



What Offense Are We Going To Run?

Description

Staring at the Birthday Cake – the collection of critical building blocks for a full Go-To-Market strategy ([link](#)) can be somewhat overwhelming. In fact, for an executive running a leanly-funded company it can be downright discouraging. I remember thinking, “Holy Cow, I freed up enough budget to hire 2-3 folks. How am I ever going to staff and manage all of these areas?”

The key is to get started – and figuring out how to get started is helped when you have an overall plan. At the highest level, this is a strategy question, and one best determined at the executive level before hiring your Go-To-Market team. How are we going to attack the market? What are the characteristics of the market? Who makes the buying decisions? How are they influenced? Is it a market where there are readily available channels to reach customers? Does the product and customer require expensive outside sales executives and sales engineers?

As a football fan, I liken this process with scouting the defenses in your conference. Are you likely to succeed with a power running offense? Or might a fast-moving West-Coast passing attack be a better strategy for scoring points against the defenses you’ll face? Making this decision – what offense you are going to run- allows you to start the process of designing your team. If you are going with the run game, you might want big, strong linemen and a power running back. If you are going with the West Coast passing offense, you’ll need a mobile quarterback who can make quick decisions on the run and several fast receivers. On the business side – a GTM strategy that is going to be educational with content-driven marketing will need strong thought leaders and communicators. A strategy that is channel driven will need channel relationship builders and professionals with industry credibility.

Knowing what offense you are going to run doesn't miraculously provide budget to make new hires for each position on the field, but it does allow you to know what are the most important positions you will need to build around and the type of players you need for each position – and this is the key. Once you know this, you can prioritize your budget around a few of the most important hires and capabilities, while also starting to redeploy internal resources based on the capabilities that are needed to run your offense. Thinking in terms of capabilities, not people, frees up resources as you will quickly discover people in your organization that have those types of characteristics and may be able to shift positions or even cover multiple roles temporarily as you build your way up towards staffing the entire team.

In my journey, starting without marketing or sales resources, I realized I needed a strategic leader who could help me organize the entire Go-To-Market design, while diving in and doing 2-3 jobs in parallel until we could afford to hire full staff for those roles. I also needed someone who was an excellent communicator that could help us train the sales and marketing team we would build and help me educate the industry. I needed more than a head of sales or a head of marketing. I needed a strategic CRO. Michael de la Torre, was the perfect 1st round draft pick to build the offense around. Choosing what offense to run became the first and most important gear in our core Growth Design Framework, which we'll talk about next. ([link](#))

Key Points To Remember:

- Realize that you are likely not going to have enough resources to cover all bases. Accept that.
- Take the time to match your product with the market (scouting) and determine your go-to-market strategy (offense).
- Once you know what offense you are going to run, draft accordingly. Focus on the most important roles that are required to run your offense successfully.
- Fill in the gaps with your existing team and other resources until you can afford additional draft picks.

Share this post:

[LinkedIn](#)
[Facebook](#)
[X](#)

Category

1. Gears of Growth

Date

2025/06/08

Date Created

2019/10/22

Author

jcastelli