

# UH OH, IT'S WORKING! WHAT NOW?!

The illustrated guide to streamlining  
& scaling your small business.

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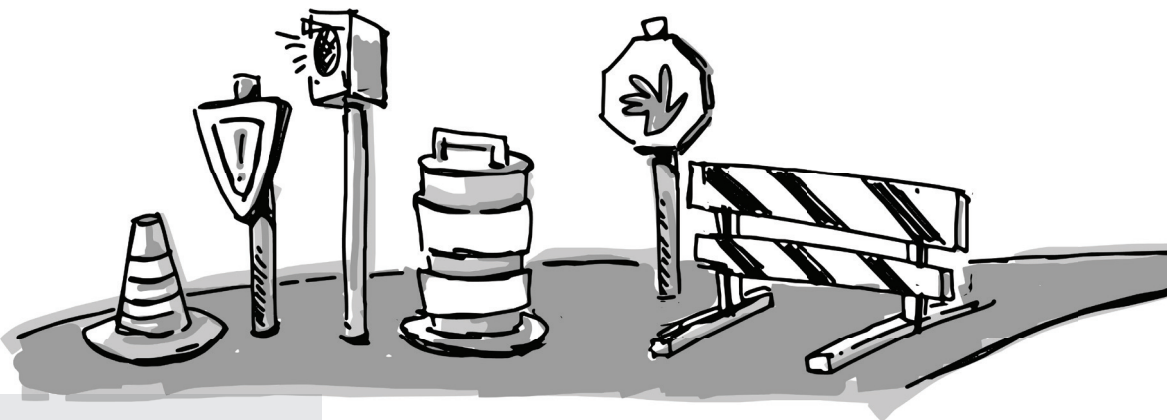
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**WARNING: YOUR BRAIN MIGHT EXPLODE.  
DO NOT READ THIS BOOK IN ONE SITTING.**

Sections 1-3 explain **The Why**. Content in these chapters give an overview to marketing theories. Sections 4 and 5 explain **The How**. These chapters provide the scaffolding to form your business strategies.

This book is part reference guide and part journal. Some pages have QR codes leading to helpful resources. Others have open areas for taking notes.

Each page has a column of text for the in-depth learner and a column with a doodle for the visual learner. TL;DR stands for Too Long; Didn't Read. There's one of these on most pages too. A Cheat Sheet is also included at the end of each section. We see you, skimmers.

To access step-by-step tutorials, check out our website at [aducatedigital.com](http://aducatedigital.com). The Resource Round Up section condenses this content into single page infographics. If you want to dive deeper, we've included a detailed Works Cited list.

## SPECIAL THANKS

Thanks to all the small business owners who made this book a reality. Your passion for solving the world's problems is an honor to assist. Keep on truckin'.

- NICOLE



The difference between an expert and a novice is the ability to adapt.

You **will** run into challenges.

Give yourself some grace.

No one expects perfection from you.

Focus on learning to assess the situation and trying a different approach.

## Intrusive Thought Monster

"All I do is work anymore. This isn't any fun."

"I'm the only one who can do this."

"How in the world can I take on more? I'm drowning!"



## Reflective Thought Master

"I need to focus on my larger vision. I should offload this task."

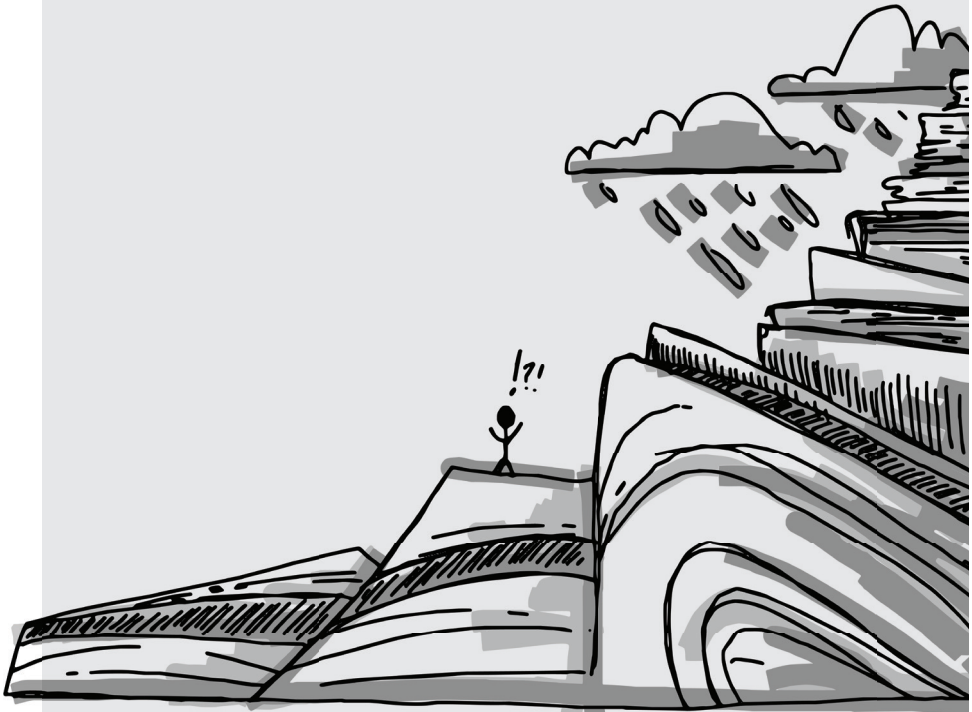
What are the steps I need to teach someone so they can do this?"



**Get OUT of your OWN way.**

Growth means you've won the first round. If you're hitting a wall, you're resisting this success.

Rather than trying "to get back to X," you need to accept your success and find your way to Z.



## REST STOP 01: GO SWOT YOURSELF

<p><b>Strengths</b> What are you good at?</p>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b> What can you improve?</p>
<p><b>Opportunities</b> What are you not interested in?</p>	<p><b>Threats</b> What are your barriers to success?</p>

## IF YOU WANT TO GROW, LEARN TO SAY NO.

Building your business from scratch resulted in many sleepless nights. You started with your personal network, friends, and family. Some who won't talk to you anymore because of the pestering. It took a long time and a lot of effort to build your network.

Even though you've got a little more stability now, that insecurity won't go away. It was your blood, sweat, and tears that got you where you are now. No one else could possibly understand how to do what you're doing, right?

Reality Check: that's a false intrusive thought.

Those friends and family that you tapped were your cheerleaders that kept you going. Those processes you created that "only you can do"? You copied other people's work.

**You didn't get here alone. And you don't need to continue to "do it alone" either.**

That aspect of you that needs to control everything - let it go.

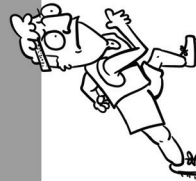
Give yourself the permission to reclaim your time. You might have had to nurture the hell out of every lead in the beginning. But you can't devote that level of attention to every lead that comes in as you grow.

Develop the processes that prioritize your time for those that deserve it. It's ok to say no.



TITAN

Grow Your Empire



TRAILBLAZER

Demonstrate Your Industry Authority



SCOUT

Hunt for Qualified Leads



HUNCH BUNCH

Test Your Theory Before Diving In

**Stage 01  
The Hunch Bunch**

Zero to seven months in business

No employees, just you

Testing an idea, not ready to quit your day job

You need to throw content out into the world and see what sticks

Simple will do for now. Don't get hung up on picking colors for a logo

**Stage 02  
The Scout**

Eight months to two years in business

One to five employees

Refining services and messaging

It's time to commit or quit

Now, you can get picky about your colors and logos as your vision solidifies

**Stage 03  
The Trailblazer**

Two to five years in business

Five to 15 employees

Actively expanding and hiring

You have an idea of where you want to go

You're on a mission to grow

Find your confidence and lead with purpose

**Stage 04  
The Titan**

Five+ years in business  
20 to 50 employees

Ready to expand, transition, or sell

Need robust and customized features

**We've identified four stages of business development. Recommendations in this book are aligned to these stages.**



## REST STOP 02: VISION FOR THE FUTURE

As The Business Owner, your priority is to focus on the strategic vision. You don't have to do it all by yourself. But if you're relying on others, you need to provide the direction.

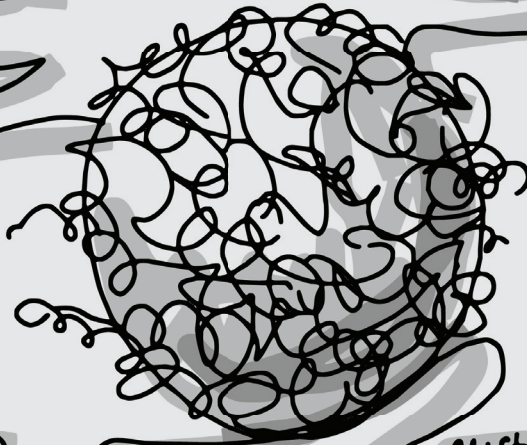
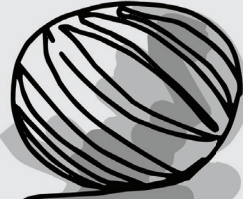
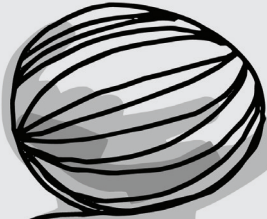
**What stage are you in now?**

**Where do you want to go?**

Identify These Pieces First

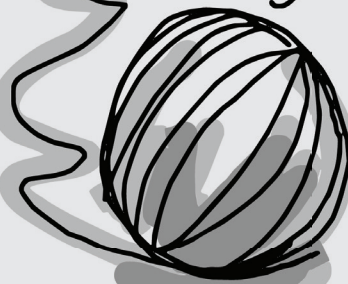
your Brand

Target Audience



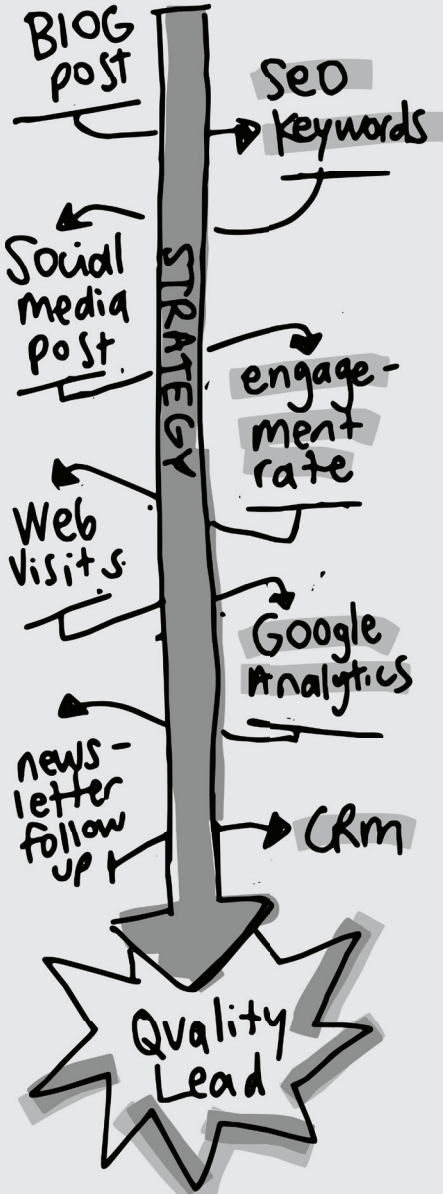
Quality Leads

customer Journey



ART

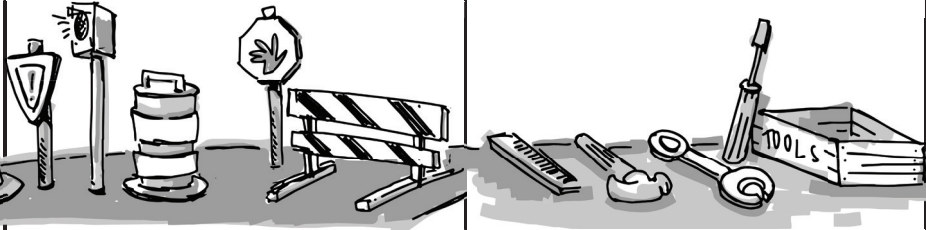
Science



## REST STOP 03 BARRIERS TO SUCCESS

We've shared our thoughts. Now it's your turn. Use the space below to write down your barriers to success. Then, think through positive ways you can address each challenge.

Barriers	Solutions



The illustration at the bottom of the page is a black and white line drawing. On the left side, under the 'Barriers' column, there are several items: a traffic cone, a triangular warning sign on a post, a rectangular sign on a post, a stack of three barrels, a stop sign with a hand symbol, and a striped barrier. On the right side, under the 'Solutions' column, there are tools: a level, a wrench, a pair of pliers, a screwdriver, and a toolbox labeled 'TOOLS'.

## SECTION 1 CHEAT SHEET

(For those that skim)



- Don't blame a small online presence on your lack of defined processes. (Page 6)
- Most of the time, your marketing problem is really a business development issue. (Page 8)
- Success will come from your ability to self-reflect. But don't let the intrusive thoughts win. (Page 9)
- Accept your success! There's no turning back now! (Page 10)
- Prioritize your time for those who deserve it. (Page 12)
- No one will untangle your processes for you. That's your job as the business owner. (Page 17)
- Marketing is more than drooling over pretty colors. (Page 18)
- There is no get rich quick solution. That includes franchises. (Page 20)

## ESTABLISH YOUR BRAND PROMISE

Think about how you want to be described by others.

Do you see a connection between those values and what you want for your business?

Your business reflects your own personal identity. Identify your guiding principles for a clear marketing roadmap.

**Mission, Vision, and Core Values make up your Brand Promise.**

These statements are the foundation of your strategic plan.

They also provide the necessary gut checks along this chaotic journey.

If you're ever feeling lost, reread these statements to reaffirm Your Why.



## Crafting your Mission, Vision, and Core Values

Use these guiding questions to write or refine your Brand Promise.

### Your Story

- How did you get here?
- Where are you going?
- What is the reason for the problem you're solving?
- What is the context that defines your solution?

### Your Values

- What are the values that you are speaking to/from?
- How will your services help people survive and thrive?
- What will your customer/client look like if they do (or don't) get what they want?

### Tone

- What is the tone you want to convey?
- Are there unique aspects to your voice?
- Is there any jargon or terms needed to educate your audience?

### Credibility

- What lends credibility to your position?
- What specific facts or third parties can verify your claims?
- Where might your credibility be challenged?

### Landmines

- What are the pitfalls?
- What defines a positive or negative message on the issue you're solving?
- What message has been tried and failed in the past?

### Method

- What mediums or channels work well with your target audience?
- What would you like to try?
- How much does the channel affect the messaging and tone?

## REST STOP 04: BRAND BASELINE

Use the space below to identify your baseline before moving on.  
Or, read on, and come back here when you're done.

**Elevator Pitch** (You and Jeff Bezos are locked in an elevator for 60 seconds. What do you tell him you do?)

**Taglines & Slogans** (Now, shorten your elevator pitch into one quick catchy sentence.)

**Target Audience(s)** (Let's be honest, Bezos probably doesn't care to hear. Who *would be* interested?)

**Marketing Methods** (Where would you find these interested folks?)



## FIND THE GOLDEN GEESE. IGNORE THE GUNK.

If you have limited time, money, and resources where would you prefer to spend it?

Casting a wide net, hoping for the best while collecting a lot of garbage?

Or targeting key people who are well connected and “get it.”

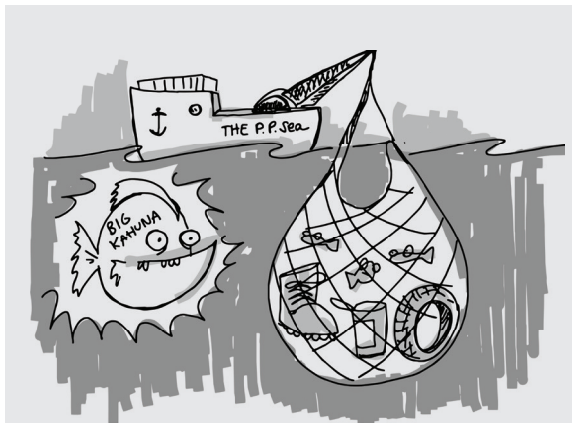
**Golden Geese are those connections that will feed your business with strong leads.**

This is the difference between Pay-Per-Click ads and Targeted Awareness.

If you have the resources, nurture these relationships. Don't bother with paid ads.

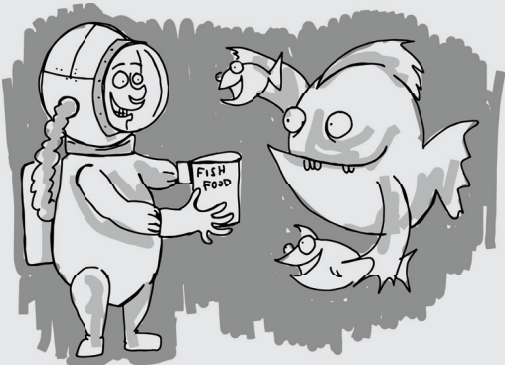
The referrals that come in from your Golden Geese will be primed to convert.

Less time spent convincing leads of your value means more time on big picture goals.



**Pay-Per-Click Ads.** Standing outside a 7/11 with flyers in hand shouting about your company will get at least one or two hits. But was the time worth it? Pay-per-click ads are like this flyer approach.

- Hit or miss
- Short shelf-life
- Reaching many uninterested folks



**Targeted Awareness.** Rather than casting a wide net, focus on key referral sources within your network. By targeting key sources, your topline will fill with quality leads resulting in:

- High-value conversions
- Long shelf-life
- Extended targeted marketing reach

## REST STOP 05: NURTURE YOUR GOLDEN GEESE

**Your Golden Geese** (Think about your current network. Identify people that are your biggest cheerleaders.)

**Help Them Help You** (What do they need? Ex: A monthly newsletter that they can forward on your behalf. Brochures to leave at their offices for visitors.)

## REST STOP 06: RED FLAG ALERT

### Identify Red Flag Leads

You now have your ideal client profile. You've also identified the Golden Geese that will feed these ideal leads to you. Next, you need to identify the opposite. Who is that client you swore you would never work with again? Sometimes people are trolls and not worth your time. No-win situations do exist. And now you'll have a list of trigger warnings.

**Green Flags** Think about a recent client that made you feel at ease. What qualities make them easy to work with? Did you have such a good working relationship that you relaxed your pricing? Did it inspire you to try something new?

**Red Flags** Now, think about someone who drove you nuts. What got under your skin? Could you have done something different in this situation? Was it a communication gap? Did you ignore your gut? Should you have asked more questions?

## SECTION 2 CHEAT SHEET

(For those that skim)

If you want to streamline and scale your small business, you must be:



1/3 Bill Nye



1/3 Bob Ross



1/3 Braveheart

- It's your job to provide the business vision. This is communicated with a brand promise. (Page 25)
- Who is Sandy Sanderson? And what did you say to her? (Page 28)
- Consider where your audience spends time on social media. Be seen there. Not everywhere. (Page 29).
- Simplify your message so people will listen. (Page 32)
- Be Gandalf in the story. Not Frodo. (Page 34)
- Find Golden Geese. Don't waste your time on energy vampires. (Page 35)
- Quality is more important than quantity. (Page 39)

## AVOID THE PAY-TO-WIN MENTALITY

Fast track passes sound like a good idea in theory. But what happens when everyone can cut to the front of the super-fast lane?

Well, that new line is just as long - and to cut that line, you'll need to pay 2 times as much.

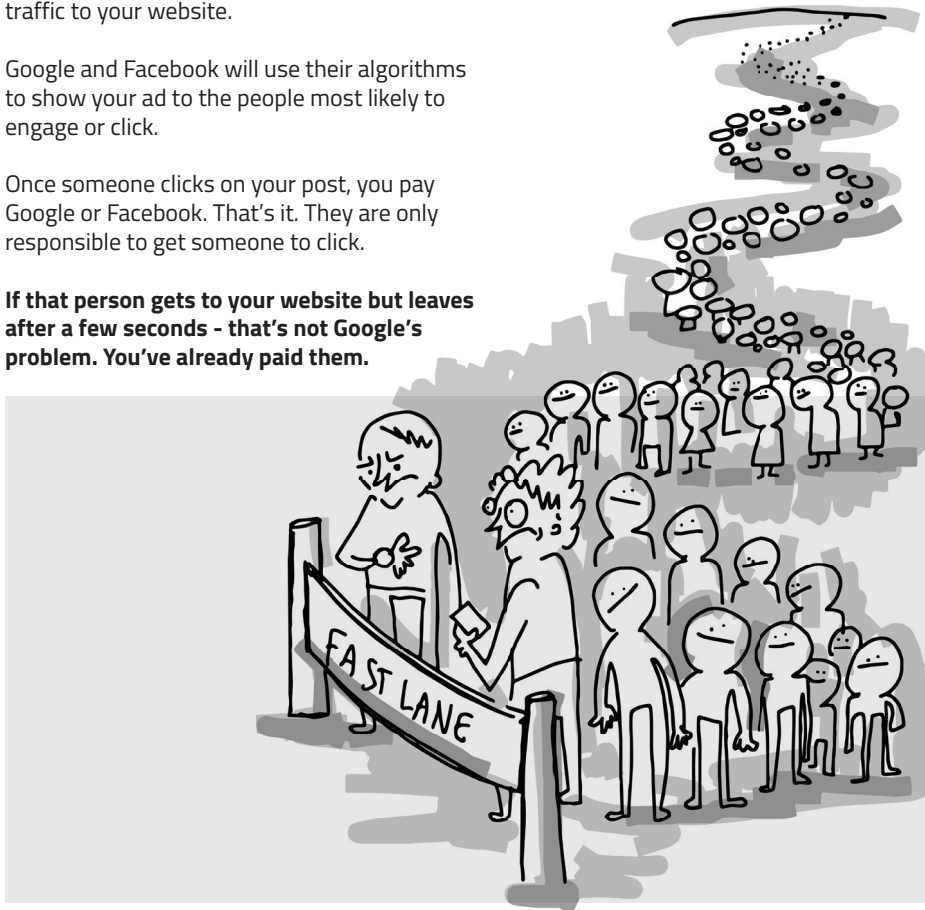
This is the result of paid ads on Google or Facebook.

In general terms, you set up an ad through your Facebook business page or Google business account. You tell the platforms your goal. For example, increase engagement rate or drive traffic to your website.

Google and Facebook will use their algorithms to show your ad to the people most likely to engage or click.

Once someone clicks on your post, you pay Google or Facebook. That's it. They are only responsible to get someone to click.

**If that person gets to your website but leaves after a few seconds - that's not Google's problem. You've already paid them.**



## **The difference between you and Nike is the amount of money to burn.**

Anyone with a free afternoon and a Gmail account can set up a Pay-Per-Click Ad. There is no barrier to entry anymore.

In 2023, to see any positive results on Google Ads, you need to spend about \$5,000 a month. And run them for at least six months. The Google algorithms need a few months to understand your ads.

Do you really have \$30,000 laying around to test things out?

### **What Should You Do Instead?**

If you have any money to burn, reinvest it in your company. Take your employees out to lunch. Buy your Golden Geese a great bottle of wine as a thank you.

Work on creating resources and content that makes people want to stay on your website.

**Create the company culture and brand that gives people FOMO. That is what will create a richer environment and a sustainable brand.**

### **TL;DR**

**As a small business owner, you are not playing the same game as Nike when it comes to PPC ads.**

**You're not on the same financial footing. So don't bother competing.**



## HOW MUCH SHOULD YOU SPEND ON MARKETING

Oh no! The Intrusive Thought Monster is back!

Seriously though, it depends on too many different variables to cram into a book. We tried our best to synthesize it in this infographic below.

There are also a lot of online calculators you can use. The QR code will lead you to a nice one. Enter in your annual revenue and industry. It'll show you what a conservative and aggressive marketing budget might look like.



### How Much is your Time worth?

We could spend 10 chapters providing tools to calculate marketing costs. But the truth is, it comes down to how much your time is worth.



### Timeframe & Support

- How quickly do you need your site up and running?
- Do you already have a site that needs an update?
- Do you have some website experience but need some training?
- Do you need assistance with SEO?

### Size & Content

- Who is your target audience and how do they access information?
- How many pages will you need?
- Do you have a logo and brand colors?
- Do you have written content for your website?

### Complexity

- Do you need customized layouts?
- Will your prospects need to fill out an intake form?
- Do you have offsite integrations?
- Are you interested in capturing analytics for better SEO?

### Technical

- Where will your site be hosted (Ex: Wix, Squarespace, Wordpress, other)?
- Have you registered a domain?
- Do you need enhanced security features?
- Are you looking for ongoing maintenance and support?



## REST STOP 01: PRIORITIZE YOUR TIME

Go back to Rest Stop 01. Use the table below to assign an estimate of hours you spend on each SWOT category. Next ask yourself, is that what you want? If not, course correct.

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Est. Hours</b>	<b>Target</b>
<b>Weaknesses</b>		
<b>Opportunities</b>		
<b>Threats</b>		



## SECTION 3 CHEAT SHEET

(For those that skim)



- The internet has us all believing we're expert investigators. Leave crumbs on social media for people to find. (Page 42)
- Social media for personal use is where you SPEND time. Social media for business use is where you INVEST time. (Page 44)
- Garbage in. Garbage out. A pay-per-click ad won't fix that. (Page 46)
- Are you crossing off hundreds of small things from your to-do list because you're avoiding the bigger decisions? (Page 49)