

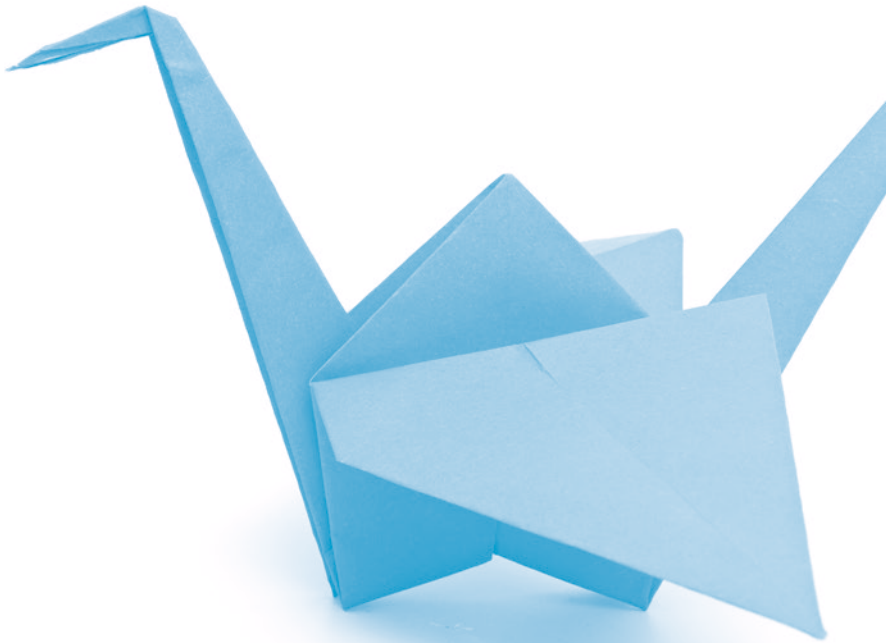
# **GROWTH STRATEGY**



Omar Mohout

# GROWTH STRATEGY

The art of scalable growth



ACADEMIA  
PRESS

12:23



Contact



Hello there. I'm your AI Companion, your dedicated assistant for exploring the book *Growth Strategy* by Omar Mohout. Whether you're curious about key concepts, need summaries, or are looking for personalised advice to help your strategy succeed, I'm here to help. How can I support you today?



12:19 PM

What is the essence of strategy, and how does it differ from tactics?

12:19 PM ✓

Strategy is the overarching plan that aligns resources and decisions to achieve long-term goals, focusing on "why" and "what" to pursue. Tactics are the specific actions and "how" to execute the strategy. Strategy sets direction; tactics deliver on that vision through immediate, actionable steps.



12:20 PM

How can organizations ensure that their tactics remain aligned with their overarching strategy during periods of rapid growth or change?

12:21 PM ✓

Organizations can ensure alignment by regularly revisiting their strategic goals, fostering cross-departmental communication, leveraging data for decision-making, and maintaining flexibility to adapt tactics to evolving market conditions.



12:22 PM



LET'S MAKE THE  
BOOK ABOUT YOU!



Discover your  
AI Companion

# DISCOVER YOUR AI COMPANION

## LET'S MAKE THE BOOK ABOUT YOU!

Imagine this: you are not just reading this book, but you are entering into a direct conversation with its contents. It feels like Omar Mohout is sitting right next to you, ready to answer your questions and support you with his knowledge and expertise. On the right, you can see what such a conversation with the AI Companion might look like. The AI Companion tailors the content of *Growth Strategy* perfectly to:

- you as a professional;
- your team;
- your company or organisation;
- and your unique situation.

Through a convenient chat function (available in WhatsApp), you will discover additional features that go beyond the classic learning experience, such as personalised advice, real-time updates and practical tools to apply the insights from the book immediately.

Experience a new, interactive way of learning that truly grows with you in three easy steps:

### STEP 1

Go to: <https://click.lannoo.be/ai-growth-strategy>  
or scan the QR code on the right and follow the instructions.



### STEP 2

To activate the AI Companion, you will need the following unique activation code:

### STEP 3

Open the chat and start the conversation.  
You get free access from the moment of registration.



# CONTENTS

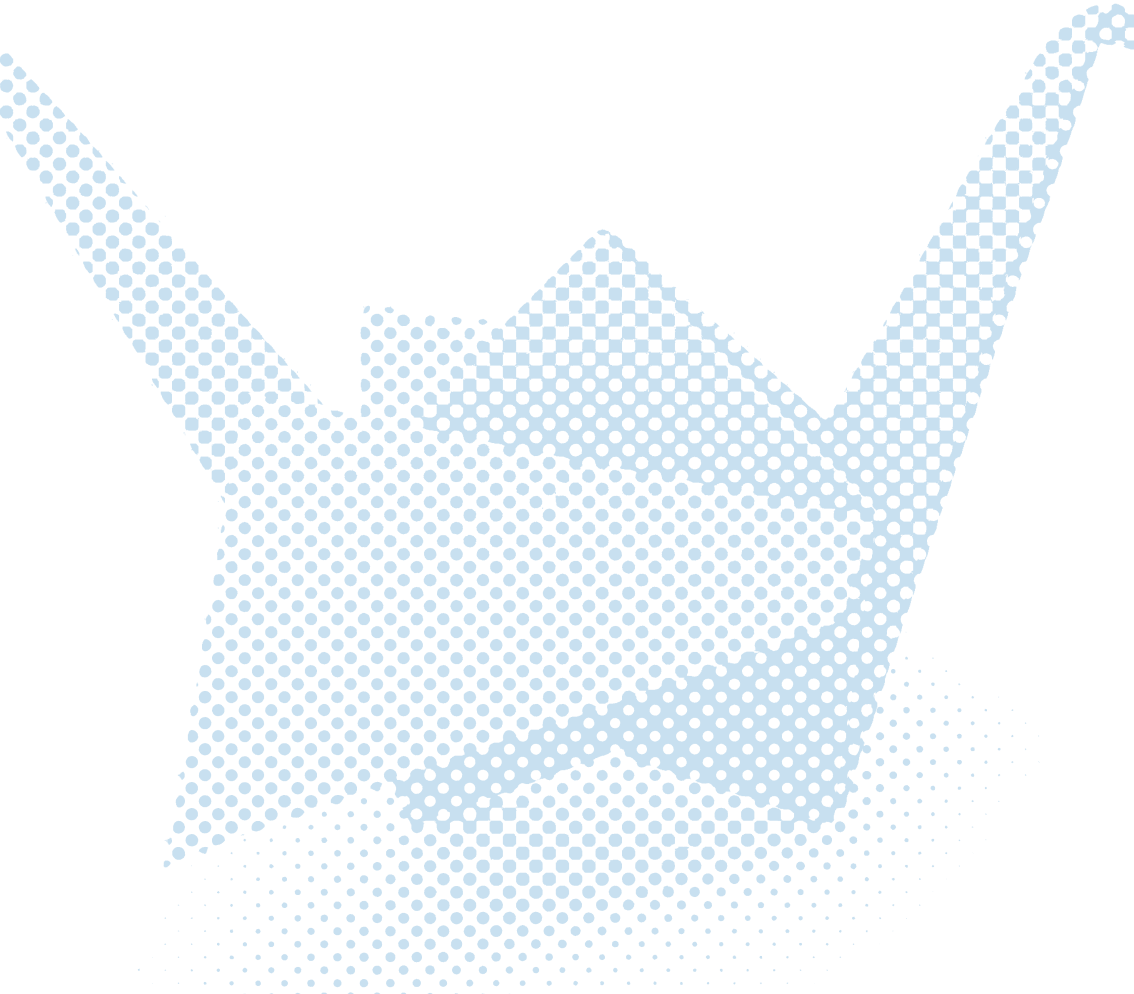
<b>Introduction</b>	9
Acknowledgments	11
<b>CHAPTER 1: UNDERSTANDING GROWTH STRATEGY</b>	<b>14</b>
What is strategy?	15
What is growth strategy?	18
Beyond the bottom line	20
Downscaling	22
Why growth is non-negotiable	25
<b>CHAPTER 2: DUAL ENGINES OF GROWTH: EXPANDING OUTWARD AND GROWING FROM WITHIN</b>	<b>32</b>
Where to play, how to win: mapping your growth territory	33
Profit from the core: unlocking growth from within	37
<b>CHAPTER 3: DEFINING WINNING ASPIRATIONS</b>	<b>40</b>
Setting the ambition level	41
<b>CHAPTER 4: A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO QUANTIFYING GROWTH</b>	<b>46</b>
Compound annual growth rate (CAGR)	48
Triple, Triple, Double, Double, Double (T2D3)	49
The rule of 40	53
<b>CHAPTER 5: SCALING YOUR BUSINESS</b>	<b>56</b>
Growth vs. scaling	57
The scalability superpower: leveraging intangible assets	61
Architecting scalability: attributes of a scalable business model	63
Business model vs. operating model	67
<b>CHAPTER 6: STRATEGIC APPROACHES TO GROWTH</b>	<b>70</b>
Simplifying strategic choices: the three components of a business	71
Build: the direct approach	73
Ally: the indirect approach	75
Buy: acquisition(s)	77

Build, buy or ally?	79
Get, keep, and grow: maximizing customer value for growth	80
Retention trumps growth	83
The unicorn combination: high acquisition and high retention	85
Beyond service: the art of customer retention	86
Optimize and capture more value	88
<b>CHAPTER 7: EXTERNAL VS INTERNAL GROWTH</b>	<b>90</b>
Balancing the scales	91
Premature scaling	93
External growth	94
Internal growth	96
The strategic lens: navigating the complexities of growth	98
Strategic clustering: simplifying external growth choices	100
Strategic clustering: simplifying internal growth choices	103
The growth profile: scaling yourself to scale your business	105
<b>CHAPTER 8: MARKETING AND SALES STRATEGIES</b>	<b>108</b>
Sales and marketing funnel	109
Deconstructing the funnel: a B2B webinar campaign example	113
Deconstructing the funnel: a SEA campaign example	117
BANTing your way to qualified leads	120
Igniting the engines	123
Mapping your strategy: aligning sales and marketing for external growth	127
The power of levers: small changes, big impact	131
Overcoming sales obstacles	134
<b>CHAPTER 9: CASH FLOW, THE LIFEBLOOD OF BUSINESS</b>	<b>138</b>
Five essential cash flow models	139
Money talks: the language of business	144
<b>Lessons from the doctor's office: applying <i>House M.D.</i> to growth strategies</b>	<b>149</b>
<b>Outro</b>	<b>150</b>
<b>Expanding your horizons: recommended reading for growth</b>	<b>152</b>
<b>About the author</b>	<b>154</b>
<b>About Deloitte</b>	<b>156</b>
Corporate Finance: navigating a world of opportunities	156
Empowering high-scaling companies for a transformative future	157
<b>List of figures</b>	<b>159</b>



For Aaron,

As you step into your first job and begin this exciting new chapter of your life, may this book inspire you to approach every challenge with confidence, every opportunity with curiosity, and every moment with gratitude. In sha' Allah.







## **INTRODUCTION**

**What if everything you thought you knew about growing and scaling a business was wrong?** Clearly, there is more to it than simply “working harder.” Sometimes, the very things that make a business successful can become obstacles to its growth.

Can you really bottle the magic of expansion? I doubt it. Every business is unique, every market a shifting landscape. But if you are determined to try, this guide might be a good place to start. Inside, you’ll find the tools and insights to navigate the complexities of growth and build or expand a business that truly thrives.

In today’s competitive market, the harsh reality is that companies failing to achieve critical mass—growing and scaling their operations to become sustainable—will inevitably face failure, regardless of the quality of their product or solution. Simply creating value isn’t sufficient for success; that value must be effectively distributed to a broad audience. A top-tier product can still falter if the company lacks the necessary reach and market penetration. Growth and scalability are critical because they ensure that a business can not only attract but also retain a substantial customer base, expand its market share, and

continuously generate revenue at a scale that supports its operations and ambitions. Without this expansion, even the most innovative and potentially transformative products risk fading into obscurity, unable to sustain the business long-term. Thus, the ability to scale and distribute value broadly is just as crucial as the value creation itself. In other words, you need a growth strategy to realize the full potential of a business model. And for the record, copy-pasting someone else's growth strategy doesn't work because the voice that suits them doesn't necessarily suit you, even if they have the same business model.

**Expanding a business seamlessly intertwines elements of both art and science.** It demands not only a profound grasp of strategic nuances but also a meticulous attention to detail and an unwavering commitment to continuous improvement. In this expanded guide, I aim to dissect and discuss the diverse and dynamic approaches to growth strategies. Drawing from a broad spectrum of industries and leveraging established best practices, I intend to equip business leaders with actionable insights and tools. My objective is to serve as a practical resource for those at the helm of navigating the intricate journey of business growth and scaling efforts. Every company is unique and so is its expansion process. However, the best way to prepare for what is ahead is to learn from fellow entrepreneurs who have already paved the way. I hope this publication contributes to this exchange of best practices and lessons learned.

This guide has been carefully structured to act as a detailed manual on the art of business expansion. Each chapter meticulously explores essential facets of growth and scaling, infused with practical advice, strategic frameworks, and illustrative examples from the real world. But that's not all. This book also provides an AI-supported application to transform your business expansion into a successful and sustainable growth strategy. Through the combination of insights, practical examples, and AI support, this book is a complete guide for those who want to understand growth strategy and apply it successfully. With the **AI Companion**, you will experience an interactive way of learning that grows with you. Throughout the book, we regularly give you suggestions of questions to ask. Tailored to business executives, budding entrepreneurs, and all those charged with spearheading growth initiatives within their organizations, this handbook aims to foster a comprehensive understanding of the processes involved in devising, deploying, and refining effective growth strategies. By the end of this book, readers will have a robust understanding of how to formulate, implement, and optimize growth strategies.

## Acknowledgments

---

My heartfelt appreciation goes out to the myriad of experts, scaleups, multinationals and institutions whose contributions have been pivotal in shaping this guide. I am particularly grateful to Beatrice De Keyzer, who was the sounding board that shaped this final result, and to my former colleagues at Nova Reperta, specifically Jan Verdonck. My thanks also extend to VOKA (the Flemish network of entrepreneurs) and the Solvay Brussels School of Economics & Management, who

have provided numerous opportunities through workshops focused on the exploration and mastery of growth and scaling strategies over the years. These experiences have been instrumental in enriching the content and depth of this book, enabling me to offer a richer, more comprehensive guide.

Growth is not merely a goal; it's a mindset, a problem-solving tool, and a compass that guides our journey toward a successful and fulfilling future. By embracing these principles and focusing on key areas of growth, we can achieve our aspirations and create a thriving business that delivers value to our customers, our employees, and our stakeholders.



## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

### **GROWTH = MINDSET**

Cultivate a growth mindset that embraces innovation, experimentation, and continuous improvement

### **GROWTH = PROBLEM SOLVER**

View growth as a solution to challenges, enabling us to overcome obstacles and achieve our goals

### **GROWTH = COMPASS**

Utilize growth as a guiding principle, directing our decisions and actions toward a clear vision of the future

### **GROWTH = VALUE CREATION**

Focus on creating value for our customers, employees, and stakeholders

### **GROWTH = SUSTAINABILITY**





CHAPTER

1



**UNDER  
STANDING  
GROWTH  
STRATEGY**



*Growth is messy, as any parent can tell you.*

## **What is strategy?**

---

Before we dive into the specifics of growth strategy, let's take a step back and explore the very essence of strategy itself.

Imagine a ship setting sail. It's not enough to simply have a powerful engine and a skilled crew. To reach its destination, the ship needs a charted course, a clear direction that guides its journey through unpredictable waters. That's what strategy provides—a deliberate path toward a desired outcome.

At its core, strategy can be thought of as the comprehensive set of actions and decisions an organization adopts to achieve its long-term goals. However, this simplistic definition only scratches the surface. To delve deeper, strategy encompasses the deliberate planning and allocation of resources to carve out a competitive advantage. This ad-

vantage is often anchored in a unique value proposition that differentiates the organization within its specific field or industry.

Strategy transcends mere short-term tactics by embedding itself in the broader vision and trajectory of the organization. It is not just about choosing what to do, but also about deciding what not to pursue. A well-crafted strategy acts as a dynamic roadmap, navigating the organization through both predictable challenges and unforeseen opportunities. It ensures that every tactical decision and action is coherent and synchronizes with the overarching objectives of the enterprise.

In a world of limited time and resources, strategy helps you prioritize and make the most impactful decisions.

## Key elements of strategy

- **Defining your destination:** where do you want to be? A clear vision of your goals is essential for creating a strategy to achieve them.
- **Understanding your current position:** where are you now? An honest assessment of your strengths, weaknesses, and current market conditions is crucial for charting a realistic course.
- **Mapping the terrain:** what challenges and opportunities lie ahead? Analyzing your competitive landscape, industry trends, and potential risks will help you navigate the journey.
- **Plotting the course:** how will you get from where you are to where you want to be? This involves identifying key initiatives, allocating resources, and setting milestones.



- **Adapting to the journey:** the sea is rarely calm. A good strategy is flexible and adaptable, allowing you to adjust your course in response to unexpected events and new information.

## Strategy vs. tactics

It's important to distinguish between strategy and tactics.

- **Strategy** is the overarching plan, the “why” behind your actions. It's about making choices that align with your long-term goals.
- **Tactics** are the specific actions you take to implement your strategy, the “how” of achieving your objectives.

Think of it this way: strategy is deciding how to win the war, while tactics are the individual battles fought along the way.

## Why is strategy important?

In today's complex and competitive business environment, a well-defined strategy is more critical than ever. It helps you:

- **Focus your efforts:** by prioritizing key initiatives, you avoid spreading yourself too thin and instead maximize your impact.
- **Gain a competitive advantage:** a strong strategy allows you to differentiate yourself and outmaneuver potential rivals.
- **Allocate resources effectively:** by aligning your resources with your strategic goals, you ensure that every investment contributes to your overall success.
- **Navigate uncertainty:** a flexible strategy helps you adapt to changing market conditions and unexpected challenges.

- **Drive organizational alignment:** a shared understanding of the strategy ensures that everyone in the company is working toward the same goals.

## The foundation for growth

A solid understanding of strategy is the foundation for developing an effective growth strategy. In the next chapter, we will explore how to apply these principles to the specific challenge of expanding your business.

## What is growth strategy?

---

Forget the buzzwords and complex frameworks for a moment. At its core, a growth strategy is simply a plan to achieve sustainable expansion. An organization's plan for overcoming current and future challenges to realize its goals for expansion. A roadmap that guides your business toward a larger, more impactful future. You are right, every strategy inherently contributes to growth in some way. Whether it's optimizing operations, enhancing customer experience, or innovating new products, the ultimate goal is to move the needle forward. But a dedicated growth strategy provides a focused framework for these efforts, aligning your entire organization around a common vision for expansion.

In essence, a robust growth strategy is pivotal for any organization seeking to maintain relevance and achieve sustained success. It enables businesses to leverage their unique strengths, meet the evol-

ing needs of their customers, and continuously adapt to the shifting landscapes of their industries.

For startups, growth strategies are the ignition switch, sparking the initial burst of momentum that propels them along the “S-curve” of company growth. It’s about finding product-market fit, acquiring early customers, and establishing a foothold in the market. But for mature companies, growth strategies take on a different form. They become the escape velocity needed to break free from the gravitational pull of the plateau, to overcome the inertia of stagnation and reach the next orbit of expansion. Basically, what brought them to this level will not necessarily bring them to the next. It’s about reinvention, diversification, and a relentless pursuit of new horizons.

## Why focus on growth?

In the dynamic world of business, standing still is akin to moving backward. A well-defined growth strategy is essential for:

- **Increasing revenue and profitability:** this is the most obvious goal, achieved by expanding your customer base, increasing sales, and optimizing pricing.
- **Gaining market share:** outpacing your competitors and capturing a larger slice of the market strengthens your position and influence.
- **Building brand equity:** growth often leads to increased visibility and recognition, enhancing your brand’s value and reputation.
- **Attracting and retaining talent:** a company with a clear growth trajectory is more appealing to ambitious employees, fostering a motivated and engaged workforce.

- **Ensuring long-term sustainability:** growth allows you to adapt to changing market conditions, invest in innovation, and secure your future in a competitive landscape.

## Beyond the bottom line

---

While financial performance is a key indicator of success, growth strategies can also encompass broader goals. While growth strategies ultimately aim to boost a company's top line (revenue) and/or bottom line (profit), they represent a diverse set of approaches with varying objectives. Some strategies prioritize expanding **market share**, capturing a larger slice of the pie and solidifying market dominance. Others focus on **maximizing company value**, aiming for long-term profitability and sustainability that attracts investors, drives up stock prices, and facilitates attractive liquidity events such as an exit. Some growth strategies prioritize **user acquisition**, aiming to build a large and engaged customer base, particularly crucial in today's digital landscape and essential for freemium-based business models. Increasingly, companies are also incorporating **social impact** into their growth strategies, recognizing that positive contributions to society and the environment can drive customer loyalty and enhance brand reputation. Lastly, **cash flow**—keeping your company afloat—could be the priority.