FIRST TOUCH
STUDIO

TAILORED TO PROFESSIONAL SERVICES BUSINESSES

THE NO-BS

MARKEING AUDIT

The professional services firm that keeps winning on credentials alone is running out of time. This audit shows you exactly what your marketing is doing wrong and what to do about it.

Not a course.
Not another AI tutorial.
A founder-level clarity framework.

A NOTE FROM THE FOUNDER

I didn't create this audit to add more noise to your marketing. I created it because I kept seeing the same pattern businesses doing more, learning more, trying more… yet still feeling unsure about what actually mattered.

New platforms. New tools. New promises around AI.

But speed rarely creates clarity.

And without clarity, even good marketing starts to feel heavy. This audit isn't a framework to follow or a system to master. It's simply a moment to pause. To step back.

To look at your business with a quieter lens.
And to notice what may have been hidden under all the activity.

If you approach these pages slowly with honesty rather than urgency you'll likely see something differently by the end.

That's all this was ever meant to do.

Marcin

FOUNDER, FIRST TOUCH STUDIO
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	The Thing Nobody In Marketing Will Tell You
2	Before You Begin
3-6	Category 1: Strategy Clarity
7-10	Category 2: Audience Understanding
11-14	Category 3: Message Strength
15-18	Category 4: Offer Positioning
19-22	Category 5: Content Direction
23-26	Category 6: Funnel Structure
27-30	Category 7: Automation & Follow-Up
31-34	Category 8: Growth Readiness
35-37	What Your Score Means
38-39	Your 90-Day Clarity Plan
40	Take the NO-BS Assessment
41	Final Note

YOUR MARKETING IS UNDERMINING YOUR GREATEST ADVANTAGE.

There is a particular kind of professional services firm that does everything right and still feels like its marketing is not working. The website is clean. The credentials are legitimate. The case studies exist. The LinkedIn page is active. And yet something about the whole operation feels hollow. New business comes in, but not reliably. Not predictably. Not in a way that feels like the result of anything deliberate.

In professional services, the reason a client ultimately chooses one firm over another with comparable credentials is almost never the website, the case studies or the LinkedIn following. It is a feeling generated by a person.

The sense that someone on the other side of this relationship actually understands what is at stake, gives a genuine damn about the outcome, and can be trusted with something that matters. That is a human advantage. And most professional services marketing is systematically destroying it.

It is destroying it by replacing voice with corporate language. By hiding the people behind the brand. By producing content that demonstrates knowledge but reveals nothing about the person who holds it. By building funnels designed for transactions when the actual sale requires trust.
A prospect reading your marketing is not asking whether you are qualified. They already assume that. They are asking something harder: whether you are the person they want to be vulnerable with. Because engaging a professional services firm requires a client to admit they cannot solve something themselves, to share information they may not share widely, and to stake their own credibility on someone else's judgment.

That is an intimate decision. And it is almost never made based on a capability statement.
This audit will show you exactly where your marketing is generating noise instead of connection. It will not be comfortable in places. That is the point.

THIS DOCUMENT DOES NOT ASK YOU TO SCORE YOURSELF.

Most audits hand you a number to calculate on your own, then ask you to trust your own maths about your own business. That is not rigorous, it is generous.

People are kind to themselves when nobody is checking. Here is how this one works instead. Each of the eight categories that follow includes the real diagnostic questions, the same ones a stranger would use to judge your marketing from the outside. Read them honestly. Notice where you hesitate. That hesitation is information, whether or not you ever turn it into a number.

The actual scoring, the part where those answers become a number out of eighty and a specific verdict about what is costing you the most, happens in one place. The NO-BS Assessment, an interactive version of this exact diagnostic that scores your answers properly and tells you precisely where to start. It takes about twelve minutes and there is a link at the end of every category and again at the close of this document.

A Note On The AI Prompts

Each category also includes a single AI prompt. These are diagnostic tools, not content shortcuts. Use them after you have read through the questions for that category honestly. The goal is to see your business the way a stranger sees it, which is the most useful and most uncomfortable perspective available to you.

Category 01 of 08

STRATEGY CLARITY

> *Most professional services firms do not have a strategy problem. They have a courage problem. Defining who you are for means defining who you are not for, and that decision makes most founders deeply uncomfortable.*

The Real Problem

The firm that says it works with businesses of all sizes across multiple industries is not being inclusive. It is being evasive. The moment you commit to a specific client, a specific problem and a specific outcome, you become accountable to that commitment. And that accountability feels like risk to a founder who has built the business on saying yes to everything.

When your strategy tries to speak to everyone, your marketing speaks to no one with any conviction. The prospect who is exactly the client you should be working with reads your positioning and feels no particular pull toward you because nothing in it was written specifically for them. They cannot see themselves in it.

And if they cannot see themselves in it, they cannot feel the beginning of the trust that eventually becomes a client relationship. There is a second failure specific to professional services: running two strategies simultaneously without acknowledging the conflict. The first works with people who already know you, built on relationships and trust accumulated over time. The second tries to reach strangers with the same message, without any of those advantages. These two require fundamentally different positioning. Most firms are failing at both.

ASK YOURSELF HONESTLY

- *Can you describe your ideal client in a single specific sentence that would allow someone else to identify them accurately, not a demographic range, but a precise description of who you do your best work with?*
- *Does your positioning make an explicit case for why a prospect should choose you specifically, or does it describe services that five competitors could claim equally?*
- *When your team makes marketing decisions independently, are those decisions guided by an agreed strategic direction or does everyone operate on instinct?*
- *If you stopped all marketing tomorrow and restarted in 90 days, would you know exactly what to do first and why?*
- *Is your positioning the result of a deliberate decision, or has it evolved reactively in response to whoever showed up?*

This category is one of the eight scored in The NO-BS Assessment. Read the questions above honestly, notice what felt uncomfortable, then get your actual Strategy Clarity score at **firsttouchstudio.com.au/assessment.**

SPECIFICITY ATTRACTS. VAGUENESS REPELS. THE DATA ON THIS IS NOT AMBIGUOUS.

Firms that commit clearly to a defined client and problem consistently find that the quality and fit of their inbound enquiries improves. The prospects who were never right for you stop enquiring. The ones who are exactly right feel immediate recognition.

The fix is a positioning statement that answers four questions in plain, specific, unambiguous language. Write it in one sitting. Read it back and ask whether a stranger would find it specific enough to feel written for them.

The Four Question Positioning Statement

1. **Who exactly is this firm for.** Not SMEs or growth-stage businesses. A precise description of the client you do your best work with, including the situation they are typically in when they need you most.

2. **What problem do you solve.** Not your service category. The actual problem your ideal client is experiencing in the language they would use to describe it before they fully understand what the solution looks like.

3. **What makes your approach different.** Not better processes or a more collaborative team. The specific thing you do, believe or prioritise that produces a different outcome than the alternative.

4. **What does success look like.** Not improved outcomes or greater clarity. A specific, believable, consequential result the client achieves by working with you.

STRATEGIC CLARITY DIAGNOSTIC

Paste your current website homepage copy or standard business description into your AI tool and use this prompt exactly.

"You have never heard of this business before. Read this description and tell me only what is explicitly clear from the text as written: who this firm appears to be for, what problem it appears to solve, why a prospect would choose it over alternatives, and what a client can expect to achieve by engaging it.

Do not interpret charitably or fill gaps with assumptions. Then identify the three most significant weaknesses in the positioning from the perspective of a sceptical prospect encountering it for the first time."

Read the response as if it came from your most important potential client. That is how your marketing is currently landing.

AUDIENCE UNDERSTANDING

You do not know your prospects as well as you know your clients. And your marketing is written for the wrong one.

The Real Problem

Your existing clients are familiar territory. You have built understanding through hours of conversation and the experience of solving their problems. Your prospects know none of that yet. They are operating from a completely different set of assumptions, anxieties and decision frameworks.

The prospect who has not yet chosen you is not evaluating your credentials. They are managing risk. And the way people manage risk when the stakes feel personal is not by reading capability statements. It is by searching for signals that tell them whether the person on the other side of this relationship actually understands what they are dealing with.

Here is the most important reframe in this audit. Your prospect is not comparing you to your competitors. They are comparing you to doing nothing. The alternative to hiring your firm is almost never hiring a different firm. It is tolerating the problem, finding a workaround, or deciding it is not urgent enough. If your marketing is written as if competition is the primary threat, you are solving the wrong problem.

ASK YOURSELF HONESTLY

- *Can you describe the internal conversation your ideal prospect is having before they begin looking for a firm like yours, not their business challenge in abstract terms, but their actual mental state and what they are afraid of getting wrong?*
- *Do you know the three most common hesitations a prospect raises before committing, and does your marketing address those hesitations before the sales conversation begins?*
- *Is your messaging built around the questions your prospects are asking at the moment they are searching, or around the expertise you want to demonstrate?*
- *Could you articulate the difference between what your ideal prospect thinks they need and what they actually need, and does your marketing acknowledge that gap?*
- *When you write any piece of marketing, could you name the specific person it is written for, not a persona, but an actual human being whose situation you understand in detail?*

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YOUR PROSPECT IS NOT COMPARING YOU TO COMPETITORS. THEY ARE COMPARING YOU TO DOING NOTHING.

Run a prospect fear audit. Go back through your last ten new business conversations, including the ones that did not convert. For each one, write down: what did they say their problem was, what did it actually turn out to be, what were they afraid of getting wrong, and what almost stopped them from proceeding.

Across ten conversations, the patterns that emerge are your marketing brief. The language prospects use to describe their fears before they fully understand the solution is precisely the language your marketing should open with. It is the language that makes someone read a sentence and think: this firm understands what I am actually dealing with.

PROSPECT FEAR MAPPING

Complete this after your prospect fear audit for maximum accuracy.

"I work with [describe your ideal client in one specific sentence]. The problem they typically present with is [describe the presenting problem]. Based on this, identify the most likely underlying fears, unstated assumptions and personal risks this type of client would be carrying before engaging a firm like mine. Do not focus on their business challenges. Focus on what this decision feels like for them personally. Then identify three specific ways my marketing could address those fears before a prospect ever speaks to me, without making promises I cannot keep or using language that sounds like it is trying too hard."

Use the output to audit your current homepage. Count how many of those fears your website currently acknowledges. Most firms score zero.

Category 03 of 08

MESSAGE STRENGTH

Your messaging does not sound vague because you lack clarity. It sounds vague because specific claims can be held accountable and vague ones cannot. That is not a writing problem. It is a risk management decision you are making unconsciously.

The Real Problem

When a professional services firm writes that it delivers exceptional outcomes through a collaborative and tailored approach, it is not struggling to find the right words. It is choosing words that cannot be tested. Words that sound credible without committing to anything that could be proven wrong.

But here is what that caution costs. The prospect reading your messaging is doing the same unconscious calculation you are. They are looking for signals of genuine confidence. Not bravado. The specific, grounded confidence of someone who knows exactly what they do and is willing to say so plainly. Vague messaging signals the opposite, a firm that is either unsure of its own value or unwilling to commit to it publicly.

The second failure is suppression of voice. Most firms write their marketing as if a committee approved every sentence. The language is smooth, balanced and completely devoid of the personality of the actual humans doing the work. And the humans doing the work are the product. A prospect reading your messaging should be able to form a sense of who they are going to be dealing with before they ever speak to you.

ASK YOURSELF HONESTLY

- *If someone read only your headline and opening paragraph, would they know specifically who this firm serves, what problem it solves and what a client experiences by working with you, or would they need to read further?*

- *Does your messaging make claims specific enough to be evaluated and confirmed, or does it rely on descriptors any firm in your category could use without contradiction?*

- *Is there a recognisable point of view in your marketing, a perspective on your clients' problems that is genuinely yours and that a competitor could not copy without it sounding wrong?*

- *Is your language consistent across your website, proposals, LinkedIn presence and verbal pitch?*

- *If a prospect read your marketing and then met you in person, would the person they meet match the impression your marketing created?*

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APPLY THE STRANGER TEST TO EVERY KEY PIECE OF MARKETING YOU CURRENTLY HAVE.

Show your homepage, LinkedIn profile and standard pitch email to three people who have no prior knowledge of your business. Ask each of them one question: based only on this, what does this firm do, who is it for, and what would it feel like to work with them?

Do not brief them. Do not explain context. Just listen. If the three answers are consistent and accurate and include some sense of what it would feel like to work with you, your messaging is working. If they vary or produce only a description of your service category with no sense of the people behind it, you have a deeper problem than word choice.

The rewrite starts with one decision: what is the one thing you believe about your clients' problems that most firms in your category would not say publicly? That belief, stated plainly, is the beginning of messaging that sounds like a person rather than a brochure.

PROSPECT FEAR MAPPING

Use this after your stranger test to understand the specific gaps.

"Here is my current business description: [paste your text]. I want you to do two things. First, identify every claim in this description that could be made equally by abcompetitor without it being untrue. Second, identifybany moments where a genuine point of view or human voice comes through. Then rewrite the opening paragraph so that it sounds like it was written by a specific, confident person with a genuine perspective on their clients' problems, not by a committee trying to sound professional. Explain what you changed and why."

Pay more attention to the explanation than the rewrite. The explanation tells you what was missing in your original.

Category 04 of 08

OFFER POSITIONING

Your clients do not buy your service. They buy relief from a specific anxiety. If your positioning does not name that anxiety precisely, you are describing a solution to a problem your prospect has not yet admitted they have.

The Real Problem

The service is real. The value is genuine. The methodology works. But the way it is described focuses entirely on what the firm does rather than what the client stops carrying once the engagement is complete.

Think about the last significant professional services engagement you personally purchased. The decision was not primarily about the methodology. It was about whether you believed that engaging this particular firm would remove a specific weight you had been carrying. A worry. A vulnerability. An uncertainty about a decision that had consequences you were responsible for.

That is what your clients are actually buying. And that is almost never what professional services marketing describes. Most firms are selling the map when clients are buying the feeling of knowing where they are.

ASK YOURSELF HONESTLY

- *If you asked your three best current clients what they were most relieved about after engaging your firm, not what service theyvreceived but what they stopped worrying about, could you answer that accurately on their behalf right now?*
- *Does your positioning make clear what a prospect's situation looks and feels like after a successful engagement, in terms specific enough to be meaningful?*
- *Is the difference between your firm and your nearest competitors immediately apparent, or would a prospect need detailed side-byside comparison to identify any meaningful distinction?*
- *When you describe your core offer, do you lead with the anxiety it relieves or the process by which it is delivered?*
- *Does your pricing feel like a natural consequence of the value described in your positioning, or do you find yourself justifying cost in conversations?*

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THE BEFORE AND AFTER STATEMENT IS THE MOST POWERFUL POSITIONING TOOL YOU ARE NOT USING.

Write it in two columns. In the before column: describe your ideal client's situation, mindset and internal experience before they engage you. What are they carrying?

What does the problem cost them in sleep, confidence, focus? What have they tried that has not worked?

In the after column: describe their situation after a successful engagement. Not improved processes. What can they now do that they could not do before? What decision can they make with confidence? What have they stopped worrying about?

The gap between those two columns, described honestly and specifically, is your positioning. It is also the most compelling marketing copy you will ever write, because it speaks directly to the anxiety your prospect is currently sitting with.

ANXIETY-FIRST POSITIONING

Use this after completing your before and after statement.

“Here is how I currently describe my core service: [paste your description]. I want you to reframe this description from the perspective of the client's emotional and psychological experience rather than the service being delivered. Specifically: what anxiety or burden does this service relieve, what does the client's situation feel like before engaging this firm, and what does it feel like after a successful engagement. Write a version of my positioning that leads with the relief rather than the process. Then identify what this reframe reveals about what my current positioning is missing."

Category 05 of 08

CONTENT DIRECTION

> *Most professional services content does one thing well. It proves you know things. It does almost nothing to prove you are the right person to help with this specific situation. Those are not the same claim and your prospects know the difference even when they cannot articulate it.*

The Real Problem

There are two kinds of trust that content can build. Most professional services firms are building only one of them.

The first is informational trust. The prospect reads your content and concludes that you know what you are talking about. This is the kind of trust most professional services content is optimised for because it is the easiest to produce and the most comfortable to publish.

The second is diagnostic trust. The prospect reads your content and concludes that you understand their specific situation at a level they did not expect. Not that you know about the category of problems they face, but that you understand the particular texture of what they are dealing with. This is the kind of trust that makes a prospect feel that working with you would be different from working with a firm that is merely technically competent. It requires a point of view. It requires the willingness to say things that are specifically true rather than generally accurate. Content built this way creates the experience of having already had a conversation with you before the conversation has taken place.

ASK YOURSELF HONESTLY

- *If someone followed your firm's content for 30 days, would they have a clear sense of how you specifically think about the problems your clients face, including where you disagree with conventional wisdom in your category?*
- *Does each piece of content advance a specific belief you want your ideal prospect to hold, or does it exist primarily to maintain visibility?*
- *Is there a perspective in your content that is genuinely yours, that a competitor could not replicate without it sounding misappropriated?*
- *Does your content address what your prospects are afraid to get wrong, or does it focus on what they should be doing right?*
- *Would a prospect who consumed six months of your content feel more equipped to make a better decision, or primarily more aware of how much there is to know?*

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STOP PRODUCING CONTENT FOR TWO WEEKS AND ANSWER ONE QUESTION HONESTLY.

What do you believe about your clients' problems that most firms in your category would not say publicly? Not a controversial opinion for its own sake. A genuine professional conviction that you hold based on what you have seen, what has worked, what has failed and what you believe most businesses in your space are getting wrong.

That conviction, stated plainly and supported by your actual experience, is your content strategy. Everything you publish should either express that conviction, illustrate it with a specific example, or apply it to a situation your ideal prospect is likely to recognise.

Content built this way does something that information-based content cannot do. It creates the experience of having already had a conversation with you before the conversation has taken place.

CONTENT PERSPECTIVE AUDIT

Paste your last ten content titles and descriptions, or the full content itself.

"Here are the last ten pieces of content I have published: [paste titles and descriptions]. Analyse these and tell me: what consistent point of view or professional conviction emerges across them, if any. What would a new prospect conclude about how this firm thinks about their clients' problems after reading all ten. Then identify the gap between what this content communicates and what a firm trying to build diagnostic trust with [describe your ideal client] should be communicating. Be specific about what is missing."

FUNNEL STRUCTURE

> *Your funnel is not losing prospects at the conversion point. It is losing them in the silence between conversations. And that silence exists because the entire system was built for a motivated prospect when almost every real prospect is a distracted one.*

The Real Problem

Here is the assumption buried in most professional services pipelines: if a prospect is genuinely interested, they will follow up. That assumption is wrong. Not because prospects are unreliable or uncommitted. Because the world they return to after your initial conversation is full of urgent competing demands that have nothing to do with you.

The problem you discussed is still real. The intention to proceed is still genuine. But the moment of activation has passed and there is no designed mechanism to recreate it. So the prospect drifts. Not away from you deliberately. Just away from the decision.

The second failure is the absence of a middle stage. Most firm pipelines have an awareness stage and a decision stage. What is missing is everything in between, where trust is built, where a prospect who is interested but not ready gets to spend time with your thinking and your people without commercial pressure. In most professional services firms, this middle stage simply does not exist as a designed experience. It happens by accident when it happens at all.

ASK YOURSELF HONESTLY

- *If a prospect engaged with your firm today and then went quiet for three weeks, is there a designed mechanism keeping your firm present and relevant to them during that silence?*
- *Do you have a single clear primary next step that you direct all prospects toward, or do prospects have to decide for themselves what kind of engagement they want?*
- *Is there a middle stage in your pipeline between first contact and proposal, a designed experience that builds trust without requiring the prospect to be ready to make a decision?*
- *Do you know where prospects most commonly exit your pipeline and what causes that drop-off?*
- *If a prospect visited your website today but was not yet ready to have a conversation, is there something valuable enough to hold their attention and a clear path to keep the relationship moving?*

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YOU ARE NOT LOSING PROSPECTS TO COMPETITORS. YOU ARE LOSING THEM TO DRIFT.

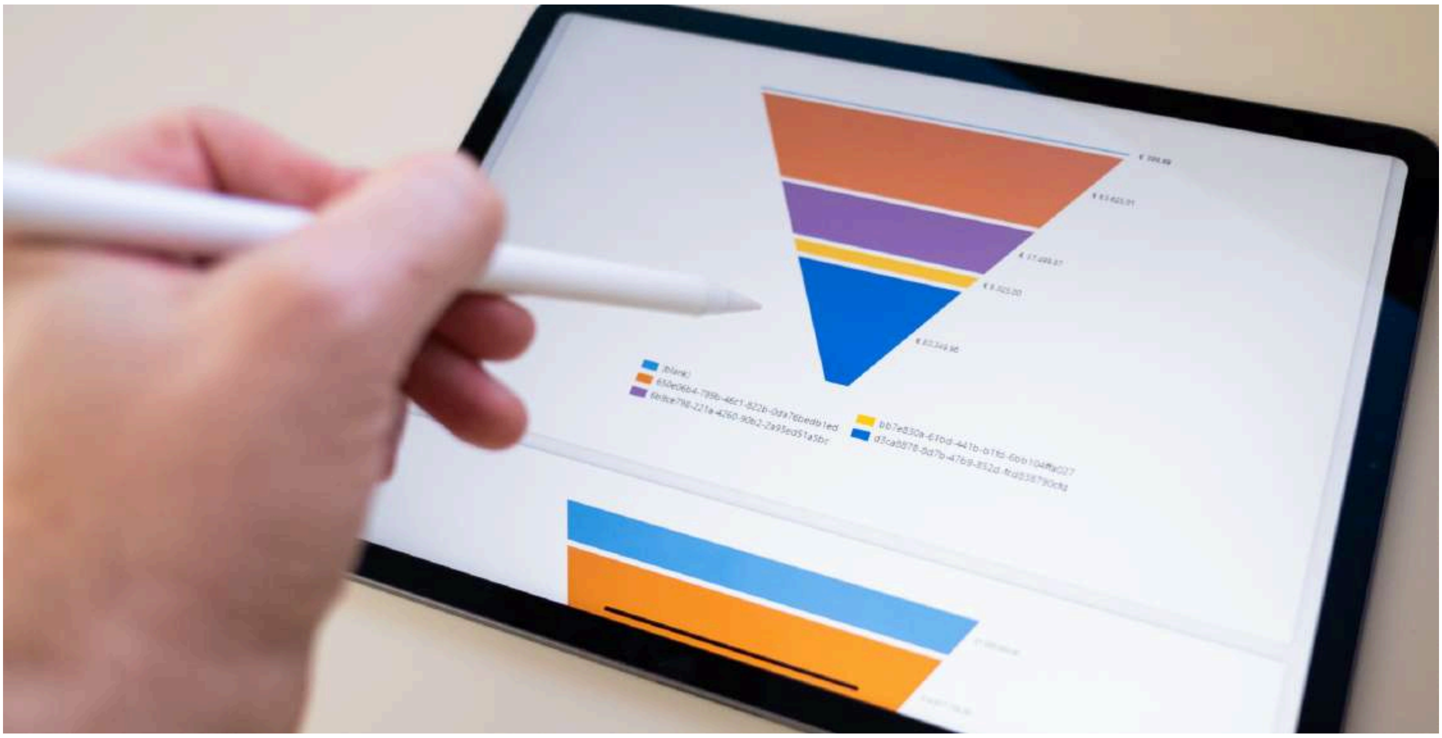
Map your current pipeline on a single page. Mark every touchpoint a prospect passes through from first awareness to signed engagement. Then mark every gap where there is silence, where the relationship is alive in theory but nothing designed is happening to maintain it. Those gaps are where you are losing business.

The fix has two parts. First, a middle stage asset: one piece of content specific enough to attract only your ideal client and substantial enough that consuming it advances their thinking on the problem you solve. This keeps the relationship moving during the silence.

Second, a single clear next step available at every touchpoint. Not a contact form. Not a range of options. One specific, low-friction action a prospect can take when they are ready to move. Every piece of marketing you have should point toward it.

FUNNEL CONTINUITY AUDIT

Describe your current touchpoints as specifically as you can.



"Here is how a new prospect currently discovers and engages with my business: [describe your current touchpoints from awareness to proposal]. Identify the three most likely points where a prospect who is genuinely interested would lose momentum and disengage without actively deciding against the firm. For each gap, suggest one specific addition that would maintain the relationship during that silence without adding pressure or complexity. Focus on what would serve a prospect who is interested but distracted, not one who is motivated and ready."

AUTOMATION & FOLLOW-UP

The reason your follow-up is inconsistent is not that you lack systems. It is that somewhere you believe a good firm should not have to chase. That belief is costing you more than any missing tool.

The Real Problem

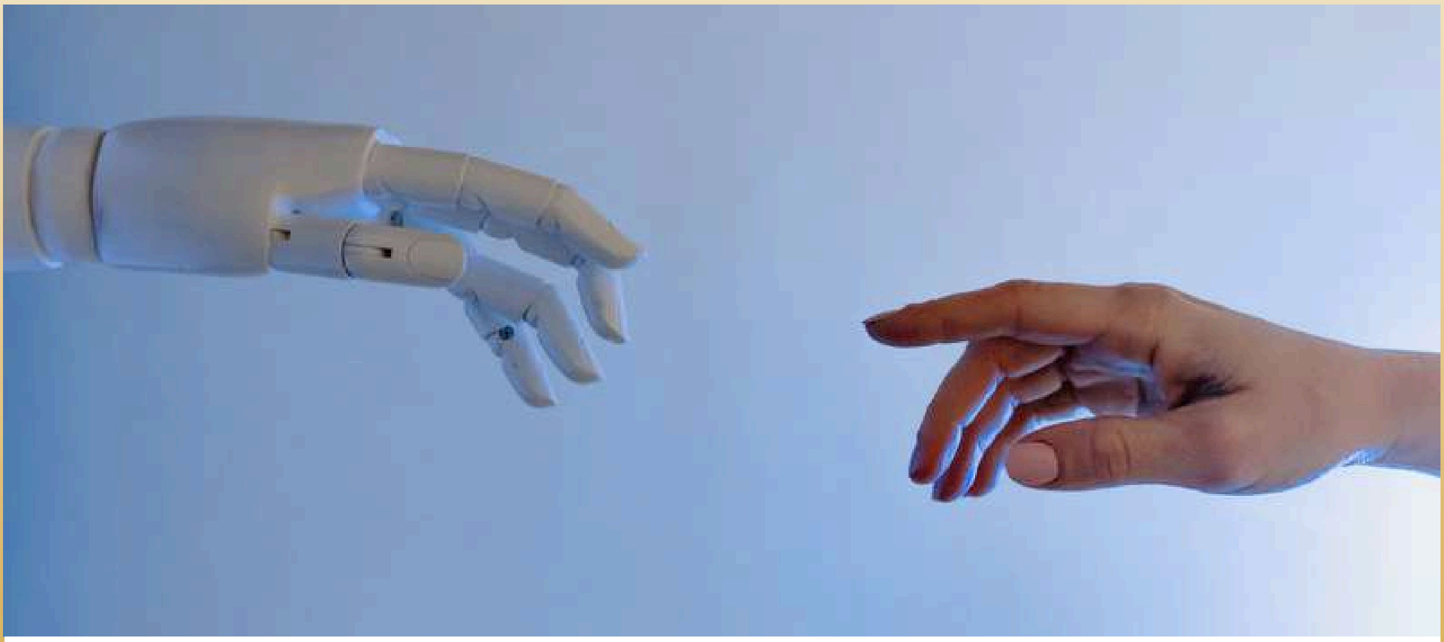
Most professional services founders who struggle with follow-up are not disorganised people. They are people who have internalised a belief, often unconsciously, that good work should generate its own momentum. That a firm of genuine quality should not need to remind prospects of its existence. That consistent follow-up is somehow undignified.

Here is the reframe. A prospect who expressed genuine interest in your firm and then went quiet is not a lost cause. They are a person who got busy. Your followup is the trigger that brings the decision back to the surface. Done well, it is not an imposition. It is a service. It says: I have not forgotten about you. I still think we could do something useful together. And I am organised enough to maintain this relationship even when you are too busy to.

That last signal, the signal of organisation and consistency, is itself a form of evidence about what working with you would be like. Firms that follow up thoughtfully are firms that manage client relationships thoughtfully. Prospects understand this intuitively even when they cannot articulate it.

ASK YOURSELF HONESTLY

- *When a new prospect makes contact, is there a consistent sameday response that acknowledges their specific situation, or does the response depend on who is available and how busy things are?*
- *If a prospect goes quiet after an initial conversation, is there a designed sequence of follow-up that keeps the relationship alive without pressure?*
- *Are your active prospects tracked in a way that shows you the history, current stage and specific next action for each one?*
- *Do you follow up with prospects who declined or went quiet after receiving a proposal, or do you write those relationships off?*
- *If the founder stepped away from business development for a month, would any prospect currently in the pipeline hear from the firm?*



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THE MINIMUM VIABLE FOLLOW-UP SYSTEM HAS THREE COMPONENTS. NONE REQUIRE COMPLEX TECHNOLOGY.

The three things that will recover more pipeline than most firms realise they are losing:

Three-Part Follow Up System

1. **Same-day response for every new enquiry.** Not a templated reply. A response that acknowledges the specific context of how they found you and what they are likely dealing with. This single behaviour will differentiate your firm immediately.

2. **A nurture sequence for prospects who are not ready.** Three to five communications over eight to ten weeks. Each delivers something genuinely useful. None push for a meeting. They simply demonstrate, through consistency, that your firm thinks carefully about the problems your prospects face.

3. **A quarterly re-engagement for prospects who went quiet.** One direct, low-pressure communication that gives them a reason to re-engage if the timing has changed. No apology for the gap. No overselling. Just a signal that the door is still open.

FOLLOW-UP SEQUENCE DESIGN

Fill in the specifics before running this prompt.

"A prospect in [describe your ideal client category] had an initial conversation with me three weeks ago. They expressed genuine interest but said the timing was not right. The most common reasons prospects in this category delay are [describe two or three common reasons]. Write a four-touch follow-up sequence over ten weeks that keeps the relationship warm and delivers genuine value without applying pressure. Each touch should be under 150 words, should sound like it was written by a specific person rather than a marketing system, and should give them a reason to re-engage without requiring them to make a decision."

Category 08 of 08

GROWTH READINESS

> *You cannot scale what you have not understood. Most professional services firms think they know where their best clients come from. Almost none of them have tested that assumption against actual data.*

The Real Problem

Most founders who want to grow their firm have a reasonable theory about what is working. Referrals from a specific network. A particular type of engagement that leads to more work. A sector where the firm has traction. Those theories feel solid because they are based on experience. But feeling solid and being accurate are different things.

When those theories are tested against actual data, a different picture almost always emerges. The referral source that feels most active turns out to be producing a lower proportion of closed work than expected. The service that feels like the core offer turns out to be the entry point for engagements that generate significantly more value through subsequent work.

Scaling on the basis of an unexamined theory amplifies whatever is actually happening, including the parts that are not working. Which is why growth without this understanding so often produces more revenue and more stress simultaneously. Growth readiness is an honest assessment of whether what you currently have is worth scaling. That question requires more honesty than most founders are comfortable bringing to it.

ASK YOURSELF HONESTLY

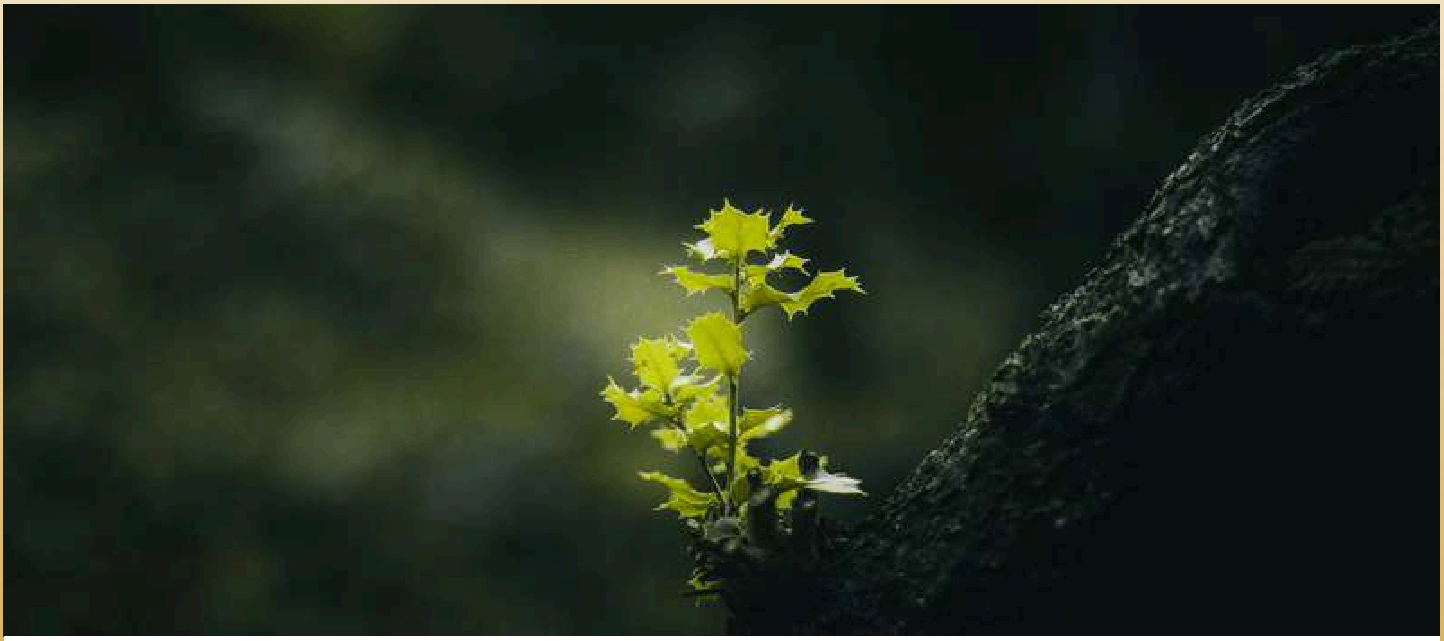
- *Do you know specifically which source, relationship or activity has produced your most valuable clients over the last two years, including what triggered those relationships and what the referred prospect already believed about your firm before contact?*

- *If you doubled your marketing investment tomorrow, does your current process for converting conversations to clients have the clarity and consistency to handle that volume effectively?*

- *Is your positioning differentiated and stable enough to work across multiple channels simultaneously, or does it still require explanation and context to land correctly?*

- *Can you draw a clear line between any specific marketing activity you are currently investing in and a measurable outcome in your pipeline?*

- *Do you feel genuinely confident about your next strategic move, or is growth still partly a matter of waiting to see what the year brings?*



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BEFORE INVESTING FURTHER IN GROWTH ACTIVITY, RUN A RETURN ON EFFORT AUDIT ACROSS THE LAST 24 MONTHS.

For every significant source of new business in that period, document three things. Who the client was and what the engagement was worth in total, not just the initial fee. What specifically triggered the relationship, not referrals as a category but the specific person, conversation or context that produced it. And what the client already believed about your firm before they made contact.

Across your last 20 clients, you will find that a small number of sources are producing a disproportionate share of your best work. And you will find activities that feel productive but have produced little of measurable value in two years.

The growth decision then becomes considerably simpler: invest more in what is actually working, stop investing in what is not, and build the systems to make the things that are working happen more deliberately rather than relying on them to occur organically.

GROWTH LEVER ANALYSIS

Complete the return on effort audit before using this prompt. The more specific your input, the more useful the output.

"Here is a summary of where my best clients over the last two years have come from and what triggered each relationship: [describe as specifically as you can, including the source, the trigger and what the client already knew about the firm before contact]. Identify the patterns in this data that suggest where my actual growth levers are. Then identify what would need to be true for those levers to work more consistently and at greater scale, and what the most significant risk is of scaling before those conditions are in place."

WHAT YOUR SCORE MEANS

You have not been asked to add anything up. That happens in one place, the assessment. Here is what the result actually tells you once you have it.

When the Actual Scoring Happens

This document does not ask you to score yourself on paper. Manual scoring is easy to be generous with, and the eight categories interact in ways a simple add up cannot capture. The NO-BS Assessment asks the same diagnostic questions you just read, scores your answers properly, and tells you the exact one costing you the most. It takes about twelve minutes.

Find it at **firsttouchstudio.com.au/assessment**. What follows is what your result actually means once you have it.

0-30

THE FOUNDATION IS MISSING

Your marketing is generating activity but not momentum. The most important thing to understand at this score is that the problem is not execution. You could produce more content, run more ads and attend more networking events and the result would be more noise rather than more pipeline. The priority is to stop most of what you are doing and spend the next 60 days getting your positioning specific enough that a stranger could describe your ideal client accurately after reading it.

Getting your messaging honest enough that it sounds like a person rather than a brochure. And getting clear enough on your prospect's actual fears that your marketing speaks to the decision they are really making. Everything else waits.

31-50

THE PIECES EXIST BUT ARE NOT CONNECTED

You have elements that are working but they are operating independently rather than as a system. Prospects can find you but the path from finding you to choosing you is unclear or inconsistent. Wins happen but they feel harder than they should and the pattern behind them is not obvious. The priority is not building new things. It is connecting what already exists.

When your positioning, messaging, content and follow-up are aligned around a single coherent story about who you are and who you serve, the same activities you are already investing in will produce measurably better results.

51-65

STRONG FOUNDATIONS, LEAKING PIPELINE

Your positioning and messaging are largely working. Prospects understand who you are and what you do. The gaps at this score are in the systems that convert interest into engagement and engagement into decisions.

Follow-up is the single biggest opportunity here, because you are attracting the right prospects but losing some of them to drift and silence rather than active rejection. The priority is building the processes that make your conversion rate reflect the quality of your positioning.

66-80

READY TO SCALE WITH INTENTION

Your marketing is working and the case for choosing you is clear. The risk at this score is the assumption that what works at current scale will automatically work at greater scale. It will not, because growth introduces complexity and complexity erodes clarity over time. The priority is protecting what works while testing carefully into new channels and new audiences rather than assuming your current positioning and approach will translate without adjustment.

YOUR 90-DAY CLARITY PLAN

Three phases. Sequential if your score is below 65. Targeted at your two lowest categories if you scored above 65.

Phase 01. Week 1-4

Stop The Leaks

Fix what is actively working against you before investing further in growth.

Week 1

Write your positioning statement. Four questions, plain language, no hedging. Test it with the stranger test. If three people who do not know your business cannot describe your ideal client accurately after reading it, it is not finished.

Week 2

Run the prospect fear audit. Ten recent conversations, documented honestly. What were they actually afraid of? Does your current marketing address any of those fears? Rewrite your homepage opening paragraph based on what you find.

Week 3

Audit every call to action across your key touchpoints. Identify your single primary next step and remove or demote everything that competes with it. One clear path forward for a prospect who is ready.

Week 4

Apply the stranger test to your three most important pieces of marketing. Homepage, LinkedIn profile, standard pitch email. Document the gaps between what a stranger concludes and what you want them to conclude.

Phase 02. Weeks 5-8

Sharpen What Exists

Make what you already have work harder without building anything new.

Week 5-6 **Write your before and after statement.** Be specific about the anxiety your engagement relieves. Rewrite your core service description, LinkedIn summary and standard proposal introduction using this framing. Lead with the relief, not the process.

Week 7 **Build the minimum viable follow-up system.** Same-day response protocol for new enquiries. Three to five touch nurture sequence for prospects who are not yet ready. Quarterly re-engagement for prospects who went quiet. These three things alone will recover measurable pipeline within 60 days.

Week 8 **Define your content position.** What is the one conviction you hold about your clients' problems that most firms in your category would not say publicly? Build your next eight weeks of content around expressing, illustrating and applying that conviction.

Phase 03. Weeks 9-12

Build Intentional Momentum

Scale what is now working rather than adding new activities to an unchanged foundation.

Weeks 9-10 **Map your funnel and identify the two biggest silence gaps.** Build one middle stage asset, a guide, a framework, a diagnostic, specific enough to attract only your ideal client and substantial enough to advance their thinking on the problem you solve.

Week 11 **Run the return on effort audit across the last 24 months.** Make one clear investment decision based on what the data shows about your actual growth levers, not what feels exciting or what a competitor is doing.

Week 12 **Retake The NO-BS Assessment.** Document what has improved, what still needs work and what your single most important priority is for the next 90 days. Then start again.

TAKE IT FURTHER

FIND THE ONE ANSWER COSTING YOU THE MOST THIS

This document gives you the framework and the language to think in. The online assessment goes further. Answer the same diagnostic questions in an interactive format and you will get the exact question you answered weakest, what that gap is actually costing you, and the first two priorities to fix from your own ninety day plan, not a generic one.

TAKE THE NO-BS ASSESSMENT

Twelve minutes. Free. No email required to see your result.

A FINAL NOTE

If you got this far and something in here made you uncomfortable, that is not a problem with the audit.

The professional services firms that grow consistently, without the constant friction of unpredictable pipelines, are not the ones with the most sophisticated marketing. They are the ones that have been honest enough to see where their marketing is working against them and disciplined enough to fix it before adding more volume.

The human advantage in professional services is real. The firms that win are the ones that let it come through. One thing from this document. Fixed properly. Then the next. That is the whole plan.

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