

# Dr Spin, or the Tao of *Threes*

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# Process - wrong!

- Found company[^]
- Have idea
- Make money/Get Acquired/IPO

# Process - better

- Have thing (code, widget)
- Observe thing more useful than expected
- Find people using thing you didn't even know
- Get 2 friends, and decide/divide work into **three**:
  - One business,
  - One tech lead,
  - One go-between
- Are you making money already?

# If in doubt...

- Don't do startup (***three*** downsides)
  - Stress
  - Uncertainty
  - Pension
- Stay in the University
  - where you already have all those luxuries 😊

# Funds

- Do you actually need funds?
  - If you have income, then you don't
  - Do you even need more than a consultancy?
- Do you need to hire an R&D team?
- Will you need a sales/marketing dweeb?
- Then you may need more money:
  - Insert Found company **three** boilerplate steps here:
    1. VC/Angel investor dosh – will expect names of customer
    2. Keep control (founders keep >51% control!)
    3. You will need a business plan, with projected income
- Remember 9/10 of startups fail to thrive[\*]
  - Though 8/10 just end up zero sum (1 lose, 1 gains)

# Take *three* goes

- Idea #1 Isn't likely to be success
  - It just proved you had clue to VCs
- Idea #2 is also likely to fail
  - It was just part of your business plan
- Idea #3 is where things take off
  - Often is a boring component of idea #2
  - That turned out to be staggeringly useful
  - And not to hard to explain to real customers
  - Like idea #1 was

# *Three* different ways to make it big

- Design/consult
  - Is respectable, reliable, and can make quite a bit
- Get noticed&acquired
  - Depends on timing
    - Too early or too late happen 8/10 times
  - Valuations based on team often (hence idea #1&#2 may be irrelevant]
- IPO
  - Is a whole different kettle of fish
  - Requires lots of legal/financial advice

# Open Source

- Is no barrier to success, **three** ways
- People don't generally steal your ideas
  - Its cheaper to have you bugfix them
  - “move fast and break things” is terrible plan
  - Is source of consulting income (bespoke/custom)



# Three IP mistakes

- Patents are a waste of time
  - literally, take your chief engineers off product
- Copyright (or copyleft) are free
  - No need to assert
- Trademarks are as important as band names
  - Led Zeppelin, The Beatles, The Band
  - Were not barriers to success
  - Any more than ibm,arm,uber

# Q&A&B

- Questions....?
- No. Answers...?
- No. ok, so Beer[\$]?

[\*] people at last week's talk on PhDs – the success rate/  
outcome of those is opposite of startups – 8 out of 10 get  
corrections 😊

<http://www.cl.cam.ac.uk/~jac22/talks/nitty18.pdf>

If you don't believe me or them, ask Elon Musk

<http://www.foundersatwork.com/>

[^] actually this isn't wrong, it is just much scarier

[\$] strong social bonds in your startup people are vital