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Bricolage and Growth Hacking: Two Smart Concepts of Creating a Business Lacking Resources

Thomas Baaken, Liguang Liu and Lea Lapornik

Abstract

The chapter presents two smart concepts of creating a new business without or with only low budget. Thus, it applies particularly e.g., for either students, refugees and/or people from developing countries. "Bricolage" stands for a behaviour in which the actor solves problems using only available resources. Contrary to the resource-creating mentality, only the resources of the repertoire at hand are used. "Growth Hacking" as a new method, using digital approaches in particular, can achieve high sales in a short time. The relevance of data-driven marketing within the framework of a growth strategy. Working primarily with data is a promising strategy for companies that can effectively, efficiently and cost effectively using online tools or online-offline combinations to achieve their growth objectives. Thus, the two concepts are complementing each other by dedication to two different stages of a start-up process. Bricolage for creating the start-up and Growth Hacking for getting it successfully to the market and make it grow sustainably. The Chapter is describing the two concepts and their interdependence by offering a conceptual framework.

Keywords: Bricolage, Growth Hacking, Entrepreneurship of Students/Refugees/ Developing Countries, Lacking Resources

1. Introduction

The creation of new companies poses various challenges for most people. However, some fractions face particularly difficult challenges in terms of resources: students, people in developing countries, and refugees.

Over the past years, the number of student entrepreneurs has been increasing [1]. In general, students are provided with a good framework as universities put much effort into supporting them. For example, they offer entrepreneurship programmes and courses or business incubators for entrepreneurs [1] and students can use university resources for little money [1]. However, the support students receive from their universities is not sufficient for founding a start-up and many barriers are faced all the same. Shambare [2] identifies four main barriers that student entrepreneurs are confronted with: lack of entrepreneurial support, lack of exposure to businesses, whereby lack of exposure and lack of entrepreneurial support and equivalent resources pose the most significant barriers. Bailetti [3] mentions two types of barriers: institutional and regional barriers. Student entrepreneurs often are not accepted by society and lack business experience and commercial skills. On the other hand, they face "regulatory, legal, administrative, employment, financial,

and partnership burdens" [3]. Sometimes the support of a business expert for receiving funding is required. The access to financial and network resources also presents a challenge as students do not have access to [3]. This is supported by a study conducted by Ruda, Martin, & Danko [4] who identified four clusters regarding the start-up barriers faced by students. In addition to the monetary constraints, they also mention student entrepreneurs have small networks.

Another group facing similar barriers is the group of entrepreneurs in developing countries. It is a common assumption that not much entrepreneurship exists in these countries, but this is not true. Entrepreneurship plays an important role as it helps developing countries to grow and leads to increased innovation and employment [5]. Nevertheless, entrepreneurship in developing countries is more difficult than in developed countries. Entrepreneurs in developing countries often are based in less wealthy locations. Besides, people in developing countries do not receive the same education as people in developing countries, which limits their capabilities to access financial resources and capital [5, 6]. Another barrier is the lack of knowledge about market conditions and requirements [5]. Often, the government even hinders entrepreneurial activities on purpose by setting up high entry barriers in the form of administrative fees as higher tax income can be generated off bigger enterprises [7]. As a consequence, entrepreneurs have to pay large sums for setting up their business or need to go through a very complex and time-consuming administrative process [7], which is very costly and, thus, hinders the establishment of new firms [6]. In comparison to developed countries, developing countries do not have a social security system as tax money is used to pay for essential public goods. Consequently, no public safety net is available, and families need to save and protect their money and even support other family members financially. This complicates investments in new businesses even more [7].

The third group that is examined is the group of refugee entrepreneurs. As the refugee population is continuously growing, the likelihood of refugee enterprises is very high [8]. Meister & Mauer [9] and Embiricos [8] provide a concise summary of the barriers refugee entrepreneurs are facing. Both authors attest refugees lack knowledge about the host country's culture, language, and ways of doing business, therefore complicating their entrepreneurial aspirations. Resulting from their flight from another country, they do not possess big networks in the host country and often face discrimination by society and economy [8, 9]. Moreover, the insecurity about their asylum status and a denial of their asylum claims ruin all of the investments made [10]. Until this claim is granted by the authorities, it is difficult to get access to financial resources due to low creditworthiness [8, 9]. Labour market regulations and legal frameworks directed at asylum seekers make the foundation of a business a time-consuming matter, too [10]. Similar to entrepreneurs in developing countries, refugees save money to support their families, resulting in the limitation of financial resources to be used for founding a business [10].

Even though the investigated groups seem to be very different from each other, it appears that they are similar with regards to the challenges faced when intending to found a business related to resources.

This leads to the research question, what can be done to detect tools and approaches for those groups to enable them to create a start-up without or low resources.

2. Conceptual framework

The conceptual model on which the chapter is based (**Figure 1**) shows that the process of successfully founding a start-up and creating a business without
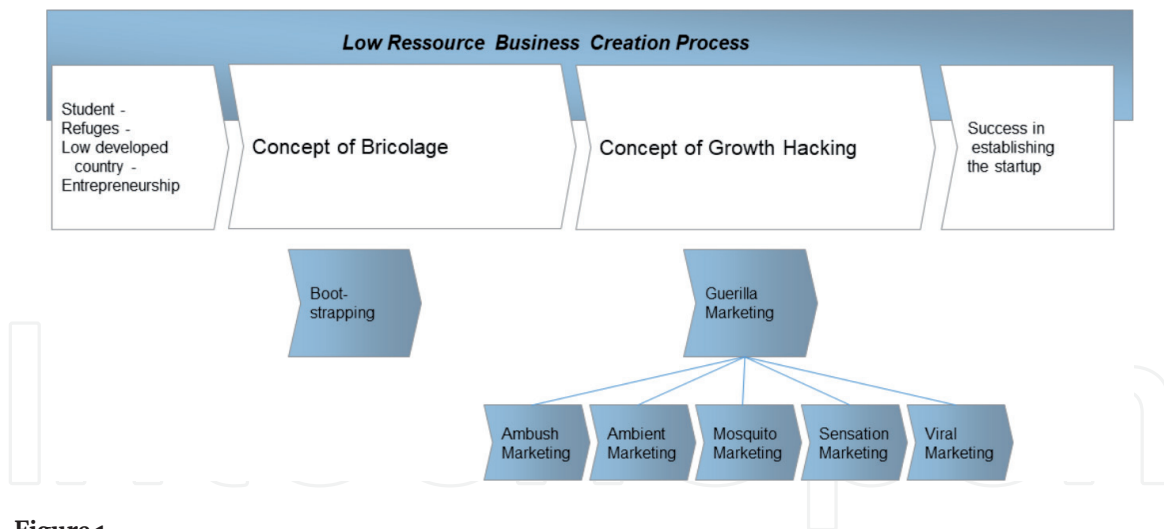
Figure 1.
Conceptual Framework.

resources consists of two concepts according to two phases. In this paper, both concepts are presented, the concept of Bricolage and the concept of Growth Hacking, according to their deployment in those phases; addressing and including selected neighbourhood strategies, such as Bootstrapping and Guerrilla Marketing.

This framework is anticipated and based on an approach that values the momentum and initiative of the individual with regard to economic success higher than economic algorithms and regularities. Thus a renewed confirmation of Schumpeter's law [11, 12] according to the Austrian School of Economy. The Austrian School is a scientific view of economics that represents a heterodox doctrine in economics. The central logic is the idea of the evolutionary creation of knowledge by the individual, the entrepreneur and the consideration of the dynamic uncertainty of economic processes. The school emphasises the importance of individuals and their personal initiatives for economic processes (subjectivism). In addition, there is a negation of purely mathematical forms of representation of economic relationships (Lausanne School with its mathematically formulated models of neoclassicism) [13].

3. Bricolage

Bricolage, associated with its actor (i.e., bricoleur), serve as analogies to delineate a particular way of practical reasoning: "making do with current resources, and creating new forms and order from tools and materials at hand" [14]. Since its original conception, Bricolage has been extended to a range of different fields, such as entrepreneurship, innovation, organisation, and management. Contrary to the resource-creating mentality, Bricolage stands for a behaviour in which the bricoleur solves problems using only available means or resources. Bricolage is an activity where, contrary to the resource-creating mentality, only the resources of the repertoire are worked with making do with the means or resources at hand [15, 16].

In the field of entrepreneurship, Baker et al. [14] label "dependence on pre-existing contact networks -" as "network Bricolage" to analyse the founding process of new knowledge-based firms. The research finds that network Bricolage is prevalent in discovering founding opportunities and recruiting early members into organisations. Trying to understand how some entrepreneurs can "create something out of nothing in resource-constrained environments", Baker and Nelson [17] integrate a range of related concepts and build a process model of Bricolage and firm growth to understand entrepreneurial behaviour. Together with resource

seeking (continued attempt to acquire standard resources) and avoiding new challenges (by downsizing, disbanding, or remaining inert), entrepreneurial Bricolage is an alternative approach that organizations may adopt when facing with penurious environment. Bricolage is thus defined as "making do by applying combinations of the resources at hand to new problems and opportunities". This means bricoleurs view resource limitations as both a problem and an opportunity. Such a notion of "the pursuit of opportunity through close regard to the resources at hand" is consistent with the claim that most entrepreneurial opportunities are more enacted than discovered [17].

In many cases, entrepreneurs draw on resources readily at hand, instead of searching broadly for, or planning for specific resources [14]. The entrepreneurship literature differentiates Bricolage and resource-seeking as two approaches and entrepreneurs make assessment by trading-off. They "engage in Bricolage at sometimes and in some domains and reject Bricolage at other times or for other activities". There are admixtures of Bricolage and resource-seeking in entrepreneurial practice. Entrepreneurs may engage in network resource-seeking for founding but rely heavily on network Bricolage afterwards, while there are other cases, in particular in start-up firms, that the founding begins with the Bricolage and successfully transmits to accelerated growth afterwards through resource seeking [18].

Bricolage is frequently used interchangeably with the term "improvisation" and some suggest taking Bricolage as an element or correlate of improvisation [19, 20] or treating improvisation as a precursor to Bricolage [21]. However, they are not the same construct. Improvisation "consists of assembling elements based on simple rules in order to yield an original composition [15], and it is "occurring when the design and execution of novel action converge" [17]. Improvisation highlights an organization's rapid degree of adaptation to a turbulent environment, whereas Bricolage is the "mixture of the precomposed and the spontaneous" and as sensemaking, Bricolage contributes to the capacity improvement for adaptation in destabilizing situations [15]. Improvisation framework complements the design precedes execution (DPE) approach, in which clear goals precede and are independent of action, while Bricolage may often occur during improvisation, but may occur in the implementation of pre-existing plans as well [14]. Baker et al. argue that improvisation implies Bricolage, but Bricolage does not imply improvisation [14], and they often "appear tightly linked empirically", however, further studies are needed to understand their relationship [17].

Three approaches, i.e., causation, effectuation, and Bricolage, are most used as theoretical perspectives to describe the logic and behaviour underlying the entrepreneurial action or corporate venturing process [14, 22, 23]. Causation is a traditional, rational model of entrepreneurship, which identifies opportunities and makes plans before developing products or services. The causation processes "take a particular effect as given and focus on selecting between means to create that effect" [21]. Effectuation and Bricolage offer an alternative view to the causation approach, which posits the market provides opportunities, and the entrepreneur discovers them. Effectuation is positively associated with uncertainty, which generates more actions of control than prediction [16]. Effectuation processes "take a set of means as given and focus on selecting between possible effects that can be created with that set of means" [24]. Effectuation and Bricolage involve starting with a set of means. However, entrepreneurial Bricolage combines existing resources in creating solutions. Behaviours following a DPE model may also make use of Bricolage. Bricoleurs may use materials at hand both to see the possible results with current resources (effectuation) and to find out the means to meet the pre-existing goal through what is at hand (causation).

Bricolage deals with the question of how start-ups succeed in outperforming and even outgrowing their competitors despite limited resources and limited scope of networks. The mechanism of how Bricolage works is hardly comprehensible so far and worth addressing [22]. However, Bricolage is a process of continuous creation and utilization of practical knowledge and a process of exploitation of varied types of resources [15, 25]. A unique advantage for bricoleurs in resource-constrained start-ups is that they "enjoy great latitude in their processes of collecting and utilizing resources", therefore, they can "find responses to the environmental constraints and dependencies they face" [15]. Despite its ability to overcome resource constraints, Bricolage can also lock the firm into a self-reinforcing cycle of activities that limit growth [23].

Bricolage depends on the existence of organizational memory, which allows an organization to maintain an inductively generated knowledge base on experiences [15]. With the link to resilience, Bricolage enables individuals and organizations to overcome the crisis by keeping flexibility in mobilizing available resources and taking trial and error tests [26]. Bricolage is viable in small firms since large organizations are more fragmented along professional or occupational boundaries [15]. It represents a particular process of engaging multiple actors and "gradually transform emerging (technological) paths to higher degrees of functionality [20]. Inside the Bricolage competencies, the improvisational competencies can impede the development of DPE competencies [14]. All these can be seen as positive points for start-ups with resource constraints. It is fair to say that the Bricolage approach is proving to be viable and potentially successful, especially for companies in problem situations, developing countries and under financial bottlenecks.

Both the resource-based view and the resource dependence theory highlight the new business' need to acquire or have access to necessary resources to grow and survive [27]. However, many young and small firms confront the barriers of limited resources in finance, space, and skills. A similar approach of behavioural strategy to Bricolage is bootstrapping. Both approaches are resource management techniques that entrepreneurs use in resource-constrained environments [28] to find creative solutions to acquire necessary resources or exploit others underutilized resources [29]. Whereas Bricolage focuses on improvisation, bootstrapping focuses on a self-sustaining process that operates effectively without external/financial help [26]. Bootstrapping is often associated with financial resources since financial resources are often looked at as one of the most important resources [30]. Bootstrapping strategy is consistent with the pecking order theory which argues that due to the information asymmetry, firms prefer internal to external sources in managing resources [31].

Research deals with the categories of financial bootstrapping in small businesses. Four types of methods under bootstrapping are identified: (1) customer-related, (2) delaying payments, (3) owner-related financing and resource, and (4) joint-utilization of resources with other firms [32]. Winborg [33] further examines motives for using financial bootstrapping in new businesses and identified three groups of founders: cost-reducing bootstrappers, capital-constrained bootstrappers, and risk-reducing bootstrappers. The relative experience of the founder is the most significant influence for using bootstrapping. With the experience gained, the bootstrapping changes from initially focusing on reducing costs towards a proactive focus on reducing the risk in the business. By delineating the nature of bootstrapping strategy profiles, logics, and effects in small ventures, Malmstrom [28] identifies 'quick-fix', 'proactive', 'efficient' as three financial bootstrapping strategies for resource mobilization. 'Quick-fix' bootstrapping emphasizes temporary access to resources and prefer internally oriented activities for such purposes; 'proactive

bootstrapping' focuses on operational resource issues; and 'efficient bootstrapping' prefers activities that are externally and vertically oriented, up, or down in the value creation chain.

Bootstrapping embraces the idea of "meeting the need for resources without relying on long-term external finance from debt holders or new owners" [32]. Bootstrapping has its pros and cons. On the one hand, it is often the speedier and more convenient way to gain access to large amounts of capital (e.g., through credit cards). It promotes lean organisations and maximizes internal efficiencies with limited resource sets [30] and helps keep ownership of the business, control over direction, and gain a sense of accomplishment [34]. On the other hand, bootstrapping firms take risks of cash flow shortages without outside capital, limitation on visibility and growth potential, drifting away from top-level help, and constraint on growth and financial performance [34]. Empirical study shows that if firms were only engaging in bootstrapping out of necessity instead of a strategic decision, bootstrapping often causes negative financial effects [27]. Nevertheless, financial bootstrapping provides useful insights by highlighting the innovative financing routes for small ventures by "acquiring the use of resources without borrowing money or raising equity financing from traditional sources" [35].

4. Growth hacking

4.1 Guide to a new smart concept

In 2010, Ellis [36] created the term Growth Hacking in a start-up surrounding. Especially interesting for start-ups, as those often have fewer financial and human resources compared to established companies [37]. Furthermore, Growth Hacking is delimited from other marketing strategies particularly for start-ups with low or non-budget. [38].

Growth Hacking describes intelligent, mostly free (online) marketing strategies, which primarily achieve companies to generate growth and – if products or software solutions are already available– to increase sales. Also, Growth Hacking is collecting direct feedback to build customer relations and use the feedback for direct improvement of the product and service. All channels and media available (at no or low cost), such as search engine optimisation, content marketing, social media, or viral marketing. [39] Only a few empirical research papers have been published on Growth Hacking, so empirical evidence is missing [40].

Thus, growth hacking, which is primarily data-based, is a practical promising strategy for new companies to effectively, efficiently and cost saving online tools or online-offline combinations to achieve ambitious objectives. Growth Hacking is also based on the ability of companies to collect relevant data and to analyse and store it in real time [41]. This also allows start-up companies to experiment and experience new marketing methods, whether or not they are successfully working.

The primary goal of start-ups is growth. Growth secures surviving and increase of value. Indicators for growth are measured by selected key figures, such as newsletter registrations, purchases, visitor klick rates or customer referrals. Thus, Growth Hacking is a process of rapid experimentation across different channels and development at the same time, to find the most effective and efficient way that contributes directly to the growth of the company [42]. One reason for this is the fact that start-ups, the development of products and their features directly into the growth process, which has a significant impact on their competitive advantage [43].

The growing digital change impacts the company's digital and social media marketing [44, 45]. The need for marketing to act more flexibly got even more

evident during the COVID-19 pandemic [46, 47]. To implement digital and social media marketing, start-ups, at first, need to provide the necessary knowledge and proactive agility. Shaltoni et al. [48] find that start-ups – and their stakeholders – are willing to engage if they perceive a greater benefit and compatibility with the corporate culture. Sun et al. [49] identifies further aspects that impact the willingness to integrate big data in a company "relative advantage, technological competence, technology resources, management support, competitive pressure, and regulatory environment."

The advantages are addressing a wide range of customers, customer engagement and the possibility of specific placement targeting [44]. Neslin et al. [50] identifies for start-ups five challenges in customer channel management: data integration, understanding customer behaviour, channel evaluation, allocating resources across channels, and coordinating channel strategies. Also, in a report by McKinsey, the authors predict that the success of the company marketing during the unpredictable COVID-19 crisis will highly depend on "how effectively they can test, learn, and adapt." [51]. The process which could support handling the opportunity is Growth Hacking.

Growth Hacking is a marketing strategy [52] that aims to increase growth by adapting digital marketing through testing and analysing, in repetitive cycles. Ellis and Brown [36] refer mainly to such as Dropbox, Uber, Instagram, and Facebook. Furthermore, those companies are offering software or artificial intelligence-related services.

But is Growth Hacking also applicable to companies offering physical products, as they cannot adopt their product as fast as software providers can?

In physical product selling markets the relationship between sellers and buyers is characterised as closer [53]. Furthermore, the focus is more on long-lasting relationships to reduce the risk [54]. Thus, relationship value leads to trust, satisfaction, and commitment, which result in loyalty [55]. Product companies need to provide more detailed information, as usually, buyers compare products in more detail [53]. Therefore, Habibi et al. [56] conclude that for products, a greater variety of communication channels and messages are needed. On the one hand, Gustafson et al. [57] relate the communication process of digital marketing, the diffusion, the transmission of information, conveyance as one relevant aspect. On the other hand, the researchers name the convergence process, which creates shared understanding and knowledge in the buying company [57].

Digital content marketing can enhance information flow and the customers' trust [58]. Furthermore, perceived information quality influences customer loyalty [59]. Social selling is here to name as one opportunity, promotion via social media platforms [60]. Järvinen et al. [61] list several social media tools for start-up companies: blogs, Facebook, Flickr, discussion forums, Twitter, YouTube, webinars. As research has shown, the use of professional networks such as LinkedIn is particularly suitable, as well as Facebook [62]. Furthermore, buyers increase the relevance of digital content marketing; providing information in a journalistic format for the customer [58]. Moore et al. [62] find that salespeople use "social bookmarking, and presentation sharing storage sites" and "relationship-oriented social media significantly more often for prospecting, handling objections, and follow-up and after-sales service." Firms also use e-mail marketing and newsletters [61]. Among other things, Growth Hacking can help to address and better coordinate these challenges by agility.

Agility marketing focuses on detecting and understanding changes repetitively and regularly, and responds fast to those changes thereafter [47]. Agility marketing consists of sensemaking, iteration, marketing decisions and speed. Leadership, employees, organisational and team factors influence the performance.

Kalaignanam et al. [44] point out that reacting, however, deciding not to do so, is part of agile marketing. Homburg et al. [63] also talk about agile marketing in terms of "simplified structures and processes, fast decision making, and trial and error learning."

Lean start-up describes an iterative process to develop and improve a product or process through the loop build-measure-learn [37]. The objective is to run the loop fast and often [37]. The central aspects of this methodology are learning from failures and mitigate invested resources [37, 64].

In their paper, Herttua et al. [52] differentiate Growth Hacking from viral marketing, guerrilla marketing and traditional marketing. For them, the difference to traditional marketing is that IT knowledge is necessary, as well as that it is not about shocking people as guerrilla marketing could intent and different from viral marketing, it focuses on people who share knowledge and not just information [52].

4.2 Neighborhood strategies

Whereas Growth Hacking can be combined and complemented with other low budget strategies, guerrilla marketing is a strategy with which start-ups design unusual marketing measures to stand out from the mass of advertising messages. It often involves offensive, creative, and unique advertising campaigns that appeal even to those who do not actually identify with the product or service or do not react to advertising due to sensory overload. Guerrilla marketing aims to achieve a surprise effect on large groups of people with a small budget and effort. Originally, the word comes from military operations and describes a tactic in warfare in which small, independently operating combat units operate covertly in the enemy's hinterland and rely on the surprise effect on the opponent. The primary goal of such guerrilla tactics is to confuse the opponent with the help of the surprise effect and to strike in a targeted manner in order to then weaken him.

With guerrilla marketing, it is possible to address a very large part of one's own target group, but beyond that, to create a sensation. Guerrilla marketing is not mass advertising. The more precisely the target group has been defined in advance and the smaller it is, the more effectively guerrilla marketing can be used. Like every marketing measure, guerrilla marketing also tries to trigger a reaction in the target group and encourage them to take action.

Guerrilla marketing has a variety of instruments at its disposal with which to convey its advertising message. Guerrilla marketing is known for being controversial and occasionally crossing boundaries. [65, 66].

These boundaries need to be weighed and exploited in a targeted way. Guerrilla marketing works best when the advertising campaign is so far unique and appears unexpected and surprising for the target groups and the competition.

- Ambient marketing: Ambient marketing tries to surprisingly change the living environment of the target group. Frequently places or public spaces are fundamentally changed to attract attention. Public transport stops, airports or highly visible house walls are particularly suitable. [67].

- Ambush marketing: Ambush marketing uses current topics in the media world and ties with them. This increases the relevance of the advertising and automatically generates more attention among the target group. If, for example, something negative about a company is revealed in the newspapers, the competitors could use this to their advantage [68].

- Buzz marketing: Similar to promotional marketing, buzz marketing is about providing samples of one's products or services among the target group. The goal is to get the product in people's minds, get them to interact and share it with others on social media. [69].

- Mosquito marketing: Smaller companies often lack the necessary level of awareness to apply advertising measures as effectively as possible. For example, weaknesses in the competition are identified, which are exploited to one's own advantage through differentiation. In this way, unique selling points or special features that stand out from the competition are highlighted. [70].

- Sensation marketing: As the name already suggests, sensation marketing tries to achieve a "wow effect" with the target group by attracting attention with spectacular advertising campaigns. Part of this marketing measure is to actively involve the audience, which is possible in the form of a spontaneous show, an event, or an installation at a specific location [66].

- Viral marketing: In viral marketing, one specifically uses the possibilities of spreading one's advertising message among customers through word of mouth. Social media in particular play an important role here, as the advertising messages can be spread very quickly and effectively by every possible person [71].

- Linkbait: This is a special form of viral marketing that aims to generate backlinks.

Guerrilla marketing offers some advantages that speak for itself: low costs, enormous attention, quick impact, and a large reach both in the masses and specifically in the target group. One problem that can arise with guerrilla marketing is that the impact and spread of the advertising can only be influenced to a limited extent once it has been circulated. Since guerrilla marketing often specifically uses controversial or even offensive content, there is a risk of negative reception of the marketing measures.

According to Conway and Hemphill [72], Growth Hacking and agile marketing are much aligned. Growth Hacking adopts "the continuous cycle of improvement and the rapid iterative approach" and focuses on customer and revenue growth [36]. Thus, Herzberger and Jenny [73] regard Growth Hacking as an evolution rather than an innovation. After this classification and delimitation, the process of Growth Hacking is described in more detail in the following.

4.3 Growth hacking framework

Growth Hacking is a marketing technique to aim customer growth cost-efficiently through creativity, marketing techniques, data analysis and coding [36, 74]. Even though Ellis and Brown [36] define Growth Hacking, it is noted in the literature that a uniform definition is difficult to grasp [52, 72, 75, 76]. Analysing the existing data of customers and conducting surveys or interviews help get more insights to potential segment customers to figure out growth potential [36]. Analysing supports and detecting key customer trends can protect from misleading posts [77]. Therefore, tools, software and AI assist in evaluating the test [74].

The first step is about collecting ideas for hacks in an open-minded surrounding [36] and those need to be prioritised. Ellis and Brown [36] propose using the Impact, Confidence, and Ease of implementation (ICE) score system they developed. The following step is testing the preferred ideas. A/B tests can serve as

a means of testing [52]. Furthermore, they propose conducting several tests a week and increasing the number of tests by time to improve results [36, 78]. After the test phase, the cycle restarts by analysing the results of the test.

Herzberger and Jenny [73], Bohnsack and Liesner [75] and Lennarz [74] propose a modified cycle. The Growth Hacking framework consists of three components, with their interaction or, in other words, their simultaneous application leading to Growth Hacking. The three components are (digital) marketing techniques, data analysis and testing, and coding and automation [74–76]. Conway and Hemphill [72] adapt the Growth Hacking framework by adding the product-fit step before the cycle. For them, the first step is to check the product-market fit and then, in the second step, to start with Growth Hacking. Ellis and Brown [36] also mention the product/market fit as a prerequisite to start Growth Hacking but do not integrate it as an element in their cycle. The idea of having a minimum viable product originates from the lean start-up. An initial product version enables gaining more information about customer needs. Then, those support developing the product and its promotion further [79]. A second prerequisite placed by Conway and Hemphill [72] before the cycle is, as already mentioned by Ellis and Brown [36], a multidisciplinary team with various skills [72]. Wahlandt and Heidel [80] propose for application in start-ups to divide Growth Hacking into three steps: development, implementation, and penetration.

Growth Hacking aims to increase growth by hacking which relates to creative ideas testing and adapting [42, 74]. To grow a company and its value, three customer groups are key: retaining customers, developing existing customers and acquiring new customers [81]. Hence balancing new and existing customers is necessary to secure financial performance [82]. Supporting the customer journey with a mixed team of sales and marketing representatives increases sales and customer loyalty [83]. So, it is relevant to follow the customer on the whole customer journey with Growth Hacking [36]. Big data provides new opportunities for companies along the customer journey. Five steps form the customer experience funnel: acquisition, activation, retention, referral, revenue. Acquisition, activation (developing) and retention were already mentioned above. Referral means a (potential) customer recommends the product to others [84]. Monetising, buying the product or, for example, a free download represents the fifth step: revenue [84]. Bohnsack and Liesner [75] identify 34 patterns for the customer journey that could facilitate the execution of Growth Hacking in a company. For example, for the activation phase, they propose using single sign-on or dynamic pricing for the revenue phase [75]. The growth of the customer base is also relevant for B2B companies [80].

According to Bussgang and Benbarak [85], in line with Herzberger and Jenny [73] Growth Hacking concerns owned (i.e., company website), paid (i.e., SEA) and earned media (i.e., likes on social media) as well as the product itself [36]. Different digital channels can serve for Growth Hacking. Ellis and Brown [36] classify them as viral/word-of-mouth (i.e., social media), organic (i.e., company website) and paid (i.e., SEA). Each channel has different opportunities and risks; besides, various efforts and inputs are necessary for the respective channel [80]. Gustafson et al. [57] point out that the right message and the right platform influence the speed and the quality of information sharing. Furthermore, the authors state besides the sources of information, for the buyer, the technique to gather and transform information into knowledge is relevant [57].

5. Conclusion, limitations, and further research

New and innovative concepts like Bricolage and Growth Hacking are increasingly finding their way into society. To survive and sometimes prosper under

resource-constrained environments, and benefit from digitalisation and its associated opportunities, Bricolage and Growth Hacking offer the possibility to generate company growth. Bricolage provides a behavioural strategy that businesses can practice creativity to find solutions even under penurious environments.

The creation of new companies poses various challenges especially for the fractions who are short of resources, such as students, people in developing countries, and refugees.

Correspondingly, businesses with strong Bricolage capabilities in making use of inputs at hand can help firms explore and exploit new opportunities and win advantages in competitive markets. As digitalisation is predicted to grow, Growth Hacking provides the opportunity to improve performance by testing, analysing, and adapting [45]. The performance of a variety of digital marketing instruments applied by start-ups can be improved to generate growth, which is of high relevance for start-up companies [80].

Certain limitations restricted the study. As the topic of Growth Hacking is very current, only a limited amount of appropriate literature is available. The term was appeared in 2010 [36]. The research published since then is limited to small in comparison to other topics. So far, just a few research papers are published on growth hacking [40]. Due to the lack, this work has often drawn on other sources than on empirical research papers. Concluding more research on the topic is necessary to be able to make reliable statements on the quality of the model.

This paper proposes a two-phase conceptual model that embraces the business creation processes and marketing strategies. It seems that the two phases are separated and the processes are continuous, however, due to today's dynamic, it is no longer entirely possible to separate the phases from each other, as they do not necessarily follow one another but shift, overlap and repeat during the creation of a new company. However, to depict this reality would have been too complex for this paper and needs further research. Notably, the application of bricolage and its linkage with growth hacking, as proposed in the framework, is not generalizable to all entrepreneurial endeavours under resource-constrained conditions. Also, for this purpose, pure literature research is not the most appropriate method. It would be advisable to conduct qualitative research or experiments (e.g., empirical case studies) to explore the topic in antecedents of acceptance or scepticism.

For future research, the concepts should be reviewed and aligned to current practices. There is an opportunity for future research to select sample cases and conduct longitudinal studies to examine processual features of entrepreneurial dynamics and capture the wide variability across start-ups. Furthermore, the subject is highly complex, and more applications should be considered than possible within the paper's scope. There is a need for a deeper understanding of low resource company creation and development to evaluate the success. For future research, it would also be interesting to investigate how growth hacking through the internet influences the decision making and the buying time, if the fast accessibility decreases the decision time or whether the amount of information and the time to evaluate those extend the decision time.

Author details

Thomas Baaken[1,2*], Liguang Liu[3,4] and Lea Lapornik[1]

1 MSB Münster School of Business, FH Münster – University of Applied Sciences, Münster, Germany

2 Science-to-Business Marketing Research Centre, Münster, Germany

3 School of Government, Beijing, P.R. China

4 Center for Global Economy and Sustainable Development, Central University of Finance and Economics (CUFE), Beijing, P.R. China

*Address all correspondence to: baaken@fh-muenster.de

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