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THE COMPLETE FIELD GUIDE

# The Freelance Web Designer's Playbook

*How to land your first paying clients, price your work with confidence, and build a profitable web design business — starting from zero.*



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## HOW TO READ THIS GUIDE

Sections 1–6 build your foundation. Sections 7–9 are the engine that actually fills your pipeline — finding businesses that need a site, proving they need one, and reaching out the right way. Sections 10–14 turn conversations into paid work and paid work into a real business. If you only have an hour, read Sections 7, 8, and 9, then run the 30-day plan in Section 15.

SECTION 00

# Your Toolkit — The Required Tools

*You can start with a lean stack. The single most important tool is the one that fills your pipeline — everything else supports the work once a client says yes. Here is the complete kit, grouped by what it does, with the one tool that runs your whole find-to-build workflow featured first.*

**THE PROSPECTING ENGINE**

## BizVoid

BizVoid is built for exactly the workflow in this guide. Enter a **zip code** and a business type, and it pulls every matching local business, automatically **audits each one's web presence** — no site, slow load, not mobile-friendly, weak SEO — and generates a ready-to-send, **personalized cold-outreach pitch** based on exactly what it found.

Its scan coverage map shows which areas you've already worked and flags **new businesses versus ones you've already seen**, so you never pitch the same lead twice. Need a different angle? Regenerate the HTML pitch with one click. Instead of spending hours building lists and writing audits by hand, you start every week with a prioritized list of prospects and a tailored pitch for each.

And when a prospect is ready — or to close them in the first place — BizVoid's **AI Website Builder** turns that same lead into a complete website in seconds, built from the business's real Google data: category, hours, reviews, and photos. Pick single- or multi-page, edit the copy and theme, and export clean HTML. It is the one tool that runs the entire loop: **find** → **audit** → **pitch** → **build**.

→ [www.bizvoid.com](http://www.bizvoid.com)

Tool	What it's for
<b>FIND, PITCH &amp; BUILD — your engine</b>	
<b>BizVoid</b>	Find local businesses by zip code, auto-audit their web presence, generate cold-outreach pitches, AND build the client's site with its AI Website Builder — the whole workflow in one tool. <b>Start here.</b>
<b>A cold-email sender</b>	An email outreach/sequencing tool to send and auto-follow-up at volume. Optional early on — BizVoid gives you the pitch; this delivers it.

<b>BUILD &amp; DESIGN</b>	
<b>BizVoid AI Website Builder</b>	<b>The recommended way to build the sites you sell.</b> Generates a complete single- or multi-page site from the lead's real Google data (category, hours, reviews, photos), editable and exportable as clean HTML. Already part of your BizVoid login — no extra tool, no tab-switching.

<b>Webflow / Framer / WordPress</b>	Optional — for fully custom or hand-coded builds and heavy ongoing edits. Many freelancers generate the first draft in BizVoid, then refine here only when a project needs it.
<b>Figma</b>	Design mockups and quick concepts to show prospects before you build — great for the speculative redesigns in Section 5.
<b>PageSpeed Insights</b>	Free speed and mobile scoring. BizVoid already runs this in its audits, but it's handy for spot-checks and client reports.
<b>RUN THE BUSINESS</b>	
<b>Domain + pro email</b>	A custom domain and professional inbox (e.g. Google Workspace). Your own site must be fast and clean — it's your first audit.
<b>Stripe</b>	Send invoices, take deposits, and collect card payments. Set up before you close your first deal.
<b>A contract tool</b>	A reusable agreement for scope, payment, and revisions (Section 11). Never start paid work without one.
<b>A simple CRM</b>	BizVoid has a built-in pipeline board for the leads you find — or use Notion, Airtable, or a spreadsheet. Just don't rely on memory.
<b>Managed hosting</b>	Reliable hosting for the sites you launch (and a foundation for the care plans in Section 13).

### ONE TOOL RUNS THE WHOLE LOOP

Finding clients is what stops most freelancers — and building the site is what eats the rest of the time. BizVoid now does both: search by zip, audit, pitch, AND generate the client's website. Everything else on this page you only need *after* someone says yes. So set up BizVoid first, start scanning your target area today, and add the rest as each deal requires it.

## SECTION 01

## Why This Is a Real Opportunity in 2026

*A website is no longer a luxury for a local business — it is the front door. Yet a surprising number of plumbers, dentists, gyms, law offices, landscapers, restaurants, and contractors still operate with no site, an abandoned one from a decade ago, or a page that loads slowly and looks broken on a phone. That gap is your opportunity.*

The reason this works as a freelance business is simple economics. A small local business can earn thousands of dollars from a single new customer. If a better website brings them even a handful of additional calls or bookings a month, a project that costs them a few thousand dollars pays for itself almost immediately. You are not selling *pixels* — you are selling more phone calls, more booked jobs, and a business that looks credible the moment someone searches for it.

### Why now is a good time to start

- **The tools collapsed the barrier.** Modern site builders, component libraries, and AI assistants mean you can produce professional results far faster than designers could five years ago. Less time per project means better margins.
- **Local demand is unevenly served.** Big agencies chase big clients. The local dentist or HVAC company is too small for them and too busy to fix it themselves — which leaves a wide-open lane for an attentive freelancer.
- **Proof is easy to show.** You can measure a site's speed, mobile friendliness, and search visibility in minutes. That turns a vague pitch ("you should update your website") into a concrete, undeniable one ("your site takes 9 seconds to load on a phone, and here's what that costs you").
- **Recurring revenue is built in.** Websites need hosting, updates, security, and content. One project can become a monthly retainer that compounds over time.

#### THE CORE LOOP OF THIS BUSINESS

Everything in this guide comes back to one repeatable loop: **Find** local businesses with a weak or missing web presence → **Audit** exactly what's wrong → **Pitch** them with the evidence → **Close** the deal → **Deliver** → turn it into **recurring** revenue → repeat. Master this loop and you will never wonder where your next client is coming from.

The freelancers who struggle are almost always stuck on one thing: finding clients. They have the skills but sit waiting for referrals. The freelancers who thrive treat client-finding as a system they run every week. This guide is built around that system.

## SECTION 02

## The Skills You Actually Need

*You do not need a computer science degree, and you do not need to be a world-class designer. You need a working command of a small set of skills and the judgment to know when good enough is genuinely good.*

### The essential stack

- **Layout and visual fundamentals.** Spacing, hierarchy, contrast, alignment, and restraint. Most amateur sites fail on these basics, not on anything advanced.
- **One way to build sites efficiently.** Pick a single path and get fast at it. The fastest on-ramp is an AI website builder like BizVoid, which generates a complete first draft from the business's real Google data that you then edit and export — so you can ship professional sites while your hand-building skills catch up. When a project needs full custom work, a builder like Webflow, Framer, or WordPress is the next step. Either way, learn one path well rather than five poorly.
- **Responsive design.** Everything must look right on a phone first. The majority of local searches happen on mobile.
- **Basic SEO and performance.** Page titles, meta descriptions, fast loading, image compression, and a Google Business Profile. You don't need to be an SEO expert — you need to not actively hurt the client.
- **Copy and content sense.** You'll often write or rewrite headlines and calls-to-action. Clear beats clever.

### The skills you can skip (for now)

- Complex custom web applications, databases, and back-end engineering.
- Advanced animation and 3D — nice, but rarely what wins a local deal.
- Branding theory and logo design — you can partner out or use the client's existing brand.

#### DON'T WAIT UNTIL YOU FEEL READY

You will never feel fully ready, and clients don't hire credentials — they hire someone who can clearly solve their problem. If you can build two or three good-looking, fast, mobile-friendly sites, you are ready to charge for the third. Learn the rest on real projects.

### A realistic learning path

1. **Weeks 1–2:** Pick your build tool. Rebuild three real local business sites you admire, purely as practice. Copying good work is how you internalize patterns.
2. **Weeks 3–4:** Build two original sites for imaginary or real local businesses (a café, a dentist). These become portfolio pieces.
3. **Week 5 onward:** Start the client-finding engine in Section 7. You learn fastest with money on the line.

## SECTION 03

## Setting Up Your Freelance Foundation

*You can start lean. Resist the urge to spend weeks perfecting a logo or a business name before you've talked to a single prospect. Set up the essentials, then go find clients.*

### The minimum viable setup

- **A simple business identity.** A name (your own name is fine), a professional email address on your own domain, and a one-line description of who you help and how.
- **A one-page personal site.** It demonstrates the standard you hold yourself to. If your own site is slow or ugly, no audit you send will be believed.
- **A way to get paid.** An invoicing tool (or a payment processor) that can send professional invoices and accept cards or transfers.
- **A simple contract template.** Covered in Section 11. Never start paid work on a handshake alone.
- **A lightweight CRM or even a spreadsheet.** You will track dozens of prospects through stages. A simple pipeline beats a perfect memory.

### Legal and money basics

Register a business entity appropriate to your country and separate your business finances from personal ones with a dedicated account. Set aside a portion of every payment for taxes from day one. These specifics vary by location, so confirm the rules where you live — this guide is general information, not legal or tax advice.

#### HOLD A LINE ON PROFESSIONALISM

The single fastest way to look more expensive — and justify higher prices — is to **respond quickly, show up on time, and write clearly**. Most local businesses have been burned by a flaky "web guy" before. Simply being reliable makes you stand out more than any design trend.

## SECTION 04

## Choosing a Niche and Positioning

*Generalists compete on price. Specialists command premiums. The fastest path to higher rates and easier sales is to become known for a specific kind of client.*

### Why niching wins

- **Your pitch gets sharper.** "I build websites" is forgettable. "I build booking-ready websites for dental practices" is memorable and credible.
- **Your work compounds.** Every project in a niche teaches you that industry's needs, so the next one is faster and better.
- **Prospecting gets easier.** You can search for one type of business in an area and reuse the same audit angle and pitch repeatedly.
- **Referrals concentrate.** Dentists know dentists; restaurateurs know restaurateurs. A reputation spreads inside a niche.

### How to choose one

Look for an intersection of three things: businesses that **can afford it** (a single customer is worth a lot to them), businesses that **visibly need it** (their current sites are weak), and a field you won't mind spending months inside. Strong starter niches include:

Niche	Why it works
Home services (HVAC, plumbing, roofing, landscaping)	High job value, urgent demand, often poor or no websites.
Health & wellness (dentists, clinics, gyms, med-spas)	Recurring customers, marketing budgets, booking needs.
Food & hospitality (restaurants, cafés, caterers)	Visual businesses where a good site obviously matters.
Professional services (law, accounting, real estate)	Credibility-driven; willing to pay to look trustworthy.

#### POSITIONING STATEMENT FORMULA

Fill in the blanks: "I help [type of business] in [area] get more [customers/bookings/calls] with fast, modern websites that work on phones." Put that sentence on your site, in your email signature, and at the top of every pitch.

## SECTION 05

## Building a Portfolio Before You Have Clients

*The classic chicken-and-egg problem: clients want to see past work, but you need clients to build past work. Here is how to break it.*

### Five ways to a portfolio from zero

- 1. Build speculative redesigns.** Pick three real local businesses with weak sites and design better versions. You don't need permission to design a concept — and these double as the most persuasive outreach you can send (more on this in Section 9). BizVoid's AI Website Builder makes this nearly effortless: generate a live redesign of a real prospect's site in seconds from their Google data, then use it as both a portfolio piece and a closing tool.
- 2. Do two or three deeply discounted or free projects** for businesses you genuinely want in your portfolio. Trade price for a testimonial, permission to showcase the work, and referrals.
- 3. Redesign for friends, family, and local nonprofits.** Real clients, real constraints, low stakes.
- 4. Create fictional brands** that show range — a coffee shop, a law firm, a gym — so prospects can imagine their own business in your hands.
- 5. Document your process,** not just the final screenshots. Showing the before, the problem, and the after builds more trust than a gallery of pretty images.

#### QUALITY OVER QUANTITY

Three excellent, relevant pieces beat ten mediocre ones. A prospect in your niche should look at your portfolio and think "this person clearly understands businesses like mine." Curate ruthlessly — remove anything that no longer represents your best work.

### What each portfolio piece should show

- The **problem** the business had (slow, outdated, no mobile, no clear call-to-action).
- The **result** you designed and the reasoning behind key choices.
- Ideally, a **number** — faster load time, more enquiries, higher conversion — even if estimated and clearly framed as such.

## SECTION 06

## Pricing Your Work Without Guessing

*Underpricing is the most common and most damaging mistake new freelancers make. It attracts difficult clients, starves your business, and signals low value. Price for the outcome you create, not the hours you spend.*

### Move away from hourly

Charging by the hour punishes you for getting faster and caps your income. Instead, quote a **fixed price per project** or sell **packages**. The client gets predictability; you get rewarded for efficiency and expertise.

### A simple three-tier package model

Tier	What's included	Best for
<b>Starter</b>	A clean 1–3 page site, mobile-ready, contact form, basic SEO setup, Google Business Profile.	Businesses with no site or a broken one.
<b>Standard</b>	5–7 pages, copywriting help, gallery, booking/enquiry flow, on-page SEO, speed optimization.	Established businesses ready to grow.
<b>Premium</b>	Everything above plus content strategy, multiple locations/services, integrations, and a care plan.	Multi-location or competitive niches.

#### ANCHOR WITH THREE OPTIONS

Always present three tiers, not one price. Most clients pick the middle option, the top tier makes the middle look reasonable, and the bottom tier gives budget-conscious clients a yes instead of a no. You sell more by letting clients choose *how much*, not *whether*.

### Setting your actual numbers

- Start where you can say the price out loud without flinching — then raise it every two or three projects until you hit gentle resistance.
- Tie price to **value**: if a site could bring the client several new customers a month, a few thousand dollars is an easy return for them.
- Always take a **deposit** (commonly 40–50%) before starting, with the balance due before launch.
- Add a recurring **care plan** (hosting, updates, backups, small edits) — covered in Section 13. This is where stability comes from.

## SECTION 07

## The Client-Finding Engine

*This is the heart of the guide. A predictable freelance income comes from a repeatable system for finding businesses that need you — not from luck or referrals alone. Run this engine every week and your pipeline stays full.*

### The engine in four steps

- 1. Target an area and a niche.** Pick a city, town, or set of zip codes and a business type from Section 4. Geography plus niche keeps your outreach relevant and your audits comparable.
- 2. Pull a list of local businesses** in that area and category — name, website (or the absence of one), phone, and address.
- 3. Audit each one's web presence** (Section 8) so every prospect comes with a clear, specific reason to talk to you.
- 4. Prioritize and reach out** to the ones with the most obvious problems first (Section 9). The weaker their current site, the easier your pitch.

### How to build the prospect list

You can assemble this list by hand from map searches and business directories, copying each business's details into a spreadsheet. It works, but it is slow. The faster approach is **BizVoid**, which is built for this exact job: enter a zip code and a business type, and it searches every matching local business and automatically checks each one's web presence — whether they have a site, how fast it loads, whether it's mobile-friendly — then flags and scores the best prospects for you. That turns hours of manual research into a ready-to-work list in minutes.

#### WHAT THE BIZVOID PROSPECTING WORKFLOW LOOKS LIKE

Search an area by zip code for a chosen business type → BizVoid pulls every matching business and detects which ones have no website, a slow site, or a non-mobile site → it scores and sorts them so the most obvious opportunities rise to the top → and generates a tailored outreach pitch for each based on what's actually wrong. The scan coverage map even shows which zips you've already worked and which businesses are new versus already-seen — so you spend your time talking to prospects, not compiling lists.

### Track everything in a pipeline

Whatever you use to find leads, record each one in a simple pipeline with stages: **New** → **Audited** → **Contacted** → **Replied** → **Call booked** → **Proposal sent** → **Won/Lost**. Knowing your numbers — how many contacts produce a reply, how many replies produce a call, how many calls produce a sale — lets you fix the weak link instead of guessing.

**VOLUME IS A FEATURE, NOT A FLAW**

Cold outreach is a numbers game softened by relevance. If 100 well-researched, personalized messages produce five conversations and two clients, that is a *great* week — and it's completely repeatable. Don't be discouraged by silence; be systematic about volume.

## SECTION 08

## Auditing a Prospect's Web Presence

*The audit is your secret weapon. Anyone can say "you should update your website." Only you arrive with specific evidence of what's broken and what it's costing them. Evidence turns a cold pitch into an obvious yes.*

### The audit checklist

For each prospect, check and note:

- **Does a website even exist?** No site at all is the strongest opportunity of all.
- **Mobile experience.** Open it on a phone. Is it readable, tappable, and properly sized — or pinch-and-zoom from 2014?
- **Load speed.** Time how long it takes to become usable. Anything over a few seconds is bleeding visitors. Free speed-testing tools give you a hard number and a grade.
- **Design and credibility.** Does it look current and trustworthy, or would a customer hesitate to call?
- **Clear calls-to-action.** Can a visitor instantly find how to call, book, or get directions? Missing or buried CTAs cost real money.
- **Basic SEO signals.** Sensible page titles, a Google Business Profile, accurate hours and contact info, reviews.
- **Security and freshness.** Is it served securely (HTTPS)? Any obviously outdated content, broken links, or placeholder text?

#### TURN FINDINGS INTO CONSEQUENCES

Don't just list problems — translate each into a business cost the owner feels. "Your site takes 8 seconds to load on mobile" becomes "more than half of phone visitors leave before a slow site finishes loading — those are calls you never get." Owners don't care about metrics; they care about lost customers.

### Package the audit so it sells

A short, clean audit — even three or four bullet points with a screenshot and a speed score — is remarkably persuasive because it is **specific to their business**. Lead your outreach with one or two findings, and offer the full audit on a call. **BizVoid generates this audit automatically** for every business it pulls, so the evidence is ready before you ever write the email — and it drafts the pitch around those findings for you.

#### OFFER THE AUDIT AS THE FIRST GIFT

"I put together a quick analysis of your website and found three things that are probably costing you calls — want me to send it over?" is almost impossible to refuse, because you're giving value before asking for anything. The audit *is* your foot in the door.

## SECTION 09

## Cold Outreach That Gets Replies

*You have a list of prospects and an audit on each. Now you reach out. The goal of a first message is not to sell a website — it's to start a conversation by leading with value.*

### The rules of outreach that works

- **Lead with their problem, not your services.** Open with something specific you noticed about *their* site, not a paragraph about you.
- **Be brief.** Five sentences beats fifteen. Busy owners skim.
- **Make one clear, low-friction ask.** "Want me to send the full audit?" or "Open to a quick 10-minute call?" — never a wall of options.
- **Personalize the first line, template the rest.** The opening proves you looked; the body can be reused. BizVoid generates a tailored pitch per prospect straight from its audit — and you can regenerate the HTML pitch for a fresh angle in one click — so personalization scales without writing every message from scratch.
- **Follow up.** Most replies come from the second, third, or fourth touch. A polite follow-up every few days roughly doubles your response rate. Silence is rarely a no — it's usually a not-yet-seen.
- **Use multiple channels.** Email, a phone call, a walk-in for nearby businesses, even a direct message. Match the channel to the niche.

#### THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE FIRST LINE

The recipient's only question in the first two seconds is "is this relevant to me, or is it spam?" A specific, true observation about their business — their slow mobile site, their missing booking button — answers that instantly and earns you the next sentence. Generic flattery does the opposite.

#### A note on tone

You are a helpful expert who noticed a fixable problem, not a desperate salesperson. Write the way you'd talk to a neighbor who runs a shop. Confidence plus genuine usefulness, with zero pressure, converts far better than hype. Full swipe-ready templates are in the Appendix.

## SECTION 10

## From Reply to Signed Deal

*A reply is not a sale — it's an invitation to a conversation. Your job now is to understand their situation, show you can solve it, and make saying yes easy.*

### Get on a call

Move promising email threads to a short call or video chat quickly. You build more trust in ten minutes of conversation than ten emails. On the call, your job is mostly to **listen and diagnose**, not to pitch.

### The discovery conversation

Ask questions that surface the real goal behind the website:

- "What made you open my message — what's bugging you about the current site?"
- "How do most customers find you right now?"
- "If the new site did one thing brilliantly, what would it be — more calls, online bookings, looking more credible?"
- "Have you worked with a designer before? How did that go?"
- "What's your timeline, and do you have a budget range in mind?"

#### SELL THE OUTCOME, NOT THE FEATURES

Owners don't buy "a responsive five-page website with on-page SEO." They buy "more booked jobs and a business that looks as good online as it is in person." Translate every feature into the result it produces for *their* bottom line, and the price stops being the focus.

#### SHOW THEM THE "AFTER" TO CLOSE FASTER

The single most powerful closing move is to stop describing the new site and **show it**. With BizVoid's AI Website Builder you can generate a live, working preview of the prospect's redesigned site — built from their real business data — and drop the link straight into your pitch or pull it up on the call. A redesign they can click through makes the value obvious and the "yes" easy, often before a competitor has even replied.

### Handle the common objections

They say...	You respond...
"It's too expensive."	Reframe around return: one or two new customers covers the cost; the site works for them every day for years.
"I need to think about it."	Ask what specifically they want to weigh — usually it's a real question you can answer on the spot.

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"My nephew can build it." Acknowledge it, then contrast a hobby site with one built to bring in customers, kept fast, secure, and updated.

"Now's not a good time." Agree, set a concrete follow-up date, and keep them in your pipeline. Timing objections are real — stay in touch.

## SECTION 11

## Proposals, Scope, and Contracts

*Once a prospect is interested, a clear proposal and a simple contract protect both of you and make you look professional. This is where amateurs lose money and seasoned freelancers protect it.*

### The proposal

Keep it short and outcome-focused. A strong proposal contains:

- A one-paragraph **summary of their goal** in their own words, so they feel understood.
- The **three package options** from Section 6, with what's included in each.
- A clear **timeline** and what you need from them to hit it.
- **Payment terms** — deposit, milestones, final payment.
- A simple **next step**: "Reply with the package you'd like and I'll send the agreement and invoice."

#### SCOPE IS WHERE PROJECTS GO TO DIE

The number one killer of freelance profit is **scope creep** — the endless "can you also just..." requests. Define exactly what's included (number of pages, rounds of revisions, what content the client provides) and state plainly that anything beyond it is a separate, priced add-on. Putting this in writing isn't unfriendly; it's what keeps the relationship friendly.

### The contract essentials

- **Scope of work** — precisely what you will and won't deliver.
- **Timeline and milestones**, with the client's responsibilities noted (content, feedback deadlines).
- **Payment schedule** — deposit up front, balance before launch.
- **Revisions policy** — how many rounds are included.
- **Ownership and handover** — what transfers to the client on final payment.
- **Cancellation terms** — what happens if either party walks away.

Use a reputable contract template suited to your country and have a professional review it once; you'll reuse it for years. This guide is general information and not legal advice.

## SECTION 12

## Delivering the Project

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*Delivering well is how you earn referrals, testimonials, and repeat work. A smooth process makes an average designer look great and a great designer look indispensable.*

### A simple, repeatable delivery process

- 1. Kickoff.** Confirm scope, gather content and access, set expectations and dates. Send a short list of exactly what you need from them — missing content is the most common cause of delay.
- 2. Design and build.** Generate the first draft fast with BizVoid's AI Website Builder — a complete single- or multi-page site from the client's real Google data — then edit the copy, theme, and structure to fit. Share that draft early, before polishing; early feedback prevents expensive late surprises. Export the clean HTML to host, or move it into another builder if the project needs heavy custom work.
- 3. Review rounds.** Collect feedback in one consolidated batch per round, not a drip of one-off messages. Hold the line on your included revision count.
- 4. Pre-launch checks.** Test on phones and desktops, check speed, links, forms, and SEO basics. Fix before, not after, launch.
- 5. Launch and handover.** Go live, confirm everything works, and walk the client through anything they need to manage themselves.
- 6. Follow up.** Check in a week later. This is the natural moment to ask for a testimonial, a referral, and to introduce your care plan.

#### UNDER-PROMISE, OVER-DELIVER ON COMMUNICATION

Clients rarely complain about the design — they complain about being left in the dark. A brief weekly update, even "on track, next update Friday," prevents the anxious check-in emails and makes you the rare professional who simply communicates.

### *Collect proof on the way out*

Every finished project should produce three assets for your business: a **portfolio piece**, a **testimonial**, and a **referral ask**. Build the habit of collecting all three at handover, while the client is happiest, and your engine gets easier to run every month.

## SECTION 13

## Turning Projects into Recurring Revenue

*One-off projects mean you start every month at zero. Recurring revenue means you start every month ahead. This single shift is what separates a stressful hustle from a stable business.*

### The care plan (your bread and butter)

Offer every client an ongoing monthly plan after launch. It's valuable to them and predictable for you. A typical care plan includes:

- **Hosting, security, and backups** — handled so they never think about it.
- **Software updates and uptime monitoring.**
- **A set amount of small edits** each month (hours change, new photos, a seasonal banner).
- **A monthly or quarterly check-in** on performance and ideas.

#### THE MATH OF RECURRING REVENUE

Imagine you sign just **ten care-plan clients** over your first year. Even at a modest monthly fee, that's a baseline of income arriving every month before you've sold a single new project — money that covers your costs and lets you be selective about new work. Twenty clients, and the business supports you on recurring revenue alone.

### Other recurring and add-on services

- **SEO and content** — ongoing optimization and new pages or posts.
- **Local marketing** — managing their Google Business Profile and reviews.
- **Performance reports** — a simple monthly summary that reminds them of your value.
- **Redesign refreshes** — a planned update every couple of years.

Existing happy clients are the easiest people to sell to. A pipeline that includes upsells and renewals to past clients — not just cold outreach — is far more resilient.

## SECTION 14

## Scaling: Systems and Leverage

*Once the loop is working, growth comes from doing more of what works with less of your personal time. You scale a freelance business with systems, tools, and eventually people — not by simply working more hours.*

### Productize and templatize

- Build a **reusable starter** — a base layout and component set you adapt per client. Most local sites share the same structure.
- Standardize your **onboarding, proposal, and handover** documents so every project runs the same proven path.
- Create **swipe files** of your best outreach, audits, and replies so you're never writing from scratch.

### Automate the engine

The most time-consuming part of the business — finding prospects and preparing audits — is also the most automatable, and it's exactly what **BizVoid** handles end to end: it pulls local businesses by zip code, audits each one, scores them, and drafts a tailored pitch per lead. One person running BizVoid can cover the prospecting volume that used to take a small team. Spend the hours you save on the human parts: calls, relationships, and quality.

### *Build leverage with people and partners*

- **Subcontract** overflow design or development work once you have more demand than capacity.
- **Partner** with complementary providers — copywriters, photographers, marketers, agencies that don't do web — for steady referrals.
- **Raise prices** as your portfolio and reputation grow. Higher rates with fewer, better clients beat a flood of cheap ones.

#### PROTECT THE ENGINE

When you get busy delivering, it's tempting to stop prospecting — and then you finish your projects and face an empty pipeline. The professionals keep the client-finding engine running **every week, no matter how busy they are**. A steady trickle of new conversations is what makes income predictable instead of feast-or-famine.

## SECTION 15

## Your 30-Day Action Plan

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*Knowledge without action changes nothing. Here is a concrete first month. Adjust the pace to your schedule, but follow the sequence.*

### WEEK 1 *Foundation*

- Pick your niche, and decide how you'll build: start with BizVoid's AI Website Builder for speed, and pick up a custom builder later if needed.
- Set up your one-page personal site, professional email, and invoicing.
- Create your BizVoid account and run a first scan of your target zip code to see what's out there.
- Generate two or three site redesigns from real local businesses to start your portfolio and learn the builder.

### WEEK 2 *First portfolio + first list*

- Finish two speculative redesigns — generate them in BizVoid, then polish the copy and theme.
- Use BizVoid to pull your first list of 50–100 local businesses in your niche, with each one already audited and scored.
- Review the top prospects — the ones with no site, a slow site, or no mobile version are your easiest wins.

### WEEK 3 *Outreach begins*

- Refine BizVoid's generated pitches in your own voice; for your hottest leads, attach a live redesign preview to close faster.
- Send personalized outreach to your top 25 audited prospects.
- Set a follow-up schedule and track every contact in your pipeline.

### WEEK 4 *Conversations and closing*

- Follow up with everyone who hasn't replied — this is where most replies come from.
- Take every call you can get; run the discovery questions from Section 10.
- Send your first proposal with three tiers, and aim to close your first deal (even a discounted portfolio piece counts).

#### THE ONLY METRIC THAT MATTERS THIS MONTH

Not how polished your site is. Not how many tools you've tried. The metric is **conversations started with real business owners**. Get that number up, keep your audits specific and your follow-ups consistent, and the clients will come. Then run the loop again — bigger.

## SECTION A

## Appendix — Swipe Templates & Checklists

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*Adapt these to your voice — never send them word-for-word. Personalize the opening line of every message with something true about that specific business. BizVoid drafts a pitch like these for every prospect automatically; use these as a reference for editing its output into your own tone.*

### **Cold email — "no website" angle**

#### TEMPLATE 1

Subject: a quick thought about [Business Name]

Hi [First Name],

I was looking for a [plumber/dentist/etc.] in [Town] and found your business through [Google/Maps] – but couldn't find a website. Most people check online before they call, so a simple, fast site could be turning searches into booked jobs for you.

I build clean, mobile-ready sites for [niche] businesses in [area]. Want me to send over a quick mockup of what yours could look like? No cost, no obligation.

[Your Name]

### **Cold email — "audit" angle**

**TEMPLATE 2**

Subject: 3 things on your website costing you calls

Hi [First Name],

I ran a quick check on [website] and noticed a few things that are likely losing you customers:

- It takes about [X] seconds to load on a phone
- It's hard to find your phone number / book online
- [one more specific, true finding]

These are all fixable. I put together a short audit – want me to send it over? Happy to walk you through it on a 10-minute call if that's easier.

[Your Name]

***Follow-up (send 3–4 days later)*****TEMPLATE 3**

Subject: re: [previous subject]

Hi [First Name], just floating this back to the top of your inbox. Still happy to send that quick audit/mockup – should I go ahead? Either way, no worries.

[Your Name]

***The audit one-pager checklist***

Fill one of these per prospect before you reach out:

- Has a website? Yes / No — URL: \_\_\_\_\_
- Mobile-friendly? Yes / No / Barely
- Load time (mobile): \_\_\_\_\_ seconds Speed grade: \_\_\_\_\_
- Secure (HTTPS)? Yes / No
- Clear call-to-action (call / book / directions)? Yes / No
- Google Business Profile present & accurate? Yes / No
- Top 3 problems to lead with: 1) \_\_\_\_\_ 2) \_\_\_\_\_ 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- Business cost angle (what it's losing them): \_\_\_\_\_

***Discovery call question bank***

- What made you open my message?
- How do most customers find you today?
- If the new site nailed one thing, what would it be?
- Worked with a designer before? How'd it go?
- Timeline? Budget range in mind?

**FINAL WORD**

The freelancers who win aren't the most talented — they're the most consistent. They find businesses that need help, prove it with a specific audit, reach out with genuine value, and follow up without fail. The skills you can learn as you go. Start the engine, keep it running, and your first client is closer than it feels. Now go send the first email.