A MONTHLY PRACTICE FOR BETTER DECISIONS

Monthly Business Review

Read the numbers.

Choose the next move.

REVIEW WITH INTENTION

A guided month-end workbook to compare revenue, profit, product performance, marketing and goals - then turn what you learn into a focused plan.



01 **REVIEW**
What the numbers reveal

02 **REFLECT**
What worked and what changed

03 **PLAN**
Three actions for next month

BUSINESS / SHOP

REVIEW MONTH

WELCOME / MAKE THIS A HABIT



Review with clarity.

Decide with intention.

Set aside a regular moment to understand what happened in your business. You do not need perfect data to start; work from reliable records and mark missing figures N/A.

THE MONTH-END FLOW

01 **Gather**
Sales, payouts, costs, product results and marketing records.

02 **Compare**
This month, last month, and goals based on your own business.

03 **Reflect**
Identify changes, useful wins, and possible explanations.

04 **Act**
Choose up to three measurable actions for next month.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- [ ] Choose one currency and one consistent reporting period.
- [ ] Use your actual channel definitions; N/A is better than a guess.

> A REVIEW IS AN EXERCISE, NOT A SCORE
> The examples are fictional and for learning. Your results may be positive, negative or unavailable; record what the data supports.

YOUR MAP

What is inside.

Start with your monthly numbers, then work through the drivers and finish with a useful next-month plan.

THE MONTHLY REVIEW

04	Getting started	Cedar & Sage Co. illustrative example
05	Monthly snapshot	Six key performance signals
06	Revenue review	Compare sales by channel
07	Expense review	Understand costs and fees
08	Profit review	Connect sales, costs and margin
09	Traffic & marketing	Review audience and ad measures
10	Product performance	Compare products on one cost basis
11	Wins & achievements	Record what worked
12	Challenges & lessons	Understand what changed
13	Goal progress	Review intentions and results
14	Next month action plan	Three measurable priorities
15	12-month tracker	One year of monthly results
16	Quarterly reflection	Patterns across three months
17	Review commitment	A routine to repeat

PRINT-USE TIP

Print more copies of any tracker or review worksheet whenever you need additional rows.

CEDAR & SAGE CO. / ILLUSTRATIVE CASE

One example. A clearer story.

Cedar & Sage Co. is an invented handmade and home-goods business selling through Etsy, Shopify and Amazon FBA. Its figures are a learning example, not industry benchmarks.

THIS MONTH IN FOUR NUMBERS

REVENUE	NET PROFIT	NET MARGIN	ORDERS
$7,800	$2,150	27.6%	256
Up 5.4%	Up $270	Up 2.2 pts	Up 14

WHERE THE REVENUE CAME FROM

CHANNEL	THIS MONTH	LAST MONTH
Etsy	$3,200	$2,950
Shopify	$2,750	$2,400
Amazon FBA	$1,850	$2,050
TOTAL	**$7,800**	**$7,400**

FOLLOW THE SAME DEFINITIONS

Expense detail totals $5,650 on page 7; $7,800 less $5,650 gives $2,150 in net profit. All figures are illustrative.

NOTE These figures do not establish a general healthy margin or advertising target.

01 / MONTHLY SNAPSHOT

What changed *this month?*



Compare the latest month with your last review and the goals you chose. Use consistent metric definitions; mark unavailable figures N/A rather than estimating.

REVIEW MONTH / YEAR	CURRENCY / CHANNEL

YOUR SIX MONTHLY SIGNALS

Use your own goals

METRIC	THIS MONTH	LAST MONTH	GOAL	STATUS
Revenue				
Net profit				
Net margin				
Orders				
Conversion rate				
Email subscribers				

READ YOUR OWN TREND

Status compares actual results with your goal; it is not a health score or a universal benchmark.

CEDAR & SAGE CO. / ILLUSTRATIVE MONTH

REVENUE	$7,800	NET PROFIT	$2,150	NET MARGIN	27.6%

02 / REVENUE BY CHANNEL

Where did sales move?

Record net sales by channel after refunds, excluding sales tax collected for remittance. Use the same basis each month; payout deposits are not the same as sales.

CEDAR & SAGE / ILLUSTRATIVE CHANNEL REVIEW

CHANNEL	THIS MONTH	LAST MONTH	CHANGE
Etsy	$3,200	$2,950	+8.5%
Shopify	$2,750	$2,400	+14.6%
Amazon FBA	$1,850	$2,050	-9.8%
TOTAL	**$7,800**	**$7,400**	**+5.4%**

YOUR CHANNELS

CHANNEL	THIS MONTH	LAST MONTH	CHANGE

WHICH CHANNEL NEEDS ATTENTION?

COMPARE LIKE WITH LIKE

% change = (current - prior) / prior x 100, when prior is nonzero. Record N/A if the comparison is not meaningful.

03 / EXPENSE REVIEW

Follow the cost changes.

Review each expense category and count each cost once. Compare expenses as amounts and as a share of sales, using the same basis every month.

CEDAR & SAGE / EXPENSES THIS MONTH

CATEGORY	AMOUNT	SHARE OF $7,800 SALES
Materials / COGS	$2,730	35.0%
Platform & transaction fees	$785	10.1%
Advertising & marketing	$940	12.1%
Shipping & packaging	$720	9.2%
Software & subscriptions	$185	2.4%
Other / supplies	$290	3.7%
TOTAL EXPENSES	**$5,650**	**72.4%**

YOUR EXPENSE CHECK

COST CATEGORY	AMOUNT	SHARE OF SALES

ONE QUESTION Which cost rose without a clear return?

04 / PROFIT REVIEW

What did the business keep?

Connect sales to the cost records from page 7. Use a consistent definition of gross and net profit to avoid counting shipping, fees or refunds twice.

NET PROFIT

Revenue - all recorded business expenses

CEDAR & SAGE CO. / THIS MONTH AND LAST

LINE ITEM	THIS MONTH	LAST MONTH
Revenue	$7,800	$7,400
Direct product costs	$2,730	$2,640
GROSS PROFIT	$5,070	$4,760
Other business expenses	$2,920	$2,880
NET PROFIT	$2,150	$1,880
NET MARGIN	27.6%	25.4%

YOUR NET PROFIT THIS MONTH

REVENUE _____ EXPENSES _____ NET PROFIT _____

REFLECTION

Profit rose $270; margin rose 2.2 percentage points in the example. Does your profit change reflect sales, pricing, costs or product mix?

05 / TRAFFIC & MARKETING

Find the useful signals.

Track the audience and advertising measures you actually have. Label each metric clearly; data from different channels may have different definitions.

ILLUSTRATIVE MARKETING OBSERVATIONS

SIGNAL	THIS MONTH	LAST MONTH
Website / tracked visitors	8,400	8,050
Reported conversion rate	3.0%	2.8%
Email subscribers	1,450	1,270
Social followers	6,800	6,260
Advertising spend	$940	$880
Ad return on spend	2.6x	2.4x

YOUR MONTHLY MARKETING SIGNALS

ACTIVITY / CHANNEL

MEASURE OR RESULT

WHAT CHANGED?

WHAT WILL I TEST?

INTERPRETATION MATTERS

2.6x ROAS alone does not show profit; compare it with your costs. A change from 2.8% to 3.0% is +0.2 percentage points.

06 / PRODUCT PERFORMANCE

Look beyond the bestseller.

Compare products using the same basis of costs. Allocated profit below is illustrative; use a consistent, documented method for shared overhead and returns.

CEDAR & SAGE / ILLUSTRATIVE PRODUCT RESULTS

PRODUCT	UNITS	SALES	PROFIT*	MARGIN
Soy candle	95	$2,470	$665	26.9%
Ceramic mug	70	$1,540	$385	25.0%
Wall art print (POD)	30	$1,020	$330	32.4%
Linen tea towel	45	$810	$190	23.5%
All other products	-	$1,960	$580	29.6%

*Product profit sums to $2,150 only when shared costs are allocated consistently. Do not deduct those costs a second time in the business profit statement.

YOUR PRODUCTS / SAME MEASUREMENT BASIS

PRODUCT	UNITS	REVENUE	PROFIT	MARGIN

WHAT DESERVES THE NEXT TEST?

07 / REFLECT ON WHAT WORKED

Notice what worked.



Keep the useful lessons.

A monthly review should record progress as well as problems. Name which actions coincided with better results so you can test whether they are repeatable.

CEDAR & SAGE CO. / ILLUSTRATIVE WINS

Shopify sales rose 14.6%, net profit reached $2,150, and the email list gained 180 subscribers. The bundle launch and sign-up offer are possible factors to investigate.

THREE WINS FROM YOUR OWN MONTH

01

WHAT WENT WELL?

EVIDENCE OR ACTION BEHIND IT

02

WHAT WENT WELL?

EVIDENCE OR ACTION BEHIND IT

03

WHAT WENT WELL?

EVIDENCE OR ACTION BEHIND IT

ONE THING WORTH REPEATING

Which action will you intentionally try again next month, and what will you measure?

08 / REFLECT & INVESTIGATE

Understand the friction.

Name one challenge without assigning a cause too quickly. Separate what you observed from a possible explanation, then decide what evidence to check.

CEDAR & SAGE / ONE ISSUE TO INVESTIGATE

Amazon FBA sales declined 9.8% from $2,050 to $1,850. Check changes in listing visibility, stock, competition and ads before choosing a correction.

01 / WHAT HAPPENED?

Record the observable change and the time period.

02 / WHAT MIGHT EXPLAIN IT?

Write one or two hypotheses, not a conclusion.

03 / WHAT WILL YOU CHECK OR TEST?

Name the evidence you need and one next action.

REVISIT THIS ISSUE ON _____ At your next review

09 / GOAL PROGRESS

Check the promise against reality.

Use the goals you actually set, and record the results without relabeling an estimate as an achieved outcome.

CEDAR & SAGE / ILLUSTRATIVE MONTH

GOAL	TARGET	ACTUAL	RESULT
Grow revenue	$8,000	$7,800	Below goal
Net margin target	25%	27.6%	Exceeded
Email subscribers	1,500	1,450	Below goal
Launch gift bundle	Complete	Complete	Completed

GOALS YOU SET / RECORD WHAT HAPPENED

GOAL	TARGET	ACTUAL	RESULT

WHICH GOAL NEEDS A DIFFERENT PLAN?

A result is evidence to use, not a verdict on the person doing the work.

10 / NEXT MONTH ACTION PLAN

Turn reflection *into a plan.*



Choose three priorities based on what changed this month. Record a specific action, a measure of success, and when you will check the result.

CEDAR & SAGE CO. / SOURCE-BASED ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE

Amazon FBA sales declined from $2,050 to $1,850. Review listing issues and pricing each week; use a $2,000 next-month sales target as a test, not a promised result.

THREE PRIORITIES WORTH FOLLOWING THROUGH

01

PRIORITY / CLEAR ACTION

BY WHEN

HOW I WILL MEASURE SUCCESS

02

PRIORITY / CLEAR ACTION

BY WHEN

HOW I WILL MEASURE SUCCESS

03

PRIORITY / CLEAR ACTION

BY WHEN

HOW I WILL MEASURE SUCCESS

NEXT REVIEW DATE

Check what happened next.

YEAR-ROUND / TRACK THE WHOLE STORY

One year. Twelve useful reviews.

Carry consistent monthly measures into one place. Compare like with like and make sure the annual profit total reflects all twelve months.

YEAR _____

CURRENCY _____

YOUR MAIN CHANNEL _____

MONTH	REVENUE	EXPENSES	NET PROFIT	NET %	ORDERS
Jan					
Feb					
Mar					
Apr					
May					
Jun					
Jul					
Aug					
Sep					
Oct					
Nov					
Dec					
ANNUAL TOTAL					

ANNUAL REFLECTION

Calculate annual net margin from annual profit / annual sales, not the average of monthly margin percentages.

QUARTERLY / REFLECT ON THE PATTERN

Notice the longer trend.



Use three completed monthly reviews to separate short-term fluctuations from changes worth addressing.

QUARTER / YEAR

MOST IMPORTANT METRIC

WHAT IMPROVED ACROSS THE THREE MONTHS?

Point to the numbers, channels or products that support your answer.

WHAT REPEATEDLY UNDERPERFORMED?

Name the pattern rather than one unusual week.

WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT YOUR SELLING MODEL?

Consider revenue mix, costs, customer needs and workload.

WHAT IS YOUR ONE FOCUS NEXT QUARTER?

Choose a measurable direction and a review date.

NEXT QUARTER REVIEW DATE

KEEP THE PRACTICE

Make the next review easy.

Choose a recurring date and keep the records you need close at hand. An imperfect review supported by real numbers is more useful than a perfect review postponed.

MY RECURRING REVIEW DAY

WHERE I KEEP MY REPORTS

A REPEATABLE MONTHLY ROUTINE

- [ ] Collect sales, fees, costs and performance reports.
- [ ] Complete the snapshot, profit and product reviews.
- [ ] Record wins, challenges, and the evidence behind them.
- [ ] Choose three actions with measurable results.
- [ ] Put next month's review date on the calendar.

ONE SMALL COMMITMENT I WILL KEEP

RELATED SIMPLELIFECALC TOOLS

Cash Flow Calculator

Net Profit Calculator