Hidden-cost and friction checklist

LoftyBiz 026 · Offers & Pricing · Make it easy to buy

These are examples, not promises. Figures are illustrative, in US dollars, and are not targets, forecasts or typical results. General business education, not advice.

If someone turns down your offer when it is free, price was never the problem. Most lost sales die from hidden costs: the time, effort and risk your customer pays on top of your price. This checklist has two parts: a hidden-cost audit of the offer, and a friction walk-through of the buying journey. Put the finished steps into Systex, our own product at loftybiz.net, so your team follows them every time.

Part 1 · Hidden-cost audit

• Step 1 — Ask every “no” why. Message recent people who did not buy (including people who turned down a free trial). One short, kind question: “No problem at all. Can I ask what stopped you?” Do not argue with the answer.

• Step 2 — Sort every answer into three columns: Time, Effort and Risk.

• Step 3 — Remove or absorb each cost. Change the offer so the customer no longer pays that cost. Every fix should answer a customer’s own words, not a guess.

• Step 4 — Rewrite the offer around what the customer no longer has to do.

• Step 5 — Re-price. A friction-free offer is worth more, so charge for it. The extra amount should more than cover what you now include.

• Track one number: enquiry-to-booking rate. Log every enquiry and every booking each day. Keep that log in Systex so the count does not get lost.

Worked example · Grace, Nairobi (illustrative, USD)

Grace runs a home-cleaning service in Nairobi. A standard visit was $20. She received 120 enquiries a month and 18 bookings (15%). She messaged the last 20 people who did not book; 14 replied; only 2 mentioned price. She made five fixes: an instant price by number of bedrooms; a two-hour arrival window; cleaners bring all supplies; the same cleaner, with a photo and ID before the visit; and a guarantee of up to $80 if anything is broken. She re-priced to $24, supplies included (the extra $4 covers the products). From the same 120 enquiries she then had 38 bookings (32%). Monthly revenue moved from $20 × 18 = $360 to $24 × 38 = $912.

Item	Before	After	How it is calculated
Visit price (USD)	$20	$24	Re-priced; supplies included. Extra $4 covers products.
Enquiries / month	120	120	Same number of enquiries.
Bookings / month	18	38	Counted from the enquiry log.
Close rate	15%	32%	Bookings ÷ enquiries (18÷120, 38÷120)
Monthly revenue	$360	$912	Price × bookings ($20×18, $24×38)
Guarantee cap	—	$80	If anything is broken, she pays up to $80.
Asked / replied / mentioned price	20 / 14 / 2	—	Only 2 of 14 replies mentioned price.

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Part 2 · Friction walk-through

• Step 1 — Buy from yourself. Ask a friend to order while you time every step. Count the messages, the waits, the payments and the surprises.

• Step 2 — Count the waits and the repeated questions. Every question that comes up again and again is friction you can remove before anyone asks it. Also ask recent buyers: “What nearly stopped you from buying?”

• Step 3 — Cut steps. Put the price where people already look. Show delivery and any fees before checkout. Add the payment options people actually ask for. Answer the biggest worry with photos or a short note. Check that the page loads in about three seconds on a phone. Reply within five minutes during opening hours.

• Step 4 — Fix one friction point per week, then measure again. Do not redesign everything at once. Change one step, count orders for a week, and keep what works.

• Put the new order steps and the reply rule into Systex so the team follows them every time.

Remember: every extra step is a place to lose a buyer.

Worked example · Carlos, Bogotá (illustrative, USD)

Carlos makes handmade leather bags in Bogotá and sells them for about $85. He received 400 messages a month and 40 orders (10%). A friend who ordered had to complete seven steps and almost a full day, and only learned the delivery cost at the end. The same three questions kept coming: “How much?”, “How much is delivery?” and “Can I pay another way?” People who got an answer within five minutes bought about three times as often as people who waited hours. Carlos put the price in every post, built one simple order page, showed delivery of $8 before checkout, added two payment options, added photos of the bag worn at different heights, checked that the page loads in about three seconds, and set a five-minute reply rule during opening hours. From the same 400 messages he then had 64 orders: 24 extra bags, 24 × $85 = $2,040 a month, with no extra advertising.

Item	Before	After	How it is calculated
Price per bag (USD)	$85	$85	Same price.
Messages / month	400	400	Same number of messages.
Orders / month	40	64	Counted from the message log.
Close rate	10%	16%	Orders ÷ messages (40÷400, 64÷400)
Extra bags	—	24	64 − 40
Extra monthly revenue	—	$2,040	24 × $85
Steps in the old journey	7	fewer	Timed by buying from himself.
Delivery shown before checkout	Hidden	$8	No surprise fees at the end.
Reply rule	Hours	5 minutes	During opening hours. Bought about 3× as often.
Page load	Slow	About 3 seconds	Checked on a phone.
Payment options	One	Two	The options people asked for.

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Three traps to avoid

- A page that promises something different from your post or advert. People feel tricked and leave.
- A slow page. If it takes more than a few seconds to load, many buyers are gone.
- Surprise costs at the end. Show delivery and any fees up front, every time.

This week

1. Ask five people who did not buy what stopped them.
2. Sort their answers into time, effort and risk.
3. Buy from yourself, count every step, and remove one hidden cost and one step.
4. Put the checklist into Systex so the steps stay clear. Systex is our own product. Find it at loftybiz.net, and use the editable Doc and Sheet that go with this PDF.

The takeaway: don’t make it cheaper. Make it easier.

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of the course: memberships that stick.