
Creative Systems *Lab*

BY AMANDA GRACE DESIGN

A FREE BUILD FROM THE LAB

Teach Claude your business.

Five documents you already own,
and the exact prompt for each one.

You do not need to write anything new.
Everything in here is already sitting
on your hard drive.

Mandy Corcoran
an artist who taught tech for 25 years
creativesystemslab.com



START HERE

You have been using AI backwards.

Most of us met AI as a place you go to make something new. Write me a caption. Give me twenty names. Draft this email.

That is the smallest thing it does.

The bigger one is this: your business already runs on documents. Platform specs. A contract you signed. Policies you wrote once and cannot remember. A class you paid for and did not finish. Every one of those is something Claude can read, hold on to, and answer from.

Almost nobody hands them over. That is the whole gap.

The rule this whole guide runs on: the art stays yours. AI runs the business around it, never the art itself. Nothing in here touches what you make.

What you will have in twenty minutes

One place in Claude that knows how your business actually works, so you stop re-explaining yourself at the top of every chat. Five documents in it. Five prompts that put them to work.

Everything here runs on Claude's free plan. No paid tier, no plugins, no code.



Build the room before you furnish it.

A Project in Claude is a room that remembers. Anything you put in it is available in every chat you start there, without re-uploading and without re-explaining. That is the whole trick.

1. In Claude, click Projects, then Create Project. Call it the name of your business.
2. Open Project Instructions and paste this in. Edit the brackets.

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I run a creative business. I make [what you make] and sell it through [where you sell].
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When you answer me:

- Use the documents in this project as the source of truth. If they contradict you, they win.
- If something is not in them, say so instead of guessing.
- Keep it plain. No jargon, no filler openings.
- You never make or alter my artwork. That part is mine.

3. Add the five documents on the next pages. Drop them straight into the project.

That is the quick version, and it is enough to run everything in this guide. Building a project that really knows your business, with the prompting formula behind it, is what we do live together in Session 2. It is free.

One catch worth knowing. Claude reads a PDF twice: once for the words, once as a picture of every page. So a long PDF quietly fills up your chat before it has understood a thing. Run each file through the free converter at creativesystemslab.com/pdf-to-markdown first and add the Markdown instead. Same information, a fraction of the room. (Yes, run this guide through it too.)

The specs you look up every single time.

What to add. Your print partner's file requirements. The marketplace's upload rules. The size, bleed, color profile and resolution sheet you have opened four hundred times and still do not have memorized.

Why this one. This is the highest-value thing in the whole list, because it is the one you touch most often and the one that costs money when you get it wrong.

THE PROMPT · COPY THIS

I am preparing a file to sell on [platform or printer] and I want it right the first time. Fixing it after upload costs me the listing and a day of work.

Their file requirements are in this project. The product is [be exact: a repeating pattern for cotton fabric, an 18x24 poster, a wrapped canvas, a phone case].

Give me a pre-flight checklist for that exact product, ordered the way I would actually work: what I set up before I start, what I check while I am designing, and what I verify in the file right before upload. Put their real numbers in every line so I never have to open the document again. Where the same requirement appears twice with different numbers, tell me which one governs.

Then, separately, the two or three requirements that most often get files rejected here, and how I would catch each one in my own file before they do.

Every line has to trace to their document. Where it is vague, silent, or contradicts itself, say so and write me the exact question to send their support team. Do not fill a gap with what is usually true elsewhere. If something in the document does not apply to my product, leave it out rather than making the list longer.

Examination only. Do not rewrite my file and do not tell me how to design it.

You will know it worked when the checklist names a number you did not remember, and it tells you where their sheet is vague instead of filling the gap itself.

The class you bought and never finished.

What to add. The workbook, the slide PDF, the handout. The one at about forty percent. We all have it and nobody is judging.

Why this one. You paid for that knowledge already. This is how you get it back without rewatching nine hours of video.

THE PROMPT · COPY THIS

I bought a course and stopped partway through. The workbook is in this project and I want the value I already paid for, without rewatching all of it.

I make and sell [what you make], to [who buys it]. The thing that is currently stuck is [one honest line].

Do not summarize the workbook. Read the whole thing and find the through-line first: what it is actually arguing, underneath the individual lessons.

Then give me the five things in it that matter most to my situation specifically. For each one: what it is in two sentences, the page or section it came from, and what it would change for me in plain terms rather than in course language.

Then pick the single one to do first and tell me why that one before the others. Give me the first concrete step, small enough to finish today.

Last, tell me what to skip. If part of the material does not apply to my business, or is out of date, or contradicts something else in the same workbook, say so directly instead of padding the list to five.

And if the material argues against something I just told you I am doing, say that plainly. I would rather hear it now than in six months.

You will know it worked when the first thing it names is something you already half knew you had skipped.

The fees you agreed to and never added up.

What to add. Your platform's fee schedule. Your printer or manufacturer's price list. A recent supplier quote. Your payment processor's rate page. Whatever states what a sale actually costs you.

Why this one. You priced your work once, probably early, probably nervously. These documents say what you are really keeping, and almost nobody sits down and does the arithmetic.

THE PROMPT · COPY THIS

I want to know what I am actually keeping on a sale, because I priced my work a while ago and I have never sat down and done the arithmetic.

In this project are [the fee schedule, price list, quote, processor rates] for [platform or supplier].

Take one product of mine: [what it is, what I charge for it, what it costs me to make or buy].

Walk the money from what the customer pays down to what lands in my account, naming every deduction and quoting the document it comes from. Include the ones that are easy to forget, like payment processing, listing fees, and anything charged per order rather than per item.

Then tell me what I would have to charge to keep [the number I actually want to keep], and what that new price would look like next to what I charge now.

Where the document is unclear, or a fee depends on something I have not told you, say so and ask me for that one number instead of assuming a typical value. Do not use industry averages anywhere.

Do not soften the result. If the honest answer is that this product barely pays me, say it in one sentence at the top before you show the workings.

You will know it worked when the number at the top is not the one you thought you were keeping.

The agreement you signed and half read.

What to add. A licensing agreement, a stockist contract, a collaboration terms sheet, a platform's seller terms. Anything you clicked accept on.

Why this one. Not to replace a lawyer. To stop you nodding along to something you have not actually read.

THE PROMPT · COPY THIS

I want to actually understand this before I rely on it. I make [what you make] and this is a [licensing agreement, stockist contract, collaboration terms, platform seller terms]. It is in this project.

Plain English first, under 300 words. No legal vocabulary unless you explain it in the same sentence.

Then four things, each quoting the clause it comes from: what I am giving up, what I am getting, how long it lasts, and how I get out of it. For the exit, include what happens to work already delivered and to anything already in production.

Then the three questions I should have asked before signing, phrased so I could send them exactly as written.

Where a clause is ambiguous, unusual for this kind of agreement, or written so it could be read two ways, say so plainly and rank those by how much they could cost me if they are read the wrong way.

You are not my lawyer. Name clearly the parts where I need one and what specifically to ask, so I am paying for twenty minutes instead of an hour.

Do not reassure me. If something is standard, say standard. If something is one-sided, say one-sided. Examination only, do not draft me a replacement.

You will know it worked when it tells you plainly which part it will not advise on. That is the answer working, not failing.

The things that actually worked.

What to add. Your best-performing posts, your best-opened emails, the listing that outsold the rest. Ten of them. Add five of your weakest too if you can, and label which are which.

Why this one. You already know what works. You have just never had it written down where you can see the pattern, so every blank page starts from scratch.

THE PROMPT · COPY THIS

I want to know what actually works in my content instead of guessing, so I can stop starting from a blank page every time.

In this project are my best-performing pieces. [Add ten. If you can, add five of your weakest too and label which are which, because the contrast is where the answer lives.]

Do not summarize them. Find the through-line: what the strong ones do that the weak ones do not.

Look at the opening line specifically, the structure, the length, the subject, whether I am talking about myself or about the reader, and what I am asking for at the end. Tell me which of those actually separates strong from weak, and which ones turned out not to matter at all.

Give it back as a short set of rules I can hand to you next time I am writing, each rule citing the pieces it came from. Keep it under ten and put the strongest first.

Then tell me what this evidence argues against, including anything I clearly believe about my own content that it does not support.

If a pattern is weak, or the sample is too small to call, or the strong ones share something that is probably coincidence, say so rather than making it sound certain. I would rather have four rules I can trust than ten I cannot.

You will know it worked when one of the rules surprises you, and you can go check it against a piece it never saw.

This is one pass over what you have already published. The repeatable content engine, the one that runs every week and points back to your offer, is what we build live in Session 6.



WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

You just built a system.

That is not a figure of speech. A room that holds your documents, instructions that tell it how to behave, and prompts that do a repeatable job. That is a system, and you built it in an afternoon without writing a line of code.

Most people never get here, because they were told AI was for making things and nobody mentioned the rest.

Three things to try this week

Start a chat in that project and ask it something you would normally look up. Add one more document the moment you catch yourself re-explaining something. And when a chat starts feeling slow, check whether you handed it a PDF instead of Markdown.

The Lab is where the next one gets built. Ninety minutes, live, one system at a time. We open every build the same way, and by the third session you will be saying it back to me:

Let's build it live.

Sessions one and two are free. · creativesystemslab.com

This is not about generating art with AI. This is about using AI to run the business around your art.

Mandy Corcoran is an artist who taught tech for 25 years. Creative Systems Lab is by Amanda Grace Design · amandagracedesign.com

