



Welcome to the Vault

Hiring marketing talent at a startup isn't about finding someone who "knows marketing."

It's about finding someone who can:

- ✓ build demand
- ✓ execute fast
- ✓ thrive without structure
- ✓ own outcomes like a founder

This Scorecard helps you spot the difference between:

Enterprise polish vs. Startup performance

THE VAULT CHECKS

The 10 Vault-Approved Growth Hire Signals

Use these to evaluate any marketing candidate — whether it's hire #1 or hire #10.

✓ 1. Operator Energy

Can they ship results without needing a full team around them?

Startup marketers build first. Teams come later.

✓ 2. Built From Zero, Not Just Scaled

Ask:

“What did you create from scratch?”

Scaling is easy. Starting is rare.

✓ 3. Pipeline Mindset

Do they understand that marketing equals revenue motion?

Followers aren't growth. Pipeline is.

✓ 4. Speed > Perfection

Startups reward movement, not perfection.

Can they test, learn, iterate?

✓ 5. Founder-Level Ownership

Do they sound like an owner...

Or a task-taker?

3

✓ 6. Customer Obsession

Great startup marketers live inside the customer's brain.

They don't guess. They know.

✓ 7. Scrappy + Strategic

Best hires can zoom out *and* execute today.

Vision + velocity.

✓ 8. Channel Adaptability

Startups pivot constantly.

Can they move across paid, organic, lifecycle, partnerships?

✓ 9. Cultural Signal

Would your team trust them in week one?

Marketing hires shape momentum early.

✓ 10. The Runway Question

If this hire missed...

Would it cost you 6 months?

That's how high the bar is.