BUSINESS LAUNCH CHECKLIST

For anyone starting a stone care practice of their own.

YOUR BUSINESS NAME	STATE	DATE STARTED

LEGAL AND FINANCIAL

- [ ] Business structure chosen — sole proprietor, LLC, or non-profit
- [ ] Entity registered with the Secretary of State
- [ ] EIN obtained from the IRS (free, online, takes ten minutes)
- [ ] Business bank account opened, separate from personal
- [ ] Trade name / DBA registered if operating under a different name
- [ ] General liability insurance in force — ask specifically about work on historic property
- [ ] Workers' compensation if you will have employees or regular helpers
- [ ] Bookkeeping method chosen and actually being used
- [ ] Sales tax registration checked — rules differ for services versus products by state
- [ ] Local business license or town permit checked

BEFORE THE FIRST PAYING JOB

- [ ] Written estimate template ready
- [ ] Contract or work agreement template ready — scope, price, timeline, what is excluded
- [ ] Permission request letter template ready
- [ ] Condition survey and cleaning log forms printed or on a tablet
- [ ] Photographic documentation routine settled — before, during, after, same angles
- [ ] Pricing worked out per hour and per stone, tested against a real job
- [ ] Payment method set up — how a town office can actually pay you

EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

- [ ] D/2 Biological Solution in quantity
- [ ] Sprayers — separate and labelled for water and for biocide
- [ ] Natural-bristle brushes in several widths
- [ ] Wooden and plastic scrapers
- [ ] Lime mortar and conservation-grade adhesive for repair work
- [ ] Probe for locating buried markers
- [ ] Safety gear — gloves, eye protection, knee pads, first aid
- [ ] Water transport — most old cemeteries have no spigot
- [ ] Camera and a scale or ruler for documentation photographs

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TRAINING AND CREDIBILITY

- [ ] Hands-on workshop attended — not just reading
- [ ] Reference library assembled
- [ ] Practice stones completed and documented before charging anyone
- [ ] Portfolio of before-and-after photographs
- [ ] References from first projects, even unpaid ones

FINDING THE FIRST CLIENTS

- [ ] Local historical society contacted
- [ ] Town cemetery committees identified and contacted
- [ ] DAR and SAR chapters in the region contacted
- [ ] Genealogy and historical societies told you exist
- [ ] Funeral homes and monument dealers introduced to
- [ ] Website or at least a one-page listing with photographs and contact details
- [ ] Grant programs identified — state historic preservation office, America 250, local trusts

FIRST-YEAR NOTES

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