

# Steven Bartlett's Revenue Masterclass: 7 key takeaways



Steven Bartlett,  
Tech Entrepreneur

In the last few months, it seems like Steven Bartlett is everywhere. His podcast *Diary of a CEO* regularly tops the charts, with guests ranging from Jimmy Carr to the former health secretary Matt Hancock.

He also became the youngest Dragon ever on *Dragon's Den*. The 29-year old Bartlett is not just an uber-successful entrepreneur, he is a cultural figure. Log on to Twitter and you'll probably see his name trending.

But Steven says the "madness" of the last three or four months has been years in the making. In a special masterclass organised by Osome, he reflected on a business career that began as a teenager in a small university bedroom.

From these humble beginnings, Steven's idea blossomed into a social media behemoth. Social Chain is now a publicly-traded agency with over 400 employees. The company's success was founded on Steven's sharp instincts for customer acquisition.

In the masterclass, he offered a few golden nuggets of wisdom for growing your customer base. These are just snippets of the full interview, so be sure to watch the recording.

[You can watch the full masterclass here](#)

# 1

## The philosopher CEO

According to the man himself, Steven Bartlett's greatest strength is his capacity to create and instil a set of values in his teams. "My teams always end up with the same philosophy I have, in terms of how you win customers and how you treat others".

Especially as your headcount grows, you need workers who not only understand your ethos – but believe in it. "I want my team to be obsessed with data and details. And when we're number one, we should become even more obsessed with our customers".

# 2

## Amplify your impact

In the early years of Social Chain, Steven was heavily involved in direct selling. Most entrepreneurs will be familiar with this rough-and-ready, all hands on deck style of leadership.

But Social Chain took off, Steven says, when he shifted from direct selling to focusing more on speaking on stage or creating video content for social media. That way, he can expand his reach and speak to more people in one go.

It's all about impact. "I think about my time as an investment of an hour. My time, that one hour, is better spent getting the greatest return. Based on one hour of my time, where can I return the biggest impact. If you think about that every day, it's a great filter."

# 3

## Four key drivers in b2b sales

"There are four key drivers in b2b sales," Steven says. "Speaking on stage, personal branding, PR and social media." Indeed, Social Chain was unique in that it never had a sales team.

It's a trend that Steven has maintained in other businesses that he has founded. His sales strategy is inbound focused. "With these four drivers, we never needed a sales time because the phone rang all the time.

"The aim should be to become a magnet or a peacock, not a door-to-door salesman. It's a much nicer existence to be a magnet. If you build a big castle and you advertise yourself, people will come to you." By building his presence online, Social Chain's next client always found them, not the other way around.

# 4

## Get your money's worth on LinkedIn

When Social Chain was founded, social media was a “wave heading into shore”. It was less crowded. Now, almost every company has a presence. In 2022, Steven’s advice for young entrepreneurs is to focus on one channel.

The best bet? LinkedIn. “If I was a whipper-snapper, young entrepreneur my social platform of choice would be LinkedIn. The reach per pound spent is the highest on LinkedIn. It doesn’t need to be a video. If you write something and it's good, you get a tremendous amount of reach that you can’t get anywhere else”.



**LinkedIn is the best place to get high reach numbers, especially when you don't have resources**

# 5

## Be the brand

“If you know how to do personal branding, it’s the best way to hire people, for scaling your growth, for putting your perspective into the world,” Steven says. “People buy from people, that’s the fundamental truth.”

In the last few years or so, Steven’s brand has exploded – but it’s the culmination of years of work. He committed to building his brand six or seven years ago. That included paying to speak on stage and a relentless social media presence.

“By 2018, I had done such a good job on my personal brand that when I went to pitch businesses for work, I had a headstart. I remember I went for a pitch meeting at Logitech and they were asking me for pics before we went into the meeting. They became a big client of ours and still are to this day.”

# 6

## Cash crunches and tight margins

Steven's masterclass was filled with moments of candour about entrepreneurship. In one instance, he recalls a payday phone call from his finance team before heading onto stage.

"They were telling me that there wasn't enough money in the bank to pay our people." Steven head out on stage, with his mind running through solutions. "I realised that the client I was presenting to was due to sign a contract with us."

A few calls to NatWest and a deal was struck: If the contract was signed, the bank would release the cash. The contract was signed over drinks in the evening, one hour before people expected to get paid.

These sorts of tight margins come with the territory of entrepreneurship. Looking back, Steven admits the stress was sometimes almost unbearable. And yet, he made it. "In many situations of crisis, it was through optimism, focus, hard work and belief that we overcome the problem."

# 7

## Be your own benchmark

What's propelled Steven's business success has been an obsession with details and iterative improvement. In the masterclass, Steven spoke of avoiding the news and searching for his name on Twitter.

"It's like I'm observing my life in the third person. I'm not internalising all the noise so much." Instead, his focus is on his own performance. Not other people's perception of him.



**The most realistic, worthy comparison I can make is how am I performing today versus yesterday. How have I developed my skillset this year versus last year? How am I speaking and selling? How am I treating people? These are the metrics I use in my professional and personal life.**