ToonieTracker

Receipts Handled

Record-Keeping for Canadian Small Business, Without the Shoebox

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Executive summary

Canadian small businesses keep their records the way they always have: in shoeboxes, glove compartments, and coat pockets. That method fails on a timer. Receipts are printed on thermal paper that fades within months, while the Canada Revenue Agency requires businesses to keep their records for six years. Every receipt that fades takes a legitimate deduction with it, and every mileage log reconstructed from memory at tax time is an estimate its owner cannot defend.

ToonieTracker is a Canadian-built web application that replaces the shoebox with a habit that takes seconds: snap the receipt when it is handed to you, verify the numbers, and let the app keep six years of records in order. Mileage is logged by odometer and calculated at current CRA rates. When the accountant needs everything, one tap sends the complete package.

This paper describes the problem ToonieTracker addresses, the principles behind its design, how the system works, and the phased rollout now under way: a private legacy beta in 2026, a founders' opening on November 27, 2026, and a full public launch on May 17, 2027.

The problem: records that self-destruct

Ask a sole proprietor where last year's receipts are and you will rarely hear the name of a system. You will hear about a drawer. The shoebox is not carelessness — it is what happens when a business owner is also the entire accounting department, working out of a truck, a market stall, or a kitchen table. Paper arrives all day; filing it is nobody's job; so it accumulates.

Three failures follow, and they compound:

- The evidence fades. Thermal receipt paper is designed for the till, not the archive. In a hot vehicle or a sunny office, a receipt can become unreadable in a single season. The CRA's six-year retention requirement does not fade with it.

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- The deduction is lost with the proof. An expense an owner genuinely incurred — fuel, materials, supplies — still needs support if the CRA asks. No readable receipt, no defensible claim. As an illustration: an owner who loses track of $200 a month in deductible expenses loses $2,400 a year in deductions, which at even a modest marginal tax rate means hundreds of dollars a year paid in tax that did not need to be paid.
- Mileage becomes fiction. Business kilometres are among the largest deductions available to anyone who drives for work, and among the hardest to reconstruct. A log written in March from memory and hope is not a log; it is a liability.

The fourth failure arrives at year-end: hours spent sorting paper on the kitchen table, or an accountant's bill padded with the cost of untangling it — or, just as often, a quiet surrender, where the owner under-claims simply to be done. Meanwhile, most record-keeping software on the market was built for another country's tax system: IRS categories, miles instead of kilometres, and no concept of GST/HST. Canadian sole proprietors are an afterthought in tools designed elsewhere.

What good looks like

ToonieTracker was designed around four principles, each one a direct answer to a failure above:

- Capture at the moment it happens. A receipt photographed at the counter takes five seconds and cannot fade. The same receipt filed in March takes an evening — if it survived.
- A human verifies every number. The app reads the receipt and proposes the figures; the owner confirms them. Automation supplies the speed, the owner's eyes supply the defensibility. Nothing is filed that a person has not checked.
- Six years, kept by default. Records are organized by tax year and retained on the CRA's timeline, not the paper's.
- The handoff is the product. Clean records that never reach the accountant in usable form have failed at the last step. Sending everything — receipts, mileage, summaries — has to be one tap, not another project.

The ToonieTracker system

ToonieTracker runs in the browser on the phone an owner already carries. No new hardware, no filing cabinet, nothing to install at a desk that may not exist.

Capture. A receipt is photographed in the app, or a PDF is dropped in. Optical character recognition reads the merchant, the date, the totals, and the tax. The owner verifies the figures on one screen and saves; the original image stays attached to the entry, so the evidence and the record are never separated.

Mileage. Trips are logged with odometer start and end readings, and the app applies the CRA per-kilometre rates automatically — for 2026, 73 cents per kilometre for the first 5,000 business kilometres and 67 cents per kilometre thereafter. The result is a contemporaneous log an owner can stand behind.

Tax-ready summaries. Entries roll up into GST/HST breakdowns and quarterly and annual reports, so the state of the year is visible before the deadline, not discovered after it.

One-tap handoff. When the accountant asks, the owner sends the complete package — receipt records with their images, the mileage log, and the tax summaries — by email or by a text-message link, in a single action. For owners who keep their own books, the same records export as a spreadsheet.

Privacy. Each business's records are isolated from every other business's, and records are never shared or sold.

Built for Canada, deliberately

ToonieTracker is not an American app with a maple leaf added. GST/HST, provincial taxes, CRA kilometre rates, and the six-year rule are not settings in the product — they are the product's home turf, present from the first line of the design. Its users are Canadian small business owners and sole proprietors: tradespeople, food businesses, market vendors, mobile services — anyone who files Canadian business taxes and is tired of the shoebox. The scope is narrow on purpose. A tool that does one country's rules properly serves its owners better than a tool that approximates everyone's.

Access, pricing, and the road in

ToonieTracker is opening in phases, so that the product is proven by real businesses before it is sold to everyone:

Phase	Who	Price
Legacy beta (now under way)	10 hand-picked Canadian businesses testing the app in real use	Free for life
Founders (opens Nov 27, 2026)	The first 30 businesses to join	$15/month or $150/year, locked for life
Standard (public launch May 17, 2027)	All Canadian small businesses	$25/month or $250/year

Every paid plan begins with a 30-day free trial, with no credit card required up front. The founder price is exactly what it says: the rate a founder joins at is the rate they keep. A waitlist is open now at toonietracker.ca for businesses that want a founder spot when the doors open.

The maker

ToonieTracker is built by ShadowCode Media, an Ontario software studio, and published under its name. Its founder, Peter Gosciola, spent more than two decades working in the restaurant industry and now operates iSharp, a Brampton-based knife-sharpening business serving restaurants and home cooks. ToonieTracker was not designed from a survey of the small-business market. It was built by someone who has run his own books out of the same shoebox — which is why the app is measured against one standard: whether a working owner will actually keep the habit on a busy day.

Conclusion

The shoebox had a long run, but it was never a system — it was an accident that paper was all there was. The records a Canadian small business is required to keep for six years deserve better than a medium that fades in six months. ToonieTracker keeps them instead: captured in seconds, verified by their owner, organized for the CRA, and one tap from the accountant.

Businesses that want in at the founder rate can join the waitlist at toonietracker.ca. Founders open November 27, 2026.

A note on advice: ToonieTracker organizes records — it does not give tax advice. The rates, rules, and figures in this paper are CRA-published information as of October 2026, provided for general information only, and the worked examples are illustrations, not predictions. Every business's tax situation is different; always have your accountant review your records before filing.