

# The Real AI Playbook

Your no-BS guide to AI for small business.  
7 chapters. Zero hype. Actual strategy.

**\$47 | SXO Authority**

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## Chapter 1: The AI Landscape Map

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- > The 4 categories of AI tools (and which ones actually matter for your business)
- > Why 80% of "AI tools" are just wrappers around 3 foundation models
- > The Build vs. Buy decision tree: when to use existing tools vs. custom solutions
- > How AI pricing actually works (so you never overpay)
- > The 3 foundation model providers you need to know (and what each is best at)
- > Real cost breakdown: \$50/mo ChatGPT Plus vs. \$0.002/call API access

## Chapter 2: The 5-Minute AI Audit

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- > Map every task in your business to one of 4 automation tiers
- > Identify the 20% of tasks that produce 80% of the AI ROI
- > The "Would I hire a person for this?" test for AI investments
- > Score each task:  $\text{time saved} \times \text{frequency} \times \text{error rate} = \text{priority score}$
- > Your first-week implementation plan (start getting value today)
- > Common pitfall: why starting with the "coolest" AI tool is always wrong

## Chapter 3: Free-Tier First Strategy

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- > Every major AI tool with a free tier (and exactly what you get)
- > How to stack free tiers to build a complete AI workflow at \$0
- > The progression path: free tier > paid tier > API > custom
- > When free tier limitations actually don't matter
- > 5 complete workflows built entirely on free tiers
- > Hidden free tier capabilities most people miss

## Chapter 4: The Build vs. Buy Decision Tree

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- > When to use no-code tools vs. API integrations vs. custom builds
- > Cost comparison chart: SaaS subscription vs. API-direct vs. self-hosted
- > The 3 questions that determine your build path
- > How to evaluate build complexity before committing
- > Real examples: 5 businesses that saved 60-80% by switching from SaaS to API-direct
- > The vendor lock-in trap and how to avoid it

## Chapter 5: Integration Playbook

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- > How to connect AI tools to your existing systems without a developer
- > The 5 integration patterns that cover 90% of business use cases
- > Step-by-step: connecting AI to your CRM, email, and project management
- > Automation workflows: trigger > AI process > action > verify
- > Data flow architecture for small businesses (keep it simple)
- > When you actually DO need a developer (and how to brief them)

## Chapter 6: ROI Tracking Framework

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- > The 3 metrics that actually matter for AI ROI
- > How to measure time saved (not just "it feels faster")
- > Revenue attribution for AI-assisted processes
- > Cost tracking template (monthly AI spend vs. value created)
- > When to kill an AI tool that isn't delivering
- > Building the case for AI investment to your team/partners

## Chapter 7: Scaling Guide

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- > When to move from individual tools to a platform approach
- > The 3 stages of AI maturity for small businesses
- > How to train your team on AI tools without the "AI is taking our jobs" panic
- > Building AI processes that work when you're not watching
- > The compounding effect: how AI ROI accelerates over time
- > Your 90-day roadmap from "AI curious" to "AI-powered business"