The Starving-Crowd Test for Your ZIP Codes

Pick three ZIP codes you would actually drive to. Answer for each. A no on any of the three criteria means pick a different ZIP.

PAIN — In each ZIP, what visible painting problem is urgent right now? Name the streets and what you saw from the truck.

PURCHASING POWER — What tells you these households can pay without a family meeting? Roofs, windows, cars, lawn services.

TARGETABILITY — How would you reach fifty of these homeowners this month without buying a lead? Be specific.

THE PICK — Which ZIP wins, and what is the one fact that decided it? Write the fact, not the feeling.

Your Homeowner Avatar

Write about one real person you could name, not a category. If you cannot picture her kitchen you have not picked her yet.

Who is she? Age, house, how long she has lived there, what she does, who else lives in the house.

What is she afraid of about hiring a painter? List every fear you have actually heard out loud.

What has she already tried, and how did it end? The nephew, the handyman, the quote that never came.

What exact words does she type into her phone? Write them the way she types them, not the way you would.

Personal Runway Worksheet

Every line your household spends in a month, and who or what covers it. Total at the bottom, then divide your cash by that total.

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

Demand by Month — Painting

The index is real painting search demand by month, averaged over five years. Fill in what you expect to sell against it, and what you will do in the flat months.

MONTH	DEMAND INDEX	JOBS YOU EXPECT	REVENUE YOU EXPECT	WHAT YOU WILL DO IN THE SLOW MONTHS
Jan	0.87			
Feb	0.91			
Mar	0.96			
Apr	0.98			
May	0.99			
Jun	1.09			
Jul	1.08			
Aug	1.05			
Sep	1.07			
Oct	1.00			
Nov	1.00			
Dec	0.99			
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

Write in her words, not yours. If a sentence contains a product name or a square footage, it is not the dream outcome yet.

What does she actually want, said the way she would say it to a friend on the phone?

By when, and what happens on that date? Name the event driving the deadline.

What two miseries does she most want removed from the process itself?

Rewrite it as one sentence: result plus timeframe plus what she no longer has to endure.

Obstacle → Solution Map

Fifteen things that stop a homeowner from hiring you. Sort each into knowledge, skill, environment or psychology, then reverse it into a component of your offer.

#	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

One row per component. Score value to her and cost to you honestly, then cut anything expensive to deliver and thin to receive.

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

Guarantee and Offer Name

Guarantee only what you performed, on the surfaces listed, for one season, with your labour as the remedy. Write the exclusions first, then read them aloud at signing.

What exactly do you stand behind? Name the failure modes and the surfaces, not a feeling.

What is excluded, in plain words a homeowner reads without a lawyer? Write every one.

How long, and what does the remedy actually cost you if you have to honour it twice this year?

Three candidate names for the offer. Name the mechanism and the standard, never the category.

Service Area and Jobs You Will Not Do

Write the circle and the refusals now, while the calendar looks fine. You will not have the nerve to write them on a slow Thursday.

Name the towns and ZIP codes inside your circle, and the paint store counter you will use for each.

What is the furthest you will go, and what has to be true about the job for you to break that rule?

List the jobs you will refuse. Beside each, write whether it is a margin decision or a liability decision.

Who is your ideal customer in one sentence, specific enough that you could point at three houses today?

Ten-Competitor Scan

The first ten painters that appear when your customer searches. Read the one and three-star reviews, not the five-star ones. The gap is in the complaints.

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

Drive-Time and Job-Size Filter

Before you say yes to a job outside the circle, fill in a row. If the drive costs more than the job clears, the answer is a friendly referral.

TOWN / ZIP	DRIVE TIME ONE WAY	DAYS ON SITE	NEAREST PAINT STORE	TAKE IT? WHY

Your One-Liner and Positioning Statement

Problem, then plan in about three steps, then result. Say it out loud until it stops sounding written.

The problem, in her language. What does she say to herself about the house when nobody is listening?

Your plan in three steps. Short enough to say without a breath in the middle.

The result, stated as something she feels rather than something you did.

Write the whole one-liner. Then write where it goes: voicemail, estimate header, truck, first message.

Entity, EIN and Bank Setup

One afternoon, in this order. Out of order it becomes three trips and a cheque you cannot deposit.

- [ ] Check that your intended company name is available with your Secretary of State, and search it on a map app too — DATE ______
- [ ] File the entity with the state and save the stamped filing as a file on your phone — DATE ______
- [ ] Apply for the federal employer identification number online, free, and print the confirmation letter — DATE ______
- [ ] Open a business chequing account in the company name, with the filing and the number in hand — DATE ______
- [ ] Get one business debit card and one card only, and never buy groceries with it — DATE ______
- [ ] Register with your county and your city for a local business licence if they require one — DATE ______
- [ ] Ask your accountant how sales tax applies to painting labour and materials in your state — DATE ______
- [ ] Set up bookkeeping software or a spreadsheet before the first invoice, not after the tenth — DATE ______
- [ ] Open a separate savings account for tax money and move a fixed share into it on every deposit — DATE ______
- [ ] Register your business name on the map listing your customers actually search — DATE ______
- [ ] Apply for a contractor account at the paint store you will use, in the company name — DATE ______
- [ ] Put the entity filing, the number letter and the insurance certificate in one folder you can send in a text — DATE ______

License Requirements by State — Painting

Where painting is licensed and where it is not, with the licence name and the fees. Find your state, then call your county, because local rules are not on this page.

STATE	LICENSE REQUIRED?	LICENSE	BOARD	FEE	EXAM
Kentucky	No statewide	—	Check city / county	—	No
Texas	No statewide	—	Check city / county	—	No
California	Yes	C-33 Painting and Decorating Contractor	Contractors State License Board (CSLB)	\$200–\$350	Yes
Florida	No statewide	—	Check city / county	—	No
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	No statewide	—	Check city / county	—	No
Georgia	Yes	Residential-Basic Contractor	GA State Licensing Board for Residential and Commercial General Contractors (Secretary of State)	\$210–\$342	Yes
North Carolina	No statewide	—	Check city / county	—	No
Michigan	No statewide	—	Check city / county	—	No

Federal: EPA Lead-Safe Certified Firm (RRP Rule) (Any firm paid to perform renovation, repair, or painting that disturbs paint in housing or child-occupied facilities built before 1978). Rules change — confirm with the board before you spend a dollar.

Insurance Lines and Annual Cost Ranges

What each line covers and what painting contractors actually pay. The ranges are wide because state law and claim history drive them.

COVERAGE	TYPICAL ANNUAL COST	WHAT IT COVERS	YOUR QUOTE
General liability	$1,592—$4,641	Damage or injury you cause to others	
Workers comp	4.01—27.86 per $100 payroll	Your crew, hurt on the job	
Commercial auto	$1,235—$4,424	The truck and what it hits	
Bond	$25,000—$25,000	Bond face value tied to state contractor licensing varies; California's CSLB requires a uniform $25,000 contractor's bond across all classifications including C-33 Painting. Neither of the other two required-license states in this list (PA's HIC registration, GA's Residential-Basic Contractor) mandates a bond.	
Tools & equipment		Theft from the truck or site	
Umbrella		Above the GL limit	

Insurance Quote Log

Three carriers minimum. Ask every one of them whether spray application is covered and at what working height they stop.

CARRIER / AGENT	LINE	LIMITS	ANNUAL PREMIUM	DEDUCTIBLE	DECISION

Questions for Your Attorney and Accountant

Ask these once, early, while they are cheap questions instead of expensive problems. Write the answers in the same folder as your certificate.

- [ ] Which entity type fits my situation in this state, and what do I have to do each year to keep the protection — DATE
- [ ] How does sales tax apply to painting labour and to materials here, and who remits it — DATE
- [ ] What should my customer agreement include for my state, and will you draft mine — DATE
- [ ] How should change orders be documented so an addition is enforceable — DATE
- [ ] What wording may I use for my guarantee without promising more than I intend — DATE
- [ ] When does a helper have to be on payroll rather than paid as a sub, under this state's tests — DATE
- [ ] What records do I have to keep, for how long, and in what form — DATE
- [ ] What do I owe in estimated taxes, on what schedule, and what should I set aside per dollar collected — DATE
- [ ] What do I need in place before I hire the first person, in order — DATE
- [ ] What is the cheapest mistake I could make now that becomes an expensive one in three years — DATE

Equipment Budget — Painting

Real market ranges. Fill in your price and your source, and mark what you can borrow or rent for the first job instead of buying.

ITEM	LOW	HIGH	DAY ONE?	YOUR PRICE	BOUGHT
Hand masker & painter's tape	$10	$20	Yes		
Painter's 5-in-1 multi-tool	$20	$35	Yes		
Caulking gun + caulk	$15	$30	Yes		
Wood/drywall filler	$6	$18	Yes		
Patching/putty knife	$6	$13	Yes		
Sandpaper (assorted grit)	$5	$10	Yes		
Microfiber & tack cloths	$5	$10	Yes		
Paintbrushes (assorted sizes)	$20	$30	Yes		
Roller frame	$10	$20	Yes		
Roller covers	$5	$10	Yes		
Paint tray	$10	$20	Yes		
Airless paint sprayer	$60	$300	Yes		
Ladder	$50	$100	Yes		
Drop cloth	$5	$20	Yes		
Extension pole	$20	$50	Yes		
Wide (18-in.) rollers	$10	$20	Later		
Essential equipment	**$247**	**$686**			

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

Total Startup Budget

Equipment plus vehicle plus a year of liability plus launch marketing. Cross out the truck line if you already own one and see what is left.

LINE	LOW	HIGH	YOUR NUMBER
Essential equipment (previous page)	$247	$686	
Used half-ton pickup truck w/ ladder rack (2018-2019 model, ~7 years old)	$13,850	$18,880	
General liability, year one	$1,592	$4,641	
Launch marketing	$2,125	$4,000	
Licenses and permits			
Software and phone, 3 months			
Personal runway (chapter 1)			
Reserve (10% of the total)			
Total startup	**$17,814**	**$28,207**	

Funding Sources

Rank by what each one costs you in a bad month, not a good one. Anything secured by your home goes at the bottom for a reason.

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

Client-Financed Acquisition Plan

Write the exact words and the exact numbers. You will not invent them well while standing in a customer's kitchen.

What deposit do you take, and what does it cover? Write the sentence you will say out loud.

When do you collect the balance, and what triggers it? Name the moment, not a date.

What share of the profit from job one goes straight into finding job three? Write the percentage and the dollar rule.

What is your rule for material float — how much of somebody else's paint will you carry before the deposit clears?

Typical Jobs and Price Ranges — Painting

National ranges by job type. Write your own price beside each one, then check it against the break-even sheet before you quote it.

TYPICAL JOB	LOW	HIGH	HOURS	PER HOUR (HIGH ÷ HOURS)	YOUR PRICE
Interior single room painting (walls + ceiling, 2 coats)	$300	$1,000	8	$125	
Whole-house interior painting (walls + ceilings)	$1,000	$2,900	40	$73	
Exterior house painting (siding + trim, avg. home)	$1,810	$4,512	48	$94	
Kitchen cabinet painting/refinishing	$200	$2,000	16	$125	
Fence staining	$750	$4,250	10	$425	
Deck staining	$550	$1,050	6	$175	

Crews in this trade bill $20—$100 an hour (quoted per sq ft of paintable surface (walls/ceilings/siding)). Technicians earn $20—$27 an hour.

Good / Better / Best Builder

Tiers differ by scope, never by prep. Show the biggest column first and let her choose down from it.

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

Break-Even Hourly Rate

Every cost of being in business this month, divided by the hours you can honestly bill. Below this rate you are paying to work.

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

Fill it in once and keep it in the truck. These are two different numbers and confusing them is how busy painters end up broke.

JOB COST	MARKUP %	PRICE	MARGIN %

Your Attraction Offer

Small, useful, honest, and it reveals the next real problem. Write it so a stranger would say yes without deciding anything.

What is the free or low-risk first step you offer, in one sentence a homeowner would repeat?

What does she walk away holding? Name the physical thing — a report, boards, photographs.

What next problem does it reveal, and which of your offers solves that problem?

What does it cost you in hours and materials, and how many have to convert for it to pay?

Upsell and Downsell Plan

The upsell is a sentence said on site with the ladder up. The downsell changes how she pays or what she gets, never the price of the same thing.

List every add-on you can offer while already set up on a job, and the moment you say each one.

Write the upsell sentence for your most common job, word for word, out loud, twice.

List your downsells. Beside each, write what is actually coming out of the scope.

What will you never discount, no matter what she asks? Write it here so you do not negotiate with yourself later.

Continuity or Referral Plan

Painting has no true subscription, so the referral engine and the repaint clock have to be deliberate. One row per play.

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

Repaint Clock — Who to Call and When

You are the only person holding the record of what was painted, with what, and in what year. That record is your warmest lead list.

CUSTOMER	JOB AND YEAR	PRODUCT AND COLOUR CODE	DUE BACK (YEARS)	MONTH TO CALL	CALLED?

Job-Start Checklist

Run it on the first morning before a drop cloth comes out of the truck. Every line is one you will otherwise learn the hard way.

- [ ] Confirm the colour, sheen and product line against the signed scope, out loud, with the customer — DATE ______
- [ ] Walk the property with her and photograph existing damage before you touch anything — DATE ______
- [ ] Ask where she parks, who is home during the day, and where the pets will be — DATE ______
- [ ] Move or mask every vehicle within reach of a sprayer, and ask about the neighbour's too — DATE ______
- [ ] Cover plants and shrubs, and note which ones will need water if the day gets hot — DATE ______
- [ ] Paper the driveway, the walk and any hard surface under the work area — DATE ______
- [ ] Set and tie off ladders at the correct angle, extended past the landing, feet on solid ground — DATE ______
- [ ] Confirm the water source, the power source and where waste goes — DATE ______
- [ ] Check the forecast for surface temperature, dew point and rain inside the label's window — DATE ______
- [ ] Confirm the day you expect to finish and the rain plan, and put both in a text she can keep — DATE ______
- [ ] Hand her one name and one phone number and tell her to use it for anything at all — DATE ______
- [ ] Photograph the site as it looked before you started work — DATE ______

Job-Close Checklist

The job is not over when the painting stops. It is over when she has walked it with you and there is no tape left on the wall.

- [ ] Pull all tape and film while the coating still releases cleanly — DATE ______
- [ ] Remove every drop cloth, paper and piece of plastic, and uncover and water the plants — DATE ______
- [ ] Sweep and wash the driveway, the walk and the porch — DATE ______
- [ ] Reinstall hardware, plates, numbers and fixtures, and confirm every door and window operates — DATE ______
- [ ] Walk every elevation or room yourself first and fix what you find before she sees it — DATE ______
- [ ] Hand her the blue tape and walk the job with her — she marks, you write — DATE ______
- [ ] Clear every piece of tape she placed before you leave the property — DATE ______
- [ ] Label and hand over the touch-up kit with colour code, sheen and room on each can — DATE ______
- [ ] Give her the written guarantee and the exclusions, on paper, and read the exclusions aloud — DATE ______
- [ ] Ask for the review while you are both standing in front of the finished work — DATE ______
- [ ] Collect the final payment at the walkthrough, not by invoice three days later — DATE ______
- [ ] Log the job in the repaint clock: surface, product, colour, year, next due — DATE ______

Family Worksheet

Ladders, weather and clean-up. Write your rules now, because you will not write them well on a hot Friday.

LADDERS — Write your own rules: angle, extension past the landing, tie-off, who inspects and when.

WEATHER — What are your go and no-go conditions for exterior work, in your own climate, on paper?

RAIN PLAN — Which interior or cabinet job is your designated wet-week work, and who do you call first?

CLEAN-UP — Write the daily standard a helper could follow without you standing there.

Equipment Log

Bought, serviced, due. It looks like busywork until it produces a purchase date for a warranty claim or tells you a machine is costing more than a new one.

ITEM	BOUGHT	COST	SERVICE DUE	SERVICED	NOTES

Your Warm 100 — 1 of 2

Every person in your phone, no filtering. The ones you would have skipped are the ones who own rental property.

#	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

A complete solution to a small problem that reveals a bigger one. Test three names before you write a word of it.

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

Cost per lead is half the number. This is the other half, and almost nobody in this trade fills it in.

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 line per working day. The weeks you skip are the weeks that show up as an empty calendar a month and a half later.

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

Estimate Visit Checklist

Run it the same way every time. The visit is not a presentation — it is four fears being removed in the right order.

- [ ] Arrive early enough to walk the outside before you knock, and know what you are looking at — DATE
- [ ] Ask why now, and write down her deadline and the event behind it — DATE
- [ ] Ask what happened with the last painter, and let the silence work — DATE
- [ ] Walk the whole property with her, including the side nobody looks at — DATE
- [ ] Photograph every defect and show her the photographs on the spot — DATE
- [ ] Name the product line, the sheen and the number of coats out loud — DATE
- [ ] Leave the certificate of insurance where she can see it, and mention lead-safe certification if the house is old enough — DATE
- [ ] Give her something before she owes you anything: the written surface report and the sample boards — DATE
- [ ] Ask what a good outcome looks like to her, and quote her own words back in the scope — DATE
- [ ] Present the full-spec option first, then the smaller ones as visible reductions — DATE
- [ ] Put the price on paper and hand it over rather than saying it in the driveway — DATE
- [ ] Tell her a no by text is fine and that you will not chase her, then keep that promise — DATE

Objections and Replies — Painting

The objections this trade actually hears, and what each one really means. Write your own reply in the third column, in your own voice, before you need it.

WHAT THEY SAY	WHAT IT REALLY MEANS	YOUR REPLY
My brother-in-law paints on weekends and said he would do it for about half.	I do not yet see what the difference between you and him is made of.	
That is a lot more than I expected.	I priced this in my head from a number I heard years ago, or from a one-coat bid.	
Can you just do one coat to save money?	I am trying to find a lever I can pull that does not feel like a downgrade.	
I need to think about it and talk to my spouse.	Either the price is real to me and I need help defending it, or I do not want to say no to your face.	
The last painter left overspray on my car and I never got him back on the phone.	I have been burned and I am looking for a reason to believe you are different.	
Do I really need to paint now, or can it wait a year?	I want to know if you will tell me the truth even when it costs you the sale.	
Are you licensed?	I want to know you are legitimate and that I am not liable if you fall off my ladder.	
Can you start next week? We have family coming.	My real deadline is the event, not the paint.	

Review Request Script

Ask at the walkthrough while the work looks its best. Ask everyone, offer nothing in exchange, and never write it for them.

Write your ask, word for word, the way you would actually say it standing in the driveway.

What do you ask her to mention specifically, so the review is useful to the next homeowner?

What is your follow-up if she says yes and does not do it? Write the one message you will send, once.

What do you do with a review that is not five stars? Write your reply policy now, while nobody has upset you.

First-Hire Scorecard

Every line needs evidence, not a feeling. If you cannot write evidence beside a yes, it is a no.

SIGNAL	YES / NO	EVIDENCE
Turning away work weekly		
Working more than 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		

30 / 60 / 90 Ramp Plan

Write what good looks like at each mark and hand it to him on day one. The test: could somebody else read this and know whether he passed?

MILESTONE	DAY 30	DAY 60	DAY 90

Pay Plan and What It Rewards

Whatever you measure is what you get. Beside each element, write the behaviour it actually encourages — including the one you did not intend.

PAY ELEMENT	AMOUNT / RATE	BEHAVIOUR IT REWARDS	BEHAVIOUR IT ACCIDENTALLY REWARDS

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

Draw it while it is theoretical and free. The point is seeing when you come off the ladder and who has to be trained before then.

At $250k: who does what, and which hours of yours are still on a ladder?

At $500k: what breaks first, and who do you hire to fix it?

At $1M: what is your own job by then, and what have you stopped doing entirely?

Which of these people has to be trained a year before you can afford them?

Twelve-Month Forecast

The index is real painting demand by month. Fill jobs first, then revenue, then costs — never revenue first, because a job count is something you can go and get.

MONTH	DEMAND INDEX	JOBS	AVG TICKET	REVENUE	COSTS	PROFIT
Jan	0.87					
Feb	0.91					
Mar	0.96					
Apr	0.98					
May	0.99					
Jun	1.09					
Jul	1.08					
Aug	1.05					
Sep	1.07					
Oct	1.00					
Nov	1.00					
Dec	0.99					
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, not monthly. The deposits-held column is the one that stops you spending somebody else's paint money.

WEEK	CASH IN	CASH OUT	BALANCE	DEPOSITS HELD	NOTES

Profit First Allocations

Split every deposit the day it lands, into separate accounts. The tax line is the one that saves people. Set the percentages with your accountant.

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

KPI Scorecard — Painting

Your figure beside the benchmark, every month. Remember the net profit benchmark comes from companies far larger than a one-truck start.

MEASURE	W1	W2	W3	W4	W5	W6	W7	W8	W9	W10	W11	W12
Target gross profit margin (target 50%)												
Net profit margin (established company) (target 20%)												
Paint/material cost share of bid (target 17.5%)												
Labor cost share of bid (target 82.5%)												
Overhead share of job cost (target 10%)												
Labor cost per sq ft (target 0.8 USD/sqft)												
Average interior job price (target 2,003 USD)												
Average exterior job price (target 3,161 USD)												

WEEK NOTES

Monthly P&L

One row a month for a year and a bit. Twelve rows of your own history beat any benchmark in this book.

MONTH	REVENUE	MATERIALS + SUBS	LABOR	OVERHEAD	NET PROFIT

Days 1–30: Get Cash

One goal this month: a paying job. Not a brand, not a logo. Everything here exists to produce one cheque.

- [ ] Entity formed, federal number obtained, business account open — DATE ____
- [ ] General liability bought and the certificate saved to your phone — DATE ____
- [ ] Lead-safe firm certification applied for if you will touch older housing — DATE ____
- [ ] The one-page offer written, printed, and readable by a stranger — DATE ____
- [ ] Warm hundred listed, no filtering, in the worksheet — DATE ____
- [ ] Ten personal reaches a day, logged, every working day — DATE ____
- [ ] Essential kit bought; everything else borrowed or rented — DATE ____
- [ ] First estimate visit run with the checklist in hand — DATE ____
- [ ] First job booked and the deposit collected — DATE ____
- [ ] Job-start and job-close checklists run exactly as written — DATE ____
- [ ] First review asked for at the walkthrough — DATE ____
- [ ] Job logged in the repaint clock and a fixed share of profit set aside for marketing — DATE ____

Days 31–60: Get More Cash

The highest return per hour in the whole ninety days, and the month everybody skips because it does not feel like progress.

- [ ] Upsell offered on every job, on site, while set up — DATE
- [ ] Price raised once on the next batch of estimates — DATE
- [ ] One cold channel chosen — and only one — DATE
- [ ] Before and after posted from every job, prep photographs included — DATE
- [ ] Map listing claimed, completed, and photographed weekly — DATE
- [ ] Every review replied to within a couple of days — DATE
- [ ] Break-even worksheet filled in with real numbers — DATE
- [ ] Doors knocked around every job you are already parked at — DATE
- [ ] Estimate log started: every quote, whether it closed, and why — DATE
- [ ] Progress payment written into the scope on anything longer than a week — DATE

Days 61–90: Get the Most Cash

Turn a run of jobs into something that keeps producing. No subscription in this trade, so the referral engine has to be built on purpose.

- [ ] Referral play written down: reward, timing, and the words — DATE
- [ ] Two names asked for from every completed customer — DATE
- [ ] Every job entered in the repaint clock with product, colour and year — DATE
- [ ] First-hire scorecard run honestly, with evidence beside every yes — DATE
- [ ] Paint store account opened in the company name — DATE
- [ ] Twelve-month forecast filled in with jobs, not revenue — DATE
- [ ] Monthly close done properly: revenue, materials, labour, overhead, net — DATE
- [ ] Pre-mortem run and tripwires written where you will see them — DATE
- [ ] Guarantee wording reviewed with your attorney — DATE
- [ ] Next quarter's one non-negotiable rule written at the top of the page — DATE

Milestones and Tripwires

One row per milestone. The tripwire is the early sign it is going wrong, and you decide the response now, while you are calm.

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

Decision Log

Every decision that mattered, why you made it, and when you will look at it again. In a year this is the most valuable page in the book.

DATE	DECISION	WHY	REVISIT ON