

How do you take your business idea to market?



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More from [Kelly Zenkewich, Capital Ideas](http://CALGARYHERALD.COM/AUTHOR/KELLY-ZENKEWICH-CAPITAL-IDEAS) (HTTP://CALGARYHERALD.COM/AUTHOR/KELLY-ZENKEWICH-CAPITAL-IDEAS)

Published on: November 19, 2015 | Last Updated: November 19, 2015 6:30 AM MST

We asked Calgary entrepreneurs what how they get their ideas ready for the next step.

Here's what members of our community had to say:

“Ideas are a dime a dozen. Everyone has them. The first step in taking an idea to market is to execute. Then execute some more. Don't wait until everything is perfect. I see a definite majority of people making this mistake, get something built, get it in front of your customers, then start cyclically improving. You have to plan for the long road, you have to work, and then work some more. Things will go right, and things wrong, and you have to keep pushing forward. Your business idea coming to market is often more about you than the idea itself.”

— Michael Tighe, owner of [Solid Site](http://asolidsite.com) (<http://asolidsite.com>)

“It seems I love taking ideas to market. I might even be addicted to the rush and excitement. I find the best way to do it is to do it. Sitting around and planning to make things perfect is a fool's game. I like to say I'm going to do it, make some promises that I can't break and then do it. It's never perfect at first, but you can use that as a starting point. I think too many people waste time planning and planning and planning, possibly never taking the plunge. I'm more interested in action and making it happen.”

— Kevin Kent, owner of [Kent of Inglewood](http://kentofinglewood.com) (<http://kentofinglewood.com>) and [Knifewear](http://Knifewear.com) (<http://Knifewear.com>)



Trena Olfert, owner and makeup artist at Trena Laine Makeup Artist. *JESS BOBYN*



Focus on your strengths, and hire those who can help you take it to the next level. Continue building and strengthening work relationships as these people who will continue to refer and want to do business with you.

— Trena Olfert, owner & makeup artist at [Trena Laine Makeup Artist](http://trenalaine.com) (<http://trenalaine.com>)

“The first step is to get organized. Write down your vision, purpose and

goal. Understand them very well. Cover all loose ends. Make yourself available for questioning by your close friends so you can take out all the excesses. Rehearse your elevator speech. Make sure you have facts about your business at your fingertips. The bottom line is get yourself prepared. Go to events that can expose you to people relevant to the success of your idea. Get business cards and a good website. Build your social media profile so when people want to go to search for you they are further encouraged.”

— Darlington Etaje, petroleum engineering masters student at the University of Calgary

“When approaching the market you need to do a lot of research and consult with people in the field you want to be in and learn as much as you can as quickly as possible. Talk to at least 100 end users of your product or service to see what they want. Find your value proposition that helps you stand out amongst the competitors and communicate it simply and clearly. Then ensure your success with a media and marketing plan that is in line with your brand.”

— Julia Cordray, CEO and co-founder of For the People
(<http://www.forthepeople.com>)

“Getting a business idea to market is a bit like getting an airplane to fly. Key factors such as a business plan, target market, goals and budgets, marketing strategies and establishing product or service differentiation work together, similar to the various parts of an airplane. Just as important, a strong set of core values that are aligned to both internal management and your target market combine to form the runway. Get everything in place and that idea will take off, just like an airplane.”

— Randall McRae, partner at McRally Accountants & Advisors
(<http://mcrally.ca>)

“Simply put, just do it. Build it and put it out there. The best way to test the value of your product or service is to put it in front of your customers. The market will tell you what the value of your product is and of its potential longevity. Be vigilant. Though your early adopters can certainly help champion your value proposition, they aren’t the only ones that can give you key-holding clues. It’s the non-evangelists and skeptics that can

also tell you a great deal about how to hone in on where the greatest value might be.”

— Bruno Steppuhn, vice-president of web services at Xpan Interactive (<http://xpan.ca>)

“An idea starts with articulating a vision, but then you have to deliver on it. One solution, one deal, one move at a time. Resist the temptation to have to master an entire plan before you can take the first step. Find the ignition point of a chain reaction. Then, ignite it.”

— Kris Hans, strategist at Market Grade Ltd (<http://marketgrade.com>).

These answers are in response to a question posed by Kari Gordon, executive director of Startup Calgary (<http://startupcalgary.ca>). Here's what she had to say:

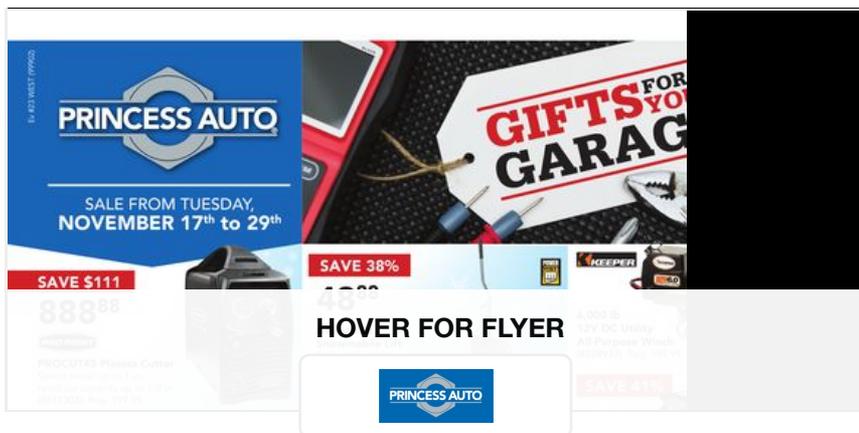
“(Going) from napkin sketch to product viability requires lots of research and when you think you’ve done enough — do more. Are you solving an existing problem or creating something new? Who are the customers? What do they want? The answers to these questions should be an intricate component of your research and development.”

Get Involved!

Answer our next question: How do you build a team to last?

Submit your answers at the Capital Ideas website (<http://capitalideascalgary.com/home/latest-question/?source=CH1001>) by Monday afternoon. We'll publish the best answers, along with your business name and website.

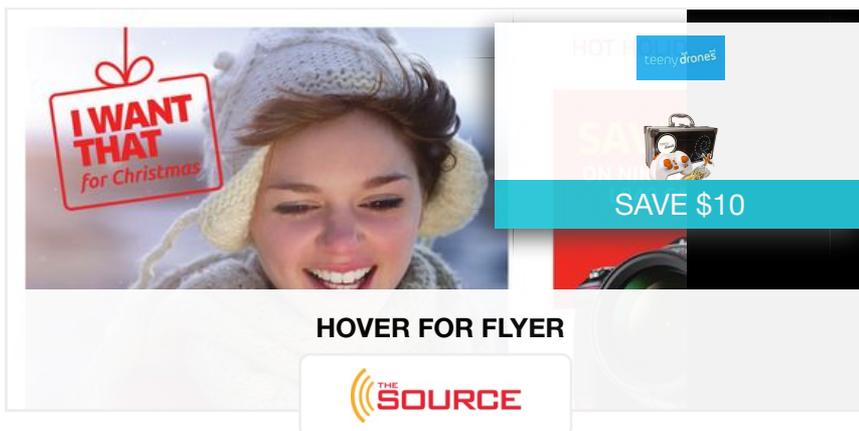
This article was produced by Capital Ideas (<http://capitalideascalgary.com/?source=CH1001>), a product of Postmedia Labs, in collaboration with ATB Business.



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