

Want a successful startup? Delight your customers, advises Hubspot CEO



When he was studying his MBA, a professor told **Brian Halligan** not to bother starting a business unless his product was going to be 10 times better than the competition.

The co-founder and CEO of [Hubspot](#), a company dedicated to digital marketing, shared that he was fortunate not to have followed that advice during his talk at **INCmty 2020**.

*"I know that entrepreneurs and winning companies often don't necessarily have products 10 times better than the competition. I think the winners are **those who create a customer experience that's 10 times better than everyone else's**," Halligan said.*



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Today, Hubspot is a global leader in **inbound marketing** software solutions; it is **valued at \$18 billion USD**. Halligan created this marketing methodology with **Dharmesh Shah** in 2005.

Halligan shared that from the very beginning of **Hubspot**, he knew that his vision had to go beyond what already existed. He understood that companies had to **migrate from offline to online space**, from **outside selling to inside selling**, and from **outbound marketing to inbound marketing**.

Disrupting the customer experience

Just as Halligan had to think differently from his professor to be able to develop his own company, he says that entrepreneurs must come up with **strategies which are disruptive**.

He said that opting for **new ways of offering your products and services to customers** in order to meet their needs and generate **improved experiences** involves **creative disruption**.

*“For example, shopping today is much cooler online. It’s not just **e-commerce** solutions that are able to create a complete experience (...) it is as much about what you sell as how you sell it,”* he added.

“The winners are those who create a customer experience 10 times better than the competition.”

A new marketing model

The guru explained that marketing used to be based on a model which was represented by a funnel, a metaphor to explain how marketing creates leads at the top with sales at the bottom.

Halligan is the co-creator of a new marketing model: **a customer-based cycle** which, metaphorically, proposes different types of customers located on a wheel rotating around an axis.

*"I think a better model, to my mind, is what I describe as a steering wheel, which includes **visitors and potential customers**, as well as current **customers, delighted customers, and even more delighted customers** (...) it will turn faster and faster, depending on how much friction there is,"* he explained.

This model -which is used by companies like [Amazon](#)- seeks to make customers as happy as possible, and **this is the type of experience that should be offered**, said the expert.



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You have to be 'online'

Halligan believes that people have changed the way they behave in recent years. Now, they spend their time glued to their smartphones: they live on Google, Twitter, and Facebook.

Based on this new digital behavior, entrepreneurs and companies must **reevaluate the way in which they promote and market their brands and products**.

“Everybody is online, profoundly online, and I think it will be increasingly difficult for companies to be caught offline and trapped in the 1990s,” he shared.

He said that the mistake made by many companies is in **moving towards digitization too slowly**, or gradually and step by step; he recommends a change in strategy involving the use of **digital platforms to strengthen relationships with the customer**.

“The platforms are really good and are relatively easy to adopt.

*“What’s more, **moving to a digital environment** is great for right now. Due to the **COVID-19** pandemic, we have to move everything that is offline online,”* he said.



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Advice for entrepreneurs: generate content

Halligan thinks marketing has changed - hardly anyone sees billboards or TV commercials anymore.

He said that instead of entrepreneurs investing their money in television or radio advertising, **they should develop publicity channels on the net.**

For example, content generated on **YouTube**, via a **podcast**, or through **blog posts**, is very attractive to the public.

Rather than paying for platforms like **Facebook** or **Google**, those funds can be used for a company to grow.

*“Invest that money in hiring excellent **marketers and content creators** to become a media-based company,” he said. “Your marketing should be an instant business.”*

More about INCmty 2020

Over the course of five days, **INCmty** brought together more than 10,000 **entrepreneurs, business owners, investors, and leaders** from Mexico, the United States, Chile, Colombia, Germany, Spain, Peru, Israel, Brazil, and Canada.

Via a **100% digital format**, participants were able to meet and interact with experts on **digital inclusion** and a **sustainable future**.

*“Through INCmty, **the Tec renews its commitment to entrepreneurship**, which is a key part of its DNA. At times like these, it’s vital to bear in mind that challenging times also present great opportunities,”* shared David Garza, Rector and Executive President of Tec de Monterrey.

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