SELL

Selling a Business

Prepare the company before a buyer starts asking questions.

A four-page guide to making the business easier to understand, trust, transfer, and value.

SELL / RECOGNIZE THE MOMENT

The exit may be years away. The preparation starts now.

Sell is not only a transaction. It is the work of making the business transferable before the market sees it.

You may be here if...

- You may sell, retire, transfer ownership, or step back within the next few years.
- The business still depends heavily on your relationships or daily decisions.
- Financial records, contracts, or operating procedures would be difficult to hand to a buyer.
- You do not yet have a shared view of value, risk, taxes, or life after the transition.

WHAT THIS STAGE NEEDS

Clean evidence, lower owner dependence, organized records, and a coordinated advisor team working from the same timeline.

SELL / FOCUS

Build what a buyer can trust

A buyer pays for understandable earnings and a business that can keep working after the owner leaves.

CLEAN FINANCIALS

Consistent monthly statements that reconcile and tie to filed returns.

DEFENSIBLE EARNINGS

Documented owner, one-time, and unusual items - not unsupported add-backs.

TRANSFERABLE VALUE

Diverse customers, recurring revenue, a capable team, and documented processes.

ORGANIZED EVIDENCE

Contracts, leases, records, payroll, ownership, and key reports ready for review.

THE SELL GOAL

A buyer can understand how the business earns money, see the risks clearly, and believe the company can perform without the founder holding every thread.

SELL / NEXT STEPS

Prepare before you go to market

Ideally begin two to three years ahead. If the timeline is shorter, start with the highest-risk gaps.

- [ ] Choose a possible sale or transition window and work backward.
- [ ] Clean and lock monthly books; make financials and tax returns agree.
- [ ] Document owner compensation, personal expenses, and one-time items.
- [ ] Reduce owner dependence and write down the processes a buyer must inherit.
- [ ] Organize a secure data room and resolve legal, lease, tax, and record gaps early.
- [ ] Coordinate the accountant, tax advisor, attorney, broker, valuation, and wealth advisors.

Bring to the conversation

- Three years of financial statements and tax returns, if available.
- Customer concentration, major contracts, leases, debt, and ownership records.
- A list of work or relationships that still depend on the owner.
- Your target timing and what a successful transition means personally.

See what a buyer will see

ACB can review the financial foundation, identify preparation gaps, and support the accounting work alongside the rest of your deal team.

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