



STOKE B2B SERIES

EPISODE 1

Known/Unknown/Inbound – KUI

This is a framework for thinking broadly when it comes to finding and developing new customers. In our past businesses and now at Onemata we believe it is critical to have a strategy around developing each of these prospective customer channels: **Known** (people you know, Channel K), **Unknown** (people you don't know, Channel U), and **Inbound** (people that come to you – Channel I). At Onemata, our goal is to reach and convert as many qualified prospects as we can on an ongoing basis, and this is how we are doing it.

In the next three sections, we will get you the information you need to think about implementation of **K, U, and I** in your business. We are not going to tell you how to do this in your specific business, because we can't. But we can tell you what you need to think about.

Known (Channel K)

Channel K represents the people you already know or that exist within your network. These are the folks you work with or have worked with in the past. We're talking vendors, college connections, customers, or perhaps someone you met at an industry function. The power of the Known contacts is that they already know you or know of you and what you have done, and they have an opinion of you – presumably a positive one. They will take your call or email without knowing what is on your mind. In business, these connections are an inside path for gaining initial traction. There is simply no better place to start than with the folks you already know.

It's important to recognize the major limitation of this track: it tends to run out quickly. We all only know so many people.

Channel K is a great place to practice your business while gaining initial traction. You get to reality-check the impact of your new idea and sharpen your vocabulary about your product and position. You can hone your what sets you apart as well as your understanding of the industry landscape. Basically, **you get to practice and perfect your pitch**. These types of messages take a long time to develop and will evolve over time as you discuss them with a growing audience. Nothing is ever perfect with version 1.0, so starting with your current network will help you give it the time it needs and deserves to develop and improve.

From our experience, K is a perfect place to practice critical questions such as:

- What does your company do?
- What problems does it solve?
- How are you different?
- How does it work?
- Can we do a free trial?
- How much does it cost?

In addition to honing a message and working on vocabulary, K is also a deep pool of potential clients and proofs of concept. Depending on how established your product or service is, the people that you know can be a ready, willing, and able channel for conducting business. Typically, this involves a certain level of discounting for friends and family and offers them a reward for early adoption.

The quickest way to leverage the **Known** universe is to reach out to your, your business partners' and your employees' first-level connections in LinkedIn. You can message these folks directly to get the ball rolling without having to pay to connect.

Things to Think About / Implement

1. The Known channel is the fastest path to early traction, early adoption, and penetration if already a going concern.
2. Channel K is the best place to practice your pitch and your value proposition among “friendlies.” They know you are working it out and they will cut you some slack on your road to excellence.
3. Channel K loves it some LinkedIn. Wherever your contact base is stored, use it, and then get it current by leveraging LinkedIn.
4. Face it, some discounting or quid pro quo will be required to entice your Channel K club into working with you while you sort it out.
5. You need to have a strategy comprised of tactics or actions that you follow to deploy against your Known channel as time allows - weekly, biweekly, or monthly.