



Venture Capital and Marketing with K8 Ventures

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K8 Ventures

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Executive Summary

K8 Ventures is a venture builder studio, with investments in a diverse range of industries. K8's greatest skill is developing companies in-house, starting at Stage 1, what they call "an idea written on a napkin," to Stage 5, which is a successful business already established in the market. Because K8 is investing in early-stage companies, they typically are able to take a larger share of equity in their developing companies. This allows them to take a managerial role in the company, thus taking some of the traditional risks out of venture capital. Over the past year with K8, they have provided countless opportunities to get involved in marketing and business management projects. Interns are directly involved in a guerilla marketing campaign for P3rceive, making an effort to rapidly bring in new customers. Interns learn the complexity of business management, which grows exponentially more difficult when managing multiple companies. Part of K8's marketing efforts is centered heavily around social media, email campaigns, and blogs, which translates to the intern's personal branding. Contributions to K8 due to these projects are large, the projects have added valuable contributions to K8's marketing efforts and have restructured various parts of the company.

Business Context

K8 Ventures is a venture builder studio that holds investments in a diverse range of industries. K8's greatest skill is developing companies in-house starting at stage 1, which can be as basic as "An idea written on a napkin," as Kurt Johnson likes to say, to stage 5. Stage 5 is most commonly used to describe a company that is successfully established in the market. Because K8 is investing in early-stage companies, they typically are able to take a larger share of equity. Because of the early-stage nature of venture capital, investments are often thought of as riskier than later-stage investments as they have not grown to be reputable companies yet. Contrary to typical venture capital firms, K8 takes a direct and managerial role in the companies they control instead of just providing funding. This approach takes some of the traditional "risk" out of venture capital. Venture establishments, unlike private equity, are more focused around investments in early-stage companies, which puts much more emphasis on critical early business growth. Because of this, during my time at K8 Ventures, I received an excellent look into the world of company management and advanced marketing procedures. At K8, I assist with multiple key roles. K8 is actively working to get their most second-most developed business, P3rceive, established in the market. P3rceive is an AI-tool for businesses to predict the future needs of their company based on hypothetical scenarios. Instead of relying on regression analysis and human prediction which tends to be inaccurate, P3rceive uses artificial intelligence to simulate future scenarios in the business to predict future needs.

Project Description

K8 holds multiple companies in its portfolio. Specifically, I completed projects for K8 and one of their subsidiaries, P3rceive. Below is a breakdown of tasks by company.

P3rceive-

Potential Customer Research- At the beginning of my experience in September, P3rceive was just beginning its launch into the market. To prepare for this launch, I gathered data on thousands of companies across the United States. These companies fit perfectly within my target market and were used in the marketing efforts of P3rceive. Materials from this project are not able to be shared.

Proposal- Once I established two thousand contacts in P3rceive's target audience, I drafted a proposal to target these future customers. My plan relied heavily on social media and email outreach. (See appendices titled: "Social Media Post")

Campaign- After I had drafted and approved an official plan, I began the execution. This consisted of designing marketing emails and sending them to the previously found members of my target audience. (See appendices titled: "Email Campaigns")

K8 Ventures-

Gen Z: Unleashed- Gen Z: Unleashed started as an attempt for K8 to differentiate itself from other venture establishments. It slowly grew to be a full-fledged blog complete with a website and multiple writers. Utilizing the unique perspectives of its writers, I explain my perspective on social, and business-related issues. While not seeming directly related to venture capital, it allows us to understand what products the future generation may favor, and how to market towards them. View the blog at: (www.genzunleashed.com)

Crunchbase and Pitchbook- Crunchbase and Pitchbook are essentially the "Facebook of investment platforms." They compile information about investment firms and platforms and make it available on the internet. Not only is it an exceptional marketing material, but understanding this information gave us a deeper look into finance and investment terms. Materials from this project are not able to be shared.

Consolidation- Even as a small firm keeping track of various services between companies is not an easy task. P3rceive currently uses Bluehost for their website and email hosting, but the rest of the K8 portfolio uses GoDaddy. Not only does this inhibit collaboration across the firm, but it is difficult to keep track of billing. As part of my project, I consolidated the hosting portfolios to GoDaddy and established collaborative tools to be used between the K8 team. (See appendices titled: "Bluehost to GoDaddy Consolidation")

Trademark Research- An important part of brand identity is having a protected name, logo and tagline. I had to produce condensed proposals for trademarking K8's intellectual property. I was immersed in the process of intellectual property. (See appendices titled: "Trademark Search")

Project Research

What tactics can be used to convert P3rceive's cold leads to closed sales?

Our project to grow P3rceive's sales was executed in three steps: **customer research, marketing proposal, and campaigns.**

Potential Customer Research:

At the beginning of my fall experience, I launched into a pre-existing effort to gather contact information from my target market. At the time I started, P3rceive had already launched an effort to gather and research specific contact information on a list of potential customers. This list of customers was curated through a database that consolidates all registered companies in the United States onto one platform. My lists consisted of 1000 potential customers, all of whom were located perfectly in my target market. My range of research techniques varied drastically, from a simple Google search to a "guess and check" system that used domain confirmation to verify a user's address. These research techniques gave us a valuable lesson in not only identifying my target market, but how to gather usable information on them. Businesses are often able to identify their target market, but actually converting that into usable information is always a challenge. After I populated these lists with specific contact information, I had a resource that would start the growth of P3rceive's sales. This portion of the project did not face any limitations, it has been completed and executed.

Marketing Proposal:

With a cache of customers to target, I was tasked with creating a marketing proposal to outline P3rceive's launch. After collaborating with P3rceive's marketing leader, Maca Navas, I began to establish useful tactics. I identified two platforms to target, email, and social media.

To plan my social media campaign, I consulted *Likeable Social Media* by Dave Kerpen. My original plan was to target LinkedIn because I identified that my customers, being business leaders, would be involved on this platform the most. A suggestion from Kerpen was that your social media posts cannot detail the product all the time; it is important to show the humanity in your company. Using this information, I created a posting schedule that included eight posts a month. Two would be completely unrelated, four would be indirectly related, and two would be directly related. My indirectly related posts would cover new information from my industry, often showcasing the improvements that artificial intelligence has made. The goal was to have the customer associate the benefit of AI with the benefit of P3rceive, which was also an AI tool. The directly related posts would include promotional material about P3rceive, always accompanied by clip art branded with the P3rceive logo.

To plan my email campaign, I again consulted Maca Navas. Maca has an established history, particularly with email marketing. My conversations with her yielded the following statement: Email serves as an incredibly successful platform to target new customers. Because the customers I am targeting are cold leads, they had never interacted with P3rceive before. That means that I need to convert them into warmer leads. Using this information, I created three different stages of email: level 1, 2 and 3. Level 1 was designed as an introductory email, it was meant to provide basic information about what P3rceive is, and educate the possible customer about my product. Level 2 served as an education and conversion email. The targets had already heard about P3rceive, and now it was time to convert them into customers. Using language researched by Neil Rackham in *Spin Selling*, I identified the optimal terms to use in my marketing email. Level 3 served as a “last attempt” effort to convert my customers. It was written as strictly a conversion email and included exclusive offers and discounts that were not available in the other campaigns.

This experience gave us a view of the formal writing and planning process that accompanies business projects. The benefit of writing a formal business proposal is invaluable; not only do you need to have a finalized plan for yourself, but you need to be able to convince others that your plan is ideal. This portion of the project did not face any limitations, it has been completed and executed.

Marketing Campaigns:

The final part of my project to convert my cold leads to paying customers was completed in the execution of my marketing plan. Having K8 co-founder, Kurt Johnson, review the plans, I began establishing a curation calendar for social media, and email campaigns. I would be releasing eight social media posts per month, which meant I had to research and create two posts per week. At the same time, I would be designing and releasing one email campaign every three weeks. An example of my social media and email campaigns can be viewed below. Not only did this project give us a view of advanced marketing techniques, but also a lesson in marketing design. My marketing leader, Maca Navas, gave us multiple opportunities to revise and test my changes in design to email and social media campaigns. This gave us experienced feedback on which designs were ultimately going to be successful with my audience. This project has been implemented and will be part of a continuing effort to bring more customers to P3rceive.

How can I foster working efficiency for K8's employees?

Gen Z: Unleashed:

Our Generation Z Blog originally served as a marketing attempt to differentiate K8 from other investing platforms. K8 wanted to show that they had insight into the next generation of consumers through the blog. This blog eventually grew to be a full-fledged blog that consisted of multiple writers, editors, and a complete website. Gen Z: Unleashed serves as an opportunity to dive into the habits of my generation. Every two weeks I am tasked with writing a blog on a topic

of my choice, but I use this as an opportunity to explore the economic opportunity with Generation Z. Not only can I analyze what they will buy, but I can also analyze what it will take to make them buy it. Gen Z: Unleashed provides a voice for generation Z because many of its members have not quite hit the professional environment. Because their thoughts and opinions are new, they are relatively unknown, creating demand for a blog like Gen Z: Unleashed. The blog has taught us how to make safe assumptions on a group of people, a valuable asset for entrepreneurship. Making assumptions on a group of people is difficult, but oftentimes necessary and even more necessary is the need to validate your assumptions. Whether using experience or statistics, entrepreneurs must make assumptions on their target audience, and I have learned how to safely come to accurate assumptions with Generation Z. This project has been launched but is an ongoing project. I will continue this endeavor even after my internship is finished.

Crunchbase and Pitchbook:

Crunchbase and Pitchbook serve as databases for investment firms which can be excellent marketing material if utilized correctly. Before my experience at K8, these pages were outdated and did not provide a valuable representation for the company. Crunchbase and Pitchbook are very technical platforms that required an understanding of technical terminology that I did not understand. To aid in this research, I engaged a K8 managing partner, Gary Scheier, to help define these sections. During my time with Gary, I discovered the meaning of intricate investment terms. Not only have these aided with the project, but they have been an invaluable learning experience. Learning about formal investment terminology not only applies to venture capital but extends into all aspects of business. Regardless of the entrepreneurial venture, raising capital is essential for any business, and I now have the ability to structure a creative fundraising round. My work on the Crunchbase and pitchbook projects is not complete at the moment but will be finished before the end of the internship session.

Consolidation:

Venture-related organizations always have multiple projects happening at the same time, but K8 did not have an effective way of organizing teams and projects. This lack of organization contributed to inefficiency as there was not a single location where documents and resources were stored. As the holding organization for multiple companies, K8 also had multiple services providing hosting services to its companies. This meant that each subsidiary of K8 used separate hosting, billing services, and storage solutions which caused organizational inefficiencies. The main issue was with P3rceive, which used different services than the rest of the K8 portfolio

The document titled, "Bluehost to GoDaddy" outlines my proposal for this project.

Because of the number of people involved with executing my plan, I can confidently say that my communication and technical writing skills have vastly improved. This project required the coordination of over seven people, some of which were reluctant to move forward, and others

could not wait for its results. Also because of the stakes involved in this project, it was the most personal and emotionally taxing of my projects. This project certainly engrained the importance of not getting overwhelmed when your plan does not work perfectly; in entrepreneurship, it is not a question of if things go wrong, but rather when they will go wrong. This project is in its final steps, it will be completed before the end of the internship session.

Trademark Research:

The phrase, “no good idea will go uncopied” was the basis of my trademark research. K8 has been fortunate up to this point that they have not been copied or had their intellectual property used without permission. That is not to say that it will never happen; when it does, K8 needs to be prepared. I embarked on a project to research the current intellectual property status of names and phrases within K8. Using the United States Trademark Database, I created an analysis of possible trademark obstacles. Additionally, I included estimated prices for the trademark process for each item.

The document titled, “Trademark Research” contains the proposal for this project.

Fortunately for K8, there were very little concerns in the trademark process for each of their entities. This provided a straightforward plan for trademarking each entity. Because of the seriousness of intellectual property, this search needed to be incredibly thorough. The requirements of the task provided for an excellent opportunity to learn about legal formalities in business; ensuring that there is no hidden opportunity left unturned.

Key Learnings & Recommendations

The diversity of my projects correlates to my development of a diverse skillset. Despite sharing my time between K8 and P3rceive related projects, I still developed advanced marketing and business management skills.

My work with P3rceive incredibly impactful because I witnessed and performed a marketing effort from start to finish. Not only does this supply real-world experience, but allows for a more seamless experience in the future. I will be able to better evaluate which tactics will be successful given the circumstances of the business. More importantly, I understand the process of execution. A proper marketing effort requires hundreds of hours of research along with a finalized proposal before it can even start. I learned how to efficiently research and plan such an effort.

Time spent at K8 was dedicated to learning business management and marketing skills. The launch of my Generation Z: Unleashed blog was intended as a marketing project, but grew to be not only an incredible research and web development experience but a writing workshop. More importantly, I learned the process of creating validated assumptions on an audience; a skill that will always be useful in entrepreneurship, especially when trying to establish a product. Another contribution to my formal planning and writing skills is based on the consolidation project. While days from being complete, it has

required advanced coordination and project drafting skills to effectively communicate with the K8 team. My time spent enhancing the K8 Ventures Crunchbase and Pitchbook pages is not complete, but already I have been able to learn and memorize key capital terms and processes. Lastly, my time spent researching trademarks provided a view into the legal side of the business, an excellent view into the world of intellectual property.

My suggestion to K8 would be to explore P3rceive's potential with paid advertising. At the moment, the marketing strategies I developed used only free solutions, but I feel there is potential in paid advertising if funding permits. It would be an interesting research project to identify how effective paid advertising would be at bringing in customers to P3rceive versus the free options I have utilized up to this point.

References

Kurt Johnson: Business Mentor
Maca Navas: P3rceive Marketing Mentor
Gary Scheier: Finance Mentor
The Lean Startup by Eric Ries
Likeable Social Media by Dave Kerpen
Spin Selling by Neil Rackham

Appendices

Trademark Search:

Trademark Rules:

- Two companies can file trademarks on a word with the same spelling/pronunciation only if they are in different sectors.
- If both companies are in the same sector, they may be pronounced the same but spelled differently
- If a trademark is dead, it can be reclaimed.

Trademark Pricing:

- Lawyers:** typically charge a flat \$950 for legal work
 - If the product is not currently for sale, it will need to be for sale within a year.
 - There are extra fees associated with this, an extra flat \$250
- Government:** The government filing fee is \$275 per class/industry that the trademark will apply in. This is only if your product is already for sale
 - If the product is not currently for sale, it will need to be for sale within a year.
 - There are extra fees associated with this, an extra \$100 per class to the government.
- Most Trademarks are registered in at least 2 classes, we may need more or less depending on the product. All prices were calculated with only 2 classes which seems to be the reasonable minimum, all trademarks can include more classes. (Add an extra \$275 per class to the total cost)**

Names:

(REDACTED):

Status: Available

Conclusion: This will be relatively easy to trademark, there should be no major issues or complications. Because Calendar Crusher is already released, we will not have to worry about extra government/lawyer fees.

Timeline from the time we submit application: 12 months

Application Review: 6 months

Publication: 3 months

To finish the application process, publication in an official news source is required.

Certificate of Registration: 3 months

It will take about 3 months for the USPTO offices to actually release the final certificate

Cost: \$1,500*

\$950 flat filing fee: Average price from law firm

\$275: Class 1 government filing fee

\$275: Class 2 government filing fee

Cost: \$1,500-\$1950*

\$950 flat filing fee: Average price from law firm

\$275: Class 1 government filing fee

\$275: Class 2 government filing fee

"If product is not being sold, extra \$100 per class and extra \$250 to lawyer this is represented by \$1950 figure.

(REDACTED):

Status: Available

Conclusion: This will be relatively easy to trademark, there should be no major issues or complications. Because (REDACTED) is already released, we will not have to worry about extra government/lawyer fees.

Timeline from the time we submit application: 12 months

Application Review: 6 months

Publication: 3 months

To finish the application process, publication in an official news source is required.

Certificate of Registration: 3 months

It will take about 3 months for the USPTO offices to actually release the final certificate

Cost: \$1,500*

\$950 flat filing fee: Average price from law firm

\$275: Class 1 Government filing fee

\$275: Class 2 Government filing fee

"If product is not being sold, extra \$100 per class and extra \$250 to lawyer.

(REDACTED):

Status Available

Conclusion: This will be relatively easy to trademark, there should be no major issues or complications. Because (REDACTED) is not released, there will be additional costs to the trademark process. If a trademark is filed, the product must be released within one year or else the trademark will be closed.

Timeline from the time we submit application: 12 months

Application Review: 6 months

Publication: 3 months

"If product is not being sold, extra \$100 per class and extra \$250 to lawyer.

(REDACTED):

Status: Complicated

Search link:

http://msearch.uspto.gov/bin/showfield?f=loc&state=4810%3Aq3x5ay.1.1&_search=se arch&_p_L=50&BackReference=&p_plural=yes&p_s_PARA1=&p_tagref%7E%3A=PAR A1%24LD&expr=PARA1+AND+PARA2&p_s_PARA2=ZiRo&p_tagref%7E%3A=PAR A2%24COMB&p_op_ALL=AND&a_default=search&a_search=Submit+Query&a_search =Submit+Query

Possible Conflicts:

1: 88632319

-Same spelling, different capitalization

-mobile app sector; Ride sharing app

2: 88768879

-Same spelling, same capitalization

-Business assistance, Clothing

3: 87474488

-Same spelling, different capitalization

-Cosmetics, Telecommunication Services

4: 8775104

-Same spelling, different capitalization

-Computer Hardware/Software, Media Production

Conclusion: It looks like this will be viable, but it will be more difficult than the others because there is a lot of usage of the (REDACTED) word. The only one we that raises any concern is 88768879 because of identical capitalization, but they are not involved in a separate sector.

Timeline from the time we submit application: 18 months

Application Review: 6 months

Response from USPTO: 6 months

Because there are other existing names, they will most likely come back and ask for more details on our differentiation. This can take up to 6 months

Publication: 3 months

To finish the application process, publication in an official news source is required.

Certificate of Registration: 3 months

It will take about 3 months for the USPTO offices to actually release the final certificate

To finish the application process, publication in an official news source is required.

Certificate of Registration: 3 months

It will take about 3 months for the USPTO offices to actually release the final certificate

Cost: \$1,500-\$1950*

\$950 flat filing fee: Average price from law firm

\$275: Class 1 government filing fee

\$275: Class 2 government filing fee

"If product is not being sold, extra \$100 per class and extra \$250 to lawyer this is represented by \$1950 figure.

(REDACTED):

Status Available

Conclusion: This will be relatively easy to trademark, there should be no major issues or complications. Because (REDACTED) is already providing service, we will not have to worry about extra government/lawyer fees.

Timeline from the time we submit application: 12 months

Application Review: 6 months

Publication: 3 months

To finish the application process, publication in an official news source is required.

Certificate of Registration: 3 months

It will take about 3 months for the USPTO offices to actually release the final certificate

Cost: \$1,500*

\$950 flat filing fee: Average price from law firm

\$275: Class 1 Government filing fee

\$275: Class 2 Government filing fee

"If product is not being sold, extra \$100 per class and extra \$250 to lawyer.

(REDACTED):

Status Available

Conclusion: This will be relatively easy to trademark, there should be no major issues or complications. If (REDACTED) is already in business, then the cost will be closer to the \$1,500. If (REDACTED) is not founded yet, the cost will escalate to \$1,950 and business must start within a year.

Timeline from the time we submit application: 12 months

Bluehost to GoDaddy Consolidation:

Bluehost to GoDaddy Consolidation

Introduction:

K8 Ventures does not currently have all email and hosting billing centralized. This means that each subsidiary of K8 uses separate hosting and billing services, which causes organizational inefficiencies. Additionally, there is not a centralized location to store files for K8 or their subsidiaries due to the lack of centralized billing. The following plan focuses on fixing these issues for P3rceive and K8 Ventures.

P3rceive currently has three active emails, info@p3rceive.com, maca@p3rceive.com, conor@p3rceive.com, and one website. The website will remain unaffected as the domain is transferred; the P3rceive.com developers have given approval for the transfer. These emails need to be transferred from being hosted by Bluehost to GoDaddy to consolidate billing and file storage. The entire process for these emails to be moved will take approximately two weeks, and there will be no interruptions in service. After they have been transferred, the emails will be using the Online Essentials plan; this means they will have access to Microsoft Teams, K8's file sharing platform. Not only will this transfer give P3rceive members access to P3rceive and K8's public files, but it will consolidate billing for K8 Ventures.

Timeline:

Wednesday 4.15.2020

- 1: The intern team emails GoDaddy with a request to transfer the three stored emails that need to be transferred.
- 2: Payment is required
- 3: There is a four day wait until GoDaddy begins transferring the stored emails.

Monday 4.20.2020

GoDaddy begins transferring stored emails between the Bluehost and GoDaddy servers.
1: Once GoDaddy has started, it will take seven days to complete the transfer.

Monday 4.27.2020

At this point, the emails have been transferred to GoDaddy; now GoDaddy will transfer the domain registration.
1: The intern team will again email GoDaddy with a request to transfer the domain registration
2: There is a one week wait for GoDaddy to finish the process of transferring the domain.

Monday 5.4.2020

All three emails will be transferred.
1: Website developers need to update the domain registration on the website

Costs:

P3rceive's contract with Bluehost ends in 4 months (August); it is currently billing at \$30 a month. We are able to recoup a portion of the money remaining on the contract.

The pricing structure below details the price of three mailboxes using Online Essentials, which is needed to access Microsoft Teams. The conversion costs have been waived; the prices below outline the cost of having the new mailboxes with GoDaddy for one year. These are not publically available, the intern team had to negotiate with GoDaddy to achieve these rates.

The following quotes are for the next (one) year of service with GoDaddy, and represent the cost of the transfer:

Domain Transfer Fee:	\$7.99
Mailbox with Online Essentials:	\$95.88 (\$7.99 per month x 12)
Mailbox with Online Essentials:	\$95.88 (\$7.99 per month x 12)
Mailbox with Online Essentials:	\$95.88 (\$7.99 per month x 12)

Total before tax: \$295.63

Social Media Post:

P3rceive, LLC
63 followers
4mo • 🌐

You deserve software that is:

- Easy to use
- Agile and flexible
- Reduces time to insight
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Because awesome people deserve awesome software. We are p3rceive: financial simulation software.



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