



Stanford eCorner

When Startups Get Press Coverage

Jessica Mah, *inDinero*

November 30, 2011

Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/2855/When-Startups-Get-Press-Coverage>

Jessica Mah, co-founder of financial software firm inDinero, examines both the temporary benefits and possible downside to receiving early attention from media outlets. In conversation with entrepreneur Steve Blank, Mah says it's important to ensure that time spent working with the press translates into sales for your startup.



Transcript

Well, getting a lot of press is a lot of fun. It's really good for the ego but.... And, why did you get all that press do you think? Well, we had an interesting story. Like we were a 20 and a 19-year-old building a startup to help business owners and we were fresh out of Y Combinator and we had raised \$1 million, and it sounds really cool, but after we got a lot of this press, we realized that maybe half of it didn't really convert into signups. So - but the press felt good. Why did you care about signups? It was about you. I thought so and then I got your phone call. Steve called me after this huge wave of press and said, Jess, like, you have to really think about what you are doing to yourself and really make sure that when you are getting press it's actually leading to money, to business results because it takes a lot of time to go out and do speaking engagements and talk to reporters and if it's just about boosting your ego, it's just not a great use of time. But, feels good for a while, doesn't it? It does and then over time we had a lot of friends saying, how's inDinero? Oh, it's probably doing great. I saw you in Inc.

Magazine or Fast Company. But, it really doesn't feel great because deep down inside you know how hard it is to build your company, and you know that you are not successful yet. So, you just feel like a con artist in a way. So, did you feel that way for a while? I still feel that way. How come? Because people think you are successful when you are still struggling.