The Starving-Crowd Test for Your ZIP Codes

All three have to be true. Answer for the ZIP codes you can actually reach on a Tuesday, not the ones you wish you served.

PAIN — the electrical complaints you have personally been called about in these ZIP codes in the last year.

PURCHASING POWER — how old is the housing stock, what do these homes sell for, who pays for a panel upgrade?

TARGETABILITY — three places these homeowners already are that you can reach this week without buying a lead.

THE VERDICT — which of the three is weakest, and what would it take to fix it or to move?

Your Homeowner Avatar

One person, not a segment. If you cannot picture her kitchen, you have not found her yet.

Who is she? Age, age of the house, how long she has owned it, who else lives there, what she does for work.

What is she afraid of? In her words, not yours — the sentence she would say to somebody she lives with.

What has she already tried? The video, the handyman, the big company's quote, the breaker she keeps resetting.

What does she type into her phone at eleven at night? Write five searches, exactly as she would type them.

Personal Runway Worksheet

Every fixed cost at your address, and what covers it if your income goes to zero. Total it, divide your savings by it, and write the answer in weeks at the bottom.

MONTHLY PERSONAL EXPENSE	AMOUNT	COVERED BY (SAVINGS / SPOUSE / SIDE INCOME)

Demand by Month — Electrical Contracting

The index is national search interest for this trade, normalised so an average month is one. Fill the rest from your own year and see whether your slow months match the country's.

MONTH	DEMAND INDEX	JOBS YOU EXPECT	REVENUE YOU EXPECT	WHAT YOU WILL DO IN THE SLOW MONTHS
Jan	0.94			
Feb	0.94			
Mar	0.95			
Apr	0.95			
May	0.92			
Jun	1.00			
Jul	1.09			
Aug	1.12			
Sep	1.05			
Oct	1.07			
Nov	0.97			
Dec	1.01			
Year				

Demand index: 1.00 = an average month for this trade nationally (source in Resources). Your ZIP will differ — pencil your own index in the slow and busy months.

Dream Outcome Builder

In her words, with a timeframe. If it reads like a scope of work, you have written yours instead of hers.

The result she wants, in the sentence she would actually say to somebody she lives with.

By when? Name a real timeframe you can hit on your worst week, not your best one.

So that what changes for her? The feeling, the argument that stops, the thing she can finally do.

Where does that outcome break down today — what actually stops her getting it from anyone?

Rewrite all of it as one sentence you could say standing in her kitchen.

Obstacle → Solution Map

Fifteen rows on purpose. Category is knowledge, skill, environment or psychology. A blank row here is an objection you will hear at a kitchen table later.

#	WHAT STOPS THE HOMEOWNER	CATEGORY	HOW YOUR OFFER REMOVES IT
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			

Your Value Stack

Every component your answers created. Score value to her and cost to you, then keep, demote to bonus, or cut. Aim to finish with six to ten that survive.

COMPONENT	PROBLEM IT SOLVES	VALUE TO THEM	COST TO YOU	KEEP / BONUS / CUT

Guarantee and Offer Name

Write one you could still honour in a slow February with one truck and one bank account.

What exactly do you guarantee? Name the work you performed — not the house, not somebody else's wire.

For how long, and what does honouring it cost you if it happens twice this year?

The exclusions, in full. Supplied equipment, wiring you did not open, declined repairs, other trades.

Three candidate names for the offer. Say each one out loud before you write it down.

How and when does she get told which bucket her job falls into?

Service Area and Jobs You Will Not Do

Both halves. The refusal list protects the calendar; the ideal-customer list fills it.

Your core ring: the ZIP codes you can reach in under thirty minutes, listed by name.

The outer ring you will only enter for a job above a stated size — and what that size is.

Jobs you will not take, and the reason for each. Licensing, cash terms, equipment, hassle.

Your ideal customer in one paragraph: house age, ownership, ticket size, how they find you.

What has to change before you widen the ring? Write the trigger, not the wish.

Drive-Time Ring Test

Sort last year's jobs into rings and total each one. The ring that pays for your year is usually not the ring you spend your day in.

RING	ZIP CODES IN IT	JOBS LAST YEAR	AVERAGE TICKET	HOURS OF DRIVING	KEEP, PRICE HIGHER, OR DROP
Under 15 minutes					
15 to 30 minutes					
30 to 45 minutes					
45 to 60 minutes					
Over an hour					

Ten-Competitor Scan

Open ten map listings the way a homeowner would. Record what they promise, then read their one-star reviews and record what they fail at.

COMPANY	GOOGLE RATING	REVIEWS	PRICE SIGNAL	THEIR PROMISE	GAP YOU CAN OWN

Your One-Liner and Positioning Statement

Problem, plan, result — three sentences. Then read it aloud to somebody who does not do this work.

The problem, in the homeowner's words. Not the technical fault — the thing she is living with.

The plan in three steps, so it sounds like a path instead of a mystery.

The result she gets, stated as what stops happening in her house.

The whole thing as one paragraph you could say out loud without reading it.

Every place it has to appear: voicemail, truck, estimate header, map listing, on-my-way text.

Entity, EIN and Bank Setup

In this order. Doing them out of order means redoing one of them.

- [ ] Decide the entity with an accountant who has seen your actual numbers, not from a blog — DATE
- [ ] File the formation paperwork with your Secretary of State and save the stamped copy — DATE
- [ ] Apply for the EIN directly on the IRS site — it is free and takes one session — DATE
- [ ] Open a business checking account in the company name using the EIN — DATE
- [ ] Open a second account for tax set-aside, and move a fixed percentage into it every week — DATE
- [ ] Register for state and local business tax accounts where your state requires them — DATE
- [ ] Get a written answer on sales tax for a residential service call where you supply devices — DATE
- [ ] Register the business name and reserve the matching domain and email address — DATE
- [ ] Set up bookkeeping before the first invoice, not after the first tax season — DATE
- [ ] Put the license number, entity name and insurance carrier on your estimate template — DATE
- [ ] Confirm with the permit desk which credential number they accept on a submission — DATE
- [ ] Diary the renewal dates for entity filing, license and insurance in one calendar — DATE

License Requirements by State — Electrical Contracting

Ten states side by side, with the fee ranges and exam requirements as researched. Fees and reciprocity change — confirm on your own board's site before you file.

STATE	LICENSE REQUIRED?	LICENSE	BOARD	FEE	EXAM
Kentucky	Yes	Electrical Contractor License (also Master Electrician / Electrician tiers)	Kentucky Department of Housing, Buildings and Construction (HBC), Electrical Division	\$50–\$200	Yes
Texas	Yes	Electrical Contractor License (requires a Master Electrician of Record)	Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR)	\$45–\$110	Yes
California	Yes	C-10 Electrical Contractor	Contractors State License Board (CSLB)	\$200–\$350	Yes
Florida	Yes	Certified Electrical Contractor (EC, statewide)	Florida DBPR / Electrical Contractors' Licensing Board (ECLB)	\$121–\$296	Yes
New York	No statewide	—	Check city / county	—	No
Pennsylvania	Yes	Home Improvement Contractor (HIC) Registration	PA Office of Attorney General	\$100	No
Illinois	No statewide	—	Check city / county	—	No
Ohio	Yes	Electrical Contractor License (OCILB commercial trade license)	Ohio Construction Industry Licensing Board (OCILB) / Ohio Dept. of Commerce	\$25–\$69	Yes
Georgia	Yes	Electrical Contractor (Class I Restricted / Class II Unrestricted)	Georgia State Board of Electrical Contractors (Secretary of State)	\$35–\$75	Yes
North Carolina	Yes	Electrical Contractor (Limited / Intermediate / Unlimited)	NC State Board of Examiners of Electrical Contractors	\$100–\$200	Yes
Michigan	Yes	Electrical Contractor (requires a Master Electrician on staff)	Michigan LARA / Board of Electrical Examiners	\$50–\$100	Yes

Rules change — confirm with the board before you spend a dollar.

Insurance Lines and Annual Cost Ranges

What each line covers and what it costs. Workers' comp is a rate against payroll, so it stays near zero until the week you hire.

COVERAGE	TYPICAL ANNUAL COST	WHAT IT COVERS	YOUR QUOTE
General liability	$444–$936	Damage or injury you cause to others	
Workers comp	2.5–12.09 per $100 payroll	Your crew, hurt on the job	
Commercial auto	$1,682–$3,304	The truck and what it hits	
Bond	$4,000–$130,000	Bond requirement and face value vary by state/license (e.g. Georgia has none for Class I/II; Illinois/PA have no statewide license so no state bond; Michigan and other states set amounts through the license board); not universally required for electrical contracting. Annual premium is typically 1-5% of the bond amount.	
Tools & equipment		Theft from the truck or site	
Umbrella		Above the GL limit	

Insurance Quote Log

Three carriers per line, minimum. The spread between carriers on identical coverage is the reason this page exists.

CARRIER / AGENT	LINE	LIMITS	ANNUAL PREMIUM	DEDUCTIBLE	DECISION

Questions for Your Attorney and Accountant

Take this page with you. You are paying for answers, not for your own education on the clock.

- [ ] Which entity fits my income, my risk and my plan to hire in this state? DATE ______
- [ ] What exactly am I personally signing when my license number goes on a permit? DATE ______
- [ ] On a residential service call where I supply devices, what is taxable and who remits it? DATE ______
- [ ] What must be in writing before work starts for me to enforce payment in this state? DATE ______
- [ ] How do I document a change in scope so that it holds up if the customer disputes it? DATE ______
- [ ] What are the deadlines and steps to preserve my lien rights here? DATE ______
- [ ] When does a helper have to be an employee rather than a subcontractor? DATE ______
- [ ] What records must I keep, for how long, and in what form? DATE ______
- [ ] What should I be setting aside for taxes each week at my expected revenue? DATE ______
- [ ] Review the estimate, invoice and change-order paperwork I actually intend to use DATE ______
- [ ] What insurance limits do the general contractors and property managers here demand? DATE ______
- [ ] What is the first thing you would tell me to stop doing? DATE ______

Equipment Budget — Electrical Contracting

Researched price ranges with the day-one essentials marked. Fill the last column with what you actually paid at your own supply house.

ITEM	LOW	HIGH	DAY ONE?	YOUR PRICE	BOUGHT
Non-contact voltage tester pen	$14	$30	Yes		
Digital multimeter (basic manual-ranging)	$30	$70	Yes		
100 ft. fish tape reel	$23	$120	Yes		
8 in. lineman's/side-cutting pliers	$30	$50	Yes		
Wire stripper/cutter	$15	$47	Yes		
1000V insulated screwdriver set	$18	$45	Yes		
Cordless drill/driver kit	$99	$329	Yes		
25 ft. tape measure	$10	$33	Yes		
Electrician's tool belt/pouch	$25	$55	Yes		
6 ft. fiberglass step ladder (non-conductive)	$119	$183	Yes		
Non-contact voltage + GFCI receptacle tester kit	$19	$35	Yes		
Wire connector (wire nut) assortment kit	$5	$30	Yes		
Heavy-duty electrician's tool bag	$35	$90	Yes		
1/2 in. EMT conduit bender	$40	$60	Later		
Essential equipment	**$442**	**$1,117**			

Ranges are retail prices at the time of research (sources in Resources). Used and rental are the day-one shortcuts.

Truck Stock — the Line Nobody Budgets

The parts that turn a second trip into a first-visit fix. Cost it once, restock it weekly, and treat the total as capital, not as expense.

ITEM	WHY IT IS ON THE VAN	QUANTITY CARRIED	UNIT COST	RESTOCK TRIGGER

Total Startup Budget

Essential tools plus vehicle plus first-year liability insurance plus launch marketing. Add your own lines for truck stock, permits and the personal reserve from chapter one.

LINE	LOW	HIGH	YOUR NUMBER
Essential equipment (previous page)	$442	$1,117	
Used cargo van (2018-2019 Ford Transit 250, ~5-7 years old)	$12,200	$18,500	
General liability, year one	$444	$936	
Launch marketing	$5,000	$15,000	
Licenses and permits			
Software and phone, 3 months			
Personal runway (chapter 1)			
Reserve (10% of the total)			
Total startup	**$18,086**	**$35,553**	

Funding Sources

Rank by cost and by what it can take from you if the year goes badly — not by how easy it is to get.

SOURCE	AMOUNT AVAILABLE	COST (RATE / EQUITY / FAVOR)	SPEED	USE IT?

Client-Financed Acquisition Plan

Trace one new customer through their first thirty days and see whether they paid for the next one.

What do you collect up front, on which job types, and what do you say when you ask for it?

How and when does the invoice go out? Name the moment, not the day of the week.

Everything one new customer pays you in the first thirty days — list every line.

What it cost to get them and to serve them, honestly, including your own hours.

Positive or negative? If negative, what changes first — the offer, the price, or the channel?

Typical Jobs and Price Ranges — Electrical Contracting

Published price ranges for the jobs this trade sells most, with the hours each typically takes. Fill in your own price and your own hours and compare.

TYPICAL JOB	LOW	HIGH	HOURS	PER HOUR (HIGH ÷ HOURS)	YOUR PRICE
Service call / diagnostic (first hour)	$100	$200	1	$200	
Install a new electrical outlet	$133	$296	1	$296	
Ceiling fan installation (existing wiring)	$146	$360	1.5	$240	
Electrical panel upgrade to 200-amp service	$1,300	$3,000	8	$375	
Level 2 EV charger installation	$750	$2,500	4	$625	
Whole-house rewire (avg. single-family home)	$6,000	$12,000	40	$300	

Crews in this trade bill $50–$130 an hour (hourly pricing). Technicians earn $21–$34 an hour.

Good / Better / Best Builder

Build all three for your most common job. Write what each one leaves out — that column is what makes the page honest.

	GOOD	BETTER	BEST
Name			
What is included			
What is left out			
Price			
Guarantee			
Who buys it			
Anchor shown first?			

Break-Even Hourly Rate

The number where you make nothing. Be honest about billable hours — driving, quoting and the permit desk are not billable.

LINE	MONTHLY AMOUNT	NOTES
Your pay		
Insurance		
Vehicle + fuel		
Software + phone		
Tools + repairs		
Marketing		
Other fixed		
TOTAL monthly nut		
Billable hours per month		
Break-even hourly = nut ÷ hours		
Target margin %		
Your rate = break-even ÷ (1 − margin)		

Markup vs Margin Table

Markup is what you add to cost. Margin is what is left of the price. Convert ten of your real jobs and see which one you have been quoting.

JOB COST	MARKUP %	PRICE	MARGIN %

Price Raise Ladder

One increment at a time on new customers only. Log what you raised, when, and what actually happened to your close rate.

DATE	WHAT YOU RAISED	OLD	NEW	CLOSE RATE BEFORE / AFTER	KEEP OR ROLL BACK

Your Attraction Offer

A named, priced first visit that reveals the next problem honestly. Free estimates are not an attraction offer, they are a subsidy.

What is it called, what does it include, and what does it cost?

What does it reveal that she did not know an hour ago? List the checks you actually perform.

How is the finding delivered — the sheet, the photographs, the red/yellow/green sort?

What do you say about crediting the fee against the repair, word for word?

How will you know it is working? Name the number you will count each month.

Upsell and Downsell Plan

Upsells you can deliver from van stock today; downsells that change terms or scope, never the price of the same work.

The five upsells a solved fault creates in a typical house, in the order you would offer them.

Which of them can you complete on the same visit from stock, and what does that require you to carry?

Your three downsell moves: phase it, change the terms, change the scope. Write each one out.

The sentence you will not say — the one that discounts the identical job. Write it down so you notice it.

Continuity or Referral Plan

This trade has no natural subscription. Build the annual inspection, the referral network and the customer list instead, and set a real target for each.

PLAY	WHAT THEY GET	PRICE / REWARD	WHEN YOU OFFER IT	TARGET TAKE-RATE

The 30-Day Cash Test

One new customer, first thirty days. If the bottom line is negative, more advertising makes it worse, not better.

LINE	AMOUNT	WHERE THE NUMBER CAME FROM
Attraction offer collected		
Upsells collected		
Downsell recovery		
Scheduled work paid in the window		
= 30-day cash		
Cost to acquire		
Cost to serve (parts, fuel, your hours)		
= 30-day profit per customer		
Customers this can fund next month		

Job-Start Checklist

Everything before the first cover plate comes off. Most complaints in this trade are made in the first ten minutes.

- [ ] Arrival window confirmed the evening before with the name of who is coming — DATE
- [ ] Text sent when leaving the previous job, with a realistic time — DATE
- [ ] Confirm out loud what you are there to do, in her words, before you start — DATE
- [ ] Floor and furniture protected on the route in and at the work area — DATE
- [ ] Tell her what the power situation will be and roughly for how long — DATE
- [ ] Test before you touch — every time, with the tester where she can see it — DATE
- [ ] Panel photographed as found, before anything changes — DATE
- [ ] Permit pulled and inspection scheduled where the work requires one — DATE
- [ ] Agree where you will work and where you will not go — DATE
- [ ] Pets and children accounted for before tools are out — DATE
- [ ] Written price accepted before anything is opened up — DATE
- [ ] Ladder set on solid footing, correct ladder for the location — DATE

Job-Close Checklist

The review is decided here. Every item on this list is something she can actually evaluate.

- [ ] Panel labelled legibly and photographed — DATE
- [ ] Fix demonstrated with the tester, and she holds it — DATE
- [ ] All covers and plates on, all breakers back on, nothing left temporary — DATE
- [ ] Area cleaned to better than you found it, your debris in your van — DATE
- [ ] Findings sheet handed over with the yellows and greens still on it — DATE
- [ ] Say plainly which items she can leave alone until next year — DATE
- [ ] Photographs of the finished work taken and sent — DATE
- [ ] Permit inspection scheduled or completed, and she knows the date — DATE
- [ ] Invoice issued before you leave the driveway — DATE
- [ ] Payment collected or terms confirmed in writing — DATE
- [ ] Next thing booked — the scheduled work or the annual check — DATE
- [ ] Review asked for once, in person, before you leave — DATE
- [ ] Two-day follow-up put in your calendar before you drive off — DATE

Family Worksheet

The license path and the qualifier question. Answer these before you commit to a route, not after.

Where are you on the ladder right now — hours logged, exams passed, what is missing?

What exactly does your state require before your COMPANY can hold a contractor license?

Route one: you get the master card. What is the timeline, the cost and the hour requirement?

Route two: a qualifier. Who, what do they get, what notice, and what happens to open permits if they leave?

Your permit and inspection routine: who you call, when you schedule, and what they told you people get wrong.

Equipment Log

Four minutes a month. It tells you when a tool is about to fail, and it gives your accountant the schedule without a shoebox.

ITEM	BOUGHT	COST	SERVICE DUE	SERVICED	NOTES

Your Warm 100 — 1 of 2

Everyone who would recognise your name. Old crews, general contractors, the supply house, other trades, church, the ball field, your old boss's customers.

#	NAME	HOW YOU KNOW THEM	CONTACTED	RESPONSE	REFERRAL?
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					
16					
17					
18					
19					
20					
21					
22					
23					
24					
25					

Your Warm 100 — 2 of 2

#	NAME	HOW YOU KNOW THEM	CONTACTED	RESPONSE	REFERRAL?
26					
27					
28					
29					
30					
31					
32					
33					
34					
35					
36					
37					
38					
39					
40					
41					
42					
43					
44					
45					
46					
47					
48					
49					
50					

Lead Magnet Plan

Solve one narrow problem completely, in under ten minutes, and land on a question only somebody with a meter can answer.

ELEMENT	YOUR ANSWER
Narrow problem it solves	
Type (reveal / sample / one step)	
Delivery format	
Name (test three)	
Time to consume	
The next problem it reveals	
The offer that solves it	

LTGP : CAC Worksheet

Gross profit, not revenue. Lifetime, not one job. Under three to one and buying leads will not save you.

LINE	AMOUNT	HOW YOU GOT IT
Average job price		
Gross margin %		
Gross profit per job		
Jobs per customer (lifetime)		
LTGP		
Marketing spend last 30 days		
New customers last 30 days		
CAC		
LTGP : CAC		

Rule of 100 — Daily Tracker

One of these every working day, including the busy ones. Especially the busy ones.

MEASURE	W1	W2	W3	W4	W5	W6	W7	W8	W9	W10	W11	W12
Cold reaches												
Warm reaches												
Content minutes												
Ad minutes / dollars												
Follow-ups sent												
Estimates booked												

WEEK NOTES

Referral Partner Board

Twenty of these relationships is a business. Track the visit, not the intention — and log what they said they wish their electrician did differently.

NAME	TYPE (REALTOR / INSPECTOR / GC / PM)	FIRST VISIT	WHAT THEY NEED FROM YOU	JOBS SENT	NEXT TOUCH

Estimate Visit Checklist

Every item removes one of her four fears. Work down it in order and the price conversation gets easier on its own.

- [ ] Arrive inside the window you promised, or call before you are late — DATE ____
- [ ] Certificate of insurance and license number offered before she asks — DATE ____
- [ ] Ask what is happening before you say what you think — DATE ____
- [ ] Ask what it costs her already, and what happens if nothing changes — DATE ____
- [ ] Never comment on how the house got this way — DATE ____
- [ ] Photograph everything you found, at her address, on your phone — DATE ____
- [ ] Show her one specific comparable job nearby, not a general claim — DATE ____
- [ ] Findings sorted red, yellow and green, with greens genuinely in it — DATE ____
- [ ] Say out loud which items can wait until next year — DATE ____
- [ ] Three priced options on one page, largest shown first — DATE ____
- [ ] Say the price and then stop talking — DATE ____
- [ ] Written exclusions handed over at the same time as the price — DATE ____
- [ ] Agree the next step before you leave — a date, not a maybe — DATE ____

Your Question Ladder

Write these before you need them. Nobody invents a good implication question standing in a stranger's kitchen.

Three questions that establish what is actually happening, for your most common call.

Three questions that surface what the problem is already costing her.

Two questions about what happens if nothing changes — real questions, not scare tactics.

Two questions that make her say the benefit of solving it out loud, in her own words.

The sentence you use to move from questions to the priced page.

Objections and Replies — Electrical Contracting

The eight you will actually hear, with what each really means. Write your reply in your own words — a memorised one sounds memorised.

WHAT THEY SAY	WHAT IT REALLY MEANS	YOUR REPLY
That seems like a lot for two hours of work.	They are pricing the minutes they watched, not the risk you took off the house or the years it took you to know where to look.	
My cousin does electrical on the side. He'll do it for half.	They want either permission to take the cheap option, or a reason not to. They are asking you to explain the gap, not to match it.	
Can you just do it without a permit? It's a small job.	They think the permit is your paperwork and your fee, not their protection at resale and their insurance claim.	
Can you give me a price over the phone?	They have been given a phone price before that doubled once the guy was in the house, and they are trying not to get caught again.	
I'm going to get three quotes.	They have no idea what they are comparing, so they are going to compare the only line they understand — the total.	
Can I just buy the parts myself at the store?	They are trying to get some control over a cost they cannot judge, and they suspect there is markup they cannot see.	
The other guy said he could start tomorrow.	Speed is what they are actually buying. The fear is sitting in a house with a problem while nobody calls back.	
It's only one outlet. I'll live with it for now.	They cannot tell the difference between a fault that waits and a fault that does not, so they default to waiting.	

Review Request Script

In person, in the room, once. Ask everyone, offer nothing, and never write it for them.

Your ask, word for word, said out loud until it stops sounding like an apology.

When exactly you say it — the moment in the close-out, not the day of the week.

How the link gets to her within five minutes, and who sends it if you are on a ladder.

Your reply template for a good review — name the work back to them.

Your reply for an unhappy one: acknowledge, own it, move it offline, then fix it.

First-Hire Scorecard

Tired is not a signal. Count how many of these are actually true before you post the job.

SIGNAL	YES / NO	EVIDENCE
Turning away work weekly		
Working > 55 hours		
Callbacks rising		
Cash covers 8 weeks of wages		
A job description exists		
A training week is planned		
A 90-day exit plan exists		

What You Pay For Is What You Get

Write the behaviour you want first, then the pay structure that produces it. If they disagree, the pay structure wins.

BEHAVIOUR YOU WANT	HOW YOU WOULD MEASURE IT	WHAT YOU WILL PAY FOR IT	HOW IT COULD BE GAMED	YOUR GUARDRAIL

30 / 60 / 90 Ramp Plan

Write it before they start. A helper who is guessing in week three is a helper who quits in month three.

MILESTONE	DAY 30	DAY 60	DAY 90

Org Chart at $250k, $500k and $1M

Names where you have them, blanks where you do not. The blanks are your hiring plan, in order.

Today: every role you personally hold. List them all, including the ones you hate.

At the first level up: who is doing what, and which role comes off your plate first?

At the second level: what does a second van require before it earns its keep?

At the third: what is your job by then, and what have you stopped doing entirely?

Which blank do you fill next, and what has to be true before you fill it?

Twelve-Month Forecast

Seeded with this trade's national demand index. Put your own jobs and average ticket against each month, then come back and write what actually happened.

MONTH	DEMAND INDEX	JOBS	AVG TICKET	REVENUE	COSTS	PROFIT
Jan	0.94					
Feb	0.94					
Mar	0.95					
Apr	0.95					
May	0.92					
Jun	1.00					
Jul	1.09					
Aug	1.12					
Sep	1.05					
Oct	1.07					
Nov	0.97					
Dec	1.01					
Year						

Demand index: 1.00 = an average month for this trade nationally (source in Resources). Your ZIP will differ — pencil your own index in the slow and busy months.

Cash Flow Log

Weekly, four minutes. Deposits held is a separate column on purpose — that money is not yours yet.

WEEK	CASH IN	CASH OUT	BALANCE	DEPOSITS HELD	NOTES

Profit First Allocations

Every dollar gets a job the day it lands. Start with percentages you will actually keep to, and raise them a little each quarter.

ACCOUNT	TARGET %	THIS MONTH $	ACTUAL %
Income (100%)			
Profit			
Owner pay			
Tax			
Operating expenses			
Materials / subs pass-through			

KPI Scorecard — Electrical Contracting

Researched benchmarks from established multi-truck service companies. Treat them as direction, not as a grade — your own first three months matter more.

MEASURE	W1	W2	W3	W4	W5	W6	W7	W8	W9	W10	W11	W12
First-time fix rate (target 80%)												
Closed call rate (service calls closed on-site) (target 85%)												
Service-call to maintenance/inspection agreement conversion (target 30%)												
On-time arrival rate (target 78%)												
Job completion rate (target 86%)												
Gross margin (residential service work) (target 66%)												
Net profit margin (target 15%)												

WEEK NOTES

Monthly P&L

Count the same way every month, even when a different definition would flatter you. Fill it in before you look at last month.

MONTH	REVENUE	MATERIALS + SUBS	LABOR	OVERHEAD	NET PROFIT

Days 1–30: Get Cash

One goal this month: money from a customer for electrical work you performed. Everything else is either in service of that or it is procrastination.

- [ ] Entity filed, EIN issued, business bank account open — DATE
- [ ] License confirmed with your state board and the permit desk — DATE
- [ ] General liability in force; commercial auto in force; certificate on your phone — DATE
- [ ] Attraction offer named and priced, written on one page — DATE
- [ ] Three-option estimate template built, with exclusions on the same page — DATE
- [ ] Map listing complete: every field, real photographs, correct hours — DATE
- [ ] Your eight objection replies written in your own words — DATE
- [ ] Warm hundred listed — actual names, not a category — DATE
- [ ] Twenty warm contacts made in week one, twenty a week after — DATE
- [ ] Essential tools and first truck stock bought and loaded — DATE
- [ ] First paying job completed with the full close-out standard, no shortcuts — DATE
- [ ] First review asked for in person, before leaving the driveway — DATE
- [ ] Weekly cash log started, tax account opened and funded — DATE
- [ ] Break-even hourly rate calculated and your rate set from it — DATE

Days 31–60: Get More Cash

Stop hunting and start harvesting. More from the work already in front of you is faster and cheaper than more work.

- [ ] An upsell offered on every job — track offered and landed, not just landed — DATE
- [ ] Truck stock built out to cover your five most common repairs — DATE
- [ ] Price raised one increment on new customers, logged on the ladder sheet — DATE
- [ ] Close rate tracked before and after the raise — DATE
- [ ] Three downsell moves written and used at least once — DATE
- [ ] One realtor, one home inspector, one general contractor visited in person — DATE
- [ ] Findings sheet used on every call, with real greens on it — DATE
- [ ] Photographs taken and sent on every completed job — DATE
- [ ] Reviews asked for on every job; every review replied to within two days — DATE
- [ ] Daily marketing action done every working day, marked on the tracker — DATE
- [ ] First month's seven numbers written on one page — DATE
- [ ] Forecast compared to what actually happened, in writing — DATE

Days 61–90: Get the Most Cash

Did you build a job or a business? These items are the difference.

- [ ] Annual safety inspection booked at close-out on every job — DATE ______
- [ ] Everyone served in the first sixty days contacted and diarised — DATE ______
- [ ] Five referral relationships that have actually sent you work — DATE ______
- [ ] First-hire scorecard run on evidence, not on exhaustion — DATE ______
- [ ] If hiring: job description, training week and 90-day exit plan written first — DATE ______
- [ ] If not hiring: the conditions and the date you will check again, written down — DATE ______
- [ ] Payroll and workers' comp questions answered by your accountant in writing — DATE ______
- [ ] Second price raise considered on the evidence from the first — DATE ______
- [ ] Every tripwire on the milestones sheet given a number and an action — DATE ______
- [ ] Quarter's numbers reviewed against the KPI scorecard — DATE ______
- [ ] One full day off taken, phone off — DATE ______
- [ ] Next ninety days written before this one ends — DATE ______

Milestones and Tripwires

A tripwire needs a number and an action in the same sentence. "I will keep an eye on it" is not a tripwire.

MILESTONE	TARGET DATE	TRIPWIRE (WHAT TELLS YOU IT IS OFF)	HIT?

Decision Log

What you decided, why, and when you will look at it again. In a year this page will be the most valuable one in the book.

DATE	DECISION	WHY	REVISIT ON