

Case Study: SaaS Product Turnaround

Product: B2C SaaS — test prep and technical reference platform for seafarers (English content) **My Role:** Solo Technical Product Manager — full responsibility for strategy, development, monetization, SEO, client support, and team leadership **Team:** 3 people led **Timeline:** January – July 2026 (7 months)

Product before

- **Revenue:** \$100/month (from context ads only)
- **Content:** technical articles and tests, given away free
- **Growth:** no organic growth, no repeat revenue

Product after

- **Revenue (MRR):** \$967/month — **9.7x growth**
 - **Traffic:** same traffic, ~30,000 monthly users
 - **Monetization:** premium subscriptions + PDF archives (freemium)
 - **Conversion:** 6.2% desktop, 4.5% mobile (view → purchase)
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What I did

1. **Redesigned the business model:** free → freemium. First sales within 6 weeks.
 2. **Implemented paywall with SEO-safe Schema markup** — kept Google rankings intact; no penalty, bounce rate unchanged.
 3. **Added monetization channels:** premium subscriptions, PDF sales, limited free search — revenue grew month over month.
 4. **Solved payment friction:** added crypto payments for markets where PayPal is unavailable (e.g., Turkey) — unlocked new customer segments.
 5. **Win-back follow-ups:** personally contacted every customer with an unpaid order — ~15 clients converted to paying.
 6. **Led a team of 3** through the turnaround: priorities, delegation, quality control.
 7. **Data-driven decisions:** tracked the conversion funnel by device and iterated on the weakest stage.
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Results

Metric	January	July
MRR	\$100	\$967 (9.7x)
Monthly users	~30,000	~30,000
Monetization	none	freemium + PDF sales

North star: more paying users from the same traffic — monetizing an existing audience without spending on acquisition.

Key takeaway: a product with a large audience and zero monetization can become a revenue-generating asset in 6 months — through freemium design, SEO-safe paywall implementation, and treating customers as people, not tickets.