

INBOUND

GTM Growth Decoded:

100 Companies, 3 Stages, 1 System

Sangram Vajre



I went from \$0 to \$1M in 9 months, twice.

The biggest difference
between now and the past

Names of business		
	Terminus	GTM Partners
Type of business	SaaS	Services Now
Founded	2014	2022
Money	Venture-backed	Bootstrapped
Market condition	Built in up-market	Built in down-market
Category	Helped create a new category ABM	Redefining an existing category GTM
Community	FlipMyFunnel	Include GTMonday (substack note w/175k+ readers)
Thought leadership	Wrote two books and a LinkedIn course ABM	Wrote one book and a LinkedIn course on GTM
Title	Co-founder / CMO	Co-founder / CEO

Personal	Life is a mess	Learning and growing every day
Marriage	Almost divorced	Renewed our vows and growing stronger
Family	4 yr old son and a newly born daughter	12 yr old son and 8 yr old daughter
Faith	No faith-based roots and it was all about winning	Faith filled life and growing abundantly
Founders	Unhealthy relationship (I was the cause of that)	Learning to trust and depend and build something together

GTM Blind Spot



“Why do some companies scale effortlessly while others stall—even with the same market and funding?”

Why only 1 in 5 truly scale beyond product-market fit?

Is growth a black box?

3 New Principles

1

Companies go from **problem** to **product** to **platform**-market fit.

2

Every company has a form of “**GTM Operating System.**”

3

How **3Ps and the GTM OS** applies to **Snowflake, Hubspot, Tesla, Notion, Lovable, Apple, Amazon Prime** and any **B2B or B2C business.**

100 Companies

Insights from 100 High-NRR Companies

Stage	Avg. NRR	GTM Motion	Key Levers
Public SaaS	<100%	Founder-led + PLG	Early ICP focus, evangelism
Private SaaS	110-120%	PLG + sales overlay	Land-and-expand, usage pricing
PLG Leaders	120%+	Hybrid GTM + ecosystem	Multi-product suites, partners

Segment	Est. Companies with NRR > 100%	Est. Companies with NRR > 120%
Public SaaS	100	40
Private SaaS	1,200-2,100	300-500
PLG Leaders	100-200	80-120

35 of the 100 companies that have publicly reported their NRR > 120%



Sales-Led
Usage-based



Sales-Led
Usage-based



PLG + Sales
Usage-based



PLG
Per-seat



Sales-Led
Usage-based



Sales-Led
Per-seat



PLG + Sales
Usage-based



PLG
Per-seat



PLG
Per-seat



Sales-Led
Per-seat



Vertical
Per-license



Sales-Led
Per-license



PLG
Per-seat



Sales-Led
Subscription



Sales-Led
Subscription



PLG
Freemium



PLG
Freemium



PLG
Freemium



PLG
Freemium



PLG
Freemium



Sales-Led
Subscription



PLG
Freemium



PLG
Freemium



PLG
Freemium



PLG
Freemium



PLG
Subscription



Vertical
Subscription



Vertical
User-based



PLG
Subscription



PLG
Subscription

3 Stages



A Venn diagram consisting of three overlapping circles arranged horizontally. The leftmost circle is orange and contains the word 'Problem' in white. The middle circle is dark purple and contains the word 'Product' in white. The rightmost circle is light green and contains the word 'Platform' in dark purple. The circles overlap in a way that creates a central intersection of all three, as well as pairwise intersections between each pair of circles.

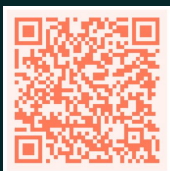
Problem

Product

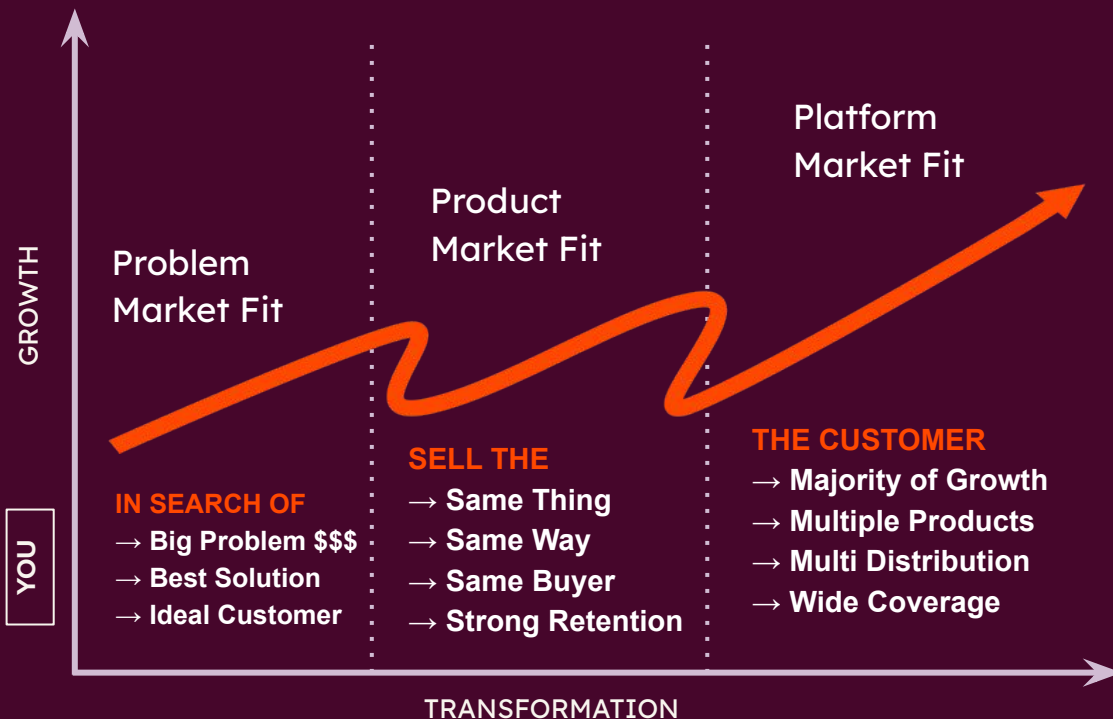
Platform

80%

of firms that don't migrate from product to platform will eventually die.



Growth (GTM) Happens in Stages





80%

of firms that don't migrate from product to platform will eventually die.

Growth (GTM) Happens in Stages

Problem-Market Fit	Product-Market Fit	Platform-Market Fit
Marketing and SMB owners	Marketing + Marketing Automation	Marketing, Sales and Customers Success
Sales only	Sales Cloud	ALL Clouds
1940 - Barbeque to Orange juice	1948 - Hamburgers, Fries & Soda (87%)	40,000 stores, 100 countries, value > \$150B
Millennials biz + life	\$3M in 2018 Business-only newsletter	\$20M in 3 years - Marketing, Tech, Retail newsletters
2009 - Podcast answering twitter Qs	2011- Top podcast (one channel focus)	\$100M deal with Spotify in to expand
1 year deal \$250 / month	Account-based advertising	Ads, Chat, Analytics, data, email signature

HubSpot



Go-to-Market is Hard

5 Valleys of GTM Death

You can **CREATE** but can't **MARKET**

You can **MARKET** but can't **SELL**

You can **SELL** but can't **DELIVER**

You can **DELIVER** but can't **RENEW**

You can **RENEW** but can't **EXPAND**

You don't have a **marketing** problem.

You don't have a **sales** problem.

You don't have a **CS** problem.

You don't have a **product** problem.

You have a **go-to-market** problem.

State of GTM for B2B

57% didn't create enough pipeline

72% seeing longer sales cycles

60% Companies can't show ROI

69% reps missed quota

56% companies missed revenue #

Smaller
Teams



Lowest
Budget



But, when we've asked...

the one thing that is keeping your company from hitting business goals?

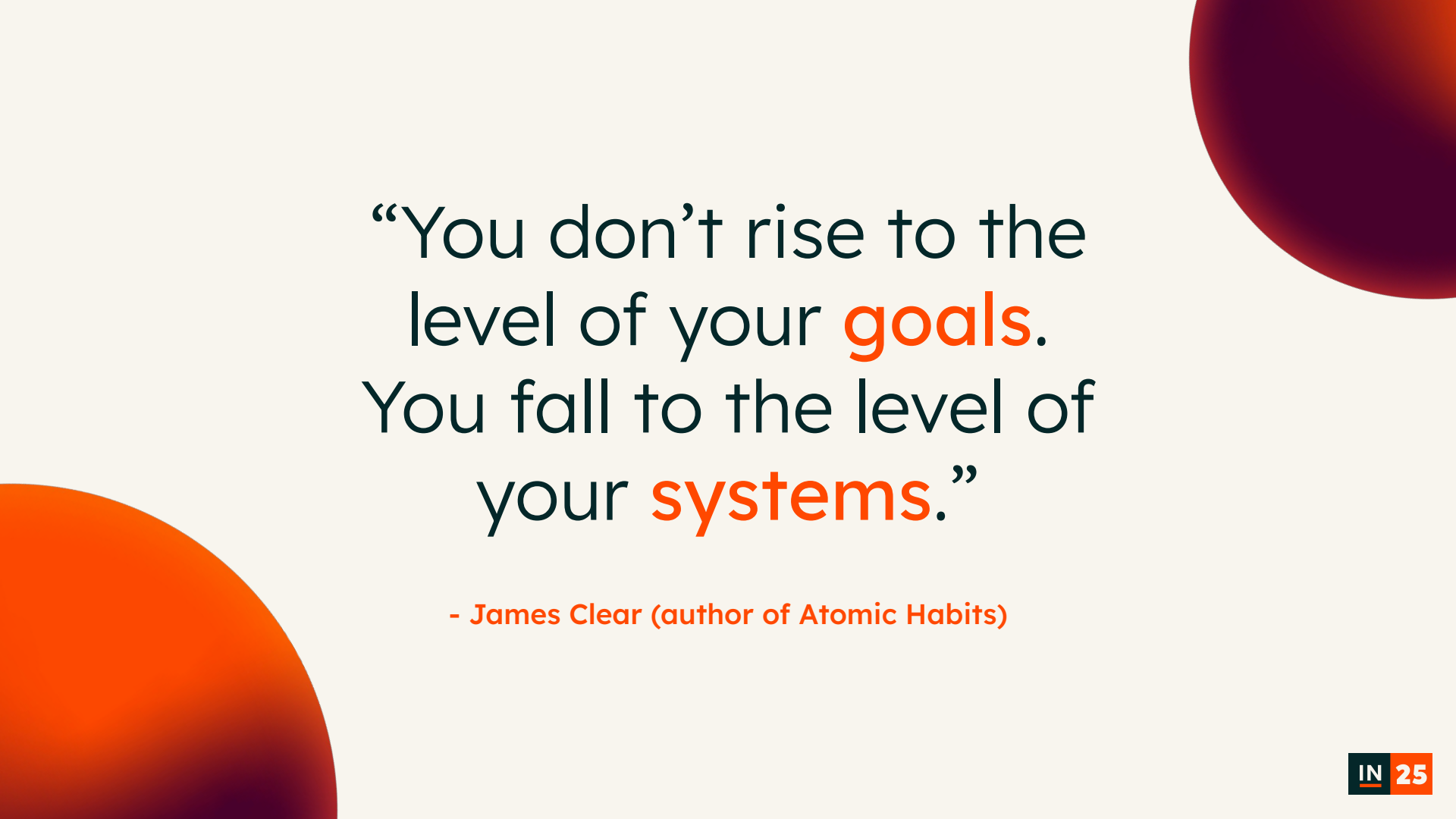
You can see how people vote. [Learn more](#)

internal go-to-market clarity	68%
market conditions	28%
competition	0%
if other, comment below	4%

State of GTM for B2B

➔ Your competition is you!

1 System



“You don’t rise to the
level of your **goals**.
You fall to the level of
your **systems**.”

- James Clear (author of Atomic Habits)

The GTM Operating System

Eight key questions to connect your cross-functional strategy to execution



How do you give your team
clarity, alignment, and trust?

Which **GTM metrics** drive
your business health?

How else can you **upserve**
your customers?

What's your **ROI** in the
customers' mind?



Where can you grow **the most?**

Which product(s) create the
highest customer value?

How will you engage your
customer with a
differentiated PoV?

Which GTM motions get you
to your revenue goal **faster?**

B2B Examples



Notion: The Problem Stage Survivor



“At first, Notion almost died. Twice.”

In the **Problem stage**, Notion was just a pretty note-taking app.

The team scrapped everything, rebuilt the product, and focused on clarity & alignment—a single mission: “Make software tools as easy to build as Lego.”

Their GTM motion?
Zero sales.
Just a waitlist
+ community-driven buzz.

Key GTM OS questions:
Who are we for?
What’s our POV?

Punchline

Notion didn’t scale by adding features—they scaled by finding their first 1,000 users who loved them enough to spread the word.

You can pivot:
“But loving fans aren’t enough to build a business. That’s why the Product stage matters.”

Hubspot: From Product to Repeatable Growth



“HubSpot didn’t invent marketing software—they invented Inbound Marketing.”

In the **Product stage**, HubSpot already had repeatable revenue (~100% NRR).

But what made them grow faster was a differentiated POV: **Outbound is broken, inbound is the future.**

They layered partner channels and sales assist on top of a freemium model.

Key GTM OS question:
How will you engage with a differentiated POV?
Answer: By creating a category.

Punchline

HubSpot didn’t just sell software; they sold a new way of thinking. That’s how they moved from a product to a system.

Then pivot:
“But even a category can stall unless you become a platform.”

Snowflake: The Platform Playbook



“Snowflake’s NRR hit 169%—the highest in SaaS history.”

At **Platform stage**, growth is about ecosystems, not just sales.

They didn’t just sell storage; they sold a network effect—the more companies store, the more valuable the platform.

Their GTM motion?
Usage-based pricing + partners + marketplace.

Key GTM OS question:
“What’s your ROI in the customer’s mind?” with “We’re the data cloud—you can run everything here.”

Punchline

Snowflake isn’t a tool—it’s an economy. That’s what Platform-market fit looks like.

Then pivot:
“Sale it like it’s PLG.”

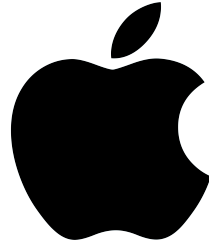


“Every great company needs a
**go-to-market
operating system.**

Not to predict the future—
but to align leadership,
pressure-test decisions, and
remove decision latency.”

- Geoffrey Moore (author of Crossing the Chasm)

B2C Examples





Tesla: The Problem Stage Rebel

“Tesla didn’t start with mass-market cars. They started with a \$100k Roadster that barely anyone could buy.”

In the **Problem stage**, Tesla was fighting for survival.

Elon Musk answered GTM OS Q1
“How do you bring clarity, alignment, and trust?”
Answer: With a bold mission:
“Accelerate the world’s transition to sustainable energy.”

Their GTM motion?
They relied on **founder-led storytelling** + a tiny fanbase of early adopters.

Key GTM OS questions:
What’s our differentiated POV? Who’s our true early ICP?

Punchline

Tesla didn’t build a car—they built a movement.
And that got them to their first 1,000 raving fans.

POV

Tesla doesn’t sell cars.
It is selling an idea.

Apple iPhone: From Product to Mass Adoption



“When Steve Jobs unveiled the iPhone in 2007, it wasn’t just a phone. It was ‘an iPod, a phone, and an internet communicator.’”

In the **Product stage**, Apple already had a repeatable business with the Mac + iPod.

But the iPhone became the expansion product that created a sticky ecosystem.

GTM motions?
Massive launch events, global retail network, partner carriers.

GTM OS question:
“How will you engage with a differentiated POV?”
Answer: With “The most powerful device in your pocket.”

Punchline

Apple didn’t just sell a phone—they sold an ecosystem you couldn’t leave.

NRR equivalent?

Users upgraded every 2–3 years, and Services with recurring revenue.

Amazon Prime: The Platform Flywheel



“Amazon Prime started as free shipping. Now it’s a full lifestyle subscription.”

At Platform stage, Amazon didn’t just optimize for transactions—they built a flywheel.

They didn’t just sell storage; they sold a network effect—the more companies store, the more valuable the platform.

Their GTM motion?
Bundle after bundle:
Prime → Video →
Music → Grocery →
Pharmacy.

Key GTM OS Question:
“What’s your ROI in the customer’s mind?”
Answer: “More of what you want, faster, cheaper, forever.”

Punchline

Amazon doesn’t sell products—they sell time. And that makes leaving feel impossible.

ROI?

Each new service makes the whole platform stickier.

The background is a solid dark purple. There are two large, semi-transparent circles: a bright orange one on the left and a darker red one on the right.

So what's next?

NRR >100% is survival.

Companies with NRR <100% churn to death.

NRR 110–120% unlocks growth.

You've built a product customers can expand into.

NRR 120%+ is rare air.

It's only achieved with a GTM system, not a single GTM motion.





GTM Manifesto

CEO owns GTM.

GTM is the business.

Business transformation happens in teams.

Trust in the NRR.

Systems are better than goals.



Mega GTM Shifts

How are people **buying**?



Rise of Services as Software

How are people **selling**?



SDR function is a bug in the SaaS model

How are people **building**?



AI prompt is the new interface

You are in the middle of a tectonic shift



Horses to Ford | Office to Internet | Low-skill work to AI

Future of Work



Workflows — seamlessly integrating people, process, and technology.

Future of Platform



Invisible — no more interfaces, just your own LLM powering decisions.

Future of Business



GTM Operating System —
Services + Fractionals + AI (tech)

OLD GTM VS. NEW GTM

THE WAY PEOPLE ARE BUYING, SELLING, AND
BUILDING IS CHANGING.

FROM	TO
Unpredictable growth	Efficient, profitable growth at scale
Overwhelming TAM	Clear TRM
Everyone owns GTM	CEO owns GTM
Spammy Inbound/Outbound	Strategic 6 GTM Motions
Heroics every month	GTM Plays that are repeatable
Churn is killing your business	Clear ROI for customer stickiness
Acquisition hamster wheel	NRR driven growth
Teams running in different directions	GTM dashboard aligning teams
Smart individual contributors	Team transformation



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Sangram Vajre

CEO and Co-founder,
GTM Partners

