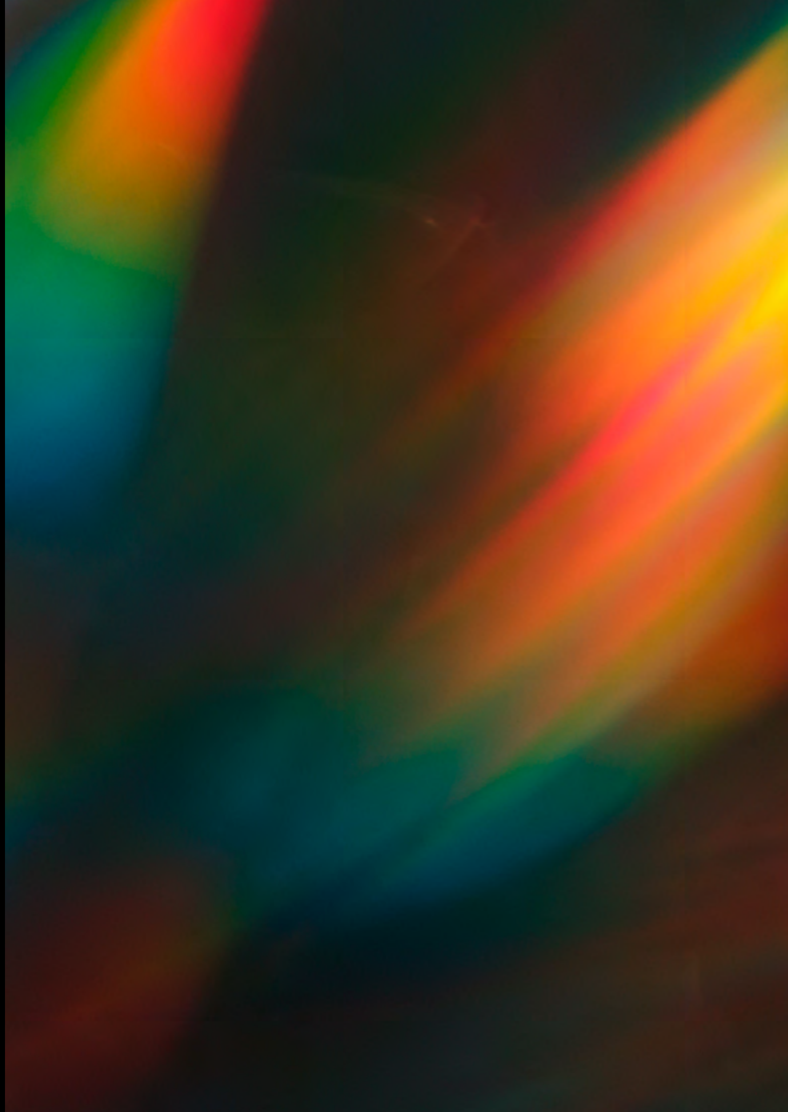


ALDER & CO.

BECOMING A UNICORN

Growth marketing to take your climate tech company from Brand to Scale™

alderagency.com

CONTENT

CHAPTER 1

SO YOU WANT TO SCALE YOUR CLIMATE TECH COMPANY.

Growth is an urgent need for any venture-backed business, and delivering it is marketing leadership's responsibility. This is especially true for climate tech marketers, who face investor pressure and the urgent need to deliver on their goal of slowing climate change. The only solution is to scale, to get your world-saving solution into people's hands as quickly as possible. This e-book will guide you through exactly this.

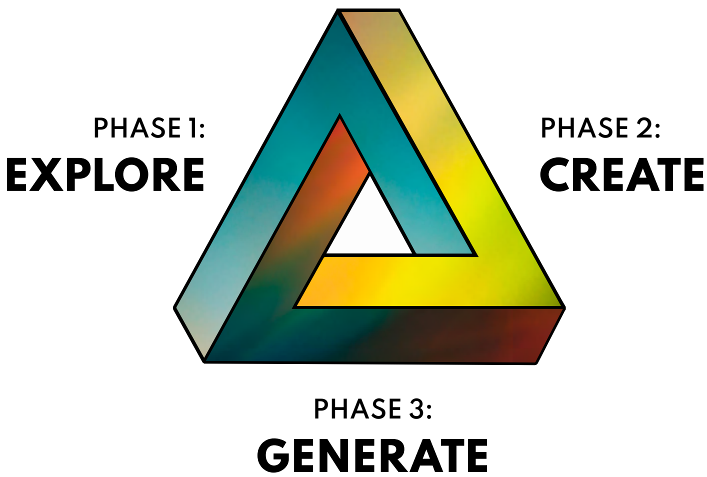
The goal is clear; yet there's multiple paths forward. We look to how adjacent industries have addressed similar challenges. For example, most impactful climate tech solutions are B2B, and there are established best practices for B2B growth marketing. But while it's easy to find scripts for Fintech and SaaS marketing, climate tech often involves new product categories or even entirely new markets. It is, in other words, a problem of translation—one that we've addressed in this e-book.

Over years, as scale-driven climate tech marketers, we've created a straightforward, three-part methodology to drive growth, which we call **Brand to Scale™**. This e-book is a high-level overview of that methodology. It translates proven B2B marketing techniques into the climate tech arena, so you can scale your business quickly, efficiently and sustainably.

CHAPTER 2

THE JOURNEY FROM BRAND TO SCALE.

At Alder & Co., we use *Brand to Scale* as the framework for everything we do. It's a blend of creative brand building and growth marketing that we designed to generate and refine growth-oriented campaigns. At its heart is a perpetual motion machine of improvement through measurement, testing and optimization that drives through three phases:



PHASE 1: Explore with research and strategic planning.

PHASE 2: Create stories and boundary-pushing design.

PHASE 3: Generate campaigns that drive demand across channels.

At the end of the third phase, take stock of what you've made, how each aspect has performed, and where you can do better next time. Often, this will lead you right back into phase one: exploring new ideas, diving into new territories and pushing your growth forward.

Of course, there's far more to each phase than a single sentence could express. In the rest of this e-book, we'll take you through each step in detail, outlining how you can get the best results from each one. By the end, you'll have the essential tools to apply this methodology to your own growth efforts, so you can scale at the speed our planet so badly needs.

PHASE 1:

EXPLORE

CHAPTER 3

THE BUSINESS OF BUILDING A BRAND.

The framework starts with branding. Branding is a critical first step for scaling your business because it gives you and your team the communications guidebook to tell your story.

A brand defines why the company exists, why you get up in the morning, and the future of your industry, also known as your purpose, values, mission and vision. The branding work informs how you execute media relations, website development and even sales, HR and customer service. And in a crisis, a well-developed brand will answer the questions you so desperately need to get through those critical moments.

Notice we haven't even mentioned your logo.

WHAT IS A BRAND?

A brand is how your stakeholders feel about you. Brand guru and Director of CEO Branding at Liquid Agency, Marty Neumeier, famously says it's the gut feeling you have when you think of a brand. We want to influence that feeling for your audiences. Through copy, visuals and experiences (online or offline), we imbue the values, personality and characteristics of your business into your communications.

SIGN ME UP; WHERE DO WE BEGIN?

Research kicks off the branding process, and data will drive your strategies. Start by researching the market you work in and your direct competitors, and begin to form hypotheses. After conducting a SWOT analysis with internal leadership, interview key stakeholders (customers, suppliers, investors, employees) to test your theories and listen for language and nuances about how people feel about your company. During this phase, the strategies almost write themselves.

In workshops with the internal leadership team, review key findings from the research, and then delve deeper into the language and finalize it for your brand. Answer these simple questions:

Who are we?

What do we do?

How do we do it?

Why do we do it?

The beginning of this story informs how your business appears visually.

TIMING IS EVERYTHING, SO WHEN DO YOU BRAND YOUR COMPANY?

When to start working on branding is different for each company. Consider a few questions before you embark on a branding strategy:

1. Are you starting to get attention from investors, target customers or partners?

If Mom and Dad are your number one LinkedIn followers, you have time before you start working on a branding project. But if your go-to-market strategy is set to launch within a year, it's time to reach out to an agency or freelancer. Waiting until after the company starts to gain traction in the marketplace is OK, too, but it will be more expensive to rebrand the company and all the existing assets.

2. Do you plan to launch new products or acquire a new business?

In climate tech, the marketplace is changing faster than ever. With so much new business, there is bound to be collaborations, consolidations and new tech that is evolving product development. How does your brand family work together? How will a new company combine to create a united front? Aside from the graphics, messaging must be updated across your communications channels. Your team members are your first and most important stakeholders in carrying the message.

3. Does the company include you, your business partner and the dog?

When the company is ready to start employing people outside the founding team, it is time to start seriously considering its branding. Your team members are an extension of the leadership team and your first line of defense. Getting everyone on the same page regarding the brand's beliefs and company culture is essential. Clearly defining what you stand for as a company and what you don't stand for brings a sense of collaboration to your team and allows potential customers to decide whether they align with your values.

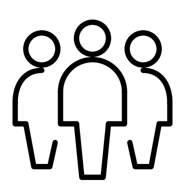
CHAPTER 4

WHO WANTS WHAT YOU'RE SELLING: ON CREATING BUYER PERSONAS.

To grow a business, you must sell a product; to sell a product in today's marketplace, you must understand the people who might buy it. One of the best ways to do this is to build buyer personas. Buyer personas are a fundamental concept in B2B marketing, and they have specific nuances that are relevant to climate tech.

For example, you may have an advocate on a potential buyer's sustainability/ESG team who is pushing for your product but lacks decision-making power. You need to speak to them and the senior management that actually decides what to buy. That means you have to pay careful attention to the roles and responsibilities you assign to each persona.

The truth is that not all buyer personas are created equal—there are a lot of ways they can end up off-target or just not useful, and there's a lot of fluff in B2B marketing literature that can lead you astray. Below are four keys to creating actionable personas for climate tech marketing and sales.



KEY 1:
UNDERSTAND WHAT BUYER PERSONAS ARE, & WHY THEY'RE ESSENTIAL

A buyer persona is often defined as representing your ideal customer, i.e., someone who uses your product or solution. But as we've just discussed above, that definition is only partly true when it comes to climate tech. A thorough exploration of personas must also include anyone who is involved in or influences the actual buyer.

For example, suppose you're selling data solutions to a utility. In that case, the people involved in your buying decision might be the CEO, a strategist or program manager, and your actual user, the VP of Customer Success. Plus, the utilities' CFO or purchasing department might also have a word to say in the decision. All these roles could be buyer personas.

When developing personas, get clear on who they are, what role they play, what drives them, and how they make decisions. Aim for two to three mandatory personas per product/solution and market. This will usually be the user, the buyer (these can sometimes be the same person), and a key influencer such as the CEO, CFO, or purchasing.

Keep in mind also that these stakeholders may have different and even conflicting beliefs. **Scaling a climate tech company can involve convincing people ideologically committed to not caring about climate change that your solution is still the right choice.** Taking this into defining your buyer personas lets you develop more motivating campaigns and avoid awkward conversations.

KEY 2:
ALIGN SALES & MARKETING

Buyer personas are an excellent way to get your sales and marketing teams on the same page so they can combine their efforts for better results. They are the quintessential starting point for content generation and channel strategy and can support the sales team in deciding who to engage with and how during their process.

KEY 3:
MAKE PERSONAS ACTIONABLE

Sometimes, marketers or consultants go very deep into personas. They come up with a name, where and how they live, their hobbies, and whether they have pets. Determine whether or not this mostly feels like unnecessary fluff.

The attributes you're collecting about your persona should be actionable—that means each trait should be able to inform your marketing tactics.

The key attributes we focus on at Alder when developing personas for our clients are:

- **Their role in the buying process: decision maker, influencer, user, roadblock, other**
- **What is their typical title: e.g., CxO, VP Operations, etc.**
- **What are their goals?**
- **What are their pain points?**
- **Why would they reject your services/product?**
- **How would their life be different if they purchased your service/product?**
- **Who influences them?**
- **Whom do they influence?**
- **How do they research information?**
- **You may want to add demographic, geographic, and psychographic attributes if it helps with targeting.**

Once you have these attributes nailed down, your personas will guide you on what content will be relevant and engaging to them and how you can reach them (channels).

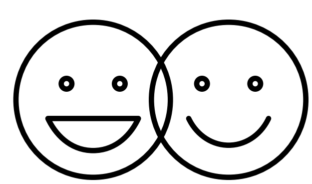
KEY 4:

DEVELOP YOUR PERSONAS

Finding information to develop your personas requires internal and external research. Start with your internal teams—sales and customer success/key accounts. Ask them who they typically interact with and what they learn from those conversations.

Based on this, verify your personas through external research. Try to interview at least two to three representatives for each type of person, understanding that the more people interviewed the better the persona analysis. Ask them about their role, goals, pain points, etc… (see list above).

Once you have your personas, start analyzing their customer journey, which we'll discuss in the next chapter. This will reveal critical questions they're asking during each phase and guide you on what content to develop to drive leads through your sales funnel. Before you do that, you'll want to make sure you have a firm grasp on your customer's journey.

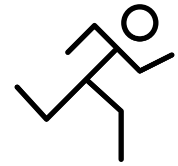


CHAPTER 5

UNDERSTANDING THE CLIMATE TECH BUYER'S JOURNEY.

One commonly quoted statistic from global B2B research and advisory firm, SiriusDecisions, claims that 70% of the B2B buyer's journey is complete before a buyer even reaches out to sales. But what do we mean by "buyer's journey"? And how are buyers of climate tech solutions reaching their decisions during the 70% of the time they're not talking to the sales team? The buyer's journey describes the path a buyer takes from the moment they become aware of a problem to the point where they decide to make a purchase to solve it.

It's a critical framework for any marketing strategy. The goal is to truly understand the buyer's entire thought process, the questions they're asking along the way and the influencing factors that shape their buying decision. The framework will inform what content to develop to drive leads through your sales funnel.



The buyer's journey can be divided into three "stages":

- **DISCOVER: The buyer discovers that they have a problem and starts defining it.**
- **CONSIDER: The buyer considers options to solve their problem and starts evaluating options.**
- **JUSTIFY: The buyer decides on the solution and needs to justify their decision.**

During the **Discover** stage, the buyer is experiencing a problem or symptoms of pain and wants to understand it. They start looking for informational resources to define, frame, and name their problem.

During the **Consider** stage, the buyer starts considering options for solving their problem. Initially, this will focus on the right approach rather than actual products or solutions—how should they tackle the problem?

During the **Justify** stage, the buyer creates a shortlist and is ready to decide. As mentioned above, this is where we focus on de-risking the buyer's decision. Our goal is to give them confidence that our solution is the best one, and make sure they can justify that to themselves and their organization.

BUYER'S JOURNEY

JOURNEY	DISCOVER	CONSIDER	JUSTIFY
CONTENT	Guide them to understanding their problems and pain points	Suggest potential solutions and overcome objections	Influence their commitment by de-risking the decision
TYPICAL PERSONA QUESTIONS	What don't I know? What is my problem? Is anyone else facing this problem?	What are my potential solutions to my problem? Who is leading in this field? How does this product/service work? How would it improve my situation? How much is it?	Is it a proven solution? Who else is using this product/service? What's the ROI? Can I try out this product/service?

If you don't know your buyer well, it will be difficult to map their journey and provide the right content at the right time; so you'll have to get to know them! You can interview customers and prospects or just speak to your sales team; they'll have a lot to say about the questions buyers are asking them.

THE LONG & WINDING ROAD

The linear buyer's journey is an essential framework for content creation, but remember—the actual journey your buyer will take isn't linear at all–buyers will jump back and forth between stages as they gather information and improve their knowledge (see B2B buying journey graphic on page 17). This indecision is especially true for climate tech B2B, where the sales cycle can take anything from a few months to more than a year. The key is to keep the buyer's thought process in mind so you can build a compelling content strategy and speak to them across the entire journey, so there is always relevant content making the case for a sale. Below is a series of examples that outlines how to use the buyer's journey to inform content creation:

DISCOVER

A Fleet Director is under pressure to reduce carbon emissions from their fleet. Before they start looking at options to decarbonize their fleet, they first seek to understand whether they're the only ones experiencing this specific problem (likely not) and how to assess their fleet's current carbon emissions.

As a marketer, your role is to educate them and articulate their problem. This isn't the time to talk about your solution. Instead, empathize with their situation and provide useful content to make them feel more informed and in control.

Some content headlines you might want to provide at this stage:

- The top [3, 5, 10] challenges facing [your buyer persona] today
- The [3, 5, 10] essential tasks and jobs [your buyer persona] need to know
- How [your buyer persona] is approaching [problem xyz] in 202X

Other useful content to provide at this stage is market research, industry trend reports, and in-depth, data-heavy descriptions of the problem your buyer is facing.

These tactics establish your brand as a thought leader and reliable source of information, someone trying to be helpful in the first place, without the hard sell—creating awareness and more importantly, trust with your buyer.

CONSIDER

The Fleet Director is now evaluating whether replacing their fleet with electric trucks is the right decision based on the costs and time it would take. They're also exploring other solutions that could be faster and/or more affordable, such as upgrading to trucks with more fuel-efficient engines or electrifying the truck's work functions through power take-off units that eliminate the need to idle engines.

Once they've settled on an approach, they will start looking for and evaluating the providers of each potential solution.

While it's still too soon to try an outright sales pitch, this is the perfect time to educate buyers about each approach to solving their problem, not just your own. By doing so, you will show that you're a trustworthy source for expert information on the subject and give your buyers the facts they need to evaluate you against the competition.

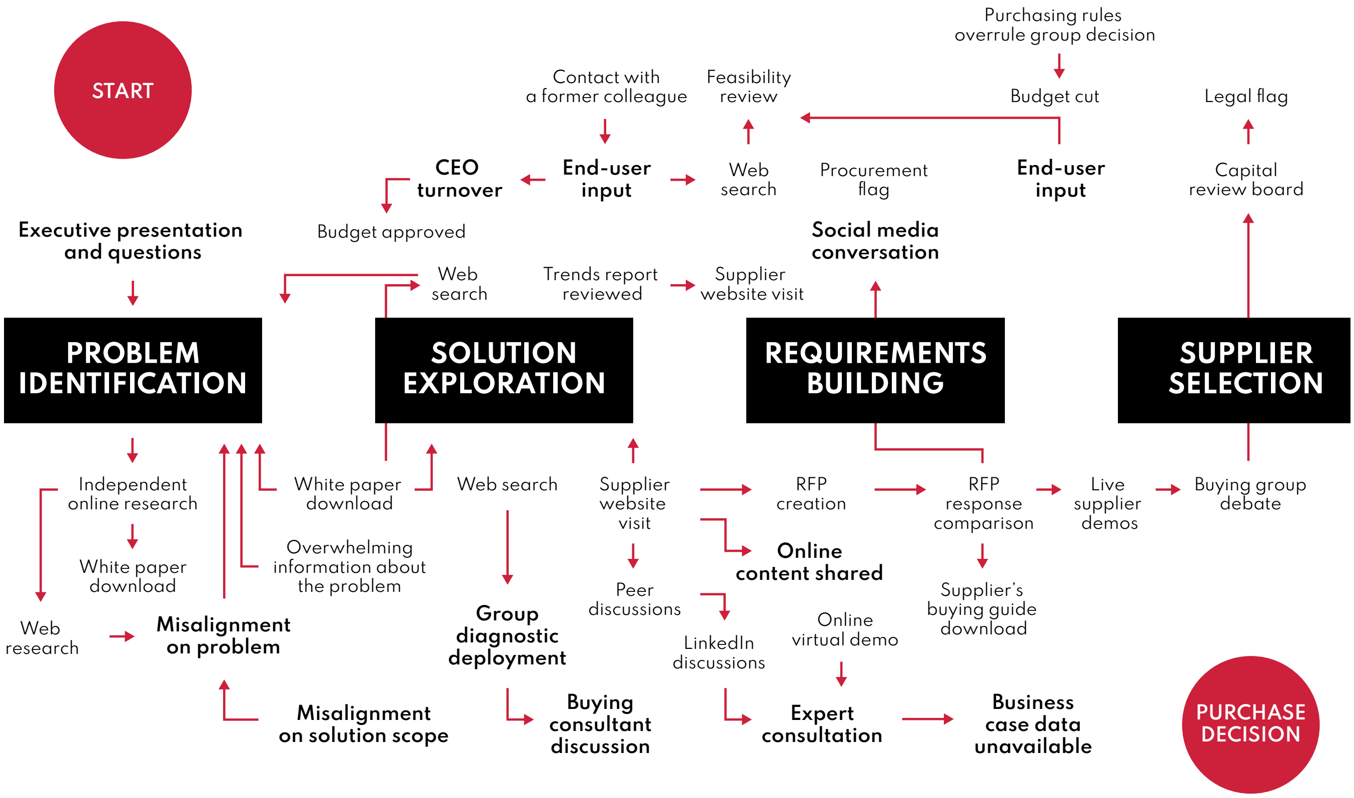
Now that your buyer is interested in your solution, you should also introduce your company—who you are, your mission, and your culture. Climate tech is so tapped into hot-button political issues that these details can make a real difference in a buyer's decision. They must feel confident that the choice won't turn off their end user.

Typical content at this stage includes:

- Explanation of how to solve their problem in a specific way (your suggested approach that will lead to your product or solution), vs. other options
- Analyst reports comparing vendors and solutions (third-party content)
- Comparison tools and ROI calculators
- Key benefits of your product or solution, your USP (unique selling proposition)
- Product or solution details, features, data sheets; explainer videos
- About Us sections, company values, culture videos
- Webinars and demos where your buyer can get to know you and your product/solution

B2B BUYING JOURNEY

ILLUSTRATIVE



Source: Gartner via Pardot

PHASE 2

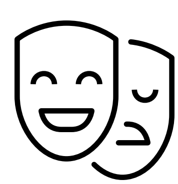
CREATE

CHAPTER 6

CAMPAIGN CREATIVELY.

You know who your buyer is, and you know how they're thinking. Now you have to decide how you'll connect with them. It's time to start thinking creatively and creating high-quality content.

What do we mean, though, when we say high quality? The short version is "something your customer wants," but there's more to it than that. The most important thing to remember is that it's not just high-quality content but high-quality content *for your brand*.



FINDING YOUR SPECIAL SAUCE

As you start to spin up the campaign apparatus, it's essential that you take stock of your brand as a whole. You're about to put a lot of effort into introducing potential customers to your brand for the first time; of course, you should put your best foot forward! Take time to examine all your existing brand assets: social channels, web presence, previous campaigns, activations, etc. Does it paint a clear picture, or is the message muddy? Take what steps you can to bring everything into alignment, for example:

- Update any stale or irrelevant brand assets to ensure a cohesive presence
- Think about the role each channel will play in your campaign and make sure they're driving towards the same goal
- Get everyone who handles any external channel on the same page. Sometimes this means getting your agency's copywriter and internal social media team in the same room. Sometimes, you have to talk to the CEO about their LinkedIn presence.

Reviewing your past efforts is also an incredible opportunity to identify your team's key strengths and any potential weaknesses. The easiest way to do this is by reviewing past campaigns to see what was most effective. But it's worth your time to go a bit deeper and find places where the team did great work, even if it didn't pop for your audience.

This is also a smart time to involve the broader team. Ask everyone what they think the brand's strengths are and what they're excited to work on. Not only are they likely to have smart insights, but getting them involved in the planning can boost their enthusiasm for the campaign and the quality of their work.

No matter what you find, make sure you stick with it. There are many ways to do stand-out creative work, but the easiest way to ruin any of them is by being inconsistent. You've taken the time to identify what makes your company special; don't waste that effort by muddying your message. Exceptional creative has always been single-minded about what it says, and that clarity is more important than ever.

Your buyers might not see specifically targeted B2B climate tech marketing all day, every day, but they are constantly inundated with information. Being clear about what you're saying is the best way to keep your campaign from being swept away by the flood.

CHAPTER 7

LEAVES OF GREEN, LET THEM BE.

Now that you've examined your brand and previous marketing efforts closely, consider what your competitors are doing. In many cases, you'll find that they—and possibly you—are painting a familiar picture.

Among the *2024 Global Cleantech 100* list, 54 brands had a blue and/or green logo. The challenge is that climate tech, more than other industries, starts with a product or solution in a technical sense. So, new climate tech companies entering the marketplace need to resonate with their audiences first and foremost. Instead, they are choosing color palettes that link them to the eco-movement of the 1980s and 1990s. Not only does this make their technology and brand hard to stand out, but it doesn't connect with today's marketplace.

Entrepreneurs often get so attached to their tech and its impact that they forget to think about their customer's perspectives. That's why you get so many leaves and logos that miss the customer's lens. Even scale-ups often find themselves working with outdated or overly simplistic visual identities. The key is to bring in a second perspective, whether that's customer, industry, or something else entirely. What's important to remember is that speaking about your vision or your goal isn't enough—it's not a differentiator in climate tech because everyone is working toward the same thing.

HOW DO YOU DIFFERENTIATE YOUR BRAND VISUALLY?

For one client we've worked with in the electrification space, we created a parallel narrative to complement their green values. It's not just about using less fossil fuels, it's about creating safer worksites and workplaces for their employees and the community through zero-emissions technologies. They're still green and clean, but that's not the core of what they do. Instead, they have a specific story they can tell about the ways they benefit not just the environment but real people going about their day-to-day lives. This lets them steer clear of potentially polarizing messaging that could alienate their customer base without sacrificing their values.

Looking outside climate tech, Nike is a key example of taking visual and creative identity beyond the obvious. The swoosh is a perfect example of why you don't want to go literal. It does not look like a shoe, nor does it look like what anyone thinks a shoe should look like. Instead, it captures the idea of movement, of activity itself, and everyone can find their own meaning in it.

Logos that literally translate the product, on the other hand, are limiting. Having an immediately obvious visual identity leaves no flexibility for your customer to combine their self-image with your brand. Instead, they must decide whether whatever rigid system you've put together suits them. If not, they'll look elsewhere.

For B2B companies, even ones targeting utilities, you need to do something different for the end consumer. What's the impact on the community for the consumers? Is it clean air or water, experiencing nature? What's the specific area of the planet that you're improving? We always advise clients that if they have a vision, they should own the values that drive that vision in everything they do; this is what drives behavior. These values affect their visual company brand.

B2B and growth marketing is only ever as good as your brand and the creative activations you use to represent it. Those touchpoints are the only way your customer gets to know you. If they're inconsistent or tell wildly different stories, the customer doesn't get a clear picture of what you're about. And if they're too limiting, you might exclude customers without realizing it. The only way to scale is by ensuring your brand is consistent, clear, and relatable. That's the key ingredient to successful growth.

PHASE 3

GENERATE

CHAPTER 8

BUILDING YOUR BEST MARTECH STACK.

Before you can start building and executing successful campaigns, you need the tools to run them. A marketing stack, also known as a marketing technology stack or MarTech stack, is shorthand for a group of software applications used in combination to manage and improve your marketing efforts. Getting the right tech stack in place is key to growing any business, as different options can unlock different insights, metrics and workflows.

THE KEY PILLARS OF YOUR MARTECH STACK

MarTech is meant to make our lives as marketers easier by improving productivity, automating processes, and giving us better data. However, with more than 8,000 tools available on the market, finding the ones that will truly simplify things can be incredibly complicated. You can rule out options by understanding your goals, the buyer's journey, and the touchpoints where you'll engage your customer.

Building your MarTech stack is never going to be one size fits all. Every company is different and you might need to try out a few different options before choosing the stack that works for you. But while finding the right tools is a process, there are a few foundational product types that every team should consider. We've grouped them into three categories below.

ENGAGEMENT

- Website & Content Management Systems (CMS)
- Email marketing software
- Social media marketing software

OPERATIONS

- Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software
- Project management tool

INSIGHTS

- A/B testing
- Website analytics
- Customer Experience Software

There are many options available for each of these product types; the right choice for your stack is dependent on your needs and the constantly evolving MarTech marketplace. Do your research to figure out what fits your company's needs, and stay open to the idea that something better might come along.

PICKING THE RIGHT PILLARS

There are many ways to pick out MarTech tools, but they're not all created equal. We've identified three key criteria to focus on as you build your company's stack: extendibility, upkeep, and cost.

EXTENDIBILITY

Although start-ups most often start with less than 20 employees, it's important to consider your growing team when building your tech stack. You should try to set a foundation that can expand as the team expands.

UPKEEP

Choose versatile tools that will stay relevant as your team and department grow. Do not put more tools in place than you need at this stage. Keeping it straightforward makes it easier to handle upkeep on the stack across different growth stages.

COST

Decide which features you need and how much you will pay for them, then choose your MarTech appropriately. While advanced features may offer nice-to-have data points or customization options, even the free tier of many products is enough to drive significant scale.

It's also important not to focus too heavily on features and end up with an overly complex stack that your team can't use effectively. A tool's ability to integrate with your existing stack—and your team's ability to use the tool effectively—can be more important than extensive product features.

When thinking about building your MarTech stack within a larger company that's in a growth stage, you need to make sure that your team, both existing and new, has the skills to operate the tools. You also have to think about interaction and integration, not just within your own stack but cross-functionally with different teams.

All of those teams will evolve as the company grows, and your MarTech stack will evolve as well. As you swap out old software and find new products for your toolbox, it is essential to keep your eye on the cohesive function of the stack as a whole. Otherwise, the combination of evolving needs and a dynamic work environment can leave you with a "Frankenstack". At the same time, a pile of mismatched tools can get the job, your team and your campaigns will benefit from logical, complementary workflows. And your company's scale will benefit right alongside them.

Watch Alder's webinar on '<u>Defining your Marketing Tech Stack</u>' to dive deeper into these tips.

CHAPTER 9

MAKING THE MOST OF THE MEDIA.

While the network news is lagging behind, climate-related news coverage is soaring. Major outlets have bolstered climate reporting resources, including the NPR climate desk, an expanded climate team at The Washington Post, the AP's climate journalism initiative, and more. There's also a robust independent landscape, with the recently launched Heatmap News and Latitude Media joining more established publications like Canary Media, Grist, and Inside Climate News. Thoughtful climate-focused newsletters and podcasts have sprung up around the world.

There's also been a shift in how climate news is covered; today, it is far less alarmist and more proactive. Extreme weather events occur so regularly that it's easier than ever to make the case for immediate action. No one is suggesting we downplay or minimize the catastrophic impacts and stats related to climate change. Still, it is a welcome shift from the earlier doomsday headlines that caused their fair share of fatigue and apathy.

In short, the news media seems primed and ready to tackle climate change solutions like never before.

HOW DO YOU GET YOUR BRAND INCLUDED IN THE COVERAGE?

Here are a few thought-starters:

1. Do your homework

Like any other beat, “climate” is vast and all-encompassing. Understand which reporters and outlets cover which aspect (i.e., emerging technologies, environmental data, corporate greenwashing) and for which audiences (e.g., policymakers, investors, consumers, business decision-makers, etc.) Read/watch/listen to their news coverage, follow them on social platforms, and support paid subscriptions to help them keep operating!

2. Zoom out

By that, we mean understanding and communicating how your company fits into the broader story. For example, the widget you produce may do x, y, and z, but how does that contribute to the next thing that brings about climate impact? That’s what reporters want to talk about and what their readers ultimately care about.

3. Consider your social presence

According to *Muck Rack’s State of Journalism 2022 report,* more journalists than ever (60%) consult a company’s social media in their reporting. So ensure your brand’s social channels are a source of helpful information and captivating, up-to-date messaging, not just a customer service portal or sales tool.

Even with expanded editorial teams and new outlets for climate change and climate solution coverage, journalists simply can’t cover every promising new technology and company. As a marketer seeking scale, it’s your job to ensure they want to cover yours. Build relationships, treat journalists respectfully, and tell them things they don’t know. You’ll be the talk of the town in no time.

Learn more! We recently held a webinar on climate tech media relations with panelists from GreenBiz, Heatmap News, Climate-KIC and Rondo Energy. Watch the recording to up your media relations game.

CHAPTER 10

ACCOUNT-BASED MARKETING ON A BUDGET.

If you've done any B2B marketing in the past ten years, there's no way you could have avoided the buzzword 'account-based marketing' (ABM). And for a good reason: Over 70% of marketers surveyed in 2022 reported a higher return on investment (ROI) from account-based marketing than any other marketing effort. It's an incredibly effective way to grow your business with specific resonance for climate tech. Here's how it works:

WHAT IS ACCOUNT-BASED MARKETING?

Account-based marketing is a “highly targeted strategy where sales, marketing, and customer service teams work together to target key accounts (aka companies), engage buyers at those organizations with personalized content, and grow those relationships over time," according to Salesforce.

In ‘traditional marketing,’ the entire audience sees the same campaign, resulting in a less personalized experience. ABM campaigns target single companies—sometimes small groups—with highly customized content. By tailoring the campaign, you ensure your message resonates with the buyer and create opportunities to engage them throughout different stages of their buyer journey.

WHY IS ABM IDEAL FOR CLIMATE TECH MARKETING?

Most climate tech companies are B2B, and the second ‘B’ is often a large corporation —think utilities, manufacturers, large tech companies or other industrial conglomerates. Your sales cycles are long, complex and often involve multiple buyer personas at each company. On the flip side, if you get a sale with one of them, the contracts tend to be long and VERY valuable. So rather than casting your marketing net wide, it’s worth focusing on a few select accounts. Prioritize based on who is strategically important for your business and who is most likely to buy.

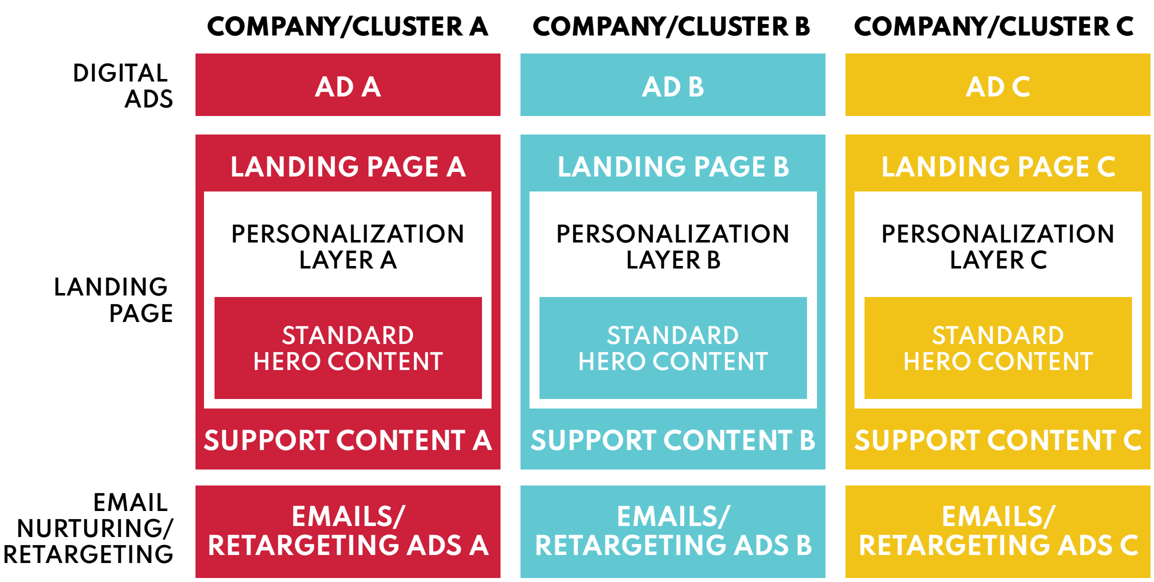
The challenge with a standard ABM approach is that it requires a lot of resources (team, time, budget and often expensive tools like marketing automation, CRM software and AI) to create highly personalized content for just one account. It’s also risky to put all your eggs in one basket by targeting only a few companies.

That’s why we developed an ‘ABM-lite’ approach that is personalization-heavy but budget-friendly! The key is repurposing existing content and campaigns by adding a ‘personalization layer’ targeted at a specific account or accounts. This approach is achievable on a typical scale-up budget and can deliver incredible results.

HOW TO DO ABM-LITE IN CLIMATE TECH

The core of any ABM-lite campaign is finding a theme or challenge that speaks to all the accounts you want to target. Choose or create a piece of high-value content (your 'hero' content) tied to that theme or challenge that will resonate across all those accounts. You then build personalized versions of the hero content for each account or cluster by adding engaging details and specific information to the original 'generic' version. Once you have a hyper-engaging centerpiece for the campaign, you build out the supporting materials—personalized ads, blogs, emails and other materials—and distribute them via targeted channels to reach your chosen audience.

Here's a snapshot of the approach. Below this, you'll find a step-by-step guide to ABM-Lite:



YOUR STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO ABM-LITE

1. Identify target accounts

ABM is a collaborative effort. Work with your leadership, sales and account management or customer service teams to identify ideal potential customers to target with ABM. This process could be its own chapter, but here's a few questions to ask yourself:

- Which prospects are most like your existing, highest-value customer?
- Which prospects have the most urgent need for your product or service?
- Which prospects have the best cultural fit?
- Which prospects would let your company break into a new industry? This question could be vital if you're looking to secure a first pilot or enter a new market.

2. Decide if you want to target them 1-to-1 or 1-to-few, i.e., in clusters

Without diving deeper into the difference between 1-to-1 and 1-to-few ABM, determine if your target accounts are large enough to warrant one campaign per company or if it makes more sense to cluster them. Deciding on a direction can be tricky, but the choice is essential for step three, where you decide which content to use and how to personalize it.

A **1-to-1 approach** works if you're targeting a large company, say an investor-owned utility (IOU) or a large industrial conglomerate. This approach makes sense if your product or service is attractive to several subsidies, branches or teams or if you need to reach many different buyers involved in the decision-making process.

A **1-to-few approach** makes sense if you're targeting a cluster of companies that experience similar challenges. Writing to specific pain points makes it easier to create content that resonates, even if it's not exclusively personalized to one company. Some ways you might be able to include pain points include:

- Geography (e.g., smaller electric cooperative utilities in the same state that are facing the same pressure from a changing climate)
- Regulation (e.g. company fleets having to phase out gas-powered vehicles)
- Decarbonization targets (e.g. your priority cluster could be those companies with the most ambitious decarbonization targets).

3. Select or create one piece of high-value, gateable 'hero' content

If you're running an ABM campaign to generate leads with a common goal, your hero content should be gateable. In other words, you need to create content so desirable that your prospects will enthusiastically trade their contact information for a chance to download what you've made.

This hero content could take many forms. Whether it's a white paper, how-to guide, webinar, or something else entirely, it needs to be useful to your target accounts and address their pain points. It is totally acceptable to use content from an existing campaign here—you'll personalize it in the next step.

4. Create 'personalized' versions of your hero content

Your hero content in an ABM campaign needs to be personalized—either to one specific company or to address the pain points of your clusters (see 2. above).

If you haven't already, work with your sales team to identify the angle you're going to use to personalize the content for your target accounts. They'll likely have key insights into your prospective companies from their past research. Some potential hooks include:

- Their overall strategic goals
- Their decarbonization targets
- Their specific pain points
- Any other company characteristics that are relevant to your content, product or service

Use these insights to create personalized versions of your hero content by tweaking any or all of the following:

- The hero content's title—this could include the prospect company's name, e.g., 'How [company name] can achieve net zero by [company net-zero target year] via decarbonizing their operations with [your category].'
- The intro, linking the topic of the hero content to the angles identified above
- The outro or summary
- A personalized call-to-action
- Content design, e.g., creating a version that mimics their corporate colors or uses their logo

5. Choose channels for delivery

How will you get your content in front of your target audience? You can use email if you have existing lists; for unknown prospects, paid advertising can be super effective for making initial contact and bringing them into your funnel.

LinkedIn provides the most effective targeting options for an ABM strategy. The two essential targeting parameters you need are the organization's name and the job title or function of your persona. Ideally, you would build a single company audience for which you can customize the ad content to create a very tailored and branded experience for the reader.

If the companies you are targeting aren't large enough, the smaller size of your potential audience can lead to targeting problems. If that's the case, you can target personas at clusters of companies instead (see 2. above).

Use LinkedIn ads to drive users to a landing page that houses your customized hero content. From here, link to other supporting content like blogs, infographics, etc. Ensure the landing page has remarketing pixels for different ad platforms. Add your visitors to audiences in Google Ads (and Facebook, if relevant to your business) for retargeting.

From there, you can continue to nurture prospects with tailored ads across multiple channels and direct emails to guide them through the buyer's journey.

6. Measure, improve & report!

Now that you've launched your ABM lite campaign, it's time to measure.

- Are you targeting and reaching the right audience?
- Does the content resonate with them?
- Are they clicking through on your ads and emails?
- Is the landing page with your hero content converting?
- Are specific clusters and messaging performing better than others?
- Are personas moving through the funnel?
- Are you getting any other engagement or reactions?

Report the impressions, clicks and leads to your sales and senior leadership team to prove the ROI of the ABM approach.

Read on for more ways to measure your success, improve campaigns, and achieve greater scale.

CHAPTER 11

KEY METRICS FOR CLIMATE TECH.

In today's fast-paced and data-driven world, leveraging the power of metrics is essential for growth. Scaling climate tech is no exception—specific metrics and data-driven strategies are necessary to measure, evaluate, and optimize the performance of your growth marketing campaigns. This is the last, and in some ways the most important part of *Brand to Scale*. This is where the cycle starts anew.

By harnessing the insights from data analysis and using them to drive marketing strategies, you learn how to scale your business better and achieve your marketing goals more effectively and efficiently.

So how can your company effectively leverage metrics to achieve your marketing goals? Let's dive in.

1. Define a clear strategy with realistic objectives

Without a well-defined plan, it can be easy to get lost in the noise and miss opportunities to promote your brand and drive growth effectively. When defining your marketing strategy, it's important to consider your target audience, market trends, and competitors. This will help you identify the most effective channels and tactics to reach your audience and differentiate yourself.

If your company's goal is to increase sales, what is marketing's role? It's not just about flashy ads and social media campaigns. To measure your marketing effectiveness, start by breaking business goals down into their constituent parts that contribute to each goal.

The term S.M.A.R.T. (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound) is a well-known acronym for good reason. SMART objectives should play an instrumental role in your strategy. For example, instead of setting a general objective of "increasing brand awareness," a SMART objective could be to "increase brand awareness by 20% across social media and organic search channels within the next two quarters."

As a climate tech startup, you'll likely want to measure your brand awareness metrics at the top of the funnel. In order to do that, you're going to need data from at least three sources. These may include:

1. Google Analytics or other analytics tools that measure traffic.
2. A social listening tool like Hootsuite or Buffer collects data from social media and the web.
3. SEO tools like Google Search Console, Ahrefs, Moz, or SEMrush measure online visibility, such as web impressions keyword ranking in search engine results pages (SERPs).
4. Paid ads such as Google ads accounts and social media accounts (LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter).

2. Identify key metrics to track

Once you have defined your objectives, it's time to identify the key metrics that align with the specific objectives you've set out to accomplish. These metrics will indicate if your campaign is delivering the desired results.

It's important to note that the appropriate metrics will vary depending on the channel(s) you focus on. For example, if your goal is to evaluate performance on social media, you should select metrics that will allow you to gauge your efforts on those platforms. On the other hand, if you aim to increase traffic to your website, monitoring Google Analytics should be a top priority.

The metrics on the following page can give you deep insight into whether your brand is delivering the results you need.

Brand Impressions or Brand Reach

Brand impressions are essential for measuring the reach and effectiveness of your marketing efforts. They represent the number of times your target audience sees your brand. By tracking impressions across various channels and touchpoints, you can gauge the visibility and recognition your brand has achieved.

To track brand impressions, utilize social media analytics tools such as Google Search Console for web impressions and Facebook Insights, Twitter Analytics, and LinkedIn Analytics for social media impressions. These insights are invaluable for scaling your climate tech business.

Brand Search Volume

This metric measures brand awareness by indicating how many people search for your brand name. It helps assess the effectiveness of marketing campaigns and **provides insights into your market position compared to competitors.** In addition, it **reveals trends or seasonality in your business.**

You can use Google Trends to monitor your brand's search volume over time and compare it to competitors and Google Search Console to monitor impressions and clicks for your brand name queries in Google Search Console. Finally, utilize SEO tools like Ahrefs, Moz, or SEMrush to track brand search volume, related keywords, and positions.

Social Media Engagement

Monitor the engagement metrics on your social media platforms, such as likes, shares, comments, and followers. This will help you gauge the effectiveness of your content and the level of interest from your target audience.

Google Analytics

These metrics pertain explicitly to your website and can show you which pages are performing the best on your website and attracting new visitors. Some of the most informative and insightful metrics include:

- **Website Traffic:** Track the number of website sessions or users to understand the overall reach of your marketing efforts. Additionally, monitor the organic search and referral traffic to evaluate the success of your SEO and backlink strategies.
- **Conversion Events:** Identify the key actions or events on your website that lead to conversions, such as newsletter sign-ups, purchases, or form submissions. Tracking these conversion events will give you insights into the effectiveness of your website and marketing campaigns.
- **Custom Events:** New to Google Analytics 4, custom events are user-defined actions you can set up to track specific interactions on your website beyond

what GA4 automatically tracks. Consider them as extra sensors you add to your site to measure specific actions important to your business, like clicks on a "Contact Us" button. They provide deeper, more granular insights into visitor behavior.

- **Average Session Duration:** Measure the amount of time users spend on your website to gauge their level of engagement. A longer average session duration indicates that users find your content valuable and are more likely to take more actions (as well as move further down the funnel, ultimately increasing conversions).
- **Links and Link Metrics:** Links are like the roads that lead to your website. You need to know where they come from and where they go in order to build a robust link profile that encourages user interaction on your website. Furthermore, these links are crucial in search engine optimization (SEO) and attracting new visitors to your site via Google Search.

3. Set measurable targets

It's crucial to set measurable targets for each metric you track. These targets will act as benchmarks to evaluate your progress and determine whether your marketing strategies are effective. Make sure your targets are realistic and attainable. Weekly, month-over-month (MoM), and quarter-on-quarter (QoQ) targets can help you succinctly break down your yearly goals and inform you of potential bottlenecks and pitfalls.

4. Regularly track & analyze marketing data to inform & optimize your strategy

Continually tracking and analyzing your marketing data is essential for optimizing your marketing strategy and achieving your goals. This practice provides several key benefits:

- Continuous data tracking allows you to identify trends and patterns in customer behavior. This insight can help you adapt your marketing strategies to align with your audience's interests and preferences.
- Regular analysis of your endeavors will help you assess your efforts' Return on Investment (ROI). This enables you to allocate resources more effectively and focus on the strategies that deliver the best results.
- Continuous data analysis helps you better understand your customer segments and their unique needs. This insight allows you to tailor your marketing messages and campaigns to resonate more effectively with each segment.
- Staying updated on industry trends and shifts is crucial in the ever-evolving marketing world. Regular data analysis allows you to adapt your marketing strategies to changes in the market and keep your brand relevant.

- By examining what tactics have been effective or ineffective at generating impressions, engagement, conversions, and click-throughs to your content, you can experiment with different marketing tactics and assess their impact. This practice fosters innovation and encourages creativity, allowing you to explore new approaches to reaching your goals.
- You can create more personalized and relevant marketing campaigns by understanding your audience's preferences and behaviors. This enhances the customer experience and strengthens brand recognition, loyalty, and trust.

Here we go again

This chapter covered quite a bit of information, so here's a quick recap as you finish this *Brand to Scale* cycle and start the next one.

- Set clear objectives you want to achieve based on your business goals.
- Choose metrics that resonate and align with your goals. Metrics such as brand impressions, website traffic, conversion events, and custom events provide valuable insights into customer behavior, enabling targeted and effective marketing campaigns.
- You need online tools to measure your marketing metrics and effectiveness. These include Google Analytics, Google Search Console, Ahrefs, Moz, Hootsuite, and native social media platforms.
- Regularly track and analyze the marketing data and metrics you choose so you can optimize and refine your marketing strategy.

As you prepare to start on another round of marketing campaigns, there's one last important note. Metrics provide many valuable insights but they don't hold all the answers. Relying solely on quantitative analysis doesn't provide the complete picture. Including a qualitative perspective, including interviews with customers you acquired via a given campaign, adds valuable depth to your learnings.

CHAPTER 12

BECOMING A UNICORN.

After tracking campaign performance against all your agreed-upon metrics, it's time to rinse and repeat. This is the moment when *Brand to Scale* truly begins when you apply everything you've learned from your previous campaign to building something even better for the next round.

This could be an opportunity to refine your customer targeting, tweak your buyer personas, or even experiment with new types of content. The important thing is to apply the lessons of your last campaign to whatever you do next and keep moving toward scale.

However you choose to move forward, Alder would love to support your efforts. You can download the free buyer persona template we created to give you a leg up on starting your own *Brand to Scale* process, or feel free to reach out about an ongoing collaboration. Our category expertise, relationships with the press, and understanding of growth marketing for scale make us an ideal partner for any aspiring unicorn in climate tech. Let's see what we can build together.

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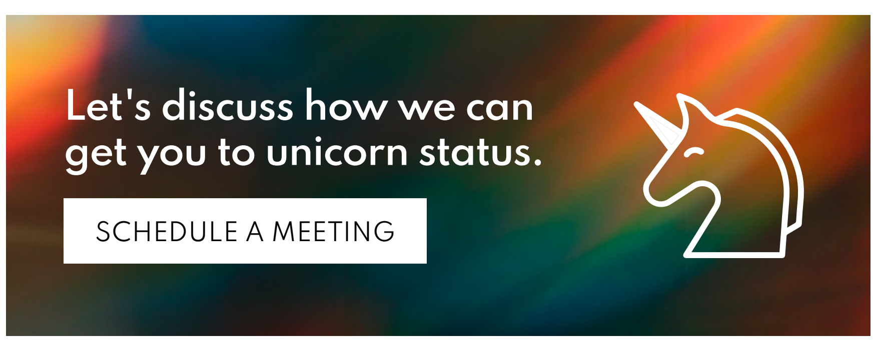
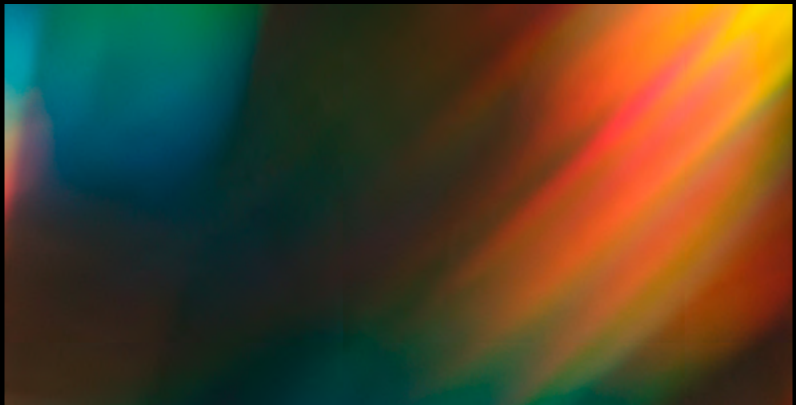


Alder & Co. is a leading, global strategic brand marketing agency with the mission to drive the adoption of climate technologies until they become universal. Alder partners with forward-facing, innovative climate tech companies who need progressive brand & marketing strategies to drive growth, secure investment and make the impact needed to address our generation's most urgent crisis—our environment.



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