DIAGNOSTIC-FIRST GROWTH NETWORK

Growth Recon

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Research Toolkit

Learn the business through the customer's eyes, not the company's ego.

01 ICP Mapping

- [ ] Exported and segmented last 12 months of closed-won deal data
  Pull from CRM and payment data - not gut feeling. Group by revenue contribution, deal size, industry, company size, and use case.
- [ ] Identified top 3 revenue-contributing segments from payment/CRM data
  The segments that actually pay you may not match your pitch deck. Revenue data reveals the truth.
- [ ] Mapped all 6 dimensions for each segment (no empty cells)
  Demographics, problem, buying trigger, decision process, price sensitivity, objections. Empty cells = incomplete research.
- [ ] Validated buying triggers with 3+ customer interviews per segment
  Data shows who buys. Interviews reveal why they started looking and what almost stopped them.
- [ ] Documented decision process including who has veto power
  B2B deals die when you miss a stakeholder. Map every person involved, their concerns, and their influence.
- [ ] Identified objections and dealbreakers per segment
  Different segments have different fears. The enterprise buyer worries about security; the SMB worries about price.
- [ ] Compared ICP assumptions (pitch deck) vs. reality (data) - noted gaps
  The gap between who you think buys and who actually buys is where your marketing budget disappears.
- [ ] Prioritized segments by revenue potential x ease of acquisition
  Not all segments are worth equal effort. Focus resources where the math works best.

COMMON TRAP

Building ICPs from the sales team's gut feeling instead of payment data. Sales remembers big logos and painful deals - not the 200 mid-market companies that closed in 2 weeks with zero drama.

02 Customer Language Audit

- [ ] Pulled and categorized language from 50+ support tickets
  Support tickets capture how customers describe problems when they need help - unfiltered, emotional, real.
- [ ] Reviewed 20+ sales call transcripts for pre-education language
  Focus on what prospects say BEFORE your team 'corrects' their vocabulary. That's the language your market uses.
- [ ] Read 30+ reviews across G2, Capterra, TrustRadius (1-star and 5-star)
  Extremes reveal truth. 5-star reviews show what you do well. 1-star reviews show what you actually need to fix.
- [ ] Searched Reddit/communities for 10+ threads discussing the problem
  How people describe the problem to peers - when you're not in the room - is the language that drives search.
- [ ] Conducted 5+ churned customer interviews focusing on their language
  Why they left, in their words. Not your exit survey checkboxes - their actual explanation.
- [ ] Built language map with 20+ rows minimum
  Three columns: Company Term | Customer Term | Context. Every row is a gap between how you talk and how your market talks.
- [ ] Identified top 10 gaps between company terms and customer terms
  These gaps are where you're invisible - in search, in AI answers, and in every sales conversation.
- [ ] Scored gaps by search volume, buying intent, and current coverage
  Biggest gaps with highest intent = your content priorities. This replaces brainstorming as your editorial calendar source.
- [ ] Mapped high-priority gaps to existing pages/content (or flagged as missing)
  Content you already have may just need language alignment. Missing content gets added to the production queue.
- [ ] Shared language map with sales team - confirmed it matches what they hear
  Sales is in the field daily. If the language map doesn't match their experience, something's missing.

COMMON TRAP

Running a customer survey asking 'How would you describe our product?' Customers mirror your terminology when talking TO you. You need language from when they're talking ABOUT the problem to peers.

03 Data & Tracking Audit

- [ ] Inventoried all tracking tools and their purposes
  List every tool - GA4, Mixpanel, HubSpot, whatever. If nobody can produce this list in 30 minutes, tracking is already broken.
- [ ] Mapped every regularly reported metric to the decision it informs
  For each metric, ask: 'What decision does this metric inform?' If 'none' - it's noise.
- [ ] Identified metrics that inform no decision (candidates for removal)
  Fewer meaningful metrics beat a dashboard of vanity numbers. Remove what doesn't drive action.
- [ ] Verified GA4/analytics events match actual conversion points
  Events that track pageviews instead of conversions create false confidence in worthless data.
- [ ] Audited UTM parameter consistency across all active campaigns
  Ad-hoc UTMs created by whoever launches the campaign make attribution impossible.
- [ ] Checked CRM lead source accuracy - what percentage is generic?
  If 70% of leads show 'Website' - you can't do attribution. Fix the source data.
- [ ] Documented current attribution model and team's understanding of it
  Most teams use default last-click because nobody chose it and nobody questioned it. Know what you're using and why.
- [ ] Listed every recurring report and its recipients
  Reports nobody reads are reports that shouldn't exist. Trim the noise.
- [ ] Interviewed 3+ report recipients: 'What do you do with this data?'
  If the answer is 'look at it and move on' - the report isn't useful. Reports must drive decisions.
- [ ] Identified tracking gaps - what's NOT tracked that should be
  What matters that nobody is measuring? This is often more important than fixing what's broken.
- [ ] Flagged misconfigured tracking (duplicate events, broken goals, stale UTMs)
  Misconfigured tracking is worse than no tracking - it produces confident wrong answers.
- [ ] Documented 'before' benchmarks for key metrics
  Without a baseline, you can never prove impact. Document everything now, before you change anything.

> **COMMON TRAP**
> Assuming more tracking = better tracking. A company with 400 GA4 custom events and 12 dashboards isn't data-driven - they're data-drowning.

04 Adversarial Assessment

- [ ] Completed competitive threat assessment - documented defensible vs. copyable
  What can competitors replicate in 6 months? What can't they? Your strategy depends on knowing the difference.
- [ ] Identified all single-vendor and single-channel dependencies
  73% of signups from organic search? One Google update away from crisis. Map every concentration risk.
- [ ] Mapped regulatory/compliance exposure relevant to the business
  What's changing in your industry that could restrict operations? GDPR, AI regulation, industry-specific rules.
- [ ] Assessed reputation risks (Glassdoor, outage scenarios, PR)
  Check Glassdoor scores, plan for outage scenarios, identify PR vulnerabilities before they become crises.
- [ ] Evaluated market timing - growth trajectory, new entrant risk
  Is the market growing, maturing, or contracting? Where are you in that cycle? This shapes urgency.
- [ ] Scored all risks/opportunities on likelihood x impact matrix
  Not all risks are equal. A high-likelihood, high-impact risk needs immediate attention.
- [ ] Identified top 5 risks by combined score
  Focus on the vital few. You can't mitigate everything - prioritize what can actually hurt you.
- [ ] Written mitigation plan for each top-5 risk
  Each plan: what you'd do, when you'd trigger it, estimated cost, who owns it. Ready to execute, not theoretical.
- [ ] Identified at least 2 opportunities from adversarial analysis
  Every risk has a flip side. A competitor's weakness is your opportunity. A market shift is a land grab.
- [ ] Documented risk assessment with quarterly review cadence
  Risks change. A one-time assessment decays fast. Schedule regular reviews to catch new threats early.

COMMON TRAP

Skipping this because 'we're too small for anyone to care.' Small companies have the MOST concentrated risk - fewer channels, fewer customers, fewer fallbacks.