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CHICAGO · FREE STARTER KIT

# The Small- Business AI Starter Kit

How to get AI doing real work in your business  
— without the hype.

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READ THIS FIRST

## The clever AI is the easy part.

Most AI advice is either breathless hype or a forty-step tutorial you'll never finish. This isn't that.

Here's the honest version: the flashy AI part is the easy part. The value is in two unglamorous things — wiring AI into the work you already do, and being picky about what's actually worth automating. Get those right and AI quietly hands you hours back. Get them wrong and you've built a toy.

This kit gives you four things: a **filter** for deciding what's worth automating, a **worksheet** for finding the tasks eating your week, five **prompts** you can use today, and the handful of **rules** that keep this safe. You can do a lot of it yourself — that's the point of a starter kit.

# Automate the boring. Keep the human.

The biggest mistake is trying to automate everything. The second biggest is automating the wrong things. Run any task through this before you spend a minute on it.

## GOOD CANDIDATE

### Hand it to a machine

- It repeats — daily, weekly, every order.
- It follows the same steps every time.
- It eats real time you'd rather spend elsewhere.
- A mistake is easy to catch before it does harm.

## LEAVE IT ALONE

### Keep it human

- It needs your judgment or a personal touch.
- It's rare, or always a little different.
- Getting it wrong is expensive or hard to undo.
- It's really about a relationship, not a task.

## QUICK GUT-CHECK

If you could write down the steps and hand them to a new employee, a machine can probably do it. If you'd have to say "it depends" a lot, keep it human — for now.

## A REAL EXAMPLE

A furniture dealer was answering vendor email — quotes, scheduling, order updates — all by hand. Same shapes, every day, easy to check. A perfect candidate. A system now drafts each reply in their voice and files it; a person just skims and approves. The morning email pile stopped being a job.

## Find where your week actually goes.

For one week, jot down the tasks you do over and over. Don't overthink it — just catch the repeats. Then fill this in and circle your top two or three.

| REPEATING TASK | HOW OFTEN | MINUTES EACH | SAME STEPS? | WORTH IT? |
|----------------|-----------|--------------|-------------|-----------|
|                |           |              |             |           |
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The winners are usually high on "how often" and "same steps." Start there.

## Five prompts to try this week.

Paste these into whatever AI tool you already use, and swap in your details. They're starting points, not magic words — tweak them until the output sounds like you.

01

### Reply in my voice

```
Here's an email I received: [paste it].  
Draft a reply in my voice — [describe yours: warm / direct / brief]. Keep it under [X]  
words. Here are two replies I've sent before, so you can match my tone: [paste two].
```

**Why:** stops the AI from sounding like a robot, which is what kills most AI-written email.

02

### Turn messy notes into a clean doc

```
Turn these rough notes into a clear [memo / proposal / summary] for [audience]. Keep all  
my points, fix the structure and grammar, and don't add anything I didn't say: [paste  
notes].
```

**Why:** turns a two-minute brain-dump into something you can actually send.

03

### Summarize and pull the action items

```
Summarize this thread in five bullets. Then list every action item, who owns it, and any  
due date: [paste thread].
```

**Why:** kills the "let me catch up on this thread" time-sink.

04

### First-pass inbox triage

```
Sort these messages into three buckets: "needs me," "quick reply," and "FYI / ignore."  
For each "quick reply," draft a one-line response: [paste messages].
```

**Why:** clears the noise so you only spend attention where it counts.

05

## Build a checklist from a process

```
I'm going to describe how I do [task]. Turn it into a simple, repeatable step-by-step checklist I could hand to someone else: [describe it].
```

**Why:** gets what's in your head onto paper — the first step toward automating it.

## Four rules so this never bites you.

### 1 Own everything.

Set up accounts in your name and your business's name — never someone else's. If you bring in help, you should still hold the keys. The systems should outlive any one person.

### 2 Keep a human in the loop.

For anything that leaves the building — emails, posts, invoices — keep an approval step. Let the machine prepare it; you press send. At least until it's earned your trust.

### 3 Start with one.

Pick a single task, get it working, and live with it for a week before adding the next. One automation that actually runs beats ten half-built ones.

### 4 Don't feed it secrets.

Don't paste passwords, card numbers, or anything you wouldn't put in a normal email. Treat AI like a sharp new assistant you don't fully know yet.

WHEN YOU WANT A HAND

## Do plenty of this yourself. When you'd rather not, that's my job.

Everything in this kit is yours to run with. But if you'd rather have it built and running without babysitting it, that's what I do.

It starts with a **Time-Check**: one paid hour (\$125) where we map your week, find the two or three things actually worth automating, and you leave with a plan and a price for each — whether or not you build with me. I'm Andy, based in Chicago, and I'll tell you straight what's worth doing and what isn't.

START WITH ONE HOUR

### Book a Time-Check.

Map your week, find your time-sinks, leave with a plan. No sales pitch to sit through.

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✓ You own everything. You approve everything.