

SmartUp Academy

Foundations

Course

Lecture 2

Branding First

THE SMART WAY TO BUILD A STARTUP



SmartUp

The SmartUp Founding Team



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SmartUp
Academy

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THE SMART WAY TO BUILD A STARTUP

SmartUp Academy

A program to teach the **profession** of building successful companies

- What is a successful company?

- Profitable
- Fast growing
- Modest investment

SmartUp Academy

A program to teach the **profession** of building successful companies (...work in progress)

- The Foundations Course
 - The three pillars for a successful company:
 - Profitable
 - Fast growing
 - Modest investment
- Workshops – specific subjects
- **4-5 years Residency program**



Branding First – Why?



- Ray Kinsella, an Iowa farmer, lives with his wife on their corn farm in Iowa.
- One day, Ray hears a mysterious voice "**If you build it, he will come.**"
- Interpreting this as an instruction, Ray decides to transform a portion of his cornfield into a **baseball field**.
- To his astonishment, the ghosts of old-time legendary baseball players appear in the field

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BY7FBX7BqGGGHa2YxzQrlFCsEjBxxMN/view?usp=drive_link

Branding First – Why?

- What is a brand? and what is the difference between branding and marketing?
- Why start with Branding and not with developing the product or at least a proof of concept or a prototype?
- How do you create a brand?
- How much does it cost to create and sustain a brand?
- The benefits of the process of creating a brand
 - Easier and cheaper sales process
 - Identifying beach heads

Branding First – Why?

- The benefits of the process of creating a brand – continued
 - Figuring out a process for lead generation at low CAC (Customer Acquisition Cost)
 - Opening up opportunities for additional products, revenue streams, and partnerships
 - Many times, it pivots the company to what customers really want and are willing to pay for
 - It creates intrinsic value that increases the value of the company, or it can be packaged and sold independently
- Various methods for brand creation

Branding First

- Industry examples
- SmartUp Academy Examples
 - SEO Long Tail
 - ZoomInfo
 - Opster
 - TickChak
 - Free product
 - BioForum
 - ZoomInfo
 - Opster
 - Thought Leadership
 - Intelichain

What is a brand?

1. A brand is that your prospects know your name and vaguely something about you and what you do, and that
2. They have a positive feeling towards the brand

- Marketing is the process of “lead generation”, generating leads for sales people to follow, or for prospects to buy online
- Branding is the bedrock and foundation for successful and cost-effective lead generation activities



Branding First – The smart old fashioned way



And then what happened?



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Branding First – A success



Branding First – Thought Leader

- John Deere & Company
- Founded in 1834



- The Furrow Magazine – Launched in 1895
- The magazine was so successful that it reached 4 million readers by 1912
- Still in circulation today, with a global audience of over 1.5 million



Branding First – Know these brands?



The Kardashians

Elon Musk

Akio Toyoda

Jeff Bezos

Andy Jassy

Blue Origin

David Limp

Mark Zuckerberg

Zhang Yiming

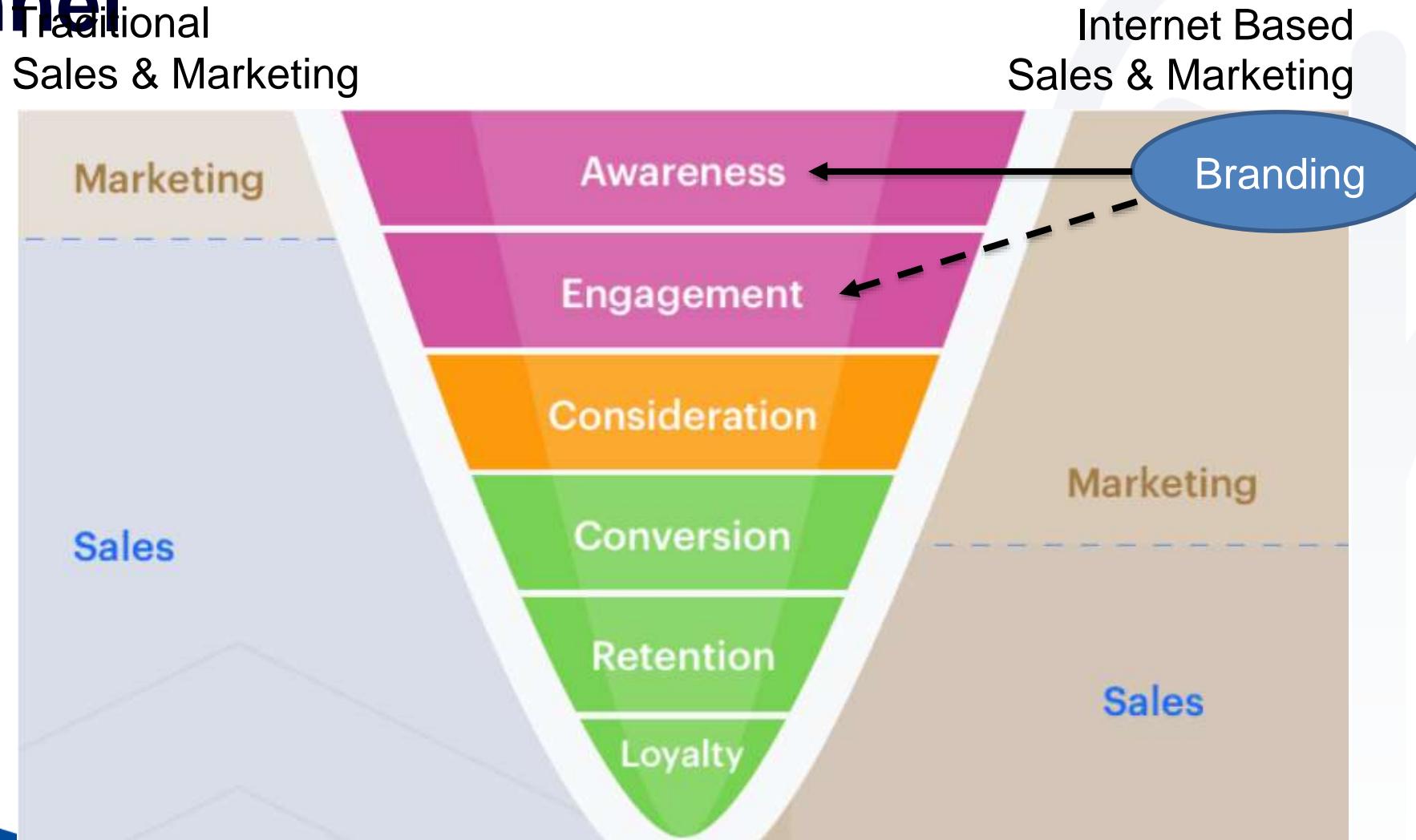
Jack Ma

8200

Albert Einstein

Niels Bohr

Branding First – Classical Marketing Funnel



Branding First

- Instead of building the product, or a proof of concept, or a prototype
- Invest the pre-seed, or Friends & Family, money in launching branding activities
- By doing so, you will create tangible value in various ways:
 - Develop a marketing funnel – the most complicated process
 - Gain deeper understanding of the market
 - Identify potential beach heads

Branding First

- Additional tangible assets
 - Potentially, identify additional revenue streams, that are easier to develop, just using the brand created
 - It will be easier to raise additional money
- Building a brand takes a long time – so better start early

Branding First – With NO product?

How to launch branding activities before having a product?

- Focus on the problem you try to solve, not on your solution
- Think of what else might be of great interest to your prospects
- Several methods for brand building
 - SEO – Search Engine Optimization, Long Tail
 - Free products, especially with viral engagement element
 - Thought leadership
 - Other? We are looking for additional ideas !!!

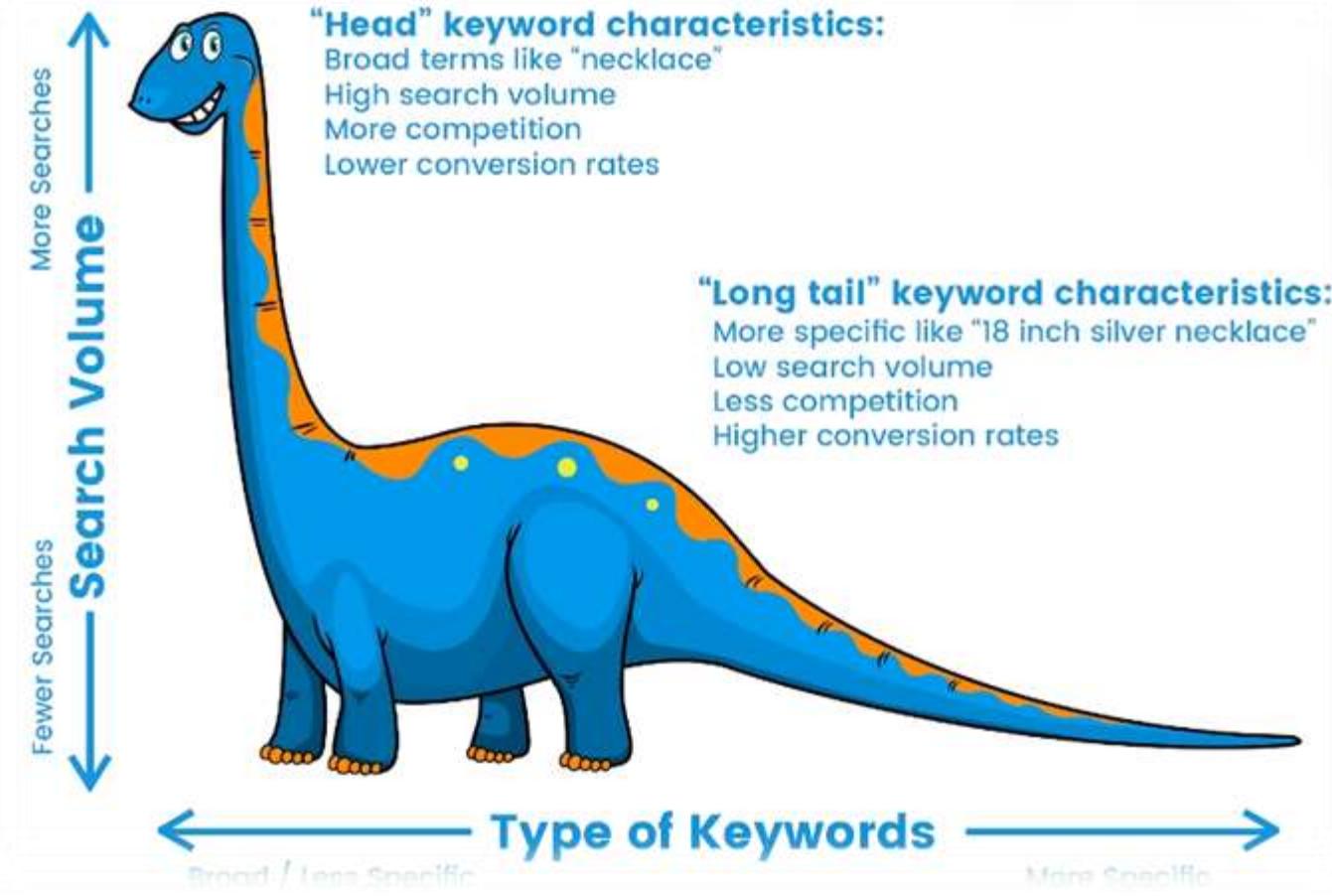
SEO – Search Engine Optimization

- SEO is the concept of creating content on the web so that people who search for answers or information will find your content
- The problem – Thousands of companies want to be found on basically the same obvious content
 - For example:
 - A patent lawyer writing content about how to file a patent
 - A CRM company writing about the benefits of using a CRM
 - Google present pages from sites with proven high quality content, and it is hard for a new player to stand out

SEO – Google's philosophy and algorithms

- Google's philosophy is very simple – they want to present the best content for every query
- The whole world wants to spam Google – “Show me!”, “Show me!”
- Google heavily relies on users to learn the value of each source
- Google is your best friend if you work with them to help their users

SEO - Long Tail SEO (Search Engine Optimization)



SEO - Long Tail

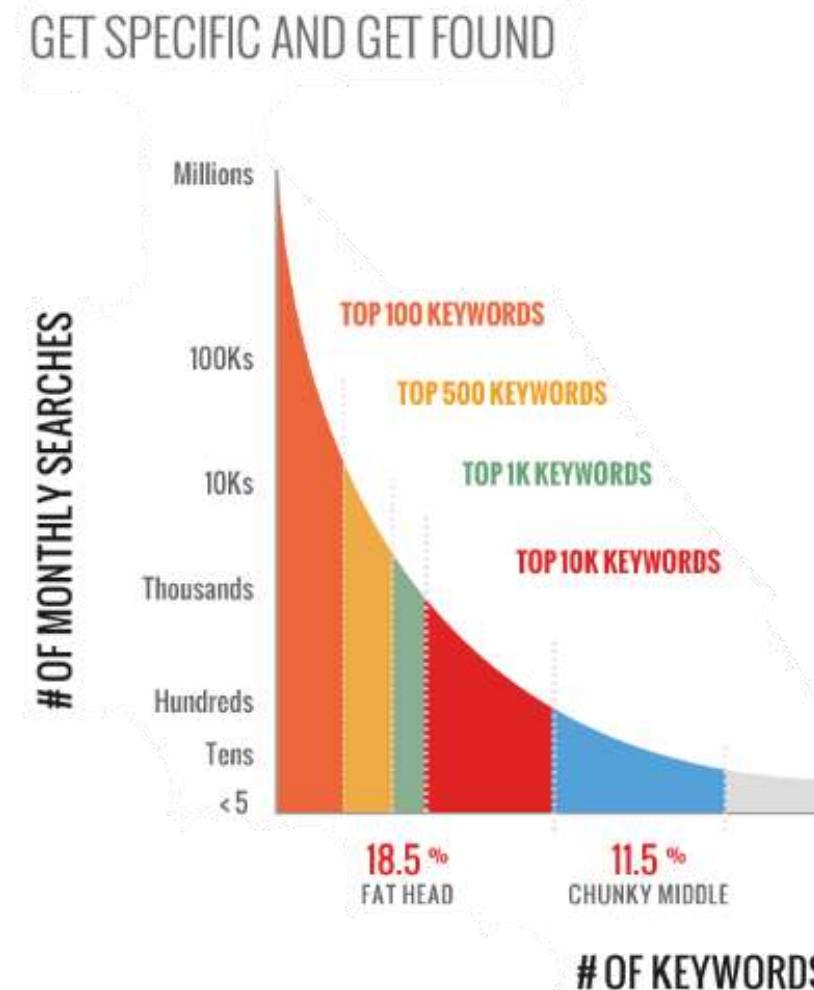
“Head” keyword characteristics

- Common terms like “necklace”, “laptop”
- High search volume
- Intense competition for a first page placement in Google
- Lower conversion rate

“Long tail” keyword characteristics, usually longer phrases, 4-6 words

- More specific terms, like “18 inch silver necklace with a pendant”
- Low search volume
- Less competition for Google first page placement
- Higher conversion rates

SEO - Long Tail



THE TOP 10,000 KEYWORDS MAKE UP LESS THAN 20% OF OVERALL SEARCH TRAFFIC. 70% COMES FROM **LONG TAIL** KEYWORDS, HIGHLY SPECIFIC 4-6 WORD PHRASES.

THE SMART WAY TO BUILD A STARTUP

SEO - Long Tail

Chris Anderson, editor-in-chief of *Wired Magazine*, noted that

"The best way to dominate the web in the face of stiff competition is to optimize for long-tail search."

SEO - Long Tail

The Problem

- Each keyword in the long tail has very few searches every month
- To reach high traffic you need to publish thousands if not millions of pages
- How do you cost effectively create thousands or millions of pages?

The Solution

- A database of information about something relevant to the problem your prospects try to solve

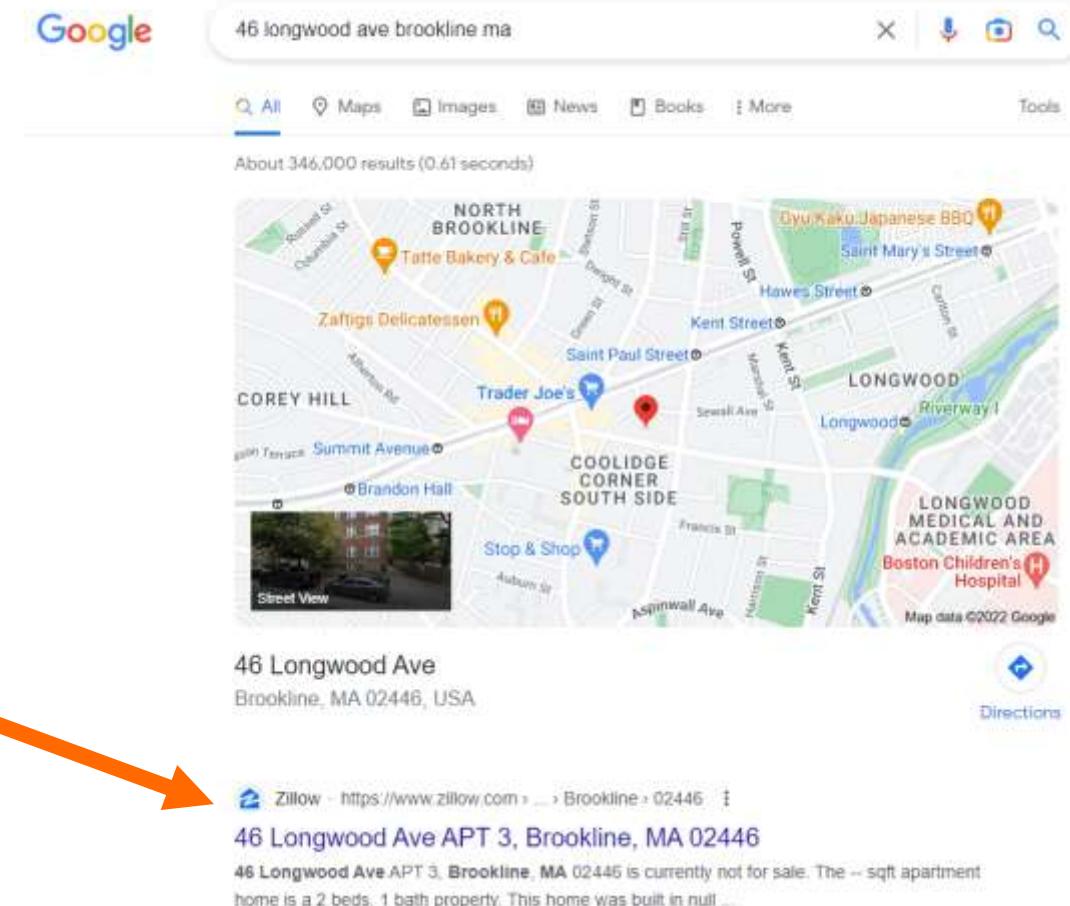
Companies that use Long Tail Effectively

Many well-known companies use Long Tail for their branding and for generating sales

- Amazon – A page per every possible product
- LinkedIn – A page per person, a page per company
- CrunchBase – A page per company
- Facebook – A page per person, or group, or entity,
- TripAdvisor – A page per hotel, attraction, location
- Zillow – A page per street address

Zillow – A Realtor's Long Tail Strategy

My first address in the USA: 46 Longwood Avenue, Brookline, MA



Google search results for "46 Longwood ave brookline ma". The search bar shows the query. Below it, a map of Brookline, MA, highlights the area around 46 Longwood Ave. The map shows neighborhoods like North Brookline, Corey Hill, Coolidge Corner, and the Longwood Medical and Academic Area. Below the map, the search results list the address: "46 Longwood Ave, Brookline, MA 02446, USA". A detailed description follows: "46 Longwood Ave APT 3, Brookline, MA 02446" and "46 Longwood Ave APT 3, Brookline, MA 02446 is currently not for sale. The -- sqft apartment home is a 2 beds, 1 bath property. This home was built in null ...". A large orange arrow points from the text "Zillow is the first Google answer" to the Zillow link in the search results.

46 Longwood ave brookline ma

All Maps Images News Books More Tools

About 346,000 results (0.61 seconds)

NORTH BROOKLINE

COREY HILL

COOLIDGE CORNER SOUTH SIDE

LONGWOOD

LONGWOOD MEDICAL AND ACADEMIC AREA

46 Longwood Ave

Brookline, MA 02446, USA

Zillow - <https://www.zillow.com> > ... > Brookline > 02446

46 Longwood Ave APT 3, Brookline, MA 02446

46 Longwood Ave APT 3, Brookline, MA 02446 is currently not for sale. The -- sqft apartment home is a 2 beds, 1 bath property. This home was built in null ...

Zillow is the first
Google answer

Zillow



Zillow

2 bd | 1 ba | -- sqft
46 Longwood Ave #3A, Brookline, MA 02446

Off market | Zestimate®: None | Rent Zestimate®: \$2,999

Est. refi payment: \$ -- [Refinance your loan](#)

[Home value](#) [Owner tools](#) [Home details](#) [Neighborhood details](#)

Tap into your home's equity
Zillow makes it simple to explore your cash-out refinance options.
[Start now](#)

Zillow Group Marketplace, Inc. NMLS #1303160

Do you own this home?
Get exclusive tools to track your home's value and update its details on Zillow. [Learn more](#)

[Unlock owner dashboard](#)

Notice the “Rent Zestimate” of \$2,999

The “Off market” for sales estimate

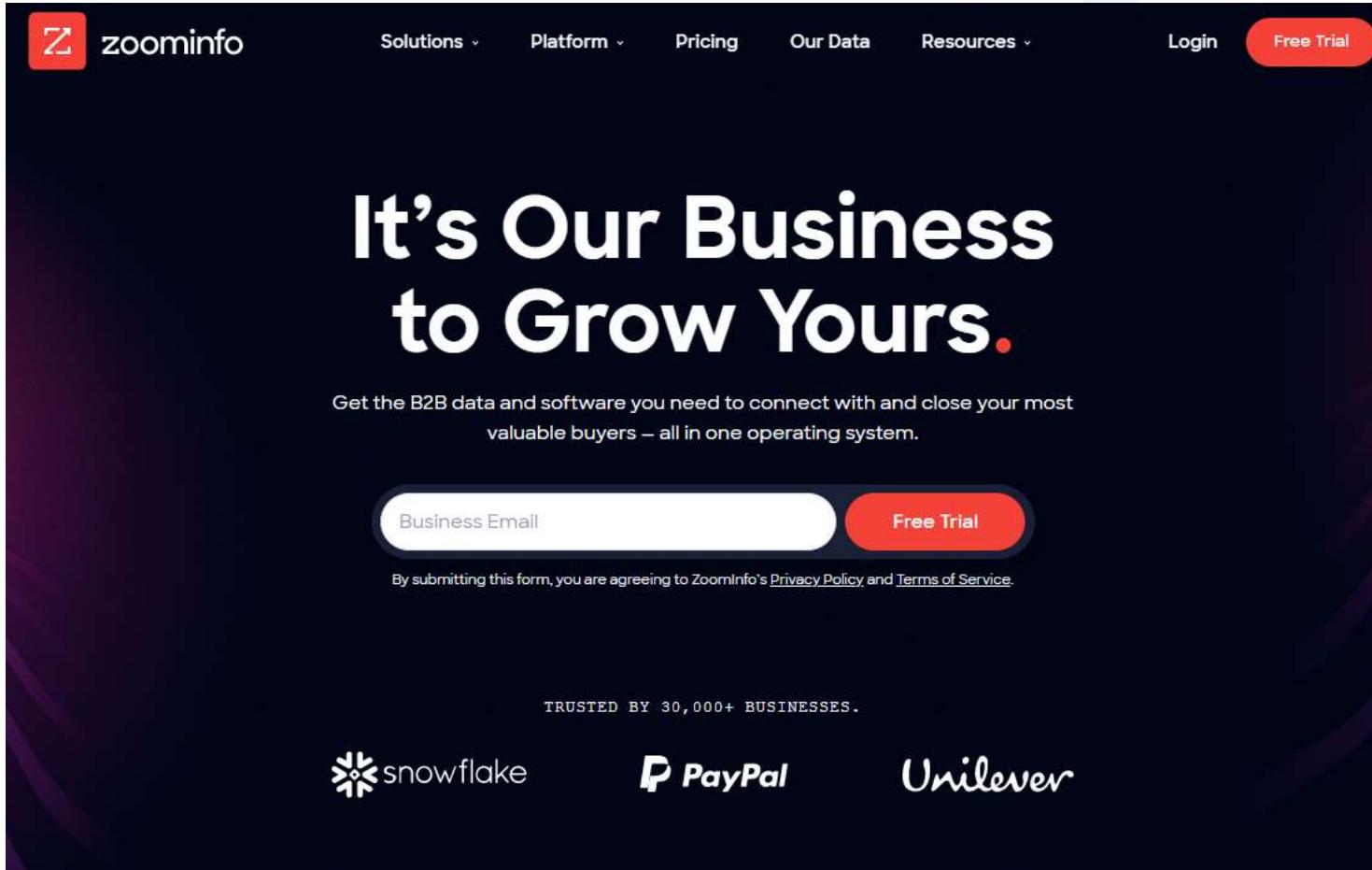
And the funnel to attract customers

SEO - Long Tail

Why a database?

- Each row in the table is about an entity – Person, Address, Company, and will be translated to one page on the website with information about that entity
- The content of the page is the data included in the fields or columns of the database
- Any query can generate additional interesting content, like:
 - 20 largest companies in New Haven CT
 - 10 most expensive houses in Birmingham AL
 - CEO's of Cyber Security firms

ZoomInfo – Tools for sales

A screenshot of the ZoomInfo website. The header includes the ZoomInfo logo, a navigation bar with 'Solutions', 'Platform', 'Pricing', 'Our Data', 'Resources', 'Login', and a 'Free Trial' button. The main section features a large white text 'It's Our Business to Grow Yours.' on a dark background. Below it is a subtext: 'Get the B2B data and software you need to connect with and close your most valuable buyers – all in one operating system.' There is a 'Business Email' input field and a red 'Free Trial' button. A small note at the bottom says: 'By submitting this form, you are agreeing to ZoomInfo's [Privacy Policy](#) and [Terms of Service](#)'. At the bottom, it says 'TRUSTED BY 30,000+ BUSINESSES.' with logos for Snowflake, PayPal, and Unilever.

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ZoomInfo - History



- Founded in 2000 by Yonatan Stern
- Nice little company, selling mainly to recruiters and Executive Search Firms
- By 2004 revenues were about \$6m, profitable, growing
- But we wanted to grow much faster by going after sales people
- How to go from one customer set – recruiters, to another – sales people?



ZoomInfo - History



- Made a bold decision – Let's publish all of our data, one page per person
- Long Tail - Sales people and recruiters search for people by name, company name and title all day long
- Search by name is one of the most common searches in Google
- There was no other people directory on the web at the time - LinkedIn just started 2 years before and did not publish its data



ZoomInfo Directory



Test Drive ZoomInfo's Directories

[Browse Directories →](#)

PEOPLE SEARCH

Boston New York City Houston Chicago Los Angeles Atlanta

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

COMPANY SEARCH

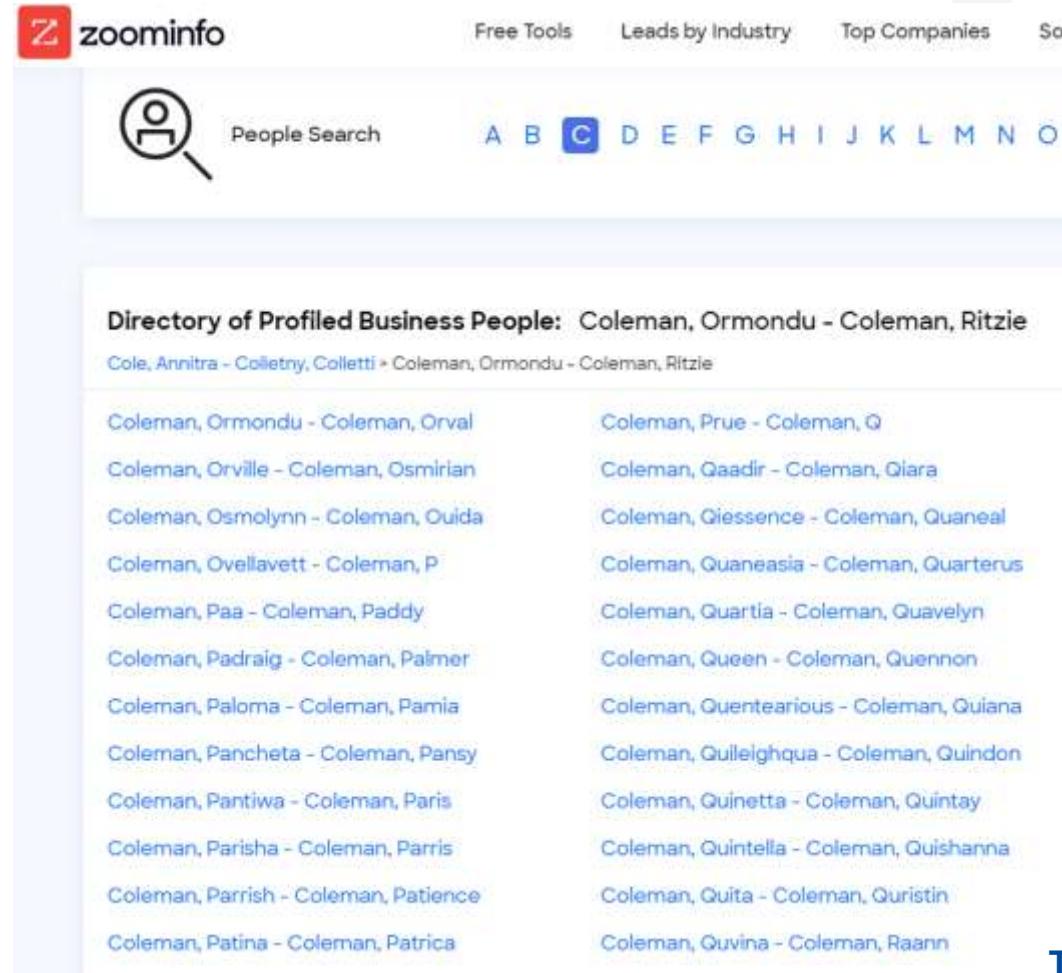
Boston New York City Houston Chicago Los Angeles Atlanta



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ZoomInfo Directory

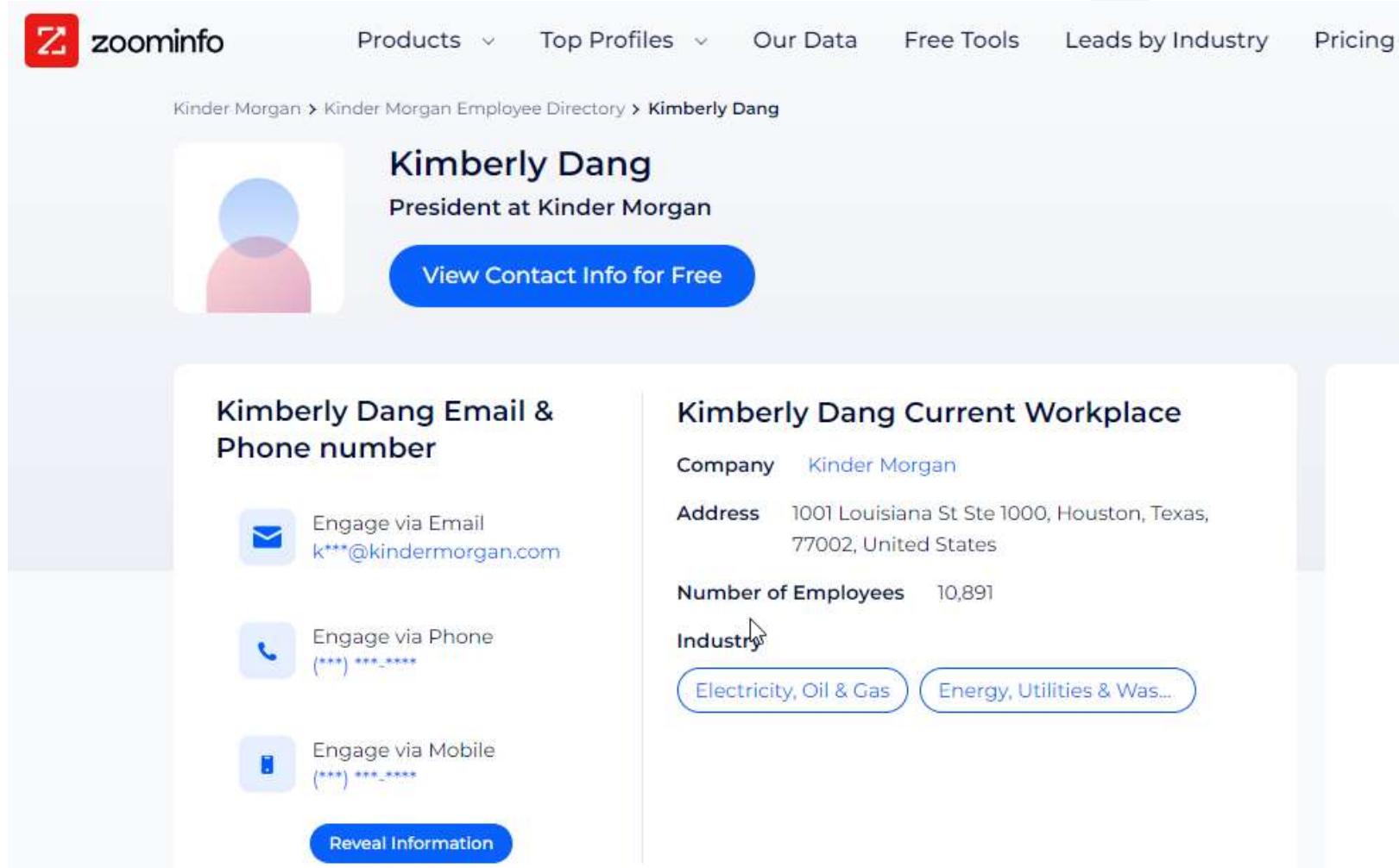


The screenshot shows a search results page for the names 'Coleman, Ormondu - Coleman, Ritzie'. The page includes a navigation bar with a 'People Search' icon and letters A through O. The results list 20 names, each consisting of two first names separated by a dash.

Result	Result
Coleman, Ormondu - Coleman, Orval	Coleman, Prue - Coleman, Q
Coleman, Orville - Coleman, Osmirian	Coleman, Qaadir - Coleman, Qiara
Coleman, Osmolynn - Coleman, Ouida	Coleman, Qiessence - Coleman, Quaneal
Coleman, Ovellavett - Coleman, P	Coleman, Quaneasia - Coleman, Quarterus
Coleman, Paa - Coleman, Paddy	Coleman, Quartia - Coleman, Quavelyn
Coleman, Padraig - Coleman, Palmer	Coleman, Queen - Coleman, Quennon
Coleman, Paloma - Coleman, Pamia	Coleman, Quentearious - Coleman, Quiana
Coleman, Pancheta - Coleman, Pansy	Coleman, Qulleighqua - Coleman, Quindon
Coleman, Pantiwa - Coleman, Paris	Coleman, Quinetta - Coleman, Quintay
Coleman, Parisha - Coleman, Parris	Coleman, Quintella - Coleman, Quishanna
Coleman, Parrish - Coleman, Patience	Coleman, Quita - Coleman, Quristin
Coleman, Patina - Coleman, Patricia	Coleman, Quvina - Coleman, Raann



ZoomInfo Directory



The screenshot shows a detailed profile for Kimberly Dang, President at Kinder Morgan. The top navigation bar includes links for Products, Top Profiles, Our Data, Free Tools, Leads by Industry, and Pricing. The breadcrumb navigation shows the path: Kinder Morgan > Kinder Morgan Employee Directory > Kimberly Dang. The profile card for Kimberly Dang includes her photo, title (President at Kinder Morgan), and a 'View Contact Info for Free' button. Below this, two sections are displayed: 'Kimberly Dang Email & Phone number' and 'Kimberly Dang Current Workplace'. The 'Email & Phone' section provides links to engage via email (k***@kindermorgan.com), phone ((***) ***-****), and mobile ((***) ***-****). The 'Current Workplace' section lists the company (Kinder Morgan), address (1001 Louisiana St Ste 1000, Houston, Texas, 77002, United States), number of employees (10,891), and industry (Electricity, Oil & Gas, Energy, Utilities & Was...). A 'Reveal Information' button is located at the bottom of the profile card.

Products ▾ Top Profiles ▾ Our Data Free Tools Leads by Industry Pricing

Kinder Morgan > Kinder Morgan Employee Directory > Kimberly Dang

Kimberly Dang
President at Kinder Morgan

[View Contact Info for Free](#)

Kimberly Dang Email & Phone number

Engage via Email
k***@kindermorgan.com

Engage via Phone
(***) ***-****

Engage via Mobile
(***) ***-****

[Reveal Information](#)

Kimberly Dang Current Workplace

Company [Kinder Morgan](#)

Address 1001 Louisiana St Ste 1000, Houston, Texas, 77002, United States

Number of Employees 10,891

Industry

Electricity, Oil & Gas Energy, Utilities & Was...



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ZoomInfo Directory



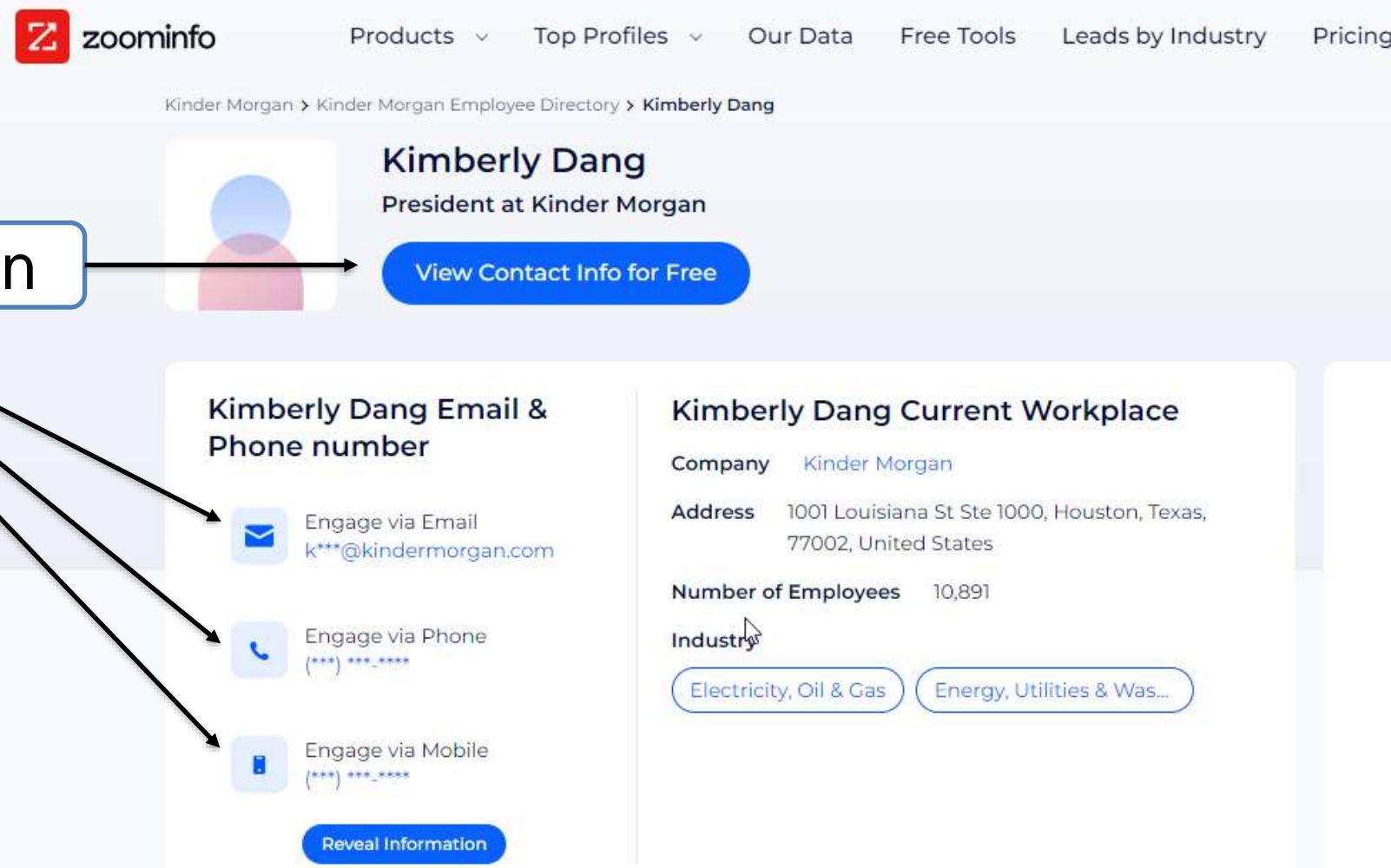
- The strategy worked really well and we started getting leads from sales people
- But.... Turns out that sales people wanted a different product from recruiters
- Recruiters wanted several good candidates – a needle in a haystack. Sales people wanted the haystack
- They also wanted phone and email address...
- Sean Parker's Plaxo (Napster)
- The “contributors” idea was born – a critical benefit of ZoomInfo's branding strategy



ZoomInfo Directory



Call to Action



Kinder Morgan > Kinder Morgan Employee Directory > Kimberly Dang

Kimberly Dang
President at Kinder Morgan

View Contact Info for Free

Kimberly Dang Email & Phone number

Engage via Email
k***@kindermorgan.com

Engage via Phone
(***) ***-****

Engage via Mobile
(***) ***-****

Reveal Information

Kimberly Dang Current Workplace

Company Kinder Morgan

Address 1001 Louisiana St Ste 1000, Houston, Texas, 77002, United States

Number of Employees 10,891

Industry Electricity, Oil & Gas, Energy, Utilities & Was...



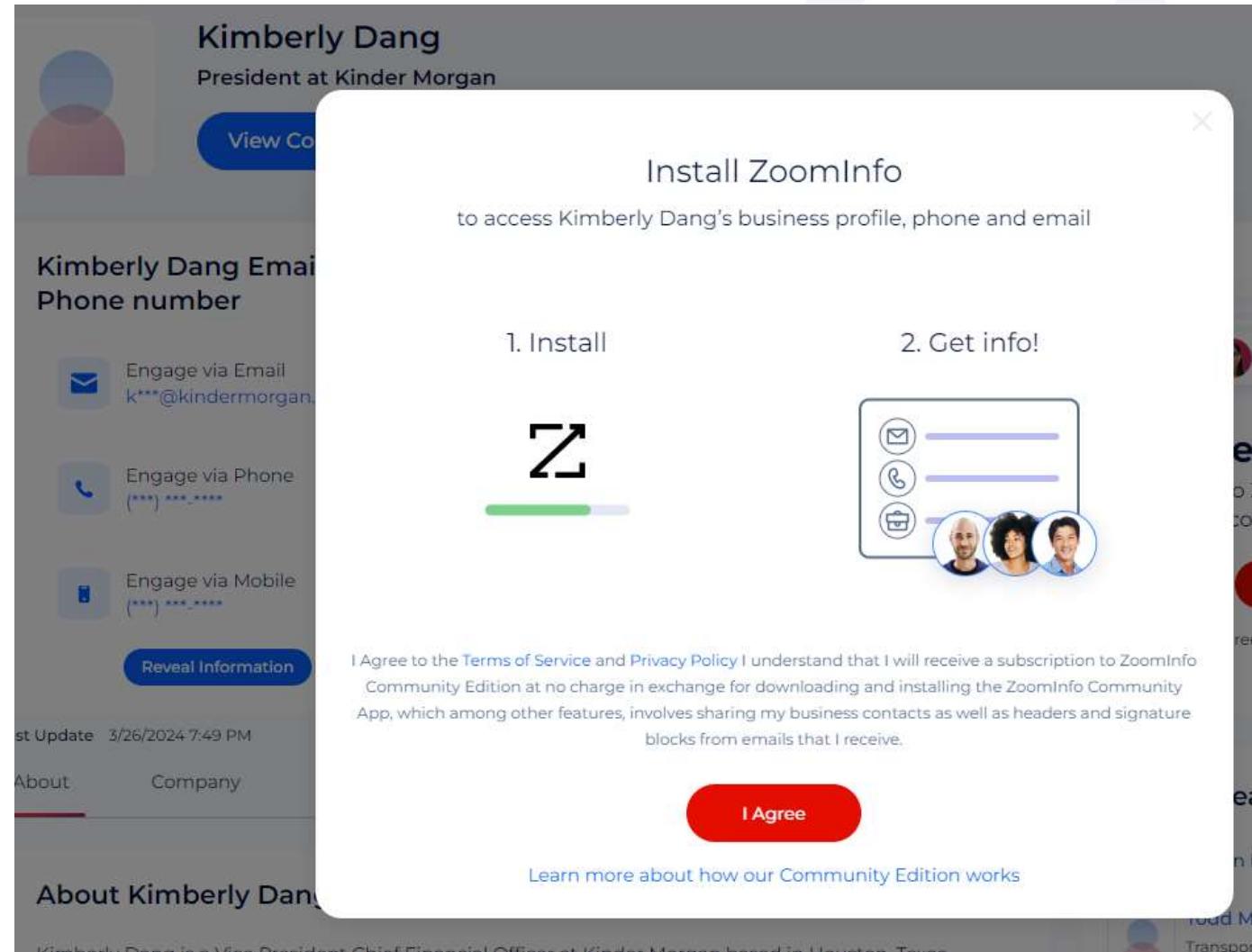
ZoomInfo Directory – Call to



Action
Limited Free
product

Used mainly to
sign up
contributors

Branding can
generate
additional assets



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BUILD A STARTUP

ZoomInfo - Results



By the time I left ZoomInfo in 2018 there were

- 50 million directory pages indexed by Google
- About 10 million visitors to the site every month – aggregation of many small searches each for a different name
- Tens of thousands of new contributors every month
- Some 20,000 inbound leads every month



ZoomInfo - Results



- Company grew revenues consistently by 50% year over year
- CAC –Customer Acquisition Cost very low
- Sale cycle of 2-4 weeks, customers were familiar with what ZoomInfo provides
- Company grew profits consistently by 50% year over year



ZoomInfo – The Brand



In early 2019 ZoomInfo was acquired by DiscoverOrg

- The CEO of DiscoverOrg ran a study to determine the name of the combined company
- ZoomInfo brand was 9 times more recognized than DiscoverOrg
- The combined company is called ZoomInfo
- The power of long tail branding



- Opster- Tools for DevOps engineers to manage and optimize mission critical ElasticSearch clusters
 - Did anybody here understand what that means?
- Who are Opster's prospects?
 - ElasticSearch DevOps engineers
- How on earth can we target these elusive people?
 - They are busy and they don't respond to emails

Focus on the problem - not on your solution

- When Opster started, we had nothing to sell. Product vision was murky
- We asked ourselves – What do DevOps engineers do when encountering a problem with their ElasticSearch installation?
- In many cases the ElasticSearch system produces an error log that is written to their log file
- Here are random examples of real error logs

Error Log examples

- ❖ Could not lock IndexWriter isLocked
- ❖ Delaying allocation for unassigned shards; next check in
- ❖ Suspect illegal state: trying to move shard from primary mode to replica mode
- ❖ Failed to start monitoring service
- ❖ Using discovery type and seed hosts providers
- ❖ All shards failed
- ❖ Term query does not support array of values
- ❖ No mapping found for " + fieldName + " in order to sort on
- ❖ high disk watermark [90%] exceeded on
- ❖ Mapping update rejected by primary

Opster - the Power of Long Tail



Opster

Ahead of StackOverflow and Elastic itself

Opster

StackOverflow

Elastic.com –
The originators of
ElasticSearch

Google

o Could not lock IndexWriter isLocked

All Videos Images Books News More Tools

About 390,000 results (0.47 seconds)

Opster - <https://opster.com/analysis/elasticsearch-could-not-lock-indexwriter-islocked/> Could not lock IndexWriter isLocked - how to solve related ...
How to troubleshoot Elasticsearch/OpenSearch log "Could not lock IndexWriter isLocked" a detailed guide including background on ES concepts: index.

Stack Overflow - <https://stackoverflow.com/questions/31375555/lucene-could-not-lock-indexwriter-islocked-false>
29 May 2016 — I think this is caused by file system locking by elasticsearch. If I say Elasticsearch instance not to lock store file system it does not occur.
1 answer · Top answer: I did not face the problem again since I have added this line into elasti...
Using IndexReader IsLocked and Unlock methods 11 May 2009
Lucene.net - singleton + queue = write.lock issue 18 May 2016
how to unlock the index directory in lucene - Stack Overflow 21 Nov 2012
java - LockObtainFailedException at new IndexWriter() 5 Aug 2014
More results from stackoverflow.com

Elastic - <https://discuss.elastic.co/t/could-not-lock-indexwriter-islocked-false/14414> Could not lock IndexWriter isLocked [false] - Elasticsearch
I try to create an index in a couple of seconds and i got this: [2014-06-02 14:10:14.141][WARN] [index.engine.internal] [shardicaprio] [myindex][0] Could ...



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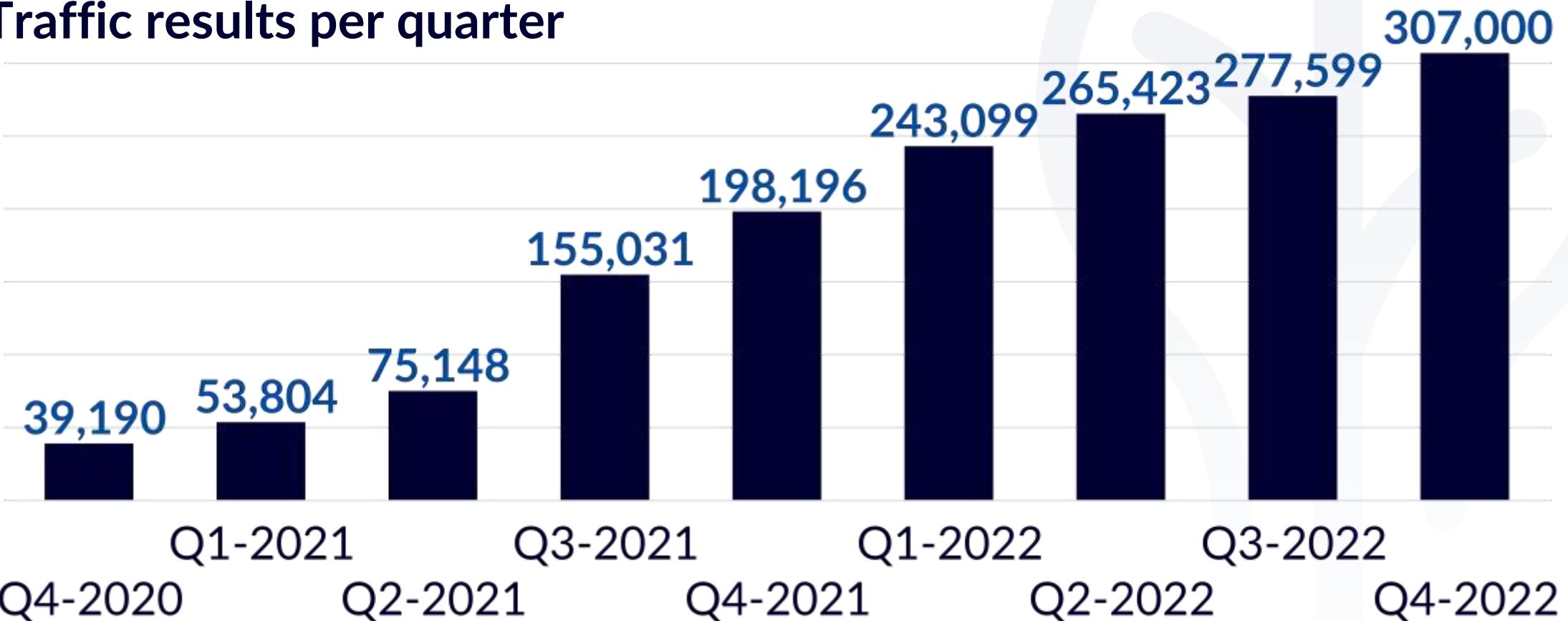
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Long Tail Creation Process

- How to automatically create thousands of content pages?
- Wrote a script to extract all error logs from ElasticSearch open-source code. Initially extracted about 700 different error logs. Today there are some 3,000 error log pages published on Opster
- Created an Opster web site, mainly these 700 pages produced automatically. Plus a detailed glossary on the basic terminology of ElasticSearch, a page per term
- 60 or so pages generated 80% of traffic – manually enriched their content. **High quality content creates a strong brand**



Traffic results per quarter





Opster – Marketing Funnel

BUT – Traffic is not yet leads

- Developed CheckUp – a FREE simple tool to identify problems based on 2-3 files taken from an Elastic cluster

Welcome to Opster's Free Check-Up

Detect Search problems and resolve them.

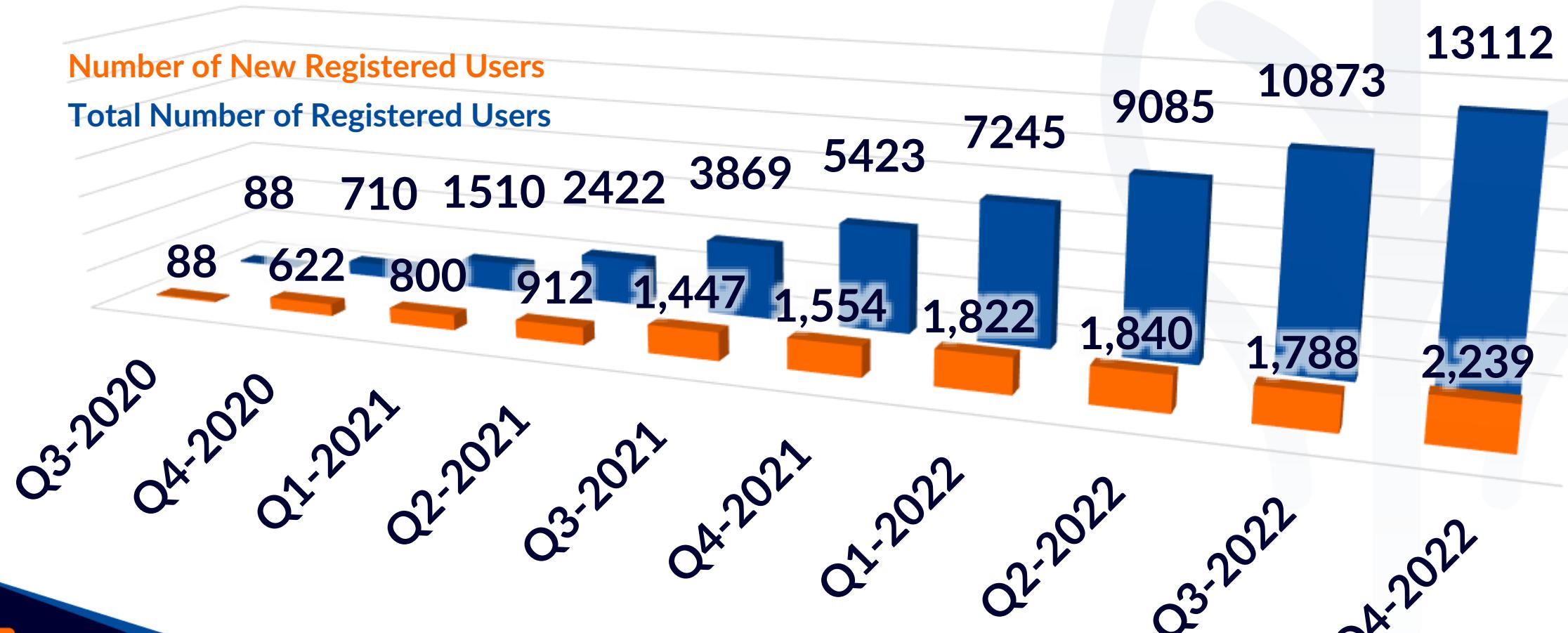
- Analyze your cluster in **2 minutes** by copying & pasting 2 JSON files.
- Receive personalized recommendations to improve performance.

Free forever No installation required



- Users needed to create an account to run CheckUp
- Our main source of leads – Very low Customer Acquisition Cost (CAC)





Opster – Content Creation process



Content Creation Process

- **High quality content creates a strong brand**
- To write high quality content for the error logs, Opster engaged several high caliber freelance tech support writers
- Opster then used them to write hundreds of “How to” articles
- Gradually, Opster became the best source of information about ElasticSearch, and also about its open-source competitor OpenSearch, promoted by Amazon Web Services
- Elastic Tech Support engineers started referring customers to Opster’s content



Opster – The value of a strong brand



- In October of 2023 Elastic acquired Opster for its AutoOps tools, content and brand
- Currently integrating Opster's AutoOps tool into Elastics products, and making it available to its tech support engineers
- Elastic also took Opster's marketing team to manage their own process of building high quality content for ElasticSearch

😊





TickChak



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THE SMART WAY TO BUILD A STARTUP



TickChak

- A platform for selling event tickets
- Offers a simple and easy way for artists and producers to create an event web presence and to start selling tickets for it
- Fast growing profitable company
- No marketing, all growth from word of mouth
- However, they grew mainly in their relatively small community and wanted to break out to the entire events market





TickChak – Long Tail Idea

- The main idea is to aggregate detailed information on all events happening in Israel
- Built a robot to extract event information from all online ticket selling offices on a daily basis (about 25 offices)
- Information extracted:
 - Name of the concert, show, lecture, event
 - Genre
 - Name of the artist(s)
 - Venue, Location, City, Producer, Agent
 - Date and time
 - Price(s)
 - Link to ticket purchasing





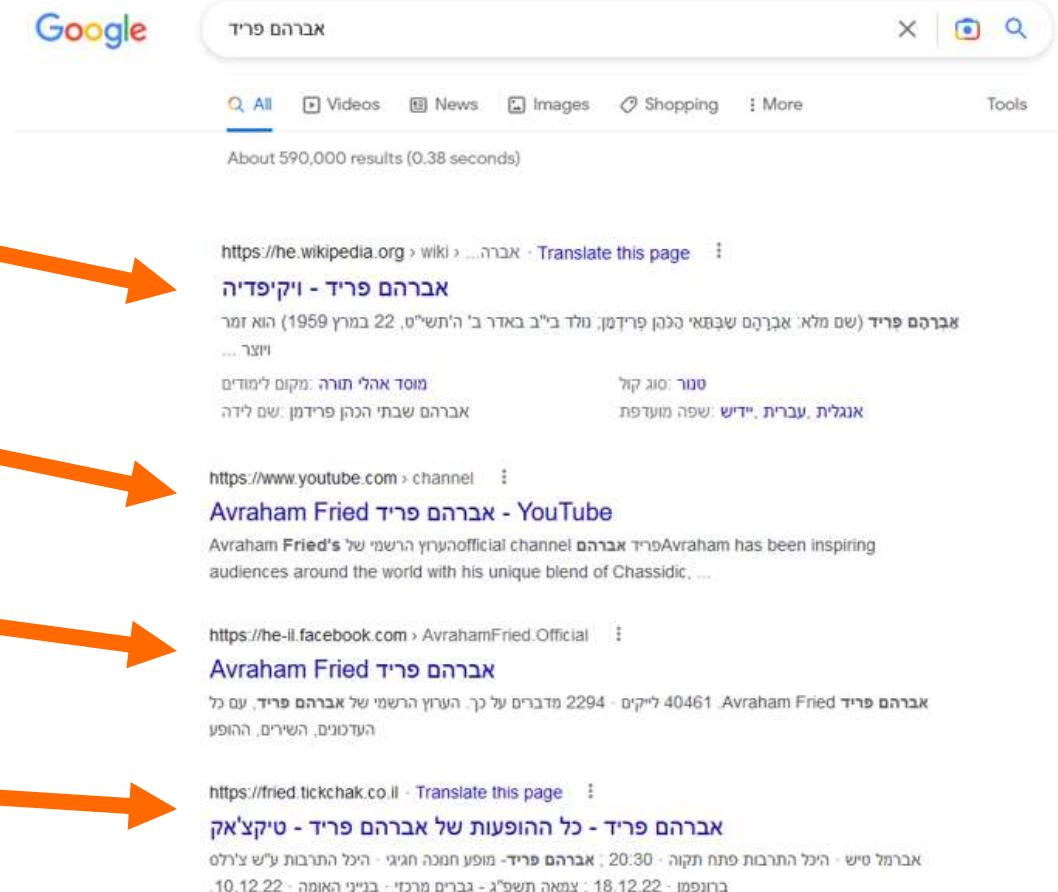
TickChak – Google positioning

1. Wikipedia

2. YouTube

3. Facebook

4. TickChak



TickChak – Artist page



Today  Yesterday  Tomorrow  

About 74,200 results (0.44 seconds)

 **מבלים**
<https://www.mevalim.co.il> › shows · [Translate this page](#) 

שירות חדד - לוח הופעות 2024 והזמנת כרטיסים

שירות חדד הchlala את קריירת השירה כאשר הייתה נערה צעירה, היא הייתה מופיעה במועדוני לילה ללא ידיעת הוריה. מעבר לכך, נחנה בכישرون בגינה ייחודי והיא יודעת לנגן על ...

 **טיקצ'אך**
<https://live.tickchak.co.il> › sarit-hadad · [Translate this page](#) 

שירות חדד | לוח הופעות 2024 | הזמנת כרטיסים - Tickchak LIVE

הרשו לעדכנים והנחות על מופעים חדשים של שירות חדד לחזו "עקב" כדי לקבל עדכנים הראשונים על השקת מופעים, כרטיסים, שוברי הנחה, וחיפוי בעלית למתחרש מאחורי הקלעים.

 **קופת תל אביב**
<https://2207.kupat.co.il> › sarit-hadad · [Translate this page](#) 

שירות חדד הופעות 2024 - כרטיסים להופעה של מלכת הזמר הים תיכוני

לוח הופעות של שירות חדד לשנת 2024. רכישת כרטיסים ישירה למופעים הכי חמימים של שירות חדד, המלכה הבלתי מעוררת של הזמר הים תיכוני. פרטים נוספים ותאריכים פנויים ...

 **muzi.co.il**
<https://muzi.co.il> › Artists · [Translate this page](#) 

- כל הופעות של שירות חדד בישראלizi

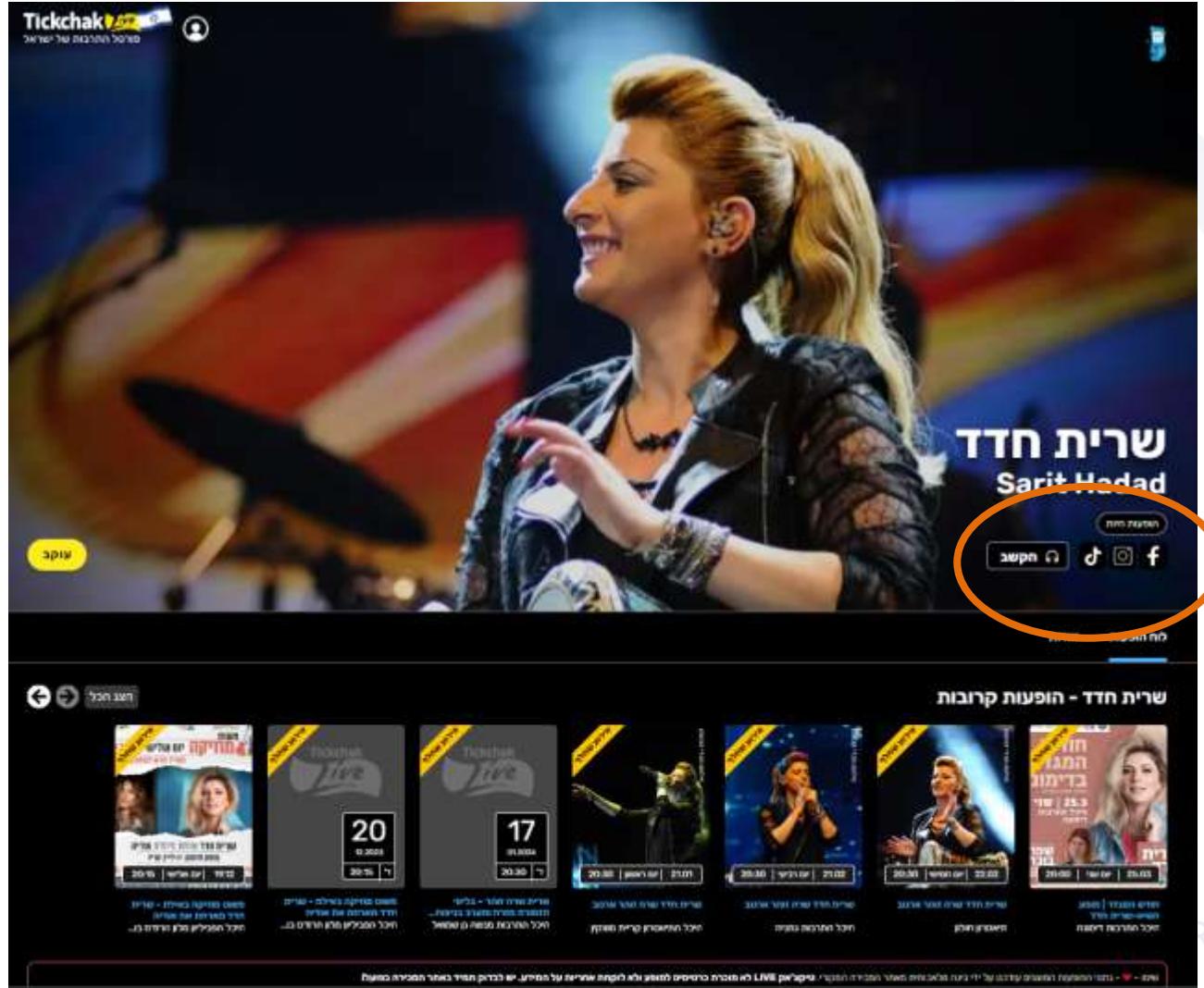
השימוש באתר זה כפוף לתנאי שימוש ופרטיות. שימוש בעמוד זה פירושה שהסכמה לפעול לפני תנאי כל. באתר מוצגים הופעות ואירועים המתרנסים באתר ע"י הקהילהizi as לא בדיקה ...

 **performances.co.il**
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שירות חדד לוח הופעות קרובות וכרטיסים מזולים 2024

דף זה תמצאו רשימה מסודרת של כל הופעות של שירות חדד. תוכלם לבצע סינון ומילן לפי תאריך, קטגוריות כמו סטנדאפ, הצגות, הופעות, ...

TickChak – Artist page



TickChak – Artist page – continuation



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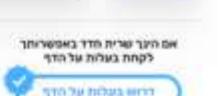
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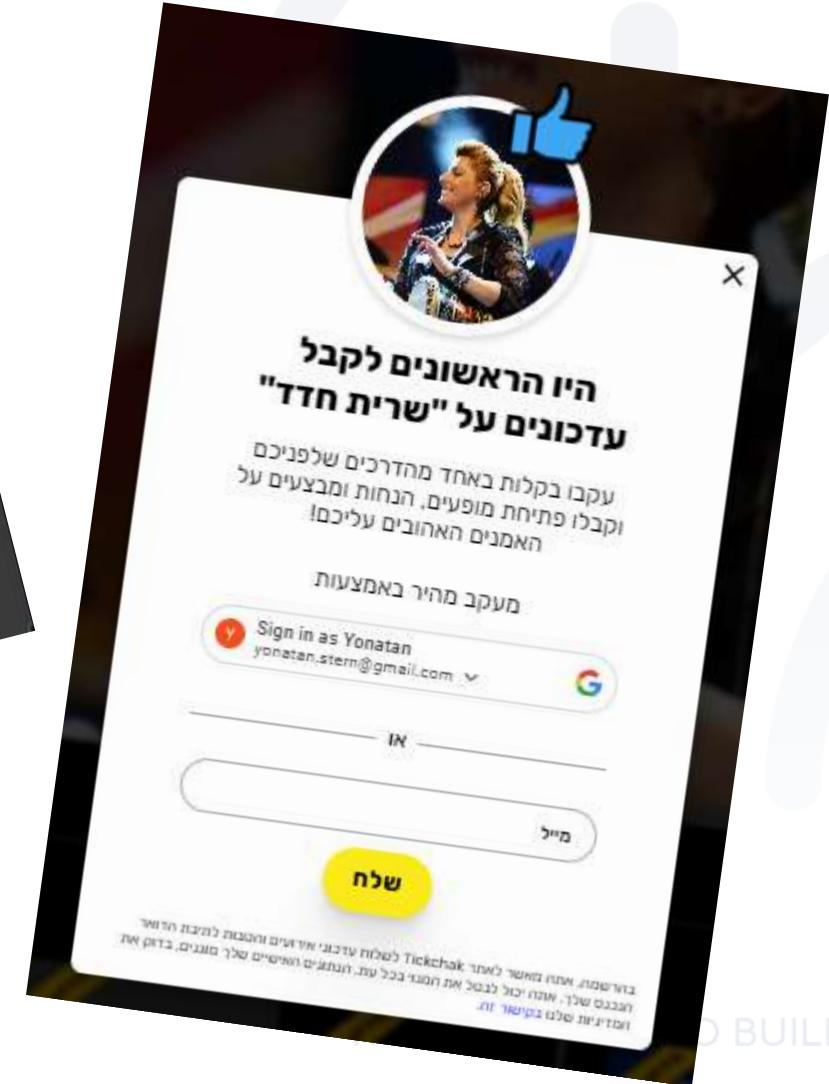
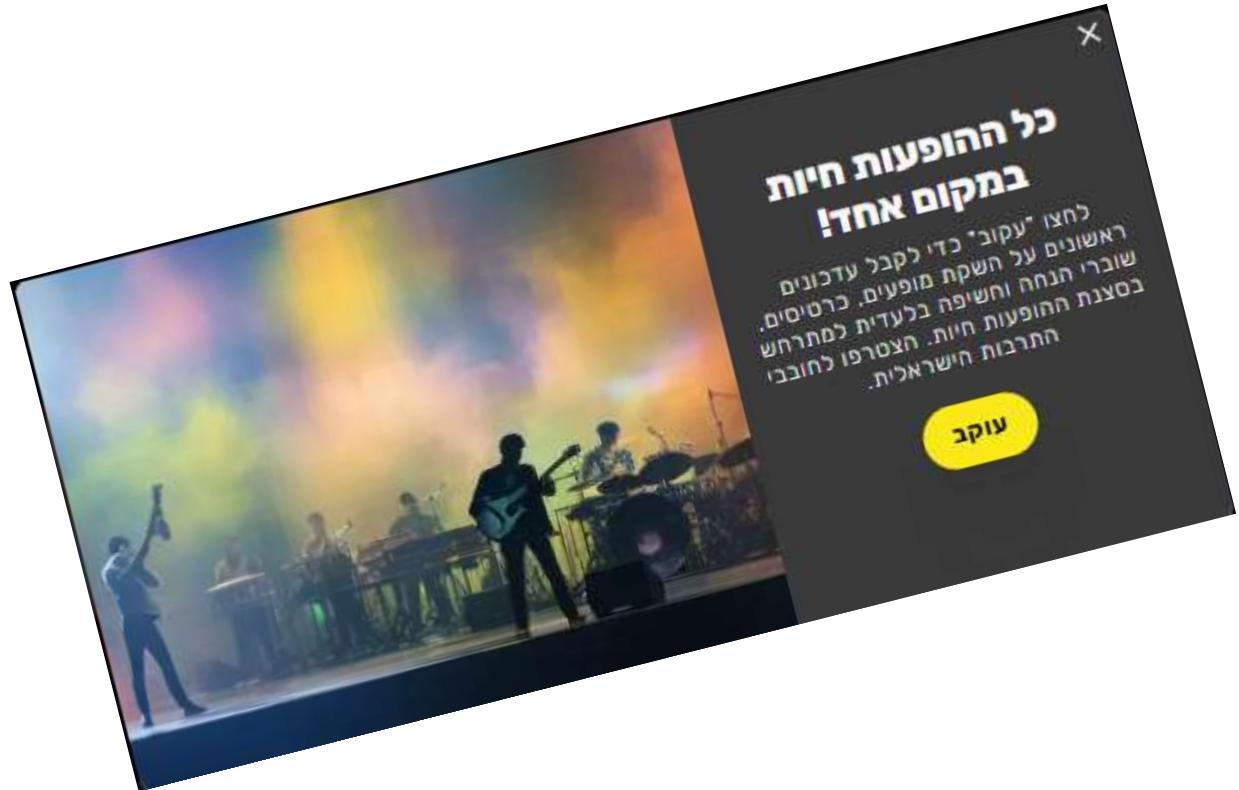
ח' ים אש"ט
הדר מונגורא בטל אבל וטל שולש בונטב-19 בספטמבר 2021 פאיו חד מלהוין וחטפה את בת זוגו, תמר יהלום, כאשרטפה את הקלי

דיסקוגרפיה

קדם עוד



TickChak – Artist page – Follow



Categories

- Live concerts
- Shows
- Standup
- Lectures
- Children
- For women
-
- Personalization

Different View

- By Date

- By City

- By Venue



TickChak – Branding First – New Opportunities

Artists – FREE with paid communication services

- Their home page – updated daily, with full history of their previous performances
- A database of their fan club, with contact information and communication tools – SMS, WhatsApp, email
- Tools to:
 - Interact with their fans before a show
 - Get feedback after a show
 - Pre-sale to fans
 - Last minute ticket sale





TickChak – Branding First – New

Opportunities

Cities, Venues

- Daily updated summary of ALL events in their town or venue
- A history and summary of events in their town or venue





TickChak – Competitors

In Israel

- Mevalim.co.il
- Muzi.co.il
- Performances
- Others....

In the USA – SongKick

- Founded in 2007, as part of Y Combinator
- Raised \$61M
- 30 employees
- Acquired in 2017 by Warner Music Group



The SmartUp Founding Team

Thank you for listening



Yonatan Stern
Founder
And CEO



Libby Molad
Co-Founder
and COO



**Ayala Dinur
Turgeman**
Co-Founder
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