



Start Small, Stay Small: A Developer's Guide to Launching a Startup

Rob Walling , Mike Taber (Editor)

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Start Small, Stay Small is a step-by-step guide to launching a self-funded startup. If you're a desktop, mobile or web developer, this book is your blueprint to getting your startup off the ground with no outside investment.

This book intentionally avoids topics restricted to venture-backed startups such as: honing your investment pitch, securing funding, and figuring out how to use the piles of cash investors keep placing in your lap.

This book assumes:

- * You don't have \$6M of investor funds sitting in your bank account
- * You're not going to relocate to the handful of startup hubs in the world
- * You're not going to work 70 hour weeks for low pay with the hope of someday making millions from stock options

There's nothing wrong with pursuing venture funding and attempting to grow fast like Amazon, Google, Twitter, and Facebook. It just so happened that most people are not in a place to do this.

Start Small, Stay Small: A Developer's Guide to Launching a Startup Details

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From Reader Review Start Small, Stay Small: A Developer's Guide to Launching a Startup for online ebook

Valentino says

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Jimmy Longley says

Reviewed as part of my 100 books challenge: <http://jimmylongley.com/blog/books/>

Run-on Sentence Summary

A short, no-nonsense guide to starting a small niche business online that clearly comes from experience.

Impressions

A really great set of practical advice that I think will really help me when I decide to explore this area. Its main ideas are about finding and evaluating a market, creating a sales funnel, and outsourcing easy tasks to cheap virtual assistants.

Final Thoughts

It's a bit prosaic, but over all it is a very good, no-frills manual packed with good advice.

Favorite Quote

"Market Comes First, Marketing Second, Aesthetic Third, and Functionality a Distant Fourth"

Stefan-Iulian Tesoi says

The title is highly inaccurate, it should rather be along these lines to reflect the book's content: A Micropreneur's Guide to Launching a Microbusiness.

The author is also selling his Micropreneur Academy side business which is a - paid online learning environment and community website for startup founders. Probably, or probably not, there is better content at the 'Academy' than in this book.

Lori Grant says

A should-read book on startups for knowledge workers and aspiring entrepreneurs.

Börkur Sigurbjörnsson says

This book is a decent read for any developer thinking of taking their coding project to a business. The content may be a bit dated and the author's voice has a hint of arrogance. However, it has good and practical tips for developers on the importance of not underestimating the role of market research and marketing when trying to monetize a software project.

Vasco says

Interesting book. I have mixed feelings as it's a mix of full-on tech startup and "freedom business", taking elements of both. It presents the dynamics of starting a business, evaluating niches and need, and more, and does it well. I don't agree the branding, especially as a "startup book", but good enough book.

Shawn Grimes says

As a developer, I'm not necessarily looking to start a business that makes millions of dollars. I'm just looking to start/run a business that lets me work my own hours and live a comfortable life. This book provides some solid advice on starting and running a business by yourself or with a single partner. I think it takes what is practical from "The 4 Hour Work Week" and applies it to starting a small service or product oriented business.

I saw a lot of value from the book on things such as mailing lists and first tier marketing approaches. It also helped instill confidence that you don't need VC funding if you just want to start and run a small business.

Michael says

Very pragmatic and straight-to-the-point guide to starting a small software business. The author understands software developers and identifies common pitfalls to avoid. The book is not a comprehensive reference on small businesses, it's very focused on the issues that a single-developer non-VC startup will face.

Ricky says

Good, but advice is a little dated these days.

I wish there was more context/advice into the business and mindset of micropreneurship.

Lân Nguy?n says

Khá chi ti?t và h?u ích không ch? cho developers có ý ??nh th??ng m?i hóa s?n ph?m c?a mình (??i t??ng

c?a cu?n sách).

Will says

Effective and practical advice. Some bits seem dated already, unsurprising given how quickly the online business environment evolves over time, and I felt like sections could have been even more edited down/to the point. However overall, a good overview and as someone new to the field of indie digital start-ups I felt that there was a lot of useful info I could take away from it.

Pete says

Start Small, Stay Small : A Developer's Guide to Launching a Startup (2010) by Rob Walling is a really interesting book for any developers who are looking at trying to build a side hustle using their development skills.

The book isn't about founding a VC funded rapidly growing unicorn. Instead Walling concentrates on trying to start businesses that can make a few thousand per month. Walling has also managed to do this himself numerous times.

The book is packed with advice on how to find a market, how to outsource as much as possible and how to avoid putting in too much time into something that is too ambitious or something unlikely to yield a profit.

The book is 8 years old and so has little about building apps or targeting markets for plug ins for various products. But the book has a lot of really interesting advice and links for anyone considering trying to make a product to make some money but that isn't being built to revolutionise an industry or create a huge product.

bartosz says

Start Small, Stay Small: A Developer's Guide to Launching a Startup by Rob Walling is a very opinionated book on entrepreneurship dedicated to developers.

While usually "opinionated" might conjure up bad connotations, I appreciated the author's honesty and vision - he doesn't try to sell a surefire way to get to a one million dollars or other get rich schemes. The book sets forward a very modest and laser focused goal: launching a small self-funded startup that tries to target a niche market and which draws a moderate revenue stream.

The author's assumptions are logical in context of what he wants to achieve: a low risk, low reward side businesses that complements a day job.

The advice the author gives, also seem to be very well founded - start with market research for a niche product, and when a particular need is identified - prototype a minimum viable product. Concentrate on marketing not on advanced functionality or aesthetics. Because your target is a small niche you can cut corners in a way that's not available to a larger company (e.g doing stuff "by hand" before automating them.)

The book offers rudimentary advice on how to find a market, marketing, how to prototype a product and a sales website, how and what to outsource and what to do when your micro-company starts losing its momentum.

My only complaint about the book is that it's a little too narrow - leaning too heavily on few strategies to achieve a particular goal without going any other alternatives. On the other hand I appreciate that author sticks to what he knows.

Start Small, Stay Small presents an interesting plan for growing your own startup. The author's points are very well made and the book is written in a clear language. Although the book does seem to be some sort of advertisement for the author's startup academy it does so without proselytizing. All in all, a solid book good for a basis for starting your own business.

Hang says

Clearly distilled from years of experience, the content is excellent. The prose isn't the most beautiful or polished, but that's not why someone would pick this up anyways. If you're interested building software that actually makes money, this book is a great starting point.

Vic Dinovici says

good for anybody in the computers industry if you plan to make some money after hours or even to move completely on your own.
