Del Norte Triplicate

COMMUNITY

People You Should Know: Colin Hodge

The Secret Behind Explosive Growth

By Tony D'Urso November 25, 2026



Colin Hodge speaks at his book launch in Taiwan, sharing lessons from his experience building and growing successful consumer businesses.



Colin Hodge delivers the opening keynote at App Growth Summit London 2026, sharing insights on startup growth and user psychology.



Colin Hodge meets with a reader and signs his book, Outrageous Startup Growth, during a launch event in Taiwan.

TAIPEI, TAIWAN. (MPG) - "The best product doesn't always win." — Colin Hodge

Every entrepreneur wants more customers. More attention. More sales. More growth. Yet some businesses spend enormous amounts on advertising, technology, and marketing campaigns without achieving the results they expect.

What are they missing?

According to entrepreneur and growth strategist Colin Hodge, the answer may have less to do with technology and more to do with understanding people.

Hodge has helped grow consumer applications to more than 100 million users. He's built companies, sold them and even bought one back. His experience has taught him that successful growth begins with understanding how customers think, feel and make decisions.

He explores these principles in his book, "Outrageous Startup Growth: Uncovering the Secrets of User Psychology to Scale Your Success," drawing on his experience growing consumer businesses.

And those decisions aren't always logical.

People Buy Benefits, Not Features

Entrepreneurs often become fascinated with what their products can do. They emphasize specifications, capabilities and technical advantages.

Hodge offers a memorable example involving Starbucks' pumpkin spice latte.

Announcing a new seasonal drink describes a product. Inviting customers to experience the feeling of autumn creates an emotional connection.

A feature tells someone what you're selling. A benefit helps them understand why it matters.

Hodge calls this the "framing effect." How a product is presented influences whether someone notices it, understands its value and decides to try it.

For entrepreneurs, the lesson is practical: Stop assuming customers see your product the way you do. Ask what problem it solves, what experience it creates, and how it improves someone's life.

Why Customers Keep Coming Back

Attracting customers is only half the challenge. Keeping them requires something more.

Hodge describes the IKEA effect, a psychological phenomenon in which people place greater value on something they've helped create.

Consider assembling a piece of furniture. The process takes time and effort, but that investment can make the finished product feel more valuable.

Hodge applies this principle to his dating app, DOWN. Rather than allowing users to rush through creating their profiles, the company encourages them to invest effort in presenting themselves authentically. That participation can strengthen their commitment.

"You need to be providing something that is of value for the long term." — Colin Hodge

The important distinction is that customer involvement must create genuine value. Simply making something difficult won't build loyalty.

Hodge also emphasizes discovering a product's magic moment. That's when customers suddenly recognize why a product matters to them.

He points to Facebook's early discovery that users who connected with seven friends within seven days were more likely to remain engaged.

The opportunity for business owners is to identify the experiences that make customers want to return.

Technology Cannot Replace Understanding

Artificial intelligence has made it easier than ever to create advertising, generate content, and automate business operations.

But Hodge warns that greater output doesn't necessarily produce better results.

Businesses can generate endless marketing material while losing sight of their customers. He cautions against neglecting organic growth in favor of paid advertising.

After all, customers don't simply want efficient systems. They want solutions that work and experiences that make them feel understood. Hodge's own entrepreneurial journey reinforces that philosophy.

After selling DOWN, Hodge later had an opportunity to reacquire it. This time, he focused on building a healthier, more sustainable company rather than chasing vanity metrics.

His lesson is clear: "When you understand how your users think and how they behave, that's when you can unlock untold growth." — Colin Hodge

What I especially enjoyed about my conversation with Colin was how he made the psychology behind business growth so practical. I came away thinking differently about what really drives success. It's not simply better technology or bigger advertising budgets. It's understanding the people you serve.

I think you'll find our conversation as fascinating as I did.

Listen to my complete interview with Colin Hodge on The Tony DUrso Show at https://tonydurso.com/colin-hodge