

Overview

This project lives in the intersection between marketing and entrepreneurship. The client company is Athlete Development, an early-stage start-up that creates digital strength & conditioning training plans for team sports athletes. They sought external expertise in the field of branding and the commercialization of their product. As a start-up

using bootstrapping as their method of financing, they face many challenges related to managing limited resources. Thus, the minimal means they have cannot facilitate the application of established go-to-market strategies. This project aims to explore how a start-up like Athlete Development can design a go-to-market strategy, using principles from experimental learning while only operating with internal financial resources, as the research question on the right shows.

Launching with limited resources

Designing the go-to-market strategy for the bootstrapped start-up 'Athlete Development'

Goals

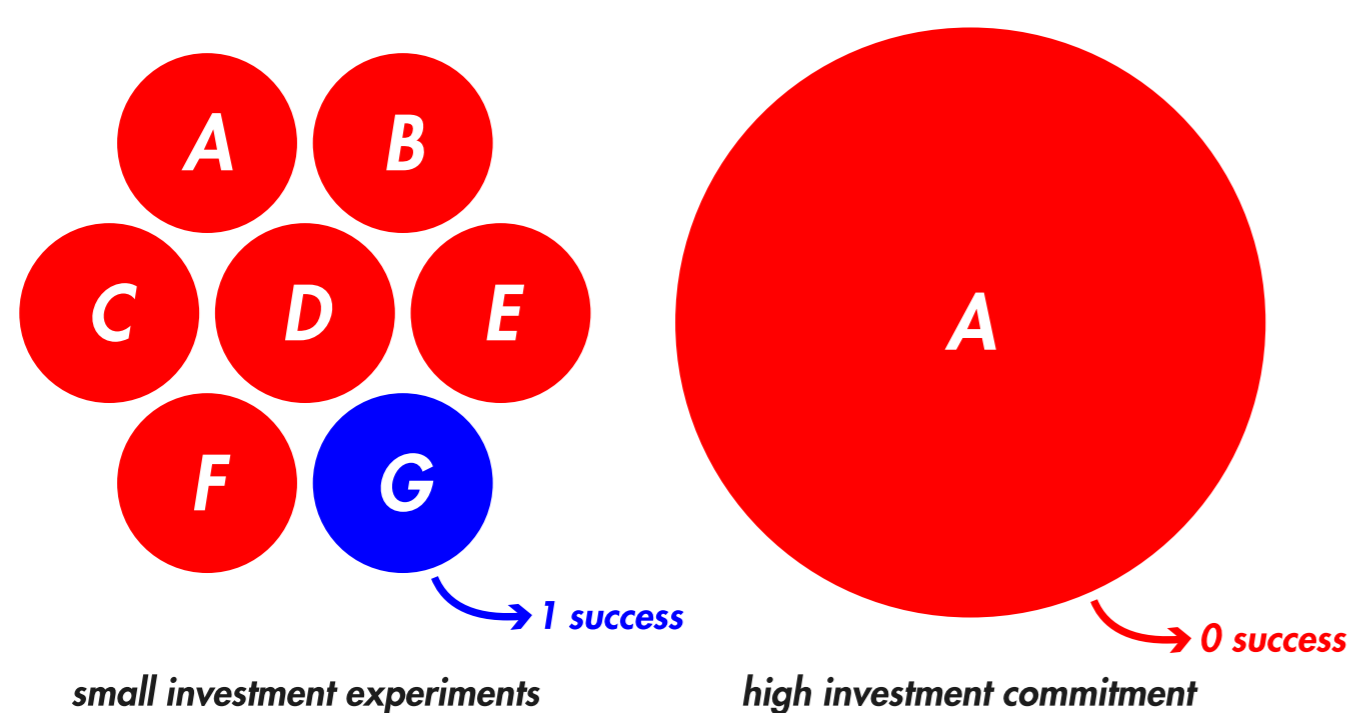
Firstly, the project's objective is to answer the research question: *How can bootstrapped start-ups use experimental learning methods to develop go-to-market strategies?*

Secondly, this project aims to supply the start-up 'Athlete Development' with a brand identity, launch proposal, and implementation plan.

Method

This project uses experimental learning as the working principle. After analyzing the frameworks of customer development (Blank, 2013), lean start-up (Ries, 2011) and simultaneous experimentation (Andries et al., 2013), the principles of experimental learning merged into one approach.

The core concept is to avoid large investments in one direction before critical assumptions about that concept are validated. Instead, those methods suggest conducting quick validation experiments that aim to prove the riskiest assumptions, prove product-market fit, or identify business models.



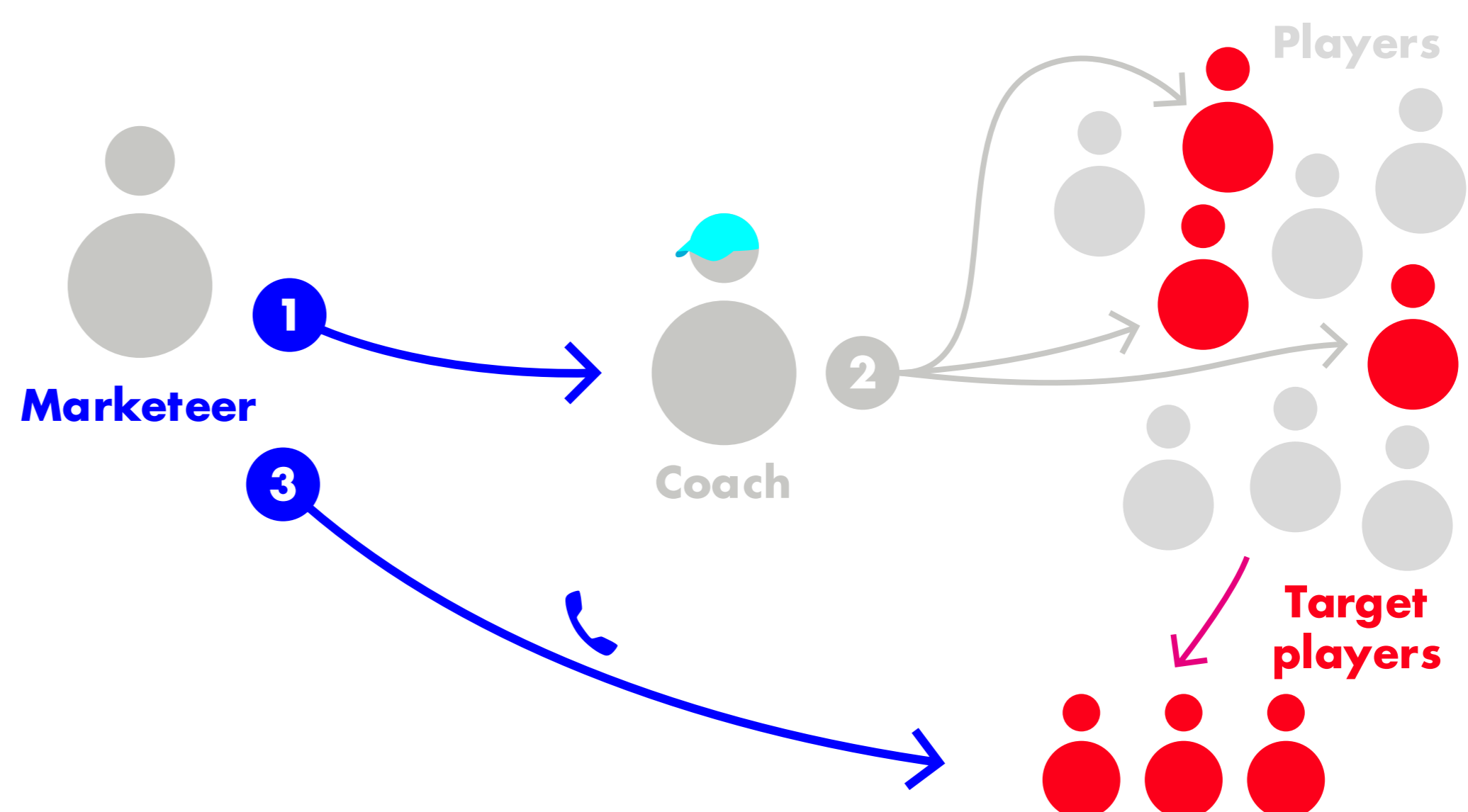
Principle of experimental learning

Experiments

Several experiments (described in chapter 3) aim to identify the best-suited market segment for Athlete Development, validate the choice, and test marketing channels to comprise the launch proposal. The graphic below visualizes the four sales channel experiments conducted to explore the target segment, validate product-market fit and identify marketing channels. The experiments were: Social media advertising, b2c cold calling, a live product showcase, and a business-to-business product proposal.

Results

The selected target segment for Athlete Development is **ambitious field hockey players**, that do not have access to a strength & conditioning coach. They are approached by extending Athlete Development's marketing reach and **contacting field hockey coaches** that can identify the fitting players and directly connect them with Athlete Development. That way, the marketer can directly address the small niche in which they position themselves and has a high conversion rate.



Cold calling sales channel scheme

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