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The Verification Checklist

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A one-page checklist for any AI answer you're about to act on, plus the prompt that surfaces hidden assumptions — the question that catches most of the mistakes that actually cost money.

The checklist

Print this, or pin it. Run it before you act on anything that matters.

#	ASK	IF YES...
1	**Is it time-sensitive?** Prices, fees, platform policies, campaign rules, software versions, anything that "changed recently".	Check a primary source. This is where models are most confident and least current.
2	**Is it local?** Rules that differ by country, platform or category — tax, shipping, what's allowed on a listing.	Confirm it applies to Malaysia and to your platform specifically.
3	**Did it cite anything?**	No source, no action. Ask for one, then open it yourself.
4	**Does being wrong cost money?**	Raise the bar. A wrong recipe costs a meal; a wrong fee assumption costs a margin.
5	**Did it agree with me suspiciously fast?**	Run the prompt below. Agreement is the default, not evidence.

Most expensive mistakes come from check one: something that was true eighteen months ago, delivered in exactly the same calm tone as everything else.

The prompt that works

> Before I act on your answer:
>
> 1. What would have to be true for your answer to be wrong?
> 2. List every assumption you made that I didn't explicitly give you.
> 3. Which of those assumptions is the most likely to be false, and what would change if it were?
> 4. Tell me the single thing I should verify first, and where I'd check it — a specific kind of source, not "do your research".
>
> Be honest if your answer relied on information that may be out of date.

This works because it asks the model to do something it's genuinely good at — reason about its own chain of assumptions — instead of something it's bad at, which is judging its own confidence.

What doesn't work

"Are you sure?" It's a politeness test, not a verification step. Push back on a correct answer and a model will often fold to keep you happy. Push back on a wrong one and it may just rephrase it. Either way you've learned nothing about whether it was right.

Asking a second AI. Two confident guesses agreeing is not evidence. They learned from overlapping material and can share the same outdated fact. Verify against a primary source, not another model.

"Double-check your answer." It will, cheerfully, and usually tell you it was right.

Where to actually check, for seller questions

THE CLAIM IS ABOUT...	CHECK IT AT...
Platform fees, commission, campaign rules	Your seller centre, and the platform's official seller education pages
Listing rules, prohibited claims	The platform's official policy pages
Tax, invoicing, business registration	The relevant government agency, or your accountant
Shipping rates, courier coverage	The courier's own rate card
A tool's pricing or features	The vendor's own pricing page, today
Your own performance	Your own data. Never the model's estimate of it.

The habit, in order

1. Ask with your constraints in the question.
2. Ask what would make the answer wrong.
3. Verify the one thing it names — at a primary source.
4. Then act. Or don't — "there isn't enough to decide" is an answer too.

The one thing to remember

Nobody gets burned by an obviously wrong answer. They get burned by a plausible, slightly outdated one delivered in the same even tone as everything else. Ask what would make it wrong, every time. It takes ten seconds.

Questions? Reply to this email — I read them all. More at @jjwong.ai — one AI play for SEA sellers, daily.