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FREE TEMPLATE

31 BUYER QUESTIONS

31 Questions Your Customers Google Before They Buy (They Ask, You Answer)

Marcus Sheridan's Big 5, turned into 31 fill-in blog titles, a cost-article outline with a worked example, an AI prompt to find your own questions, and a 52-week order.

11	59	2026-11
SECTIONS	IDEAS, TOOLS & TEMPLATES	LAST CHECKED



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Tested, not guessed.

INSIDE THIS TEMPLATE

Every question your buyers type into Google before they pick a business, written as a blog title you can fill in. Answer them before your competitor does and you earn the trust and the sale.

> **WHO IT'S FOR**
>
> Service businesses, agencies and founders who don't know what to write about, or write posts nobody searches for.

01 **If you only have 15 minutes**

02 **Big 5 #1: Cost and price (7 questions)**
The question every buyer has and almost no business answers. You don't need one exact price. Give an...

03 **Big 5 #2: Problems (7 questions)**
Talk about what can go wrong, including with your own product. Honesty here is what makes buyers trust...

04 **Big 5 #3: Comparisons (6 questions)**
Buyers always compare. If you don't write the comparison, they read someone else's.

05 **Big 5 #4: Reviews (5 questions)**
Buyers search reviews of you, your competitors and your category. Write honest ones, including of other...

06 **Big 5 #5: Best-of lists (6 questions)**
Yes, include competitors. Sheridan's point: if you don't publish the honest list, someone less fair will.

07 **Copy this: the cost article outline**

08 **Copy-paste prompts: find and draft your questions**

09 **Decision table: which question to write first**

10 **Common mistakes (check before you publish)**

11 **The 52-week publishing order**

HOW TO USE IT

1

Do the 15-minute quick-start first. It gives you your first 5 real questions from your own inbox.

2

Replace [service], [product], [city] and [competitor] in the 31 titles with your own words.

3

Write the cost article first using the outline and worked example, then publish one a week in the 52-week order.

01

If you only have 15 minutes

1 **Minutes 0–5: open your inbox and WhatsApp**

Search your last 30 days of customer messages for 'how much', 'price', 'vs', 'difference', 'worth it' and 'problem'. Copy every real question into one note, word for word.

2 **Minutes 5–10: open Google**

Type your service name plus 'cost', 'vs' and 'problems'. Write down the 'People also ask' questions and the suggestions at the bottom of the page. These are questions Google already sees people asking.

3 **Minutes 10–13: match them to the Big 5**

Put each question under cost, problems, comparisons, reviews or best-of. The cost pile is almost always the biggest and the least answered by your competitors.

4 **Minutes 13–15: pick one and book it**

Choose the cost question you hear most. Put a 2-hour block in your calendar this week to write it with the outline below. One honest published answer beats 31 saved ideas.

02

Big 5 #1: Cost and price (7 questions)

The question every buyer has and almost no business answers. You don't need one exact price. Give an honest range and explain what moves it. In the book, Sheridan says one River Pools article on fiberglass pool cost brought in more than $3 million in sales (chapter 11 title).

☐ **How much does [service] cost in [city]? ([year] prices)**

The single most-searched buyer question in most industries.

☐ **Why is [service] so expensive?**

Turns price shock into an explanation of value.

- [ ] **What affects the price of [service]? (7 factors)**
  Lets them estimate their own price.
- [ ] **Cheap vs expensive [service]: what's the real difference?**
  Defends your price without saying 'we're worth it'.
- [ ] **Hidden costs of [service] nobody tells you about**
  Builds trust by revealing what competitors hide.
- [ ] **Is [service] worth the money? An honest answer**
  Catches buyers on the fence.
- [ ] **How to budget for [service]: a simple guide**
  Helps them plan, so they come back to you when ready.

03

Big 5 #2: Problems (7 questions)

Talk about what can go wrong, including with your own product. Honesty here is what makes

buyers trust everything else you say.

- [ ] **The biggest problems with [product/service] (and how to avoid them)**
  Sheridan's most counter-intuitive and most trusted article type.
- [ ] **Common mistakes people make when buying [service]**
  Positions you as the guide.
- [ ] **What can go wrong with [service]? Real risks explained**
  Answers a fear before it becomes an objection.
- [ ] **Who is [service] NOT right for?**
  Filters bad-fit leads and builds credibility.
- [ ] **Why [service] fails for some businesses**
  Shows experience.
- [ ] **Signs your [service provider] is doing a bad job**
  Captures buyers unhappy with a competitor.
- [ ] **[Problem] after [service]: what to do**
  After-purchase fear is a top buyer worry.

04

Big 5 #3: Comparisons (6 questions)

Buyers always compare. If you don't write the comparison, they read someone else's.

- [ ] **[Option A] vs [Option B]: which is better for you?**
  Classic high-intent search.
- [ ] **[Your type] vs [Competitor type]: pros and cons**
  e.g. agency vs freelancer vs in-house.
- [ ] **DIY [task] vs hiring a pro: an honest comparison**
  Catches people deciding whether to buy at all.
- [ ] **[Product] vs [cheaper alternative]: is it worth paying more?**
  Price-anchored comparison.
- [ ] **[Method 1] vs [Method 2] for [goal]**
  Educational, earns links.
- [ ] **Monthly vs one-time [service]: which pricing model is better?**
  Answers a common deal-stage question.

05

Big 5 #4: Reviews (5 questions)

Buyers search reviews of you, your competitors and your category. Write honest ones, including of other companies.

- [ ] **[Your company] reviews: what customers actually say**
  Owns your branded review search.
- [ ] **[Competitor] review: pros, cons and who it's for**
  Honest, fair reviews of competitors earn huge trust.
- [ ] **[Product] review after [time] of use**
  Long-term reviews beat first impressions.
- [ ] **Is [tool/product] legit? An honest review**
  Answers a real buyer doubt.
- [ ] **What our customers say about [service] (real examples)**
  Social proof as content.

06

Big 5 #5: Best-of lists (6 questions)

Yes, include competitors. Sheridan's point: if you don't publish the honest list, someone less fair will.

- [ ] **Best [service providers] in [city] ([year])**
  Huge local intent.
- [ ] **Best [product] for [use case]**
  Mid-funnel shopping search.
- [ ] **Best [tools] for [job]: our honest picks**
  Earns links and shares.
- [ ] **Top [number] questions to ask before hiring a [provider]**
  Who else should I consider? This answers it.
- [ ] **Best alternatives to [competitor]**
  Catches buyers leaving a competitor.
- [ ] **Best [service] for small businesses on a budget**
  Segmented best-of.

07

Copy this: the cost article outline

How much does [service] cost? (outline)

H1: How much does [service] cost in [year]?
1. Short answer: most [customers] pay $X–$Y. (Give a real range.)
2. What's included at the low, middle and high end
3. The 5–7 factors that change the price
4. Hidden costs to watch for
5. Example quotes (3 scenarios with real numbers)
6. How to know if a quote is fair
7. Our pricing and how it compares (be honest)
8. FAQ: 4–6 real questions from sales calls

> Use your real numbers. A range you can stand behind beats a vague 'it depends'.

Worked example (illustrative): a web design studio's cost article

H1: How much does a small business website cost in India in 2026?

1. Short answer: most small businesses we quote pay ₹40,000–₹1,50,000 for a 5–10 page site. (Illustrative range. Use your own.)
2. Low end (₹40k): template theme, 5 pages, you write the text.
   Middle (₹80k): custom design, 8 pages, basic SEO setup, contact forms.
   High end (₹1.5L): custom design, 15+ pages, copywriting, booking or payments.
3. What changes the price: number of pages, who writes the copy, custom vs template design, integrations (payments, CRM, booking), number of revision rounds, speed of delivery.
4. Hidden costs: domain (yearly), hosting (yearly), paid plugins or theme licences, stock photos, ongoing updates.
5. Three scenarios:
   - A local clinic, 6 pages, template: ~₹45k
   - A D2C brand, 10 pages + store setup: ~₹1.2L
   - A consultant, 5 pages, copy included: ~₹70k
6. Is a quote fair? Ask for a page list, number of revisions, who owns the site, and what yearly costs remain.
7. Our price: we sit in the middle. We are not the cheapest. Here is why.
8. FAQ: Can I pay monthly? Who owns the domain? How long does it take?

> Every number above is illustrative. Replace each one with your real numbers before you publish. A wrong range does more harm than no range.

08

Copy-paste prompts: find and draft your questions

Turn your sales notes into the Big 5

I run [business] that sells [service] to [customer type] in [city/country]. Below are real questions customers asked me by email, WhatsApp and on calls. Sort them into Marcus Sheridan's Big 5: cost, problems, comparisons, reviews, best-of. Rewrite each as a blog title a buyer would type into Google. Do not invent questions that are not in my list. Then list 5 gaps: Big 5 topics where I have no questions yet.

My questions:
[paste them here]

> Feed it real questions only. The prompt tells it not to invent, but check the output against your list anyway.

Draft an honest 'problems' article

Write an outline for: 'The biggest problems with [product/service] (and how to avoid them)'. I sell this. Be honest: include 5 real downsides a buyer might hit, who it is not right for, and what to do about each problem. Use plain grade-6 English. Leave [brackets] wherever you need a real fact, price or example from me instead of guessing.

> The brackets matter. Fill them with your own experience, or the post reads like everyone else's.

09

Decision table: which question to write first

If this is true	Write this first	Why
Buyers ask price on every call	How much does [service] cost in [city]?	Highest buying intent; saves time on every call
You lose deals to cheaper rivals	Cheap vs expensive [service]: the real difference	Explains the gap before the buyer decides
Buyers compare you to DIY tools	DIY [task] vs hiring a pro	Catches people still deciding whether to buy
A known competitor dominates your market	[Competitor] review: pros, cons and who it's for	Owns a search your buyers already make
You get many bad-fit leads	Who is [service] NOT right for?	Filters leads and builds trust
You're new with no reviews yet	Top questions to ask before hiring a [provider]	Useful without needing social proof

10

Common mistakes (check before you publish)

- [ ] **The cost article never gives a number**
  'It depends' with no range is the answer buyers are tired of. Give a range and the factors.

- [ ] **The answer is buried under 300 words of intro**
  Put the short answer in the first two sentences. Readers and Google both look there first.

- [ ] **You hide your downsides in the 'problems' post**
  A problems post that only praises you reads as an ad. Name real limits.

- [ ] **Competitor reviews are unfair or sneaky**
  Sheridan's rule is honest and fair. A hit piece on a competitor destroys the trust the post was meant to build.

- [ ] **Your 'best of' list only includes you**
  Readers know. Include real alternatives and say who each one is best for.

- [ ] **Sales never sends the articles**
  Sheridan calls this assignment selling: send the cost and problems articles before a sales call so the buyer arrives informed.

- [ ] **The article has no date or author**
  Prices change. Show when it was updated and who wrote it, and refresh cost posts every year.

- [ ] **Titles are written for you, not the buyer**
  Use the buyer's words ('how much does X cost'), not your internal jargon.

11

The 52-week publishing order

Weeks	Write	Why this order
1–7	All 7 cost questions	Highest buying intent; answers what sales calls ask most
8–14	All 7 problem questions	Builds trust fast
15–20	6 comparisons	Catches buyers choosing between options
21–25	5 reviews	Owns branded and competitor searches

Weeks	Write	Why this order
26–31	6 best-of lists	Wider reach, links, shares
32–52	Repeat for your 2nd and 3rd service, or answer new questions from sales calls	Every sales call is a new title

Sources

Every claim in this Template traces back to one of these. Checked 2026-11.

Marcus Sheridan, They Ask, You Answer (Wiley)
https://www.wiley.com/en-us/They+Ask%2C+You+Answer%3A+A+Revolutionary+Approach+to+Inbound+Sales%2C+Content+Marketing%2C+and+Today%27s+Digital+Consumer%2C+2nd+Edition-p-9781119610113

Marcus Sheridan: official site
https://www.marcussheridan.com/

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