

# Validation Checklist

I've decided to share this tool early on in this journey because it's a crucial step in venturing out on a new project as a bootstrapper / Indie Hacker. **Probably the most important step in building your business.**

By leveraging a Validation Checklist in line with your goals, you'll save weeks, months or maybe even years of wasted time. It also helps you prioritise between all of the ideas you might have.

If you haven't watched it already, you'll want to watch the explainer video. It's important because I take you through all of the questions I ask myself before kicking off a project AND I share why they are important. You can watch it here:

<http://mrgrillet.com/journal/my-validation-checklist/>

Understanding the checklist and eventually creating one of your own will help you answer questions like:

- Why do some projects do better than others?
- What should I build next?
- Is my idea any good?
- Will people care about my idea?

If you have a project already, this could help you answer questions like:

- Why haven't I made any sales?
- What should I build next?
- Where can I find customers?
- Is there a market for my product?
- Do people care about my product?

Honestly, investing this time up front, could save you months of frustration and get you on track for building your ideal business. Obviously, you'll want to customise this for your own use, but copy and pasting most of the points I have and understanding the implications of them will be a game changer for you.

For more content like this, visit my blog [mrgrillet.com](http://mrgrillet.com), [checkout my YouTube channel](#) and follow [me on twitter](#).

# The Checklist

## Identifying Demand

- **Is there a real problem people want to solve?**
  - There are more than 10,000 searches a monthly for the solution as described
  - I have proof people are paying for a similar solution already
  - The client already tries solves this problem with an existing solution
  - I have proof that there is a way to improve this solution for the client
- **Do I 'get' the persona?**
  - This will help *JOB TITLE* with *JOB FUNCTION*
  - I have found a group of more than 10k online with the personas in it
- **If new persona:**
  - The persona will typically spend more than 3 hours a day at their computer
  - I have documented a belief, interest, fear, passion or state makes them all similar?
  - I have documented:
    - What do they hope for?
      - PERSONA 1 with MOST PRESSING PROBLEM FOR PERSONA SOLUTION
      - PERSONA 2 with MOST PRESSING PROBLEM FOR PERSONA SOLUTION
      - PERSONA 3 with MOST PRESSING PROBLEM FOR PERSONA SOLUTION
    - What do they love?
      - PERSONA 1, favourite part of their job
      - PERSONA 2, favourite part of their job
      - PERSONA 3, favourite part of their job
    - What do they have?
      - PERSONA 1, PLATFORM X, Followers > Y...
    - What do they want to avoid?
      - PERSONA 1
      -
    - I have documented 3 people asking for or proof that they bought solutions
    - I have documented what people LIKE about the competitors product
    - I have documented people DISLIKE about the competitors product
- **Can I validate my ability to tap into the demand for this solution?**
  - Speak to PERSON 1 NAME
  - Speak to PERSON 2 NAME
  - Speak to PERSON 3 NAME
- ...so I know there is a real problem worth solving.

## Fulfilling Demand

- **Can I build it?**
  - It is a software solution that can be delivered a SaaS business model
    - Yes, pay unlock premium features
  - I can build a prototype for this alone or with minimal help
    - Yes, should mainly be a CRUD application & stripe
    - Done
- **Is it possible to quickly communicate the value?**
  - It can be explained in 1 page website
  - It will be possible to experience the value within 5mins of visiting the website

- Will create video
    - Really quick signup process
  - It will be possible to do a free trial
- **Is this quick to validate?**
  - It will be less than a month of work to build a prototype
  - It will be less than a year of work to build a good working model
- **Can it support a lifestyle I want?**
  - I will be able to automate this business
  - It will be able to make sales while I sleep
  - It will be able to run for a 2 week period with no action needed
  - It would make sense to get the the point where I login once a month only

## Ensuring a Profit

- **Can it be highly profitable?**
  - I can still make £100,000 a year if I only sell to 1 in every 260 people
  - Payments are made upfront so I am not left out of pocket
  - I can charge monthly for this service
- **Will it be affordable to acquire customers?**
  - You want to be targeting an acquisition cost of no more than 30% of the LTV
  - If it costs you \$200 a sale, is it sustainable?
  - If it costs you \$4 a lead, is it sustainable?
- **Does the client have the willingness and the ability to pay?**
  - This is a product that will be sold to businesses
  - I can charge based on the value it provides (revenue uplift, cost savings)
  - Based on cost savings or revenue it would make sense to charge more than \$100 pm
  - This product will be a nominal expense for this type of business
  - The customer already has a budget for this type of thing

## Sustainability

- **Can this project sustain me for more than 3 years?**
  - I have an unfair advantage
    - Advantage 1
    - Advantage 2
  - It's platform agnostic (so X can't change the rules overnight)
  - I can charge monthly for this service
  - Users will need to sign in at least weekly
    - Reason 1
    - Reason 2
  - The more users use it, the more they get invested in it
  - I have proof the market is growing
    - Example 1
    - Example 2
  - I am adding value others have not achieved yet
    - Example 1
    - Example 2
    - Example 3