

I want you to help me build a reusable **Photo Booth Rental Cost & Profitability Calculator** that I can use inside ChatGPT for my photo booth business.

The goal is NOT simply to calculate a rental price. I want the calculator to determine the **true cost of producing each event**, then calculate the selling price required to achieve my desired profit margin.

I want you to guide me through setting up the calculator rather than assuming any of my business's costs or pricing.

## **STEP 1 — BUILD MY BUSINESS PROFILE**

First, ask me for my business-wide assumptions.

### **Annual overhead**

Ask me for:

- Website/hosting — \$/year
- Domain/email — \$/year
- Insurance — \$/year
- Advertising — \$/year
- Software/subscriptions — \$/year
- Phone/internet allocation — \$/year
- Accounting/bookkeeping — \$/year
- Business licenses/permits — \$/year
- Other overhead — \$/year

Calculate my total annual overhead.

### **Business volume**

Ask me for:

- Expected total events per year
- Expected events per year for each booth type
- Advertising-generated bookings per year
- Non-advertising bookings per year

If I have an annual advertising budget and know how many bookings it generates, calculate:

## **Customer Acquisition Cost = Annual Advertising Spend ÷ Advertising-Generated Bookings**

Do not double-count advertising by including the entire advertising budget in both overhead and customer acquisition cost.

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### **STEP 2 — LABOR**

Ask me for my internal labor costs.

I may have different rates for:

- Owner/manager
- Designer/admin
- Booth attendant
- Setup/breakdown staff
- Other employees or contractors

The calculator must allow both:

#### **Hourly compensation**

Example:

\$25/hour

#### **Flat event compensation**

Example:

Attendant = \$150 flat fee

If I give you a flat fee for a specific event, use the actual flat fee instead of calculating hourly labor.

The calculator should distinguish between:

#### **Customer-facing rental hours**

and

**Total labor hours required to produce the event.**

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### **STEP 3 — TRAVEL**

Ask me for my travel assumptions.

Include:

- Mileage cost per mile
- Default driving time
- Toll costs
- Parking
- Other transportation costs

When calculating an event, ask for:

**One-way mileage**

and automatically calculate:

**Round-trip mileage = One-way mileage × 2**

Calculate mileage cost separately from travel labor.

Do NOT separately add gasoline, maintenance, tires, or vehicle depreciation if those are already incorporated into my mileage rate.

Travel time should be included as labor.

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**STEP 4 — EQUIPMENT**

Ask me to create an equipment profile for each booth type.

For each booth, ask for:

- Booth name/type
- Equipment purchase cost
- Accessories
- Lights
- Batteries
- iPad/tablet
- Printer
- Backdrop
- Props
- Tables
- Cart

- Other equipment
- Useful life in years
- Expected number of events per year

Calculate straight-line equipment depreciation.

For example:

**Annual depreciation = Equipment cost ÷ useful life**

Then:

**Equipment cost per event = Annual depreciation ÷ expected annual events for that booth**

Important:

Do NOT spread the cost of every booth across every company event.

A Regular Photo Booth's equipment cost should primarily be allocated to Regular Photo Booth events.

A 360 Booth's equipment cost should primarily be allocated to 360 events.

A Roaming Booth's equipment cost should primarily be allocated to Roaming events.

## **STEP 5 — SOFTWARE AND SERVICES**

If software is included in annual overhead, do NOT charge the same software again on individual events.

Avoid all double-counting.

Ask me about booth-specific recurring costs such as:

- Cellular service
- Cloud storage
- Music licensing
- Other recurring services

Allocate booth-specific recurring expenses to the events that use that booth.

## **STEP 6 — PRINTING**

If I offer a print booth, ask me for:

- Printer model
- Cost of media
- Number of prints per package
- Print size
- Expected maximum prints per event
- Whether customers receive one print per session
- Whether additional prints are sold

Calculate:

**Cost per print = Media cost ÷ Number of prints in package**

For each event, estimate printing based on:

- Number of guests
- Average number of sessions per guest

OR allow me to directly enter the expected number of prints.

Apply a maximum print assumption if I establish one.

Digital-only booths such as 360 or roaming booths should have **zero printing cost unless I specifically tell you otherwise.**

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## STEP 7 — ADD-ONS

Ask me to establish my normal selling price for add-ons.

Examples include:

- Extra hours
- Extra prints
- Custom backdrop
- Additional attendant
- Guest book
- Custom props
- Additional booth
- Premium lighting
- Other upgrades

For every add-on, calculate:

**Revenue**

and

**Incremental cost**

Do not assume an add-on is pure profit.

For example:

**Custom backdrop**

Revenue:

Customer price

Costs may include:

- Design labor
- Production
- Shipping
- Materials

Calculate the contribution from the add-on separately.

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## **STEP 8 — EVENT-SPECIFIC EXPENSES**

When calculating an event, ask about:

- Custom backdrop
- Custom design
- Printing
- Props
- Shipping
- Equipment rental
- Generator
- Tent
- Parking
- Tolls

- Hotel
- Meals
- Venue fees
- Permits
- Special transportation
- Other event-specific expenses

Do not invent costs.

If I don't know a cost, identify it as an assumption or ask me for the value.

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## **STEP 9 — EVENT LABOR**

For each event, calculate:

### **Pre-event**

- Client communication
- Planning
- Custom design
- Equipment preparation
- Loading

### **Travel**

- Drive to event
- Drive home

### **Event**

- Setup
- Booth operation
- Attendant time

### **Post-event**

- Breakdown
- Loading
- Unloading

- Gallery processing
- Uploading
- Client delivery
- Administrative work

Use the appropriate labor rate for each task.

Do not treat a "4-hour rental" as a four-hour job.

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## **STEP 10 — EVENT DIFFICULTY**

Ask about factors that could increase costs:

- Indoor/outdoor
- Weather
- Stairs
- Elevator
- Long distance from parking to venue
- Difficult load-in
- Multiple booth locations
- Tight setup window
- Large guest count
- Multiple attendants
- Late-night event
- Special venue requirements
- Remote location
- Lack of power
- Other unusual circumstances

Do not automatically add arbitrary fees.

Instead, identify what additional labor, equipment, travel, or contingency is actually required.

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## **STEP 11 — HOLIDAY / BOOKING RESTRICTIONS**

Ask me whether there are dates or types of events that my business does not accept.  
If I establish a "do not book" rule, flag those events instead of calculating a normal quote.

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## **STEP 12 — MINIMUM BOOKING PRICE**

Ask me for my minimum acceptable booking price.

The calculator must enforce this minimum.

However, distinguish between:

**Minimum Booking Price**

and

**40%/target-margin price.**

If the target-margin price is below the minimum:

Use the minimum booking price.

If the minimum price produces a margin below my target, explicitly show that.

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## **STEP 13 — PROFIT TARGET**

Ask me for my desired profit margin.

For example:

40%

Use:

**Required Price = True Event Cost ÷ (1 – Target Profit Margin)**

Do NOT confuse profit margin with markup.

For example, if true cost is \$600 and target margin is 40%:

**\$600 ÷ 0.60 = \$1,000**

Do not calculate \$600 × 1.40.

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## **STEP 14 — QUOTE ANALYSIS**

If I provide an existing quoted price, calculate:

- Revenue

- True event cost
- Dollar profit
- Profit margin
- Profit per labor hour
- Difference between actual margin and target margin
- Target price needed to achieve my desired margin

If I don't provide a quoted price, calculate a recommended price.

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## **STEP 15 — LABOR PRODUCTIVITY**

Always calculate:

**Total owner hours**

**Total staff hours**

**Total combined labor hours**

Then calculate:

**Profit per owner hour**

and/or:

**Profit per total labor hour**

This is important because an event that has a good percentage margin may still require too much time.

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## **STEP 16 — OUTPUT**

When I ask:

"Calculate this event"

collect the necessary event information and return:

### **EVENT COST ANALYSIS**

**Event:**

**Date:**

**Venue:**

**Booth:**

**Rental Hours:**

**Guests:**

**Revenue**

Base package: \$X

Add-ons: \$X

**TOTAL REVENUE: \$X**

**True Event Cost**

Owner labor: \$X

Staff labor: \$X

Travel labor: \$X

Mileage: \$X

Tolls/parking: \$X

Printing: \$X

Equipment depreciation: \$X

Recurring booth costs: \$X

Allocated overhead: \$X

Advertising acquisition cost: \$X

Custom materials: \$X

Other event costs: \$X

**TRUE EVENT COST: \$X**

**Profitability**

Break-even price: \$X

30% margin price: \$X

Target margin price: \$X

50% margin price: \$X

Minimum booking price: \$X

**RECOMMENDED PRICE: \$X**

If I provided a quoted price:

**CURRENT QUOTED PRICE: \$X**

Profit: \$X

Profit margin: X%

Difference from target: X percentage points

### **Labor**

Owner hours: X

Staff hours: X

Combined labor hours: X

Profit per owner hour: \$X

Profit per total labor hour: \$X

### **Assessment**

Use a simple business-oriented assessment such as:

- **MEETS TARGET**
- **BELOW TARGET**
- **ABOVE TARGET**
- **BELOW MINIMUM**
- **DO NOT BOOK** if the event violates a business rule

Explain the primary factors driving the result.

Do not hide costs inside unexplained calculations.

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### **IMPORTANT RULES**

1. Never double-count annual overhead.
2. Never double-count advertising.
3. Never charge full equipment purchase prices to a single event.
4. Use useful-life depreciation for reusable equipment.
5. Allocate equipment to the booth type using it.
6. Charge actual consumables separately.
7. Include travel labor AND mileage.
8. Include setup, breakdown, loading, unloading, and post-event work.

9. Use actual flat-rate staff compensation when provided.
10. Do not assume rental hours equal total labor hours.
11. Distinguish profit margin from markup.
12. Do not invent missing costs.
13. Clearly identify assumptions.
14. Ask only the questions necessary to produce an accurate calculation.
15. Allow me to override default assumptions for individual events.
16. Keep business-wide assumptions separate from event-specific assumptions.
17. Always show true cost separately from recommended selling price.
18. Always show actual profit and margin when a quote is provided.
19. Always show labor hours.
20. Always calculate the target-margin price.
21. Continue refining the calculator when I provide actual costs from completed events.
22. Never silently change my business assumptions.
23. When I provide new permanent business information, ask whether I want it treated as a new default if it materially changes the calculator.
24. If a cost is unknown, do not assume \$0 unless I explicitly tell you to use \$0.
25. The calculator should be useful for both quoting new events and analyzing whether existing bookings are profitable.

## **START HERE**

Begin by saying:

"I'll build your Photo Booth Rental Cost & Profitability Calculator. We'll first establish your business-wide assumptions, then I'll use those defaults to calculate individual events."

Then ask me for my annual overhead, business volume, labor rates, equipment, printing costs, travel assumptions, minimum booking price, and target profit margin.

Do not use any example numbers from this prompt as my actual business numbers.