



Paper Paper

Case Study



The 60-Second Breakdown

The Challenge: From Passion-Fueled Purchase to Marketing Overwhelm

Janet Lee, new to business ownership and the wedding industry, acquired Paper Paper Co (generating AUD 170k annually) with a vision for growth. But the path to scaling her luxury stationery business quickly became a marketing maze...

- **Lost in Marketing Mayhem:** Without a clear plan, marketing efforts felt like "spraying money" on ads with sky-high uncertainty and a Customer Acquisition Cost that had *doubled*. This ate into precious cash flow and added immense pressure. As Janet put it, she felt "all over the place with a strategy."
- **High Web Traffic, Vanishing Leads:** Despite impressive website visitor numbers (tripling year-over-year by November 2024!), actual quote requests stagnated. It was the classic "leaky bucket," a frustrating sign that her online presence wasn't effectively capturing potential clients.
- **Capped by Inexperience & Operational Bottlenecks:** Time spent on hit-or-miss marketing, coupled with unexpected operational costs (like design revisions) and the financial strain of a new venture, left Janet feeling stuck and struggling to see how she'd reach her ambitious growth goals.

The Solution: A Clear Roadmap & In-House Marketing Empowerment

The Lean Marketing Accelerator provided Janet with the strategic framework and 1:1 coaching to build sustainable, results-driven marketing from the inside out, transforming her approach and her business:

- **Ignited Strategic Clarity & High-Value Lead Capture:** Developed a **1 Page Marketing Plan (1PMP)** for laser focus. Revamped the Paper Paper Co website with compelling, conversion-focused copy (leveraging feedback from **Copy Clinics**), clear Calls to Action, and a smart **lead magnet** to engage prospects earlier. The previously cumbersome online quote form was drastically simplified to reduce friction.
- **Systematized for Proactive Sales & Consistent Nurturing:** Implemented a game-changing new sales process emphasizing **immediate, personal phone calls** to new leads, turning



follow-up from passive to proactive. An **email nurture sequence** was established to engage her significant existing database and new opt-ins, while ad spend was re-strategized for quality over quantity.

- **Empowered In-House Action & Operational Alignment:** Janet gained profound confidence and practical skills, learning to manage key marketing tasks herself, including SEO. She also implemented vital operational improvements, like an "**expectations contract**" for design clients, to protect profitability by managing scope creep—crucially aligning marketing, sales, and day-to-day operations.

The Results: Unleashing Growth & Engineering a Profitable Strategic Exit

The transformation from marketing fog to strategic command wasn't just about feeling better; it delivered tangible results and an unexpected, highly positive outcome:

- **Key Performance Metrics Took Off:** Instagram followers grew from 14,000 to 18,000 (Oct 2024); website traffic tripled YoY (Nov 2024); Google Search exploded from 0 to **40% of all quote requests**, even landing a direct \$3,600 order (Jan 2025); and, critically, Paper Paper Co achieved its "**Best Ever**" **Invoice & Profit Month** (March 2025).
- **From Cash-Strapped to Coveted Asset:** The deep strategic and systemic improvements significantly boosted the business's intrinsic value. So much so, that when personal circumstances shifted for Janet, she was positioned to sell Paper Paper Co **MORE than she had paid for it**—a fantastic ROI and a far cry from potentially just closing the doors.
- **Owner Empowered with Skills for Life:** Janet didn't just get a business makeover; she underwent a personal transformation. "The money you put into Lean Marketing, you've got life skills that you're going to take with you, wherever you are," she reflected. (May 2025 Call) Her confidence in marketing and overall business management soared.

Read the full story...



From Marketing Maze to Profitable Exit: How Paper Paper Co Found Clarity and Scaled with Lean Marketing

Ever feel like you're pouring your heart, soul, and a scary amount of cash into marketing, only to stare at a flat line? You're not alone. Many ambitious business owners hit a wall, not because their product or service isn't stellar, but because their marketing feels like a tangled mess.

This was the reality for Janet Lee when she took the reins of Paper Paper Co.

Introduction: A New Chapter, A Familiar Foe

Meet Janet Lee. After a long career in a completely different industry (refrigeration, of all things!), she dove headfirst into her passion, acquiring **Paper Paper Co**, a luxury wedding and event stationery business in Australia. The brand had charm, the products were beautiful, and Janet had big dreams.

She quickly realized, though, that passion and a great product weren't enough. Her biggest foe? Marketing. "I largely underestimated how much [the business] was going to rely on [marketing] and what I didn't know about," Janet confessed. "That was the area... in business that I really knew the least about."

Sound familiar? You've built something amazing, but getting the word out effectively and turning clicks into clients feels like cracking the Da Vinci code.

The Challenge: "Am I Just Burning Money Here?"



Like many driven entrepreneurs, Janet wasn't afraid of hard work. She was all-in, aiming to triple revenue in her first year. But her initial marketing efforts felt like "spraying money... and hoping for a result."

Here's what was keeping Janet up at night – maybe it resonates with you too:

- **Marketing Overwhelm & Confusion:** Pinterest ads, Meta ads, SEO, blogging... Janet was doing *a lot*, but without a clear strategy, it felt chaotic. "I do feel all over the place with a strategy," she admitted.
- **Wasting Money on Ineffective Tactics:** Significant ad spend, especially on Pinterest, wasn't translating into proportional sales. Her customer acquisition cost had *doubled* from \$60 to \$120. This kind of cash burn is a serious headache for any SMB owner watching their bottom line.
- **Inconsistent Leads (The "Leaky Bucket" Syndrome):** Despite website traffic tripling year-over-year by November 2024, actual quote requests hadn't budged. It was the classic "leaky bucket" – lots going in, not much staying.
- **Stalled Growth Initiatives:** Janet knew targeting high-value wedding stylists (B2B) was key for long-term growth, but uncertainty paralyzed her. "I've been going to do an email app [to stylists] but I haven't done it yet because I was a bit nervous..."
- **Cash Flow Squeeze:** The combination of marketing spend, higher-than-expected design costs, and the general pressures of a new business venture meant cash flow was "very difficult." This is a pain point many SMBs know all too well.
- **Working "IN" vs. "ON":** Janet was deep in the daily grind, handling marketing, sales, admin, and more. She needed a way to step back and work *on* the business strategically.

Janet was ambitious and committed, but the lack of marketing clarity was a major roadblock. She knew something had to change.

The Solution: Building a Damn Good Marketing Engine (From the Inside Out!)

In June 2024, Janet joined the **Lean Marketing Accelerator program**. No quick fixes or silver bullets here. We rolled up our sleeves with her to build a robust, *in-house* marketing capability, piece by practical piece.

Our philosophy? Empower *you*, the business owner, with simple, high-impact strategies.



Here's how we tackled Paper Paper Co.'s challenges:

1. **Clarity First: The One-Page Marketing Plan (1PMP)**

- We started by co-creating Janet's 1PMP. This isn't some dusty 50-page document; it's a clear, actionable roadmap. For Janet, a solopreneur, this brought immediate relief. Her words: "It's huge having a support team rooting for you 😊" (June 2024)

2. **Plugging the Leaks: Website Conversion Overhaul**

- **Diagnosis:** Her website was getting traffic but not converting. Big red flag!
- **Action (Advised Nov 2024):**
 - Revamped the homepage using proven **Copy Clinic templates** – focusing on a powerful value proposition and clear calls to action.
 - Implemented a **lead magnet** (a simple quiz like "Find the right design for your wedding") to capture those not ready to buy immediately.
 - Drastically **simplified the quote request form**. We cut out the fluff because every extra field can decimate conversion rates. Nate's advice: "for every form field that you have the conversion rate will go down by about 30 percent."

3. **Igniting Sales: From Passive to Proactive**

- **The Breakthrough (Feb 2025):** After a Lean Marketing Sales Clinic, Janet started *calling* leads immediately instead of just emailing. "The first quote I called the client, she answered and we had a 10 minute call." This personal touch built instant rapport.
- **New Sales Flow:** We mapped a simple, powerful process: Short Website Form -> Janet Calls Lead -> Discuss Needs & Schedule Design Consult *on that call* -> Send Quote.

4. **Smart Ad Spend & Nurturing:**

- **Ad Optimization:** Through PPC Clinic guidance, Janet learned to refine ad targeting. The goal? Quality leads, not just quantity. She realized, "I could probably halve the cost of what I'm spending on the ads because it's just making their website numbers look good, but they're not actually converted."
- **Email Marketing Cadence:** We set up a bi-weekly email plan to nurture her sizable list and keep Paper Paper Co top-of-mind.

5. **Aligning Marketing, Sales & Operations:**

- This wasn't about isolated tactics. Website improvements (marketing) fed directly into the new, proactive sales process.



- Operational tweaks, like Janet creating an "expectations contract" for clients, helped manage design revisions (a big cost center) and protected profitability, directly supporting sales and financial health.

Throughout this, Janet wasn't just handed a plan; she was *learning*, attending clinics, and implementing with coaching from her advisor, Nate. She was building her *own* marketing muscle.

The Benefit: "Ah, So THIS is What Clarity Feels Like!"

The transformation wasn't just about numbers (though we'll get to those!). It was about Janet regaining control and building a business that truly worked for her.

- **Clarity & Direction:** The overwhelming marketing "to-do list" became a focused set of priorities. "Clarity and direction on what to focus on and what not to focus on," was a key benefit Janet cited.
- **Empowerment & Skill-Building:** Janet learned to manage her own SEO (goodbye, expensive agency fees!), understand her metrics, and confidently implement website changes. "The money you put into [the program], you've got life skills that you're going to take with you, wherever you are."
- **Increased Confidence:** From feeling like an outsider in marketing, Janet grew into a confident strategist. "The confidence that I've been able to get, not only just in marketing, but in, you know, the running of the business. It's been my personal growth."
- **Reduced Stress, Increased Enjoyment (Eventually!):** While the journey had its pressures, especially with cash flow, the growing sense of control and seeing strategies work began to alleviate the initial stress.

The program provided a transparent, step-by-step path, turning marketing from a source of frustration into an engine for growth and, ultimately, a valuable asset.

The Results: From "Stuck" to a Successful Exit!

Okay, let's talk brass tacks. What did all this hard work and smart strategy achieve for Paper Paper Co?



- **Immediate Uptick & Consistent Growth:**
 - **July 2024:** "Best month ever" early in her Accelerator journey.
 - **October 2024:** Instagram followers jumped from **14,000 to 18,000** after a strategic giveaway.
 - **November 2024:** Website traffic **tripled** year-over-year!
 - **January 2025:** A "great increase in Google quoting" with **40% of quote requests now coming from Google Search** (up from zero!), including a single \$3,600 order.
 - **March 2025:** Paper Paper Co hit its **BEST invoice month AND profit month EVER!**
This was a direct result of the focused sales and marketing improvements.
- **Building a Valuable, Saleable Asset:** When personal circumstances led Janet to consider her options in April 2025, she wasn't looking at a failing business. Thanks to the robust systems, strengthened brand, and clear marketing processes implemented through the Accelerator:
 - With Nate's guidance on positioning the business for sale, Janet received an offer she "couldn't refuse."
 - **May 2025: Paper Paper Co was sold for MORE than Janet originally paid!**
"Considering I was seriously considering just closing it down it is a great success," Janet shared.
- **A Legacy of Success:** The new owner planned to showcase Paper Paper Co in a prestigious retail location on Oxford St, Paddington, Sydney – a testament to the brand's enhanced value.

Janet's own words sum up the program's impact:

"My experience with Lean Marketing, I would recommend it 100% to anybody that asked me. I think it was the best thing I did as a business owner."

"And I certainly wouldn't have been able to keep the brand in as good shape as it was when I handed it over. And that's definitely thanks to all the help that I've gotten from you [Lean Marketing]."

This wasn't just about a temporary spike in sales; it was about fundamentally transforming Janet as a business owner, driving value through systems and ultimately a profitable exit.

The Takeaway: Your Business Isn't Stuck. Your Marketing Might Be.



Janet Lee's journey with Paper Paper Co is a powerful lesson for any ambitious SMB owner feeling the marketing pinch.

Key Lessons for *Your* Business:

1. **Own Your Marketing, Own Your Growth:** Don't just throw money at agencies or tactics you don't understand. Invest in learning the "why" and "how" so *you* can drive the strategy. As Janet put it, the program helped her learn "how to do a lot of the tasks myself and not rely on an agency."
2. **Strategy Before Spend:** A clear, simple plan (like our 1PMP) is your most powerful weapon. It prevents wasted resources and ensures every action has a purpose.
3. **Fix the Foundations First:** Pouring leads into a "leaky bucket" (a website that doesn't convert or a broken sales process) is a fast track to frustration. Focus on optimizing what you *have* before chasing what you *don't*.
4. **Small Hinges Swing Big Doors:** You don't always need massive, complex changes. Simplifying a form, making a phone call instead of an email, clarifying your website's main message – these "small hinges" made a huge difference for Janet.
5. **Guidance Accelerates Growth:** You don't have to figure it all out alone. Expert coaching provides clarity, accountability, and helps you sidestep common pitfalls.

The most significant impact of the Accelerator program for Janet? It was the journey from feeling overwhelmed by marketing chaos to gaining the **clarity, confidence, and capability** to build a stronger, more valuable business – one that ultimately provided her with a profitable and proud exit.

If Janet's story strikes a chord, and you're ready to stop "spraying and praying" with your marketing and start building a predictable engine for growth, maybe it's time for a different approach.