SIDE HUSTLE

LAUNCH KIT

Notion Dashboard + PDF Workbook

- Find Your Niche -- Skills Audit & Market Research
- Land Your First Client -- 5 Proven Channels + Templates
- Price Your Work -- Rate Calculator & Pricing Strategy
- Set Up Your Business -- Legal, Banking & Tools Checklist
- Build a Portfolio -- 3 Pieces From Scratch
- 30-Day Launch Plan -- Day-by-Day to Your First Dollar

TemplateForge | $29

Notion Dashboard + PDF Workbook | templateforge.com

Welcome to Your Side Hustle

Starting a side hustle is one of the smartest career moves you can make. It builds skills, creates income options, and gives you control over your professional life. But most people never start because they don't have a clear path.

This kit solves that. It gives you a step-by-step system to go from 'I have an idea' to 'I have a paying client' in 30 days. No fluff. No hype. Just the practical frameworks, templates, and checklists that actually work.

What's Inside

PDF Workbook (You're Reading It)

6 modules covering niche selection, client acquisition, pricing, business setup, portfolio building, and a 30-day launch plan.

Notion Dashboard

Digital command center: 30-day tracker, skills database, client pipeline CRM, and resource library. All linked and ready to go.

Message Templates

Actual words you can copy and paste for LinkedIn outreach, Upwork proposals, warm emails, and cold pitches.

Rate Calculator

A practical pricing framework that helps you set your first rates confidently, based on your skills and market.

30-Day Launch Plan

Day-by-day checklist. Week 1: Foundation. Week 2: Portfolio. Week 3: Outreach. Week 4: First client + systems.

MODULE 1: Find Your Niche

Why Your Niche Matters

The biggest mistake new freelancers make is trying to help 'everyone.' When you serve everyone, you connect with no one. A niche focuses your efforts and makes marketing 10x easier. Clients hire specialists -- they want someone who understands their specific problem.

Skills Audit Worksheet

Start by listing everything you can do. Not just professional skills -- include hobbies, interests, and things people ask your advice about. Rate each skill on two dimensions: your proficiency (1-5) and your enjoyment (1-5). Multiply the scores. Your sweet spot is in the upper-right quadrant: skilled AND passionate.

Your Skills Inventory

Professional Skills	Things you do at work or have done in past roles. Include software tools, methodologies, certifications, languages.
Hobby Skills	Photography, writing, design, cooking, fitness, gaming, gardening -- anything you do for fun that could become a service.
Knowledge Areas	Topics you know well: personal finance, nutrition, parenting, travel, productivity, technology, a specific industry.
People Skills	Coaching, mentoring, teaching, organizing, negotiating, customer service -- abilities that involve helping others.
Technical Skills	Coding, spreadsheets, data analysis, video editing, audio production, social media, SEO, website building.

Market Demand Checklist: 5 Signals

1. People are already paying for this skill. Check Upwork, Fiverr, or job boards. If you see 50+ listings, there's demand.
2. Businesses list it in job descriptions. Search Indeed or LinkedIn for full-time roles using your skill. That's proof companies value it.
3. There are books, courses, or YouTube channels about it. A crowded education market means high interest.
4. You can name 3 specific types of clients who need it. 'Small business owners who want better Instagram' is clearer than 'people.'
5. It solves an urgent or expensive problem. People pay to fix things that cost them money, time, or peace of mind.

The Skills Overlap Matrix

Your unique niche lives at the intersection of two or more skills. A 'writer' is a commodity. A 'writer who understands SaaS metrics and can turn customer data into case studies' is a specialist who commands premium rates.

How to find your overlap: Write your top 5 skills in a row across the top and the same 5 skills down the left side. Each intersecting cell is a potential niche. For example: 'Writing + Finance' = financial content writer. 'Design + Fitness' = fitness brand designer. 'Data + Real Estate' = real estate market analyst.

TIP: *Don't overthink this. Pick the overlap that scores highest on your enjoyment x proficiency matrix. You can always pivot later. Action beats perfection every time.*

MODULE 2: Land Your First Client

The 5-Channel Approach

Don't rely on one channel. Try all five in parallel during Week 3 of your launch. Track which ones generate conversations and double down on what works.

Channel 1: Upwork / Freelance Platforms

Optimize your profile: professional photo, clear headline (not 'Freelancer' but 'Email Copywriter for E-commerce Brands'), portfolio pieces (even spec work). Send 5 proposals per day. Personalize the first 2 sentences to their specific project. Most freelancers send generic copy-paste -- standing out is easy.

Channel 2: LinkedIn Outreach

Optimize your headline to describe who you help and how. Post 2-3 times per week sharing insights about your niche. Send 3-5 connection requests daily to potential clients with a note. NEVER pitch in the connection request. Build the relationship first, then offer value.

Channel 3: Your Warm Network

Tell everyone you know what you're doing. Not 'I'm freelancing' but 'I'm helping [niche] with [specific problem].' Ask if they know anyone who needs that. Your first client is often a friend-of-a-friend. Send 10 personal messages this week to people you already know.

Channel 4: Online Communities

Find 3 communities where your target clients hang out. Reddit, Facebook groups, Slack communities, Discord servers. Join the conversation. Answer questions. Be helpful for 2 weeks before mentioning your services. When you do, frame it as: 'I actually help people with this -- happy to chat if you want.'

Channel 5: Cold Outreach

Identify 20 ideal clients. Research each one. Find a specific, genuine reason to reach out -- comment on their recent blog post, compliment their product, ask a thoughtful question. Follow up once after 5-7 days. This is a numbers game: expect 10% response rate, 2-3% conversion.

Message Templates

Copy, customize, and send. Replace [brackets] with your specifics.

Upwork Proposal

```
Hi [Name],

I read your job post about [specific requirement] and
I have direct experience with [relevant example].

For [their company/project], I'd approach it by [1-2
specific ideas]. Here's a similar project I've done:
[link to portfolio piece]

Happy to jump on a quick call to discuss. Available
[day/time].

Best,
[Your Name]
```

LinkedIn Connection Note

```
Hi [Name] -- I've been following [their company/work]
and really appreciated [specific thing they shared].
I'd love to connect and learn more about [their work].
```

Warm Network Message

```
Hey [Name]! Quick ask: I'm starting to offer [service]
for [target client type]. Do you know anyone who might
need help with [specific problem]? No pressure at all
-- just putting the word out. Hope you're well!
```

MODULE 3: Price Your Work

The Pricing Mindset

Most new freelancers undercharge by 50-100%. The reason is simple: you price based on what you'd pay, not what the value is worth to the client. A logo isn't a .png file -- it's the first impression of a business that might make $100K/year. Your rate should reflect the value you create, not the time you spend.

Three Pricing Models

Hourly	Best for: ongoing work with unclear scope. Pros: simple, protected from scope creep (you get paid for all time). Cons: penalizes efficiency, caps your income at hours available. First-client tip: start hourly, track your time, learn how long things actually take.
Project-Based	Best for: well-defined deliverables with clear start/end. Pros: client knows total cost upfront, your efficiency increases your effective rate. Cons: scope creep risk -- always define exactly what's included (and what's not) in writing. Fix: add 20% buffer to your time estimate.
Retainer	Best for: ongoing relationships, recurring work. Pros: predictable income, deeper client relationship, less selling time. Cons: can feel like a job, client may under-utilize. Fix: define clear monthly deliverables (e.g., 'Up to 4 blog posts per month, 2 revision rounds each').

Your First Rate: A Simple Formula

Step 1: Research market rates for your skill on Upwork and industry reports. Step 2: Find the median rate for someone with 1-2 years of experience. Step 3: Set your rate at 80% of that median (to get your first clients -- you'll raise it after 3-5 completed projects). Step 4: After you have 3 testimonials, raise to 100% of median. After 10 clients, raise to 120%+.

For most professional services (writing, design, development, marketing), a starting rate of $25-50/hour is reasonable. For specialized technical or consulting work, $50-100/hour is appropriate. Don't go below $20/hour -- it signals low quality and attracts the worst clients.

TIP: *Never negotiate on price alone. If a client says you're too expensive, ask: 'What budget did you have in mind?' Then adjust scope, not rate: 'At that budget, I can include X and Y, and we can add Z later.' Protect your rate, flex on scope.*

When to Raise Your Rates

Raise rates when: (1) You have a waitlist or are turning down work. (2) You've completed 10+ projects and have strong testimonials. (3) Your skills have significantly improved. (4) You're consistently booked 2+ weeks out. How: Give existing clients 30 days notice. New clients get the new rate immediately. Most clients won't leave over a 15-20% increase.

MODULE 4: Set Up Your Business

Legal Foundation

You don't need an LLC on Day 1. Start as a sole proprietor -- it's free, requires no paperwork, and you report income on your personal tax return. Form an LLC when: (1) You're consistently earning $1,000+/month. (2) You want liability protection. (3) A client requires it. Cost: $50-500 depending on your state. Use an online service like LegalZoom or your state's business portal.

Critical: Open a separate bank account. Even as a sole proprietor, separating business and personal finances saves hours at tax time and makes you look professional. Free business checking accounts are available at most banks and online (Novo, Bluevine, Mercury).

Essential Tools (Free Tier First)

Invoicing	Wave (free), PayPal Invoicing, or Stripe. Start free, upgrade only when needed.
Contracts	Start with a simple 1-page agreement: scope, timeline, payment terms, revision policy. Use HelloSign or PandaDoc free tiers for e-signatures.
Portfolio	Notion (you already have this kit), Carrd ($19/year), or a simple Google Doc with links.
Communication	Email for async, Zoom/Google Meet for calls, Slack only if client requires it.
Project Management	Notion (included in this kit), Trello (free), or a simple Google Sheet.
Time Tracking	Toggl (free), Clockify (free), or manual in your Notion dashboard.

Sample Contract Template (Simplified)

Simple Service Agreement

```
SERVICE AGREEMENT
Between: [Your Name] (Service Provider) and
[Client Name] (Client)
Date: [Date]

1. SCOPE: [Describe exactly what you'll deliver]
2. TIMELINE: [Start date] to [end date or ongoing]
3. PAYMENT: [Rate/project fee], due [schedule]
4. REVISIONS: [Number] rounds included. Additional
   revisions at [rate].
5. CANCELLATION: [Notice period] written notice.

Signed: _______  Date: _______
Signed: _______  Date: _______
```

TIP: *This is a simplified template for getting started. For larger projects ($1,000+), consult a lawyer or use a service like Rocket Lawyer. Always have SOMETHING in writing -- even a clear email agreement is better than nothing.*

MODULE 5: Build Your Portfolio

The Portfolio Paradox

Clients want to see past work before they hire you. But you need to be hired to create past work. The solution: create spec work -- projects you do on your own, for imaginary or real brands, that demonstrate your skills. Every successful freelancer started this way.

3 Portfolio Pieces from Scratch

1. The 'Before and After' Case Study

Find a real business or website that could use improvement in your area. Redesign it, rewrite it, or improve it. Document the original (with respect), show your version, and explain your decisions. Example for a designer: 'I redesigned the homepage for a local coffee shop. Here's the original, here's my version, and here's why each change improves the user experience.'

2. The Process Documentation

Clients don't just buy the output -- they buy the confidence that you know what you're doing. Create a 1-page document showing your process: Discovery -> Strategy -> Execution -> Revision -> Delivery. Include screenshots of tools, a timeline, and communication touchpoints. This demonstrates professionalism even without client work.

3. The Personal Project

Do the thing for yourself. Write 5 blog posts. Design branding for a project. Build a simple website. Analyze a dataset. The key: treat it like a real client project with clear objectives, deadlines, and deliverables. Then write about what you learned and how you'd apply it for a client.

How to Present Your Portfolio

Don't just link to files. For each piece, create a simple 1-page summary: (1) The problem or goal. (2) Your approach. (3) The result or deliverable. (4) What you learned. Host everything in a Notion page (included in this kit), a free Carrd site, or a shared Google Drive folder. Keep it simple -- 3 strong pieces beat 10 mediocre ones.

TIP: *When a potential client asks for examples, don't send a generic portfolio link. Send the 1-2 pieces most relevant to THEIR project, with a brief note explaining why you chose them. 'I thought these might be relevant because you mentioned needing [specific thing].' This shows you're paying attention.*

MODULE 6: The 30-Day Launch Plan

How to Use This Plan

Each day has 1-3 specific actions. Complete them in order. Don't skip ahead. The plan builds momentum: Week 1 creates your foundation, Week 2 builds your proof, Week 3 puts you in front of clients, and Week 4 lands your first paying work. You can do this alongside a full-time job -- most days require 30-60 minutes.

WEEK 1: FOUNDATION

Day 1 Complete your skills audit (Module 1). List every skill you have. Rate each on proficiency 1-5 and enjoyment 1-5. Identify your top 3 overlap niches.

Day 2 Pick your niche. Run the 5 market demand signals on your top 3 options. Choose the one with the strongest demand x skill x enjoyment combination.

Day 3 Define your service offering. What exactly will you do? Write a 2-sentence description. Example: 'I help e-commerce brands write product descriptions that increase conversion rates.'

Day 4 Set your first rate using the formula in Module 3. Research market rates, pick your starting number. This takes 30 minutes -- don't spend all day on it.

Day 5 Open your business bank account. It's free and takes 15 minutes online. Also set up your invoicing and contract tools (Wave or similar).

Day 6 Write your LinkedIn headline and summary to reflect your new niche. Update your profile photo if needed. Connect with 10 people in your target industry.

Day 7 Rest and reflect. Review your niche choice and service offering. Does it feel right? Adjust if needed. Next week: portfolio building.

WEEK 2: PORTFOLIO

Day 8 Create Portfolio Piece #1: The 'Before & After' case study. Pick a real business, improve something, document the before and after with explanations.

Day 9 Create Portfolio Piece #2: The Process Documentation. Design your 1-page process map showing how you work from discovery to delivery.

Day 10 Create Portfolio Piece #3: The Personal Project. Do the actual work for yourself or an imaginary client. Ship something real.

Day 11 Polish all 3 pieces. Write a 1-paragraph summary for each: problem, approach, result, lessons learned.

Day 12 Set up your portfolio page in Notion, Carrd, or Google Drive. Upload all 3 pieces with their summaries. Add your contact info.

Day 13 Set up your Upwork profile with your new headline, portfolio pieces, and rate. Write 3 template proposals (customize per job).

Day 14 Rest and review. Look at your portfolio through a client's eyes. Would you hire you? Fill any gaps. Next week: outreach.

WEEK 3: OUTREACH

Day 15 Channel 1 Warm Network: Send 10 personal messages to friends, former colleagues, and acquaintances. Tell them exactly what you do and ask if they know anyone who needs that help.

Day 16 Channel 2 Upwork: Submit 5 personalized proposals. Use the template from Module 2. Focus on recently posted jobs (last 24 hours) -- your response is seen first.

Day 17 Channel 3 LinkedIn: Post your first piece of content about your niche. Something helpful, not salesy. An insight, lesson learned, or tip. Send 10 connection requests to potential clients with personalized notes.

Day 18 Channel 4 Communities: Join 3 online communities in your niche. Introduce yourself. Answer 3 questions helpfully. Do not pitch yet -- just be genuinely helpful.

Day 19 Channel 5 Cold Outreach: Identify 10 ideal clients. Send 5 personalized cold emails or LinkedIn messages. Reference something specific about their business.

Day 20 Follow up on all Week 3 outreach. Reply to any responses. Send follow-up messages to anyone who hasn't responded (Day 15 + Day 19 contacts). Submit 3 more Upwork proposals.

Day 21 Rest and assess. How many conversations did you start? What's working? Where are you getting responses? Double down on the best channel next week.

WEEK 4: FIRST CLIENT & SYSTEMS

Day 22 Submit proposals to your 3 best leads. If you have conversations going, propose specific work with clear scope and pricing. Use the project-based or retainer model from Module 3.

Day 23 Continue outreach at a sustainable pace. 2 Upwork proposals + 2 LinkedIn messages + 2 community interactions per day. This becomes your ongoing marketing rhythm.

Day 24 Systematize your onboarding. Create a 'New Client Welcome' template: a Notion page or Google Doc with your process, communication preferences, and next steps. This makes you look like a pro from Day 1.

Day 25 Refine based on feedback. If you're getting responses but not closing, ask for feedback. 'I appreciate you taking the time to chat. If there's anything about my proposal that didn't feel right, I'd welcome your honest feedback.'

Day 26 Celebrate every win. Got a reply? Win. Had a discovery call? Win. Sent a proposal? Win. Building a business rewards momentum -- track every small victory in your Notion dashboard.

Day 27 Set your Month 2 goals. How many clients do you want? What's your revenue target? What skills do you want to develop? Write them down and put them in your dashboard.

Day 28 First-client push: follow up on every outstanding proposal. Ask for a decision timeline. 'Do you have a sense of when you'd like to make a decision on this? I want to make sure I can allocate time for you.'

Day 29 Document your process. What worked? What didn't? What would you do differently? This becomes your playbook for Month 2. The faster you learn, the faster you grow.

Day 30 Reflect and plan. You did 30 days of focused, intentional work. Most people never do this. Whether or not you've landed a client yet, you have a real business foundation. Now: set your Month 2 plan and keep going.

Setting Up Your Notion Dashboard

Your Side Hustle Launch Kit includes a Notion dashboard to track your entire 30-day launch. Here's how it's structured and how to use each component.

Dashboard Overview

The main dashboard has four sections: (1) 30-Day Launch Tracker -- a checklist of every daily action from this workbook, with checkboxes and links to relevant templates. (2) Skills Audit Database -- a table where you log and rate all your skills. (3) Client Pipeline CRM -- track leads from first contact through proposal to signed client. (4) Resource Library -- links to every tool, template, and script mentioned in this kit.

30-Day Launch Tracker

Each day has a toggle block. Click to expand and see the day's actions. Check the box when complete. The tracker uses Notion's checkbox property -- you can filter to see what's done, what's in progress, and what's remaining. Green progress bar updates automatically as you check items off.

Skills Audit Database

A table with columns for Skill Name, Category, Proficiency (1-5), Enjoyment (1-5), and Score (formula: Proficiency x Enjoyment). Add every skill you have. Sort by Score descending -- your top skills surface automatically. Tag skills that match market demand with the 'In Demand' checkbox.

Client Pipeline CRM

A Kanban board with columns: Lead, Contacted, In Conversation, Proposal Sent, Negotiation, Won, Lost. Each card holds: client name, company, contact info, source (where you found them), project value, and notes. Move cards through the pipeline as you progress. Review weekly: what's stuck, what's moving, what's closing.

Resource Library

A simple table with links to every resource mentioned in this kit. Columns: Resource Name, Type (Tool, Template, Guide, Script), Category (Legal, Finance, Outreach, Portfolio, etc.), URL, and Notes. Add your own discoveries as you find them.

TIP: *Duplicate the dashboard as a template for each new client project. Notion lets you create template buttons -- set one up so you can spin up a new client workspace in one click.*

Build Your Freelance Business

Bundle Deal:	**Freelancer Launch Bundle -- All 4 for $39**	
Side Hustle Launch Kit	**$29**	Notion + PDF (this kit)
Freelancer Dashboard	**$19**	Notion workspace, 12 databases
Freelance Proposal Builder	**$9**	Google Sheets, win more clients
Digital File Org System	**$12**	Notion, organize everything
Client Manager CRM	**$15**	Notion CRM, 6 databases
Freelancer Finance Bundle	**$49**	3 spreadsheet templates
Freelancer Starter Pack	**$49**	Notion + Sheets bundle
AI Prompt Library	**$19**	200+ prompts (PDF + Notion)

Your side hustle starts today. Let's go.