

First Five Customers

Wow, we've come a long way through the journey in the Startup Booklet. From preparing you to start your own business to building the idea, identifying customers and costs, through to how you will share the idea. We've spent a lot of time planning, and even started getting customers excited about the business by developing an MVP (Minimum Viable Product) – but now it's time to start attracting customers.

The Van Diemen Project recommends using a 'Beachhead Market' strategy to reach your first customers, a term introduced by Bill Aulet. Based on military strategy used in battle, the focus is on claiming a small yet significant part of the market – like taking a small area along the coastline – to establish your business, and then expand the number of customers from there.

To help you work out who is in your Beachhead Market, let's identify your first five customers. Focus your energy on getting a small number of people interested in your business so that you can learn what they need to become customers and what experience of service they expect/enjoy, before you start selling to a larger group of customers. All of the customers should be looking to buy a similar product or service, they should be looking for similar value from what you are offering and have the capacity to help you establish your business. That is, these customers have a trusted reputation that will bring you word-of-mouth or knock-on sales.

Remember, this is a learning process. As you approach these customers, you will learn what they see value in, what prompts them to come and do business with you, and how they experience the way you deliver what you sell. This is extremely useful information for you to learn from, and it is easier to adapt when you only have five customers rather than when you have fifty!

Customer	Strategy to Approach	Reflections