# The Series B Marketing Playbook

A practical guide that unlocks investment by turning growth into an investable story.

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# >Introduction

The hardest part of the startup journey isn't getting funded once, it's getting funded again.

Series B is the first serious growth round, the point where a business **must move from promising to provable**, from a risky bet to something that can scale.

At Velocity B, we've worked with companies navigating this step, and it's where many otherwise successful businesses stall. Not because they stop growing, but because they can't prove their growth is repeatable, credible, and worth scaling.

Attracting that investment takes more than a compelling pitch. The due diligence that follows tests not just past performance, but whether the business has a clear story and a predictable path to growth.

Marketing should be in the room when those plans are made.

In this playbook, we outline the areas where marketing must lead, creating a clear narrative, executing against revenue goals, and providing proof and credibility.

These are lessons drawn from our hard-won experience, for companies looking to take the next step.

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# >The Step Up to Series B

The step-up to Series B is a significant inflection point for growing businesses. Venture data consistently shows that while Series A funding represents an important milestone, once a company makes it past Series B, its prospects of sustained success significantly increase.

At Series A, the objective is to prove there is something there, to hustle for a foothold in the market and secure some early wins, which is why the failure rate for companies at this stage is so high, as ideas and execution are tested in the unforgiving crucible of the market.

Surviving this indicates there is a need and a viable solution to meet it. The next challenge is to **prove there is a market large enough to scale into and attract Series B investment** that will fund this growth and significantly reduce the chance of failure.

Only **20-30% of startups make it to Series A**, less than half of those will make it to Series B, **but once past Series B, the chance of progressing** to secure additional funding, scaling to sustained organic growth, or an exit **increases significantly**.

(CB Insights; PitchBook; Carta)

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# >The Step Up to Series B

However, as we've seen, Series B is where many good companies stall.

Not because they stop growing, but because they can't communicate or prove their growth is repeatable, credible, scalable, and is worth investing in.

Aside from a clear focus on revenue growth, **marketing also needs to support "securing investment" as a significant goal for the founder and the board,** something that, in our experience, is not always explicitly shared with the CMO.

Key to that is, of course, pipeline and revenue growth, but we contend that marketing needs to address a new audience; **investors.**

# >Addressing Investor Needs

Working with companies seeking investment, we have gone so far as to identify **investors as a persona** when planning content marketing to ensure their needs, which are slightly different from the buyer's, are not lost in the focus on revenue.

Developing this messaging centrally with the whole team also means that whatever is shared in the founders' investor briefings consistently lives and breathes across the company's communications.

**A credible story is important.**

In the same way that we need to enable a sponsor to tell our story during the buying process, we are enabling investors to feel confident in the story they tell themselves and their colleagues, and to imagine the future story they will need to tell when it's time for them to make a profitable exit.

## What are investors looking for?

**Category clarity**
Do we understand what this company is?

**Market credibility**
Do others believe this matters?

**Commercial traction**
Is this pipeline real and repeatable?

**Narrative coherence**
Does the story hang together?

# >Three Areas of Focus

To move from early traction to investable growth, marketing needs to play a leadership role across three areas:

**Narrative** – making the company easy to understand and position

**Execution** – building a repeatable revenue engine

**Proof** – demonstrating credibility and real market traction

Together, these three pillars turn activity into something investors can understand, trust, and scale.

1 Narrative

2 Execution

3 Proof

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# 1 Narrative

We often see companies in which the sales deck, website, and investor narrative each describe a slightly different business, the hymn sheets have been shuffled, and the story is out of tune.

# 1 Narrative

## >Be clear about your category position

When it comes to positioning the company in the category, you have three choices;

**Align with the mainstream in an existing category**
This strategy can be the quickest route to revenue, as buyers understand the box you are in. You can align with the market leaders, who have done the hard work of defining and marketing the need for the category, but it's harder to stand out, and you can end up competing on price.

**Reframe the category**
Anchor your story in an existing category, but shift the conversation toward your differentiation and the innovative approach you've taken.

**Create a new category**
This approach requires defining a new problem you uniquely solve, in a new language (and knowing us marketers a fancy acronym) and then educating the market not just on your position, but on what this new category is.

# 1 Narrative

## >Differentiated, Not Different

Founders typically want to sound different, so they try to invent a category without considering that they've just signed up to educate the entire market.

This approach not only soaks up more marketing resources but also lengthens sales cycles and has investors now evaluating whether the category is viable, not just the company.

While it's easy for buyers and investors to place you in their mental box, in a category proven by a plethora of competitors, playing it safe by staying within the lines of the mainstream category is similarly flawed.

Your message gets lost in a sea of beige, and buyers and investors can't clearly identify why they should choose you, as the differentiation drifts in feature details and price.

# 1 Narrative

## >Find the Sweet Spot

The Goldilocks sweet spot is to anchor your solution in an existing category while positioning your approach and key differentiators as requirements for success in that category, not as nice-to-haves.

This content marketing strategy redefines what vendors need to play in this space. It suggests that what you are describing is version 2.0 of the category, while everyone else is thinking version 1.

This approach implies category leadership and, therefore, **makes the solution stand out to buyers and investors.** The conversation doesn't start with educating on a new concept, but with "yes, we are like vendor X you've heard of, but we do Y because that's the new Z."

**"...version 2.0 of the category, while everyone else is thinking version 1"**

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# 2 Execution

A common pattern we see is strong top-of-funnel activity, but the noise isn't translating into revenue, and there is no detailed understanding of what's driving sales velocity beyond doing more activity.

It's OK for the Series A journey to be bumpy, with founder-led sales, early-adopter bluebird deals, and lumpy revenue as the solution proves itself in the market. However, Series B will require discipline, with a predictable, well-understood pipeline.

## 2 Execution

# >Demonstrate a repeatable demand engine

Investors will be asking not just for a demonstration of growth, but an understanding of why you are growing and **whether you can consistently repeat the trick.**

The demand engine obviously spans sales and marketing, but marketing’s contribution includes:

- [x] A clear understanding of the Ideal Customer Profile
- [x] Defined addressable segment you can convert
- [x] Insight into the buyer and buying journey
- [x] Buying triggers and entry points
- [x] Customer data that supports the hypothesis

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# 2 Execution

## >Renewal and retention are **investable signals**

**"...retention and expansion are signals of quality growth that investors trust"**

A repeatable engine isn't just about creating new business opportunities; as the business matures beyond Series A, it's about creating customers that renew, expand, and advocate.

Aside from being good for revenue, retention and expansion are signals of quality growth that investors trust. And yet, marketing in growing companies is often measured solely by its contribution to new business, leading to a lack of focus on existing customers.

Marketing can play a vital role in unlocking this revenue stream by having a clear system for identifying renewal and expansion opportunities.

## 2 Execution

# >The Revenue Department

**Investors don't fund handoffs; they fund systems.**

Regardless of the opportunity's source, the process must be aligned across sales and marketing.

We describe a joined-up sales and marketing team as **The Revenue Department** here at Velocity B, and this is what an investor is looking for.

Not a set of disparate marketing dashboards, sales metrics, finance reports, and hand-offs as the opportunities move through the funnel, and the inevitable finger pointing and complaints that "the leads are weak" or that sales are not closing ICP prospects.

They need to see a single view of revenue operations and pipeline from awareness, through the sales process, to advocacy, that includes key metrics such as pipeline coverage, conversion rates, cost of acquisition, and sales velocity.

A mature Revenue Department, **delivering a repeatable demand engine that builds confidence in growth.**

# 3 Proof

Many companies have told us powerful customer stories from great brands, sometimes from the most unassuming vendors, but they live in meeting rooms, not in the market, **and they cry out to be packaged and scaled beyond those rooms.**

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# 3 Proof

## >Turn customer stories into a growth asset

“we have happy customers and a set of logos”

**“we have repeatable proof of success in this category”.**

Investors are looking for market credibility (as are buyers), and high-quality customer success stories are, of course, worth their weight in gold when it comes to delivering it.

However, in the hustle for new business, it’s hard for the commercial team to focus on returning to existing customers, negotiating, and investing time in securing a post-sale case study.

We have seen numerous examples where, in a client meeting, the founder can tell the story, sales can share some anecdotes, and the customer may even be prepared to take a call and validate it, but that doesn’t scale and is hard to share.

Turning customer stories into a growth asset means making them repeatable, shareable, and backed by evidence investors trust.

# >Conclusion

To create investor confidence, the step from Series A to Series B isn't just about the critical need for growth and revenue; it's about moving from the scrappy hustle to mature focus.

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# > Conclusion

## >Transforming Hustle to **Trust**

As we discussed in the introduction, investors are looking for **clarity, credibility, and traction**, and these three pillars (**Narrative**, **Execution**, and **Proof**) aim to address these needs.

Marketing plays a central role in this, not as a support function but as a means of turning activity into narrative, traction into proof, and growth into something that can be trusted and funded.

**At Series B, marketing isn't just supporting growth; it's making that growth believable.**

And we can help, please get in touch

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# >About Velocity B

Velocity B was founded with a clear mission: to help growing B2B tech companies and their investors realize their revenue potential.

We combine the kind of strategic thinking you'd expect from a seasoned commercial leadership team, including corporate strategy, ICP clarity, sales velocity, disciplined revenue operations, with the flexibility to roll up our sleeves and get execution done.

**Not just theoretical playbooks, hands-on execution.**


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