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# Make Decisions. Take Action.

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GrowthWheel® is a toolbox for decision-making in start-up and growth companies. It helps entrepreneurs and advisors get focused, set agenda, make decisions and take action.





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# GrowthWheel<sup>®</sup>

## A Visual Toolkit for Assisting Companies in Making Decisions and Taking Action

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**GrowthWheel<sup>®</sup> is a visual toolkit for dialogue and decision-making. It is used in the touchpoints between clients and advisors having conversations about what to do.**

GrowthWheel helps entrepreneurs build their businesses through a simple action-focused process that stays true to the way most entrepreneurs think and work.

For the business advisor the toolkit is a checklist to keep a 360° perspective and a way to save time by empowering the client company to do more work.

For organisations, GrowthWheel establishes a common language for all advisors and clearly communicates what the counselling process offers.

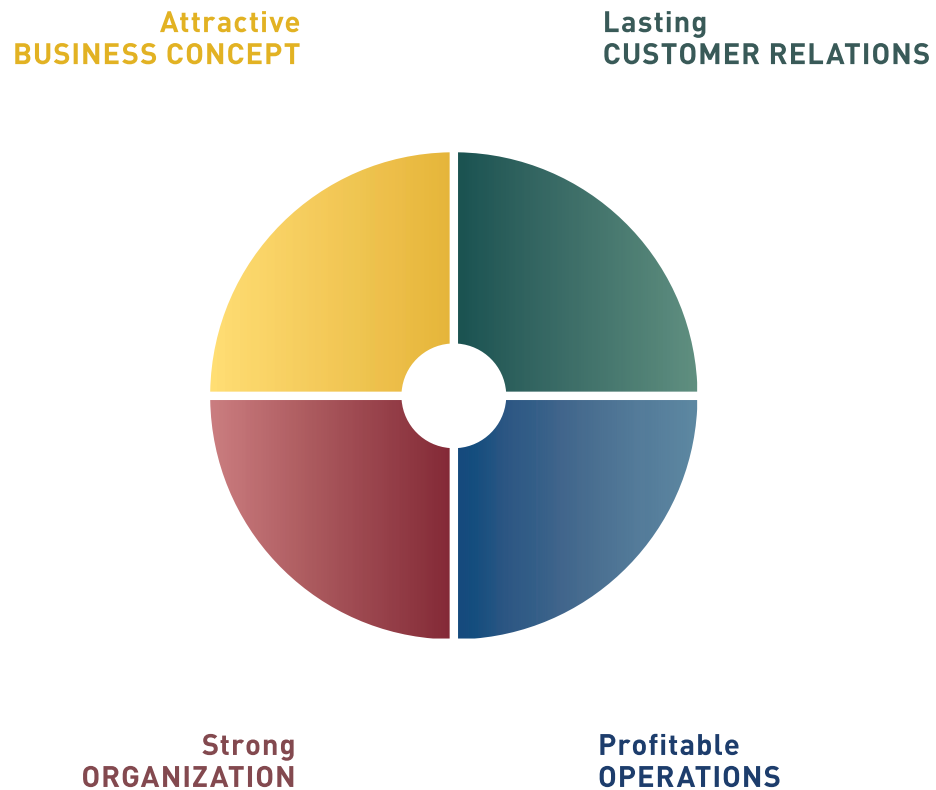
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# All Companies have the Same Challenges

Whatever the industry, lifestage, or company size. Building and growing a company comes down to four basic challenges:

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# Simple. Visual. Practical.

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## **360° Perspective Made Simple** Everything about Business in One Single Toolkit

GrowthWheel was designed around the observation that all businesses – in all industries and life stages – have four lasting challenges in common: They must create an attractive Business Concept, build a strong Organization behind it, develop lasting Customer Relations, and do so while maintaining profitable Operations.

The GrowthWheel Toolkit consists of easy-to-use tools that deal with real-life challenges for entrepreneurs.

## **All Business Decisions Made Visual** Faster Understanding. More Inspiration. Better Communication

The GrowthWheel tools create a better experience for the entrepreneur because visual tools change the conversation. They make it easier to understand a challenge, they inspire creativity, and conclusions are easy to communicate to outsiders.

The recognizable graphic design in the GrowthWheel tools is used across topics as different as product design, recruitment or financing, making everything seem equally simple and easy to deal with.

## **Decision-Making Made Practical** Set Agenda. Make Decisions. Take Action

Every GrowthWheel tool is designed to work independently. The selected tool can be placed on the meeting table, on the wall or even shown on a hand held computer device, and the business conversation can begin instantly.

All tools are designed with a guideline outlining the intention of the tool, the proposed process using the tool and the suggested Next Steps having reached a decision. The entrepreneur or advisor can choose to follow the GrowthWheel suggestions or to use the tools their own way.

## **100% Flexible. Reinvented Every Day** A Tool for Every Company and Every Advisor

Every day GrowthWheel is reinvented by more than 1600 GrowthWheel Certified Business Advisors who hand-pick from the wide selection of tools and use them in their own way.

GrowthWheel is fully flexible because each of the tools can be used on their own, so the advisor picks and chooses the ones that fit the entrepreneur's needs or his or her personal style. There is even a choice of using the tools in digital format or print.

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“When I used to bring up the business plan in my advisory sessions, the energy-level of my clients would immediately go down. They just weren’t excited about it and it was overwhelming to them.

**GrowthWheel®** makes it easy to extract what’s important for the entrepreneur to work with right now. Basically, it’s a planning-tool that works.”

—Ted Baker

Executive Director  
Innovation Connector, Indiana

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# Challenging the Business Plan: Few Entrepreneurs like to Write Business Plans. And Fewer Advisors like to Read them!

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**Most experienced advisors know, that even if a business plan is sometimes a formal requirement for entering an incubator or applying for financing, it is not the recipe for starting and growing a business.**

Talking to hundreds of advisors and entrepreneurs, we learned why many entrepreneurs either never write business plans or never use them after they have been written.

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## **#1: Business Plans are Fiction** Creating the Future beats Projecting the Future

Somehow the attempt to convince someone about a business idea in the format of the conventional business plan tends to produce macro-level analysis, long-term planning and so-called strategic consideration.

However, for most entrepreneurs the key challenge is not collecting information like the growth and size of the national market, but rather finding the names and phone numbers of the next ten customers.

Taking action is more likely to create the future than writing about it.

## **#2: Business Plans are a Distraction** The Plan is not the Business, the Business is the Business

Sometimes when you ask start-ups how their business is going they will tell you that they are “still working on the business plan”. Unfortunately this can go on forever or until the entrepreneurs are exhausted from analysis-paralysis.

The problem is that a lot of time and focus are taken away from activities such as calling customers, making products and writing invoices. Activities that are not only building the business but also the best way to learn what works and what does not.

The best way to take the next step is to take it.

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## **#3: Business Plans are Static** The Future comes One Day at a Time, Starting Tomorrow

Business plans are not supposed to be static. They are supposed to be “frequently updated.” However in reality that rarely happens, and the business plan ends up collecting dust in the desk drawer.

The reason is that the business plan does not fit the natural process of decision-making in start-ups, which takes place when entrepreneurs meet face-to-face to solve problems and produce ideas based on current events.

Big progress comes from small conversations every day.

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## There is an alternative...

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**“GrowthWheel® gives me immediate credibility with the client because it’s an action oriented process.**

**Clients quickly see that it’s an efficient way to spend their time - the one thing they don’t have much of...”**

—Brian R McIntyre

Program Director  
IL Small Business Development RVC

# GrowthWheel® 360° Perspective on Start-up and Growth

**GrowthWheel® is a visual way to look at areas of business that are already known to experienced entrepreneurs and business advisors.**

In GrowthWheel's 360° framework, four lasting business challenges are broken into 20 focus areas.

When a start-up or growth company is not getting off the ground or not growing the way it could, the reason is that more work is needed in one or several focus areas. Decisions have not yet been made, and actions have not yet been taken.

Rather than trying to do everything at once - or make plans for everything - the core message of GrowthWheel is to find the single most important areas and focus on them first. The 20 focus areas are:

## Attractive Business Concept Meeting or creating demand

Getting the right **business idea** and designing the right **product portfolio**. Selling it to the right customers using the right **revenue model**, and doing so while maintaining a strong **market position**.

## Strong Organization Building teams and partnerships

Finding the right **ownership and board**, recruit and develop the right **employees**. Outsourcing tasks through **partnerships** with suppliers and contractors and mapping the core **business processes**. Having the **legal** frameworks in place for working together.

## Lasting Customer Relations Finding and keeping clients

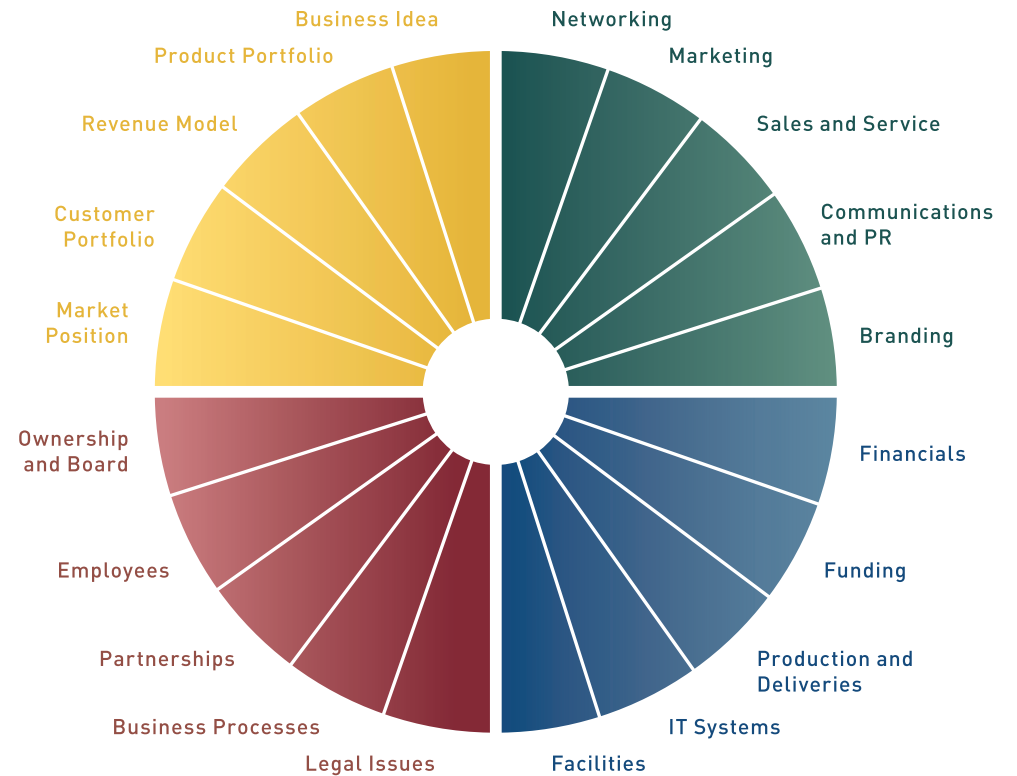
**Networking** to get the right introductions. Choosing the right way to do **marketing** and organizing effective **sales** processes. Getting in the media and on the customers' agenda by handling **communications and PR**. Living the values that shape a strong **branding** of the organization and the products.

## Profitable Operations Being productive and making money

Making sure the right **financial** practices are in place and ensuring that there is enough **funding** for profitable investments to be made. Setting up the right **production and project management** systems to ensure deliveries and set up the right **IT systems** and **facilities** to carry out the business.

## BUSINESS CONCEPT

## CUSTOMER RELATIONS



## ORGANIZATION

## OPERATIONS

**Building the Business one Brick at a Time**  
The Natural Process of the Entrepreneur

Building and growing a business is done by choosing the right focus. By making the right decisions. And by carrying out the actions to make it happen.



# Tools for Conversations that Make a Difference

## Download. Print. Share

The GrowthWheel® Toolbox can be used for both screening of entrepreneurs, one-to-one consulting sessions and group training. Business advisors and trainers have access to the entire GrowthWheel Toolbox and can pick and choose the tools that are exactly right for their clients. All tools are available online and can be printed to take to the meeting room.

### Get Focus and Deal with First Things First

#### GrowthWheel 360° Screening creates the full overview

GrowthWheel 360° Screening tool helps to quickly create an overview and discover decisions to be made.

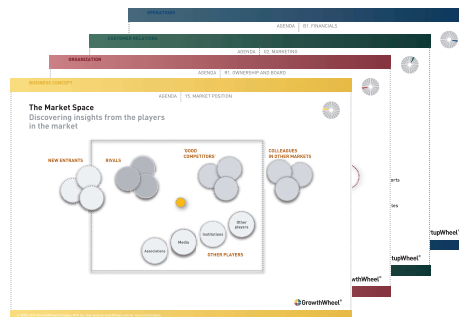
It is a tool for entrepreneurs and advisors to do a mapping of current challenges and opportunities in the business. The result is a common image of the situation and a shared understanding of what needs to be prioritized next.



### Set Agenda and Find the Path to Growth

#### GrowthWheel Frameworks create a common language

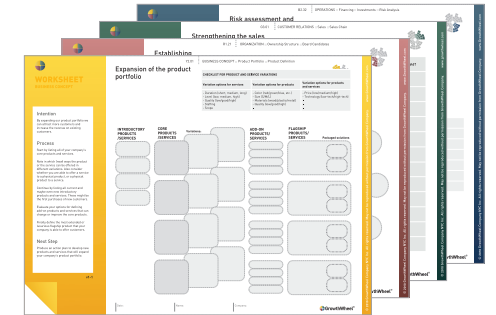
GrowthWheel Frameworks help put structure to the conversations. They are simple graphic checklists of issues to put on the agenda within each of the focus areas of GrowthWheel. When laid out on the meeting table they create a common language and give ideas for new directions.



### Make Decisions that Lead to Action

#### GrowthWheel Worksheets open the mind

GrowthWheel Worksheets help make decisions faster. They contain questions and outline alternatives for decisions to be made. They are like the whiteboard in the conference room, but prepared upfront, so the entrepreneur can focus on the decisions and next steps.



### Take Action and Track Progress

#### GrowthWheel 360° Growth Plan makes it doable

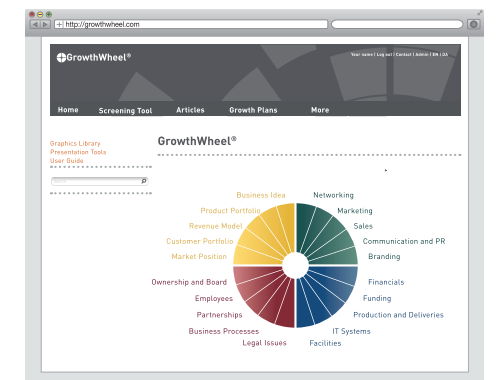
GrowthWheel 360° Growth Plans helps keep track of decisions made and actions to be taken. They replace the to do list with a structured plan with color codes for the focus areas of GrowthWheel. It keeps the entrepreneur focused on getting things done.




### GrowthWheel® Online Platform

#### Download. Print. Share

GrowthWheel® Online is the business advisor's personal platform for downloading, printing and sharing tools with clients. All tools are writeable PDF files so advisors and entrepreneurs can work within a file and put in information for review. The simple interface makes it easy for the business advisor to login and instantly share a relevant tool during or after a conversation.







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**“Whether I am  
advising a one-  
man company or  
a company with  
50 employees,  
GrowthWheel<sup>®</sup>  
works.**

**—it simply deals with  
the fundamentals of business  
development. All businesses  
can benefit from its  
action-oriented approach.”**

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— Henrik Tørnquist

**Business Consultant**  
Vaeksthus Greater Copenhagen  
Business Development Centre

**VÆKSTHUS**  
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[www.growthwheel.com](http://www.growthwheel.com)

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# One Thousand Things to Do. One Hour to Talk About It. Empower Clients. Save Time.

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**GrowthWheel® helps business advisors do more in less time.**

## It saves time in three ways:

- #1: It establishes an instant common language in the advisory session.
- #2: It allows the entrepreneurs to be prepared before meeting up.
- #3: It empowers the entrepreneurs to do more work on their own.

### **The One-To-One session: Some Worksheets to Talk About**

Some issues require a conversation. Like getting new ideas, making the right decisions and coming up with creative solutions to problems. Together with the entrepreneur you pick perhaps 1-3 Worksheets to focus on per session.

### **The Homework: Some Worksheets to Take Away**

During the One-To-One session more issues will arise. However it's easy to pick additional Worksheets that the entrepreneur can bring home. Once introduced to the GrowthWheel Worksheets, the entrepreneur can get things moving by himself with Worksheets that require research, analyzing decision alternatives, testing and more.

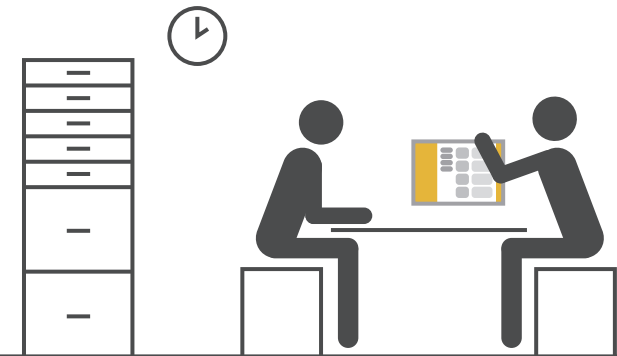
### **The Networking: Some Worksheets to Bring to Experts**

Some challenges are best solved by talking to experts in the business advisor's network. When such issues are identified the entrepreneur brings selected Worksheets for conversations with other people and reports back to the advisor.

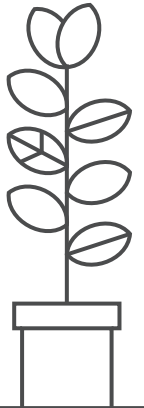
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Pick some GrowthWheel Worksheets to talk about




Hand out some Worksheets to take away



Select some Worksheets the entrepreneur can bring to other expert advisors





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“Within hours of learning about GrowthWheel<sup>®</sup>, I signed myself up for the certification course in New York.

**When I see something I like, I don't waste much time, I just go for it.”**

—Debera Johnson

Director  
Pratt Center for Sustainable Design Studies and  
Pratt Design Incubator for Sustainable Innovation

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# Get Certified

## Join the Global Community of more than 1600 Certified Business Advisors

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**When becoming a GrowthWheel Certified Business Advisor™ or GrowthWheel Certified Educator™ you obtain a personal license to use the tools in training or coaching of every entrepreneur or student you are personally working with.**

### **GrowthWheel® Training & Certification** 360° perspective. 5 Tools. 2 Days

To become certified you participate in the GrowthWheel Training & Certification. The course takes two days and is held every month in different locations around the world. See the schedule for upcoming courses at [www.growthwheel.com](http://www.growthwheel.com), or contact us about having a course in your city or state.

### **The License Package**

**Online Access. Quarterly Updates. Unlimited use**

A license for GrowthWheel includes the following rights and services:

- Online access to all GrowthWheel tools in hardcopies and writeable PDF-format
- Quarterly updates with new and updated tools based on your suggestions for changes and additions
- Rights to unlimited print and download of tools to all entrepreneurs or students you are personally working with.

### **Current Licensed Partners**

**Incubators. Universities. SBDCs. Governments**

GrowthWheel is used by business advisors and educators in many different organizations from incubators to government agencies. They all customize GrowthWheel to their specific needs and the types of entrepreneurs they work with. Go to [www.growthwheel.com](http://www.growthwheel.com) to see our licensed partners.

### **Price Plans & Return on Investment**

**Everything for the Price of a Textbook per Entrepreneur**

The price to become certified and licensed is divided into a one-time Course Fee and a quarterly License Fee per individual.

GrowthWheel International Inc. offers different price plans for business advisors, educators and mentors, but all prices plans usually break down to the price of a textbook per entrepreneur, depending on how many entrepreneurs you are working with.

For some licensees GrowthWheel provides new sources of revenue, because fees can be charged to the end user, or because sponsors are attracted to the tangible be-nefits GrowthWheel provides.

Contact us to get a quote.

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**See what our partners say about us and how they use GrowthWheel at [www.growthwheel.com](http://www.growthwheel.com)**

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GrowthWheel International Inc. was founded in 2005 on the idea that there had to be an alternative to the conventional business plan. A better way to support the decision-making and action-planning that take place in all companies every day.

Today our visual tools are used by more than a thousand of business advisors, incubator managers, business angels, and entrepreneurship professors around the world who have become GrowthWheel® Certified Business Advisors and co-creators of GrowthWheel®.

Together we continue our quest to find the best ways to help entrepreneurs make decisions and take action.

**Learn more about GrowthWheel® at [www.growthwheel.com](http://www.growthwheel.com)**

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