BuildUp BOOKINGS

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BONUS 11 OF 11 · MASTERING VACATION RENTAL MARKETING

# Your Marketing Operating Cadence

## A companion resource to the 2nd edition

### WHAT YOU'LL HAVE WHEN YOU FINISH

A weekly, monthly and quarterly rhythm for running marketing — what gets checked, who owns it, and what triggers action — so the important work stops losing to the urgent work.

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buildupbookings.com/book-bonuses

PART 1

# Do this now

Start here. Each one works on its own.

1 **Accept the real problem.**

It is not that you do not know what to do. Every other bonus in this set tells you what to do. The problem is that marketing work has no deadline attached to it, so it loses every single time to a double-booking, a broken water heater, or an owner on the phone.

2 **Pick four or five numbers. No more.**

A scorecard with twenty metrics gets read by nobody. Four numbers, same four every week, is a habit. Good candidates: direct bookings, direct booking share of total, new reviews, and email list growth. If a number would not change what you do next week, leave it off.

3 **Put one 90-minute block on the calendar, weekly.**

Same day, same time, recurring, defended. Monday morning works well because it happens before the week can take it from you.

4 **Choose three to five priorities for this quarter and write them down.**

Not twelve. Three to five things that will actually be finished in 90 days.

5 **Share them with someone.**

Your team, your business partner, your agency. A priority nobody else knows about is a preference.

6 **Set your quarterly review date now, for all four quarters.**

Book them today. A quarterly rhythm that depends on remembering to schedule the next one rarely lasts.

7 **Assign every recurring item a name.**

Not “we” or “the team.” A person. Unowned recurring work does not recur.

PART 2

# The depth

The full method.

## Why a cadence, not a task list

Most task-tracking advice is a list of general productivity tips — prioritize, use a tool, delegate, set deadlines. All true, none of it specific to marketing a vacation rental business, and useless for the actual problem.

Run your marketing through the classic urgent-important matrix and you see why. “Write a blog post for your direct booking site” lands in *Not Urgent*, and in practice anything not urgent gets treated as not important.

Content marketing genuinely *feels* unimportant in the moment — nothing breaks if you skip it this week. And it is one of the highest-return activities available to you. **Marketing is important and almost never urgent**, which means any system that sorts by urgency will systematically starve it.

The fix is not a better matrix. It is a calendar.

## The four rhythms

| RHYTHM | QUESTION IT ANSWERS | TIME | WHO |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Weekly** | Is anything broken, and did we do the work? | 90 min | Whoever owns marketing |
| **Monthly** | Is the trend going the right way? | 2 hours | Owner + agency, if you have one |
| **Quarterly** | Did we finish what we said, and what is next? | Half day | Leadership |
| **Annually** | Is the strategy still right? | Full day | Leadership |

Skipping the weekly one is what kills marketing programs. Skipping the quarterly one is what makes a year of weekly work add up to nothing in particular.

## The weekly block — 90 minutes

Same agenda every week. The point of a fixed agenda is that it requires no decisions to start.

**First 20 minutes — the scorecard.** Four or five numbers, written down, compared to last week. Not analyzed. Just recorded, so a trend becomes visible before it becomes a problem.

**Next 20 minutes — the maintenance list.** The small recurring jobs that protect everything else:

| JOB | WHY IT CANNOT SLIP |
|---|---|
| **Mine search terms, add negatives** | Wasted ad spend compounds silently. Twenty minutes protects budget that would otherwise leak. |
| **Respond to new reviews** | A response two months late reads worse than none. |
| **Check yesterday's bookings tracked correctly** | Broken conversion tracking makes every downstream decision wrong. |
| **Scan for anything genuinely broken** | Forms, links, the booking flow. |

**Next 40 minutes — the important-not-urgent work.** Whatever moves this quarter's priorities. Content written, a page fixed, an outreach batch sent. This is the block the whole system exists to protect, and it is the one that gets raided. Defend it.

**Last 10 minutes — set next week.** What is the 40-minute block next week? Decide now, so next week starts without a decision.

## The scorecard: four or five numbers

Pick from this list based on what you actually run. Same numbers every week — the value is in the consistency, not the completeness.

| NUMBER | WHY IT EARNS A SLOT |
|---|---|
| **Direct bookings this week** | The thing everything else is for |
| **Direct booking share** | Direct as a share of total. The real trend line. |
| **New reviews this week** | An input you control, and now part of your AI visibility |
| **Email list growth** | Compounds, and it is the asset you own outright |
| **Ad spend and ROAS** | Only if you run paid |
| **Content pieces published** | If content is a current priority |
| **Homeowner conversations** | If you are acquiring owners |

Four is better than eight. If a number would not change what you do next week, it does not belong on the weekly scorecard — move it to monthly.

## The monthly review — 2 hours

Weekly is about doing. Monthly is about noticing.

- **Trends, not weeks.** One bad week is noise. Three bad weeks is a signal.
- **Marginal return on any budget you increased.** Not blended ROAS. The **Paid Search** bonus has the calculation, and this is where it belongs in the calendar.
- **What content published, and what it is doing** — impressions first, ranking later.
- **Test the capture path.** Submit a real email through your own live form on your phone and confirm it lands in your email platform. This breaks silently after site updates and can cost you months of leads without a single error message.
- **One thing to stop.** Every month, name something to stop doing. Marketing programs accumulate activity that nobody ever removes, and without this step your list of recurring work only grows.

## The quarterly reset — half a day

This is the ROCKS rhythm from *Traction*: chunk progress into 90-day blocks with three to seven priorities you commit to publicly.

**Score last quarter honestly.** Each priority either got finished or it did not. Partial credit is how you end a year having completed nothing. Then ask the more useful question: for anything unfinished, was it the wrong priority, or did it lose to urgent work every week? Those have completely different fixes.

**Set three to five for the next quarter.** Specific enough to be scoreable. “Improve SEO” is not a priority. “Publish six pieces in the leaf-season cluster” is.

Priorities that suit a quarter in this industry:

- Publish [N] pieces completing one content cluster
- Fix the technical items from the AI Search readiness score
- Build the brand guide and get every channel consistent with it
- Restructure the ads account to three campaigns with correct conversion values
- Run the off-season email sequence
- Work the Dream 100 list through a full five-touch sequence
- Get from [current] to [target] reviews
- Document the marketing processes nobody but you can currently do

**Set one stretch goal** — something that scares you slightly but is achievable. And convert it into a weekly number. If the goal is portfolio growth, the weekly version is *contact this many homeowners every week, no matter what*. Annual goals get abandoned in month ten; weekly numbers get done.

**Then look at the calendar ahead.** Your content and campaigns run a season ahead of your operations — so the quarterly reset is when you check that the work for two seasons out is actually scheduled. The **12-Month Content System** bonus explains the lead times.

## The annual review — a day

Is the strategy still right? Which channels earned their place. What weight class you are actually in now. Which of last year's quarterly priorities added up to something, and which were motion.

Also the housekeeping that only makes sense annually: refresh the brand guide, re-audit the guidebook, re-run the AI search readiness score against your dated baseline, and check whether the numbers on your scorecard are still the right numbers.

## Who owns what

The failure I see most often with this system is a cadence with no name attached.

| ITEM | REALISTIC OWNER |
|---|---|
| **Weekly block** | One person, always the same person |
| **Scorecard** | Whoever can pull the numbers in 20 minutes |
| **Search terms and negatives** | Agency, or the marketing owner |
| **Review responses** | Someone with the voice for it — ideally the same person every time |
| **Content** | The person who actually knows the market |
| **Quarterly priorities** | Leadership, shared with everyone |

If you are a one-person business, you own all of it, and the calendar matters more rather than less — because there is nobody to notice that you skipped it.

## Two habits that make it stick

**Meet weekly with someone.** Fighters reset with their corner between rounds. My team meets every Wednesday to celebrate wins, ask for help, and unstick each other. If you are solo, find a peer in another market and trade fifteen minutes a week. Accountability to a person beats accountability to a calendar.

**Document anything you do more than twice.** Every recurring item in this cadence should end up written down as a process — where to pull the numbers, how to respond to a review, the negative-keyword checklist. Two reasons: it is how you eventually hand the work to someone else, and it is what stops the cadence dying the week you are on holiday. Your playbook is also where your vision, values and mission belong, which the **Vision & Mission** bonus covers.

PART 3

# Worked example

One example, all the way through.

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*Ridgeline Cabin Co. — fictional company, 40 mountain cabins, the running example across these bonuses.*

## Their scorecard

Four numbers, every Monday.

| NUMBER | WHY THIS ONE |
|---|---|
| **Direct bookings, last 7 days** | The outcome |
| **Direct share of total bookings** | The trend that matters most to them |
| **New reviews, last 7 days** | Rebuilding volume after fixing their gating problem |
| **Email subscribers added** | Their newest asset, and the one they can most affect |

They deliberately left ad spend off the weekly card. It is on the monthly one, because a week of ad data on their budget is noise and looking at it weekly was producing bad decisions.

## Their Monday block

**8:00–8:20** Scorecard into a spreadsheet. No discussion. **8:20–8:40** Search terms and negatives · respond to new reviews · confirm the weekend's bookings tracked with real values. **8:40–9:20** This quarter's priority work. Currently: writing the leaf-season cluster. **9:20–9:30** Name next Monday's 40-minute block.

## Q1 priorities — three, not twelve

1. Publish all six Q1 content pieces on schedule, including the first three leaf-season pieces *(due: March 31)*
2. Fix the three technical items from their AI readiness score — schema output, the H1 count, and deleting the auto-generated llms.txt
3. Get from 61 reviews to 120 by running the new compliant request on every direct-booked stay

**Stretch goal:** 250 reviews by year end.
**Weekly version of it:** every departing direct-booking guest gets the request, no exceptions. That is the number they actually manage.

## What their first quarterly review found

Two of three finished. Reviews reached 124 against a target of 120. The content calendar shipped all six Q1 pieces.

The technical fixes did not get done. And the honest diagnosis mattered: it was not the wrong priority, it was that it needed a developer they had not booked, so it lost to urgent work every single week for twelve weeks. The fix was not more willpower. It was scheduling a developer for a specific morning, which they did in week one of Q2, and it took him three hours.

That is the distinction the quarterly review exists to draw. A priority that failed for lack of time and one that failed for lack of a booked resource look identical on a scorecard and need completely different responses.

## The thing they stopped

Their monthly “one thing to stop” in February: a weekly social post rounding up the week’s bookings. It took forty minutes, nobody engaged with it, and it existed because someone suggested it a year earlier and nobody had ever revisited it. Forty minutes a week returned to the content block.

PART 4

# Your turn

Your worksheet. Print it and fill it in.

## Your scorecard — pick four or five

| # | NUMBER | WHERE IT COMES FROM | WHO PULLS IT |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | | |
| 2 | | | |
| 3 | | | |
| 4 | | | |
| 5 | | | |

## Your weekly block

**Day and time:** _____ **Owner:** _____

| MINUTES | WHAT | NOTES |
|---|---|---|
| **0–20** | Scorecard | |
| **20–40** | Maintenance: search terms · reviews · tracking check · broken things | |
| **40–80** | This quarter's priority work | |
| **80–90** | Set next week's block | |

☐ Recurring calendar invite created ☐ Blocked as busy ☐ Someone else knows it exists

## This quarter's priorities — three to five

| # | PRIORITY | SCOREABLE HOW? | OWNER | DUE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | | | |
| 2 | | | | |
| 3 | | | | |
| 4 | | | | |

**Stretch goal:** _____

**Its weekly number:** _____

**Who I have shared these with:** _____

## Your calendar, booked now

| RHYTHM | DATES |
|---|---|
| Weekly block | |
| Monthly review | |
| Q1 reset | |
| Q2 reset | |
| Q3 reset | |
| Q4 reset | |
| Annual review | |

## Monthly checklist

- ☐ Trends reviewed, not single weeks
- ☐ Marginal ROAS calculated on any budget increase
- ☐ Content performance checked — impressions first
- ☐ **Capture path tested with a real submission from a phone**
- ☐ One thing named to stop doing

**This month I am stopping:** _____

## Ownership

| ITEM | OWNER |
|---|---|
| Weekly block | |
| Scorecard | |
| Search terms / negatives | |
| Review responses | |
| Content | |
| Quarterly priorities | |

## Quarterly scoring

| PRIORITY | FINISHED? | IF NOT — WRONG PRIORITY, OR LOST TO URGENT WORK? | FIX |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

PART 5

# How you'll know it worked

What to check, and when.

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**Within a month** — did the weekly block happen four times? That is the only question that matters this early, and it is binary. Three out of four is fine. One out of four means the time is wrong, the owner is wrong, or it is not actually defended on the calendar.

**Within a quarter** — the scoring conversation. How many priorities finished. Two of three is a healthy quarter. Zero of five means you chose too many, which is a common first-quarter outcome and an easy fix.

**Within two quarters** — the real test: **did the important-not-urgent work compound?** Content published in consecutive months rather than bursts. Reviews arriving weekly rather than in pushes. Negative keywords added fifty times rather than twice. Consistency is the entire product of this system, and it is only visible over a couple of quarters.

**The honest failure mode**, and it is worth naming because it is so common: the weekly block gets skipped for three consecutive weeks during your busy season, and never comes back. The season is exactly when it matters most, because that is when the season *after* it gets built. If you know a stretch is coming, cut the block to 45 minutes rather than cancelling it. A shortened habit survives; a paused one usually does not.

**A signal you are doing it right:** you start declining things. New tactics, tools, and channels get measured against a quarter that already has three priorities in it. A cadence that never causes you to say no is not a cadence, it is a list.

PART 6

# Where this lives in the book

Where to read more in the book.

**Sections:** *Task Tracking* (Lightweight) — the Company Goal scorecard, and the page in the book that sends you here. *Build Momentum with the 90 Days ROCKS system* (Middleweight) — the quarterly rhythm, the stretch goal, the weekly scorecard, and the corner-team accountability habit. *Mastering Momentum: Planning the Next Three Years* — where the three-year plan connects to the quarterly priorities. *You're going to need your playbook* — documenting the processes this cadence generates.

The ROCKS system comes from Gino Wickman's *Traction*, which is worth reading in full if this rhythm works for you. Traction® and EOS® are registered trademarks of EOS Worldwide, LLC. This resource is not affiliated with or endorsed by EOS Worldwide.

At Heavyweight, see *Crafting your Key Initiatives Document* and *Performance Appraisals and Reviews* — the same rhythm, formalized for a bigger team.

Every other bonus in this set produces work that needs a home in this cadence. The weekly search-terms job comes from **Paid Search**. The monthly capture-path test comes from the **Off-Season Email Funnel**. The quarterly re-measurement comes from **AI Search & GEO**. The content lead times come from the **12-Month Content System**. This document is where they all get scheduled — which is the difference between having read the book and having run it.

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