
MARKETING PLAYBOOK

Heirloom Woodcraft

Custom cutting boards & kitchen woodwork sold at Seattle farmers markets and Etsy.

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Prepared by Owl Playbook

Classification: Internal

How to Use This Playbook

What is this?

This is your go-to-market playbook for Heirloom Woodcraft. Think of it as a step-by-step field guide for finding your first customers and making your first sales.

How to use it:

1. Skim Your Business at a Glance on the next page for the big picture.
2. Go straight to Your First 30 Days — that's your action checklist. Start there.
3. When an action mentions a customer type, a pitch, or a channel, flip to the matching Reference Section for the full detail.
4. Come back to Questions to Answer whenever you're unsure what to try next.

A note on “Best Guesses”

You'll see some items marked as best guess 📎. That's completely normal — every new business starts with educated assumptions. The whole point of your first few sales is to replace guesses with real answers from real customers.

Your Business at a Glance

Handmade, personalized cutting boards sold at Seattle farmers markets and on Etsy — built for cooks, gifters, and craft lovers.

<p>Your Customers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gift Buyers — Shoppers hunting for a personal, practical gift for weddings, housewarmings, or holidays. • Local Food Enthusiasts — Seattle farmers market shoppers who love locally-made kitchen goods. • Home Cooking Hobbyists — Passionate home cooks who invest in quality, beautiful kitchen tools. • Etsy Craft Collectors — Online shoppers who seek out handmade, one-of-a-kind items on Etsy. 	<p>Your Pitch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Gifts That Cut Above the Rest" • "Your Kitchen, Your Story" • "Built to Last, Made to Love" • "Local Craft, Global Reach"
<p>Where to Find Them</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seattle farmers markets (in-person booth) • Etsy shop (online listings) • Instagram visual content • Word-of-mouth and gifting season outreach 	<p>First Moves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book your next 4 Seattle farmers market dates and confirm booth setup • Publish 5 Etsy listings with strong photos and keyword-rich titles • Post 3 Instagram photos showing your boards and customization process • Ask every buyer for a review on Etsy or a photo to share

<p>25 Paying customers goal</p>	<p>2 Active sales channels (market + Etsy)</p>	<p>4 Customer segments to reach</p>	<p>0 Competitors formally researched — fix this first</p>	<p>\$0 Paid marketing budget needed to start</p>
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Your First 30 Days

This is your action checklist. Work through it in order — some steps depend on the ones before them. When an item refers to a customer type or a pitch, flip to the matching Reference Section for the full detail.

Week 1: Get Your Foundations Ready

Book your next 4 farmers market dates and confirm booth logistics

BLOCKER

Publish 5 Etsy listings with keyword-rich titles and real photos

BLOCKER

Search 'custom cutting board' on Etsy — note the top 10 sellers, their prices, and their review counts

Set up a free Square account to take card payments at the farmers market

Week 2: Start Talking to Customers

Attend your first market and talk to every person who stops at your booth

Collect email addresses from every buyer using a paper sign-up sheet

Post your first 3 Instagram photos: one finished board, one process shot, one lifestyle kitchen shot

Message 5 friends or family who might need a gift soon — offer them a small discount for being your first customers

Week 3–4: Build Momentum and Get Reviews

Follow up with every buyer and ask them to leave an Etsy review or send a photo

Update your Etsy listing titles to include 'gift' language ahead of the next major holiday

Identify 10 Seattle wedding planners on Instagram and send 3 a direct message with a photo of your best board

Run a \$1/day Etsy Offsite Ad for 7 days and track how many clicks you get

Week 1: Get Your Foundations Ready

▲ DO THIS FIRST **Book your next 4 farmers market dates and confirm booth logistics**

You can't sell at markets you haven't booked. Locking in dates gives you a concrete deadline to prepare for.

▲ DO THIS FIRST **Publish 5 Etsy listings with keyword-rich titles and real photos**

Your Etsy shop is your 24/7 storefront. Without listings, no one can find or buy from you online.

 Search 'custom cutting board' on Etsy — note the top 10 sellers, their prices, and their review counts

You have zero competitive research right now. This 30-minute exercise will tell you what you're up against and how to price.

 Set up a free Square account to take card payments at the farmers market

Most buyers don't carry cash. If you can't take cards, you will lose sales at the booth.

Week 2: Start Talking to Customers

 Attend your first market and talk to every person who stops at your booth

Your first conversations will tell you more about what customers want than any amount of planning. Ask what occasion they're shopping for and what they'd pay.

 Collect email addresses from every buyer using a paper sign-up sheet

Your email list is the one channel you own. Start building it from day one — even 10 emails is a real asset.

 Post your first 3 Instagram photos: one finished board, one process shot, one lifestyle kitchen shot

Instagram is free and visual products like yours perform well there. Starting now builds a small audience before you need it.

 Message 5 friends or family who might need a gift soon — offer them a small discount for being your first customers

Your first sales are the hardest. Warm outreach to people who already trust you is the fastest path to your first 5 orders.

Week 3–4: Build Momentum and Get Reviews

 Follow up with every buyer and ask them to leave an Etsy review or send a photo

Reviews are the #1 factor in Etsy search ranking. Your first 10 reviews will unlock significantly more organic traffic.

 Update your Etsy listing titles to include 'gift' language ahead of the next major holiday

Gift buyers search with occasion-specific terms. Matching their language gets you in front of them at the right moment.

 Identify 10 Seattle wedding planners on Instagram and send 3 a direct message with a photo of your best board

One wedding planner referral can bring multiple orders. This is a high-leverage, zero-cost outreach effort.

 Run a \$1/day Etsy Offsite Ad for 7 days and track how many clicks you get

A small paid test tells you whether Etsy ads are worth investing in before you spend real money.

R E F E R E N C E S E C T I O N S

The following sections provide the detail behind your action plan. When a step in "Your First 30 Days" mentions a customer type, a pitch, or a channel, flip to the matching section here for the full detail.


Your Best-Fit Customers


4 types of people are most likely to buy from Heirloom Woodcraft. The plan is to reach out to all of them in your first 30 days and see who responds fastest.

Gift Buyers	
People shopping for a meaningful, personalized gift for a wedding, housewarming, or holiday. They want something that feels thoughtful and special, not generic. A custom cutting board with a name or date engraved hits both boxes: practical and personal.	
Who they are	Adults ages 25–65, shopping for friends, family, or colleagues around special occasions.
What they want	A distinctive, personalized gift that is practical, memorable, and shows real care — not something the recipient will return.
Why they care	Generic gifts feel lazy. A custom cutting board with a name, wedding date, or personal message feels intentional and is something the recipient will actually use every day.
What they'll spend	👉 Likely \$50–\$150 for a gift purchase. Gifters often spend more than they would on themselves because the occasion justifies it.
<p>★ Recommended starting customer: Gift buyers have the clearest, most urgent reason to buy — a specific occasion with a deadline. They are present at farmers markets and actively searching on Etsy. They also tend to spend more per order and tell friends when they find something great.</p>	

Local Food Enthusiasts	
Seattle residents who shop farmers markets regularly and love finding locally-made kitchen goods. They already show up where you sell. They value the story behind the product as much as the product itself.	
Who they are	Middle to upper-middle class Seattle residents, ages 30–55, who shop farmers markets regularly and care about supporting local makers.
What they want	High-quality, locally-made kitchen tools that enhance their cooking and let them support local artisans at the same time.
Why they care	Buying local is part of their identity. A handmade cutting board from a Seattle maker fits their values and their kitchen.
What they'll spend	👉 Likely \$40–\$100 for a personal purchase. They appreciate quality but are buying for themselves, so price sensitivity is higher than gift buyers.

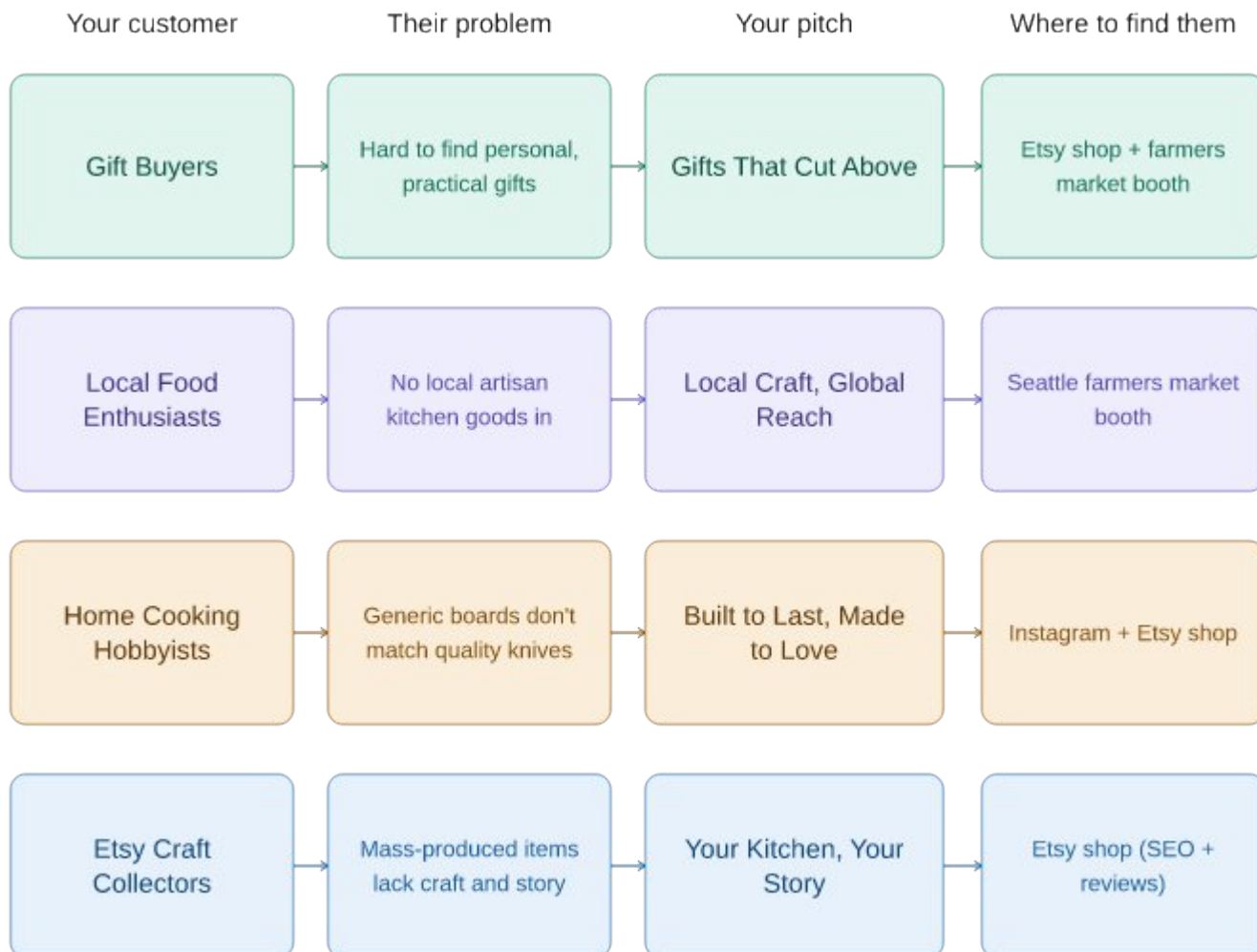
Home Cooking Hobbyists	
Passionate home cooks who treat their kitchen seriously and invest in quality tools. They want a cutting board that performs well and looks great. They are willing to pay more for something built to last.	
Who they are	Home cooking enthusiasts, ages 28–60, with disposable income to spend on premium kitchen equipment.

Home Cooking Hobbyists	
What they want	A beautiful, high-quality cutting board that improves their cooking setup and holds up to daily use.
Why they care	They have spent money on good knives and cookware. A cheap cutting board feels like a mismatch. A handcrafted board completes the picture.
What they'll spend	 Likely \$60–\$150+. This segment is most likely to buy a larger or premium board if you offer tiered sizing or wood options.

Etsy Craft Collectors	
Online shoppers who specifically browse Etsy for handmade, one-of-a-kind items. They are not looking for the cheapest option — they want something a mass retailer cannot offer. Your Etsy shop is their front door.	
Who they are	Online shoppers, primarily ages 25–50, who prefer handmade items over mass-produced products and actively browse Etsy.
What they want	Unique, handcrafted items they cannot find in mainstream stores — something with a story and a maker behind it.
Why they care	They distrust mass production. Buying handmade feels like a small act of resistance, and they enjoy knowing a real person made what they bought.
What they'll spend	 Likely \$40–\$120. Etsy buyers compare listings carefully, so photos and reviews drive conversion more than price alone.

The Big Picture

Here’s how everything connects. Each customer type has a core problem, a pitch that speaks to it, and a specific place where you can reach them. Read this left to right:



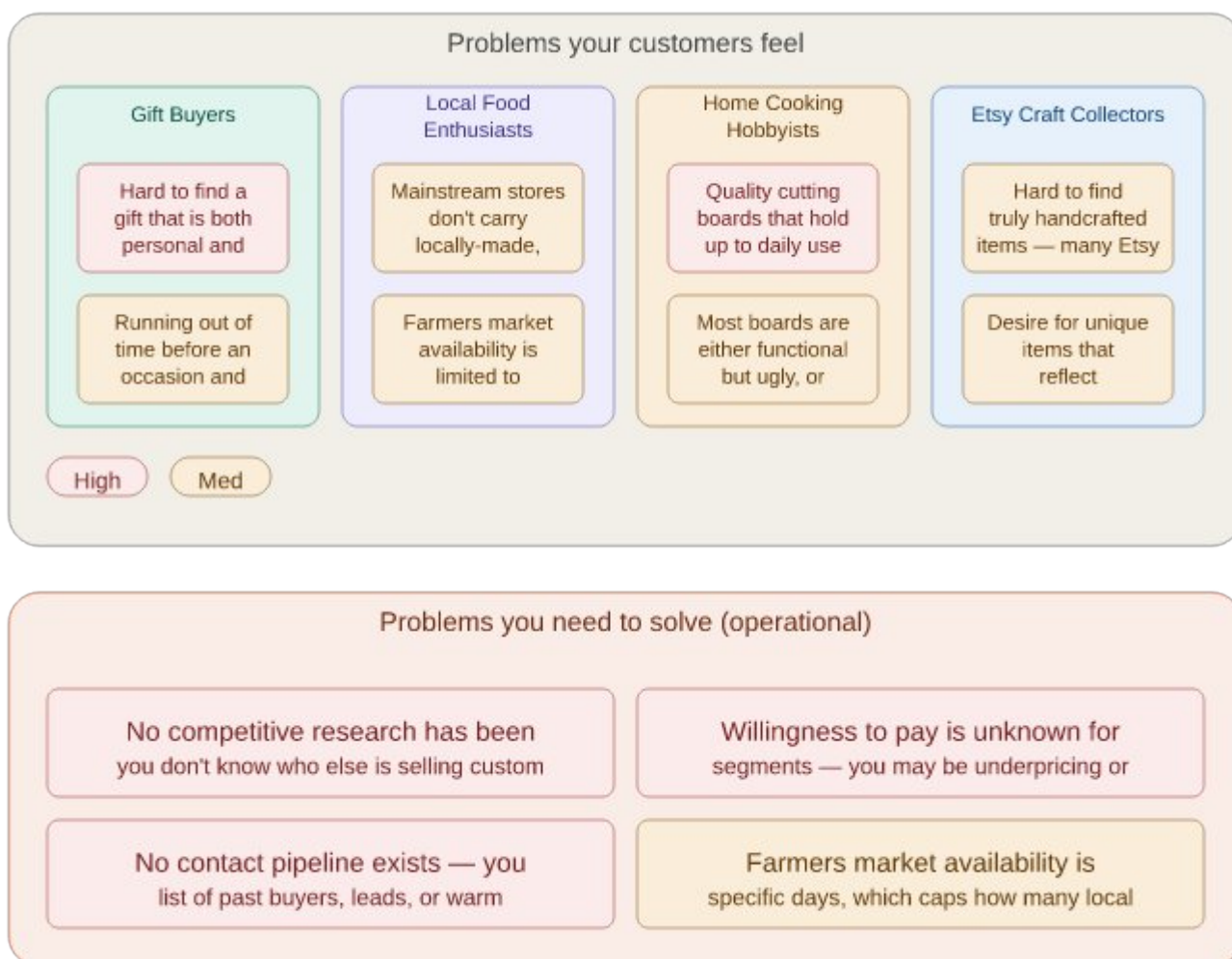
Read each row left to right: customer, problem, message, channel

→ **How to read this**

Follow each row left to right: that’s the customer, their core frustration, the message that speaks to it, and the place where you deliver that message. Each row is a complete mini-strategy.

Problems Worth Solving

These are the frustrations and gaps your business addresses. They're split into two groups: problems your customers feel (the reasons they'll buy), and problems you need to solve (operational challenges on your side). All are best guesses for now — your first expeditions will confirm which ones matter most.



Problems Your Customers Feel

Gift Buyers

- **High** Hard to find a gift that is both personal and actually useful — most personalized gifts are cheap or tacky.
- **Medium** Running out of time before an occasion and needing something that ships or is ready quickly.

Local Food Enthusiasts

- **Medium** Mainstream stores don't carry locally-made, artisanal kitchen products.

- **Medium** Farmers market availability is limited to specific days and locations.

Home Cooking Hobbyists

- **High** Quality cutting boards that hold up to daily use and look great are hard to find.
- **Medium** Most boards are either functional but ugly, or decorative but flimsy.

Etsy Craft Collectors

- **Medium** Hard to find truly handcrafted items — many Etsy sellers resell mass-produced goods.
- **Medium** Desire for unique items that reflect individual style, not available in any store.

Problems You Need to Solve

- **High** No competitive research has been done — you don't know who else is selling Heirloom Woodcraft on Etsy or at Seattle markets.
- **High** Willingness to pay is unknown for all segments — you may be underpricing or overpricing without realizing it.
- **High** No contact pipeline exists — you have no list of past buyers, leads, or warm prospects to reach out to.
- **Medium** Farmers market availability is limited to specific days, which caps how many local customers you can reach each week.
- **Medium** No validated channels beyond the two you already use — you may be missing faster paths to customers.

Your Pitch

These are the messages you'll use when talking to potential customers, writing emails, or posting on social media. Each one is tailored to a specific customer type. Use the "Use this when" note to know which pitch fits which situation.

"Gifts That Cut Above the Rest"

Best for: Gift Buyers

Finding a gift that feels personal and actually gets used is hard. Our Heirloom Woodcraft are engraved with names, dates, or messages — so every time someone chops an onion, they think of you. Order online through Etsy or find us at Seattle farmers markets.

Use this when: Talking to anyone shopping for a wedding, housewarming, holiday, or birthday gift. Use this at your farmers market booth and in your Etsy shop title and description.

"Your Kitchen, Your Story"

Best for: Local Food Enthusiasts

Your kitchen should feel like yours. Our cutting boards are handmade right here in Seattle and customized to match your style — no two are exactly alike. Come find us at the farmers market and pick one up in person.

Use this when: Talking to shoppers at the farmers market who ask what makes your boards different. Lead with the local, handmade angle.

"Built to Last, Made to Love"

Best for: Home Cooking Hobbyists

You've invested in good knives and real cookware — your cutting board should match. Our boards are handcrafted from quality wood using traditional techniques, built to handle daily cooking without warping or wearing out. They look as good as they perform.

Use this when: Talking to serious home cooks who ask about materials, durability, or wood type. Use this in Etsy listings targeting cooking enthusiasts and in Instagram captions showing boards in action.

"Local Craft, Global Reach"

Best for: Etsy Craft Collectors

We make every board by hand in Seattle — no factories, no shortcuts. You can customize yours with a name, design, or message, and we ship it straight to your door. If you want something real and made by a person, this is it.

Use this when: Use this in your Etsy shop bio, listing descriptions, and any social media targeting online craft buyers. Emphasize the handmade process and customization.

All pitches are best guesses 🐾 These messages are based on what we know about each customer type. As you talk to real prospects, pay attention to which phrases get a reaction and which fall flat. Update your pitch language based on what you learn.

Where to Find Customers

Specific places and actions for reaching each customer type, organized by urgency.

Start Now

Seattle Farmers Market Booth

Best for: Local Food Enthusiasts | Cost: Low

Your customers are already there, in a buying mindset, and can touch and see the product before purchasing.

- Book your next 4 market dates at Capitol Hill, Ballard, or University District farmers markets — apply at seattlefarmersmarkets.org
- Set up a display that shows the customization process: have a sample board with engraving visible and a simple order form on the table
- Bring 3–5 ready-made boards at different price points so people can buy on the spot without waiting for custom orders
- Collect every buyer's email address — use a simple paper sign-up sheet or a free Square account to capture it at checkout

Etsy Shop Listings

Best for: Etsy Craft Collectors | Cost: Low

Etsy buyers are actively searching for handmade, Heirloom Woodcraft — your product is a natural fit for the platform's search intent.

- Create at least 5 listings with distinct titles using search terms like 'personalized cutting board,' 'custom engraved cutting board,' and 'wedding gift cutting board'
- Shoot photos in natural light showing the board in a real kitchen, close-ups of engraving, and a size reference — use your phone, no camera needed
- Set your processing time honestly (e.g., 5–7 days) and offer a rush option at a \$15–\$20 premium to capture last-minute gift buyers
- After every sale, send a follow-up message asking the buyer to leave a review — your first 10 reviews are the most important thing you can get

Start Soon

Instagram Visual Content

Best for: Home Cooking Hobbyists | Cost: Free

Home cooks and kitchen enthusiasts follow food and kitchen content on Instagram — showing your boards in real cooking contexts puts you in front of the right people.

- Post 3 times per week: one photo of a finished board, one short video (15–30 seconds) showing the engraving or woodworking process, and one lifestyle shot of the board in a kitchen

- Use hashtags like #cuttingboard #customcuttingboard #seattlemade #handmadekitchen #woodworking in every post
- Tag Seattle food bloggers and local cooking accounts in relevant posts — if one reshares you, it can drive dozens of followers overnight
- Add your Etsy shop link to your Instagram bio and mention it in every post caption

Etsy Gift Season Promotions

Best for: Gift Buyers | Cost: Low

Gift buyers spike around Mother's Day, Father's Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas — Etsy's search volume for personalized gifts jumps 3–5x during these windows.

- Update your Etsy listing titles and first photo to include 'gift' language 4 weeks before each major holiday (e.g., 'Personalized Wedding Gift Cutting Board')
- Create a dedicated 'Gift Bundle' listing that pairs a cutting board with a care kit or recipe card at a slight premium
- Run Etsy Offsite Ads at \$1–\$3/day during the 3 weeks before Mother's Day and Christmas to test paid reach — Etsy handles the targeting
- Add a gift-wrapping option to every listing for \$5–\$8 extra — it increases average order value and reduces buyer hesitation

⌘ Start Later (after first expeditions)

Local Wedding and Event Vendor Networks

Best for: Gift Buyers | Cost: Free

Wedding planners and event coordinators are always looking for unique, personalized gifts for couples — a referral from one planner can bring multiple orders.

- Identify 10 Seattle-area wedding planners on Instagram or The Knot and send each a direct message with a photo of your best board and a simple offer: a free sample in exchange for a referral
- Drop off a sample board and business card at 3–5 local bridal boutiques or gift shops in Capitol Hill or Fremont
- List your business on Etsy's 'Wedding' category and add 'wedding gift' and 'bridal shower gift' to your listing tags
- Ask your first 5 wedding-gift buyers if they have a wedding planner — if so, ask permission to reach out to that planner directly

How You Stand Out

You're creating something new

No competitive research has been done yet. You don't know who else is selling Heirloom Woodcraft on Etsy or at Seattle farmers markets. This is a gap you need to close in the next two weeks — see the action plan for specific steps.

Similar (But Different) Businesses

These aren't direct competitors, but they compete for the same customer budget and attention. They're also potential partners.

They do this	What they offer	What you offer differently
Mass-market retailers	Cheap to mid-range cutting boards, some with basic engraving, available instantly in-store or with Prime shipping	Fully custom designs, handmade by a local Seattle maker — not a factory. Buyers get a real person, not a SKU.
Other Etsy cutting board sellers	Similar custom engraved boards, often at competitive prices, with established review counts	Local Seattle story, farmers market presence for in-person buyers, and the ability to meet the maker — something no remote Etsy seller can offer.
Local craft fairs and markets	Handmade wood goods with a local story, sold in the same physical spaces	Specialization in cutting boards with full customization — not a generalist woodworker. Depth beats breadth for buyers who know what they want.
Big-box personalization services	Fast, cheap personalization on generic products with no craft story	Real wood, real craft, real maker. The product is the story — not just a name stamped on a generic item.

What Makes You Hard to Copy

- Made by hand in Seattle — buyers can meet you in person at the farmers market, which no online-only seller can match
- Full customization: names, dates, designs, and messages — not just a font choice on a template
- Dual-channel presence (in-person + Etsy) means buyers can discover you online and pick up locally, or vice versa
- Specialist focus on cutting boards — you know the product deeply, which shows in quality and customer conversations
- Local story and maker identity — in a market full of anonymous sellers, a face and a name builds trust fast

Your Biggest Risk

Etsy is crowded with custom cutting board sellers, many with hundreds of reviews. Until you have 20+ reviews and strong photos, you will be invisible in search results. Getting your first

10 Etsy reviews is the single most important thing you can do online.

Questions to Answer

These are the most important things you don't know yet. Each one has a practical way to find the answer. Treat this as your learning roadmap.

What are buyers actually willing to pay for a custom cutting board?

How to find out: At your next 2 farmers market appearances, test two price points on similar boards and track which sells faster. Also look at the top 10 Etsy competitors and note their pricing and review counts.

● **CRITICAL**

Who is actually buying — gift buyers, home cooks, or local food enthusiasts?

How to find out: Ask every buyer at the farmers market: 'Is this for yourself or a gift?' Track the answers over 4 market visits. After 20 buyers, you'll have a clear pattern.

● **CRITICAL**

What customization options do buyers want most — names, dates, designs, or something else?

How to find out: Ask every buyer what they'd want engraved and why. Note the top 3 requests. This will tell you what to feature in your Etsy listings and booth display.

● **HIGH**

Who else is selling Heirloom Woodcraft on Etsy and at Seattle markets, and how do you compare?

How to find out: Spend 30 minutes searching 'custom cutting board' on Etsy. Note the top 10 sellers' prices, photos, review counts, and what they emphasize. Then walk the next farmers market and look for other woodworkers.

● **CRITICAL**

Does your Etsy shop get found in search, or are you invisible?

How to find out: Search your own product keywords on Etsy ('personalized cutting board Seattle') and see where your listings appear. If you're not on page 1, your titles and tags need work — use eRank (free tool) to find better keywords.

● **HIGH**

How long does it take you to make one board, and what does that mean for your pricing?

How to find out: Time yourself making 3 boards of different sizes. Calculate your hourly rate, add materials cost, and check if your current prices cover your time at a rate you're happy with.

● **HIGH**

Can you handle a rush of orders before a major holiday without burning out?

How to find out: Estimate how many boards you can make in a week at full capacity. Set a maximum order limit in your Etsy shop and plan your market inventory 3 weeks before Mother's Day and Christmas.

• **MEDIUM**

What's Still Open

These are decisions you'll need to make as you learn from your first customers. None of them need to be decided today — but keep them on your radar.

Should you focus on farmers markets, Etsy, or both equally right now?

- Focus on farmers markets first — pro: immediate cash, real customer feedback; con: limited reach and weather-dependent
- Focus on Etsy first — pro: 24/7 sales, national reach; con: slow to build without reviews, competitive
- Run both equally — pro: tests both channels simultaneously; con: splits your limited time and energy

Recommendation: Run both, but treat farmers markets as your primary feedback engine and Etsy as your long-term growth channel. Markets give you fast learning; Etsy gives you scale.

When to decide: Decide before you book your next market dates — you need to know how much time to reserve for Etsy listing work.

Should you offer ready-made boards at the market or custom-order only?

- Ready-made only — pro: instant sale, no waiting; con: less personalization, lower perceived value
- Custom-order only — pro: higher price, more personal; con: buyers can't take anything home today
- Both: a few ready-made plus custom orders — pro: captures impulse buyers and planners; con: more inventory to manage

Recommendation: Bring 3–5 ready-made boards to capture impulse buyers, and take custom orders for everything else. This maximizes revenue per market day.

When to decide: Decide before your next market appearance so you know what to make in advance.

What price range should you set for your boards?

- Price low (\$30–\$60) to compete on Etsy — pro: more sales volume; con: may not cover your time
- Price mid-range (\$60–\$100) — pro: balances volume and margin; con: need strong photos and reviews to justify
- Price premium (\$100–\$150+) — pro: higher margin, positions as luxury gift; con: harder to sell without established reputation

Recommendation: Start mid-range and test. If boards sell out at the market, raise your price. If they sit, lower it. Let real buyers tell you the right number.

When to decide: Set a starting price before your first market, then revisit after 4 market appearances or 10 Etsy sales.

Should you invest in paid Etsy ads now or wait until you have more reviews?

- Run ads now — pro: faster visibility; con: low reviews mean low conversion, wasted spend
- Wait until 10+ reviews — pro: ads convert better with social proof; con: slower growth in the short term
- Run a tiny \$1/day test now — pro: learn the system cheaply; con: results won't be statistically meaningful

Recommendation: Wait until you have at least 10 reviews before spending real money on Etsy ads. Run a \$1/day test to learn the interface, but don't scale it yet.

When to decide: Revisit when your Etsy review count hits 10.