**TwitterChat 3/18/15        Startup Experiences**

**Q1**

**StartUpGrindBuf**: Alright, let's get started! Q1. How can a #startup tell if an idea is good?#launchhour @launch_NY
3/18/2015 4:05:13 PM

> **A1**
>
> **ToddBernhard**: A1: Pitch it at Startup Weekend! http://t.co/BsSflXJbNC #launchhour
> 3/18/2015 4:05:56 PM
>
> **EbenPiazza**: A1. If there is a need not being met in the market, if other people are looking for solution #launchhour
> 3/18/2015 4:06:50 PM
>
> **tuzag_inc**: @StartUpGrindBuf To me, the best startup ideas are novel solutions to existing or soon to be existing problems. #launchhour
> 3/18/2015 4:07:15 PM
>
> **716Labs**: A1. Services like @BetaList help gauge interest in your startup idea. #Launchhour
> 3/18/2015 4:07:58 PM
>
> **pbrooks5050**: Good idea to tell if its a good idea:: Talk to potential customers #launchhour
> 3/18/2015 4:08:46 PM
>
> **bradtreat**: A good business idea solves a problem customers will pay for. Best if you've actually spoken to those customers. #Launchhour
> 3/18/2015 4:09:28 PM
>
> **vidboltr**: A1: Do your research. Researching the marketplace tells you if the idea is original #launchhour
> 3/18/2015 4:10:18 PM
>
> **Launch_NY**: A1 Talk to your future customers. Become engaged in their thought processes. #launchhour
> 3/18/2015 4:11:24 PM
>
> **StartUpGrindBuf**: good point, if customer is not willing to pay then there is no business @ken_rother @bradtreat #launchhour
> 3/18/2015 4:11:25 PM
>
> **ToddBernhard**: A1. Impossible to Inevitable. Your product could not have existed two years ago. And will be everywhere two years from now. #launchhour
> 3/18/2015 4:11:38 PM

**vidboltr**: A1: Most good ideas make it easier for people to do what they already have to do. Don't expect to change human behavior #LaunchHour
3/18/2015 4:11:45 PM

**ken_rother**: Frame your concept in terms of problems it solves, not about the idea #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:12:18 PM

**MarnieLaVigne2**: Vidbolt and Todd, what problems are your products solving and who is buying? #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:12:21 PM

**ebizari**: A1: There are even more casual ways, such as Startup Weekend events, which allow you to perform fast analysis amongst peers. #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:12:24 PM

**StartUpGrindBuf**: A1. An idea from past #startup grind speaker,talk to sales team for company and see if they would want to sell product down road #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:12:44 PM

**ken_rother**: I love the way Clay Christensen talks about "what problem will a customer hire your product to solve" #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:13:31 PM

**ColliganLaw**: A1: customers are crucial (even if prospective). #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:13:37 PM

**ebizari**: A1: I have seen Startup Weekend develop a low cost MVP and rough business model to use for more thorough customer discovery. #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:14:30 PM

**campusflyUS**: A1:If you're trying to solve a pain that you have, chances are others face the same pain. Conduct a survey to validate that pain #LaunchHour
3/18/2015 4:14:39 PM

**tuzag_inc**: A1: For customer validation, banging on (the right) doors works. Smart people like to see new stuff and share opinions. #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:14:57 PM

**slargentine**: A1 #launchhour Market analysis and an understanding of cost-value would be one place to start.
3/18/2015 4:15:15 PM

## Q2

**Launch_NY**: Q2 What are important first steps for a startup to take to act on a idea. #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:13:34 PM

### A2

**ToddBernhard**: @AlexAAdema Startup Weekend gave me a deadline for ideas I had brewing for years. Plus, we won, twice & received press, prizes #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:14:12 PM

**ToddBernhard**: A2: Start small, build minimum viable product, ship it, learn from users, tweak, repeat #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:15:17 PM

**ColliganLaw**: A2- making sure you can create an minimum viable product is important. #startupstate #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:15:48 PM

**716Labs**: A2. One of the first steps should always be market research. See if there is already something similar out there. #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:16:22 PM

**ColliganLaw**: A2: figure out what team you are going to need. #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:16:28 PM

**tuzag_inc**: A2: Research > Google searches. Figure out your questions first, then look for answers. Understand the value chain... #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:17:08 PM

**vidboltr**: A2: The important first steps are mental. Have a vision of what you want to do and what you want to get out of the project #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:17:47 PM

**ken_rother**: Existing product in market doesn't negate going forward it validates there is actually a market, you need to be better #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:17:50 PM

**StartUpGrindBuf**: i agree @vidboltr, it is easy for #entrepreneurs to get discouraged without strong mental vision #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:18:23 PM

**716Labs**: A2. Doing your research will help you to differentiate your product or service if others already exist. #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:18:29 PM

**vidboltr**: A2: Next, look in the mirror to see if you really have the desire, self-awareness and dedication to reach your goal #LaunchHour
3/18/2015 4:18:55 PM

**StartUpGrindBuf**: A2: First steps for #startup are mental as well, it is easy to get discouraged #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:19:01 PM

**tuzag_inc**: @AlexAAdema Figure out the players in your value chain. Find someone in your networks who has contacts with the players... #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:19:22 PM

**bradtreat**: A2 First steps from Idea to Launch would be validating your assumptions. Get from "I think" to "the data shows" #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:19:22 PM

**vidboltr**: A2: Get the help you need. You need a talented team that is committed to the vision. Finally built your prototype #LaunchHour
3/18/2015 4:19:38 PM

**DevelopingMike**: A2 How soon should we be prepared to pivot? #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:19:48 PM

**ColliganLaw**: A2: ID the various steps that are needed & break them up into
manageable (& not overwhelming) benchmarks and goals #startupstate #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:20:03 PM

**tuzag_inc**: @AlexAAdema Be mindful of their time. You're a journalist at this point. Ask great questions.
Listen and probe. Bring snacks. #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:20:19 PM

**StartUpGrindBuf**: I do not think pivot should be first step, pivot comes if better option
exists or deadend happens @DevelopingMike #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:21:04 PM

**ColliganLaw**: @StartUpGrindBuf @DevelopingMike Agreed. Starting a venture with the intent of
pivoting seems counter intuitive! #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:21:48 PM

**ken_rother**: agree with @bradtreat pivoting should only happen when your "i think" was invalidating by
"customers are actually telling me" #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:22:15 PM

**EbenPiazza**: @ColliganLaw small goals are best, allows a sense of accomplishment
#launchhour
3/18/2015 4:22:37 PM

**ColliganLaw**: @tuzag_inc it's all about relationships! #startupstate #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:22:47 PM

## Q3

**Launch_NY**: Q3 What resources are available for start-ups? What ones did you use?
#launchhour
3/18/2015 4:22:16 PM

### A3

**vidboltr**: A3: We got help from LaunchNY, National Grid, Dig, WNED-TV, Z80, Algonquin studios,
WNY Venture, and Buffalo Angels #LaunchHour
3/18/2015 4:23:14 PM

**716Labs**: A3 @Launch_NY #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:23:31 PM

**Launch_NY**: A good collection of tools, contacts and resources can be found at
http://t.co/5rV5r9uCJ8 #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:23:37 PM

**ToddBernhard**: We participated in High Tech Rochester LaunchPad. And by winning
Startup Weekend, we got a number of prizes (legal etc) #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:24:02 PM

**vidboltr**: A3: Specifcally Diane Mcmahon, Marnie LaVigne, Dan Magnuszewski, Jessica
Edwards, Don Boswell and many others were all helpful #LaunchHour
3/18/2015 4:24:06 PM

**ColliganLaw**: There a tendency to undervalue networks & relationships. I's impossible to know how your network can help! #startupstate #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:24:14 PM

**tuzag_inc**: @ColliganLaw Exactly. People seem far more amenable to opening rolodexes these days for friends. #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:24:38 PM

**ken_rother**: A3, In the Southern Tier we have Launch NY, Southern Tier Alliance (hot spot), SBDC, incubators in Ithaca, Binghamton, Corning #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:24:42 PM

**vidboltr**: A3: Also look for help from established entrepreneurs and companies. Don't forget about national accelerators in SF and NY #LaunchHour
3/18/2015 4:24:59 PM

**AlexAAdema**: Q3 Engage successful entrepreneurs and mentors for real-time answers to your questions monthly during LaunchHour! #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:25:02 PM

**ColliganLaw**: A3: w/ @blacksqrl we relied on mentors in the industry. Again--that comes down to network and relationships! #startupstate #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:25:38 PM

**Launch_NY**: A3 Get involved in your local startup community - no matter where you live. They know what works. #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:25:39 PM

**LumsdenCPA**: A3 #LaunchHour Find a network through incubators. @LumsdenCPA @DamonMorey @WDWellnessDaily are in @BNMC and @DigBuffalo offering support
3/18/2015 4:25:53 PM

**StartUpGrindBuf**: A3: Other #entrepreneurs are the best resource IMO #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:26:23 PM

**bradtreat**: A3. Resources for start-ups what I use: Read @GuyKawasaki, Use Biz Model Canvas by @strategyzer #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:26:30 PM

**campusflyUS**: A3: If you're a student start-up, use the vast resources schools have, professors, labs, other students. #LaunchHour
3/18/2015 4:26:42 PM

**tuzag_inc**: A3: @thetechgarden is an awesome resource in CNY; @Launch_NY is a treasure in Upstate NY. @Start_Fast, too! #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:26:45 PM

**ToddBernhard**: also a plug for a group I started, http://t.co/5BxxVM0QXE @AppRochester #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:27:17 PM

**StartUpGrindBuf**: and my frien @techgarden_tony! @tuzag_inc @thetechgarden @Launch_NY @Start_Fast #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:27:48 PM

**ColliganLaw**: @MarnieLaVigne2 A3: we looked at current and future needs and determined who had the skill set to address them. #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:27:57 PM

**StartUpGrindBuf**: A3: @UVConnect and @nplexBUF are great list of events in #startup #ecosystem as well as @uvanyorg #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:29:13 PM

**ToddBernhard**: @AlexAAdema Ed Bizari (LaunchNY) and Mike Reidlinger (HTR) and Rami Katz (Excell) and Alex Zapesochny (iCardiac) have helped #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:29:45 PM

**LumsdenCPA**: Q3 #LaunchHour there are free workshops/networking at places like @DigBuffalo #startups can take advantage of, too.
3/18/2015 4:30:12 PM

**pbrooks5050**: A3 http://t.co/M9W0gqj1aG, for resources throughout Upstate #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:30:41 PM

**ColliganLaw**: A3: The @startupgrind speakers are a great resource and willing to provide insight! #startupstate #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:30:42 PM

**StartUpGrindBuf**: A3: Startup Grind is good resource :) http://t.co/kgYLUrxoI2 #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:32:41 PM

## Q4

**Launch_NY**: Q4 How do you know if it's time to walk away or try something else? #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:32:49 PM

### A4

**StartUpGrindBuf**: A4: Tough question, I think when you are not seeing a personal and/or financial return it is time to move on #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:33:58 PM

**vidboltr**: A4: One of the main reason you walk away, is if you no longer have the passion for the idea #LaunchHour
3/18/2015 4:34:06 PM

**ColliganLaw**: A4: really tough question. I think when the personal satisfaction isn't there then you have to question if its worth the effort. #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:35:17 PM

**vidboltr**: A4: Without the passion, you will not be able to overcome the ups and downs #LaunchHour
3/18/2015 4:35:26 PM

**Launch_NY**: A4 The question of whether to walk away or not involves more than just money - people, time and resources count a lot #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:35:32 PM

**tuzag_inc**: A4: When you're doing sufficiently more damage to your head than the wall you're banging into. :) #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:35:59 PM

**MarnieLaVigne2**: Do the work on the Business Model Canvas and if there isn't the market opportunity out there, time to pivot or move on #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:36:19 PM

**ken_rother**: A4 Walking away is a personal decision, trying something else is a business decision #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:37:14 PM

**tuzag_inc**: A4: It's all about traction. If you can't bend to the needs of the market or afford to keep being wrong, you've got to bail. #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:37:37 PM

**MarnieLaVigne2**: How have our start-up founders gotten through the rough patches of doubt? #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:38:02 PM

**ColliganLaw**: @MarnieLaVigne2 A4: take it one step at a time. If you can overcome that hurdle then keep going. #startupstate #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:38:37 PM

**withHelm**: @Launch_NY constantly experiment so you can understand why you're failing and how to improve. #LaunchHour
3/18/2015 4:39:03 PM

**tuzag_inc**: A4: If you know you're onto something, though, there are more ways to skin the cat than innovation by startup. #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:39:16 PM

**vidboltr**: A4: Tough times, team conflicts, lack of resources plague everyone. Don't stop but innovate around them #LaunchHour
3/18/2015 4:39:29 PM

**StartUpGrindBuf**: A4: even the best #entrepreneurs @elonmusk @peterthiel @BillGates sometimes walk away from #startups #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:40:51 PM

**ColliganLaw**: A4: it is certainly not a good road for the faint of heart! #startupstate #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:41:31 PM

**ken_rother**: A4 walking away gets harder if you have used friends and family money, explain odds of success are low before taking their money #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:43:23 PM

**bradtreat**: A4 Determine under which scenario you will walk away from your startup long before you find yourself in that situation #fumedate #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:44:38 PM


**Q5**

**Launch_NY**: Q5 What are things that did not work? What have you learned from them?

**A5**

**vidboltr**: @MarnieLaVigne2 Keep going through the rough times by listening to Rocky. Eye of The Tiger! Remember that everyone has doubts #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:43:15 PM

**ColliganLaw**: A5: there's a lot to be learned in how you interact w/ a team--not just what you are saying. That is something that takes time. #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:43:30 PM

**tuzag_inc**: A5: It's usually better to be the luckiest guy in the room than the smartest one. Best to be the best listener in the room. #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:43:55 PM

**ken_rother**: A5, if you have business partners make sure you motivations are aligned #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:44:12 PM

**ColliganLaw**: @tuzag_inc A5: And I find that the harder I work the luckier I get! #startupstate #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:44:26 PM

**vidboltr**: A5: We learned to keep even keeled. Getting too excited will backfire. When things go wrong, you will emotionally crash. #LaunchHour
3/18/2015 4:44:33 PM

**vidboltr**: A5: Keep focused. Build the critical pieces you need. Don't just do what was easy. #LaunchHour
3/18/2015 4:45:17 PM

**ColliganLaw**: A5: just like any relationship: communication. #rinseandrepeat #startupstate #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:46:11 PM

**StartUpGrindBuf**: A5: Failure can be a great motivator/ teacher Awesome event in #rochester next week @digital_roch http://t.co/L4VZkx7n5j #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:46:40 PM

**Launch_NY**: Know your exits...or at least your exit strategies. #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:47:15 PM

**tuzag_inc**: A5: Never burn a bridge. Respect others. Laugh at yourself. Stop whining. Exercise. Read. Compliment. Encourage. Chill. #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:47:30 PM

**EbenPiazza**: A5: misaligned expectations of team members can really hurt a startup #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:47:47 PM

**vidboltr**: A5: Don't just focus on efficiency and execution. It is too easy to execute your way to something that doesn't work #LaunchHour
3/18/2015 4:48:09 PM

**MarnieLaVigne2**: Start-ups may have to change direction or pivot from your original

idea, team, etc., can our start-up founders share an example? #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:49:26 PM

**vidboltr**: A5: Always remember the team. Team morale and engagement helps you create the good times keeps you going through tough times #LaunchHour
3/18/2015 4:49:37 PM

**bradtreat**: Q5 Startups shouldn't pitch venture capital when portfolio isn't a fit. Getting a VC meeting is easy. Meeting ≠ Likely to Invest #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:50:07 PM

**LumsdenCPA**: Q5 #launchhour be proactive with bookkeeping - we've seen clients struggle to recreate the wheel.
3/18/2015 4:50:54 PM

**ColliganLaw**: @MarnieLaVigne2 pivoting from a team member can be difficult-- especially where there is a personal relationship. #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:51:29 PM

**StartUpGrindBuf**: Startups shouldn't pitch venture capital when portfolio isn't a fit. Getting a VC meeting is easy. Meeting ≠ Likely to Invest #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:52:14 PM

**Tuzag_inc**: @LumsdenCPA Yes! Managing cash is so, so important. #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:52:20 PM

**vidboltr**: @MarnieLaVigne2 Team issues are very difficult. Act quickly and decisively if you someone is not working out #LaunchHour
3/18/2015 4:52:28 PM
**MarnieLaVigne2**: Start-ups in love with their idea can have as much problem moving on to a new product, as transitioning team members! #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:53:00 PM


## Q6

**Launch_NY**: Q6 How did @Launch_NY help your startup? Who else helped? #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:53:36 PM

### A6

**vidboltr**: A6: LaunchNY has been terrific. They helped us get grant funding from National Grid #LaunchHour
3/18/2015 4:54:44 PM

**vidboltr**: A6: LaunchNY also helped us develop business connections which has been equally important #LaunchHour
3/18/2015 4:55:44 PM

**amdgPubAffairs**: Q6...the help...A good senior mentor (who has battle scars) and a peer mentor (to match energy & keep u positive and motivated) #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:57:00 PM

**tuzag_inc**: A6: @pbrooks5050 is one of the best ears in our region. @ebizari is another outstanding @Launch_NY resource. #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:57:29 PM

**MarnieLaVigne2**: Launch NY is working on an even broader reach for expertise by piloting a national mentor network to help our local start-ups #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:57:30 PM

**StartUpGrindBuf**: A6: I think the best part of #UpstateNY #startup ecosystem is people work together. #startups may need help from many places #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:57:35 PM

**tuzag_inc**: A6: @SyracuseSeth has been a tremendous personal and professional friend. If you don't know him, you're missing out. #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:58:43 PM

**StartUpGrindBuf**: Almost forgot @Start_Fast is great resource, and they have office hours 3/26 @Z80Labs for next #accelerator class #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:59:12 PM

**ColliganLaw**: And of course the networking with @startupgrind and @startupgrindbuf ;o) #launchhour
3/18/2015 4:59:35 PM

**MarnieLaVigne2**: @tuzag_inc @SyracuseSeth Seth is doing amazing things at the Syracuse Tech Garden, where Launch NY is fortunate to be co-located #launchhour
3/18/2015 5:00:25 PM

**StartUpGrindBuf**: A6: Here is a list of 5 people who can help your #startup in #upstateNY http://t.co/PPw6tXeSSt #launchhour
3/18/2015 5:00:29 PM