

The Complete Guide to Launching Your First
Business While Keeping Your Day Job

SHIP UGLY GET PAID



AKINTOMIWA ADISA

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**The Complete Guide to Launching Your First Business
While Keeping Your Day Job**

By Akintomiwa Adisa

After helping build a bus rental business that's lasted 10+ years, I learned that businesses don't fail because they're imperfect. They fail because they never launch. This book shows you how to ship fast, validate real demand, and build something that actually makes money - even if it's ugly.

WHY I WROTE THIS BOOK

In 2014, my friend had an idea for a bus rental business.

He didn't have a perfect business plan. No professional branding. No fancy website. No months of market research.

What he had was a clear problem to solve - churches and schools needed reliable transportation - and a willingness to launch before feeling "ready."

We built the foundational systems in one focused weekend. The website was basic. The booking process was manual. The pricing was simple.

It was ugly. But it worked.

Ten years later, that business is still running profitably. I'm a co-owner.

That experience taught me something critical: The businesses that survive aren't the prettiest or the most prepared. They're the ones that ship systematically, learn from real customers, and iterate based on actual feedback rather than assumptions.

Since then, I've worked with aspiring founders - product managers, engineers, designers, consultants - all stuck in the same trap. They have the skills. They have the idea. They even have a market.

What they don't have is permission to ship something imperfect.

This book gives you that permission. More importantly, it gives you a systematic framework for turning ideas into revenue without quitting your job, draining your savings, or spending years "getting ready."

WHAT THIS BOOK WILL DO FOR YOU

This book will show you how to:

- Validate your business idea in hours, not months
- Build a functional landing page using WordPress and free tools
- Get your first 10 paying customers before you build anything complex
- Create basic systems that prevent the chaos most founders face when they scale
- Launch within days or weeks, not years

WHAT THIS BOOK WON'T DO FOR YOU

This is not a "quit your job and follow your dreams" book.

It's not a "10x your income in 10 days" promise.

It's not a theory from someone who's never built a real business.

This is a practical, tested framework for employed professionals who want to launch a business without burning bridges or betting the farm.

If you're looking for hype, look elsewhere. If you're looking for honest guidance from someone who's built something that lasts, keep reading.

WHO THIS IS FOR

This book is for:

- Product managers, engineers, designers, and consultants who want to turn their expertise into a business
- Aspiring founders who have been "planning" for months (or years) without launching
- Side-project builders who want to turn ideas into actual income
- Anyone tired of overthinking and ready to ship something real

This book is not for:

- People looking for passive income with no work
- Anyone unwilling to launch something imperfect
- Those expecting overnight success

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book is designed to be implemented, not just read.

Each chapter includes:

- Practical frameworks you can use immediately
- Real examples from businesses that worked
- Honest assessments of what actually takes time
- Exercises to apply concepts learned in this book to your specific situation

The time estimates in this book (like "30-Minute Launch Ritual") are guidelines, not rules. It took me 3+ hours to complete my own "30-minute" ritual. A full day to build my landing page.

If it takes you longer, that's normal. Deep strategic thinking can't be rushed.

The goal is to launch within days or weeks, not months or years. But within that window, take the time each step needs.

A NOTE ON SOFTWARE AND TOOLS

Throughout this book, I recommend WordPress with Brizy as your landing page solution. This isn't because it's the only option or it's perfect. It's because after building dozens of landing pages for clients, I've found it to be the most flexible, and cost-effective approach.

If you prefer to handle the technical setup yourself, I'll give you exact instructions. If you'd rather have an expert handle it, I offer a Done-For-You service that includes all the software licenses you need.

Either way works. The important part is shipping, not which tools you use.

Ready? Let's begin.

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PART 1: FOUNDATION

CHAPTER 1: THE "SHIP UGLY" PHILOSOPHY

Most aspiring founders never launch.

They spend six months "researching the market." They waste thousands on branding before they have a single customer. They build for a year, then discover nobody wants what they made.

The problem isn't lack of preparation. It's too much of it.

THE BUS RENTAL STORY

When we started the bus rental business in 2014, we had none of the things most business books tell you to have.

No detailed business plan with financial projections. No professional logo or brand guidelines. No months of customer interviews and market research.

What we had was simple: a clear problem (churches and schools needed reliable transportation), a straightforward solution (rent them buses with good service), and a willingness to launch before feeling fully prepared.

We built the foundational systems in one weekend. Set up a basic WordPress site with a contact form. Created a simple pricing structure. Documented a delivery checklist so we wouldn't forget anything important.

The website looked amateurish. The booking process required phone calls and emails. The whole operation would have embarrassed any professional web designer.

But it worked.

Within the first month, we had bookings. Within three months, we had repeat customers. Within six months, we had a profitable business. Ten years later, it's still running profitably without requiring 80-hour weeks from anyone.

WHY UGLY WORKS BETTER THAN PERFECT

Here's what most business advice gets wrong: It assumes your initial assumptions are correct.

They're not.

You don't know what features customers actually need until they use your product. You don't know what messaging resonates until you test it with real people. You don't know what price point works until someone hands you money.

Building something perfect based on assumptions is just expensive guessing.

Building something ugly and learning from real customers is cheap education.

The bus rental business succeeded not because we planned perfectly, but because we launched quickly enough to learn what actually mattered. We discovered that customers cared about reliability and communication, not about having a beautiful website. We learned which routes were most profitable. We figured out which types of events needed which services.

None of that learning could have happened in a planning phase. It only happened because we shipped something imperfect and paid attention to what worked.

THE THREE PRINCIPLES

Principle 1: Ship Before You're Ready

You'll never feel ready. That feeling you're waiting for - the confidence, the certainty, the perfect moment - it doesn't come from more planning. It comes from doing the thing and surviving.

Every successful founder I know launched before they felt prepared. Every failed founder I know waited until they felt ready and either never launched or launched so late they'd burned through their resources.

Perfect timing doesn't exist. Good enough timing is always available.

Principle 2: Systems Before Scale

This is the principle most "ship fast" advice misses: Ugly doesn't mean chaotic and useless.

The bus rental business was ugly in its presentation but systematic in its operations. We had checklists for booking, delivery, and follow-up. We had simple processes that ensured consistent quality even when we were learning.

Success without systems isn't success. It's delayed chaos.

You can launch with a basic website, manual processes, and imperfect design. But you need fundamental systems for how you deliver value, support customers, and maintain quality. Otherwise, your first success will overwhelm you.

Principle 3: Iterate Based on Reality

Your assumptions about what customers want are probably wrong. Mine usually are.

The only way to know what actually works is to put something in front of real people and watch what happens. Not survey responses. Not focus groups. Actual behavior with actual money.

The market doesn't care about your perfect plan. It cares about solutions that work.

WHAT "SHIP UGLY" ACTUALLY MEANS

"Ship ugly" doesn't mean ship garbage. It means:

Ship with basic design instead of hiring an expensive designer. Ship with manual processes instead of building complex automation. Ship with one core feature instead of twenty ancillary ones. Ship with simple copy instead of hiring a professional copywriter. Ship this month instead of six months from now.

Everything that doesn't directly impact whether someone gives you money can be improved later. Everything that does impact that decision needs to be functional, not perfect.

THE COST OF PERFECTIONISM

I see the same pattern repeatedly with aspiring founders:

Month 1-3: Research phase. Reading books, taking courses, analyzing competitors.
Month 4-6: Planning phase. Writing business plans, sketching designs, debating features.
Month 7-9: Building phase. Finally start building, realize it's harder than expected.
Month 10-12: Polish phase. Making it "launch ready," which somehow never arrives.

Twelve months later, they've spent thousands of dollars and hundreds of hours, and they still haven't had a single conversation with a paying customer.

Meanwhile, the person who shipped something ugly in Month 1 has had twelve months of real customer feedback, iteration, and revenue. They've probably already pivoted twice based on what they learned.

Who do you think is more likely to build a successful business?

YOUR PERMISSION SLIP

If you're waiting for permission to launch something imperfect, here it is:

You have permission to ship before you're ready. You have permission to build something that looks amateur. You have permission to charge money for something that isn't perfect. You have permission to improve it later after you see what actually works.

The only thing you don't have permission to do is wait another six months for conditions that will never arrive.

THE ASSIGNMENT

Before moving to Chapter 2, answer these questions honestly:

How long have you been planning your business idea?

What's one thing you're waiting to be "perfect" before launching?

What would actually happen if you launched it this week in an imperfect state?

Real talk: What are you actually afraid of?

Write down your answers. We'll come back to them.

Stuck on this chapter?

Email: hello@shipugly.com

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/aadisa/>

Book a call: <https://calendar.app.google/WECVaWLZnad6JzRg6>

I respond to every message within 24-48 hours.

CHAPTER 2: THE PROMISE COMPASS FRAMEWORK

The number one mistake aspiring founders make is trying to serve everyone.

"I'm building a productivity app for professionals."

Which professionals? Doing what? Solving which specific problem?

"I'm creating a wellness platform for busy people."

Which busy people? Busy doing what? What specific wellness problem?

The broader you go, the broker you become.

THE PROMISE COMPASS

The Promise Compass is one sentence that defines your entire business:

"For [desperate WHO], I solve [burning WHAT]."

Two components. Both non-negotiable.

Desperate WHO: A specific person with a specific problem they're experiencing right now.

Burning WHAT: A problem painful enough that they'll pay money to solve it today, not someday.

This isn't just a positioning exercise. It's the foundation of everything you'll build. Your landing page, your messaging, your product decisions, your pricing - all of it flows from this one sentence.

WHY THIS FORMAT WORKS

Most business ideas fail before they launch because they target everyone (which means no one) or solve a problem nobody actually has.

The Promise Compass forces specificity on both dimensions:

The WHO must be specific enough that you can find them easily and know where they hang out.

The WHAT must be painful enough that solving it is worth money right now.

If either component is vague, your business will struggle. If both are sharp, everything becomes easier.

EXAMPLES OF PROMISE COMPASS STATEMENTS

Good:

"For exhausted new moms, I eliminate the 3 AM feeding struggle."

Who: Exhausted new moms (specific life stage, specific problem)

What: 3 AM feeding struggle (immediate, painful problem)

Bad:

"For parents, I help with child-rearing challenges."

Who: Too broad (parents of what age children?)

What: Too vague (which challenges specifically?)

Good:

"For overwhelmed freelance designers, I turn feast-or-famine cycles into predictable income."

Who: Freelance designers specifically (not all freelancers)

What: Feast-or-famine problem (immediate financial pain)

Bad:

"For creative professionals, I provide business tools."

Who: Too broad (which creative professionals?)

What: Too vague (which business tools for what problem?)

Good:

"For mid-career product managers, I help launch their first profitable side business without quitting their job."

Who: Mid-career PMs specifically (not junior, not senior)

What: First profitable side business (specific goal, specific constraint)

Bad:

"For people interested in entrepreneurship, I provide guidance."

Who: Meaningless (everyone is "interested" in something)

What: Useless ("guidance" tells me nothing)

THE THREE PROMISE COMPASS TESTS

Once you write your Promise Compass, it must pass three tests. If it fails any one of them, revise until it passes all three.

Test 1: The Money Test

Does your WHO have money to pay for solutions?

College students rarely do. Mid-career professionals usually do.

Unemployed people rarely do. Business owners usually do.

Hobbyists rarely do. People solving work problems usually do.

This isn't about being mercenary. It's about building a sustainable business. If your WHO can't afford to pay you, you're building a charity, not a company.

Test 2: The Findability Test

Can you easily find 100+ people who match your WHO?

"Product managers at tech companies" - Yes (LinkedIn search takes 5 minutes)

"Freelance designers" - Yes (Behance, Dribbble, LinkedIn)

"Entrepreneurs who are passionate" - No (too vague to target)

"People who want to improve" - No (meaningless category)

If you can't find them, you can't reach them. If you can't reach them, you can't sell to them.

Test 3: The Urgency Test

Does your WHAT cause pain RIGHT NOW?

"Can't sleep because of newborn" - Yes (happening tonight)

"Losing money every month" - Yes (happening now)

"Interested in general productivity" - No (someday problem)

"Want to be more successful" - No (vague aspiration)

People pay to solve problems they have today. They procrastinate on problems they might have tomorrow.

THE BUS RENTAL PROMISE COMPASS

Let me show you how we used the Promise Compass for the bus rental business.

Our Promise Compass:

"For churches and schools that need reliable transportation for groups, I solve the nightmare of coordinating multiple vehicles."

Test 1 (Money): Churches and schools have budgets for transportation. Pass.

Test 2 (Findability): Easy to find hundreds of churches and schools in any metro area. Pass.

Test 3 (Urgency): Need arises multiple times per year for retreats, field trips, events. Pass.

That single sentence guided every decision for ten years:

Pricing: Aimed at institutional budgets, not consumer pricing

Marketing: Targeted church administrators and school coordinators

Service: Focused on reliability and coordination (their specific pain points)

Growth: Expanded to more churches and schools, not into consumer market

One sentence. A decade of clarity.

COMMON MISTAKES

Mistake 1: Too Broad

Bad: "For entrepreneurs, I help them succeed."

Good: "For solo founders, I prevent the chaos that kills businesses when they scale."

The difference: Specific type of entrepreneur, specific problem at specific stage.

Mistake 2: No Specific Pain

Bad: "For busy professionals, I help them be more productive."

Good: "For overwhelmed product managers, I turn 60-hour weeks into 40-hour weeks without sacrificing output."

The difference: Generic productivity vs. specific outcome with specific constraint.

Mistake 3: Aspirational Instead of Urgent

Bad: "For people who want to travel more, I help them achieve their dreams."

Good: "For burned-out corporate employees, I create guilt-free sabbaticals their company will approve."

The difference: Vague aspiration vs. specific problem with specific solution.

Mistake 4: Unfindable WHO

Bad: "For passionate people who care about wellness."

Good: "For tech executives who sleep less than 5 hours per night."

The difference: Can't target passion, can target job title + specific symptom.

YOUR PROMISE COMPASS WORKSHEET

Work through this systematically. Don't skip ahead.

Step 1: Identify Your WHO

Who specifically are you trying to help?

Current job title or life situation:

Current specific situation they're in:

Where do they hang out? (LinkedIn groups, forums, communities):

Step 2: Identify Their Burning WHAT

What problem keeps them up at night?

The immediate pain:

Why it hurts right now (not someday):

What it costs them if not solved:

Step 3: Write Your Promise Compass

"For _____ [WHO], I solve _____ [WHAT]."

Step 4: Test It

Run your Promise Compass through the three tests:

Money Test: Do they have the budget to pay for solutions?

Yes No

Findability Test: Can I find 100+ of them in 30 minutes?

Yes No

Urgency Test: Is this problem painful RIGHT NOW?

Yes No

If all three are checked, you have a viable Promise Compass.

If any are unchecked, revise your WHO or WHAT and test again. Don't proceed until all three pass.

Step 5: Validate With Real Humans

This step is mandatory. Send your Promise Compass to 5 people who match your WHO.

Ask them: "Does this sound like something you need right now?"

Person 1 response: _____

Person 2 response: _____

Person 3 response: _____

Person 4 response: _____

Person 5 response: _____

If 3 or more say "Yes, I need this," you have validation.

If fewer than 3 say yes, your Promise Compass isn't painful enough or your WHO isn't specific enough. Revise and test again.

This validation step saves you from spending weeks building something nobody actually wants.

WHEN YOUR PROMISE COMPASS CHANGES

Your first Promise Compass probably won't be your final one. That's normal.

The bus rental Promise Compass evolved over the first year as we learned what customers actually valued most. We started thinking our competitive advantage was vehicle quality. Turned out it was reliability and communication.

But we needed that first Promise Compass to get started. Then we iterated based on what we learned from real customers.

The goal isn't to get it perfect on day one. The goal is to get it specific enough to start testing.

THE ASSIGNMENT

Don't move to Chapter 3 until you complete this:

1. Write three different Promise Compass statements for your idea
2. Test each one through the three filters
3. Choose the ONE that passes all three tests
4. Send it to 5 people who match your WHO
5. Get at least 3 positive responses

If you can't get 3 positive responses, you don't have a viable Promise Compass yet. Keep revising until you do.

Stuck on your Promise Compass?

Email: hello@shipugly.com

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/aadisa/>

Book a call: <https://calendar.app.google/WECVaWLZnad6JzRg6>

I've helped dozens of founders nail their Promise Compass. Happy to help you find yours.

PART 2: IMPLEMENTATION

CHAPTER 3: THE LAUNCH RITUAL

The Launch Ritual is designed to force you to make decisions quickly and launch something real within hours, not weeks.

It's called the "30-Minute Launch Ritual" not because it actually takes 30 minutes, but because 30 minutes is the absolute minimum time you should spend on each component.

Reality check: It took me three hours to complete my own "30-minute" ritual. I wrestled with my Promise Compass for 90 minutes before I felt confident about it. I rewrote my landing page headline seven times.

If your ritual takes longer than 30 minutes, that's normal. Deep strategic thinking takes time. The point of the time constraint is to prevent perfectionism paralysis, not to rush through important decisions.

Plan for 1-3 hours if you're doing this properly.

PRE-RITUAL PREPARATION

Before you start the ritual, eliminate all distractions.

Close every browser tab except one blank document.

Turn your phone to airplane mode or leave it in another room.

Close email, Slack, and all messaging apps.

Tell anyone around you that you need uninterrupted time.

Open a blank document (Google Doc, Notion, whatever you prefer) and write this at the top:

"Today I choose progress over perfection. I'm building something that works, not something that looks impressive. The market will tell me what to improve. Let's go."

Set a timer for 30 minutes minimum. Give yourself permission to go longer if needed.

PART 1: THE PROMISE COMPASS (5-90 MINUTES)

If you completed Chapter 2's exercise properly, you already have your Promise Compass.

Write it at the top of your document:

"For _____ [WHO], I solve _____ [WHAT]."

Now answer these questions as specifically as possible:

Question 1: Who exactly is my WHO?

Don't write "entrepreneurs." Write "mid-career product managers at tech companies who have a side project idea but haven't launched it yet."

Don't write "busy people." Write "freelance designers who have been freelancing for 2-5 years and experience feast-or-famine income cycles."

Specificity is your friend.

Question 2: What exactly is their burning pain?

Don't write "they want to be more productive." Write "they work 60-hour weeks but feel like they're constantly behind, and it's affecting their relationships."

Don't write "they need help with business." Write "they have 15 customers but no systems, and they're overwhelmed by manual work that doesn't scale."

Pain specificity sells. Vague pain doesn't.

Question 3: Can I find 100+ of these people on LinkedIn in 30 minutes?

Open LinkedIn. Try to find them. If you can't easily find at least 100 people who match your WHO, your definition is too vague.

Refine it until you can actually locate them.

Question 4: Do they have money to pay for solutions?

Be honest. If your WHO is "college students," they probably don't have the budget for paid solutions.

If your WHO is "mid-career professionals" or "business owners," they probably do.

Question 5: Is their pain urgent (needs solving now, not someday)?

"Want to learn a new skill" - Not urgent.

"Losing money every month" - Urgent.

"Interested in productivity" - Not urgent.

"Working 80 hours per week and burning out" - Urgent.

If you answered yes to questions 3, 4, and 5, move forward.

If you answered no to any of them, revise your Promise Compass and test again.

PART 2: THE TRUTH METRIC (10-30 MINUTES)

The Truth Metric is the one number that proves people actually care about your Promise Compass.

It's your early validation signal before you build anything substantial.

Choose ONE metric from this list:

Pre-orders with credit cards down - Proves people will pay

Discovery calls booked - Proves people want to learn more

Email signups for early access - Proves people are interested

Paid pilot customers - Proves people will test it with money

Waitlist subscribers - Proves people want to be notified

Choose the metric that makes sense for your business model and set a target:

"I will consider my idea validated when I get _____ [number] of _____ [metric] within _____ [timeframe]."

Example: "I will consider my idea validated when I get 5 pre-orders with credit cards down within 14 days."

Example: "I will consider my idea validated when I get 10 discovery calls booked within 7 days."

Be specific about the number and timeframe. Vague goals lead to vague results.

Why this metric matters:

Write down why hitting this number would prove your idea has potential.

How I'll measure it:

Write down exactly how you'll track this metric (spreadsheet, tool, whatever).

What I'll do if I hit the target:

Write down your next step if you achieve the goal.

What I'll do if I don't hit the target:

Write down what you'll change or try differently if you miss the goal.

PART 3: THE LANDING PAGE (30 MINUTES TO FULL DAY)

Now you're going to build the actual landing page.

The ritual says "30 minutes" but reality check: It took me a full day to build my first landing page. I tested different headlines, rearranged sections, rewrote copy multiple times.

If you want to spend 30 minutes on a bare-bones version and iterate later, that works. If you want to spend 6 hours getting it closer to right the first time, that also works.

The key is to ship something within days, not months.

Element 1: Your Headline

Your headline must communicate a specific promise with a specific outcome or consequence.

Formula: "[Promise] in [Timeframe] or [Consequence]"

Examples:

"Land Your Dream Job in 60 Days or Get Full Refund"

"Double Your Income in 90 Days or Work For Free"

"Scale Without Breaking in 96 Hours or Stay Stuck Forever"

Write 5-7 headline variations. Choose the one that most directly addresses your WHO's burning pain.

Your headline:

Optional subheadline (clarifies the main promise):

Element 2: Three Value Bullets

Your bullets answer three questions:

What do they get? (The tangible thing they receive)

What do they avoid? (The pain they escape)

What do they become? (The transformation)

Example for freelance designers:

What you get: The "Freelance Profit System" - templates and workflows that turn scattered clients into predictable \$5K-15K months

What you avoid: No more feast-or-famine cycles, last-minute fires, or working 70-hour weeks just to pay bills

What you become: A profitable business owner who commands premium rates, works with dream clients, and has time for life outside work

Write your three bullets:

Bullet 1 (What you get):

Bullet 2 (What you avoid):

Bullet 3 (What you become):

Element 3: Call-to-Action

Your call-to-action must be clear and specific.

Good CTA examples:

"Get Started Now"

"Book Discovery Call"

"Download Free Guide"

"Pre-Order Now"

"Join Waitlist"

Bad CTA examples:

"Learn More" (vague)

"Click Here" (generic)

"Submit" (no context)

Your CTA button text:

[_____]

What happens when they click? (Where do they go, what do they get):

Element 4: Build The Actual Page

Now you're going to build this in WordPress with Brizy.

What you'll need:

Domain name - About \$25/year including Whois protection (buy from Namecheap or Google Domains)

WordPress hosting - About \$15/month (I use Hostinger managed WordPress hosting)

Brizy page builder - Free version works, Pro version included in my Done-For-You service

MailPoet for email capture - Free for up to 500 subscribers

Total DIY cost: About \$265/year

If you want me to handle the technical setup and include all the premium tool licenses (Brizy Pro, MailPoet Pro, AnyChat AI for customer support), see the Done-For-You section at the end of this book.

Building your page:

I'll give you detailed WordPress and Brizy instructions in Chapter 4. For now, just know you're going to:

1. Pick a clean, simple Brizy template
2. Add your headline
3. Add your three bullets
4. Add your CTA button
5. Connect the button to email capture or booking calendar
6. Publish

Chapter 4 will walk you through this step-by-step.

POST-RITUAL ACTIONS

Once your landing page is live, do these three things within 24 hours:

Action 1: Send it to 10 people who match your WHO

Don't send it to friends and family asking "what do you think?" Send it to actual potential customers asking "is this something you'd use?"

Message template:

"Hey [Name], I just launched something [ugly/imperfect - be honest about it]. I built it for [their WHO category] who struggle with [their WHAT]. Would this be useful to you? [link] - Honest feedback appreciated."

Action 2: Post about your launch publicly

Share on LinkedIn, Twitter, or wherever your WHO hangs out. Transparency builds trust.

Post template:

"I just launched [Promise Compass] in [time it actually took]. It's imperfect but functional. [Link]. Looking for feedback from [WHO description] who deal with [WHAT]. DM me if that's you."

Action 3: Track your Truth Metric

Create a simple spreadsheet with these columns:

Date | Activity | Contact Name | Status | Notes

Track every landing page visit, every button click, every email signup, every discovery call booked - whatever your Truth Metric is.

WHEN YOU KNOW IT'S WORKING

If people click your button and give you their Truth Metric (email, booking, pre-order), you have validation.

If nobody clicks or you get lukewarm responses, your Promise Compass isn't painful enough or your WHO isn't specific enough.

Don't build anything else until you hit your Truth Metric.

The Launch Ritual prevents you from spending six months building something nobody wants.

Need help completing the ritual?

Email: hello@shipugly.com

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/aadisa/>

Book a call: <https://calendar.app.google/WECVaWLZnad6JzRg6>

I can walk you through it or do it with you.

CHAPTER 4: BUILDING YOUR LANDING PAGE

You have your Promise Compass. You have your Truth Metric. Now you need a landing page that converts.

This chapter gives you step-by-step WordPress and Brizy instructions, plus five real landing page examples you can adapt for different markets.

WHY WORDPRESS AND BRIZY

After building landing pages on every platform imaginable - Carrd, Webflow, Squarespace, custom code - I've settled on WordPress with Brizy for one reason: It works reliably for businesses that need to launch and grow fast.

WordPress gives you:

- Full control (you own it, not a platform)
- Flexibility (add features as you need them)
- Stability (it's not going anywhere)
- Professional capability (from simple landing pages to complex sites)

Brizy gives you:

- Visual page building (no code needed)
- Clean, professional templates
- Mobile optimization automatically
- Fast page loading

This combination costs about \$265/year if you do it yourself (including domain + hosting), or it's fully included if you use my Done-For-You service.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

Domain name - About \$25/year with Whois protection

Buy from: Namecheap or Google Domains. I sometimes buy from Hostinger too.

WordPress hosting - About \$15/month

Use: Hostinger managed WordPress hosting (what I use for client sites)

Brizy page builder - Free version works

Install from: WordPress plugin directory

(Pro version included in Done-For-You service)

MailPoet - Free for 500 subscribers
Install from: WordPress plugin directory
(Pro version included in Done-For-You service)

Total DIY cost: About \$265/year

Note: If you paid separately for all the premium tools I include in my Done-For-You service (Brizy Pro, MailPoet Pro, AnyChat AI), you'd pay \$420/year. My agency has lifetime licenses.

WORDPRESS SETUP (30 MINUTES)

Step 1: Buy your domain (5 minutes)

Go to Namecheap or Google Domains.
Search for available domains related to your business.
Choose something simple and memorable.
Add Whois protection (keeps your contact info private).
Cost: About \$25/year including protection.

Step 2: Sign up for hosting (10 minutes)

Go to Hostinger.
Choose their managed WordPress hosting plan (about \$15/month).
Enter your domain name (it will connect automatically).
Complete signup and payment.

Step 3: Install WordPress (5 minutes)

Hostinger's managed WordPress hosting installs WordPress automatically.
You'll receive login credentials via email.
Log in to your WordPress dashboard.

Step 4: Install Brizy (5 minutes)

In WordPress dashboard, go to Plugins > Add New.
Search for "Brizy."
Click Install, then Activate.
Brizy is now available on all your pages.

Step 5: Install MailPoet (5 minutes)

In WordPress dashboard, go to Plugins > Add New.
Search for "MailPoet."
Click Install, then Activate.
Complete the setup wizard (takes 2 minutes).

You now have everything you need to build your landing page.

BUILDING YOUR LANDING PAGE WITH BRIZY (1-3 HOURS)

Step 1: Create a new page (1 minute)

In WordPress dashboard, go to Pages > Add New.

Give it a title (this is just for your reference, not what visitors see).

Click "Edit with Brizy" button.

Step 2: Choose a template (5 minutes)

Brizy will show you templates.

Choose any simple landing page template.

Don't overthink this - you're going to customize it anyway.

Step 3: Add your headline (15-30 minutes)

Click on the template headline to edit it.

Replace with your headline from Chapter 3.

Choose a readable font (Inter, Open Sans, or Roboto work well).

Make it large enough to be the first thing people see.

Keep it simple - no fancy animations or effects.

Step 4: Add your three bullets (15-30 minutes)

Find the bullet section in your template.

Replace template bullets with yours from Chapter 3.

Format clearly - each bullet should be scannable.

Use checkmarks or simple icons if you want, but not required.

Step 5: Add your CTA button (10 minutes)

Click on the button in your template.

Change text to your CTA from Chapter 3.

Choose a button color that contrasts with your background.

Make it large enough to be obvious.

Step 6: Connect your button (15-30 minutes)

This depends on your Truth Metric:

If email capture: Connect button to MailPoet form.

If booking calls: Connect button to your calendar link (example: <https://calendar.app.google/WECVaWLZnad6JzRg6>).

If pre-orders: Connect button to payment processor.

For email capture with MailPoet:

- Create a MailPoet form

- Embed it where your button is or link button to separate signup page
- Test that emails are captured correctly

Step 7: Remove unnecessary sections (10 minutes)

Most templates have extra sections you don't need.
Delete anything that doesn't serve your core message.
Remember: Ugly and simple beats complex and confusing.

Step 8: Mobile check (10 minutes)

Brizy has a mobile preview button.
Click it and check how your page looks on phones.
Make sure headlines are readable and buttons are tappable.
Adjust if needed.

Step 9: Publish (2 minutes)

Click the Publish button.
View your live page.
Test every button and link.
Make sure everything works.

Step 10: Get your URL and start sharing (1 minute)

Copy your page URL.
This is what you'll send to people.
Add it to your LinkedIn profile, email signature, and anywhere your WHO might see it.

FIVE LANDING PAGE EXAMPLES

Here are five real landing page frameworks you can adapt based on your market and Promise Compass.

EXAMPLE 1: FOR NEW PARENTS (CONSUMER, HIGH URGENCY)

Promise Compass: "For exhausted new parents, I eliminate the 3 AM feeding struggle"

Headline:

Sleep Through The Night in 14 Days or Your Money Back

Subheadline:

Finally end the 3 AM chaos that's stealing your sanity

Three Bullets:

What you get: The "Peaceful Night Protocol" - step-by-step system that helps your baby sleep 6+ hours straight without guesswork, tears, or confusion

What you avoid: No more stumbling around at 3 AM exhausted, wondering if you're doing everything wrong while your baby cries and your partner sleeps

What you become: A confident, well-rested parent who enjoys peaceful evenings and wakes up refreshed instead of dreading another sleepless night

CTA: [Get The Peaceful Night Protocol - \$47]

Social proof: Used by 847+ exhausted parents. Average result: 6+ hour sleep stretches within 2 weeks.

Who this works for: Consumer market, high urgency problem, personal/emotional pain, lower price point.

EXAMPLE 2: FOR FREELANCERS (BUSINESS, INCOME PROBLEM)

Promise Compass: "For overwhelmed freelancers, I turn chaos into organized profit"

Headline:

Double Your Income in 90 Days or Work For Free

Subheadline:

Transform freelance chaos into a \$10K+ monthly profit machine

Three Bullets:

What you get: The "Freelance Profit System" - simple templates and workflows that turn scattered clients into predictable \$5K-15K months without working more hours

What you avoid: No more feast-or-famine cycles, last-minute fires, or working 70-hour weeks just to pay bills while successful freelancers seem to have it figured out

What you become: A profitable business owner who commands premium rates, works with dream clients, and has time for life outside of work

CTA: [Get The Profit System - \$197]

Social proof: 347+ freelancers went from chaos to consistent \$10K+ months. Next cohort starts Monday.

Who this works for: Business market, medium urgency, income problem, mid-range price.

EXAMPLE 3: FOR JOB SEEKERS (CONSUMER/CAREER, HIGH URGENCY)

Promise Compass: "For anxious job seekers, I transform rejections into offers"

Headline:

Land Your Dream Job in 60 Days or Get Full Refund

Subheadline:

Stop getting rejected and start getting offers (even in this market)

Three Bullets:

What you get: The "Interview Magnet Method" - proven scripts, templates, and strategies that make hiring managers excited to offer you the job (even when competing against more qualified candidates)

What you avoid: No more sending hundreds of applications into the void, getting ghosted after interviews, or watching less qualified people get the jobs you deserve

What you become: A confident job candidate who gets multiple offers, negotiates from strength, and never has to desperately job hunt again

CTA: [Get The Interview Magnet Method - \$127]

Social proof: Used by 1,200+ job seekers. 89% land offers within 60 days. Next group starts Thursday.

Who this works for: Consumer or business, high urgency, clear transformation, mid-range price.

EXAMPLE 4: FOR CAREER PROFESSIONALS STARTING A BUSINESS (BUSINESS LAUNCH PROBLEM)

Promise Compass: "For mid-career corporate professionals, I help launch your first profitable side business without quitting their job."

Headline:

Launch Your Business Without Quitting Your Job or Stay Stuck Serving Someone Else's Vision Forever

Subheadline:

The systematic approach that turns side projects into profitable businesses (even if you only have nights and weekends)

Three Bullets:

What you get: The "Ship Ugly, Get Paid" framework - proven system that helps employed professionals validate, launch, and grow their first business while keeping their day job and income secure

What you avoid: No more spending months perfecting plans that never launch, watching competitors ship while you're still planning, or risking everything on an untested idea

What you become: A systematic business owner who launches quickly, learns from real customers, and builds profitable businesses - all while maintaining the security of employment

CTA: [Download The Free Starter Kit]

Social proof: Downloaded by 2,800+ aspiring founders. Average time to first customer: 23 days.

Who this works for: Business market, medium urgency, income problem, free to mid-range price.

EXAMPLE 5: FOR ESTABLISHED BUSINESSES (BUSINESS, SCALING PROBLEM)

Promise Compass: "For profitable businesses doing \$50K-200K/year, I eliminate the bottlenecks preventing you from reaching \$1M"

Headline:

Break Through \$1M Revenue in 12 Months or Pay Nothing

Subheadline:

The systematic approach that turns plateaued businesses into million-dollar companies (without working more hours)

Three Bullets:

What you get: The "7-Figure Foundation System" - proven framework that identifies and removes the specific bottlenecks keeping your business stuck below \$1M annual revenue

What you avoid: No more working 80-hour weeks while revenue stays flat, watching competitors grow while you plateau, or becoming a prisoner of your own business

What you become: A 7-figure business owner who scales systematically, works fewer hours, and builds a company that could sell for life-changing money

CTA: [Book Strategy Call - \$297 one-time diagnostic]

Social proof: 43 businesses scaled from \$50K-200K to \$1M+ in 12-18 months. Next available slot: [date]

Who this works for: Established businesses with proven revenue looking to scale systematically.

HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT FRAMEWORK

Use Example 1 if:

Consumer market, high urgency, personal/emotional pain, lower price (\$47 - \$97)

Use Example 2 if:

Business market, income problem, medium urgency, mid-range price (\$197 - \$497)

Use Example 3 if:

Consumer or business, very high urgency, clear transformation, mid-range price (\$127 - \$297)

Use Example 4 if:

Consumer or business (employed professionals wanting to start businesses), lead generation, business startup/training (free offer - \$497)

Use Example 5 if:

Established businesses, scaling problem, higher price (\$297 - \$997+), strategy/consulting model

Pick the example closest to your Promise Compass. Copy the structure. Replace their WHO and WHAT with yours. Keep the proven format.

ITERATION FRAMEWORK

Don't just build and forget. Track and improve.

Week 1: Launch and measure baseline

Track: How many people visit your page?

Track: How many click your button?

Calculate: Conversion rate (clicks divided by visits)

Week 2: Test headline variations

Version A: Your current headline

Version B: Different angle or benefit

Keep: Whichever converts better

Week 3: Test bullet variations

Version A: Your current bullets

Version B: Different pain points or benefits

Keep: Whichever converts better

Week 4: Test CTA variations

Version A: Your current button text

Version B: Different action word or urgency

Keep: Whichever converts better

Only change one element at a time. Otherwise you won't know what actually improved conversion.

TARGET CONVERSION RATES

For free offers: 30-50% conversion (visits to email signups)

For low-price (\$47 - \$97): 10-20% conversion

For mid-price (\$197 - \$497): 5-10% conversion

For high-price (\$297+): 2-5% conversion

If you're below these targets, your Promise Compass might not be painful enough. Go back to Chapter 2.

Stuck on the technical setup?

If WordPress, Brizy, and technical configuration feels overwhelming, I offer a Done-For-You service where I handle all of this for you.

See the complete details in the bonus section at the end of this book, or:

Email: hello@shipugly.com

Book a call: <https://calendar.app.google/WECVaWLZnad6JzRg6>

CHAPTER 5: GETTING YOUR FIRST 10 CUSTOMERS

You have a landing page. Now you need people to see it and actually buy from you.

This chapter covers how to get your first 10 customers without paid ads, complex funnels, or years of audience building.

WHY 10 CUSTOMERS MATTERS

Ten customers proves more than any business plan that:

- Your Promise Compass resonates with real people
- Your solution is worth money
- You can deliver what you promise
- You can support customers without imploding

After 10 customers, you'll know whether you have a real business or just an idea. You'll also have testimonials, feedback, and proof for the next 100 customers.

THE THREE-CHANNEL APPROACH

You need three acquisition channels running simultaneously:

Channel 1: Direct outreach (fastest results, most effort)

Channel 2: Public content (slower results, compounds over time)

Channel 3: Referrals (best customers, requires delivering value first)

Most aspiring founders only try one channel, get discouraged, and quit. Run all three for the fastest path to 10 customers.

CHANNEL 1: DIRECT OUTREACH (CUSTOMERS 1-5)

Direct outreach means finding people who match your WHO and starting conversations with them individually.

This feels uncomfortable. It's also the fastest way to get your first customers.

Platform: LinkedIn (if B2B) or relevant communities (if B2C)

Daily goal: Connect with 10 people per day who match your WHO

Weekly goal: Have meaningful conversations with 5 of them

Monthly goal: Convert 2-3 into paying customers

Finding Your WHO on LinkedIn

Open LinkedIn. Use search with these parameters:

For Product Managers:

Job title: "Product Manager"

Industry: "Technology" or "Software"

Add keyword: "side project" or "entrepreneurship" in their profile

For Freelance Designers:

Job title: "Freelance Designer"

Activity: Posted in last 30 days (shows they're active)

Look for: People discussing feast-famine cycles or business challenges

For Your Specific WHO:

Think about where they'd be and what they'd be talking about online.

The Connection Message (If you can add notes to your request)

Don't pitch in your connection request. Open with value or genuine curiosity.

Template:

"Hi [First Name], saw you're [specific thing from their profile]. I [relevant credibility and value offering]. Would love to connect and hear about [their goal/project/challenge]."

Example for Product Managers:

"Hi Sarah, saw you're a PM at [company]. I help employed professionals launch their first business without quitting their job. Would love to connect and hear about your side project journey."

Example for Freelancers:

"Hi James, saw you're a freelance designer. I work with freelancers turning feast-or-famine into predictable income. Would love to connect and hear how your business is going."

Keep it conversational. Real humans don't talk like marketing copy.

The Follow-Up Message (After Connection)

Wait until they accept. Then start a real conversation.

Don't: Immediately pitch your offer

Do: Ask about their situation and offer value

Template:

"Thanks for connecting! What stage are you at with [their goal from Promise Compass]? I just launched [your solution] for [WHO] dealing with [WHAT]. Happy to share what I'm learning."

Then actually listen to their response. If they're interested, share your landing page. If they're not, ask if they know anyone who might be.

The Value-First Approach

Before asking anyone to buy, give them something valuable for free:

- Share a useful resource
- Answer a specific question they have
- Introduce them to someone helpful
- Give feedback on something they're working on

People buy from helpful experts, not desperate salespeople.

CHANNEL 2: PUBLIC CONTENT (CUSTOMERS 6-8)

Public content means posting where your WHO hangs out. It's slower than direct outreach but compounds over time.

Platform: LinkedIn (if B2B), Twitter/X (if tech), relevant subreddits or forums (if specific communities), blog post

Daily goal: Post one piece of valuable content

Weekly goal: Get engagement from people who match your WHO

Monthly goal: Convert 1-2 engaged people into customers

Content That Actually Works

Don't post about yourself. Post about your WHO's problems and how you solve them.

Content Framework:

- Open with their pain
- Share a specific lesson or insight
- Give one actionable takeaway
- Invite conversation in comments

Example post for Product Managers:

"Most PMs have a side project idea they've been 'planning' for 6+ months.

The problem isn't the idea. It's perfectionism disguised as preparation.

Here's what actually works: Build a landing page in one day. Send it to 10 people. See if anyone clicks.

That's validation. Everything else is procrastination.

Who's planning when you should be launching?"

Example post for Freelancers:

"Feast or famine isn't a freelance problem. It's a pipeline problem.

When you're busy: No time for sales

When you're free: Desperate for any client

The fix: Spend 5 hours per week on pipeline even when you're busy.

That's it. Five hours keeps the pipeline full so you never panic.

What's your pipeline strategy?"

Post this kind of content daily. Some posts will flop. Some will resonate. The ones that resonate attract your WHO.

When to Share Your Link

Don't link-spam every post. Build value first.

After 10-15 valuable posts, mention your offer naturally:

"I created a free guide for [WHO] struggling with [WHAT]. Link in my profile if it'd be useful."

Or respond to comments with:

"Great question. I actually built [solution] for exactly this problem. Mind if I DM you the link?"

Always ask permission. Never spam.

CHANNEL 3: REFERRALS (CUSTOMERS 9-10)

Referrals are the best customers because they come pre-sold by someone who trusts you.

But you need to deliver value first before anyone refers you.

Asking for Referrals (After Delivering Value)

Once someone uses your product and likes it, ask directly:

"Glad this helped! Know anyone else dealing with [WHAT]? Happy to help them too."

Or create a simple referral incentive:

"Refer a friend, get [discount/bonus/extra month]. They get [discount/bonus] too."

Make it easy for them to share. Give them:

Shareable link to your landing page
One sentence they can copy-paste about you
Permission to tag you when they recommend you

The Referral Request Template

Email to happy customers:

Subject: Quick favor?

"Hi [Name],

Glad [your solution] helped with [their specific problem].

Quick question: Know anyone else dealing with [WHAT]?

I'm looking to help [X] more people this month and figured you might know someone.

Happy to give them [referral incentive] if you send them my way.

Just have them mention your name when they reach out.

Thanks!

[Your name]"

Simple. Direct. Easy for them to act on.

THE 10-CUSTOMER TIMELINE

Realistic timeline if you work this system consistently:

Week 1: Connect with 50 people (direct outreach), post daily content

Result: 5-10 conversations started, 1-2 landing page visits

Week 2: Follow up with conversations, keep connecting, keep posting

Result: 2-3 discovery calls booked, 1 customer

Week 3: More connections, more posts, ask customer 1 for referral

Result: 2-3 more customers, 1 referral lead

Week 4: Keep all channels running, iterate based on feedback

Result: 4-6 more customers, hitting 10 total

That's one month of consistent work. Not passive. Not easy. But proven.

COMMON MISTAKES

Mistake 1: Only trying one channel

If you only do direct outreach, you burn out from constant messaging.

If you only post content, it takes months to see results.

If you only rely on referrals, you never get the first customers to refer you.

Run all three simultaneously.

Mistake 2: Pitching too fast

Nobody wakes up wanting to be sold to.

Build value and trust first.

Pitch second.

Mistake 3: Giving up after one week

Week 1 results are usually disappointing.

Week 2 starts showing traction.

Week 3-4 is where customers actually buy.

Most people quit in week 1.

Mistake 4: Perfect content

You don't need professional copywriting or graphic design.

You need helpful content that resonates with your WHO.

Ugly and helpful beats pretty and useless.

WHEN YOU HIT 10 CUSTOMERS

Celebrate. Then do this:

Step 1: Ask for testimonials

Email each of your 10 customers:

"Quick favor - would you mind sharing what [solution] helped you with? Just 2-3 sentences. I'll use it to help others like you find this."

Step 2: Document what worked

Which outreach messages got responses?

Which posts got engagement?

What objections came up repeatedly?

What made people finally buy?

Write it all down while it's fresh.

Step 3: Iterate your landing page

Based on customer feedback, update:

Your headline (does it match what they actually wanted?)

Your bullets (do they hit the real pain points?)

Your price (too high? too low? just right?)

Step 4: Plan for the next 90

You've proven the concept with 10. Now scale to 100.

Chapter 7 covers the 90-day roadmap for getting there.

Struggling to get your first customers?

I offer hands-on coaching where we identify your specific bottlenecks and fix them together.

Email: hello@shipugly.com

Book a call: <https://calendar.app.google/WECVaWLZnad6JzRg6>

PART 3: BEYOND LAUNCH

CHAPTER 6: SYSTEMS THAT PREVENT CHAOS

You have customers. That's success, right?

Only if you can handle them without imploding.

Most businesses don't fail because they can't get customers. They fail because success overwhelms them. They land 10 customers with no systems, try to deliver manually, work 80-hour weeks, deliver inconsistent quality, and burn out.

This chapter covers the basic systems you need from day one to prevent that chaos.

THE FIVE FOUNDATION SYSTEMS

These aren't complex. They're simple processes that prevent most problems before they start.

System 1: Customer Onboarding

What it does: Gets new customers from "just paid" to "actively using and succeeding"

Without it: Confused customers email you constantly, churn fast, leave bad reviews

With it: Customers know exactly what to expect, when to expect it, and how to get help

What you need:

Welcome email immediately after purchase (automated)

Clear explanation of what happens next (first 24 hours, first week)

First value delivery within 24 hours (give them something immediately)

Check-in at key milestones (day 3, day 7, day 30)

Tools: MailPoet for automated emails (free for 500 subscribers)

Example welcome email:

Subject: Welcome! Here's what happens next

"Hi [Name],

Thanks for purchasing [your solution].

Here's what happens in the next 24 hours:

1. You'll receive [first deliverable] via email in the next hour
2. Check your spam folder if you don't see it
3. Start with [specific first action]

If you have any questions, reply to this email or message me on LinkedIn.

Looking forward to helping you [achieve outcome].

[Your name]"

Simple. Clear. Sets expectations.

System 2: Delivery Checklist

What it does: Ensures you deliver consistent quality every single time

Without it: You forget steps, deliver inconsistently, customers get different experiences

With it: Every customer gets the same high-quality experience regardless of how busy you are

What you need:

Step-by-step checklist of everything you deliver
Quality checkpoints before customer sees anything
Timeline for each step (so you know if you're behind)
Troubleshooting guide for common issues

Format: Simple Google Doc or Notion page

Example delivery checklist for Done-For-You landing page:

- Day 1: Discovery call completed, notes documented
- Day 2-3: Research WHO's market, analyze competitors
- Day 4-6: Create Promise Compass options, get client feedback
- Day 7-10: Build landing page in Brizy
- Day 11-12: Set up email automation in MailPoet
- Day 13-14: Set up payment processing and test entire flow
- Day 15: Client review, make revisions
- Day 16: Deliver final product with documentation
- Day 17-30: Monitor and provide support

Every delivery follows the same checklist. No guessing.

System 3: Support System

What it does: Handles customer questions without overwhelming you

Without it: You're drowning in repetitive questions, can't focus on actual work

With it: 80% of questions are answered automatically, you focus on the 20% that need personal attention

What you need:

FAQ document covering common questions
Help desk email or chat (I use AnyChat AI for customers)
Response templates for common questions
Escalation process for complex issues

Start with: Document every question a customer asks for the first 30 days

By day 30, you'll have 15-20 questions that cover 80% of what people ask. Write clear answers to those. Put them somewhere accessible.

Example FAQ structure:

Getting Started:

- How do I access [deliverable]?
- What should I do first?
- How long does it take to see results?

Technical Issues:

- I can't log in / didn't receive my email
- The page isn't loading correctly
- I need to change my payment method

Support:

- How do I get help?
- What's included in my purchase?
- Can I get a refund?

Answer these once, well. Then link to them when people ask.

System 4: Feedback Collection

What it does: Tells you what's working and what needs fixing

Without it: You're guessing what customers want, miss opportunities to improve

With it: You know exactly what to fix, what to keep, what to add

What you need:

Post-purchase survey (send 7 days after delivery)
Monthly check-in for ongoing customers

Exit survey if someone cancels
System for tracking and categorizing feedback

Simple post-purchase survey (3 questions):

1. On a scale of 1-10, how satisfied are you so far?
2. What's the most valuable part of [solution]?
3. What would make this even better?

That's it. Three questions give you actionable insights.

System 5: Revenue Optimization

What it does: Maximizes value from each customer

Without it: You're leaving money on the table, customers aren't progressing to higher-value offers

With it: Customers naturally upgrade, you make more per customer, they get more value

What you need:

Upsell sequence (after customer gets initial value)
Retention campaign (keep them engaged long-term)
Referral incentive (turn customers into advocates)

Example upsell timing:

Week 1: Deliver initial value, don't pitch anything
Week 2: Check in, ask how it's going
Week 3: Introduce next level offer naturally
Week 4: If they're succeeding, make the upsell offer

Don't pitch before they see value. Once they see results, they'll want more help.

SYSTEM MATURITY: DON'T SKIP STAGES

Your systems will evolve. Let them.

Stage 1: Manual (Weeks 1-4)

You do everything yourself.
Processes are in your head.
Nothing is documented yet.
This is normal.

Goal: Learn what actually works by doing it manually.

Stage 2: Documented (Weeks 5-8)

Write down what you're doing.
Create checklists and templates.
Someone else could follow your process.

Goal: Get processes out of your head so you don't forget steps.

Stage 3: Automated (Weeks 9-16)

Set up automation for repetitive tasks.
Customers get consistent experience without manual work.
You focus on exceptions, not routine.

Goal: Remove yourself from tasks that don't need human touch.

Don't try to automate before you understand the process. Run it manually 10 times first, then automate.

THE QUARTERLY SYSTEM AUDIT

Every 90 days, review each system:

Onboarding:

Are new customers clear about what happens next?
Are they getting value in first 24 hours?
What questions keep coming up?

Delivery:

Is quality consistent across all customers?
Where do we usually run behind?
What could be documented better?

Support:

What are the most common questions?
Which questions could be prevented with better onboarding?
What needs personal attention vs. self-service?

Feedback:

What are customers consistently praising?
What are they consistently requesting?
What's causing frustration?

Revenue:

How many customers upgrade to higher tiers?
What's our average customer lifetime value?
Where are we losing customers?

Fix the biggest gap in each system. Don't try to fix everything at once.

Want help setting up these systems?

My Done-For-You service includes basic system setup, or I can coach you through it in live sessions.

Email: hello@shipugly.com

Book a call: <https://calendar.app.google/WECVaWLZnad6JzRg6>

CHAPTER 7: THE FIRST 90 DAYS

You've launched. You have your first customers. Now what?

The first 90 days determine whether your business becomes sustainable or fizzles out.

This chapter gives you a day-by-day roadmap for the first three months.

THE THREE PHASES

Days 1-30: Ugly Launch - Ship it to test it

Days 31-60: Scale Ugly - Make it work better, not look better

Days 61-90: Profitable Patterns - Optimize what's proven

DAYS 1-30: UGLY LAUNCH

Week 1: Foundation

Day 1-2: Complete your Promise Compass and Truth Metric

Day 3-5: Build landing page (WordPress + Brizy)

Day 6: Send landing page to 10 people

Day 7: Review what worked, what didn't

Week 2: Initial Traction

Day 8-10: Direct outreach to 30 more people

Day 11-12: Start posting daily content

Day 13: Follow up with everyone who showed interest

Day 14: Weekly review (track metrics)

Week 3: First Sales

Day 15-17: Aggressive outreach and follow-ups

Day 18: Fix any major landing page issues based on feedback

Day 19-20: Deliver value to any customers you've landed

Day 21: Weekly review (how many customers so far?)

Week 4: Momentum

Day 22-24: Keep outreach and content going

Day 25: Ask first customers for testimonials

Day 26-27: Add testimonials to landing page

Day 28-30: Month review (total customers, revenue, lessons learned)

End of Month 1 Goal: 3-5 paying customers minimum

DAYS 31-60: SCALE UGLY

Week 5-6: Systems Foundation

Days 31-35: Document your onboarding process
Days 36-38: Set up automated welcome emails
Days 39-42: Create FAQ based on customer questions
Days 43-44: Set up basic support system

Week 7-8: Customer Success

Days 45-48: Check in with all current customers
Days 49-52: Fix common issues or confusion
Days 53-55: Collect feedback systematically
Days 56-60: Month review (what systems are working?)

End of Month 2 Goal: 8-12 paying customers, basic systems in place

DAYS 61-90: PROFITABLE PATTERNS

Week 9-10: Optimization

Days 61-65: Analyze which outreach worked best
Days 66-68: Analyze which content performed best
Days 69-72: Test pricing or upsells
Days 73-75: Improve landing page based on data

Week 11-12: Sustainable Growth

Days 76-80: Batch content for next month
Days 81-83: Set up referral program
Days 84-86: Ask happy customers for referrals
Days 87-90: Quarter review and plan next 90 days

End of Month 3 Goal: 15-25 paying customers, predictable acquisition system

WEEKLY METRICS TO TRACK

Every Sunday, record these numbers:

Outreach messages sent:

Responses received:

Discovery calls booked:

New customers:

Total customers:

Revenue this week:

Revenue total:

Watch for patterns. If outreach isn't working, try different messaging. If content isn't getting engagement, try different topics. If customers aren't buying, revisit your Promise Compass.

WHEN TO ITERATE VS. WHEN TO PERSIST

Change if: After 4 weeks, you have zero customers

Persist if: You have 1-2 customers and positive feedback

Change if: People visit your landing page but nobody clicks

Persist if: People are clicking but not all are buying yet

Change if: Everyone says "interesting idea but not for me"

Persist if: People say "I want this but not ready right now"

Give your Promise Compass 30 days of real testing before changing it. But if it's clearly not resonating, don't wait 90 days to pivot.

COMMON FIRST 90 DAYS MISTAKES

Mistake 1: Giving up too early

Most founders quit around day 20-30 when initial excitement wears off and they don't have 10 customers yet. Day 20-30 is often right before traction starts.

Mistake 2: Changing strategy every week

If you try a different approach every week, you never learn what actually works. Pick a strategy, run it for 4 weeks minimum.

Mistake 3: Building features instead of getting customers

When customer acquisition feels hard, founders retreat to building new features. Don't. More features won't help if nobody wants what you already have.

Mistake 4: Not asking for money

Some founders get lots of interest but never actually ask people to pay. Interest means nothing. Revenue proves everything.

THE 90-DAY REVIEW

At day 90, answer these questions:

How many customers do I have?

How much revenue have I generated?

What's working better than expected?

What's not working at all?

Do I have a viable business or should I pivot?

If you have 15+ customers and consistent revenue, you have a real business. Plan the next 90 days.

If you have fewer than 5 customers after 90 days of consistent effort, something fundamental isn't working. Revisit your Promise Compass. You might be solving a problem nobody has or targeting people who can't pay.

PART 4: REFERENCE

CHAPTER 8: IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLISTS

These checklists are designed for quick reference when you need to move fast.

30-MINUTE LAUNCH RITUAL CHECKLIST

Pre-Launch (2 minutes):

- Close all tabs except blank document
- Phone on airplane mode
- Timer set for 30+ minutes
- Write: "Today I choose progress over perfection"

Part 1: Promise Compass (5-90 minutes):

- Write "For [WHO], I solve [WHAT]"
- Money test: Do they have budget?
- Findability test: Can I find 100+ on LinkedIn?
- Urgency test: Is pain happening now?

Part 2: Truth Metric (10-30 minutes):

- Pick one validation metric
- Set specific target number and timeframe
- Write why this number matters
- Write how I'll measure it
- Write what I'll do if I hit target
- Write what I'll do if I miss target

Part 3: Landing Page (30 minutes to 1 day):

- Write headline (promise + timeframe + consequence)
- Write 3 bullets (get, avoid, become)
- Choose CTA button text
- Build page in WordPress + Brizy
- Test that buttons work
- Publish

Post-Launch (within 24 hours):

- Send to 10 people who match my WHO
- Post about launch publicly
- Set up tracking spreadsheet

DAILY OPERATIONS CHECKLIST

Morning (15 minutes):

- Check customer messages
- Respond to any urgent issues
- Review yesterday's metrics
- Identify today's #1 priority

Work Block (3-6 hours):

- Execute today's #1 priority
- Deliver on customer commitments
- Document what I learned
- Update systems based on feedback

Evening (10 minutes):

- Update metrics
- Log today's lessons learned
- Plan tomorrow's #1 priority

WEEKLY REVIEW CHECKLIST

Metrics:

- Revenue this week: \$_____
- New customers: _____
- Total customers: _____
- Conversion rate: _____ %
- Customer satisfaction (1-10): _____

Qualitative:

- What worked well?
- What didn't work?
- What did customers ask for?
- What frustrated customers?
- What will I improve next week?

Planning:

- Priority #1 for next week
- Priority #2 for next week
- Priority #3 for next week

CUSTOMER ONBOARDING CHECKLIST

Within 1 hour of purchase:

- Automated confirmation email sent
- Receipt/invoice delivered
- Welcome message with clear expectations
- First action step defined

Within 24 hours:

- First value delivered
- Support contact info provided
- Success metrics explained

Within 7 days:

- Check-in message sent
- FAQ sent proactively
- Asking how it's going

Within 30 days:

- Success milestone acknowledged
- Testimonial requested (if happy)
- Referral requested (if very happy)

LANDING PAGE BUILD CHECKLIST

WordPress Setup:

- Domain purchased (about \$25/year)
- Hosting account created (about \$15/month)
- WordPress installed
- Brizy plugin activated
- MailPoet plugin activated

Page Creation:

- New page created
- Brizy template selected
- Headline added
- Three bullets added
- CTA button added

- Button connected to email capture or booking
- Unnecessary sections removed
- Mobile view checked
- Page published
- All links tested

FIRST 10 CUSTOMERS CHECKLIST

Direct Outreach (Daily):

- Connect with 10 people on LinkedIn
- Send personalized connection message
- Follow up with anyone who accepted yesterday
- Have 2-3 real conversations
- Share value before pitching

Public Content (Daily):

- Post one valuable piece of content
- Engage with comments on previous posts
- Connect with people who engage
- Share landing page when relevant (not every post)

Referrals (Ongoing):

- Ask happy customers for referrals
- Make referral process easy
- Follow up with referral leads
- Thank people who refer

CHAPTER 9: THE UGLY LAUNCH HALL OF FAME

If you're hesitating because your idea isn't "ready," read this.

These companies prove that ugly plus systematic beats beautiful plus chaotic every time.

AIRBNB (NOW WORTH \$75+ BILLION)

The Ugly:

Three guys rented out air mattresses on their apartment floor. Not a hotel. Not even real beds. Air mattresses.

The website was built in a weekend and looked like it. Only three people signed up for the first event.

Why It Worked:

They solved a real problem: Affordable lodging when hotels were sold out during conferences.

They tested with real money: People actually paid to sleep on air mattresses in a stranger's apartment.

They built systematic processes: Booking, payment, communication all had simple systems from day one.

Timeline:

96 hours from idea to first paying guests

3 years to \$1M revenue

15 years to \$75B+ value

The Lesson:

Airbnb didn't wait until they had professional hotels, perfect insurance, or regulatory approval. They launched with air mattresses and proved strangers would trust strangers with housing. Everything else came after validation.

AMAZON (NOW WORTH \$1+ TRILLION)

The Ugly:

Jeff Bezos sold books from his garage using makeshift shelves. He personally packed boxes. The website looked like a high school project.

No sophisticated inventory system. Just spreadsheets and manual processes.

Why It Worked:

Solved a real problem: Couldn't find obscure books in physical bookstores.

Proved demand fast: Sold books to all 50 states within 30 days.

Built systematically: Added one product category at a time over years, not all at once.

Timeline:

30 days from launch to national reach

3 years to go public

25+ years to \$1+ trillion

The Lesson:

Amazon didn't try to be "everything store" on day one. They sold books from a garage, proved the model worked with real customers, then systematically expanded category by category.

FACEBOOK (NOW WORTH \$800+ BILLION)

The Ugly:

Built in a college dorm room over one weekend. Only worked for Harvard students initially.

The server crashed constantly from unexpected traffic. No professional infrastructure.

Why It Worked:

Solved a real problem: Hard to digitally connect with classmates.

Proved engagement: 50% of Harvard signed up in the first month.

Scaled systematically: Opened one college at a time, not all colleges simultaneously.

Timeline:

1 weekend to build MVP

1 month to 50% adoption at one school

1 year to 1 million users

20 years to \$800B+ value

The Lesson:

Facebook didn't start global. It started with one college. Proved it worked there. Then systematically expanded to other schools one at a time. Constraints force focus.

STRIPE (NOW WORTH \$95+ BILLION)

The Ugly:

The founders had zero payment processing experience. They manually onboarded every early user via email.

No fancy infrastructure initially. Just a simple API that made something hard become easy.

Why It Worked:

Solved a real problem: Integrating payment processing was painfully complex for developers.

Focused on specific niche: Developers first, everyone else later.

Made it simple: 7 lines of code instead of weeks of integration work.

Timeline:

Beta with manual onboarding

2 years to public launch

13 years to \$95B+ value

The Lesson:

Stripe's founders Patrick and John Collison personally emailed API keys to early users. That manual, high-touch service (despite ugly processes) created fanatical early adopters who spread the word.

SHOPIFY (NOW WORTH \$100+ BILLION)

The Ugly:

The founder wanted to sell snowboards online. Couldn't find good e-commerce software. Built it himself with zero e-commerce experience.

First version was buggy and basic. Made for one snowboard shop, not a platform.

Why It Worked:

Solved his own problem first: If he needed it, others probably did too.

Other store owners asked: "Can we use this?"

Made it simple: Designed for non-technical people to run stores.

Timeline:

Built for personal snowboard store
2 years to open to public
18 years to \$100B+ value

The Lesson:

Shopify wasn't built to be an e-commerce platform. It was built to sell snowboards. The platform came second after the founder validated his own use case.

THE PATTERN ACROSS ALL FIVE

What they all did:

1. Solved one specific problem for one specific person first
2. Launched ugly and imperfect
3. Got paying customers before building more
4. Built systematic foundations early (even air mattresses had booking systems)
5. Expanded systematically, not chaotically

What they all avoided:

1. Waiting for "perfect" before launching
2. Building features nobody asked for
3. Trying to serve everyone from day one
4. Raising money before proving the model
5. Caring about design over functionality

YOUR PERMISSION SLIP

You have permission to:

- Launch before you're "ready"
- Build something that looks amateur
- Use cheap tools instead of enterprise software
- Deliver manually what will eventually be automated
- Start with 1-10 customers instead of thousands
- Focus on function over form

You do not have permission to:

- Wait another 6 months for perfect conditions
- Build for a year without testing with real people
- Add features nobody requested
- Spend thousands on branding before validation
- Hire people before proving the model yourself

Note: Please read the Bonus Section after this chapter to learn how to seek help.

BONUS SECTION

GETTING HELP WHEN YOU'RE STUCK

This book gives you everything you need to launch a business systematically.

But reading about it and actually doing it are different things.

If you get stuck, overwhelmed, or just want expert help, I offer two services:

OPTION 1: DONE-FOR-YOU SERVICE (\$1,500)

I'll personally build your entire launch foundation while you focus on getting customers.

What's included:

60-minute strategic discovery call where we nail your Promise Compass together

Complete landing page design and build using Brizy Pro (lifetime license included in service - worth \$419/year if purchased separately)

Email automation setup using MailPoet Pro (lifetime license included - worth \$199/year separately)

Customer support system using AnyChat AI (lifetime license included - worth \$300/year separately)

Payment integration (Lemon Squeezy, PayPal or Stripe)

Mobile optimization and cross-browser testing

Complete documentation of all systems

30 days of post-launch support (I monitor, troubleshoot, and optimize)

What you provide:

Your domain name if you have one, OR

Opt into \$100/month maintenance package (covers domain, hosting, updates, monitoring, support)

Maintenance package includes:

- Domain name and renewal
- WordPress hosting on Hostinger
- Ongoing updates and security
- Performance monitoring

- One support call per month
- One support email per week

Delivery timeline: 15 business days (3 weeks)

Why 3 weeks instead of 1 week?

Because I build it right, not fast. You get thorough competitive research, multiple design iterations, proper testing across devices, and documented processes for your business.

Total value if purchased separately:

Domain: \$25/year

Hosting: \$180/year (\$15/month)

Brizy Pro: \$419/year

MailPoet Pro: \$199/year

AnyChat AI: \$300/year

Strategic consulting: \$500+ typical rate

Implementation: \$2,000+ typical rate

Your investment: \$1,500 one-time (or \$1,500 + \$100/month with maintenance)

Email: hello@shipugly.com

Book discovery call: <https://calendar.app.google/WECVaWLZnad6JzRg6>

OPTION 2: HANDS-ON LIVE COACHING (\$997)

Want guidance but prefer to build it yourself? I'll coach you through your launch step-by-step.

What's included:

4 weekly 90-minute coaching sessions (group or 1-on-1 available)

Session 1: Promise Compass workshop (we nail it together with live feedback)

Session 2: Landing page build session (I watch your screen and guide as you build)

Session 3: First customer strategy (outreach, messaging, conversion tactics)

Session 4: Systems setup and optimization (prevent chaos before it starts)

Between-session email support (I'm available for questions as you implement)

Lifetime access to all meeting and coaching call recordings (rewatch any session anytime)

Best for:

People who want to learn the process deeply (not just get it done)

Those who prefer hands-on guidance over done-for-you

Anyone building for long-term (you'll know how to do this for future projects)

Format:

Video calls via Google Meet

Screen sharing (I see what you're doing, give real-time feedback)

Recorded sessions you can review later

Investment: \$997 for 4-session package

Email: hello@shipugly.com

Book discovery call: <https://calendar.app.google/WECVaWLZnad6JzRg6>

OPTION 3: FREE SUPPORT

Seriously stuck on something specific and just need a quick answer?

Email me: hello@shipugly.com

LinkedIn DM: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/aadisa/>

I read every message and respond within 24-48 hours.

No pitch. No pressure. Just helpful answers.

If your question needs more than an email can provide, I'll let you know and we can discuss coaching or done-for-you options.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Akintomiwa Adisa helps employed professionals launch their first business without quitting their job or risking everything.

In 2014, he helped a friend start a bus rental business that's still running profitably 10+ years later. That experience taught him that businesses succeed not because they're perfect, but because they're systematic.

Since then, he's worked with aspiring founders - product managers, engineers, designers, consultants - helping them break out of perfectionism paralysis and launch businesses that actually generate revenue.

The "Ship Ugly, Get Paid" framework has helped hundreds of people launch in days instead of years, using systematic foundations that prevent the chaos most founders face when they scale.

His Done-For-You agency provides complete launch setup using premium lifetime licenses for Brizy Pro, MailPoet Pro, and AnyChat AI - tools that would cost \$918/year if purchased separately.

When not building businesses or helping others launch theirs, Akintomiwa spent time with his wife and little boy, his DIY projects, and in church where he worships and serves as a minister.

Connect:

Email: hello@shipugly.com

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/aadisa/>

Book a call: <https://calendar.app.google/WECVaWLZnad6JzRg6>

END OF BOOK

One Final Thought

You finished this book. That puts you in the top 10% of people who actually complete what they start.

But reading doesn't build businesses. Shipping does.

Close this book. Open your calendar. Block time to complete the Launch Ritual. Ship something ugly.

The world doesn't need another perfect plan.

It needs your imperfect solution delivered systematically.

Ship ugly. Get paid. Build systematically.

Let's go.

Akintomiwa

The Complete Guide to Launching Your First
Business While Keeping Your Day Job

SHIP UGLY GET PAID



AKINTOMIWA ADISA