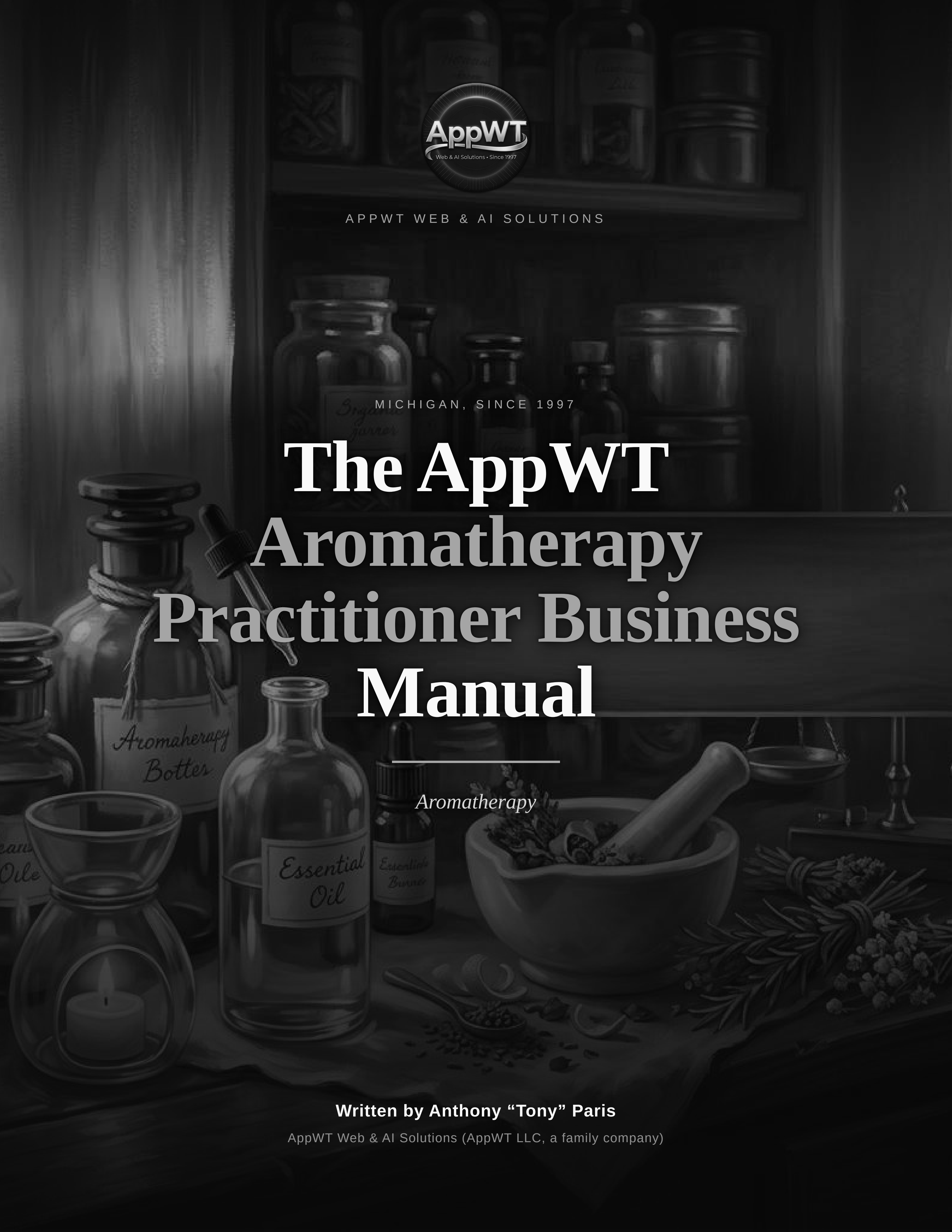

APPWT WEB & AI SOLUTIONS

MICHIGAN, SINCE 1997

The AppWT Aromatherapy Practitioner Business Manual

Aromatherapy

Written by Anthony “Tony” Paris

AppWT Web & AI Solutions (AppWT LLC, a family company)

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Second Edition, August 2026

Published in Livonia, Michigan, United States of America.

A NOTE ON SPELLING

This manual is read in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom and Australia. Where a word is spelled differently in different countries, both spellings appear the first time the word is used, like color/colour. After that, one spelling is used so the page stays easy to read.

HOW TO USE THE TECHNICAL NOTES

Smaller italic notes marked *For your tech person* hold the deeper detail: exact settings, file names and commands. You can skip every one of them and the manual still makes complete sense. Hand them to whoever looks after your website.

IMPORTANT

This manual describes security practices that AppWT uses and recommends. It is written as general guidance for business owners. It is not legal advice, and it is not a guarantee that any system cannot be attacked. Security reduces risk. No honest provider will promise to remove risk entirely.

Every incident described in this manual comes from work AppWT actually performed. Client identities are deliberately withheld, because a client's security incident is not ours to publish. Where the business involved is AppWT itself, we name ourselves.

FOREWORD

A Note From Tony

An aromatherapist emailed us last winter about a checkout that kept failing. Ten minutes into the call, the checkout was not the problem. A spa buyer had asked her for the documentation behind one ingredient in one blend. She had the oil, she had the invoice somewhere in a drawer, and she had no way to answer inside the two days the buyer waited.

Since 1997 I have built websites, order systems and the back office plumbing behind them for small business owners. In that time I have watched skilled people learn the business half of their trade the expensive way. Aromatherapy is a harder case than most, because the training points at the material, the blend and the client, which is exactly where it should point. Costing, records, labels and product law arrive later, usually one surprise at a time.

This book exists because that sequence works against you, and because the repairs are smaller than they look. A bottle has a cost you can measure in one evening with your own invoices in front of you. A lot number is the thread that ties a customer complaint back to a supplier lot. One sentence on a label decides which rulebook applies to the product inside it. None of that is difficult, and all of it stays invisible until it has already cost you an order.

One decision changes how much of this manual applies to you. The moment a client leaves with a bottle you made, you are a product business as well as a service one. Suppliers, formulas, records, labels, registration and product liability all become yours, and so does the margin. Chapter two lays that fork out plainly, and Parts Two and Three are written for the readers who cross it.

Here is what this book will not do. It will not tell you what to charge, what an oil should cost, or what margin to expect, and it prints no recipes and no safety numbers either. Supplier prices move by lot, by country and by week, and published dilution limits get revised, so a figure printed here would go stale while still looking authoritative on the page. Every number in every worked example is a placeholder, and every table ships with blank cells on purpose.

It does not stand in for your regulator, your attorney, your accountant or your insurer. The product chapters are written for the United States, where cosmetic law was updated in 2022 and the registration duties that came with it are still new. Chapter ten sets out the European Union and the United Kingdom as two more systems you decide on before you ship there, rather than after the first order lands. Read the rule on the official page, save a dated copy, and write the date beside your own one-line summary.

One limit matters more than the rest. This is a business manual for a practitioner, not health advice and not clinical instruction. You will find no protocol for a condition and no claim about what a blend does to one. The language throughout is supports, may help with, traditionally used for and many clients find, and the work always sits alongside care from a licensed health professional rather than in place of it. Chapter seven teaches you to look a limit up and record where you looked, which stays correct long after any printed chart does.

Work chapter one before anything else, even if a different chapter is the reason you bought the book. It produces a cost card for each product you sell, built from your own invoices and your own recorded minutes. Chapters thirteen and fourteen both price from that card, and chapter eighteen ranks your products with it every quarter. After chapter one the parts stand on their own, so take them in whatever order your next problem picks for you.

About our own part in this. We build sites, shops and the systems behind them, so chapter fifteen sits closest to our day job. The rest came from sitting beside small makers and practitioners while they worked out where the money went and what it cost to bring it in. We kept what survived contact with a real bench and a real market table, and we left the rest out.

This is a second version, current for 2026. Parts of it will age, and I would rather name them than pretend otherwise. The lines most likely to move are the cosmetics registration duties, the transport marking on a small parcel of oils, the state tax thresholds, and the advertising rules covering reviews. Check the date on any rule before you act on it, and give chapter one the two hours it asks for.

Anthony “Tony” Paris

Founder, AppWT Web & AI Solutions · Livonia, Michigan

How to Use This Manual

This manual is built for a desk, a folder of invoices and about ninety minutes at a sitting. Eighteen chapters sit in five parts, and every chapter ends with something you can hold. A filled cost card, a written procedure, a script you have said out loud, or a form with the fields already named.

Do chapter one before anything else, even if a different chapter is the reason you bought the book. It converts a supplier invoice into a cost per milliliter, then builds a cost card for one finished bottle, including the failed batch, the sample and your own minutes. Chapters thirteen and fourteen price from that card, and chapter eighteen ranks your products with it every quarter.

After chapter one the parts stand alone. A reader staring at a wholesale email should read chapters five and fourteen together. A reader about to order label stock should read chapter nine before chapter ten, because the sentence sets the category and the category sets the label. There is no penalty for jumping ahead, only for skipping the arithmetic.

Chapters nine, ten and eleven are written for the United States, and chapter ten also covers what the European Union and the United Kingdom each require before you list there. Read the pages that match where you sell, then read the others once as background. A system you do not sell into is still useful, because seeing a second set of rules makes your own much easier to explain to a buyer.

The parts

Part One is What a Bottle Costs and What It Makes You, chapters one to four. It costs a single ten milliliter roll-on down to the drop, the label and the minutes, then compares six revenue lines that share one job title and makes you choose two. Chapter three settles your scope, because no United States state licenses aromatherapy and a certificate proves training rather than permission. Chapter four separates the three insurance covers a maker needs from the one a consultant needs, and looks hard at the room you blend in. You finish with cost cards, two chosen lines, a one-page scope statement and cover you can name.

Part Two is A Product You Can Document, chapters five to eight. Chapter five turns buying oils into a recorded process, with a supplier file, ten required fields on every lot and an incoming goods log. Chapter six builds the master formula sheet, the batch record you fill at the bench, and the lot number that ties one bottle back to the supplier lot inside it. Chapter seven builds the safety file and the screen that runs before any blend, and chapter eight sets a best-by date you can defend, opens a complaint log, and writes the recall page on a quiet day.

Part Three is The Label, the Claim, and the Box, chapters nine to eleven. Chapter nine explains how intended use puts a bottle into a category, and how words about pests, germs, mold or air purification move it into the pesticide rules instead. Chapter ten builds a United States cosmetic label panel by panel, then covers facility registration, product listing and the responsible person standing behind them. Chapter eleven handles a box of oils as regulated freight, because most of them are flammable liquids, and closes on where you owe sales tax and who collects it for you.

Part Four is The Consultation, the Price, and the Channel, chapters twelve to fourteen. Chapter twelve gives the first session a fixed running order, an intake form field by field, and four scripts you never improvise, including the one for declining. Chapter thirteen prices the session, the blend, the formulation fee, the refill and the sample as five separate decisions, and puts prepaid money in its own dated ledger. Chapter fourteen builds retail, wholesale and private label prices upward from the same cost card, with the nine-field line sheet, the terms page and the minimum order that keep them from turning into a loss.

Part Five is Being Found, Chosen, and Still Here Next Year, chapters fifteen to eighteen. Chapter fifteen names the eight pages a small aromatherapy site needs and handles every product page as a compliance surface, down to the alt text. Chapter sixteen puts a real cost on a market day and gives you a breakeven count you can check by mid-afternoon, then covers the spa buyer, the gift order, the paid class and the referral rules. Chapter seventeen handles reviews, email and text under the advertising rules as they stand in 2026, and chapter eighteen closes with a fixed annual agenda, six quarterly numbers and three decisions for the year ahead.

The boxes, and what each one means

DO THIS TODAY

A gold box is one action you can finish now. If you only ever act on the gold boxes, you will still be far safer than when you started.

FROM OUR FILES

A dark box is a real incident from AppWT work. Nothing in these boxes is invented. Where a detail was never verified, we say so rather than fill the gap.

FOR YOUR TECH PERSON

A smaller italic note like this one carries the professional detail: exact file names, headers, settings and commands. Skip every one and the manual still reads completely. Forward them to your web person.

The code blocks and the technical notes

The code blocks in this manual are not software. They are wording and layout: a supplier questionnaire, an email reply, a batch record with its fields in order, a line sheet, a review sheet with its columns named. Anything inside square brackets is a blank you fill with your own number, your own material or your own wording. Retype them in your own voice rather than pasting them cold, then read the result out loud once. The technical notes are short and practical, written for whoever runs your website or sets up your records, and you can hand those over as they stand.

What this book does not promise

It does not promise a price, an income, a stockist or a full order book. It states no supplier costs, no market rates and no margin percentages, because your suppliers, your town and your product list are not ours to guess at. It is not legal, tax, insurance or medical advice, and it never presents a blend as a substitute for care from a licensed health professional. What it promises is narrower and more useful. Do the work inside a chapter and you finish that chapter holding a written thing you did not have before.

The rules that move, and where to check them

Several rules in this book are live questions rather than settled ones. United States cosmetic law changed in 2022, the ORM-D marking on a small parcel of oils has been retired in favor of the limited quantity mark, sales tax thresholds are set state by state, and the advertising rules covering reviews were updated in 2024. Where that is true, the chapter says so and names whose page to read. Verify anything time sensitive at the official source, save a dated copy, and write one line of your own summary beside it.

If you only have one afternoon

Do three things, in this order. Build the cost card from chapter one for your three best selling products, working from the invoices you already have rather than hunting for perfect numbers. Run the shelf audit from chapter five, marking every bottle full, partial or none against its botanical name, its supplier lot and its report. Then read every product page, product name and market sign out loud, and rewrite each sentence that names a condition, following chapter nine. That is one afternoon, and it touches what your products cost, what you can prove about them, and the risk sitting on your website.

THE MANUAL

Contents

PART ONE

What a Bottle Costs and What It Makes You

An aromatherapy practice is two businesses wearing one word. These four chapters put a real cost on a single bottle, choose which revenue lines to run, set the scope boundary for a practitioner who holds a certificate and not a license, and cover the three insurance policies a maker needs rather than the one a consultant needs.

CHAPTER 1

PART ONE

The Ten-Milliliter Roll-On That Cost More Than It Sold For

Chapter 1. Costing one bottle, down to the drop, the label and the minutes

This chapter turns a supplier invoice into a cost per milliliter, a cost per drop and a finished cost card for one bottle. It adds the lines most makers leave off, including the failed batch, the residue in the beaker, the sample and your own time. You finish with cost cards for your three best sellers, a stated minimum batch size, and one product you now know loses money on every unit.

The market closed at four on a Saturday in late October. You had a folding table, a cloth, two trays of ten milliliter/millilitre roll-on bottles and a card reader clipped to your phone. People stopped and smelled things. Several asked for a blend mixed for them right there at the table. So you blended, you wrote labels by hand, you answered questions for six hours, and you sold almost everything you brought. Driving home you felt good about the day, and the feeling was earned. Then you got in, made tea, and set the day's receipts on the kitchen table next to a stack of supplier invoices you had not filed yet. That is where the evening turned.

The question is simple, and most makers never sit down and answer it. What did one of those bottles cost you to put on that table? Not the oils on their own. The bottle, the roller fitting, the cap, the label stock, the printing, the small box it went home in, the stall fee, the card fee, the batch that failed on Thursday, and the two hours you spent blending, writing the record and cleaning up. Until you have that number, you are not pricing anything. You are guessing. A guess that runs for a year quietly takes money out of a small business, and the owner usually blames slow sales instead. This chapter builds the number. None of it is hard. It is arithmetic and a clock.

Start With the Cost of One Milliliter

Every material you buy arrives priced by the container, not by the amount you use in one bottle. A cost card needs a rate, so convert once and store it. Take the price you actually paid on the invoice, and include any shipping charged on that same invoice. Divide it by the volume in the container. A bottle sold as fifteen ml gives you a cost per milliliter in a single division. Do this for every essential oil in stock, every carrier oil, and anything else you pour. Keep all the rates on one sheet, with the purchase date and the supplier lot number beside each one. When a price changes you edit one cell, and every product card that uses that material moves with it. That one habit saves hours later.

Cost per drop is the same math with one extra step, and that step needs care. Drop size is not a fixed quantity. It changes with the thickness of the oil, the shape of the orifice reducer, the temperature of the room and the angle of your hand. Do not take a drops-per-milliliter figure from a chart or a forum post. Measure your own. Count drops from your own dropper into a small measuring cylinder until you reach one milliliter, do it three times, and average the three counts. Write that number on the rate sheet next to the oil it belongs to. Cost per drop is then the cost per milliliter divided by your measured count. Better still, stop dosing by drops and start weighing, because a scale does not care about viscosity or the angle of your wrist.

FOR YOUR TECH PERSON

A digital scale that reads to 0.01 g removes the drop problem completely. Weight and volume are not interchangeable between materials, because oils differ in density, so one milliliter of one oil does not weigh the same as one milliliter of another. Record the formula in grams, record the rate as cost per gram for anything you weigh, and keep volume and weight in separate columns so the two never get multiplied together by mistake.

Build the Cost Card Line by Line

A cost card is one page for one product at one size. Every material that touches the product gets its own row, at its own rate. Do not group three essential oils into a single line called oils. That grouping hides the exact thing you are trying to see. The card has three columns: the line item, where the number came from, and the amount. The middle column matters as much as the third one. A year from now you will not remember whether the bottle price already included the case shipping, or which invoice the carrier rate came off. The middle column tells you, and it also makes the card something another person can check.

LINE ITEM	WHERE THE NUMBER COMES FROM	AMOUNT
Essential oil 1, by botanical name	Cost per ml or per gram from the invoice, times the quantity in one unit	

LINE ITEM	WHERE THE NUMBER COMES FROM	AMOUNT
Essential oil 2, by botanical name	Same math, its own rate, never an average of the three	
Essential oil 3, by botanical name	Same math, its own rate	
Carrier oil	Cost per ml or per gram from the invoice, times the quantity in one unit	
Bottle	Case price plus its shipping, divided by units in the case	
Roller fitting	Case price plus its shipping, divided by units in the case	
Cap	Case price plus its shipping, divided by units in the case	
Label stock	Sheet or roll price divided by usable labels per sheet or roll	
Label printing	Ink, ribbon or print shop invoice divided by labels produced	
Outer packaging	Box, insert and tissue, each at its own per-unit price	
Shipping supplies, if mailed	Mailer, absorbent material, tape and required marking, per parcel	
Failed batch allowance	Materials written off over a year, divided by units made that year	
Spillage and residue	Expected yield minus actual yield, costed and spread over the batch	
Samples given away	Samples made in a period, costed, divided by units sold in that period	

LINE ITEM	WHERE THE NUMBER COMES FROM	AMOUNT
Making time	Recorded minutes per unit, times the hourly figure you set for yourself	
Selling cost for the channel	Stall fee, table fee, listing fee or platform commission, per unit sold	
Card processing	The rate printed on your own processor statement, applied to the sale price	
Total unit cost	Add every row above	

Fill the amount column for one product completely before you start the next one. Work in your own currency and put the date at the top of the card. This book prints no supplier prices, no market rates and no margin figures anywhere, and that is deliberate. Prices differ by supplier, by lot, by country and by week, so a number printed here would be wrong before you read it. Your own invoices are the only honest source you have. Two things tend to surprise people the first time they finish a card. The oil used at the smallest percentage often produces the largest single line, because a small quantity of an expensive material still costs what it costs. And the parts you think of as cheap, meaning the bottle, the fitting, the cap and the label, take a much bigger share of the total than expected once they sit on separate rows. Packaging is quiet. It is not small.

The Lines Most Makers Leave Off

Six costs are real, they are paid in materials and in time, and they almost never appear on a homemade cost sheet. They are the failed batch, the spillage and residue left in the beaker, the sample handed to a stranger, your own labor/labour, the fee for the place where the sale happened, and the cut the card reader takes. None of them are unusual. They are ordinary parts of making things, and leaving them off does not make them cheaper. It only moves them out of sight, where they turn up later as a month that felt busy and paid badly. Each one has a simple way to price it, and each one gets its own row on the card.

- **The failed batch.** Keep a running note of every material written off in a year. Divide that total by the units you made in the same year. The result is a small per-unit allowance, and it stops one bad Thursday from being invisible.
- **Spillage and residue.** Weigh the batch before filling, then weigh what actually went into bottles. The gap is loss, and it is paid for in oil. Cost it at your normal rates and spread it across the units that came out of that batch.
- **Samples.** Count what you made and gave away over a set period. Cost the contents and the container at your normal rates, then divide by the units you sold in that same period.
- **Making time.** Time the whole session with a clock, from getting the beakers out to putting the last cloth in the wash. Blending, filling, labeling, writing the batch record and cleaning up all count. So does the drive to the market and the setup.
- **Selling cost.** A stall fee, a table fee, a listing fee or a platform commission belongs to the sales it produced. Divide the day's fee by the units you sold that day, and accept that a slow day raises the per-unit number.
- **Card processing.** Use the rate printed on your own processor statement, applied to the price the customer actually paid. Do not use a number you half remember from a sign-up page.

> **TWO HOURS, TONIGHT OR SUNDAY MORNING**
>
> Pick your three best selling products. Set a timer for two hours. Pull the invoices for every material in them, build the rate sheet, then fill one cost card per product using the three-column layout above. Two hours is enough for three cards if you stop hunting for the perfect number and use the invoice in front of you. Date every card. This is the most valuable two hours a small product business ever spends, and every pricing decision in the rest of this book is built on the cards you produce in it.

Divide Twice, Because One Number Is Not Enough

One making session gives you two different answers, and you need both. The first is cost per unit, which tells you whether a single bottle can be sold at your price without losing money. The second is effective hourly across the whole session, which tells you what the day paid you for your time. A product can pass the first test and fail the second badly. That happens when the materials are fine but the session was small, or when setup and cleanup took as long as the making. Run both divisions on the same batch, on the same evening, and write both numbers on the card.

1. Write down the invoice price of every material exactly as paid, including any shipping charged on that invoice.
2. Convert each essential oil to a cost per milliliter, or a cost per gram if you weigh, by dividing the invoice price by the container volume or weight.
3. If you dose by drops, measure drops per milliliter from your own dropper three times, average them, and divide the cost per milliliter by that average.
4. Convert the carrier oil the same way, using its own invoice and its own container size.
5. Convert every component bought by the case to a per-unit price: case price plus its shipping, divided by the number of units in the case.
6. Write the formula for one finished unit in milliliters or grams, never in vague parts or a pinch.
7. Multiply each material rate by the quantity in one unit, and record every material on its own line.
8. Add the packaging lines: bottle, roller fitting, cap, label stock, printing, outer box and insert.
9. Add the shipping supplies line if that unit is mailed rather than handed over in person.
10. Add the loss lines: failed batch allowance, spillage and residue, and samples given away.
11. Time the making session with a clock from setup to cleanup, and record the total minutes.
12. Divide session minutes by units produced to get minutes per unit, then multiply by the hourly figure you set for yourself.
13. Add the selling cost lines for the channel that unit sold through, including the card processing fee.
14. Add every line together. That total is your cost per unit, and it goes at the bottom of the card.
15. Now divide the second way: take the money kept from the session, subtract all material, packaging, loss and selling costs, then divide by the hours the session took. That is your effective hourly for the day.

FOR YOUR TECH PERSON

Build the card in a spreadsheet with one row per material and a single rate column, then reference that column from every product card. Keep four decimal places inside the sheet and round only at the last line, because rounding each row separately hides real money once a batch is scaled up. Add a dated price history column so you can see when a rate moved, and never overwrite an old rate without keeping the previous value and its date.