

Marketplace Validation Workbook

Use this workbook before a marketplace or directory build becomes expensive. The goal is not to prove the idea is exciting. The goal is to prove the next build decision is worth funding.

How to Use This Workbook

Work through each worksheet with real interviews, real supply conversations, and real pricing tests. If a section is weak, use that as scope guidance instead of forcing a full custom build too early.

Validation Area	Question to Answer	Evidence Required	Decision
Problem	Is this painful enough to change behavior?	10+ buyer conversations with specific current problems	Proceed / narrow / stop
Supply	Can enough providers, listings, or vendors supply target?	20+ supply targets, outreach responses, quality filter	Prove / niche / manual concierge
Demand	Will buyers search, compare, request, or transact?	Search intent, landing page signals, interviews, pre-orders, waitlist	Proceed / waitlist / directory first
Trust	What has to be believed before users accept?	Verification needs, review model, guarantees, digital trust	Verify trust / managed trust
Revenue	Where does value move and who pays?	Pricing interviews, competitor model, unit economics	Lead test / subscription / commission / hybrid

Interview Notes

Person	Segment	Current workaround	Urgency 1-5	Would pay?	Next signal

Red Flags

Red Flag	What It Usually Means	Safer Next Move
Users say it is interesting but will not commit or may be low urgency	The problem may not be that urgent	Run manual concierge tests before build
Supply wants guaranteed demand or first priority	Confidence is high	Start with one niche or geography
Revenue depends on future volume only	Economics are unproven	Use a lead-gen or directory wedge first
Trust requires heavy verification or operational scope is larger than UI scope	Operational	Budget trust operations before polishing screens

Validation Scorecard

Dimension	0	1	2	3	Score
Buyer urgency	No pain	Mild interest	Active workaround	Budget or time committed	
Supply availability	Unknown	List exists	Outreach responses	Qualified supply committed	
Trust clarity	Unknown	Basic reviews	Known verification path	Trust operations scoped	
Revenue logic	No payer	Possible payer	Pricing tested	Model and margin drafted	
Launch wedge	Too broad	Possible niche	Specific segment	Specific segment + first channel	

Interpretation: 0-6 means validate manually. 7-11 means build a narrow wedge. 12-15 means scope the first platform release.