



Things I Have Learned About Sales So Far

Fred Stevens-Smith, Rainforest QA

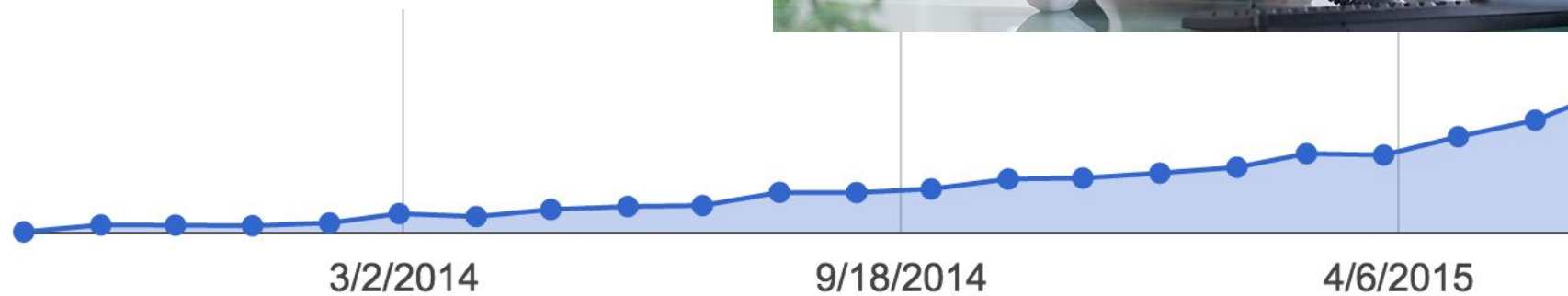
Hello

- I'm Fred Stevens-Smith
- My company Rainforest is building AWS for QA. We're a Heavybit member, our customers include Oracle, IBM, Zenefits, Intuit
- 110 customers, 57 people, 16mm funding, \$Xmm ARR
- **This talk is for people with 10+ paying customers**

The dream

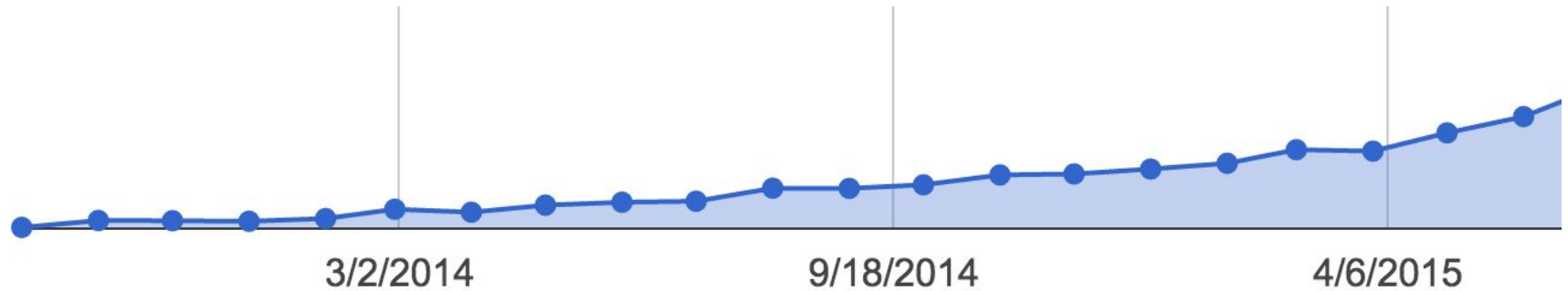


The reality



The reality: to make revenue you must sell

- Founders are usually bad at sales
- Focus is impossible
- Sales is hard and scary

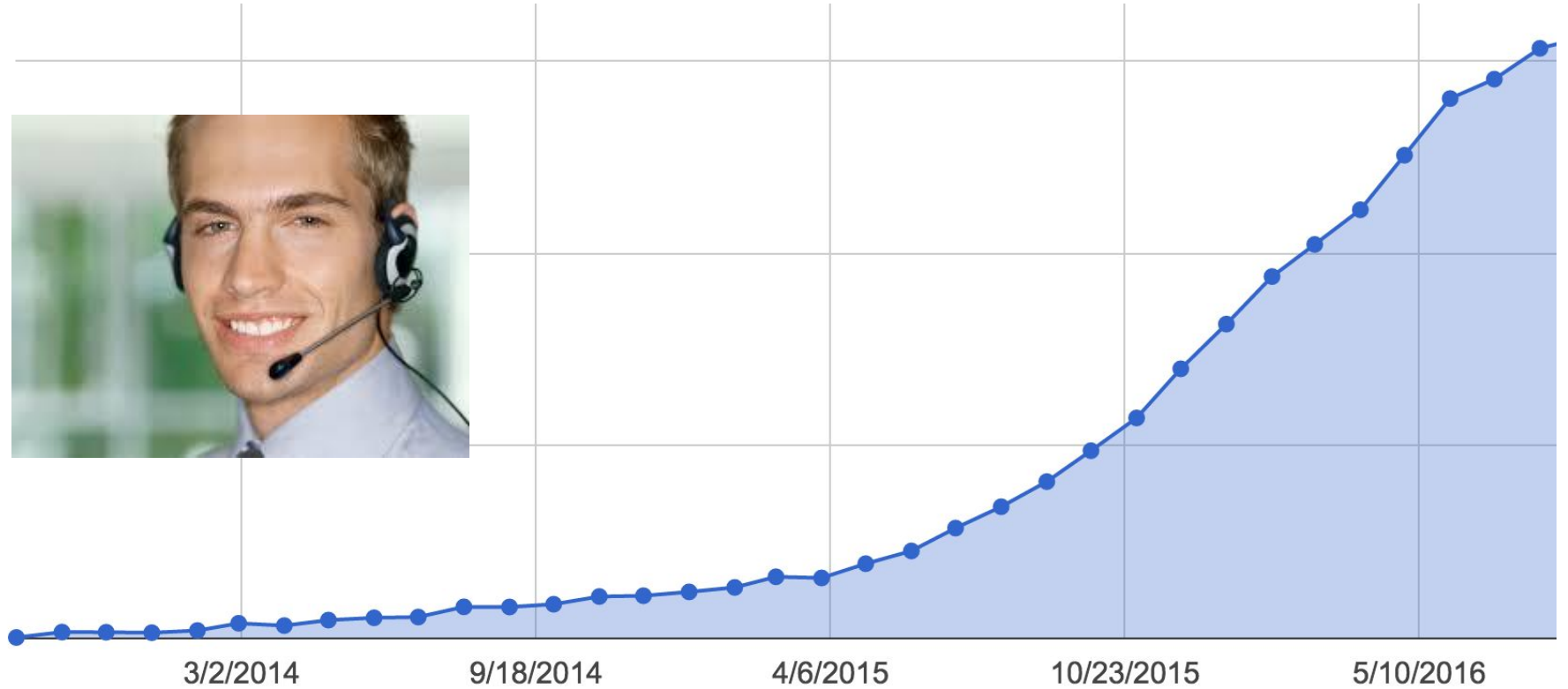


So what do you need to figure out?

- Sales Strategy
 - Persona
 - Qualification
 - Pricing
- Sales Process
- Hiring your first salesperson



Why?



Components of a Startup Sales Strategy

1. **Persona:** who you're selling to
2. **Qualification:** what organization they're in
3. **Pricing:** what your product's value is to them

Personas: who buys & who uses your product?

- Developers? VP Eng? PM? Support?
- What do they care about?
- **Is your product solving one of their top 5 issues?**
(And if so do they have \$?)

Qualification: which companies do you sell?

- Our sweet spot:
 - 50-200 people
 - Series A+ funded
 - Continually developed webapp
 - Access to VP Eng / CTO

Qualification: which companies do you sell?

- Our sweet spot:
 - 50-200 people
 - Series A+ funded
 - Continually developed webapp
 - Access to VP Eng / CTO
- **You get to this through experimentation**

Pricing: what are you worth?

- N00b pricing = cost+ (we do this)
- Pro pricing = value- (nobody actually does this)
- Other tips
 - Understand your substitute goods
 - Experiment with increasing prices
 - Tell the prospect the cost and **stop speaking**

The process

1. Qualify lead
2. Get access to buyer and user personas
3. Understand what you're worth to them, and ask for it

It seems fucking simple. But it's actually incredibly hard to do this in parallel for 20 prospects and remain disciplined. This is why you need someone running the process.

Hiring: who

- Fuck big company experience
- 4+ years in trenches selling
- MUST be SaaS
- MUST be Software
- MUST be a similar ACV
- Good salespeople have lots of numbers on their CVs.
Ask them for specifics about deals.

Hiring: when

- Now

What I would tell myself 4 years ago

- Hire a salesperson
- Create a simple thesis on persona, qualification and pricing
- Trust the process
- Build a SaaS metrics dashboard and obsess over it



Thanks!

- Email me at fred@rainforestqa.com with off-the-record questions
- Don't follow me on twitter
- Questions?