

FICTIONAL EXAMPLE / SAM / PART 1 OF 3

A business worth testing

Regional freight visibility service

Decision: Validate the problem before building the product.

Your starting point

Sam is a fictional logistics professional exploring a business that builds on operating experience and industry relationships. The initial idea is a daily shipment-status service for regional shippers. Access to potential buyers is a starting advantage, not evidence that they will pay.

Recommended direction

Start with a manual freight-visibility pilot. Define a small set of shipments, an agreed daily update, and clear escalation rules. Learn which information customers actually use before designing software. The decision today is to test the opportunity, not to launch a fully developed company.

Alternatives considered

Existing phone calls and spreadsheets require no change from the customer and may be good enough. Established logistics software may already solve the problem, but suitability and current pricing need research. A manual service could reduce coordination effort without a systems migration; that benefit remains an untested hypothesis.

What the evidence does - and does not - say

This example draws on the fictional regional-shipper scenario in the POLIS walkthrough. No interviews, purchases, customer savings, or current competitor prices have been verified. Confidence in demand is low. Record sources and dates as real evidence replaces each assumption.

FICTIONAL EXAMPLE / SAM / PART 2 OF 3

Make the economics testable

First customer and positioning

Begin with regional shippers who repeatedly chase carrier updates and can describe the cost of that work. Proposed positioning: a reliable daily status view with simple onboarding. Ask what they use now, where it fails, who owns the budget, and what would justify switching.

An illustrative pilot budget

Planning assumptions only: two customers at \$500 per month would produce \$1,000 in monthly revenue. Assume \$100 in monthly tools and 24 hours of delivery and administration. That leaves \$900 before founder compensation, tax, insurance, setup costs, and other expenses - \$37.50 per committed hour. This is not verified pricing or a take-home earnings estimate.

Stress test

If the same revenue takes 40 hours rather than 24, the return before the excluded costs falls to \$22.50 per hour. If only one customer pays \$500 while costs remain \$100 and work takes 24 hours, the result is \$16.67 per hour. Track actual hours and expenses before deciding whether the offer works.

Questions to resolve before committing

Verify access to shipment information and permission to use it. Define responsibilities for late or inaccurate updates. Confirm applicable registration, contract, insurance, and data-handling requirements with appropriate official sources and qualified professionals. This sample does not form an entity, file registrations, or provide legal instruments.

FICTIONAL EXAMPLE / SAM / PART 3 OF 3

Your first 90 days

Days 1-30: validate the problem

Interview five relevant shipper contacts. Document the existing workflow, recurring pain, budget owner, and alternatives. Ask two credible prospects to commit to a clearly scoped paid pilot.

Deliverable: a dated evidence log, one-page offer, and go/no-go decision.

Days 31-60: deliver manually

Run the pilot only if the first gate passes. Record actual delivery time, errors, customer use, service costs, and payment. Deliverable: a pilot scorecard and revised economics. No paying pilot commitment by day 60 is a reason to revise the offer or stop.

Days 61-90: decide whether to build

Review renewals, repeat use, margins, and operational workload. Invest in automation only when it improves a service customers already value. Deliverable: an evidence-based build, revise, or stop decision and the next 30-day plan.

Reasons to reconsider

Do not proceed merely because the founder can reach buyers. Stop if existing tools solve the need adequately, data access is unreliable, customers will not pay, or delivery effort makes the economics unattractive. A useful brief makes these conditions visible before significant investment.

Your next action

Schedule the first five problem interviews. Bring this brief to an advisor and agree which evidence would change the decision. Replace every fictional assumption before spending money on the venture.