Twitter Thread by Ben Barbersmith ■

Ben Barbersmith ■
@benbarbersmith

B2B sales are lucrative. They can generate 1000x as much revenue as B2C sales. ■

But for most indie hackers, sales is scary. Selling to businesses is SUPER scary.

This thread shows you exactly how I closed my first $10k of B2B sales as an indie dev.

■ FIVE SIMPLE LESSONS. ■

First, let me present my credentials. ■

I quit my job at Google to become full-time indie hacker 6 months ago.

When I quit, I had $500 MRR from https://t.co/HdPMTm4vtn, an app for nerds who play Pathfinder (a game like Dungeons & Dragons).

It took 3 years to get that far. ■

Fast forward 6 months. I still have $500 MRR from Spell Tracker.

But in January, I closed my first $10k ARR of B2B revenue from https://t.co/crGFxRCt0g! ■

And I'm not slowing down. I'm on a rocket ship, and it looks like I'll hit ramen profitability before the end of March. ■

HOW DID I TURN IT AROUND? ■

When I worked at Google I was a partner engineer who advised businesses on YouTube's rights management system.

4 months after I quit, I got calls from businesses I'd advised. They asked me to do some consulting.

I had no deadlines, so why not?

It turns out they both had the same problem... a problem I'd already solved repeatedly inside Google.

Within 3 weeks, my new product was born.

Meet https://t.co/crGFxRCt0g, a system to find, prioritize, and recover missed revenue opportunities for YouTube content owners.

LESSON 1■■: MAKE SOMETHING PEOPLE ALREADY WANT.

Observant solves a problem that businesses were paying me crazy hourly rates to solve for them.

It solves a problem Google paid me to solve for years.

Instant validation!

Don't start with ideas. Start with burning problems. ■

LESSON 2■■: NICHE DOWN & TALK THEIR LANGUAGE.

I'd wager that my elevator pitch just now didn't mean anything to you. Good!

If your customers get the value proposition, it doesn't matter if nobody else knows WTF it means.

Get it right for customers, then start sending emails. ■

LESSON 3■■: MAKE USE OF EXISTING PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS.

Hopefully you do (or did) great work at your job. Hopefully there are already business people who already know you're smart, capable, & effective.

Make your first sales easy. Pitch to those people first.

All my sales so far came from sending email to people I've worked with for years.

I have no landing page. I still have to explain my product every time I mention it on Twitter. I still only get sales from warm email outreach.

I expect this to be true until I hit $250k ARR. ■

LESSON 4■■: KNOW YOUR USP & LEVERAGE CAREER CAPITAL.

1st question I got asked when pitching: why shouldn't our devs built it instead?

2nd question: what's going to stop Google doing the same thing?

Anticipate questions about why an indie dev is the right person to solve this.

BTW, my answers were:

1) Because I did this for 7 years at YouTube, so I can do it faster & more effectively than anyone (except people still inside FAANG).

2) Because Google is preoccupied with billion dollar opportunities. This is only a multi-million dollar opportunity. ■

LESSON 5■■: SHOW THE VALUE IN HARD NUMBERS.

Every time I book a demo, I ask prospects to share confidential data beforehand, process it, and load it into my product.

The first thing they see in a demo is how much cash they're leaving on the table.

For example...

"Last month, you earned $184k in ad revenue. But you missed out on an estimated $51k due to [BLAH BLAH]. Fixing those issues could increase your monthly ad revenue by 27.4%."

■ ■ ■■

Find a way to put numbers on your value, and put it front and center.

I can't stress this enough. Make your product valuable, and tell your prospects how valuable it is in terms they relate to.

"Hmm, should I spend $5k to make $20k?"

Easy question.

Make it easy for demos to be followed by a sale. ■

OKAY, time to recap!

How to win B2B sales in 5 simple lessons:

1■■ Make something people already want
2■■ Niche down & talk their language
3■■ Make use of existing professional relationships
4■■ Know your USP & leverage career capital
5■■ Show value in hard numbers

I did it as a solo dev. So can you. ■