

PR agency Spreckley launches the Spreckley Startup Growth Hub

Every startup needs to tell their story. Independent B2B PR agency, Spreckley, has decided to combine their 40 years of industry experience with a team of marketing and business growth experts to support ambitious founders on every aspect of startup marketing through the Spreckley Startup Growth Hub.

The *Spreckley Startup Growth Hub* is a comprehensive, tailored suite of marketing and PR services designed to support ambitious startup founders reach the next level of growth with powerful storytelling and lead-generating integrated marketing. The aim is for the Spreckley Startup Growth Hub to become the go-to partner for startups looking to gain a competitive edge.

The SSGH team is composed of award-winning experts, each of whom are specialists in specific disciplines and understand the challenges of scaling a business at every level, from pre-seed angel investment to Series A and beyond.

Maddyness UK spoke to Richard Merrin, CEO of *Spreckley*, about the launch of their exciting new service and what the Spreckley Startup Growth Hub can offer to founders.

So, Richard, how does SSGH answer an unmet need?

Marketing and PR are vital elements to startup growth, but they refer to an expansive, all-encompassing discipline that can as easily lead to loss as it can to growth, without the right strategy and partner. Knowing where to start, and with whom, is key.

Many startups eagerly hire a PR agency, understanding that press coverage has a huge value in reaching customers, investors and building the brand. However, with little knowledge of what is needed to drive good PR results, or how to harness PR to amplify other marketing efforts, it can lead to a false start if not implemented strategically. Even with the best PR results achieved, if the brand and the website isn't built yet, it's like getting sign-ups for an open house event when the house isn't yet built. Timing matters. PR and marketing is like an orchestra and when each discipline is performed in a silo, the full effect is lost (and so is the investment).

Why is good marketing important to an early-stage startup?

Many founders make the mistake of trying to do everything, from website build and performance and SEO to lead gen, content, and PR, on a bootstrapped budget. The reality, however, is that a budget stretched so thinly will rarely lead to a strong foundation for your brand.

With eyes set on the next investment round, your brand image matters, and it's often a more impactful strategy to do less with more.

In this case, knowing where to funnel your budget matters. Many agencies may

offer to do everything under one roof but be aware that each discipline is its own craft. Instead, does your agency know its specialty, but understand the wider ecosystem of marketing? Do they have relationships with other professionals who can be brought in at the right stage – either through the agency or via a direct introduction?

Ultimately no startup aims to remain one; they plan for growth. Your agency needs to be able to grow with you and propel you to each next stage. Look to find your next long-term partner, not who you think you need right now. Your business will change, and so will its needs.

How would you define the relationship between a founder and the SSGH team?

A founder is creative, ambitious, intelligent and, importantly, time-poor; they rarely have the time to conduct the orchestra of marketing and PR, let alone the knowledge of each discipline to ensure every instrument is in tune. Working with agencies also relies on trust, which takes time to build and, if lost, is hard to regain in new relationships.

Being an expert in any subject is not a prerequisite to hiring in that field; however, there are a few essential things to consider before any startup should hire a PR or marketing agency.

What can a founder / startup expect from a partnership with SSGH?

First things first – at the Start Up Hub we do not expect to potential clients to simply sign a blank cheque.

We offer a free consultation to any start up looking for immediate help to walk through the marketing maze.

It is in this session we can help you define what you are looking for and what your immediate need may be.

Before hiring any agency, you need to know what your vision is. You certainly don't need to eloquently narrate that vision in elegant prose. Leave that to the copywriters on the PR team. However, your marketing strategy must align with your business strategy, and your PR strategy must align with your marketing plan. Step one is to define your business plan. Marketing and PR are a vehicle to help realise that plan and accelerate growth. Without clear messaging to steer storytelling in PR, not only will your PR agency be starting from a blank slate, but there is no indicator that earned media coverage will have the right impact. If you don't know what you want to say, and to whom, then it's perhaps a bit early to kick off a media relations PR campaign.

Already, from earned media relations, copywriting and content creation has become part of the remit, which many agencies can do – but each agency has its own specialty. Moreover, if content is now part of the brief, how is this content being maximised? Do you have an in-house SEO or web team, or an SEO agency? Can your PR or content agency add specialist SEO when needed into your marketing strategy?

Knowing how, and when, to implement different marketing disciplines into your strategy, is not always obvious and many founders need time back to spend on the business itself. Managing multiple agencies and conducting the symphony that ensues can be a full time job. Trust, in this case, is intrinsic in the best agency relationships. They need to be able to understand when to recommend activity that may even be beyond their remit. And in this case, can you trust their recommendations of who to turn to?

A founder's budget is especially precious and recommendations on where and when to invest marketing budget has a direct impact on growth. Therefore, hiring the right agency can be a heavy decision process. The right appointments can blossom into long term relationships, which for startups must be the goal.

Richard Merrin is CEO of [*Spreckley*](#). Book your free 30 minute consultation with the Spreckley Startup Growth Hub [*here*](#).