



**Pear Deck™**

## Identifying Opportunity to Improve Student Engagement

Founded by Riley and Michal Eynon-Lynch, Anthony Showalter and Dan Sweeney, Pear Deck is an early-stage Ed-Tech company that provides a teaching tool that significantly improves student engagement. Riley and Michal are former teachers who have devoted their entrepreneurial careers to developing products and tools that improve the educational experience for both teachers and students on a daily basis. Ultimately improving the end learning experience, Pear Deck has quickly become a favorite engagement tool in more than one-third of schools nationwide and is cultivating nearly one million moments of student engagement during each school day.

EDC had originally engaged with this team when they were growing Active Grade, an Ed-Tech company they sold in 2013. They re-engaged with EDC when they began Pear Deck in 2014 and have been engaged throughout their journey to date. Support has encompassed everything from finance and capital raising to marketing and sales assistance. Most recently, EDC has been engaged in developing the sales organization; strengthening both the selling process as well as individual selling skills.

"EDC has been a value to us from the very beginning. I think EDC has touched on almost every part of our business. We came to EDC right away when we were developing our business plan and then we came to them a few months later when we wanted to raise money from IEDA. Most recently, we have used their guidance to polish our selling process. EDC's direct, hands-on approach has been crucial to our scaling business. EDC differs from other business resources in the scope of their expertise and how dedicated they are to each company that they're helping," said Riley Eynon-Lynch, Co-Founder and CEO.



**Company:** Pear Deck

*Pear Deck was founded by educators to help teachers engage every student, every day.*

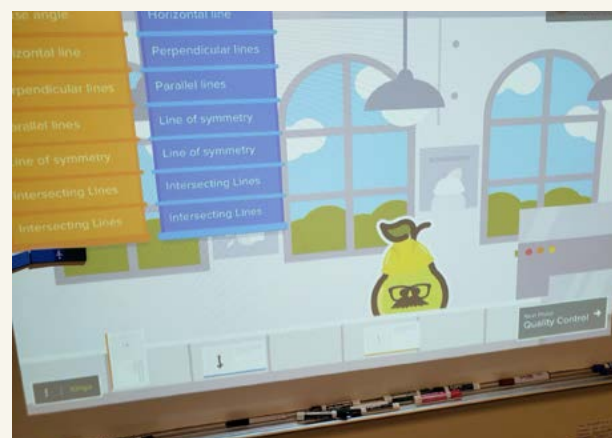
**Founders:** Michal Eynon-Lynch and Riley Eynon-Lynch

**Location:** Iowa City

**Stage When Started with EDC:** Startup

**Current Stage:** Early

[www.peardeck.com](http://www.peardeck.com)



## Building a Powerful Student Engagement Tool in Iowa

The Pear Deck team uncovered a need in the classroom and created an effective solution using the Google platform (and now Microsoft as well) already embedded in most school districts. EDC engaged to help the team develop a plan and strategy to efficiently go to market. EDC worked closely with the founder team to provide high-level strategic planning and develop a fundraising plan. Early on, EDC helped assess the team's fit and capabilities and helped with the hiring process as Pear Deck expanded its team.

In 2017, Pear Deck successfully raised a Series A equity round, continued to expand its team and moved into larger space in downtown Iowa City.

"I value EDC on many levels. From experienced business guidance and hands-on engagement, to more tactical connections with other like-minded entrepreneurs and vendors, we have turned to them at each growth stage of our business," said Eynon-Lynch.

## Developing an Effective Sales Engine

In 2018, EDC's President & CEO, Curt Nelson, engaged as interim sales manager for Pear Deck and helped build out the company's sales organization and structure to scale revenue. He met routinely with sales team members to track sales progress and mentor them on selling technique. The sales team exceeded their 2018 sales goal.

"Curt worked with our sales team and me in a very engaged way. He worked weekly with our sales team—both revenue and overall selling price improved significantly over the year to the point where we ended 2018 at roughly 130% of the original sales plan.

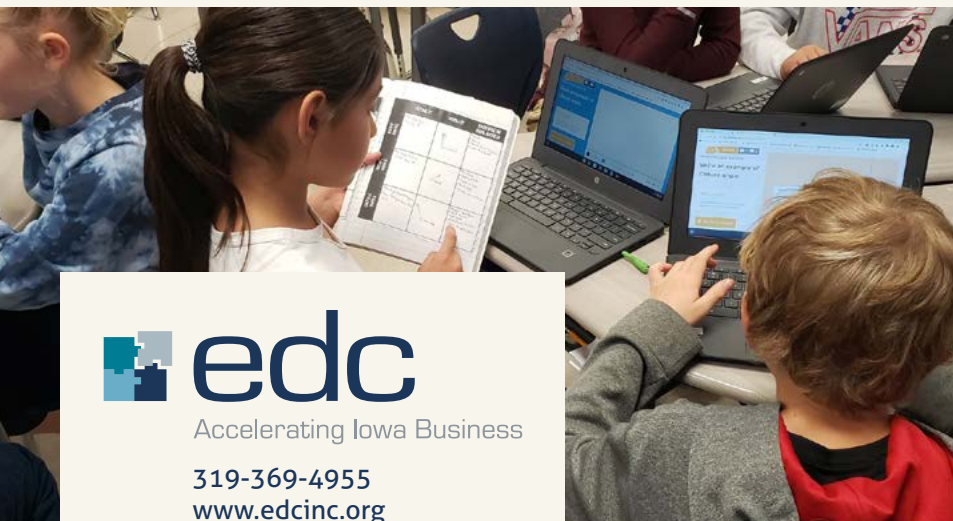
Without EDC's engagement in 2018 alone, there would have been many, many dollars of revenue and margin that we would not have realized. It is really clear to me that our organization would not be as smoothly functioning and highly performing as we are without EDC's help," said Eynon-Lynch.

Curt continued to lead the sales team and hold weekly meetings with the various salespeople to provide feedback and monitor sales progress against the plan until Pear Deck hired a VP of Sales to take the reins and continue to grow Pear Deck's footprint.

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## Expanding the Pear Deck Ecosystem

Only six years after launch, Pear Deck has grown to nearly 50 full-time employees, steadily increased revenue and has developed a strong product road map introducing new products that further entrench its presence in school districts across the nation. In addition to being in Google Classrooms, Pear Deck recently partnered with Microsoft in Education to create a seamless Pear Deck integration for PowerPoint Online and Teams. This is an exciting milestone in Pear Deck's mission to help teachers throughout the country boost student engagement.



Accelerating Iowa Business

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