectively eliminated dandruff. Adding the word “Shoulders” to the name of the product showed how it was different from other shampoos.



## PRODUCT AND MARKET FIT

Growth depends on having a product that fulfills a real and compelling need for a defined segment of the market. The key to success is to keep trying new iterations of your product until you achieve massive growth. This process is what marketers call Product Market Fit (PMF). As Eric Ries explains in *The Lean Startup*, the best way to get to PMF is to start with a Minimal Viable Product (MVP) and keep building it based on feedback.

Growth Optimizing lets you quickly build prototypes that will help you to figure out customer needs. It means being open to feedback and having the flexibility to pivot and move in a different direction if that is what the market dictates.

So, how do you know whether you have achieved Product Market Fit? The answer is simple: you constantly focus on your information feedback loop. This may be in the form of the number of conversions that you achieve through a PPC test campaign, or a survey that you run through Survey Monkey. Add in Google Analytics, Optimizely for conversion tests, and Marketing Automation tools like those offered by National Positions, to create great feedback loops on what is and is not working.

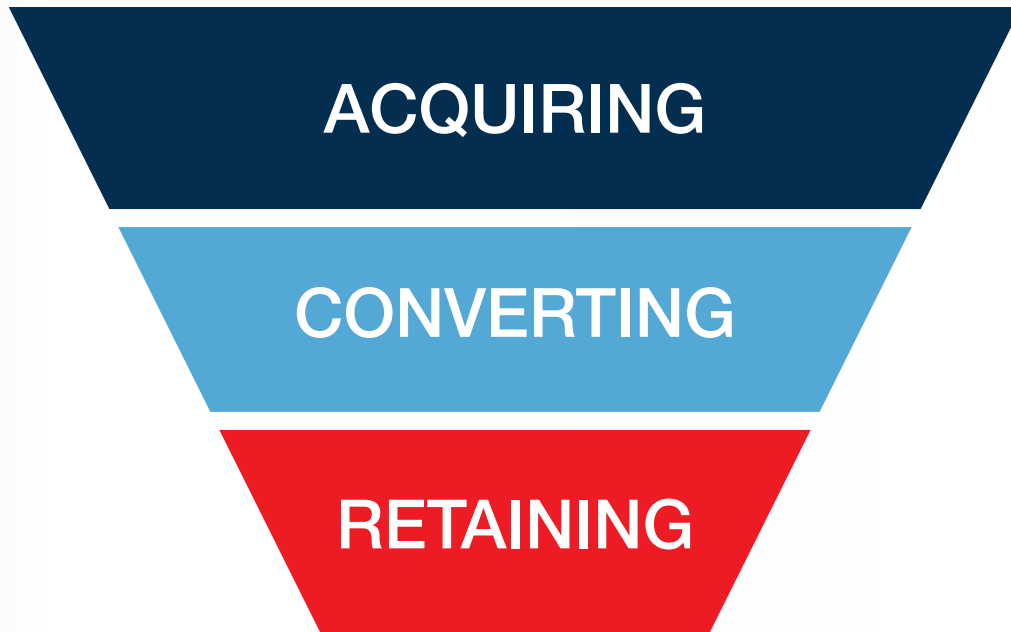
# CHAPTER 05

UNDERSTAND THE  
SALES FUNNEL



The Sales or Conversion Funnel is an important model that helps to explain the Growth Optimizing process. This concept helps us visualize the path that the customer follows in order to take some action and ultimately, to buy your product or service.

There are three basic steps to moving site visitors through the funnel:



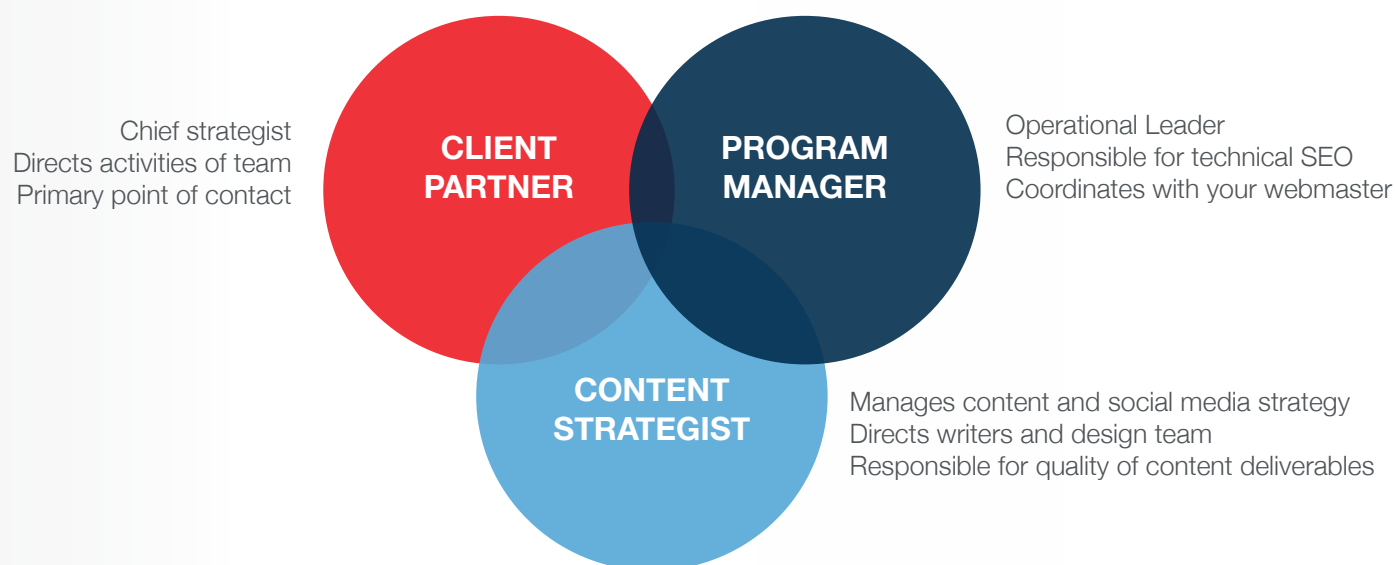
Visualizing the funnel helps growth optimizers prioritize their strategies around one of these stages, whether acquisition, conversion, or retention. It is important to focus your time and energy in the area of the funnel that will generate the biggest growth impact for your business.

Imagine how your customers enter and exit the funnel, and where to pinpoint the greatest opportunity for improving their experience on your site.

# CHAPTER 06

DEVELOP A GROWTH  
OPTIMIZING TEAM

Growth Optimizing is a team sport that requires a multi-disciplinary group to get it right. As you will see, each team requires a diverse set of skills to be successful. At National Positions we assign teams of three people to manage the process on behalf of our clients. Your business may require a bigger or smaller team depending on your needs.



### THE CLIENT PARTNER OR CHIEF STRATEGIST

The client partner is the strategist in the team. This person leads all the marketing activities and growth experiments. They devise the plans and manage the agile or lean marketing process of build, measure and learn. They need to be strong digital marketing experts in order to manage this process, and they must be both creative and data-driven in their thinking. The best strategists understand behavioral psychology and web design. These are the same people that love to experiment and learn. As you can imagine, finding good strategists is often difficult because you are looking for someone that is both a left- and right-brain thinker.

### THE TECHNOLOGIST OR PROGRAM MANAGER

This person is often a programmer who is strong in web design, implementing split tests, data aggregation, scraping and data manipulation. You can think of this person as your ultimate optimizer, who can turn ideas into reality. In larger-scale implementations, the program manager will write specifications, design wireframes for experiments, and manage a team of web developers.

### THE CONTENT STRATEGIST

The final team member is the content strategist. This person is critical to the marketing effort. They are often the creative element of the team that will devise calls to action and write web copy including headlines, eBooks, infographics, presentations, video scripts, and more. Content is, more than ever, the honey that is needed to keep visitors on a website, taking the actions we want them to take in order to move them through the marketing funnel. In larger teams the content strategist may have a team of content writers, designers, proofers, editors and videographers to help build and execute on their creative ideas.

# CHAPTER 07

FOCUS ON DATA



Before running any growth experiment, it is important to set up the means to collect and store data, then draw inferences from it. Every experiment should be designed to store as many relevant data points as possible. The more data you have, the better you can calibrate your future investment decisions. Most experiments that you conduct will use A/B testing, with a goal of devising a new marketing program or optimizing a current one.

Data offers you the ability to identify the subtle and not-so-subtle distinctions that allow you to improve your marketing. Ultimately, data provides a mechanism to understand what is and is not working with a campaign. Data tells you which activities to continue developing, which activities need tweaking, and which activities should be discontinued.

Data provides you the ability to ask the right questions, like “what is going to make the biggest difference to my business?” If the data is analyzed correctly, it will tell you the best way to achieve your ultimate plan.

# CHAPTER 08

## THE ANALYTICS PLATFORM





Measuring the success of your marketing activities requires a platform to track all your leads, from inception to closing new business, and beyond. Most marketers tend to use Google Analytics as their tracking platform. Unfortunately, the tracking of data and the information provided by the free version of Google Analytics is limited, as Google hides many of the organic results under the pretext of privacy concerns.

Digging deeper into the data and answering all the questions needed to complete Growth Optimizing experiments, calls for a platform such as the **National Positions Marketing Analytics SaaS Platform**. This application is designed to store all interactions that occur with your web properties. The National Positions Marketing Analytics SaaS Platform allows you to track all of your owned media and marketing activities, including your main website, any microsites, landing pages, social media sites, as well as all your campaigns, whether paid or earned. What makes this application different from Google Analytics is that it allows you to identify and track real visitors through the sales funnel.

The analytics platform lets you:

Decide which marketing channels are most effective

Evaluate where you are earning the best and worst ROI on your marketing spend

Understand key metrics including traffic, leads, and customers

# CHAPTER 09

## EXECUTE YOUR GROWTH EXPERIMENTS



There are a few key points to bear in mind when implementing the Growth Optimizing process. Be clear and honest about the expected outcome of your growth campaign. At the end of your experiment, you want to be able to reflect on your assumptions and compare them to the actual outcomes.

Growth Optimizing is the same as regular marketing in that it requires you to find ways to attract new customers. The difference is that growth optimizers are interested in unconventional, often less expensive ideas to pull in new customers. The growth optimizer's job never ends, as there is always room for improvement.

## **IDENTIFYING YOUR GOALS AND KPIS**

Before starting any experiment, you need to understand your company's growth metrics or KPIs (Key Performance Indicators). These metrics may change depending on where in the funnel you are performing your experiment. At the top of the funnel they might include more traffic, while lower down in the funnel they might include leads, conversions and retention numbers.

## **RUNNING THE EXPERIMENT**

The growth optimizer starts by identifying a problem or bottleneck, then choosing a tactic. Below are some examples:

## **GROWTH OPTIMIZATION TECHNIQUES**

- ☐ Landing page optimization
- ☐ FAQ copywriting
- ☐ Technical SEO
- ☐ Email marketing based on user behavior
- ☐ Nurture email queues
- ☐ Data-scraping
- ☐ Posting a question on Quora.com
- ☐ Adding a popup to your site to capture email addresses
- ☐ Targeting Influencers
- ☐ Adding dynamic content to your pages
- ☐ Reaching out to reporters through HARO (Help a Reporter Out)

See image below for examples of 48 more Growth Optimization Techniques.

# 48 DIGITAL GROWTH OPTIMIZATION TECHNIQUES



## Email Techniques

- The behavior nurture queue
- The upsell email
- The refer a friend email
- The timely Holiday offer
- The upgrade email
- The win-back email



## Video Growth Optimization

- Product Demo
- Elevator Pitch Explainer Video
- Testimonial Videos
- The "Unboxing" Video
- The Interview Video
- Value-Based Video series
- The Team Spotlight Video



## Conversion Testing

- The Lean Homepage A/B Test
- Feedback request
- Test CTA
- Landing Page Conversion Testing
- Social Proof Confidence Builder
- Testimonials
- Live Chat
- The Countdown Urgency Conversion Technique
- The conversion-Driven About Page
- Form Conversion Test
- The Free Trial
- Competitor Comparison Page



## Online PR

- HARO Brand Buzz Boost
- PR Push Outreach and Pitch Strategy
- Influencer Marketing
- Animated Gif



## Content Growth Optimization

- Getting Ideas
- Writing a great blog post
- Writing an even better blog post
- Pitching a Guest post
- The industry Influencer Blog posts
- Video Testimonials
- Ebook Giveaways
- Top Posts Digest
- Gated Content
- The Weekly Roundup Blog Post
- Free Tool
- User Generated Content
- Original Graphic Creation
- FAQ's Blog Post Series



## Social Growth Optimization

- Social Integration Techniques
- Giveaways
- LinkedIn Groups



## Competitive Analysis

- Competitive Research
- Top Page Optimizer

## EXECUTING GROWTH EXPERIMENTS

The key is to test conversions at each stage of the marketing funnel, to:

- Identify bottlenecks
- Identify tactics and best practices
- Identify companies that focus on optimization and learn from them
- Know that not every growth tactic will work for your company

# CHAPTER 10

RINSE AND REPEAT



At the end of each experiment, you need to analyze the outcome. Did your Growth Optimizing technique succeed or fall short of your goals? Now is the time to reflect on the outcome and the assumptions that led you to pursue the experiment in the first place. The beautiful thing about Growth Optimizing is that whether your experiment worked or not, you come out learning more about your customers and about your product and business.

It is a bit like the Thomas Edison quote “I have not failed, I have found 10,000 ways that my product does not work”. If an experiment fails or leads to a decrease in traffic and revenue, learn why and apply this learning to your next Growth Optimizing experiment. Don’t take the results too personally. Whether your experiment is a success or a failure, remember to remain at a healthy distance from the outcome so that you can objectively repeat the process in a systematic way. Always ask what you can learn from the experiment that can be improved the next time around.

# CONCLUSION

Growth Optimizing is the new secret weapon that your company can use to beat out online competition and grow new sales and leads. Since growth optimization revolves less around set rules and practices and more around a mindset, it is important that you hire and build strong teams to execute your growth plans.

Growth techniques need a new kind of marketer that is fascinated by data and experimentation, and open to learning from the outcome of their experiments. This type of marketer needs an entrepreneurial mindset that is nimble and responsive, ready to take advantage of the growing opportunities found in a changeable digital playing field.

If you are serious about transforming your business, then decide today to embrace the unconventional and test, test, test until you uncover the tactics that propel your company to far greater levels of success.

# SOURCES

1. [http://www.academia.edu/5334630/Marginal\\_gains\\_Olympic\\_lessons\\_in\\_high\\_performance\\_for\\_organisations](http://www.academia.edu/5334630/Marginal_gains_Olympic_lessons_in_high_performance_for_organisations)
2. [https://www.amazon.com/Lean-Startup-Entrepreneurs-Continuous-Innovation/dp/0307887898/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1471306533&sr=8-1&keywords=eric+ries](https://www.amazon.com/Lean-Startup-Entrepreneurs-Continuous-Innovation/dp/0307887898/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1471306533&sr=8-1&keywords=eric+ries)
3. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minimum\\_viable\\_product](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minimum_viable_product)
4. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unique\\_selling\\_proposition](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unique_selling_proposition)
5. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A/B\\_testing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A/B_testing)
6. <http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/t/thomasaed132683.html>

# NOT SURE WHERE TO START?

## Talk to one of our experts.

Learn more about ways to make Growth Optimizing work for your business, with the experts at National Positions. Call us today to get started optimizing,

### GET A COMPLETE SEO AUDIT

- Examines the key SEO factors which affect your ability to rank
  - Pinpoints SEO issues and explains the remedies
  - Performs over 300 checks
  - Looks at 6 main areas of Local SEO and Maps
- Performs a competitive analysis
  - Reports are customizable
  - Includes explanations and advice

## How does your digital marketing stack up?

**CLAIM YOUR FREE AUDIT!**



877-866-6699



[www.nationalpositions.com](http://www.nationalpositions.com)



[info@nationalpositions.com](mailto:info@nationalpositions.com)