

PORT JACKSON WORKSHOP · FREE COURSE · DO IT YOURSELF SERIES

Launch Your Own Store

From an idea to a first A\$10K month on your own money — the five stages honestly costed, with the two numbers the coaching pages leave out

WHO THIS IS FOR

Australians with A\$5,000–15,000 saved who have watched a coaching webinar or booked a strategy call, and want to know what starting a product brand really costs, what the odds are, and whether they can do it without a five-figure program.

WHAT YOU WILL HAVE AT THE END

A passed margin gate on a real product; a live, compliant Shopify store you own; a tracked ad launch with a written kill rule; four weekly scorecards and a target stated in contribution, not revenue; a 13-week cash forecast; and a written decision on whether to scale — and on what, if anything, is worth buying.

Christine de Vries · Port Jackson Group · v1.0 · 3 September 2026 · Free to read, copy and share unchanged with this notice. This course names no company, coach or product. Every figure is an estimate to check against your own numbers. It is general information, not financial, legal or tax advice. Nothing is sold inside it.

How to use this course

Five modules matching the five stages. They are gates, not weeks: do not open Build until Validate's margin gate passes. Total cash to a fair test is A\$4,000–9,000; the course itself is free. Australian figures, September 2026; check live prices. For the deeper version of Build see the companion guide 'Build Your Own Online Store'.

Course map

Module	Lessons	You finish with
Validate	The two hidden numbers · One problem, one place · Demand on free tools · Three quotes, two samples · The margin gate	A passed margin gate, three supplier quotes, two samples on the way, and the cash-and-odds sheet completed.
Build	The right order · Six pages · Returns and consumer guarantees	ABN, business name, bank account and Shopify store in the correct order; six pages live; a compliant returns policy.
Launch	Ten warm sales · One campaign, three creatives · Tracking and the daily sheet · The kill rule	Ten warm sales with ten conversations logged; one campaign live with three creatives; tracking firing; a dated kill rule.
Optimise	Read the first fifty orders · Four email flows · The eight-number scorecard · Contribution, not revenue	Top complaint fixed; four email flows live; four weekly scorecards; the target restated in contribution.
Scale, or decide not to	The three-month gate · Stock, cash, reorders · When a program is worth buying	A 13-week cash forecast and a signed decision memo.

Module 1 — Validate

Most first stores fail at a spreadsheet they never made. This module makes it, and refuses to let you buy stock until it passes.

Lesson 1.1 — The two hidden numbers

Number one: total cash to a fair 90-day test — samples A\$200–500, first stock A\$1,500–4,000, store and apps A\$150–300, ads A\$1,500–3,000, ABN/domain/legal A\$150. About A\$4,000–9,000, before any program fee. Number two: the odds. Coaching pages that publish 'thousands launched' beside 'a founder hits \$10K every few days' are telling you, if you divide, that roughly one in seven reaches the first milestone. Plan for the six.

DO THIS NOW

Fill W1 with your own cash and your own risk tolerance. If the total is more than you can lose, stop here — this is the cheapest stop on the course.

Worksheet: W1 Cash and odds (Appendix)

Lesson 1.2 — One problem, one place

Write the product as a problem in one sentence, and name the one place your customer already gathers — a Facebook group, a subreddit, a trade-fair aisle, a sports club. If you cannot name the place you cannot launch warm, and you will be paying ads to find strangers from day one.

DO THIS NOW

Write both sentences at the top of W2.

Worksheet: W2 Demand and quotes (Appendix)

Lesson 1.3 — Demand on free tools

Google Trends set to Australia; Amazon AU best-seller ranks in the category; eBay 'sold' listings for the last 30 days; the questions people ask in the place you named. A paid keyword tool is only worth it if you are going to Amazon. Write a one-paragraph demand note with the four sources.

DO THIS NOW

Complete the demand section of W2.

Worksheet: W2 Demand and quotes (Appendix)

Lesson 1.4 — Three quotes, two samples

Three suppliers — Alibaba with Trade Assurance, or Australian wholesalers from the gift-fair exhibitor directories, which are free. Each quote: unit cost, MOQ, sample cost, lead time, freight to your door. Order samples from two. Note the difference between a wholesaler (you buy and hold stock) and a dropship platform (they hold and ship) — opposite models on capital and margin.

DO THIS NOW

Three quotes on W2; two samples ordered.

Worksheet: W2 Demand and quotes (Appendix)

Lesson 1.5 — The margin gate

Landed cost × 3 must be at or below what customers already pay for the nearest alternative. After payment fees (about 1.75% + A\$0.30), GST, freight and a 30% ad-cost allowance, gross margin must be at least 25%. Prompt for an AI assistant: 'Here are three supplier quotes, my target price and competitor prices. Build the unit economics with Australian payment fees, GST, freight and a 30% ad allowance. Give me the break-even ad cost per order.' If the gate fails, change the product. Never change the spreadsheet.

DO THIS NOW

Complete W3. Pass, or return to Lesson 1.2 with a different product.

Check: Break-even ad cost per order written down? That number is your launch kill rule.

Worksheet: W3 Margin gate (Appendix)

MODULE 1 — YOU ARE DONE WHEN

A passed margin gate, three supplier quotes, two samples on the way, and the cash-and-odds sheet completed.

Module 2 — Build

A store is a weekend and a few hundred dollars. Anything sold to you as more than that is company, not construction.

Lesson 2.1 — The right order

ABN first (free). Business name at ASIC second — it needs the ABN. Business bank account third. Shopify fourth, in your own name, on your own login. Payment gateway last, with the same name on the ABN, the business name, the bank account and the gateway application — a mismatch is what freezes payouts right after your first sales.

DO THIS NOW

Complete W4 in order, with a screenshot per step.

Worksheet: W4 Setup order (Appendix)

Lesson 2.2 — Six pages

Home, product, about, shipping and returns, contact, FAQ. Free theme. Logo from a free design tool or a A\$30 generator; product photos on a phone in a A\$40 light box. Product page prompt: 'Write my product page in plain Australian English: one-sentence problem, three benefits I can substantiate, specs, shipping times, guarantee. No superlatives.' Delete anything you cannot prove.

DO THIS NOW

Store live with six pages. Ask one stranger to buy a A\$1 test product.

Worksheet: W4 Setup order (Appendix)

Lesson 2.3 — Returns and consumer guarantees

Under the Australian Consumer Law customers have guarantee rights you cannot exclude: a refund, repair or replacement for a fault, regardless of your policy. Your returns page states the guarantees, then adds what you offer beyond them (change of mind, days, who pays return freight). A policy that says 'no refunds' is illegal and costs you the sale to anyone who reads it.

DO THIS NOW

Write the returns page from W5's template.

Worksheet: W5 Returns policy (Appendix)

MODULE 2 — YOU ARE DONE WHEN

ABN, business name, bank account and Shopify store in the correct order; six pages live; a compliant returns policy.

Module 3 — Launch

Warm first, ads second, kill rule written before the first dollar.

Lesson 3.1 — Ten warm sales

Post to the place you named in Module 1. Ten sales to people you can ask 'why did you buy?' and 'what nearly stopped you?' Those twenty answers are your ad copy and your FAQ. Do not run an ad until you have them.

DO THIS NOW

Ten sales, ten answers on W6.

Worksheet: W6 Launch log (Appendix)

Lesson 3.2 — One campaign, three creatives

Meta ads: one campaign, one ad set, three creatives — a 15-second demo video, a photo with the one-sentence problem, a customer quote. A\$30–50 a day. Seven days before judging anything. Google Shopping only after ten organic sales and only if the demand note showed people search for the product by name.

DO THIS NOW

Campaign live. W6 filled daily: spend, orders, revenue, contribution.

Worksheet: W6 Launch log (Appendix)

Lesson 3.3 — Tracking and the daily sheet

Meta pixel plus Conversions API through Shopify's integration; GA4 purchase event; one sheet with spend, orders, revenue, cost of goods, contribution per day. If the sheet does not reconcile with Shopify's orders, stop and fix tracking before spending more.

DO THIS NOW

Reconcile day 3's sheet against Shopify orders. Screenshot.

Worksheet: W6 Launch log (Appendix)

Lesson 3.4 — The kill rule

Written before launch, dated: 'If after 14 days the cost per order is above my break-even (from W3) and no creative is winning, I stop the ads and return to Validate with what I learned.' The rule protects the remaining budget from hope. Most coaching programs have the opposite incentive.

DO THIS NOW

Write the kill rule on W6 and read it aloud to someone.

Worksheet: W6 Launch log (Appendix)

MODULE 3 — YOU ARE DONE WHEN

Ten warm sales with ten conversations logged; one campaign live with three creatives; tracking firing; a dated kill rule.

Module 4 — Optimise

Early sales feel like luck. Fifty orders and eight numbers a week turn them into a pattern.

Lesson 4.1 — Read the first fifty orders

Where each came from, what the customer said, what came back. Rank the complaints; fix the top one before spending another dollar on ads. In most first stores it is sizing, shipping time or a photo that over-promised.

DO THIS NOW

W7 complaint list; top fix shipped.

Worksheet: W7 Scorecard (Appendix)

Lesson 4.2 — Four email flows

Free tier of an email platform: welcome (three emails), abandoned cart (two), post-purchase (two: how to use it, then a review ask), win-back at 60 days. These are where second orders come from, and second orders are where the margin is.

DO THIS NOW

Four flows live.

Worksheet: W7 Scorecard (Appendix)

Lesson 4.3 — The eight-number scorecard

Weekly: revenue, orders, contribution after ads, repeat rate, return rate, weeks of stock cover, cash in bank, hours worked. The last two are the numbers coaching programs never ask for, and they are the ones that decide whether you have a business or a job.

DO THIS NOW

Four consecutive weekly scorecards on W7.

Worksheet: W7 Scorecard (Appendix)

Lesson 4.4 — Contribution, not revenue

A A\$10K month is a revenue milestone. At healthy margins it delivers roughly A\$2,500 of contribution after ads — before your time. Restate the target as contribution. A A\$4,300 month with A\$640 contribution and a fixed complaint is a good first month; a A\$10K month with negative contribution is an expensive one.

DO THIS NOW

Write the contribution target on W7 and use it from now on.

Worksheet: W7 Scorecard (Appendix)

MODULE 4 — YOU ARE DONE WHEN

Top complaint fixed; four email flows live; four weekly scorecards; the target restated in contribution.

Module 5 — Scale, or decide not to

Three contribution-positive months is the gate. Then cash, then stock, then — maybe — help.

Lesson 5.1 — The three-month gate

Do not add a product, raise the ad budget or buy a program until three consecutive months show positive contribution after ads. Second product to the same customer before a second customer for the same product. First hire is customer service or packing, not marketing.

DO THIS NOW

Review three scorecards against the gate on W8.

Worksheet: W8 Cash and decision (Appendix)

Lesson 5.2 — Stock, cash, reorders

Reorder on weeks of cover, not enthusiasm. Build a 13-week cash forecast: opening cash, expected sales at last month's rate, stock purchases, ads, fees, tax set-aside, your wage. If the forecast goes negative in any week, the reorder waits.

DO THIS NOW

Complete the 13-week forecast on W8.

Worksheet: W8 Cash and decision (Appendix)

Lesson 5.3 — When a program is worth buying

Price every item a program offers against its DIY equivalent: training (free platforms, a A\$29 guide), group calls (a A\$97 community), supplier introductions (free directories), a store build (a weekend, or a A\$800 freelancer), a strategist (a fractional consultant at A\$300–500 a month). Sum: A\$500–2,500 for a launch. If the program costs ten times that, you are buying company and certainty; the first is real, the second is not for sale. Buy only when the store has paid you a wage for a quarter and the fee is a mistake you can afford.

DO THIS NOW

Write the decision memo on W8: scale / hold / stop, and what, if anything, to buy.

Worksheet: W8 Cash and decision (Appendix)

MODULE 5 — YOU ARE DONE WHEN

A 13-week cash forecast and a signed decision memo.

Appendix — Worksheets

W1 Cash and odds

Item	Estimate (A\$)	Mine (A\$)
Samples	200–500	
First stock	1,500–4,000	
Store, apps, domain	150–300	
Ads, 90 days	1,500–3,000	
ABN, name, legal	150	
Total to a fair test	4,000–9,000	
Cash I can lose without stress		
Odds I am planning for	≈1 in 7 reach A\$10K/month in 90 days	

W2 Demand and quotes

Field	Content
Problem in one sentence	
The one place the customer gathers	
Demand note (Trends / Amazon AU / eBay sold / questions asked)	
Quote 1: supplier / unit / MOQ / sample / lead / freight	
Quote 2	
Quote 3	
Samples ordered (date)	

W3 Margin gate

Line	A\$
Landed unit cost	
× 3 = minimum viable price	
Nearest alternative's price	
Selling price	
Payment fees (1.75% + 0.30)	
GST (1/11 of price)	
Freight to customer	
Ad allowance (30% of price)	
Gross margin after all above (must be ≥ 25%)	
Break-even ad cost per order	
GATE: PASS / FAIL	

W4 Setup order

Step	Done (date)	Same name as ABN?
1 ABN		
2 Business name (ASIC)		
3 Business bank account		
4 Shopify in my name / my login		
5 Payment gateway application		
6 Six pages live		
7 A\$1 test purchase completed		

W5 Returns policy (template)

Section	Wording
Consumer guarantees	Our goods come with guarantees that cannot be excluded under the Australian Consumer Law. You are entitled to a replacement or refund for a major failure and to have the goods repaired or replaced if they fail to be of acceptable quality.
Change of mind	We offer [] days for change of mind on unused items in original packaging; return freight is [paid by you / us].
How to return	Email [] with your order number; we reply within [] business days.
Refund timing	Refunds are processed within [] business days of receiving the item.

W6 Launch log

Day	Spend	Orders	Revenue	COGS	Contribution	Note
Kill rule (dated):						
1						
2						
3 (reconciled?)						
...14						

W7 Scorecard

Week	Revenue	Orders	Contribution after ads	Repeat %	Return %	Stock weeks	Cash	Hours
1								
2								
3								
4								
Contri								

Week	Revenue	Orders	Contribution after ads	Repeat %	Return %	Stock weeks	Cash	Hours
tribution target:								

W8 Cash and decision

Field	Content
Three-month gate: contribution positive in months 1/2/3?	
13-week forecast: lowest cash week and amount	
Reorder allowed? (weeks of cover / cash)	
DIY-equivalent total for anything I am considering buying	
Decision: scale / hold / stop	
What I will buy, if anything, and why now	
Signed and dated	

Honest limits

- All prices and fees are September 2026 Australian estimates; check Shopify, payment and platform pages before relying on them.
- The 'one in seven' odds are derived from figures coaching pages publish about themselves; your odds depend on the margin gate more than on any program.
- Australian Consumer Law guarantees apply to what you sell; this course is not legal advice and the returns template should be read by a professional if your product carries safety or warranty complexity.
- Importing goods raises compliance questions (product safety standards, labelling, customs) not covered here.
- Nothing here promises income. Contribution after ads, measured weekly, is the only number that tells you the truth.