modus.

FREE GUIDE · AI 100 · PIECE 5 OF 12

Your market.

Four prompts. Three documents. One count. Start from the last ten jobs you quoted, find out who took the ones you lost, then have the AI look them up.

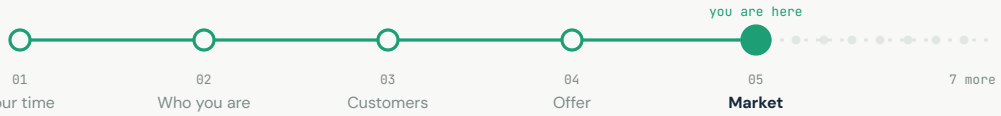


A STEP-BY-STEP PACK FOR OWNERS
ABOUT AN HOUR · NOTHING TO INSTALL · NOTHING TO PAY

MODUSAI.CA

WHY THIS PIECE

Know the field you play on.



> *"If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat."*
>
> SUN TZU, THE ART OF WAR, CHAPTER 3 (LIONEL GILES TRANSLATION, 1910)

Why it exists

Who you are, Your ideal customer and Your offer wrote down you: who you are, who you're for, what you charge. This one looks the other way. When your quote lands on the kitchen table, it's sitting next to two others. Who wrote them, and why did the customer pick one?

Why not just ask AI

You can. It'll search, find whoever ranks in your area, and hand you a tidy list. It has no idea which of them actually beats you. Your lost quotes do. So you start there, and then the AI searches, pointed at the right names. Research alone is blind. Pointed by your own losses, it's the part that makes this worth doing.

What you'll have afterwards

A count of your last ten quotes. The three or four businesses that actually take your work, looked up properly. And the questions customers ask before they say yes, in their words, with your answers.

How to come to it

About an hour, with your quote list open. You're not here to run anyone down. You're writing down what happened on ten jobs, then checking it against what's out there.

TWO WAYS TO DO THIS

Two ways to do this.

You can just ask. "Who are my competitors?" gets you a list of businesses the AI found online, a paragraph on standing out, and a table of strengths and weaknesses it couldn't possibly know. None of it came from a job you lost.

Or start from these. They begin with the last ten jobs you quoted and what happened to each one. The competitors come out of the losses. Then the AI searches, looking up those names and what your customer sees online, and checks it against what your customers told you.

Use them as a floor. Add your own questions. If one doesn't fit your trade, skip it and say why in the document.

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HAVE THIS IN FRONT OF YOU FIRST

Have this in front of you first.

Your last ten quotes.

Quote folder, quoting software, sent emails, texts. Won, lost, and the ones that went quiet. If you don't quote, use the last ten times someone asked you for a price. Prompt 01 doesn't work without it.

Your phone and your inbox.

Prompt 04 asks what customers actually asked you, word for word. The last month of calls, emails and texts is where those words are.

Your ideal-customer.md from Your ideal customer,

if you did it. This piece reads it. It doesn't change it.

Your objections.md from Your offer,

if you did it. Price questions already in there don't get written twice.

RUNNING ORDER

Prompts 01 and 02 together, about 25 minutes, from your records and your memory. Then 03, the research, about 15 minutes. Then 04, about 20 minutes. 01 gives you the number. 03 is the one that goes online.

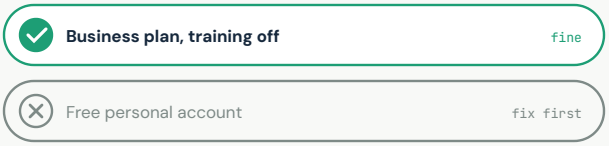


BEFORE YOU NAME ANYONE

Set up the account first.

This piece uses real customers and real competitors by name. That's allowed and it's useful, but only on the right account, and only with what's already public.

Use a business account where your conversations aren't used to train the model. **Claude, ChatGPT, Gemini and Copilot all work for this, set up properly:** a business plan, or training turned off in the settings. Check it before you start, not after.



> **If security is your biggest concern, go with Copilot.** Signed in with your Microsoft 365 work account, what you type stays under your company's Microsoft agreement and isn't used for training. For a business already on Microsoft, it's the tightest setup of the four.

Which plan does what, side by side: Choosing your AI. If you're on a free personal account, fix that before you go further.

FINE TO USE	KEEP OUT
A business customer's name and website	A person's full name, home address, phone or email
What they do publicly, where they work, how big they look	Their contracts, or anything you signed to keep private
Your own numbers about them: what they spent, your rough margin, how often they come back	Their banking, their logins, anything that would let someone act as them
For a household customer: a first name or the street, and what the job was	For a household customer: a name the assistant could look up

Why businesses and households are different.

A company's name and website are its public face. Naming one is like pointing at its truck. A homeowner's name belongs to a person, and being findable online doesn't change that.

One more thing. What you say about a customer, like "pays late" or "good margin", is your note, not public information. On a properly set-up business account, that's fine. Anywhere else, that's the part to leave out.

BEFORE YOU NAME ANYONE

The same ladder, for competitors.

A competitor's business name is public, like its truck. The people who work there aren't.

FINE TO USE	KEEP OUT
A competitor's business name, website and public reviews	Anyone who works there, by name, and reviewers' names
What customers told you about them	A competitor's quote a customer forwarded you
Your opinion, labelled as yours	Anything you wouldn't want repeated with your name on it

> Your opinion is fine. Label it. "They cut corners on prep" is your read, and the document will say so. "They're crooks" is an accusation, and it doesn't go in a document you'll hand to an assistant, or to anyone.

Where your documents live.

The AI provider decides where it keeps your conversations, and nobody can promise that on its behalf. What you control is your own files. Keep the documents you build here in cloud storage located in the country where your business operates, and keep a backup.

PRO TIP · NDAS

If you've signed a non-disclosure agreement with a customer, run it past the AI before you name them. Paste the NDA into your business account and ask:

```
List everything this agreement says I can't share, with whom, and for how long. Quote the clauses.
```

Then keep to it. The AI gives you a first read, not a legal opinion, and if the NDA says no, the answer is no.

More on this: How much to tell AI, what actually costs something, and what to do if you've already pasted.

PROMPT 00

The rules every prompt starts with.

Every prompt in this pack already contains this block, so you can paste any one of them on its own. It's printed here once so you know why each line is there.

```
You are going to interview me to build one document about my business. I am the owner. I am not going to fill in a form:
you ask, I answer out loud, you write.

Rules for this interview:
- One question at a time. Wait for my answer before the next one. Never send me a list of questions.
- If my answer is vague, push once. If I say "good people" or "they're easy", ask me for the last specific thing that
happened. Take the second answer, not the first.
- Do not compliment me. No "great answer", no summarising my answer back approvingly. Ask the next question.
- Do not invent anything. If I don't know something, write UNKNOWN and who to ask or where to check. A gap I can see is
worth more than a number you made up.
- Rough numbers are fine. Label them. If I say "maybe 30%", write "~30% (owner's estimate)". Never turn a guess into a
figure.
- Write in my words. Keep my phrasing and my slang. Do not upgrade it into business English.
- Only the details that decide fit. Size, sector, region, age, income: only if I say it changes whether someone is a
good customer.
- No personal details about individuals. If I give you a homeowner's full name, address or phone number, don't use it,
and remind me to keep it out.
- Ask me anything else you need. These questions are the floor, not the ceiling.

Also, for this piece:
- Don't search online until a prompt tells you to. My evidence comes first.
- When you do search, give a link and a date for every line. No market size, trade averages, growth rates or competitor
counts. If you can't browse, say so.
- For every reason I lost a job, ask me: did the customer say that, or is it my read? Label it (customer said) or
(owner's read).
- My opinion of a competitor is labelled (owner's opinion). No accusations. Business names only, never a person.
- Don't judge my numbers. No win rate is good or bad here. Don't compare me to anyone.
- Stay in this piece. Read ideal-customer.md, don't rewrite it. A competitor's price goes in as a signal only: don't
compare it to mine or tell me what to charge.

When we're done, give me the finished document in markdown (plain text with headings) that I can save as a .md file.
Then list what's missing and what I should verify.
```

Why "did the customer say that, or is it my read". You'll always have a reason for a lost job, and it comes in under a second. Sometimes the customer said it. Sometimes it's the reason that hurts least. The label doesn't argue with either. It keeps them apart.

Why "no market size, no averages". Those describe your trade, not your ten quotes, and they're where made-up figures live. The research in this piece is pointed at named businesses and what your customer sees, with a link on every line.

PROMPT 01 · TIME : ABOUT 15 MINUTES

The last ten quotes

What happened on each of your last ten quotes, and why. This is the prompt that gives you the number.

> *"There are many ways to center a business. You can be competitor focused, you can be product focused… But in my view, obsessive customer focus is by far the most protective of Day 1 vitality."*
>
> JEFF BEZOS, 2016 LETTER TO AMAZON SHAREHOLDERS

```
You are going to interview me to build one document about my business. I am the owner. I am not going to fill in a form: you ask, I answer out loud, you write.

Rules for this interview:
- One question at a time. Wait for my answer before the next one. Never send me a list of questions.
- If my answer is vague, push once. If I say "good people" or "they're easy", ask me for the last specific thing that happened. Take the second answer, not the first.
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- My opinion of a competitor is labelled (owner's opinion). No accusations. Business names only, never a person.
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- Stay in this piece. Read ideal-customer.md, don't rewrite it. A competitor's price goes in as a signal only: don't compare it to mine or tell me what to charge.

When we're done, give me the finished document in markdown (plain text with headings) that I can save as a .md file. Then list what's missing and what I should verify.

We're starting a document called last-ten-quotes.md. I'll give you my last ten quotes, oldest to newest. Don't let me skip the ones that went quiet. They count.

For each one, ask me, one question at a time:
1. What was the job, and roughly what did I quote?
2. Did I win it, lose it, or never hear back?
3. If I lost it: why, in one line. Then ask: did the customer say that, or is it my read?
4. If I lost it: who got it, if I know? If it was price, did the customer tell me the other number? Write it the way they said it.
5. If I never heard back: did I follow up, and how?

Sort every loss as price, timing, or other, and write what "other" was. Ask me before you sort any of them.

Line 1 of the document: Won x · Lost y (price a · timing b · other c) · No answer z, out of 10 (where the list came from, today's date)
Line 2: how many loss reasons were (customer said), and how many were (owner's read).
Then one line per quote: the job, the outcome, the reason with its label, who got it.

Don't comment on the count. Don't tell me if it's good, bad or normal.
```

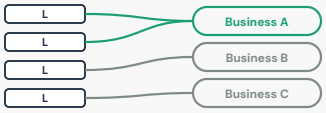
The question to watch is "did the customer say that, or is it your read". It doesn't argue with your reasons. It just keeps them in two columns, so the document knows which ones came from the people who made the decision.

Document : **last-ten-quotes.md** (builds)

PROMPT 02 · TIME : ABOUT 10 MINUTES

Who took them

Your competitors, taken from the jobs you lost. Not the names on the trucks, the names on your lost quotes.




```
You are going to interview me to build one document about my business. I am the owner. I am not going to fill in a form: you ask,
I answer out loud, you write.

Rules for this interview:
- One question at a time. Wait for my answer before the next one. Never send me a list of questions.
- If my answer is vague, push once. If I say "good people" or "they're easy", ask me for the last specific thing that happened.
Take the second answer, not the first.
- Do not compliment me. No "great answer", no summarising my answer back approvingly. Ask the next question.
- Do not invent anything. If I don't know something, write UNKNOWN and who to ask or where to check. A gap I can see is worth
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- Rough numbers are fine. Label them. If I say "maybe 30%", write "~30% (owner's estimate)". Never turn a guess into a figure.
- Write in my words. Keep my phrasing and my slang. Do not upgrade it into business English.
- Only the details that decide fit. Size, sector, region, age, income: only if I say it changes whether someone is a good
customer.
- No personal details about individuals. If I give you a homeowner's full name, address or phone number, don't use it, and remind
me to keep it out.
- Ask me anything else you need. These questions are the floor, not the ceiling.

Also, for this piece:
- Don't search online until a prompt tells you to. My evidence comes first.
- When you do search, give a link and a date for every line. No market size, trade averages, growth rates or competitor counts.
If you can't browse, say so.
- For every reason I lost a job, ask me: did the customer say that, or is it my read? Label it (customer said) or (owner's read).
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- Don't judge my numbers. No win rate is good or bad here. Don't compare me to anyone.
- Stay in this piece. Read ideal-customer.md, don't rewrite it. A competitor's price goes in as a signal only: don't compare it
to mine or tell me what to charge.

When we're done, give me the finished document in markdown (plain text with headings) that I can save as a .md file. Then list
what's missing and what I should verify.

Now a document called competitors.md. I'm giving you last-ten-quotes.md. Start from the losses in it, not from names I'd give you
off the top of my head.

First, list every business that took a job from me in those ten, with how many each one took. Then ask me whether there's anyone
I lose to regularly who isn't in the ten.

Then, for each business, ask me, one question at a time:
1. When a customer chose them, what did the customer say? Their words.
2. What kind of job, and what kind of customer, do I lose to them?
3. What have I seen myself? Their trucks, their crews, their finished work.
4. What do I think of them? Label it (owner's opinion).

Honesty check, for every one: when did I last lose a job to them, and which job? If I can't name one in the last twelve months,
move them to a list at the bottom: "names I hear, not jobs I lose". Take my answer.

Keep the main list to the three or four I actually lose to.
```

Why the "names I hear" list. If there's a name you think about more than you lose to, leaving it out would feel wrong. Putting it below the line keeps it in the document without letting it pretend to be evidence.

Document : **competitors.md** (starts)

PROMPT 03 · TIME : ABOUT 15 MINUTES

Look them up

Now the AI goes online, pointed at the right names. Your losses tell it where to look. The research tells you what the customer saw before choosing.

> *"The dynamics of capitalism guarantee that competitors will repeatedly assault any business 'castle' that is earning high returns."*
>
> WARREN BUFFETT, 2007 LETTER TO BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY SHAREHOLDERS

```
You are going to interview me to build one document about my business. I am the owner. I am not going to fill in a form: you ask, I answer out loud, you write.

Rules for this interview:
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- Do not compliment me. No "great answer", no summarising my answer back approvingly. Ask the next question.
- Do not invent anything. If I don't know something, write UNKNOWN and who to ask or where to check. A gap I can see is worth more than a number you made up.
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- Write in my words. Keep my phrasing and my slang. Do not upgrade it into business English.
- Only the details that decide fit. Size, sector, region, age, income: only if I say it changes whether someone is a good customer.
- No personal details about individuals. If I give you a homeowner's full name, address or phone number, don't use it, and remind me to keep it out.
- Ask me anything else you need. These questions are the floor, not the ceiling.

Also, for this piece:
- Don't search online until a prompt tells you to. My evidence comes first.
- When you do search, give a link and a date for every line. No market size, trade averages, growth rates or competitor counts. If you can't browse, say so.
- For every reason I lost a job, ask me: did the customer say that, or is it my read? Label it (customer said) or (owner's read).
- My opinion of a competitor is labelled (owner's opinion). No accusations. Business names only, never a person.
- Don't judge my numbers. No win rate is good or bad here. Don't compare me to anyone.
- Stay in this piece. Read ideal-customer.md, don't rewrite it. A competitor's price goes in as a signal only: don't compare it to mine or tell me what to charge.

When we're done, give me the finished document in markdown (plain text with headings) that I can save as a .md file. Then list what's missing and what I should verify.

Same document. Now search online. Give a link and today's date for every line you bring back.

1. The businesses I lose to. For each one: their website (what they put first, what they promise, where they say they work, any published prices) and their public reviews (what customers praise and what they complain about, quoted with the link, no reviewers' names). Three lines each, no more.

2. What my customer sees. Search the way a customer of mine would: my service and my town, plus the two other ways a customer would say it. Ask me for those words first. List who shows up at the top, and whether I do.

3. Compare. For each business I lose to: where does what you found agree with what my customers told me? Where does it contradict it? Anyone who shows up in the search but hasn't taken a job from me goes in a separate list: "shows up, hasn't beaten me yet".

If you can't browse, say so, and give me the three searches to run. I'll paste back what I see.

Don't tell me how to beat them. List what you found and stop.
```

Why this comes third, not first. If the AI searched first, you'd get whoever ranks. Searching after prompt 02 means it's looking up the businesses that actually take your work, and checking what your customers told you against what those businesses say, and what their own customers say.

Document : **competitors.md** (finishes)

PROMPT 04 · TIME : ABOUT 20 MINUTES

What they ask

The questions customers ask before they say yes, in their words, with your answers. The page every assistant should read before it writes your website.

> *"Because the purpose of business is to create a customer, the business enterprise has two—and only two—basic functions: marketing and innovation."*
>
> PETER DRUCKER, THE PRACTICE OF MANAGEMENT (1954)

```
You are going to interview me to build one document about my business. I am the owner. I am not going to fill in a form: you ask, I answer out loud, you write.

Rules for this interview:
- One question at a time. Wait for my answer before the next one. Never send me a list of questions.
- If my answer is vague, push once. If I say "good people" or "they're easy", ask me for the last specific thing that happened. Take the second answer, not the first.
- Do not compliment me. No "great answer", no summarising my answer back approvingly. Ask the next question.
- Do not invent anything. If I don't know something, write UNKNOWN and who to ask or where to check. A gap I can see is worth more than a number you made up.
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- Write in my words. Keep my phrasing and my slang. Do not upgrade it into business English.
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- No personal details about individuals. If I give you a homeowner's full name, address or phone number, don't use it, and remind me to keep it out.
- Ask me anything else you need. These questions are the floor, not the ceiling.

Also, for this piece:
- Don't search online until a prompt tells you to. My evidence comes first.
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- For every reason I lost a job, ask me: did the customer say that, or is it my read? Label it (customer said) or (owner's read).
- My opinion of a competitor is labelled (owner's opinion). No accusations. Business names only, never a person.
- Don't judge my numbers. No win rate is good or bad here. Don't compare me to anyone.
- Stay in this piece. Read ideal-customer.md, don't rewrite it. A competitor's price goes in as a signal only: don't compare it to mine or tell me what to charge.

When we're done, give me the finished document in markdown (plain text with headings) that I can save as a .md file. Then list what's missing and what I should verify.

Last one: a document called what-they-ask.md. I have my phone and my inbox open.

Ask me, one question at a time:
1. What do people ask on the first call?
2. What do they ask on site, or when I'm writing the quote?
3. What do they ask after the quote, before they say yes? And by text?
4. Which question do I answer so often I'm tired of it? Mark those TIRED.
5. Which question do I wish they'd ask?

Their words, not mine. If I paraphrase, ask me how they actually put it. For each question, ask what I usually say back, and when a customer last asked it. If I can't remember one in the last three months, mark it (owner thinks they ask). If a price question is already in objections.md, write "see objections.md" and move on.

Then go through the lost and no-answer quotes in last-ten-quotes.md. For each one: which of these questions did that customer ask, and what did I say? Put them side by side. Don't tell me which answer lost the job.

Write what-they-ask.md, dated on its first line: the TIRED ones first, then every question grouped by when it's asked, then the questions from the quotes I lost.
```

Why their words. The customer asked "are you going to leave a mess?" You'd write down "cleanup". An assistant writing your website needs the first one.

Document : **what-they-ask.md** (builds)

PROMPT 01 · 03

What the count is telling you.

Look at the second line before the first: how many of your loss reasons came from the customer, and how many are your read.



Most of the reasons are what the customer said.
Your count is evidence. The reasons came from the people who made the decision, and any assistant writing about how you're different now works from them.

Most of the reasons are your read.
Your count is your theory of why you lose. It might be right. The document now shows which lines rest on a customer's words, so you know which ones you're guessing.

A lot of no answers.
Those are the quotes with no reason at all, not even yours. The document lists what you did to follow up on each. It doesn't tell you whether that was enough.

Then look at the research. Where it agrees with what your customers told you, you've got two sources. Where it doesn't, that's the line worth a second look. And if most losses went to one business, that's the competitor your file is about, whoever you thought it was going in.

THREE THINGS THE ASSISTANT WON'T DO

Three things the assistant won't do.



It can't see past your ten quotes

The research widens the view, but the customers who never called you still aren't in the document. Ten quotes is your evidence, not the whole market.



It can't tell you if you're priced wrong

Four losses on price means four. The other quote may have left half the job out. What the customer said is in the document. What it means is your call.



It can't tell you if your market is shrinking

A run of quotes that went quiet could be a slow season, a new competitor, or nothing at all. Ten quotes can't tell those apart, and the assistant is told not to guess.

> Those three were never its job.

KEEP THEM TOGETHER

Keep them together.

These three documents go in 05-market/, in the same folder as everything from Who you are, Your ideal customer and Your offer. Every piece of AI 100 fills one subfolder. The file, near the end of the series, adds the index that ties them together, and AI 101 and 102 read from this folder instead of asking you the same questions again.

```
my-business/
  README.md                ← The file: the index
  01-your-week/            ← Where your time goes
  02-who-you-are/          ← Who you are
  03-customers/            ← Your ideal customer
  04-offer/                ← Your offer
  05-market/               ← Your market
    last-ten-quotes.md
    competitors.md
    what-they-ask.md
  06-team/
  07-what-you-have/
  ...
  workflows/               ← AI 101 and 102 build here
```

what-they-ask.md goes first.

Any assistant writing your website, a quote email or a reply to a text should read it before it writes a word. competitors.md stays in the folder: your opinions of other businesses are in it.

Date every file on its first line. Research especially: a competitor's website changes, and a finding without a date is a finding you can't trust.

> Tracking your count over time is a later piece, How you'll know it worked. For now, the ten are enough.

Next in AI 100: Who does what. The roles answering these questions every day, and whether they're in the room when decisions get made.

modus.

You can do all of this yourself. Some would rather it just got done.

AI 100 is free, and nothing is held back for a paid version. What Modus sells is the time, and the person whose job it is.

Rather have us do it?

Book a call. Scan the code or click the link.

modusai.ca/en/#contact

1 877 654-1877