

# Course: The Automated Empire: Scale to 6-Figures on Autopilot

## Lesson 12: How to Test, Debug, & Maintain Your Empire

### 1. Core Concept & Learning Objective

**Core Concept (149 words):** Your empire is built. But this is not "set it and forget it." It is "set it and *monitor* it." Your automations *will* break. An app will update its API, a field name will change, a connection will expire. A "broken" automation is a silent killer, losing leads and clients without you even knowing. This final lesson is your "defense system." It teaches you "automation hygiene": how to properly test *before* you launch, how to debug (using the "Run History" to find the *one* broken step), and how to document (so you can fix it 6 months from now). This is how you ensure your empire runs for *years*, not just weeks.

**Learning Objective:** By the end of this lesson, you will be able to **utilize** the "Run History" log to find and debug automation errors, **develop** a monthly "Automation Audit" checklist, and **create** a simple "SOP" (Standard Operating Procedure) for one of your core automations, ensuring its long-term health.

### 2. Interactive Content Activities

#### Activity 1: Case Study: "The 'Silent Failure'"

- **Type:** Case Study Analysis
- **Time:** 15 minutes
- **Instructions:**
  1. Read the scenario: "Founder 'Kim's' 'Lead Funnel' (Lesson 5) has been working great. But 3 days ago, her Form tool (Tally) pushed a "security update." This *broke* the connection to Zapier, and she didn't get a notification. Her form *still works* (it collects emails), but the *automation* is silently failing. 50 new leads have signed up and gotten... nothing. No

welcome email. No PDF. She only finds out a week later when one complains."

2. In the text box, answer: "What is a 'Silent Failure'? What *one* 5-minute *daily* habit would have caught this on Day 1?"
- **Expected Outcome:** A visceral, terrifying understanding of "Silent Failures" and the absolute necessity of a "Run History" check.

### Activity 2: Tool Exploration: "The 'Run History' (Your #1 Debugging Tool)"

- **Type:** Tool Exploration
- **Time:** 20 minutes
- **Instructions:**
  1. Log in to Zapier or Make.
  2. Find the "History," "Run History," or "Task History" tab (this is the *main* log for your *whole account*).
  3. Look at the list of all your automation runs. You'll see "Success," "Failed," "Held," etc.
  4. Click on any "Success" run. Click "Data In" and "Data Out" to see the *exact data* that went through each step.
  5. Now, find a "Failed" run (if you have one). Click on it. It will tell you *which step* failed and *why*.
- **Expected Outcome:** This is the *most important* screen in your automation tool. You now know how to "x-ray" your automations to see *exactly* what's happening.

### Activity 3: Creative Development: "My First 'SOP'"

- **Type:** Creative Development
- **Time:** 20 minutes
- **Instructions:**
  1. An "SOP" (Standard Operating Procedure) is a simple "readme" file for your automation.

2. Open a new text doc. Pick *one* automation you've built (e.g., your "Lead Funnel").
3. Write a 1-page "SOP" using this template:
  - **Purpose:** (e.g., "Sends the PDF guide to new leads.")
  - **Apps Involved:** (e.g., "Tally, Zapier, ConvertKit.")
  - **Trigger:** (e.g., "New 'Tally' form submission.")
  - **Actions:** (e.g., "1. Adds 'Tag: New-Lead' in ConvertKit. 2. ConvertKit auto-sends welcome email.")
  - **Maintainer:** (e.g., "Me. Check Run History weekly.")
- **Expected Outcome:** A simple, clear "readme" file for your automation. This is the "documentation" that will save you 6 months from now when you've forgotten how it works.

#### Activity 4: "My 'Automation Audit' Checklist" (Peer Collaboration)

- **Type:** Peer Collaboration / Discussion
- **Time:** 10 minutes
- **Instructions:**
  1. Go to the community discussion board.
  2. **Post:** "My 3-Step 'Monthly Automation Audit':"
  3. *Example:* "1. Check my 'Run History' for all 'Failed' runs. 2. Re-connect any 'expired' app connections. 3. Test my 'Lead Funnel' form myself to make sure it's still working."
  4. Reply to one other student's list and suggest *one more* item for their checklist.
- **Expected Outcome:** A simple, actionable checklist for the assignment.

### 3. Assignment & Project Milestone

**Assignment:** My "Automation SOPs" & Maintenance Hub (Component 12 of Final Project)

- **Estimated Time:** 60 minutes

- **Deliverable:** A public "share" link to a *new page* in your Operations Hub.
- **Description:** This is the "User Manual" for your empire. You will create a new page in your Ops Hub that acts as your "SOP Library," storing your maintenance checklists and your "readme" files for your automations.
- **Step-by-Step Instructions:**
  1. **In your Operations Hub:** Create a new, blank page. Title it "My Automation SOPs & Maintenance."
  2. **Section 1: "Monthly Maintenance Checklist":**
    - Add a "To-Do" list.
    - Add the items from your "Audit Checklist" (Activity 4). (e.g., `[] Check Zapier 'Run History' for errors.`, `[] Test all 'live' forms.`, `[] Check all app 'connections' are active.`).
  3. **Section 2: "Automation SOPs":**
    - On this page, create a sub-page (or just a new text block).
    - Title it "SOP: Lead Funnel Machine."
    - Paste in the "SOP" you wrote in Activity 3.
  4. Make it clean, organized, and easy to read.
  5. Submit the public "share" link. This is Component 12, the final component!
- **Connection to Final Project:** This is the "Maintenance" module. Your "Automated Empire Playbook" (the Final Project) is now *complete*. It contains your "why" (your hit list), your "blueprints" (your maps), your "machines" (your automations), your "cockpit" (your dashboard), and now your "user manual" (your SOPs).
- **Evaluation Criteria:**
  - **Excellent:** The link opens a *single page* that clearly contains *both* the "Monthly Maintenance Checklist" and at least *one* complete SOP.
  - **Proficient:** The link opens a page with *either* the checklist *or* the SOP, but not both.

- **Needs Improvement:** The link is not a new "SOP" page, or the page is blank.

#### 4. End-of-Lesson Assessment

(Multiple Choice 1) What is a "Silent Failure" (from the case study)?

- A. An automation that sends you a "Failed" email.
- B. An automation that *breaks* (e.g., an app connection expires) but doesn't *notify* you, so leads/tasks get lost.
- C. A "Filter" that stops an automation from running.
- D. An automation that runs successfully but too slowly. (Answer: B)

(Multiple Choice 2) What is the "Run History" (from Activity 2)?

- A. A log of your "To-Do" list.
- B. A "cockpit" dashboard of your KPIs.
- C. The *most important* debugging tool, which shows a "log" of every automation run ("Success" or "Failed") and the data that went through.
- D. A "Standard Operating Procedure" (SOP). (Answer: C)

(Multiple Choice 3) What is the *primary* purpose of an "SOP" (Standard Operating Procedure) for an automation?

- A. To make the automation seem more complicated to clients.
- B. To "document" the automation (its purpose, apps, and logic) so you or a team member can easily understand and fix it later.
- C. It's the "Filter" logic that tells the automation what to do.
- D. It's the "Trigger" step. (Answer: B)

(Multiple Choice 4) Why is "Set it and Forget it" a dangerous mindset for automation?

- A. Because you will forget what you automated.
- B. Because "Silent Failures" are inevitable (apps update, connections break), so you must "Set it and *Monitor* it."
- C. Because it's better to do tasks manually.

- D. Because your automations will cost too much money. (*Answer: B*)

**(Short Answer 1)** What is the *one* 5-minute daily habit that would have saved "Founder Kim" in the "Silent Failure" case study?

- (*Example Answer: A 5-minute check of her "Run History" in Zapier/Make. She would have seen all the "Failed" runs and known immediately that it was broken.*)

**(Short Answer 2)** What two "Apps" are involved in the SOP you wrote for Activity 3?

- (*Example Answer: My SOP was for the "Blog-to-Social" machine. The apps are 1. My Blog's "RSS Feed," 2. "Zapier," and 3. "Twitter".*)

**(Scenario-Based 1)** Your "Payment-to-Welcome" automation (Lesson 6) suddenly fails. A client paid, but nothing happened. You open the "Run History" and see the "Failed" run.

1. What is the *first* thing you should do *for the client*?