LAUNCH & EXECUTE

BUSINESS LAUNCH TIMELINE

Sequence the work, protect dependencies, and coordinate a disciplined launch.

2026 EDITION | PRACTICAL BUSINESS RESOURCE

01 / LAUNCH DEFINITION

Set the Launch Window and Outcome

Define what is launching, for whom, when, and what must be operationally true. The timeline should connect strategy, production, readiness, market activation, and stabilization.

Planning decision	Definition
Business, product, or initiative	
Priority customer / market	
Launch type	New business / Offer / Market / Location / Platform
Target launch date	
Earliest acceptable date	
Latest acceptable date	
Primary customer action	
Primary business outcome	
Launch owner	
Final go / no-go authority	

Conditions that must be true at launch

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Conditions that may be completed after launch

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02 / PHASE ARCHITECTURE

Define the Launch Phases

Use phases to organize distinct types of work and decisions. Dates may overlap, but each phase must have a clear result and exit condition.

Phase	Start	Finish	Required result	Exit condition	Owner
1. Strategy & validation					
2. Offer & business model					
3. Brand & customer experience					
4. Digital & technology build					
5. Operations & delivery readiness					
6. Marketing & sales preparation					
7. Testing & final readiness					
8. Launch & stabilization					

- ☐ Phase exit conditions are observable and approved.
- ☐ The sequence reflects real dependencies rather than convenient dates.
- ☐ Launch-critical work is separated from desirable future work.
- ☐ Every phase has one accountable owner.

03 / MILESTONE MAP

Identify the Major Completion Points

Define milestones as finished decisions, approvals, tested capabilities, or customer-ready outcomes—not vague percentages of completion.

Milestone	Phase	Completion evidence	Owner	Due	Approval	Status
1						Not started
2						Not started
3						Not started
4						Not started
5						Not started
6						Not started
7						Not started
8						Not started
9						Not started
10						Not started
11						Not started
12						Not started

Milestone that determines the earliest credible launch date

Milestone with the least timing flexibility

04 / CRITICAL PATH

Protect the Work That Controls the Launch Date

Map the sequence of dependent items that determines the earliest possible launch. A delay on the critical path requires immediate recovery or a date decision.

Critical-path item	Predecessor	Duration	Start	Finish	Owner	Recovery option

Critical-path controls

- ☐ Durations include review, approval, testing, and correction time.
- ☐ External suppliers and approvals have confirmed dates.
- ☐ Recovery options are defined before delay occurs.
- ☐ No one shortens quality, safety, legal, or customer protections to recover time.
- ☐ The launch date is changed explicitly when the path is no longer credible.

05 / WORKSTREAM TIMELINE

Coordinate Parallel Work

Plan the major workstreams together so that interdependent teams do not build from different assumptions, dates, or versions.

Workstream	Start	Finish	Primary deliverable	Dependency	Owner	Status
Strategy / leadership						
Offer / pricing						
Brand / content						
Website / digital						
Technology / data						
Marketing / communications						
Sales / partnerships						
Operations / fulfillment						
Finance / controls						
People / training						
Legal / compliance						
Customer support						

Workstreams requiring the closest coordination

06 / DEPENDENCIES

Manage Inputs, Handoffs, and Approvals

Record what each task requires, who provides it, when it is needed, and what happens if it is late or incomplete.

Required input / dependency	Needed by	Provider	Due	Acceptance evidence	If late / incomplete

Approval schedule

Approval	Approver	Submission date	Decision date	Rework allowance

07 / TESTING

Schedule Validation and Correction

Testing must occur before launch pressure removes the time to respond. Define the test, acceptance standard, correction window, and retest date.

Test	Owner	Test date	Acceptance standard	Correction due	Retest	Approved
Offer / customer response						☐
Website / mobile experience						☐
Forms / checkout / payment						☐
Tracking / data / integrations						☐
Sales process						☐
Fulfillment / service delivery						☐
Onboarding / confirmation						☐
Customer support						☐
Security / privacy / access						☐
Accessibility / compliance						☐
Capacity / stress test						☐

Known condition that requires a contingency rather than a full correction

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08 / READINESS GATES

Create the Go / No-Go Schedule

Use staged readiness decisions instead of waiting until launch day. Each gate should close defined risks and authorize the next level of commitment.

Gate	Timing	Decision scope	Required evidence	Approver	Outcome
Gate 1 - Direction					Go / Revise / Stop
Gate 2 - Build					Go / Revise / Stop
Gate 3 - Market readiness					Go / Delay / Stop
Gate 4 - Operational readiness					Go / Delay / Stop
Gate 5 - Final launch					Go / Conditional / Delay

Final readiness dimensions

- ☐ Offer, pricing, claims, and terms are approved.
- ☐ Customer journey and critical systems have passed testing.
- ☐ Marketing, sales, service, and delivery teams are prepared.
- ☐ Capacity, finance, controls, and contingencies are credible.
- ☐ Tracking, escalation, and launch-day ownership are active.

09 / LAUNCH WEEK

Coordinate the Final Seven Days

Create an hour-appropriate run of show for final checks, publication, customer response, performance monitoring, and escalation.

Day / window	Action or checkpoint	Owner	Evidence	Decision / escalation
T-7				
T-6				
T-5				
T-4				
T-3				
T-2				
T-1				
Launch - AM				
Launch - PM				
T+1				
T+2 to T+3				

Launch command channel, meeting time, and escalation contact

10 / STABILIZATION

Plan the First 30 Days After Launch

A launch is not complete when the campaign begins. Schedule customer support, operational monitoring, issue correction, learning, and the transition into routine ownership.

Period	Priority outcome	Monitoring / action	Owner	Decision point
Days 1-3				
Days 4-7				
Week 2				
Week 3				
Week 4				
Day 30 review				

Stabilization measures

Measure	Expected range	Escalation threshold	Source
Customer response			
Conversion / revenue			
Delivery / activation			
Quality / complaints			
System performance			
Capacity / workload			

11 / TIMELINE CONTROL

Update Status and Manage Change

Maintain one authoritative timeline. Record changes to scope, date, cost, quality, dependency, or ownership so every team operates from the same plan.

Timeline item	Baseline date	Current date	Variance	Reason / evidence	Recovery / decision	Owner

Change record

Change	Impact on scope / time / cost / quality	Approved by	Date

12 / REFERENCE NOTES

Use Guidance

Build the timeline with accountable owners and the people responsible for approvals, testing, delivery, and customer response. Review it frequently enough to act before dates fail.

Recommended working sequence

Step	Working action
01	Define the launch window, outcome, customer, owner, and decision authority.
02	Create phases with clear results and exit conditions.
03	Identify milestones and map the launch-critical sequence.
04	Coordinate workstreams, dependencies, handoffs, and approvals.
05	Schedule testing, correction, retesting, and readiness gates.
06	Build the launch-week run of show and post-launch stabilization plan.
07	Maintain one current timeline and document all material changes.

Final timeline quality check

- ☐ The target date follows a credible sequence of work.
- ☐ Milestones represent completed and verifiable outcomes.
- ☐ Critical-path items have owners and recovery options.
- ☐ Dependencies and approvals have confirmed dates.
- ☐ Testing includes correction and retest time.
- ☐ Launch week and stabilization have explicit ownership.
- ☐ All teams use the same current timeline.

Important: This timeline provides general business-planning guidance. Confirm operational, employment, privacy, safety, accessibility, financial, regulatory, contractual, tax, and other requirements for your business and markets.

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