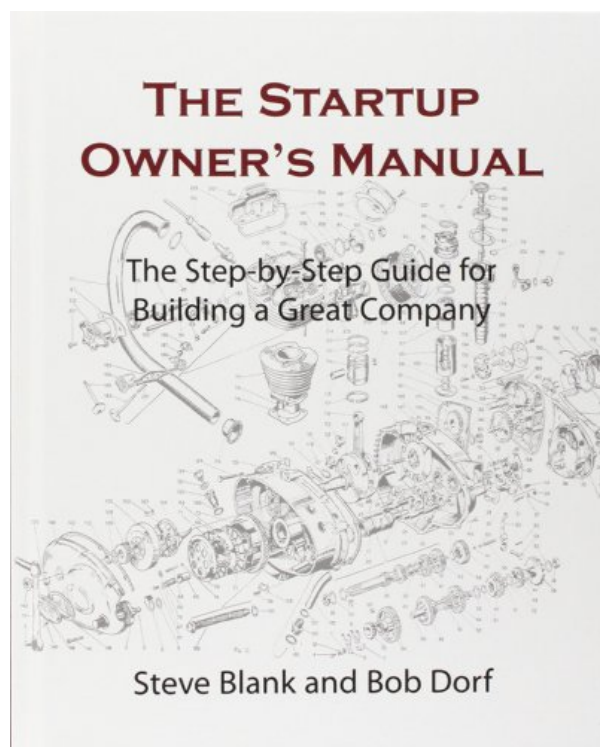


# **THE STARTUP OWNER'S MANUAL: THE STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE FOR BUILDING A GREAT COMPANY BY STEVE BLANK, BOB DORF**



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# THE STARTUP OWNER'S MANUAL

The Step-by-Step Guide for  
Building a Great Company



Steve Blank and Bob Dorf

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More than 100,000 entrepreneurs rely on this book for detailed, step-by-step instructions on building successful, scalable, profitable startups. The National Science Foundation pays hundreds of startup teams each year to follow the process outlined in the book, and it's taught at Stanford, Berkeley, Columbia and more than 100 other leading universities worldwide. Why?

The Startup Owner's Manual guides you, step-by-step, as you put the Customer Development process to work. This method was created by renowned Silicon Valley startup expert Steve Blank, acknowledged catalyst of the "Lean Startup" movement, and tested and refined by him for more than a decade.

This 608-page how-to guide includes over 100 charts, graphs, and diagrams, plus 77 valuable checklists that guide you as you drive your company toward profitability. It will help you:

- Avoid the 9 deadly sins that destroy startups' chances for success
- Use the Customer Development method to bring your business idea to life
- Incorporate the Business Model Canvas as the organizing principle for startup hypotheses
- Identify your customers and determine how to "get, keep and grow" customers profitably
- Compute how you'll drive your startup to repeatable, scalable profits.

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Most helpful customer reviews

249 of 262 people found the following review helpful.

Interesting, easy read

By M. Hyman

This book is very different as a business book. Instead of being filled with dense, usually overly wordy pages, it is beautifully laid out, the wording is kept to a minimum, and there are lots of illustrations.

The book is focused on ways to think of the model for your business... with some nice guidelines for structuring the thought process... as well as a bunch of examinations of different types of businesses.

It has good discussions on thinking through what is critical for the business, where the cost structures are, where the benefits are, and how to organize and present those ideas.

It also has a number of cases studies of various companies that changed or invented new business models, such as Amazon's introduction of Web Services.

The book is fast to read, and there were several sections I bookmarked to put into use in my company, which to me is always a good sign for a book.

Where the book is lacking is that I would really have liked more case studies -- a bit more meat so to speak -- once a company came up with the new model, how did the artifacts of the book's discussions come into play with the execution? Did any of the techniques discussed help with the inevitable pitfalls associated? What are some case studies for when people tried the techniques discussed and failed miserably? Innovator's Dilemma, by comparison, does a much better look at both positive and negative case studies, which can provide a lot more learning.

I also would have liked more depth on the blue ocean discussion.

Altogether though, an interesting read and a good addition to my management book shelf.

142 of 149 people found the following review helpful.

A Decent Place to Start

By Ken Rider

"Business Model Generation" is a breezy read and a well-organized introduction to several related topics including: basic types of business models, techniques and strategies for generating ideas and thinking creatively about them, along with process steps for moving good ideas forward. But the promising title makes it sound like this is a more substantive resource than it really is.

PROS: Anyone new to these topics would likely have to read four to six separate books to get the broad coverage you'll find here. The authors have done a service for folks who want to come up to speed more quickly. I felt that I came away with some useful info in most of the chapters and each has additional references for further reading. The designers also deserve some credit for a creative and varied layout that makes the text seem fresher. Plus, you can feel good about yourself as you plow through 50+ pages in half an hour without fatigue. The bonus: this is a business book that won't have you drowning in business jargon.

CONS: As several reviewers have noted, there's breadth here but not much depth on the core topics. Those expecting more may be disappointed and some may find the book's suggestive title misleading. Probably more accurate if they called it "A \*PRIMER\* for Business Model Generation" instead of a Handbook. It's a place to get started, not a definitive resource as the term handbook implies. Finally, the small font sizes that a few reviewers mentioned will surely be difficult to read for those with less-than-great eyesight.

229 of 246 people found the following review helpful.

NOT the same as TSOM!

By Jessica

The kindle version of this is NOT the same as The Startup Owner's Manual! Instead you get the Startup Owner's Strategy Guide, which is a very condensed version. I bought this for a class and was super frustrated to find that it wasn't the same as the original hardcover book. I am going to try to get a refund because it's not what was advertised to me. Ugh.

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