



Skill-Forward

6 Solo Projects Under 20 Hours

- Portfolio Generator
- Portfolio Roaster
- Skill-Gap Analyzer
- Interview Story Bank
- Cold Outreach Crafter
- Skill Forward-Match

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Portfolio Generator

PortfolioGen helps job-seeking developers create 3 tailored portfolio sites in minutes by matching their projects to target role requirements.

USER

Junior-to-mid developers (0–5 yrs) actively applying for jobs.

CUSTOMER

Same person — they'd pay to skip 10+ hours of portfolio design per job pivot.

PROBLEM

Developers spend days hand-building portfolio sites, then send the same generic one to every role.

WHY NOW

LLMs can now analyze job postings and rewrite project descriptions to emphasize relevant skills; one-click deploy platforms make hosting free.

SOLUTION

Paste a job posting URL + your GitHub/LinkedIn → get 3 portfolio variations (frontend, backend, full-stack) with role-matched descriptions and live preview.

SCOPE GUARDRAIL

V1: static HTML only. No custom domains, no CMS, no design theme picker. Three templates, that's it.

Portfolio Generator

Proof · Risks · Revenue

20-HOUR PROOF GOAL

Working prototype that takes a GitHub profile + one job URL, generates 3 styled HTML portfolios, and deploys to Netlify — tested with 5 devs to see if at least 3 prefer a generated version over their current portfolio.

RISKS & MITIGATIONS

RISK 1

GitHub READMEs lack enough content for compelling descriptions.

MITIGATION

Add a 3-question intake form per project as fallback input.

RISK 2

Generated portfolios all look the same and feel generic.

MITIGATION

Build 3 visually distinct templates; randomize layout choices within each.

RISK 3

Job posting scraping breaks across ATS platforms.

MITIGATION

Start with paste-the-text input; add scraping later.

PATH TO REVENUE

FIRST \$

\$9 one-time fee per batch (3 portfolios).

\$1K/MO

~112 purchases/mo via dev Twitter/Reddit and bootcamp partnerships.

BEYOND

\$5/mo subscription for unlimited regeneration + portfolio analytics.

2



Portfolio Roaster

PortfolioRoast helps developers improve their portfolio by delivering brutally honest feedback from 3 distinct hiring personas.

USER

Developers and designers who have a portfolio but aren't getting callbacks.

CUSTOMER

Same person — they'd pay for actionable feedback they can't get from friends who are too polite.

PROBLEM

Friends say "looks great!" Strangers don't reply. No fast, persona-based feedback without paying \$100+/hr for a coach.

WHY NOW

LLMs can simulate domain-expert perspectives with enough nuance to be genuinely useful.

SOLUTION

Paste portfolio URL → get a roast from 3 personas: rushed Engineering Manager (10-sec scan), Senior Dev (code quality), Recruiter (first impressions + keywords).

SCOPE GUARDRAIL

V1: text-only feedback. No screenshot analysis, no redesign suggestions, no change tracking.

Portfolio Roaster

Proof · Risks · Revenue

20-HOUR PROOF GOAL

Web app that scrapes portfolio content, returns 3 persona-based roasts — tested with 8 devs to see if at least 5 say feedback was more useful than peer feedback.

RISKS & MITIGATIONS

RISK 1

Scraping JS-heavy SPAs returns empty content.

MITIGATION

Use Puppeteer for scraping; fall back to user-pasted content.

RISK 2

Feedback feels generic or repetitive across personas.

MITIGATION

Give each persona detailed system prompts with specific criteria and distinct voice.

RISK 3

Users feel attacked rather than helped.

MITIGATION

End each roast with one compliment and a prioritized “fix this first” action.

PATH TO REVENUE

FIRST \$

\$5 per roast session (3 personas).

\$1K/MO

200 sessions/mo via dev communities + “share your roast score” viral loop.

BEYOND

\$12 premium: follow-up roast + before/after comparison report.

3



Skill-Gap Analyzer

SkillGap helps career-switchers see exactly what's missing between their resume and their dream job by mapping skills to specific postings.

USER

Professionals pivoting careers or targeting a promotion (bootcamp grads, self-taught devs).

CUSTOMER

Same person — they'd pay to stop guessing what to learn next.

PROBLEM

Job postings list 15+ requirements; applicants can't tell which gaps matter vs. which are wishlist fluff.

WHY NOW

LLMs parse resumes and postings semantically, matching beyond keywords (e.g., "built REST APIs" partially covers "microservices").

SOLUTION

Upload resume + paste up to 3 job URLs → color-coded gap report: green (have it), yellow (partial), red (real gap — 2-week learning path).

SCOPE GUARDRAIL

V1: single-page report. No saved profiles, no course marketplace, no recruiter tools. PDF export only.

Skill-Gap Analyzer

Proof · Risks · Revenue

20-HOUR PROOF GOAL

App that takes resume PDF + one job URL, produces a color-coded gap report with learning recs — tested with 6 career-switchers to see if at least 4 changed their study plan.

RISKS & MITIGATIONS

RISK 1

Resume parsing fails on creative/non-standard formats.

MITIGATION

Use LLM to extract skills from raw text; accept plain text paste as backup.

RISK 2

Gap analysis is too surface-level (keyword matching).

MITIGATION

Prompt the LLM to explain why each skill maps or doesn't, with evidence.

RISK 3

Learning recs feel generic ("take a Udemy course").

MITIGATION

Recommend specific projects to build, not courses — portfolio evidence while closing the gap.

PATH TO REVENUE

FIRST \$

\$7 per analysis (resume + up to 3 job postings).

\$1K/MO

~143 purchases/mo via bootcamp Slack groups + LinkedIn gap report posts.

BEYOND

B2B licensing to bootcamps and career coaching platforms.

4



Interview Story Bank

StoryBank helps job candidates ace behavioral interviews by turning their work history into structured STAR-format stories mapped to common questions.

USER

Professionals preparing for interviews who freeze at “Tell me about a time when...”

CUSTOMER

Same person — they’d pay to walk in with 10 polished stories instead of 0.

PROBLEM

Behavioral interviews are #1 at top companies, but candidates memorize generic answers instead of mining their own experience.

WHY NOW

LLMs can now conduct structured interviews, extract stories, and reformat into STAR with coaching-quality follow-ups.

SOLUTION

Conversational app walks through 5 roles on your resume, asks targeted follow-ups, organizes 10–15 STAR stories tagged to question types (conflict, leadership, failure).

SCOPE GUARDRAIL

V1: text-only, no mock interview mode, no video, no company-specific question sets. Story bank as downloadable PDF.

Interview Story Bank

Proof · Risks · Revenue

20-HOUR PROOF GOAL

Prototype that extracts stories from one role, formats into STAR, maps to 5 behavioral questions — tested with 5 job seekers to see if at least 3 discovered a story they wouldn't have told.

RISKS & MITIGATIONS

RISK 1

Users give vague one-sentence answers without story material.

MITIGATION

Build a follow-up question chain that probes until the story has substance.

RISK 2

Generated STAR stories sound robotic and formulaic.

MITIGATION

Add a “make it conversational” rewrite pass — structure stays, language sounds natural.

RISK 3

Users don't know which stories to prep for which companies.

MITIGATION

Include a cheat sheet mapping top 20 behavioral questions to story types.

PATH TO REVENUE

FIRST \$

\$12 per full story bank (10–15 stories).

\$1K/MO

~84 purchases/mo via LinkedIn job-hunting communities + bootcamp career services.

BEYOND

\$19/mo: unlimited regen + company-specific mapping + mock interview bot.

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Cold Outreach Crafter

OutreachIQ helps job seekers write personalized cold emails to hiring managers by researching the company and connecting it to the candidate's experience.

USER

Job seekers who know cold outreach works but stare at a blank email for 45 minutes.

CUSTOMER

Same person — they'd pay to turn a 45-minute task into a 2-minute review-and-send.

PROBLEM

70%+ of jobs filled through networking, but most cold emails read like cover letter spam. Real personalization takes research.

WHY NOW

LLMs + web search can do the research loop in seconds and draft messages that read like a human did the homework.

SOLUTION

Enter company + role + resume → app researches company (news, blog, launches), drafts 3 email variants: "mutual interest," "I noticed your problem," "specific value I'd add."

SCOPE GUARDRAIL

V1: email drafts only. No LinkedIn automation, no send-on-behalf, no CRM, no follow-up sequences.

Cold Outreach Crafter

Proof · Risks · Revenue

20-HOUR PROOF GOAL

Prototype that takes company + role + resume, researches via web search, generates 3 cold email drafts — 6 job seekers each send their favorite, measuring if at least 2 get a reply.

RISKS & MITIGATIONS

RISK 1

Web research returns shallow or outdated company info.

MITIGATION

Search “company + blog” and “company + news” separately; show a research quality score.

RISK 2

Emails feel AI-generated and get ignored/flagged.

MITIGATION

Keep under 100 words, casual tone, one hyper-specific detail proving research.

RISK 3

Users can't find the right person to email.

MITIGATION

Include a 30-sec guide for finding hiring managers on LinkedIn; user pastes the name.

PATH TO REVENUE

FIRST \$

\$5 per batch (3 email variants for one company).

\$1K/MO

200 batches/mo via job-seeker communities + “I got a reply” testimonials.

BEYOND

\$15/mo unlimited plan + follow-up email generation + response coaching.

6



Skill Forward-Match

Skill Forward-Match helps startups buy scoped execution from vetted mid/senior tech talent on 20–40 hour projects — competition first, speed matching after.

USER

Demand: pre-Series A founders who need real work done but can't justify a full hire. Supply: mid/senior professionals (5+ yrs) in eng, product, PM, marketing.

PROBLEM

Founders waste weeks hiring contractors who can't execute; portfolios don't prove someone can ship on your problem.

SOLUTION

Phase 1 (Competition): multiple participants work on one scoped brief, each delivers a completed deliverable + demo video + private repo. Phase 2 (Speed Match): finalists rotate tables with founders, each picks top 3.

CUSTOMER

The startup founder pays for the completed deliverable.

WHY NOW

AI-augmented workflows mean skilled professionals deliver in 20–40 hrs what used to take 80+, making short scoped projects viable for both sides.

SCOPE GUARDRAIL

V1 runs manually (Google Forms + Notion + Zoom). No platform, no payment processing, no matching algorithm. Just the process, proven.

Skill Forward-Match

Proof · Risks · Revenue

20-HOUR PROOF GOAL

One scoped project brief from a real startup, 3–5 vetted participants, run the competition round, collect deliverables + demo videos, get the founder’s ranking — was competition output better than their last contractor?

RISKS & MITIGATIONS

RISK 1

Talent won’t do speculative work without guaranteed pay.

MITIGATION

Pay all participants a base stipend (\$200–400); winner gets the full project contract. It’s a paid audition.

RISK 2

Founders write vague briefs that produce incomparable outputs.

MITIGATION

Co-write the brief using a strict template (problem, deliverable spec, eval criteria, time box).

RISK 3

Two-phase model (competition → speed match) is too complex.

MITIGATION

Launch competition-only. Add speed matching once you have repeat founders.

PATH TO REVENUE

FIRST \$

\$500 project fee covering participant stipends + margin.

\$1K/MO

2–3 competitions/month across verticals at \$500–750 each.

BEYOND

15% placement fee on speed-match contracts + reputation/credential layer.

Pick one. Ship it in 20 hours.

The best project brief is the one that stops you from building too much.

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