

PESTLE Analysis: Singapore Private Swim Coaching Industry (2026)

1. POLITICAL

Factor	Impact
SportSG/ActiveSG Regulations	Stricter enforcement of lane usage, coaching permits, and crowd control at public pools. Coaches require registration (NROC) to operate legitimately.
Condo Management Rules	Private estates have their own facility usage policies – some allow external coaches, others restrict to residents only.
Net Effect	The operating environment is increasingly <i>regulated</i> but not prohibitive. Compliance (NROC certification) is a baseline requirement, not a differentiator.

2. ECONOMIC

Factor	Impact
Inflation / Cost of Living	Household budgets are tightening for middle-income families. Discretionary spending on enrichment (including swim lessons) is under pressure.
K-Shaped Recovery	Bifurcation: lower-income households cutting back; higher-income households relatively insulated.
Pricing Sensitivity	Monthly subscription models (\$300-400/mo) are vulnerable to churn during inflationary periods.
Net Effect	Demand is <i>price-elastic</i> for the mass market. Coaches relying on recurring monthly fees face retention risk.

3. SOCIAL

Factor	Impact
"Kiasu" Parent Culture	Strong demand for child enrichment – swimming is seen as a life skill AND competitive advantage.
Safety Consciousness	Post-COVID, parents are more aware of water safety and drowning statistics (heightened by occasional news coverage).
Time Poverty	Dual-income families have limited availability – convenience (location, scheduling flexibility) matters.
Adult Learners	Growing (but underserved) segment: adults who never learned to swim, or want to overcome fear/improve technique.
Net Effect	Demand exists across segments. The <i>pain points</i> differ: parents want safety + speed; adults want privacy + patience.

4. TECHNOLOGICAL

Factor	Impact
Digital Booking Expectations	Consumers are conditioned by Grab/Klook/etc. – Frictionless booking is a baseline expectation, not a luxury.
Video Analysis Tools	Coaching can be augmented with poolside iPad recording, slow-mo playback, and AI-assisted stroke analysis (emerging).

Social Media Marketing Factor	TikTok/Instagram are primary discovery channels for service-based businesses. Organic reach is powerful but algorithm-dependent.
Net Effect	Tech-savviness is a <i>differentiator</i> today, but will become <i>table stakes</i> within 2-3 years.

5. LEGAL

Factor	Impact
Liability / Insurance	Coaches are exposed to liability if accidents occur. Professional indemnity insurance is advisable but not universally adopted.
NROC Registration	The National Registry of Coaches mandates certification for credibility. Non-NROC coaches operate in a grey zone.
Net Effect	Regulatory compliance is low-cost but critical for trust-building. Operating without credentials is a reputational risk.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL

Factor	Impact
Weather Disruptions	Tropical storms disrupt outdoor pool sessions. Cancellation policies are a friction point with clients.
Venue Quality	Public pools: crowded, less predictable hygiene. Private pools: controlled but access-dependent.
Net Effect	Weather risk is inherent. How coaches <i>absorb</i> or <i>manage</i> this risk affects customer experience.

Summary: The Neutral Audit

Factor	Key Takeaway
Political	Regulated, compliance-based. NROC is the baseline.
Economic	Price-sensitive middle market. Inflation pressure on recurring fees.
Social	Strong demand. Pain points differ by segment (parents vs. adults).
Technological	Digital adoption is a competitive advantage now; it will be mandatory soon.
Legal	Liability exposure exists. Credentials build trust.
Environmental	Weather risk is real. Policies matter.

Porter's Five Forces: Singapore Private Swim Coaching Industry (2026)

1. Threat of New Entrants – HIGH

Factor	Analysis
Barrier to Entry	Very low. Anyone with a basic life-saving cert (Bronze Medallion / Life Saving 1-2-3) can start coaching. No capital investment required – coaches use existing public/condo pools.
Capital Requirements	Minimal. No storefront, no inventory. Just swimwear and transport.

Regulation Factor	NROC registration exists, but enforcement is soft. Non-registered coaches still operate.
Brand Loyalty	Weak in the mass market. Parents switch coaches easily if the price or scheduling is better.
Net Effect	Constant influx of part-timers, students, and gig workers entering the market. Price pressure is real.

2. Bargaining Power of Buyers (Customers) – MODERATE to HIGH

Factor	Analysis
Switching Costs	Near-zero. Parents can change coaches between terms with no penalty.
Price Transparency	High. Parents compare rates in WhatsApp groups, Carousell listings, and forums.
Information Access	Parents research via Google reviews, TikTok, and word-of-mouth – coaches are scrutinised before first contact.
Negotiation Culture	Common. Parents negotiate rates, ask for sibling discounts, or haggle on makeup lessons.
Net Effect	In the mass market, buyers have leverage. Coaches compete on price/availability. Premium positioning (if achieved) can flip this dynamic.

3. Bargaining Power of Suppliers – MODERATE

Factor	Analysis
Key "Suppliers"	Public pools (ActiveSG/SportSG) and private venues (condos, clubs).
Public Pool Dependency	Coaches depend on pool access. SportSG controls lane allocation, entry fees, and can ban coaches for rule violations.
Private Venue Access	Condo pools require resident sponsorship. Access is relationship-dependent, not market-bought.
Net Effect	Coaches don't control their "factory floor." Venue restrictions can disrupt operations instantly.

4. Threat of Substitutes – MODERATE

Factor	Analysis
DIY Teaching	"Dad teaches the kid" is common. Works for basic water confidence; fails for technique.
Group Swim Schools	Larger academies (Happy Fish, SwimRay) offer structured programs at scale. Compete on curriculum + convenience.
YouTube / Online Tutorials	Free content exists but can't replace in-water instruction. Low threat for actual skill acquisition.
No-Swimming Option	Some families deprioritise swimming altogether (especially if no pool access).
Net Effect	Substitutes exist, but don't fully replace 1-on-1 coaching. The threat is for <i>initial learning</i> , not <i>skill development</i> .

5. Competitive Rivalry – HIGH

Factor	Analysis
Number of Competitors	Hundreds of freelance coaches in Singapore. Low differentiation in the mass market.

Factor	Analysis
Product Homogeneity	Most coaches sell "hourly lessons." Hard to distinguish Coach A from Coach B on service alone.
Exit Barriers	Low. Coaches can stop operating anytime (no sunk costs), so struggling coaches linger, adding noise to the market.
Geographic Clustering	East Side (Bedok, Tampines, Pasir Ris) has high coach density due to condo concentration.
Net Effect	Intense price-based competition. Differentiation is the only escape from the "race to the bottom."

Summary: The Neutral Audit

Force	Threat Level	Key Insight
New Entrants	✗ HIGH	Almost anyone can start. No moat by default.
Buyer Power	✗ MOD-HIGH	Parents have options and know it. Price is visible.
Supplier Power	✗ MODERATE	Venue access is a bottleneck. Coaches don't own infrastructure.
Substitutes	✗ MODERATE	DIY and group schools exist, but don't fully replace private coaching.
Rivalry	✗ HIGH	Crowded, undifferentiated market. Competing on price is the default.

The Structural Reality

The industry is a fragmented, low-barrier, price-competitive market – classic "Red Ocean" conditions.
Profitability is possible, but it requires either:

1. Volume (teach many students at commodity rates) – hits time constraints
2. Differentiation (escape price competition via brand, niche, or offer structure) – requires investment

Coach Derrick Lim – Business Audit (Current State)

1. Business Model Canvas (BMC)

Key Partners		Key Activities		Value Propositions	
• ActiveSG / Public Pools (venue access)		• 1-on-1 & small group coaching		For Parents: Child water safety + confidence	
• Condo residents (private pool access)		• Lead handling via WhatsApp		For Adults: Learn to swim without judgment	
• NROC / SportSG (certification body)		• Content creation (TikTok)		• Certified, experienced coach (ex-National swimmer)	
Key Resources		Customer Relationships		Customer Segments	
• Coach Derrick (the talent)		• High-touch, personal WhatsApp		• Parents with children (primary)	
• TikTok following (31.3K)		• Manual booking & payment		• Adult learners (secondary)	
• 5.0★ Google Reviews		• Word-of-mouth referrals		• Geographic: East Singapore (Bedok, Tampines)	
Channels					
• TikTok (organic)					

discovery) Channels

- Google Maps (local SEO)

- Word-of-mouth / referrals

Cost Structure	Revenue Streams
• Transport: ~\$600/mo	• Private 1-on-1: \$360/mo per student
• Pool entry fees: ~\$150/mo	• Small group (1-4): \$540/mo per group
• Equipment: ~\$50/mo	• Referral Fee: ~\$160/referral (2-lesson commission on referred students)
• Phone/insurance: ~\$200/mo	

2. Pro Forma Income Statement (Current Monthly)

Line Item	Amount (SGD)	Notes
REVENUE		
Private Coaching (1-on-1)	\$5,400	~15 students × \$360/mo
Small Group Coaching	\$2,160	~4 groups × \$540/mo
Referral Commissions	\$320	~2 referrals × \$160 (2-lesson fee per referred student)
TOTAL REVENUE	\$7,880	
DIRECT COSTS (COGS)		
Transport (Grab/Petrol)	(\$600)	Daily travel between venues
Pool Entry Fees	(\$150)	ActiveSG fees
Equipment	(\$50)	Kickboards, noodles, etc.
GROSS PROFIT	\$7,260	<i>~90% margin (labour-intensive)</i>
OPERATING EXPENSES		
Marketing	\$0	Word-of-mouth only
Website/Domain	(\$30)	Basic hosting
Phone/Data	(\$100)	WhatsApp management
Insurance/NROC	(\$100)	Liability (amortised)
NET PROFIT	\$7,030	<i>This is Derrick's "salary"</i>

Annualised: ~\$84,000 net income

3. SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS (Internal)	WEAKNESSES (Internal)
• 5.0★ Google Rating (high trust)	• Website is outdated ("leaky bucket")

STRENGTHS (Internal)		WEAKNESSES (Internal)	
• NROC Certified, ex-National Swimmer		• Manual WhatsApp/PayNow (high friction)	
OPPORTUNITIES (Internal)		WEAKNESSES (Internal)	
• "Laser Eyes" – instant diagnostic skill		• Complex pricing tables (confusing)	
		• Income capped by personal hours	
		• \$0 marketing spend (growth is passive)	
OPPORTUNITIES (External)		THREATS (External)	
• Adult learner market (underserved)		• Low-cost coaches (\$20/hr students) undercutting	
• Private condo market (willing to pay more)		• ActiveSG regulations tightening	
• Demand for "fast results" intensive courses		• Inflation = clients cutting recurring fees	
• Premium positioning via digital presence		• Weather disruptions (outdoor lessons)	

4. TOWS Matrix (Strategy Derivation)

OPPORTUNITIES		THREATS
STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	
SO (Maxi-Maxi): Use TikTok audience + 5★ reviews to sell premium offers (intensives, high-ticket packages) to condo/adult market	ST (Maxi-Mini): Use NROC certification + safety record to differentiate from cheap uncertified competitors	
WO (Mini-Maxi): Upgrade website/booking to capture high-SES leads that currently bounce off the dated site	WT (Mini-Mini): Reduce dependency on public pools (move to condo clients) to bypass government restrictions	

The Structural Picture

Derrick's business is profitable but fragile:

- High margin (~90%) but time-capped – he can't scale without burning out
- Strong social proof (reviews, TikTok) but weak conversion infrastructure (website, booking)
- \$0 marketing = no growth lever to pull if students churn

The TOWS tells us where the strategic plays are. The question is: *which quadrant does Derrick want to prioritise?*

Strategic Recommendations for Coach Derrick Lim

Based on the PESTLE, Five Forces, and SWOT/TOWS audit, here are the prioritised recommendations:

Recommendation 1: Digital Storefront Transformation

Addresses: WO Strategy (Fix Weakness → Capture Opportunity)

Problem	Solution
The current website is dated and high-friction (manual WhatsApp scheduling, PayNow requests). High-SES and busy parents bounce.	Build a mobile-first, conversion-focused website with:

Key Features:

- Simplified Pricing Display – Replace complex spreadsheet tables with 2-3 clear tiers (e.g., Standard, Premium, Intensive)
- One-Click WhatsApp CTA – Pre-filled message buttons: "Hi Coach, I'm interested in [Package Name]..."
- Trust Signals Above the Fold – NROC badge, 5.0★ Google rating, testimonial carousel
- Booking/Inquiry Form – Capture leads even when Derrick is in the pool

Why This First: The website is the bottleneck. TikTok drives traffic, but a dated site fails to convert. Without this, paid ads = money burned.

Recommendation 2: Product Architecture Pivot

Addresses: SO Strategy (Use Strengths → Capture Opportunity)

Problem	Solution
Currently selling hours (\$360/mo), which commoditises Derrick and makes him vulnerable to price competition.	Introduce outcome-based, high-ticket offers that justify premium pricing.

New Offer Stack:

Offer	Price	Target	Rationale
Weekend Intensive	\$500	Busy parents wanting fast results	4-6 hours over Sat/Sun. "Learn to swim in 2 days" positioning. ~\$100/hr effective rate.
"Swim-Safe" Guarantee	\$1,500	Anxious adults / fearful kids	12-week structured program. Upfront payment. Filters price-sensitive clients.
Legacy Monthly	\$400/mo	Existing recurring clients	Slight price increase for new signups. Maintain base.

Capacity Note: Scaling 1-on-1 is physically limited. The goal is to fill Derrick's "Premium Slots" (Condo/Adults) and funnel the excess demand to Group Classes (at Derrick's Pool) or **Referrals** (Junior Coaches). Do not try to swim 40 hours a week.

Why This Matters: Higher AOV (Average Order Value) means Derrick earns more *per sale*, reducing dependency on volume. Unlocks scalability without burnout.

Recommendation 3: Targeted Traffic Engine

Addresses: ST Strategy (Use Strengths → Counter Threats)

Problem	Solution
\$0 marketing spend = growth is passive (referrals only). Vulnerable to churn with no acquisition lever.	Deploy paid acquisition to control lead flow.

Campaign Architecture:

Element	Execution
Target ads at private estate residents (they provide the pool)	
Creative	For Parents: "Laser Eye" diagnostic videos – Derrick spots and fixes common stroke errors in 15 seconds. For Adults: "Overcoming Fear" series – empathetic content addressing the shame/fear of learning at a later age. (Copy focus: "It's never too late/privacy guaranteed").
Targeting	Geo-fence private estates (D15, D16, D10, D11). Exclude mass-market HDB zones. Interests: parenting, swimming, and child enrichment.
Retargeting	Install Meta Pixel. Parents who visit the site but don't convert → see testimonial video 24-48 hours later.
Budget	Start at \$600-1,000/mo. Measure CPL (Cost Per Lead). Scale winners, kill losers.

Why Paid Ads: Derrick's TikTok (31K) is organic reach he doesn't control. Paid ads = a "tap" he can turn on/off. Predictable lead flow.

Recommendation 4: Venue Diversification

Addresses: WT Strategy (Fix Weakness → Avoid Threat)

Problem	Solution
Dependency on public pools (ActiveSG) exposes Derrick to regulatory risk and venue restrictions.	Shift marketing focus to condo/private pool clients + leverage Derrick's own pool.

Execution:

- **Option A: Client's Condo Pool (1-on-1 ONLY)** – Target ads at private estate residents. 1-on-1 lessons at client's condo can generally fly under the MCST radar. Group lessons at condos are not viable (security will intervene).
- **Option B: Derrick's Pool** – Derrick has access to his own pool. This eliminates venue dependency entirely. Trade-off: Clients must travel to him, which creates friction. Best positioned as "premium/dedicated facility" rather than "come to my place."
- Emphasise convenience messaging for Option A; emphasise exclusivity for Option B.

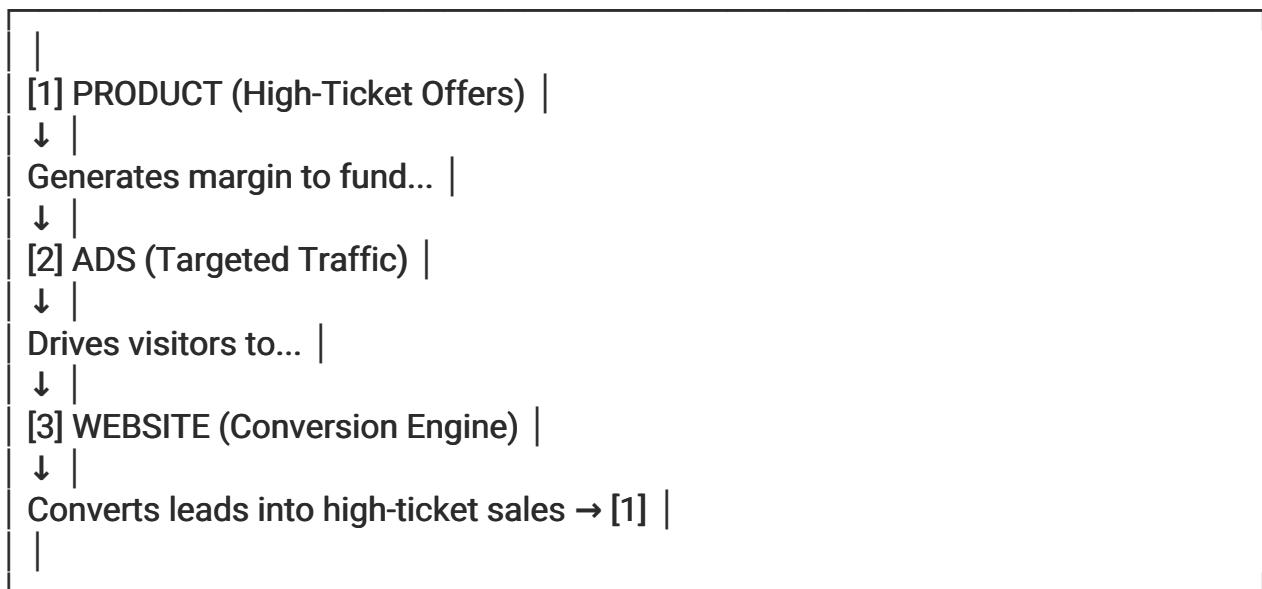
⚠️ **Condo Reality Check & Protocol:** MCSTs are increasingly hostile. We do not build a business on hope. **The Protocol:** Before targeting a specific condo (e.g., Costa Del Sol), we call the management office to confirm visitor coaching rules.

- If **Allowed:** We target.
- If **Banned:** We exclude that geo-fence and push those leads to Option B (Derrick's Pool).

Why This Matters: When the client supplies the venue (Option A) or Derrick controls it (Option B), he bypasses pool fees, lane limits, and government regulations. But we must verify access *before* spending ad money.

Summary: The Flywheel

These recommendations are not independent — they form a growth flywheel:



You cannot do just one. Ads without a website = wasted spend. Website without the product = low margins. Product without traffic = no customers.

Prioritisation (Sequencing)

Phase	Focus	Duration
Phase 1	Website + Product Design	Weeks 1-4
Phase 2	Ads Launch + Lead Triage	Weeks 5-8
Phase 3	Optimization + Scale	Weeks 9-12

Execution Plan: 90-Day Digital Transformation Pilot

1. The Investment

Package Name: The "High-Performance Academy" Pilot

Duration: 90 Days (3 Months)

Total Investment: SGD \$5,000 (*excludes ad spend paid directly to Meta/Google*)

Deliverable	Market Value	Pilot Price
Strategic Audit & Product Design	\$1,500	Included
"Conversion Engine" Website	\$3,500	Included
Content Production (5x Video Ads)	\$1,500	Included
Ad Campaign Management (3 Months)	\$3,000	Included
TOTAL VALUE	\$9,500	—
CLIENT PAYS	—	\$5,000

Payment Terms:

- 50% Deposit (\$2,500) – Upon signing (covers Strategy + Website)
- 50% Completion (\$2,500) – End of Month 2 (once ads are running and leads flowing)

2. Timeline (The Roadmap)

Month 1: The Build (Infrastructure)

Week	Milestone	Deliverable
Week 1	Strategy Session	Finalise \$500 Weekend Intensive curriculum, \$1,500 package structure, positioning
Week 2	Website Wireframe + Copy	Mobile-first layout, pricing page, trust signals, WhatsApp CTA
Week 3	Video Shoot + Edit	1 shoot day with Derrick → 5 edited ad creatives
Week 4	Website Launch + Tracking	Go live. Install Meta Pixel + GA4.

Outcome: Professional digital storefront + product ready to sell.

Month 2: The Launch (Traffic)

Week	Milestone	Deliverable
Week 5	Ads Go Live	Test 2-3 angles (e.g., "Fearless" vs "Safety First")
Week 6	First Leads	Triage inquiries, refine sales script
Week 7-8	First Intake	Goal: 4 students for Weekend Intensive

Outcome: Real-world market validation + first revenue from new offers.

Month 3: The Optimisation (Efficiency)

Week	Milestone	Deliverable
Week 9-10	Cut/Scale	Kill underperforming ads, double budget on winners
Week 11	Retargeting Layer	Testimonial video ads to warm leads

Week 12	Milestone Final Review & Handoff	Deliverable Tech Independence: Delivery of "Marketing SOP & Readme" doc. Training session for Derrick (or his appointed intern) to manage the system.
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Outcome: Calibrated marketing engine + decision on long-term retainer.

3. Scope of Work (Deliverables)

A. Strategy & Operations

- Define the "Swim-Safe" Guarantee (12-Week) and Weekend Intensive (\$500) offer structures.
- Create a Sales Script for handling WhatsApp inquiries
- Competitor positioning analysis

B. Web Development

- 5-Section Single Page Website:
 - Hero (headline + CTA)
 - Problems We Solve (pain points)
 - The Coach (credentials + social proof)
 - Packages (clear pricing tiers)
 - FAQ + Contact (WhatsApp API button)
- Tech Stack: Framer / Webflow / WordPress (flexible)
- Integrations: WhatsApp API, Google Analytics 4, Meta Pixel
- **Handover Asset** "The Manual" – SOPs for managing the system.

Maintenance Options (Post-Pilot)

Option	Cost	Pros	Cons
A. DIY (Derrick)	\$0	Free. Full control.	Distraction from coaching. Risk of neglect.
B. Intern	~\$800-1,000/mo	Cheap labour.	Management headache. Turnover risk.
C. Agency Retainer	~\$500-1,000/mo	Done-for-you. Professional.	Monthly fixed cost.

Recommendation: Start with Option C (Retainer) for 3 months, then transition to Option A or B once stable.

C. Content & Ads

- 5x Video Ads: Scripted, shot (1 day with Derrick), edited
- Ad Account Setup: Meta Business Manager, ownership transferred to Derrick
- Bi-Weekly Reporting: "Traffic Light" dashboard (Spend vs Leads vs Cost-Per-Lead)

D. Exclusions (What's NOT Included)

Out of Scope	Reason
Community management (replying to comments/DMs)	Derrick's job – authenticity matters
Graphic design for offline (flyers, business cards)	Not part of the digital scope
Ad spend budget	Derrick pays Meta/Google directly (~\$1,000/mo recommended)
Ongoing retainer after Month 3	Separate negotiation
Sales Conversion	CRITICAL: Generating leads is our job; <i>closing</i> them is Derrick's job. (Caveat: High-ticket sales require phone skills. We provide the scripts, Derrick provides the charm).
Weather Risk	Managed via Derrick's existing T&Cs (make-up lessons/cancellation policy).

4a. Operational Risk Matrix (Blind Spots)

We must be honest about where this breaks.

Risk Factor	Probability	Mitigation Strategy
Venue Denial (MCST)	High	Pre-Targeting Call: We verify rules before ads run. Fallback: Derrick's Pool.
Coach Burnout	Medium	Cap 1-on-1s: Ads turn off when Derrick hits 25 hours/week. Excess goes to Agency/Group.
Lead Quality	Medium	Filter: High price (\$1,500) acts as a filter. We want fewer, better clients.
Tech Debt	Low	No-Code: We build on user-friendly stacks (Webflow/Framer) so extensive coding isn't needed.

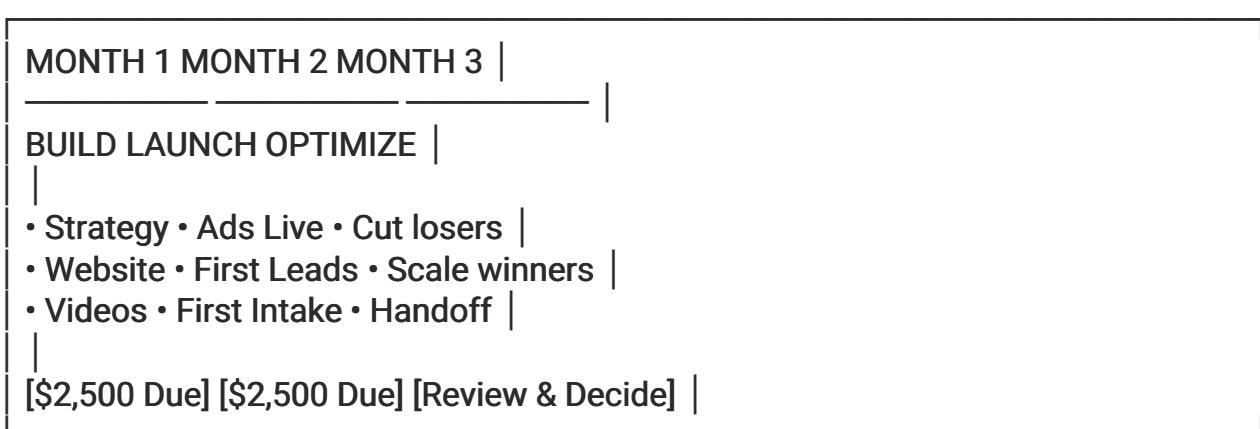
4b. The "Safety Net" Guarantee

"Skin in the Game" Clause:

If we launch ads in Month 2 and generate ZERO qualified leads after spending \$500, the final 50% payment (\$2,500) is held until I fix it and deliver leads.

This removes the client's fear of "paying for nothing."

5. Visual Summary



The Pitch Close

"Derrick, the total investment is \$5,000 — about the price of 2.5 new students. We split it into two payments, so your cash flow is managed. Once we sign, I will start building the website tomorrow. Ready to go?"

1-Year Outcome Comparison

Metric (12 Months)	Path A: Do Nothing	Path B: Invest \$5K
New Students Acquired	~5 (referrals only, passive)	24 (2/month via ads + site)
Average Spend per Student	\$1,080 (3 months × \$360)	\$2,000 (mix of high-ticket + recurring)
Total New Revenue	+\$5,400	+\$48,000
Less: Project Cost	\$0	(\$5,000)
Less: Ad Spend (12 months)	\$0	(\$12,000) @ \$1,000/mo (Real cost of growth)
Less: Ongoing Mgmt (optional)	\$0	(\$3,000) (3-month pilot only)

Metric (12 Months)	Path A: Do Nothing	Path B: Invest \$5K
NET PROFIT ADDED	+\$5,400	+\$28,000
DIFFERENCE	—	+\$27,400 more cash

The Math Breakdown

Path A: Default (Do Nothing)

- Derrick continues relying on word-of-mouth
- Natural churn: loses 2-3 students/year (kids grow up, move away)
- Natural acquisition: ~5 new students/year (slow, unpredictable)
- Net position: Treading water. Revenue is roughly flat.

Path B: Digital Investment

- Month 1-3: Build assets (website, offers, ads)
- Month 4-12: Marketing engine at cruising speed
- Acquisition rate: 2 new students/month (conservative assumption)
- Revenue quality: Higher AOV from intensives + packages

The "Hidden" Value (Even if Ads Fail)

If the absolute worst case happens (ads get zero traction), Derrick still owns:

What He "Lost"	What He Keeps Forever
\$5,000 cash	☒ Professional website (market value ~\$3,500)
	☒ 5x video ads (reusable on TikTok/Instagram)
	☒ Offer structure (\$500 course curriculum)
	☒ Market data (now knows what doesn't work)

Reframe: He's paying market rate for the website and getting the strategy + experiment for free.

ROI Calculation

Metric	Value
Total Investment (Year 1)	\$15,200 (Project + Ads + Mgmt)
Total New Revenue	\$48,000
Net Profit Added	\$28,000
ROI	164% (\$1.64 back for every \$1 spent) — <i>Conservative Estimate</i>
Payback Period	~4.5 months

The "Asymmetric Bet" Frame

	Risk	Reward
Magnitude	Capped at \$5K upfront	Uncapped (recurring revenue)
Recovery	~2 weeks of teaching	Potential \$27K+ Year 1
Duration	One-time cost	Ongoing benefit

"Derrick, you're trading \$5,000 today for a machine that could put an extra \$27,000 in your pocket this year alone – and keeps running in Year 2, Year 3, and beyond."

The Decision Question

"Are you willing to risk the equivalent of 2.5 students to potentially gain 24 new students and \$27K in extra profit over the next 12 months?"