SAMPLE REPORT — FICTIONAL DEAL. This listing, site, seller and all figures were invented to demonstrate our report format. Any resemblance to real listings or persons is coincidental.

VetThatDeal — Deal Scan Report

Independent deal inspection. Before you wire.

Prepared for: Sample Client · **Date:** November 21, 2026 · **Turnaround:** 41 hours **Target:** patioplantlab.com (fictional) — content site, home & patio gardening niche **Asking price:** $84,000 · Seller-stated profit: $2,800/mo · Implied multiple: 30× monthly profit **Listed on:** a major online-business marketplace · Seller handle: "PlantProfits22" (fictional)

How to read this report

This report checks what the seller says against the evidence you gave us and against public information. It does not tell you whether to buy. It shows what holds up, what does not, and what to ask before you decide.

The Risk Score (0–100) adds up eight risk areas. A higher number means more unanswered problems. 0–25 standard caution · 26–50 room to negotiate · 51–75 significant concerns · 76–100 walk-away territory. The score is a summary of the evidence, not a recommendation.

Every finding carries one label:

Label	What it means	What to do with it
Verified	We saw primary evidence, such as a payout statement, an analytics export or a public record.	You can rely on it as fact for the period we checked.
Seller-claimed	The seller says it, but we saw no proof. It may well be true.	Ask for the proof before you rely on it.
Red flag	The evidence contradicts the listing, or shows a serious risk the listing does not mention.	Raise it with the seller. It usually affects price or terms.
Unknown	We could not check it, usually because the documents were not provided.	Treat it as an open question until it is answered.

Words you will see

- **Multiple:** the asking price divided by monthly profit. A 30× multiple means the price equals 30 months of profit, so the business pays for itself in about 2.5 years if profit stays the same.
- **Trailing 12 months (TTM):** the average of the last 12 months. It smooths out good and bad months, so it is the fairest view of profit.
- **Google core update:** a change Google makes a few times a year to how it ranks websites. It can raise or cut a site's visitors overnight, and the loss often lasts.
- **Organic traffic:** visitors who arrive from unpaid search results, mostly Google.
- **Sessions:** visits to the site. One person can make several.
- **Display ads / affiliate income:** money from ads shown on the pages, and commissions from products sold through the site's links (here, Amazon).
- **Concentration:** how much depends on one thing. If one page, one source or one partner disappears, how much income goes with it.
- **SDE (seller's discretionary earnings):** the profit a single owner-operator takes home, after all real running costs.
- **AI answers:** summaries that search engines now show above the results. When they answer the question, fewer people click through to sites like this one.

Verdict

Risk Score: 64 / 100 — Significant concerns

In plain terms: the site is real and technically clean, but the profit and traffic shown in the listing are higher than the evidence supports today. Most of the price rests on three articles and on Google, and the traffic fell sharply this year for a reason the listing does not mention.

Risk area	What it measures	Level
Financial integrity	Are the profit numbers real, complete, and backed by primary records?	Elevated
Traffic & demand authenticity	Is the audience real and stable, and will it continue after you buy?	**High**
Seller & counterparty	Who you're buying from: track record, consistency, public footprint	Moderate
Concentration	How much hangs on a single page, channel, customer, or platform	**High**
Transferability	What actually survives the handover to a new owner	Low
Legal & IP	Ownership of content and name, licenses, compliance exposure	Moderate
Market & AI exposure	Is the niche itself healthy, or one AI answer away from shrinking?	Elevated
Valuation	Does the asking price match the evidence?	Elevated

Top 5 findings

1. **RED FLAG — The "seasonal dip" lines up with a Google update.** Traffic fell 38% beginning the exact week of the March 2026 core update and has not recovered. The listing attributes this to "normal spring seasonality." Prior-year data shows no comparable spring dip. *(Module 3)* **What this means:** a seasonal dip comes back on its own; a ranking loss from a Google update often does not. Today's lower traffic is the more realistic starting point for what you would be buying.
2. **RED FLAG — Profit is quoted from the best 3 months.** The $2,800/mo figure is the June–August average. Trailing-12-month average is $1,910/mo, which puts the real multiple at 44×, not 30×. *(Module 2)* **What this means:** on a full year of results, the price equals about 44 months of profit (over 3.5 years to earn it back) instead of the 30 months the listing implies.
3. **RED FLAG — 54% of traffic rides on 3 articles**, all competing for keywords where AI answer boxes now appear above the #1 result. *(Modules 4, 7)* **What this means:** if those three pages lose their rankings, or AI answers take their clicks, more than half the visitors and income could go with them.
4. **Seller-claimed, unverified — the 9,200-subscriber email list.** The one campaign screenshot shows 211 opens (2.3%). Either the list is stale or far smaller than claimed. We could not verify. *(Module 2)* **What this means:** the email list cannot be treated as a working asset until the seller shows recent campaign reports.
5. **Seller's track record raises questions.** A profile matching this seller's handle sold a similar plant-niche site in 2024; public forum posts by its buyer report traffic collapsed within 5 months. Identity match is probable, not certain — disclosed accordingly. *(Module 9)* **What this means:** this is not proof of anything. It is a reason to ask the seller directly about past sales and, if possible, to speak with a previous buyer.

What would change this picture most: analytics *access* (not screenshots) for 24 months; payout reports for all 12 months; the seller's answers to Questions 1–6.

Findings by module

Each module below starts with what we checked and why it matters to a buyer, then lists the findings with their labels, then sums up what they mean.

1. Listing integrity — Elevated risk

What we check: does the listing say what the evidence says? We compare every claim in the ad against the documents behind it, and look at the listing's own history (price drops, relists, how profit is framed). Why it matters: the listing is a sales document. Gaps between the ad and the evidence show where the price may rest on optimism.

- **Verified:** Listing live 74 days; price reduced once ($96k → $84k).
- **Red flag:** Profit quoted from best-3-month window (see Module 2).

- **Seller-claimed:** "Premium ad network account transfers with the site." The network's published rules require requalification at transfer. *(→ Question 7)*

What this means: the listing presents the business at its best moment. The ad network's account may not pass to you automatically; if the site fails to requalify, ad income could drop or stop.

2. Financial forensics — Elevated risk

What we check: we rebuild the profit picture from primary records — payout statements, processor exports — rather than trusting the seller's spreadsheet, and we test whether stated costs reflect what it really takes to run the business. Why it matters: profit is what you are paying for. If it is overstated, every month you own the business earns less than the price assumed.

- **Verified:** Ad-network payouts for 7 of 12 months, matching seller's spreadsheet for those months ($1,480–$2,950/mo range).
- **Unknown:** The remaining 5 months — screenshots only, no payout statements.
- **Red flag:** Trailing-12 profit $1,910/mo vs listed $2,800/mo (best-3-months). At asking price that's a 44× multiple.
- **Red flag:** $340/mo "virtual assistant, optional" excluded from costs — yet the virtual assistant published 15 posts/month. The content cadence the valuation depends on is not optional.
- **Seller-claimed:** Amazon affiliate income $610/mo. Only a dashboard screenshot; no earnings report export.

What this means: the income we could check is real, but the realistic monthly profit is closer to $1,570 ($1,910 minus the $340 assistant cost) than $2,800. Five months and the Amazon income still need real statements.

3. Traffic authenticity — High risk

What we check: where visitors actually come from, whether the trend is genuine, and what really explains any rise or fall — including whether a decline the seller calls "seasonal" lines up with something else, like a search-engine update. Why it matters: for a content site, visitors are the income. You need to know whether the audience will still be there after you buy.

- **Verified (from the analytics export you provided):** 61,000 → 38,000 monthly sessions between February and April 2026; flat since.
- **Red flag:** Decline aligns to the day with the March 2026 core update. Prior-year spring shows *growth*. The "seasonality" explanation is contradicted by the seller's own data.
- **Verified:** 92% of traffic is Google organic. Direct + social + email combined: under 5%.
- **Unknown:** Search Console (Google's ranking report) access not provided; we cannot confirm which pages lost rankings. *(→ Question 2)*

What this means: the visitors are real, but there are about 38% fewer of them than in February, and almost all come from Google. The site's future depends heavily on how Google ranks it.

4. Concentration — High risk

What we check: single points of failure — how much of the revenue and traffic depends on one page, one traffic source, one ad network, one customer, or one platform's goodwill. Why it matters: dependencies stack. One change outside your control can remove most of the income at once.

- **Verified:** Top 3 articles = 54% of all sessions; top 10 = 78%.
- **Verified:** Revenue is 76% display ads (one network) + 21% one affiliate program (Amazon).
- **Red flag:** Three single points of failure stacked: one traffic source → one ad network → three articles.

What this means: losing Google rankings, the ad network account, or the top three articles would each hit income hard, and they can happen together.

5. Technical & transferability — Low risk

What we check: what the site runs on, its health and security, and what breaks when it changes hands: accounts that must transfer, licenses tied to the seller, and anything the new owner must know how to operate. Why it matters: a business that cannot be handed over cleanly loses value on day one.

- **Verified:** Standard WordPress on common hosting; licensed theme; clean malware scan; site loads acceptably on mobile.
- **Note:** Domain registered through a registrar that supports easy transfer. No proprietary systems.

What this means: this is the deal's genuinely clean area. A new owner can take over and run the site with common tools.

6. Legal & IP surface — Moderate risk

What we check: who owns the content and the name, what is properly licensed, and what legal cleanup a buyer would inherit. We flag issues for your attorney; we don't give legal advice. Why it matters: problems with images or the name become the new owner's problems after the sale.

- **Verified:** 212 of 480 images lack identifiable licenses (no credits, no stock metadata). *(→ Question 9)*
- **Seller-claimed:** "All content original or properly licensed."
- **Note:** No trademark registered for the site name; a similarly named brand sells planters on Amazon. Flag only — confirm with counsel. *(→ Question 11)*

What this means: some images may need to be replaced or licensed after purchase, which is a known cost. The name question is worth a short check with your attorney.

7. Market & AI exposure — Elevated risk

What we check: whether the niche itself is growing or shrinking, how defensible the site's position is, and how exposed its content is to AI answers replacing the search visits it lives on. Why it matters: even a well-run site loses value if people stop needing to click on it.

- **Verified:** For the site's top 5 keywords, AI-generated answer summaries now appear above organic results in 4 of 5 (checked Nov 20–21, 2026).
- **Inference:** "What is / how to" gardening queries are among the most exposed to AI answers; the site's informational-only content mix (vs product-testing content) heightens this.

What this means: the questions this site answers are the kind AI now answers directly on the search page, so fewer searchers may click through over time.

8. Valuation sanity — Elevated risk

What we check: what the asking price actually implies, measured against current market multiples for this type and size of business, plus a stress test of what the price looks like if income drops. Why it matters: it tells you how long it would take to earn your money back, and how that changes if things get worse.

- On *trailing-12* profit, asking price = 44× monthly. Recent marketplace ranges for declining-traffic content sites have run meaningfully below 30× [current comparables cited in live reports; illustrative here].
- Sensitivity: if the top 3 pages lose half their traffic, trailing profit falls toward ~$1,100/mo, and the asking price implies 76× — i.e., a 6-year payback on today's trajectory.

What this means: the price reflects the site's best months. On full-year numbers it is priced above what similar declining sites usually sell for, and a further traffic loss would stretch the payback to around six years.

9. Seller & counterparty — Moderate risk *(screening tier: Full — US-based seller)*

What we check: who you're buying from, using public records and public posts only: identity consistency, lawsuits and bankruptcy checks, marketplace track record, and whether their public statements match the listing's story. Business-relevant signals only; uncertainty is always disclosed. Why it matters: you rely on the seller's honesty and cooperation during the handover. Their past sales and public statements help you judge how much to verify yourself.

- **Verified:** Marketplace account active since 2021; 2 prior completed sales.
- **Publicly reported:** A 2024 sale of a similar plant-niche site by a matching handle; the buyer's forum posts describe post-sale traffic collapse. Identity match probable, not confirmed — treated as a question, not an accusation. *(→ Question 14)*
- **Social presence (public posts only):** LinkedIn/X profiles consistent with claimed 3-year ownership; a public X post from April 2026 — "core update hit my portfolio hard" — is inconsistent with the listing's seasonality narrative.
- **Verified:** No bankruptcy filings or civil judgments found under the associated business entity (county + federal search, Nov 21, 2026).

What this means: no legal or financial trouble was found. The seller's own public post describes the traffic drop differently from the listing, and one past sale is worth asking about directly.

The Question Sheet (send these before your next call)

Ordered by what would change the deal. Clear answers to Questions 1–6 would move this report the most.

1. Provide payout statements (not screenshots) for all 12 months from the ad network and Amazon.
2. Grant read-only Google Search Console access for 24 months of data.
3. Walk me through the Feb–Apr 2026 traffic decline. Which pages lost rankings, and what recovery steps were taken?
4. Recalculate seller discretionary earnings using trailing 12 months. Do you stand by the $2,800/mo figure?
5. The virtual assistant who published 15 posts/month — cost, hours, and will they stay on after sale?
6. Export the email list's last 6 campaign reports (sends, opens, clicks, unsubscribes).
7. Has the ad network confirmed in writing that the account survives an ownership transfer?
8. What % of revenue came from Q4 holiday affiliate spikes in each of the last 2 years?
9. List all image sources and licenses, or confirm which images would need replacement.
10. Any paid traffic, link purchases, or private blog network (PBN) usage — ever?
11. Is the site's name trademarked, and are you aware of the similarly named Amazon brand?
12. What happened to the two prior sites you sold? May I speak with either buyer?
13. Your April 2026 post mentioned the core update hitting your portfolio. Which properties?
14. Confirm: is the 2024 plant-niche site sale under a matching handle yours?
15. Why are you selling this site now?

Negotiation levers (informational)

Findings you may choose to raise with the seller. We do not negotiate for you or structure deals.

- Trailing-12 earnings vs listed earnings (44× vs 30×) — the central pricing conversation.
- Unresolved traffic decline + AI exposure on top pages — supports pricing on *current* trajectory, not peak.
- The virtual assistant's cost belongs in the profit figure — it directly reduces SDE.
- Image licensing cleanup — a quantifiable post-sale cost.
- Structures buyers commonly use in cases like this: price tied to trailing-12 profit; a holdback (part of the price paid later, after the handover checks out); or an earn-out (part of the price paid only if traffic holds for 90 days). *(Discuss with your attorney; we don't structure deals.)*

Transfer checklist (content site)

Domain unlock + auth code · hosting migration or account transfer · ad network re-application window planned · Amazon affiliate account linkage rules confirmed · email list export + consent records · social accounts + brand assets · content backlog and virtual assistant handoff · post-transfer monitoring (rankings, payouts) for 90 days.

Scope & limits

We analyzed materials provided by the buyer plus public sources, Nov 19–21, 2026. We did not access seller systems, audit tax filings, or verify bank records. Findings marked Seller-claimed or Unknown are exactly that. **This report is independent informational analysis. It is not investment, financial, legal or tax advice, and we make no recommendation to buy or not buy.** Decisions are yours; for legal or tax questions, use licensed professionals.

Analyst sign-off: [Analyst name] · VetThatDeal · vetthatdeal.com · Report ID SAMPLE-001

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