

SIMPLESTARTUP

Canvas.

The one-page business plan for a business of one. Ten boxes, one new AI Layer, thirty honest minutes.

Fillable PDF

13 zones

30 minutes

SIMPLE STARTUP CANVASone page · 2026

01	02	03	04	05
06	07	08	09	10

AI LAYER

It's not a document. It's a search tool.

Somewhere on your hard drive there's probably a 40-page business plan you never opened again. This isn't that. A business of one doesn't need predictions... **it needs tests.**

Every box is a guess. Fill them honestly, find the shakiest one, test it cheaply this week, rewrite. **That loop is the entire method.** — Mayank



1. Guess

Fill all 10 boxes in 30 minutes.
Ugly is fine.



2. Test

Pick the shakiest box. Run one
cheap test.



3. Rewrite

Update the box with what reality
taught you.

- 01 One or two sentences per box.** More than that means several answers... pick the one you'll test first.
- 02 An empty box is information.** It's your business telling you what to figure out next.
- 03 Date every rewrite.** A canvas that hasn't changed in a year means the testing stopped.

YOUR NAME

BUSINESS / IDEA

DATE

SIMPLE STARTUP CANVAS

The one-page business plan for a business of one · guess → test → rewrite

DESIGNED FOR

DESIGNED BY

DATE

VERSION



Problem / Pain

01

The biggest pain your prospect is living with right now... the Tuesday-night version of it.



Product / Solution

02

Your fix for that exact pain... in one sentence, not a feature list.



Unique Selling Proposition

03

Why you, and not the obvious alternative? One clear, checkable claim the competition can't make. This is the center of the canvas for a reason... everything else feeds it.



Unfair Advantage

04

Skills, assets, or a head start that can't be easily copied. "Passion" doesn't count.



Customer Avatar

05

One person, not a demographic. Their situation, their frustration, what they want in their own words... and where they hang out online.



Existing Alternatives

06

What they do today without you... including the \$997 course, YouTube, or nothing.



Key Metrics

07

The 2-3 numbers that prove the search is working. Checkable in 5 minutes a week.



Traffic Sources

08

2-3 channels max... incl. the new one: would ChatGPT recommend you? (See the AI Layer below.)



Pricing

09

What's free (and its job), what's paid, and why that price fits the avatar in box 05... not your revenue fantasy.



Business Model

10

How this becomes a living: membership, course, digital products, services, affiliate... the chain from stranger to customer.

NEW · 2026

The AI Layer

One person + agents = a full team. Plan the delegation like a department.



Delegate to agents

11

The busywork AI runs weekly: drafts, research, repurposing, follow-up, reporting.



Only-you decisions

12

What never gets delegated: strategy, offers, pricing, voice, final approval.



AI visibility

13

Ask ChatGPT what it recommends in your niche. Are you in the answer? Date + result here.

01

BOX 1 OF 10

Problem

Not a category. A moment... the Tuesday-night version of the pain.



● VAGUE

"Marketing is hard for small businesses."

● HONEST

"Solopreneurs want a real business, but busywork eats the hours they'd need to build it."

WHEN DOES YOUR CUSTOMER FEEL THIS PAIN MOST SHARPLY?

WHAT DOES IT COST THEM... TIME, MONEY, OR PEACE OF MIND?

YOUR PROBLEM BOX, IN 1-2 SENTENCES



A real customer would nod at this... it's their words, not mine.



Up next · **02 Solution** →

02

BOX 2 OF 10

Solution

One sentence. If it needs a paragraph, you have several solutions... pick one.



● VAGUE

"A platform that empowers entrepreneurs to reach their goals."

● HONEST

"AI agents do the busywork... drafting, publishing, follow-up... while the founder decides."

WHAT SPECIFICALLY GOES AWAY FOR THE CUSTOMER?

WHAT FORM DOES IT TAKE... SERVICE, PRODUCT, CONTENT, COMMUNITY?

YOUR SOLUTION BOX, IN ONE SENTENCE

☐ This directly attacks the pain in box 01... not a different, easier problem.



Up next · **03 Unique Selling Proposition** →

03

BOX 3 OF 10

Unique Selling Proposition

Something TRUE about you that the obvious alternative can't say.



● VAGUE

"High quality and great customer service."

● HONEST

"I'm actually one person... every system I teach runs my own business first."

WHAT'S THE OBVIOUS ALTERNATIVE YOUR CUSTOMER COMPARES YOU TO?

WHAT CAN YOU TRUTHFULLY SAY THAT IT CAN'T?

YOUR USP BOX



The claim is checkable... a stranger could verify it in five minutes.



Up next · **04 Unique Advantage** →

04

BOX 4 OF 10

Unique Advantage

"Passion" is not an advantage. What can't be copied?



● VAGUE

"I'm passionate and hard-working."

● HONEST

"A decade of SEO experience plus an AI setup that took months to tune."

SKILLS, ASSETS, AUDIENCE, OR EXPERIENCE YOU ALREADY OWN

HOW LONG WOULD IT TAKE A COPYCAT TO MATCH IT?

YOUR UNIQUE ADVANTAGE BOX (OKAY TO LEAVE THIN... IT FILLS OVER TIME)



If this box is empty, I've noted what I'll build this year to fill it.



Up next · 05 Customer Avatar →

05

BOX 5 OF 10

Customer Avatar

Could you recognize this person in a coffee-shop conversation?



● VAGUE

"Adults 25-54 interested in business."

● HONEST

"A burned-out project manager who wants to coach on the side... allergic to hype."

THEIR SITUATION RIGHT NOW (JOB, STAGE, FRUSTRATION)

WHAT THEY WANT INSTEAD... IN THEIR WORDS, NOT YOURS

YOUR CUSTOMER AVATAR BOX



I can name at least one real person who fits this description.



Up next · **06 Existing Alternatives** →

06

BOX 6 OF 10

Existing Alternatives



"No competitors" is the wrong answer. The deadliest one is doing nothing.

● VAGUE

"There's really nothing like this out there."

● HONEST

"Guru courses (\$997), free YouTube (overwhelming), or duct-taping tools alone."

ALTERNATIVE 1 & WHAT IT GETS WRONG

ALTERNATIVE 2 & WHAT IT GETS WRONG

YOUR EXISTING ALTERNATIVES BOX



I am the thing that fixes what these alternatives get wrong.

Up next · **07 Traffic Sources** →

07

BOX 7 OF 10

Traffic Sources

Pick 2-3 channels. Every channel you add halves the attention the others get.



● VAGUE

"Social, SEO, ads, YouTube, podcast, TikTok, email, referrals."

● HONEST

"SEO + AI search, feeding an email list I own. That's it."

CHANNEL 1 & WHY IT FITS YOUR AVATAR

CHANNEL 2 & WHY IT FITS

YOUR TRAFFIC SOURCES BOX



I cut at least one channel I was tempted to list.



Up next · **08 Key Metrics** →

08

BOX 8 OF 10

Key Metrics

2-3 numbers you can check in five minutes a week. Vanity doesn't count.



● VAGUE

"Followers, likes, impressions, brand awareness."

● HONEST

"Email subscribers, opt-in rate, revenue per offer. Three numbers, five minutes."

METRIC 1 & WHAT DECISION IT DRIVES

METRIC 2 & WHAT DECISION IT DRIVES

YOUR KEY METRICS BOX



A bad week would actually show up in these numbers.



Up next · **09 Pricing** →

09

BOX 9 OF 10

Pricing

Pricing follows from box 05 and box 06... the boxes argue until they agree.



● VAGUE

"Competitive pricing with premium options."

● HONEST

"Free tier builds trust; paid products in impulse territory."

WHAT'S FREE, AND WHAT JOB DOES THE FREE TIER DO?

WHAT'S PAID, AND WHAT WOULD YOUR AVATAR HAPPILY PAY?

YOUR PRICING BOX

☐ This price makes sense for the avatar in box 05... not my revenue fantasy.



Up next · **10 Business Model** →

10

BOX 10 OF 10

Business Model

A boring model executed weekly beats a brilliant model executed never.



● VAGUE

"Multiple revenue streams across several verticals."

● HONEST

"Free content → email list → digital products, with costs near zero."

THE CHAIN: HOW A STRANGER BECOMES A CUSTOMER

WHY THIS WORKS AT A TEAM SIZE OF ONE

YOUR BUSINESS MODEL BOX



I could explain this model to a friend in 30 seconds.



Next · Your one-page Canvas is ready to assemble →

THE PRESSURE TEST

Now let AI attack it.

Paste your ten boxes into ChatGPT or Claude with this prompt, and let a ruthless skeptic earn its keep:

COPY-PASTE PROMPT

"Here's my one-page business plan. Play a skeptical investor: find the **three weakest boxes**, tell me **what evidence would prove each one wrong**, and design the **cheapest possible test** for each. Be blunt. Don't reassure me."

WEAK BOX 1

BOX & WHY IT'S SHAKY

CHEAPEST TEST

DEADLINE

WEAK BOX 2

BOX & WHY IT'S SHAKY

CHEAPEST TEST

DEADLINE

WEAK BOX 3

BOX & WHY IT'S SHAKY

CHEAPEST TEST

DEADLINE



I ran the pressure test and picked one test to run this week.

Cheap tests worth stealing: five customer conversations · one landing page · two pitches · a pre-sale · one post · the AI baseline ("what does ChatGPT recommend in my niche?")

Tonight's 30-minute sprint

☐ **Set a timer for 30 minutes** and fill all ten boxes on page 3 with your best guesses. 30 min

☐ **Mark your shakiest box** ... the one you'd least want a skeptic to poke. 2 min

☐ **Run the AI pressure test** on page 14 and design one cheap test. 10 min

☐ **Schedule the test** for this week. Two emails. One page. Five conversations. 5 min

REWRITE LOG · DATE EVERY CHANGE

DATE	BOX	WHAT I BELIEVED	TEST I RAN	WHAT I LEARNED

Five rewrites in a year doesn't mean the plan failed. It means you learned five true things about your business.

YOU'RE DONE, FOR NOW

The 40 pages were packaging. This page is the plan.

A business plan is a set of decisions: who you serve, what you promise,
how they find you, what they pay. You've now made all ten.

Guess. Test. Rewrite. Start with box 01, tonight.

FREE · NEXT STEP

The Free Startup Toolkit

The templates, tools, and AI workflows
that pair with this Canvas.

simplestartup.net/startup-toolkit

WEEKLY · FREE

The Simple Startup Newsletter

One practical idea a week... what I learn
building mine in public.

simplestartup.net

P.S. Every box, explained with my real answers: simplestartup.net/business-plan-for-solopreneurs

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