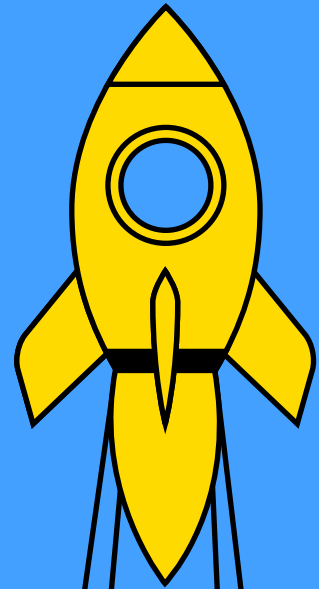


Your guide to digital marketing

For Accountants and Bookkeepers



BOMA

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About this book

The internet is usually the first place customers go to search for a product or service. Google alone processes over 99,000 searches every single second. To succeed in this new era, businesses need to be found, liked, shared and engaged with online by their current and prospective customers and clients.

In this ebook you'll get a look at the full picture.

We'll cover how to be found online, maximising your website and connecting with your audience through email and social media. We'll also look at how to track your activity with analytics and understand your return on investment. Throughout this book are easy tips and tricks to guide you.

How you apply these principles will change depending on your business and your goals. This book aims to give you a broad understanding of how these digital media channels could fit into your marketing mix, to make the most of the incredible opportunities waiting for you.

A word of advice: Reading this book cover to cover might be overwhelming. Take out the bits you want to achieve right now and come back to other chapters. For example, you may want to simply update your website's home page and start sending better client newsletters. Marketing is an iterative process. Each communication builds on the last.

And, book a time with us to talk about your accounting or bookkeeping firm. We can show you how BOMA can help you connect with and get closer to your clients.

This is a good-news story

The digital age, with all its complexities and unprecedented consumer choice, brings untold opportunities. The barriers to entry into markets have gone. Geography and size no longer limit business growth, and more consumers than ever before are seeking ever-better services and products.

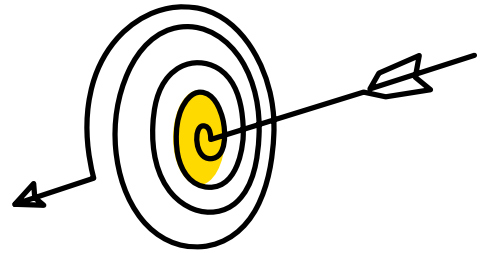
"Marketing is about people, the essentials are unchanged. If your customer is at the centre, you will provide something of value." – Ian Christie, founder and CEO, BOMA

While digital marketing requires a whole new set of skills, the fundamentals are actually unchanged from traditional marketing. There are just more options – added to the shop front and print advertisements are newer tools like email, social media and search engine marketing. But marketing is still all about making a connection with people looking for credibility and authenticity.



Define your marketing mix

The old model of the Four P's of marketing is still a great place to start.



The 4 P'S Marketing Mix

<p>Product/Service:</p> <p>What do your clients need and how do your products or services satisfy that need? This will help uncover your unique selling point.</p>	<p>Price:</p> <p>What is the value of your services to clients? How do you compare? Are clients price sensitive? Is your perceived value higher or lower than your current pricing? Do you offer discounts or added value?</p>
<p>Place:</p> <p>Where do clients find you? In your office, online, via a sales team? What do your competitors do? Can you differentiate?</p>	<p>Promotion:</p> <p>How and when do you get your message across? Is it seasonal? Can you establish a presence where your clients are?</p>

Essentially, marketing is the process of building awareness of your products and services amongst potential clients, and persuading them to choose you over another business.



CHAPTER 1

Brand

Why does your business need one?





What's in a Brand and why does your business need one?

Is it a name, a logo, a way of life, a story, a symbol, a promise or an experience? A brand is all of these. It is the external representation of your business and its services. Your brand is the 'personality' of your company, allowing your clients to have a relationship with you, beyond what your business does functionally. That may sound a bit abstract, but branding is critical for small business.

A well-established brand forms the basis of every marketing decision you make. Companies with strong brands have a powerful tool that helps gain, and keep those clients on factors other than price or product features. Your brand positions your services for clients, based on what they get, not what you do.

When done well, branding:

- Delivers the message clearly
- Confirms your credibility
- Connects with your target prospects emotionally
- Motivates the buyer
- Cements client loyalty

A brand cements your business as 'first in mind', helping drive increased business and strengthening the relationships you hold with existing clients.





1. Establish your vision

In this chapter, we look at how to develop your business's brand and create your brand assets.

The first step is to understand what you are really selling, by analysing exactly what makes your firm stand out from its competitors, and how the company really benefits your target audience. This involves a bit of internal work.

You'll need to think beyond the function of your service. For example, what are the following companies really selling? :

Xero

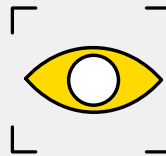
The brand is widely known as easy-to-use online accounting software. What set them apart is the way the brand has focussed heavily on celebrating small business. This has positioned the company as accessible and positive. The tagline 'doing beautiful business' challenges the perception that accounting is painful, boring and tedious. Xero's advertising is centred around real people to create a sense that Xero is all about 'us'.

Apple

While Apple is renowned for its usability, its technology is, arguably, otherwise no smarter or more advanced than any comparable brands. But Apple lovers buy the brand as much as the technology – and they're willing to pay extra for it. The brand represents uncompromising aesthetics and an endless quest for improvement, with a generous dose of superiority.

To do

Think about what your company represents beyond what you do day to day. What is your vision? What is the problem you solve for your clients? In short, what are you really selling or offering?





2. Create a brand proposition that describes why your offer is better

What is it that you do better than your competitors and why do your clients prefer you to anyone else? Once you've hit upon something, try to clearly and concisely articulate it. This is a brand proposition and should say the right thing, in the right way. That means choosing words that mean the right thing, but are also tonally right – for example, if you're a relaxed, fun-loving brand, choose casual, quirky words. If you're a serious, formal brand, stick to classic language. Here's a process you could follow:

Brainstorm

Write down what you want to say, and then come up with as many ways of articulating this same message as you can. This can be a tricky process, so give yourself time.

Test and refine

Once you have a few options you're happy with, test out your thinking on friends, family and clients, and refine your one-sentence brand proposition based on their feedback.

Consider keywords

You should also consider the keywords associated with your industry. Keywords are the words and phrases that people type into the search field of a search engine to find a product or service, e.g. financial planning or small business tax savings. A tool like Google's free Adwords Keyword Planner shows you how prospects search for your products or services, so tailor your wording to suit.

Use your brand proposition strategically

When you've hit upon this point of difference, and have it clearly articulated, it should be integrated into everything your clients see – from the ads you choose to run, to the key messages on your homepage.

Your 3 second pitch will explain what it is your company does, how you meet clients' needs and why they should choose you over a competitor.

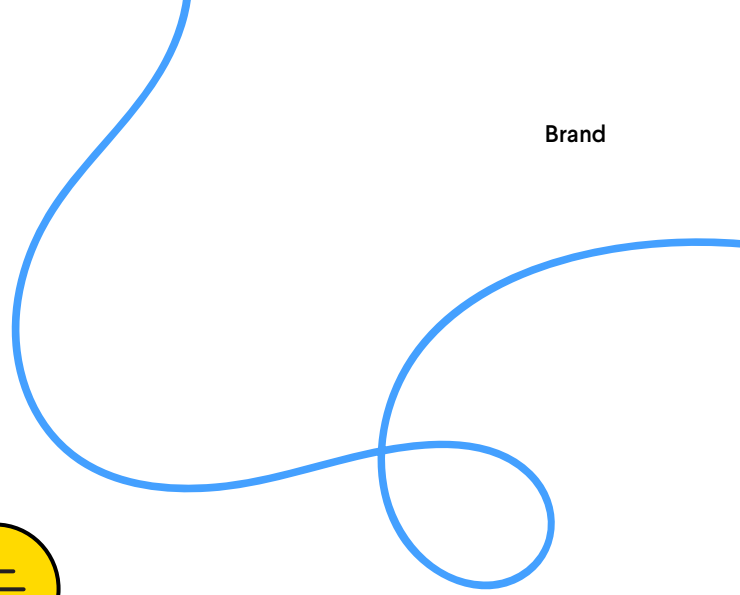
It's not easy to capture all of this in one sentence but when you have done so, it provides you with a powerful tool that forms the basis of all your marketing communications.

Consider the following components:

- Your service's features and benefits. Features describe your services, while the benefits sell them. The features are important (and will sometimes be your point of difference), but the benefits are what your client pays attention to, or relates to. Think about how your services help them and their business. IKEA is a good example. Their brand proposition isn't about furniture but, in their words: "At IKEA our vision is to create a better everyday life for the many people".
- Your company's special expertise. It might be your advisory niche as an accountant, or your payroll specialisation as a bookkeeper.
- Your brand attitude. Like Xero's focus on making business beautiful or Volvo's safety.
- A big mission like embracing business technology, giving people work/life balance or supporting a community charity.

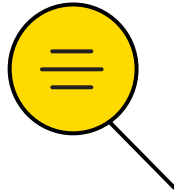
To do:

- Write a one-sentence description for your business explaining clearly and powerfully to your audience what you do and why you're unique.
- Put yourself in your clients' shoes.
- What do you offer that no one else does?



3. Research

Have a look at your competitors. Search for them on Google, look at their website, their social media profiles and read the reviews. Their offers and the way they describe them may highlight where you can do something better or different.



4. Define your customers with buyer persona

You may have heard the expression 'buyer persona'. This is a strategy for tailoring your marketing effort to connect with your target audience.

Creating a buyer persona is about pinpointing your ideal target audience (or audiences) and visualising a single person to represent the whole group. A buyer persona turns an abstract messaging exercise into a conversation with someone in your head - making branding and marketing decisions much easier.

'When you understand who you are talking to, you will be more targeted, persuasive and effective in all your marketing'

And it doesn't need to be an imaginary person. Think about your current best client and build your persona around them. These are the individuals you should gear your business towards, so you can attract more of the same. And you can have more than one persona that represents different customer segments.

To do:

- Have a discussion with your team to identify your highly valued clients. This will help your business in a broader sense also.
- Use these insights to build a picture of your buyer persona:
 - Needs and goals – what are their key drivers?
 - Pain points – how can you provide solutions to the challenges they face?
 - Interests – how can you engage with them on their level to show you 'get them'?
 - Demographics – include their age, socioeconomic level, family, work life and where they live.

Tips

Create a 'day in the life' for each persona.
This will prompt you to think about where and when they might engage with your business.

Test your brand proposition
Once you've defined your buyer persona, ask yourself how they could benefit from your products or services. Does your brand proposition still work or does it need refining?



5. Build your brand assets

Now it's time to bring your brand to life using assets. These are the tangible representations of your brand: logo, emails, brochures, signage, blog posts, website content, videos and images. If all of these reflect your brand, they'll add up to build a picture of who you are, what you do and what you stand for.

Your brand logo

A logo is a mark or icon that makes it easy for customers to instantly recognise your business. This can include designs of the products themselves, or the insignia of your company such as its initials or a symbol representing it.

A good logo should be:

- Simple
- Durable
- Memorable
- Versatile

Working with a professional graphic designer is always the best option for logo design, or you can keep costs down with sites like Dribbble, Logo Gala and Logo Moose. In either case you must start with a clear understanding of your business, its market and what kind of imagery will be effective.

Website and URL

Think of your website as a digital window to your business. Your design should be creative and easy to use.

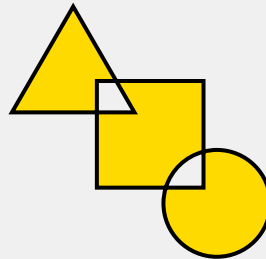
Your brand name should also be coordinated with your website domain name (URL) to make it easy for your buyers to find you online. We'll look at websites in more detail in the next chapter.

Outreach material

This material can include anything from blog posts to search engine marketing (SEM), and social media marketing. Whatever you do, your material must reflect your brand in look and tone, to ensure your audiences are seeing a consistent message every time. We'll delve into these areas in later chapters.

To do:

- If you already have brand assets, review them with your newly articulated brand and target audience in mind. Will the brand assets connect with the right people? Do they support and promote your brand?
- If you're starting from scratch, ensure you keep your brand, your audience and your value proposition top of mind when developing your brand assets.





CHAPTER 2

Website

Your digital shop front





The key elements of an effective website

Think about the last big item you bought – chances are, you started online. Research from Fleishman-Hillard shows that 89% of customers begin their purchase with an internet search. And that makes sense – your clients' buying decision will have been influenced by a number of factors, such as personal recommendations, their brand preferences, price, benefits and reviews - much of which can be found online.

1. Build on the right web platform

The software you use to build your website will depend on how you intend to use your site. You might plan to share a lot of video or imagery, require extremely tight security or want to post many long blogs. One platform will suit you better than another and a web developer can help you choose the right one with consideration for cost, customisation, template options and good plug-in services. Your new web platform should have, as standard, a simple content management system (where you can edit and update content) and robust security.

Tip

Do your own due diligence by researching user reviews of your proposed new platform to hear how it has performed for other businesses.

2. Has a great home page

Your home page is critical – according to a study by Carlton University in Canada, site visitors will form a first impression within a blink of an eye, or 50 milliseconds, and this impression won't change with more time spent. It's where you persuade your visitors that they are making the right choice. Include your expertise or qualifications and your three-second pitch here.

3. The Menu is simple

Plan your site with a maximum of five key areas in the top menu bar, to make it easy for visitors to navigate. More pages is good for search engine optimisation, but keep them within straightforward site architecture. Users have come to expect standard page names like, 'about', 'services', and 'contact'. Make sure you provide all the information they might want.



4. Key messages are 'above the fold'

On all pages, make sure users can engage with the main messages straight away - they shouldn't need to scroll down. This is especially important if they are viewing your site on a mobile device. Keeping your visitor engaged with compelling and useful information will reduce the risk of them 'bouncing' off the site.

6. Includes testimonials

Testimonials are a very powerful way to show that you are a trusted brand. You'll find that your clients are often happy to endorse you, and you will be giving their business brand exposure too. Win-win. Start asking for feedback from existing clients. Make sure you get their permission to use it on your site, and include a photo for authenticity, if appropriate.

5. Text is clear and concise

Be clear about what you do and make each word count. Rather than headlines like 'introduction' or 'welcome to our website' tell visitors exactly what they'll find on your site and why it will help them.





7. Is visually appealing

According to research compiled by 3M images are processed by the human brain 60,000 times faster than text. Photos are a simple way to draw attention and represent your product or service. Imagery you commission yourself will feel more authentic and add credibility, but if you're using stock images, try to avoid cliché photos that take away from your brand.

8. Calls to action are clear

At each step, your website should be clear about what visitors should do next. For example, do you want them to sign up for a newsletter or webinar, or start a free trial?. You might have a number of call-to-actions on a page about a service. Your visitor may want to 'ask for a quote' or 'find out more'.

Tip

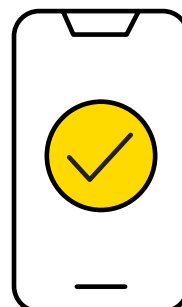
Make your call to actions compelling, e.g instead of the standard 'sign up', a Netflix button says 'join free for a month'. Focus on the action you'd like your audience to take, remind them why they should and make it easy for them to do it.

9. Mobile responsive

A site should be as easy to use on a mobile as it is on a computer. Most sites now are 'mobile friendly'. This means that they are designed to work on a mobile device with slim formatting and text blocks. The result can be that these sites, when viewed on a desktop, look a bit unfinished with a lot of blank space. 'Mobile responsive' sites are different in that they adjust to the size of the window they are viewed on. Since 2015, more people have been using Google on a mobile device than on their desktop and the search engine ranks your mobile version first so optimising for mobile is essential.

To do:

- Focus on your client's needs - your website may be the first and only place they will engage with your brand.
- Be clear on what you want your site users to do - from the moment viewers land on your website, make sure you direct them to your chosen end point - your contact page.
- Use clear, visually appealing website design and copy.
- Put your main messaging above the fold.
- Ensure your site is mobile responsive and built on the right platform.
- Create a great homepage with a clear menu.

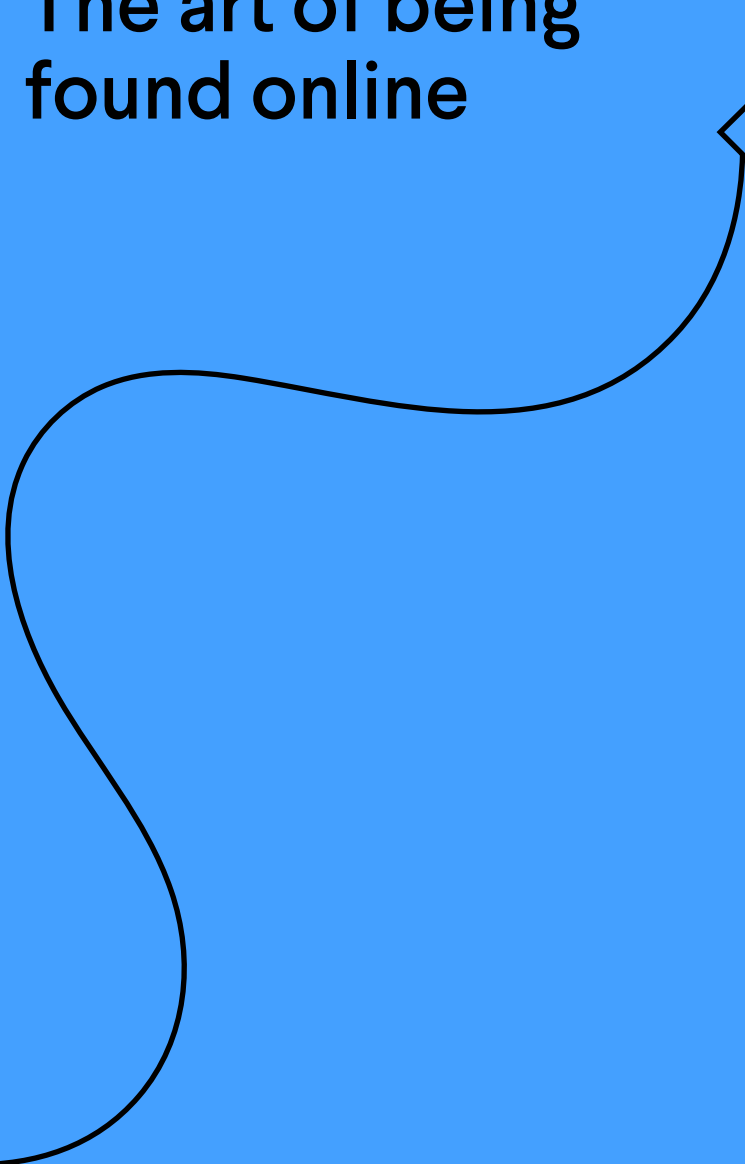
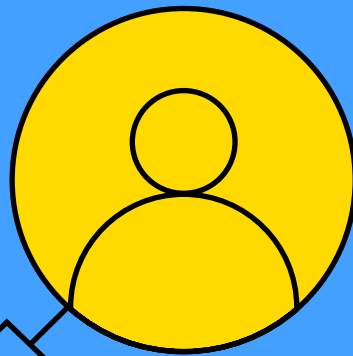




CHAPTER 3

SEO

The art of being found online





Optimise your online presence

Do you know how to optimise your online presence for maximum impact? [SEO or search engine optimisation](#) is the term used to describe a number of techniques you can use to increase the visibility of your company online. SEO differs from paid search because it is free. It may involve some time invested, but it is worthwhile using SEO best-practice to market your business. Read on as we explain how SEO works and what you can do to give your business the best chance of being found by prospective clients

Why is SEO so important?

The internet is now the first port of call for most people when looking for a product or service. Google alone processes over 8.5 billion searches every day. So having prominence in search results is vital to increasing traffic and enquiries through your website.

It's worth getting to the top. Research from Sistrix shows that listings on the first page on Google receive 88% of organic traffic, with the top three rankings accounting for 55.2%.

Explaining the jargon..

- **Search Engine**

These are the software systems designed to search for information on the world wide web using 'search bots'. Examples include Google, Yahoo, Bing, Duck Duck Go and others.

- **Search Bots (also called spiders, wanderers, or crawlers)**

Search Bots are what the search engines use to seek content. They trawl websites, evaluate the information they find and add that data to an index, in order to deliver high quality results for people.

- **SERP - Search Engine Results Page**

This is the page of web listings you see after typing in a search word. Websites that are highly ranked by a search engine will appear first.

- **SEO - Search Engine Optimisation**

Optimising your website so you get the most possible organic and free traffic from search engines like Google. Search engines rank websites based on approximately 200 factors. However, if you focus on the main ones you can move your site higher up the search results.

- **SEM - Search Engine Marketing**

Search Engine Marketing uses both organic and paid or sponsored ads to funnel relevant traffic from search engines. The most common forms of SEM is Google Search.

- **Keywords/key phrases**

These are the words or sentences that people type into the search bar when looking for something online.



So how does SEO work?

When you type into a search bar online, you're sending search 'bots' or 'crawlers' out into the world wide web to find the results you want.

Search engines want to deliver the most relevant and credible content possible to their user so, using their own algorithms, they rank websites based on a number of factors. The factors include things like how closely the

web page content matches the search terms, how often the website is updated, how users behave on the website, whether other 'high authority' pages link to it, or even, how well it is written. The better you perform against these factors, the more likely you will appear on the search engine result page (SERP).





There are over 200 factors that affect how your website ranks

Some of these factors matter more than others. Essentially the search bots are looking for the same thing that people are – unique, high-quality content that loads well, is up to date and is trusted. The changes you make to improve your online visibility will also result in better experiences for clients, which again help move your page up the ranks – starting a virtuous cycle.

Here are the factors to focus on first:

1. Performance

For your website to do its job, it needs to be easy to use. That means having an effective user interface (UI) – (the elements of the site design that viewers interact with to use the site). You must also give users the best possible user experience (UX). That means no hurdles, like confusing menus or slow download speeds, that stop them finding what they want. Your website should load quickly and be mobile-responsive.

To do

Review your load speeds, and test your web page for mobile with Google's helpful tool. If your site is slow to load, try reducing the sizes of all your images and video. If your site is not mobile-responsive, it is time for an upgrade.

2. Ease of navigation

When search bots see your users navigating clearly and logically around the site, your rankings improve. Your site can still be creative and interesting, but it must also be easy to use.

To do

Regularly review your site's categories and subcategories, page titles, descriptions, buttons and links to ensure your site is logical and easy to navigate.

3. Quality content

Search engine algorithms have a number of ways to gauge the quality of your written content, so you should be aiming for quality over quantity. Engaging blogs and updates will encourage people to visit, read and share, which is SEO gold, so you should be aiming for quality over quantity.

To do

Post on your site regularly with blogs, high-quality imagery and video content. Share it widely on social media so you bring a wider audience back to your site.



4. Relevance

Relevance is about how closely your site content matches what is being searched for. Your website pages, their page titles and descriptions should also make sense, so your visitors can easily find what they are looking for.

Think like a client. Do your homework, research your target audience and ensure your site clearly explains how you meet their specific needs and the key value you add. Based on this thinking, put together a list of keywords for your products and service offering. These are the words and phrases that help search engines understand what your website offers. Use relevant, high-quality keywords to bring you more qualified traffic.

General keywords, like 'accounting advice' will be competitive so look for keywords that are more specific to your offering such as 'farm financial plan'. Your keywords could be about your specialty, location, price, quality, speed, or a unique way of working.

Don't make the mistake of shoehorning keywords into text for their own sake. Clear, concise writing should be your goal - if your keywords are relevant to you and your business, they will appear naturally in your text.

To do

Review page titles and descriptions to ensure they accurately describe the page content.

Focus on one keyword, or key phrase per page.

Make sure you include these within the text of your website - especially the headlines, subheads and the main descriptive text (slug) of your URL.

5. Bounce Rates

This is the number of visitors who leave a page immediately after selecting it. A high bounce rate indicates that your page titles and descriptions don't match the content, your pages are poorly designed, or they are not providing the information or solutions that visitors are looking for.

Use a tool like Google analytics to assess each page and spot pages with poor bounce rates. Ask yourself why people are clicking onto this page, and then leaving immediately.

To do

Do the page titles and descriptions match the content?

Is your content easy to read, sectioned with simple headlines and subheads?

Is your design clean and professional

Do you offer enough to entice them to stay?



6. Web traffic

Increasing your site's organic traffic (not from ads) will improve its search engine rankings. Grow your traffic, by extending your reach, and offering users a reason to visit your site. You could share your great content as a post on Facebook, tweet it out on Twitter or share it on LinkedIn. Go beyond your own site by commenting online about topical issues, write guest blogs for sites that hold authority for your audience and partner with other businesses to access each other's networks.

To do

Attract more users to your site with interesting content and promote this across your social media channels.

Grow your network through thought leadership and partner up with complimentary brands to grow your reach.

7. Build backlinks to your site

Backlinks are when other sites link to yours. These indicate to search engines that other people think your content is worth directing users to. This is a huge indicator of your content's value and will help move your site up the search rankings. When it comes to links, focus on quality, not quantity - the goal is to encourage highly ranked websites with lots of traffic to link to you. Your backlinks should also be relevant to your business goals - there is little use in someone directing users to you who are looking for information on skateboards, when you're an accountant.

Look for opportunities to have other authoritative websites such as an industry association, to link to yours. The most obvious way is to create exceptional, relevant and unique content and promote it through social media. You can also reach out to the managers of authority sites and offer to write a guest blog or jointly host a webinar.

Make sure your contact details are accurate and up to date in online directories such as Xero's advisor directory or industry organisation websites. Also focus on growing your reviews using sites like Yelp or Google Maps and Facebook.

To do

Like any SEO activity, building links is an ongoing process. Start with the basics like ensuring relevant business associations or online directories have your business details. Make it part of your regular marketing activities to maximise your online presence.



SEO – an ongoing process

The more you do to improve your site and keep your content current, the more likely people will visit it and other sites will link to it. Eventually your website will be seen as a trusted source of information and rank higher for many search terms.

But once you're there, don't stop – this should be part of your business-as-usual operation. Websites are no longer the static brochures they used to be. They play an important role in persuading a prospect to try, call and buy. Search companies are constantly making tweaks to their algorithms, and your competitors are improving their sites. That means as soon as you stop improving your search ranking, it will begin sliding backwards. Put some time in the diary to review your site, consider adding and updating content to keep it relevant and up to date.

We can't talk about SEO without mentioning the paid version of search engine marketing - Paid search, PPC (Pay-per-Click) or remarketing are some examples. PPC or paid search involves paying to list your ads above the organic search results on a search provider such as Google or Bing. You pay for this position by bidding on the keywords that are relevant to your business (product or service) and people who are searching for it (or your product or service).

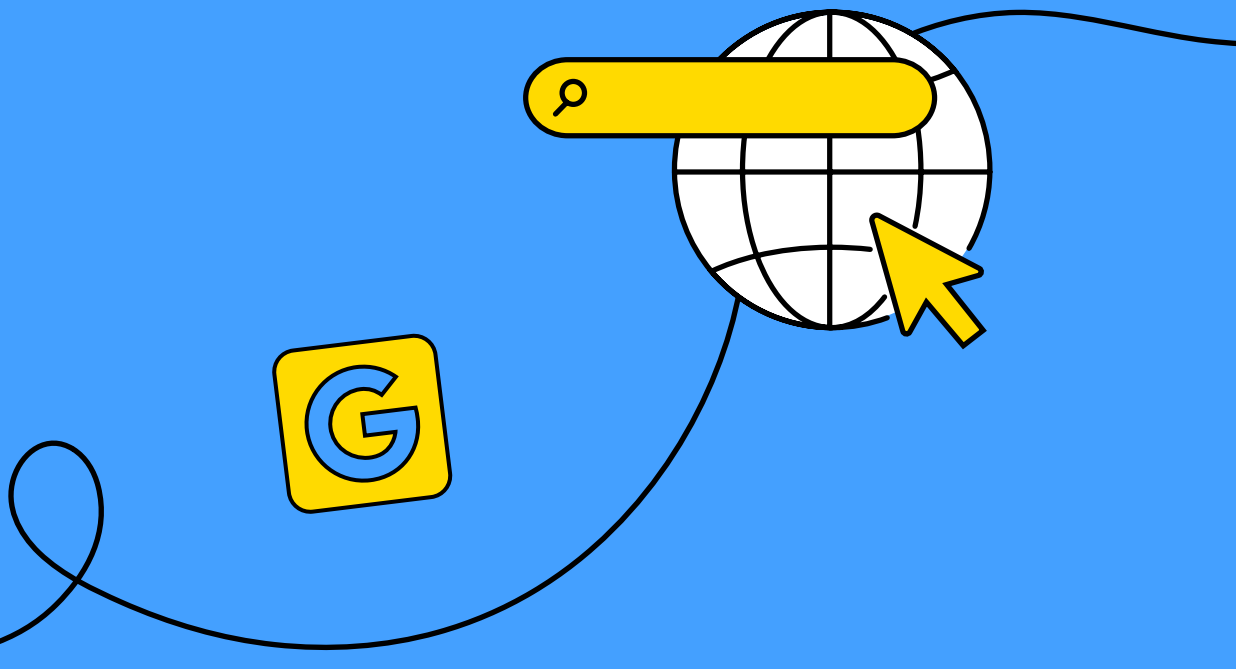
It's worth noting that your ad page position is based on more than the amount you are prepared to pay. Google also takes into account your landing page quality and relevance, plus your click-through rates. So the work you do on optimising your website and it's SEO will give you a better return when you invest in paid search.





CHAPTER 4

Advertising on google search



What are Google Search Ads?

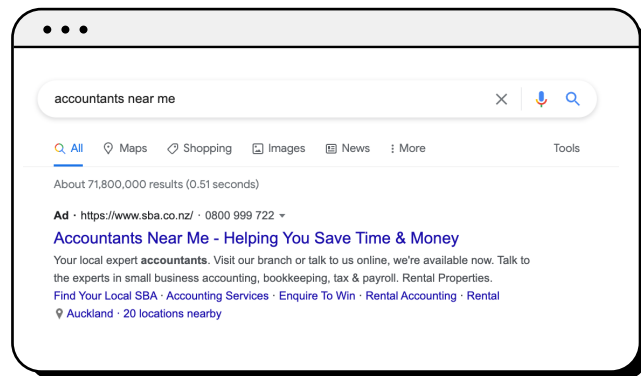
Google Search ads, previously Google AdWords, are an easy way to reach new customers when your target audience is searching. You might have noticed that when you search for something on Google, for example, “accountants near me”, you are served multiple results, all of which are clearly marked ‘Ad’. These are paid for results, unlike the organic search results that show on the page (which the SEO chapter refers to).

How exactly does it work?

Google is all about relevancy. In this modern world, consumers expect a lot out of technology. We expect Google to show us what we want, when we want it, and how we want it. It’s a win-win situation – the customer finds what they want, and the advertiser, if running campaigns correctly, may get a lead!

In a nut-shell, every time an individual searches for something in Google and hits enter, the algorithm works its magic. The end user can literally type anything they want into the search bar. They could be in the early research phase of their journey – perhaps doing some research on the various options, or directly in-need of something at that moment. In that split second, similar to an organic, non-paid search result, the Google algorithm crawls through all possible advertisers, weeds out the ones that aren’t relevant, and shows the searcher a number of ads that it thinks best match their search query.

As a search advertiser, you only pay when someone clicks on your ad (this is known as Cost-Per-Click or CPC). If someone searches and reads but doesn’t interact with the ad (i.e. doesn’t click on the headline or any links) you aren’t charged. When it comes to how much you will pay per click, this varies for every search – depending on target area, keyword itself and hundreds of other factors. The main thing is that you can set a maximum CPC, or let the system adjust according to goals you set in the campaign. These goals are pulled over from your website’s Google Analytics accounts.



From the searcher’s end it takes into consideration factors like previous searches, websites visited, likelihood to convert, and adds this to thousands of other factors relating to website relevancy, competitors, performance etc, to determine what ads to show to you in that moment.

Google uses machine learning and millions of data points across its network to connect the dots. Think about how many different ways there are to search for a particular phrase (e.g. “accountants”, “accountant”, “best accountant”, “accountants near me that are open now”), not to mention misspellings.

Google has ways to account for all of these factors with the aim of providing maximum relevance for the searcher and getting the most ROI for every dollar spent by the advertiser. This machine learning is fantastic, and evolves every day, but if we think about how Google just sees copy, not images – human interaction is vital to campaign success. The way ads are worded can really impact the end results. In this ad space, you have limited characters to portray your company and give the end user reason to click on your ad, over your competitors.



Campaign structure/what keywords should I use?

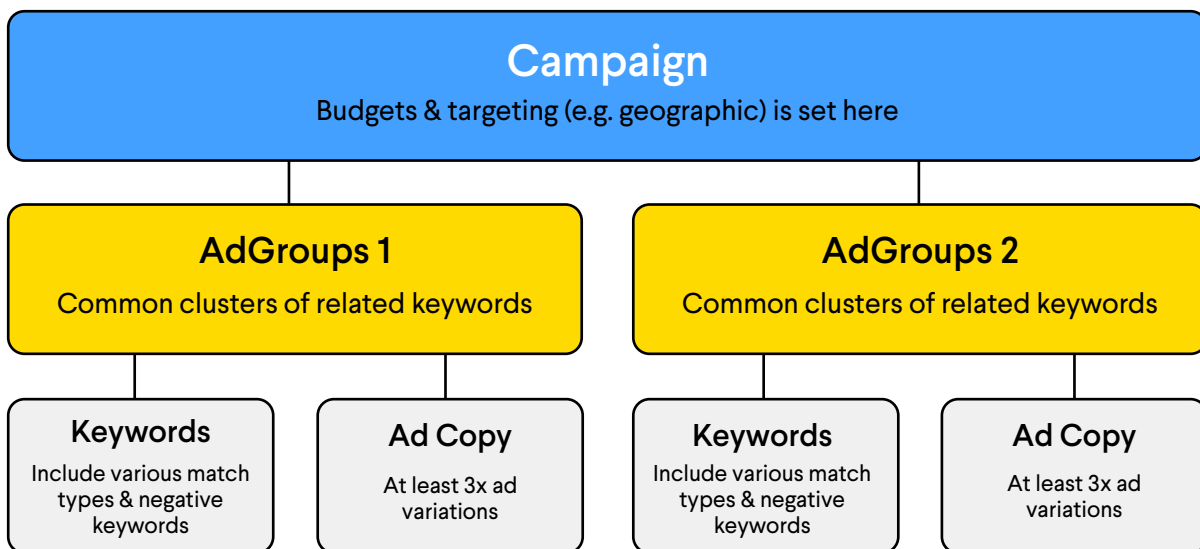
The structure of a Google campaign is one of the most critical elements. It's very easy to set up a campaign, throw in a bunch of 'keywords' and let Google burn through your budget. A campaign is only as good as the information put into it, so by having a proper structure with targeted ad groups, ad copy, and setting the campaign to really optimise towards your goals (e.g. form submissions, phone calls etc.) this can result in a strong ROI and high converting campaign with reduced wastage.

When thinking about keywords, it's important to think about how your typical client would conduct their search for your services. This is why it's recommended to include various keyword types – including some broader phrases, as well as more niche/technical terms. Always think about your customer. What would they search for? As mentioned earlier, consumers assume that Google will spit out exactly what they are looking for, so even if their

search is reasonably generic e.g. "accountants near me" they may actually be looking for "rural tax accounting help". It's the machine learning that helps Google understand the user's search query.

For example – A company selling Scissor Lifts/ Cherry Pickers were convinced their audience would search for 'EWP' or 'Elevated Work Platform'. Research showed that the average monthly search volumes were much higher for 'Scissor Lifts/Cherry Pickers for Sale', than the industry term of EWP. That's because someone looking to purchase may not know the technical term, but can recognise what they are with a more common search.

Put yourself in your prospects' shoes, what would they type into the search bar when they look for your services? It's also important to include a mixture of broad and more specific phrases. Broader keywords/phrases can help you identify new relevant words. More specific audiences could capture a smaller audience, but they may also be less competitive.





How does it fit into the consumer journey?

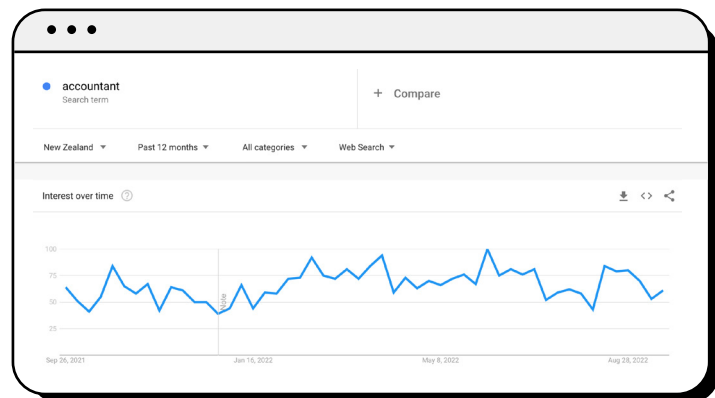
Think about your own actions, when you need something or want to know something – where do you go? Most likely, you search on Google. Gone are the days where you pick up the phone book to find a company, instead, this phone book is at your fingertips. One simple search can lead you to exactly what you wanted to know, whether you search the company name or just for a broader category/phrase.

Google used to be thought of as the last step in the user journey, being that it's the last step before someone converts. More and more, advertisers are seeing that Google Search ads are the first step in the journey, assisting with someone's research journey.

Most people don't need to search for accounting services often, so when a situation presents itself, users begin by searching for general information, and over time – their searches can get more specific as they learn and adjust. Research shows that 50% of people turn to their smartphones for immediate information or advice when triggered by an unexpected problem or situation. Google, and the web in general, is used to educate consumers on where they should start, and what they need.

Google Search Ads can pull together a whole marketing campaign, ensuring that if someone searches, your business can be found. Brand awareness has a strong tie with Google Ads, with users more likely to click on brands they recognise and trust. This is why there is a strong correlation between Google Search & traditional mediums like radio and print.

Industries like accountants have natural peaks around Financial Year End, but as the graph below shows – interest in 'Accountant' search terms is constant all year round.



Why hire a professional to run my Google Ads?

- It's a technical skill. You wouldn't do your own plumbing, cut your own hair, build your own house – you hire the professionals to do this for you.
- Think about it as a partnership/extension of your marketing team. Trained Google Campaign Managers understand the platform inside out, they can spot things that are/ aren't working and identify where issues are happening. You feed them the information on what you want to focus on/what your goals are, and the Campaign Manager inputs this into the campaign.
- It frees you up to run your business and focus on your clients. Google can essentially be your 24/7 sales person.
- Google changes things often, your Google Campaign Manager is trained to keep up with these, and to be able to implement any necessary changes to your campaign as and when needed.



Glossary

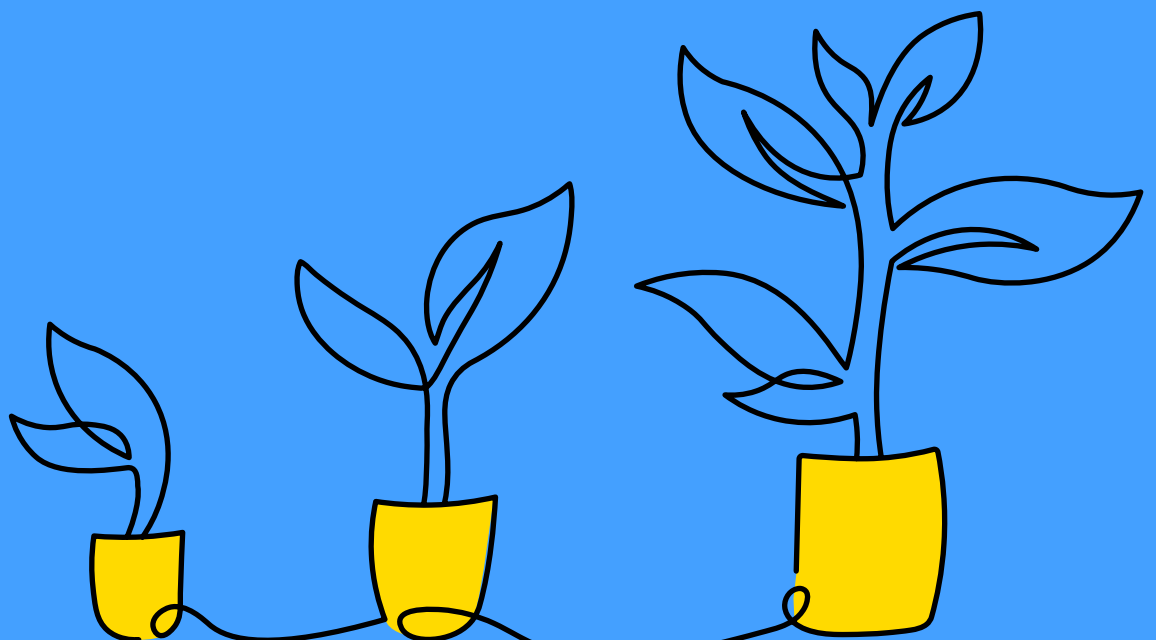
- **Campaign** – A set of ad groups (ads, keywords, and bids) that share a budget, location targeting, and other settings.
- **Ad Groups** – Use ad groups to organize your ads by a common theme. For example, try separating ad groups into the different product or service types you offer.
- **Keywords** – Words or phrases, that you choose to describe your product or service. These help determine when and where your ad can appear.
- **Negative Keywords** – A type of keyword that prevents your ad from being triggered by a certain word or phrase. Your ads aren't shown to anyone who is searching for that phrase.
- **Click** – When someone clicks your ad, like on the blue headline of a text ad, Google Ads counts that as a click.
- **Impression** – How often your ad is shown. An impression is counted each time your ad is shown on a search result page.
- **CTR** – A ratio which shows the number of clicks that your ad receives divided by the number of times your ad is shown: $\text{clicks} \div \text{impressions} = \text{CTR}$. Can be used as an indication of relevancy.
- **Avg CPC** – Avg Cost-Per-Click (CPC), also known as Pay-Per-Click (PPC) is the average price you've paid for clicks on your ads.
- **Conversions** – An action that's counted when someone interacts with your ad and then takes an action that you've defined as valuable to your business, such as an online purchase or submitting a contact form. It's recommended to have a mixture of micro-conversions (e.g. pdf downloads, time on site etc.) and macro-conversions (form submissions, online sales, phone calls).
- **Organic Search Result** – A free listing in Google Search that appears because it's relevant to someone's search terms.



CHAPTER 5

Content marketing

Growing your brand & reach





Growing your brand and reach

Content marketing is a strategy where you produce regular, interesting, entertaining or useful content, such as articles, e-books or videos, and simply give it away for free. What you get in return is immeasurable. Here are some of the ways that content marketing could help grow your business:

1. Attract new business

Unlike traditional direct marketing, where your interaction is based solely on converting a prospect into a sale, content marketing is a slow-burn strategy. It's about giving your audience something interesting and valuable to win their attention and their consideration. In this way you attract people and deeply engage them, giving you a greater chance of converting them. Practically, content can also help you build valuable databases - just ask for an email in exchange for a white-paper or ebook.

Great content gives you opportunities to stay top-of-mind throughout the consideration process, deliver value and establish yourself as the seemingly obvious choice.

2. Improve your search rankings

Shared wisely, great content can also positively impact your SEO rankings. Here's how:

Blogs and articles create more text about your business which means more keywords and more for Google to look at. If your accounting firm specialises in retail businesses, you may want to rank well for keywords around inventory management. Rather than trying to cram every keyword you can think of into your home page, you could write a guide to cash flow for retail businesses - a natural place to use keywords.

Consider what content demonstrates your expertise or supports your brand, while also being useful, interesting or entertaining for your audience. You can go beyond your core business too, like the causes you support, case studies, life hacks or amusing stories, e.g. an outdoors shop might write reviews of great walks. A bookkeeping company might write about work-life balance for small business owners.

Content brings people to your site, keeps them there longer and gives them something to share. This is critical because user behaviour is a big indicator to Google that your site is worth looking at.



3. Grow your brand

Building your reputation in the marketplace helps establish you as the go-to for certain products or service niches. It makes it easier for potential clients to trust you and creates loyalty in your existing database.

Do this by ensuring your content is high quality, uses your expertise, and addresses the needs of your potential clients. Be prepared to put yourself out there. Offer your services for speaking spots at events, share commentary and host events that will drive awareness of your brand message.

4. Strengthen client relationships

Content marketing will strengthen your existing client relationships. It's about giving first and selling second.

Great content puts your brand top of mind when your client is ready to buy. It's about giving first and selling second. It can help make your account management process easier, encourage repeat purchases and upsell your other products or services.

Here's how: Your great content will pop up and remind your clients that the next time they need to accounting or tax advice, they should come to you. As a financial advisor you could share useful guides to setting up a trust or advice and tips on business growth.



Where to use your content

Publish your content in multiple places - it can add depth to your social media presences, share it with other publications, post on your website or offer as a guest blog on an authority site. Think about what content you could create - here are some ideas:

Social media ideas

- Post reminders for small business compliance dates
- Share a video post, that gives guidance and advice on key areas you can assist your clients with. Create an infographic to explain financial concepts that you are often asked about and share it on LinkedIn.
- Produce an informative guide to tax and post the link to it on your social media pages.
- Link back to longer form content from your website's blog posts

Website ideas

- Post weekly blogs on your website that talk directly to your audience needs or challenges
- Create 'how to' guides or useful checklists
- Write a useful e-book and publish it on your site - ask for emails before allowing downloads, to build your database
- Interview clients and post a real, behind-the-scenes review of a recent project.

Email

- Create an informative series for business growth or light 'how-to' guides
- Invite your readers to complete a survey
- Invite your database to view a video webinar or online training
- Write a monthly newsletter containing a combination of all your content (news, latest blog, webinars and new services)

Syndicated content

- Write controversial industry commentary, a unique insight or perspective on a topical issue and share it with media outlets.
- Look for digital platforms with large readerships (e.g. other blogs or social presences) and send them an article or other piece of content to publish to their readership.
- Get in front of people to share your message via speaking spots, video blogs and events.

To do:

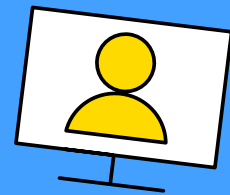
- Use [Google's keyword planner](#) to help spot areas where people are looking for information that you could deliver on. Look at your Frequently Asked Questions - the answer you provided to one client is likely to be useful for others.
- Create a plan to regularly create and share your content.
- Consider image sizing and blurbs to ensure your images and text are formatted for the channel they appear on. BOMA's intuitive marketing platform auto formats your content for the channel, whether it's email, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter or Instagram.
- Test and measure the impact of different content by looking at your site traffic, and adjust your plan accordingly.



CHAPTER 6

Education marketing

Educating your existing and future clients





Education Marketing



Written and contributed by Viv Brownrigg, FCA. Viv is co-founder and Director of The Gap and specialises in marketing innovation for accounting and bookkeeping firms.

Education marketing is simply the process of educating your existing and future clients, rather than pitching to them. It works on the basis of providing value to clients before you extract value from them.

The three best ways to deploy education marketing are to:

1. Create blogs and articles of value.
2. Add practical content to your website.
3. Deliver educational webinars.

Educating clients is a smart use of your marketing resources. It earns people's attention, rather than forcing it. By making client education free, you remove the barriers to buying your services - time, money and value.

Create blogs and articles

Writing blogs and articles from scratch takes time. One solution is to subscribe to a quality content provider (such as BOMA) and mix their articles up with your own pieces. If you're worried you're in a 'sea of content sameness', customise the content to reflect you and your voice:

1. Change the images.
2. Change the title and headings.
3. Customise the text so it represents your business, values, services, clients and region.

There is no perfect length for an article. Shorter pieces are quicker to read, however may come across as too generic. To balance the need for depth of content with attention span deficit, create a series of articles under one topic. For example, your lead article could be 'Seven causes of poor cashflow'. Your next 7 articles could then drill into each of those 7 causes. This creates a content 'pathway' for readers and means the content they choose is more relevant to them.

Add practical content to your website.

Adding multiple types of content to your website increases your education marketing gravity. Keep it practical. Some great examples include:

- Guides – e.g. How to manage slow payers
- Checklists – e.g. 36 ways to improve your margin
- Surveys and polls – e.g. a survey asking 10 questions on engaging your team
- Calculators – e.g. a personal budgeting template
- Short e-books e.g. How to build your Business Plan
- Client interviews on topical business issues

Make sure you add a lead capture form to all content downloads. Your lead capture form will gather contact names and emails, adding 'marketing qualified' leads to your database.

Deliver educational webinars to clients

Economic uncertainty creates an ideal platform for accountants to deliver meaningful webinars to clients. Educational webinars are one of the smartest marketing strategies today, because they:

- Position your 'value-add' services
- Leverage your time better, providing support to clients on a one-to-many basis - leading to higher value services
- Create advocates who refer new business
- Enable clients to buy more services from you
- Help raise your young guns' profiles



Your webinar content

The education possibilities are endless. Consider developing or subscribing to webinar content within the following business categories:

1. Financial awareness
2. Government support
3. Leadership
4. Organisational
5. People management
6. Growth
7. Marketing
8. Start-ups
9. Succession
10. Governance
11. Using technology
12. Tax updates

The key is to earn people's attention, not force it.

Add value before you extract value.

Education marketing is the softest sell.

Managing webinar anxiety

Webinar anxiety is normal. Here are our ten best tips to avoid it:

1. Have an internal techie fan to manage your webinar platform.
2. Do at least 3 rounds of marketing, to get the numbers, starting 2-3 weeks out with and following up with a reminder. Email invites work best. Add social posts to amplify your message.
3. Your marketing messages should focus on what's in it for them and describe how they will benefit
4. It takes time to write webinar content. Subscribe to a specialist provider, such as [The Gap](#).
5. Keep webinars short – 30 to 45 minutes. For longer topics, break them into episodes.
6. Keep the text on your slides to a minimum and use presenter notes to capture your thoughts. Print your notes, but don't read them like a script.
7. Practice the webinar. First to your cat, then to your team.
8. Always have a call-to action at the end of the session, so clients do something, and you get leads.
9. Provide a no cost engagement option. This could be a free checklist or tool.
10. Pre-load an exit survey and ask 3 short questions, one to land leads for services, one for feedback and one that adds value to clients.



To do:

- Decide a date for your first webinar. Tuesdays and Thursdays work better, with mid-morning and lunchtime sessions most practical.
- Select a topic you know.
- Agree 3-5 points of client value. Reality check –where is the value?
- Design your slide deck and presenter notes.
- Create webinar landing page.
- Send your first marketing email, at least 2 weeks before the date.
- Add weekly social posts.
- Send final email invite one week before the date.
- Set up post-webinar survey and webinar workbook.
- Hold webinar.
- Send post-webinar survey.
- Follow up.
- Rinse and repeat.

Click here to find out about the Gap's ready-to-use webinar kits

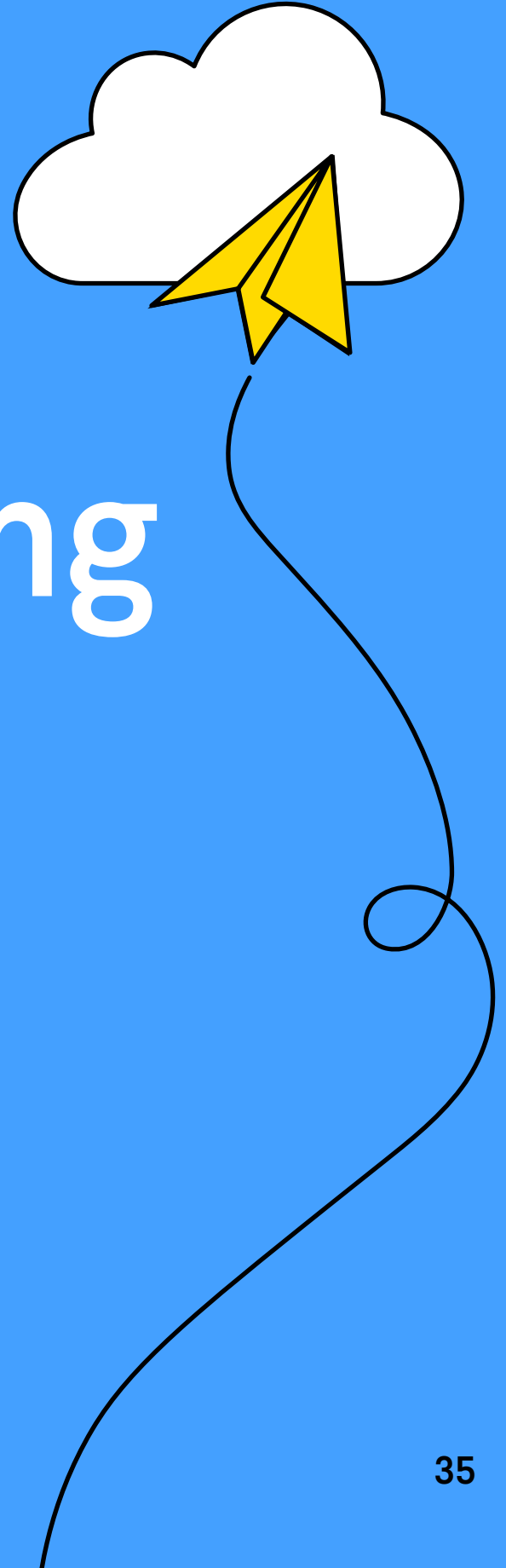
THE.GAP



CHAPTER 7

Email marketing

Connecting with your customers



Connecting with your customers

Email is the direct link between you and your client, which makes it a highly effective way to turn your value proposition into revenue. It has a higher average read rate than most other forms of advertising, and return on investment rates that far exceed broader channels. Research by Litmus found that for every \$1 marketers spend in email marketing they receive \$36 in return. Here's how to use email as an effective marketing channel:

Build your list

Building an email list takes time and effort, but getting started is easy. If you send quality emails that your contacts enjoy receiving, you will continue to build a list that will help meet your email marketing objectives.

Here's how to get people to sign up for your email list

- **Make it easy to sign up**

Add a sign-up button or registration form prominently on all your website's main pages and other digital channels, such as your social media pages. Tell people what to expect - what kind of information you will send, why it will be valuable to them and how often they'll hear from you.

- **Get permission**

You have implied permission to email somebody if you have an existing business relationship with them. If they are not a client you'll want to get permission. Give them the option to opt-in through a sign-up form. Make sure you also let recipients easily unsubscribe from your email list. This isn't just good manners - it's essential as rules surrounding privacy tighten.

- **Make it worth their while**

Give people something in return for signing up - this might be useful content such as a downloadable ebook, a template for a business forecast, or one hour free advisory support.

- **Keep the content quality high**

Send out high-quality content to build loyalty and attract new contacts.

- **Build your database using social media**

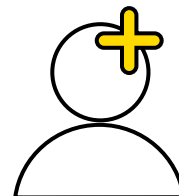
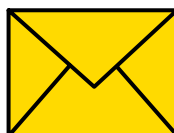
When you distribute your content on social media platforms such as LinkedIn, Twitter or Facebook, include a link back to your website, so people who enjoyed your content can sign up for more.

- **Follow up with people**

Keep in touch with people you meet by connecting with them on LinkedIn or inviting them to your Facebook page. Growing your business network in other areas will help build brand awareness and increase the opportunities for people to sign up to your mailing list.

- **Add a sign-up link to your email signature**

Give people an easy way to subscribe to your newsletters. Insert links into your signature within your email programme.





Plan what to send

Your content needs to serve both your business goals and your clients' needs. Creating content for its own sake runs the risk of turning your valuable mailing list into unsubscribes.

Start by articulating your goals. These could be to:

- Grow revenue from existing clients by introducing other products and services they may not be aware of.
- Attract new business.
- Strengthen existing relationships by providing something of value.
- Demonstrate your expertise and how much you understand your customers.

Next, put yourself in your client's shoes and create a list of topics to cover so that you always have inspiration.

Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Tips, advice and guidance
- Legislation updates or industry news
- Commentary or response to topical issues
- Informative guidance presented as a series
- Profiles of your clients (this gives them valuable exposure too)
- News from your business





Create your emails

Every communication builds awareness of your brand – that includes email marketing. Your emails are a reflection of you. Here are the elements to consider when putting together each email:

- **Write for your ideal client**

Once you know who you're talking to, it is much easier to work out what you want to say to them. And we are not talking about 'all people in my local area'. It needs to be specific, with enough depth so that you understand what content they would value. Think about your client's goals and pain points.. How can you provide the solutions to their needs? What are they interested in?

- **Use an impactful subject line**

An attention-grabbing subject line will improve the chances that your email gets opened. Keep it straightforward – describe the content of the email, but avoid generic headings like 'newsletter'. If you can't think of a subject line, write it at the end. You'll find it easier to create something compelling that also sums up the main message.

- **Keep it short and easy to read**

Make text concise using simple language. Break the content down into sections and keep the main take-outs near the top of the email. Introduce longer form content with a punchy introductory paragraph and a 'read more' link.

- **Focus on mobile accessibility**

With over half of all web traffic coming from a mobile device, it's vital to design your emails so they can be read on mobile.

- **Include your personality**

Imagine your target persona is in front of you – write as if you were talking directly to them.

- **Send a test email**

Ask someone else to review your email before you send it – they should check that all images load, that your text is error-free and that all your links and buttons work.

To do:

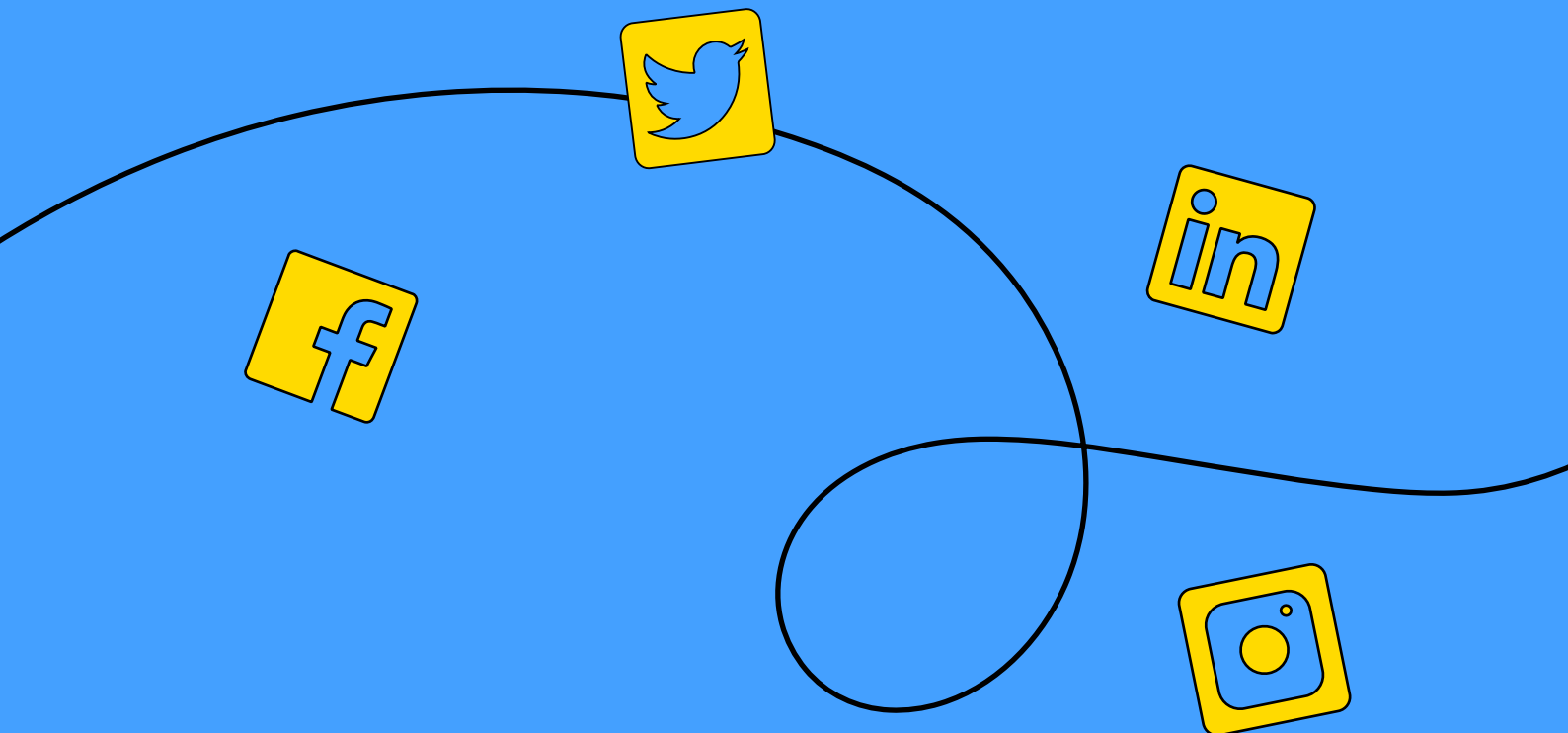
- Build a purpose-built database. Try adding a sign up button on your website, offering an incentive through Facebook, or offering a valuable piece of content when people submit their emails.
- Create a content plan based on your marketing goals - ask yourself who you're talking to, what they will care about and how you can deliver on that in a way that will engage and motivate them.
- Ensure each email is useful and compelling. Each email must earn its place in people's inboxes. Ideally, people should look forward to hearing from you.



CHAPTER 8

Social Media

The new word of mouth





The new word of mouth



Social media marketing is a must-have for small businesses these days. Your clients and prospects are already there, exchanging opinions, researching products and connecting with brands, so it makes sense for you to be there too. By posting valuable, shareable content you'll reach more people and win more clients – it's a no-brainer.

Social media channels help you reach new and different audiences.

They also provide communication platforms that are more fluid than your website. You can be more relaxed there, engaged with your audience, and able to comment on topical issues.

It's quite simple really – you're there to make connections, and so is your audience. The trick is to create relationships that are mutually interesting and beneficial. And that means taking an honest, open approach with lots of integrity – in short, being yourself.

Start by exploring the platforms to get a feel for which ones might suit your brand – you don't need to be on every platform. Then dedicate some thought to your new presences. These are where your business has a great chance of growing reach and engagement. It's worth the investment.

Social platforms are about talking to people

It's useful to think about social platforms as digital versions of real world 'meet ups'. Regardless of which platform you're on, your messaging has to feel like a conversation – the trick is to reflect your brand and business.

You'll need to

- Understand the social media platforms you're using
- Know how your target will want to engage with your brand
- Define how your brand will talk and behave

Who are you?

As in any marketing activity, you must start with understanding who you are, and what kind of relationship you're hoping to develop with your audience. Your brand can come alive here. Keep your posts, tweets and comments in line with your brand voice.

Who are you talking to?

Working out who you're targeting is crucial. Identify your ideal clients (the ones you want more of) and imagine you are talking to them. Your posts will be more authentic and this will result in better engagement.

Defining what to say

The goal is to build a community full of people who want to engage with your brand. Do that by choosing topics that are both interesting to the right people and relevant to your business.

While some of your activity will involve pushing out content or sharing posts about your services, don't stop there. Social is your chance to share your brand's personality with news about new staff members, stories about your company or something you've been involved with in the local community.



Creating a conversation plan

Once you've defined the topics that are relevant to your business, think about how you'll put them into practice.

Uber is about convenience, of course, but their social presences are built around a personal connection. Their Facebook page brings that to life by sharing profiles of riders and drivers.

As you go, you'll start to see some posts that win more attention and response. If you are creating posts in BOMA, you can view the result of your campaign (such as clicks, likes and shares) collated for your campaign across all the social platforms. Work out which posts perform better than others and amend your approach to suit.

Social Media Tips

- Give without expectation – while being on social media is undeniably a marketing exercise, your approach should be underpinned by a feeling of generosity – of your time and your resources. You're there to build a community first, sales second.
- Focus on what benefits or interests your audience and build the human side to your business to grow your relationship.
- Professional images are great, but don't be afraid to use your phone to take photos of events or the team.
- Be responsive – if someone reaches out to you on a social platform, show that you're engaged and listening. Post a comment back or sometimes a 'like' will suffice. Posts with more comments and engagement get increased visibility.
- Include calls to action to deliver on your marketing goals. Ask users to either visit your website, call you, take up an offer, comment, share or read content somewhere else.
- Building fans and followers takes time so take it in stages and make some time each week to add new images, messages and posts.





Facebook – the birthday party

This huge, fast-growing medium is the dominant social platform. It started as a friend networking site but has quickly become a place for businesses to communicate with their audiences in a less formal way than their websites. Facebook is a community where users want to interact with people and brands they already know.

The stats:

- 2.13 billion daily active users worldwide
- Average of 20 mins per visit
- 5 new profiles created every second
- 42% of marketers say Facebook is critical for their business

Why you should be there

You'll find your existing clients will be keen to engage with you on Facebook and you'll also benefit from their network – their friends will see when they interact with your posts. Facebook is all about personality, casual endorsement and being a proactive and responsive company. When you share news, updates and images that resonate with your audience, you get referred through their shares and likes, which amplifies your message.

Google uses Facebook as a source to find and deliver information too, so your page will also increase the opportunity to be found online (SEO).

With so many consumers and businesses on Facebook, it can be hard to cut through the clutter. Facebook advertising offers a number of strategies you can leverage to increase your reach. You can boost a post you have created or start from scratch with an advertising goal such as sending people to your website.

To do:

- Set up your page Facebook - for business <https://www.facebook.com/business/learn/set-up-facebook-page>
- Note - don't be tempted to use your personal profile. Firstly it's against Facebook's rules but you miss out on business page functionality and it means your clients need to 'friend' you rather than simply follow.
- Describe your services, expertise, point of difference in the 'about section'. Add your contact details - make it easy for clients to contact you.
- Be social. Create posts that encourage interaction: strike up a debate around a controversial topic, ask for opinions or advice, share a funny image or offer something of value.
- Ask clients to add reviews - these can be a powerful way to convince people to contact you. (To turn reviews on or off on your page go to 'tabs and templates' in the settings menu).
- Use Boosted Posts or Ads to target people based on their interests, location, or demographic.

**Tip**

You'll find lots of information on Twitter. It can be a useful source of topics when you are coming up with ideas for content marketing.

Twitter – the networking drinks

Twitter can be compared to cocktail or networking drinks. It's social, but people are happy to meet and talk to strangers. Business-related chit chat and even more serious back and forths are acceptable.

The stats:

- 330m users worldwide
- 1/3 of users are millennials (18-29), with usage dropping as age increases
- 93% of people who follow businesses on Twitter plan to purchase from them.
- 69% of people have already purchased from a business because of something they saw on the network.

Why you should be there

The communities and kinds of people you'll find on Twitter are more limited than Facebook, but the platform's openness means you could find it useful even so. Twitter is a great platform to extend your events and connect the participants. You'll find people will tweet out messages during and after, and chat with other attendees.

Because Twitter has instant and wide reach it can also be the place where people feel freer to say what's on their mind, whether negative or positive. For example, if one of your clients has a bad experience, they might turn to Twitter to call you out. However, it's worth noting that this feedback will happen whether you have an account or not – if you are on the platform you'll be able to respond and rectify.

Hashtags

Simply stated, hashtags are a way of grouping discussions, like a miniature search engine. They allow you to connect your post to trending subject matter or topics that people post about often.

Check out the #worldcup hashtag or #GoT for Game of Thrones fans.

Hashtags allow groups of people to join a global conversation about a shared interest. Using a hashtag means your post will appear if anyone in the world searches for it. Hashtags can also be used as sign-offs to add humour or to explain: #gettingmyheadroundhashtags!

To do:

- Set up your business profile: www.twitter.com
- Write a short description of your business. Don't forget to include your contact details.
- Identify and follow key influencers in your industry and people in your audience
- Follow similar businesses who are doing well. This will give you ideas on content and style.
- Retweet other people, and join the conversations where you can add insight.
- Share thoughts and updates throughout your week, and strike up real conversations with people.
- Include images to make your tweets more engaging
- Use hashtags to connect with topical themes or add a succinct and clever summary.



Tip

Use your videos to deliver on marketing goals. Ask users to either visit your website, call you, take up an offer, or watch or read content somewhere else.

YouTube and Vimeo – the festival

YouTube and Vimeo are video-hosting sites. You can create and upload your own videos to share with others. These can be beautiful, high-quality productions, or quick and casual behind-the-scenes videos. It's all about user-generated content – and this is the reason these sites are so popular. Instead of movies by TV or film studios, they host videos made by real people.

The stats:

- Users watch over 1 billion hours of videos on YouTube every day
- 300 hours of video are uploaded to YouTube every minute
- In an average month, 8 out of 10 18-49 year-olds watch YouTube
- Vimeo has 70,000,000 creators worldwide.

Why you should be there

Video is engaging, a report by Animoto found that 64% of consumers make a purchase after watching branded social videos.

This is because we like doing business with people we know, like and trust. Video builds a relationship by giving your audience a feel for who you are, what you do and what you know about. YouTube and Vimeo are great platforms for hosting your videos, but this content can also be reused on other channels, so you really get your money's worth.

You don't need huge production budgets, you can use your phone to shoot something easy and simple. Here are some ideas:

- Educate by sharing something useful. Use the video in an email or on your social channels.
- Build your brand by demonstrating your expertise either in a niche vertical or broader thought leadership on how your clients can take advantage of new support measures

To do:

- Set up your business channel www.youtube.com - You'll need to create a Google Account. <https://vimeo.com/join>
- Link your channel to your website
- Give your video a great title and add relevant tags – use keywords so people can find your videos, e.g. instead of 'bookkeeping advice', a better alternative could be '5 ways to save time on your tax return'
- Add subtitles – many people prefer to watch video with the sound off.



LinkedIn – the business conference

LinkedIn is a business conference – professional and more straightlaced than the others, this platform is intended for business talk, not for personal topics. LinkedIn is open – once you're connected with people, you'll find there are lots of discussions between strangers.

The stats:

- More than 546 million users in 200 countries and territories
- 56% of LinkedIn users are men and 44% are women
- 61% of members are between 30–64 years old

Why you should be there

Many people initially set up a LinkedIn account to create an online CV or to find and vet new staff. But the platform is growing, and more people are beginning to see its value for growing brands too.

LinkedIn is a great place for industry comment and opinion. Use it to build your profile as a thought leader and this will begin to rub off on your brand as well.

LinkedIn Groups are useful too. When you join or create a group you can share insights, knowledge and information around important issues. This can help target your B2B clients and establish yourself as a trusted expert on those topics.

To do:

- Set up your business page account: <https://business.linkedin.com/marketing-solutions/company-pages>
- Share with your employees so they can link to it in their profiles which broadens your reach to your team's business connections.
- Connect with everyone you meet, those in similar industries and people who share your interests.
- Include messages when you invite people to connect– say hi and why you'd like to be connected.
- Be interesting – well-written and provocative content stands out on LinkedIn.
- Ask for recommendations from clients.
- Comment on and share other people's posts.



Instagram – the gallery opening

Now owned by Facebook, Instagram is where beautiful things happen. Think about it as millions of personal art exhibitions from both users and brands. Many brands have great feeds that promote values, events and causes. Some also sell direct using the platform with inbuilt ads.

The stats

- 400 million daily active users worldwide
- 25 mins spent daily, on average
- 33% of internet users are on Instagram

Is this the platform for you?

While this isn't a 'kid' platform, Instagram is certainly dominated by younger audiences – 90% of users are under 35. Their engagement with brands is also high – ten times that of Facebook's.

Your best bet is to grow your own beautiful exhibition. The quality of the photography is everything. In a service orientated business this isn't as straightforward.

Some businesses have products that photograph well such as fashion, fitness or design, but it's not just for product shots. Companies like GE and FedEx post beautiful shots that capture their brand too.

Hashtags are important on Instagram – they let you connect your post to trending subject matter or topics people often post about. For example, the #tbt (throwback Thursday) is attached to posts with images that are from last week, or last decade. Using a hashtag means your post will appear if anyone in the world searches for it.

To do:

- Instagram is primarily for mobile. Download the Instagram app for iOS from the App Store, Android from Google Play store or Windows Phone from the Windows Phone Store. <https://business.instagram.com/getting-started>
- Follow users who might be interested in your brand. You'll also be able to connect to your Facebook fans
- Use hashtags to index your posts and make them more searchable or discoverable.
- Use the ad platform to connect with a wider audience.
- Make your posts beautiful and full of personality.
- Go easy on filters – they can make your posts look nicer but less authentic, so include a mix of no-filter images too.



The Social Media Wrap Up

Social media platforms are more immediate and less static than your website so the key is to keep posting. You can share an industry comment on Twitter, an expert opinion piece on LinkedIn and more of your personality and team news on Facebook. On these sites you can connect with a broader audience and the communication is two-way, unlike the more traditional channels.

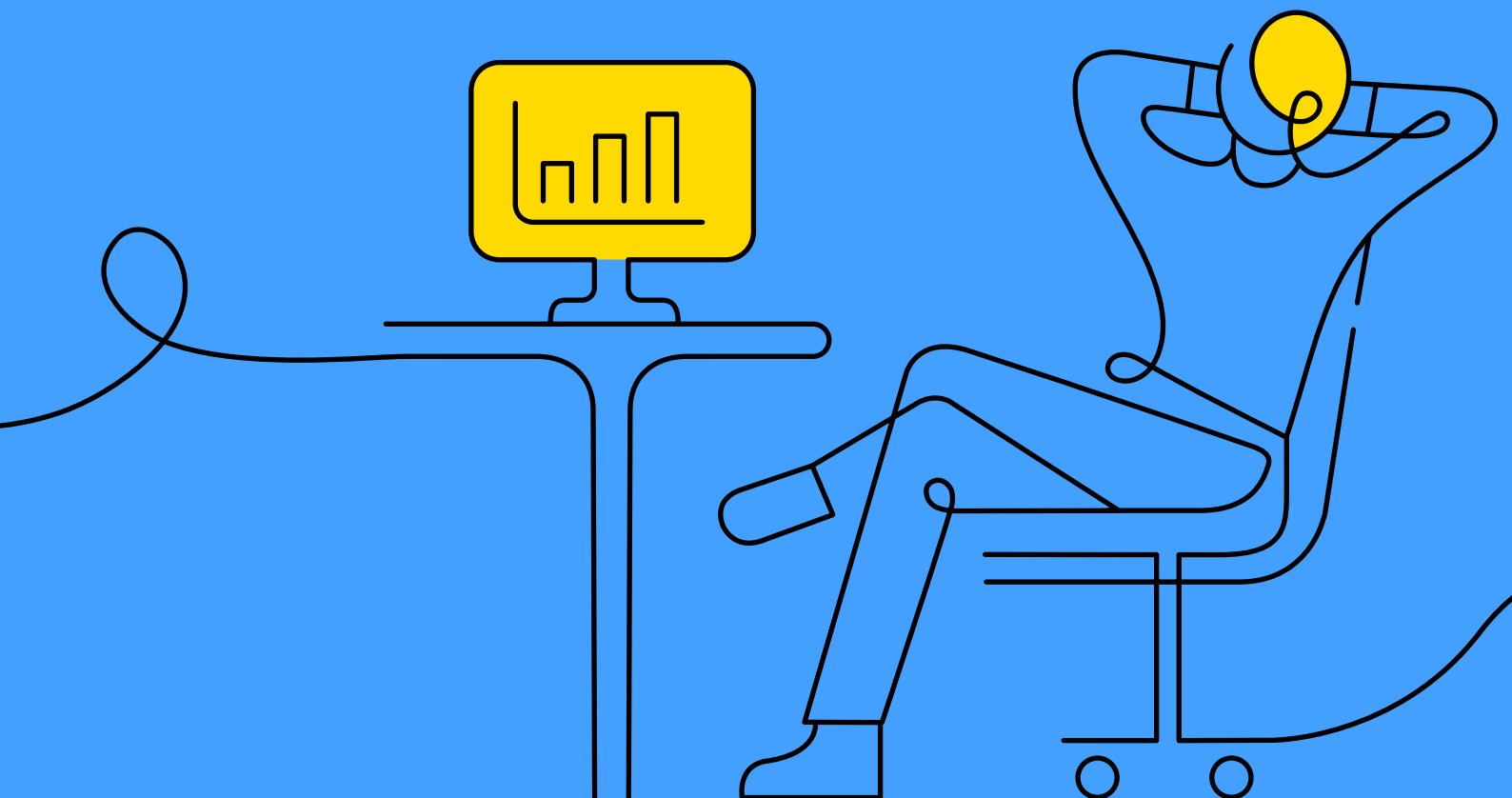
If your posts are liked and shared, they are amplified and you benefit from the word of mouth. This is powerful. In a study by Nielson, 92% of people trust recommendations from people they know. Compare this to the extent that they trust ads in the Newspaper - only 46%.





CHAPTER 9

Analytics & ROI





Analytics and ROI

One of the best things about digital marketing is that it is infinitely measurable. Traditional marketing is often conducted with no performance data or it requires more investment in research to uncover.

If an element of your marketing can be tracked, recorded and measured, turn it into a key metric. Whether that's the conversion rate on your latest website campaign, the number of followers of your Twitter account, or the number of new prospects won through email marketing. The key is to have access to the right data – so you can plan accordingly in the future.

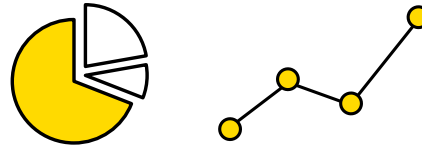
Rather than wasting time and money on activity that doesn't deliver the right bang for your buck, you can make informed marketing

decisions, and be confident that you're using the most effective marketing channels for the business.

But before you start - think about what you are hoping to achieve with each activity, this will make it easier to spot success.

Here are some of the more common analytics you could consider.





1. Website traffic and engagement

When you analyse your website you can look at things like traffic sources, conversions, bounce rates and exit pages. You'll find loads of information on visitor behaviour. The more you know about the activities of your clients, the easier it is to figure out ways to help them, get them to spend more or encourage them to provide recommendations.

With a tool like [Google Analytics](#), you can keep a close eye on how well your site and online content is performing. Your analytics will be able to give you figures around:

- **Acquisition**

This shows how successful you are in attracting visitors to your site. You'll improve these numbers by working on your site's SEO.

- **Behaviour**

This is what people do once they're on your site. Are they 'bouncing' straight off the page, or staying to engage with the content? A high bounce rate is a sign you may need to improve your content, or user experience.

- **Conversion**

This is the number of people clicking your call-to-action buttons. If you want to increase your conversion numbers, review your content and your design to ensure they're both simple and compelling.

Keeping an eye on your website analytics will let you see which pages are getting traffic and which are a virtual ghost town. You'll get a ton of information which might feel a little overwhelming. Don't worry - you don't need to tackle it all at once. Start by identifying a few factors that tie in to your marketing goals.

For online businesses of all kinds, conversions are key, whether that is a sale or an enquiry. You should identify the main actions you want your website visitors to take, assign them monetary values if that helps you perceive their worth, and shape your website to drive users towards them.

2. Email campaign open rates

You'll want to understand which emails gain the most traction, who in your target audience is clicking through and if there's a tail-off in interest during the course of the campaign. All of this information helps you refine, evolve and improve your next campaign. By using a digital marketing tool like [BOMA](#) you can track your email open rates, measure your audience size and see conversion rates on your key calls-to-action.

3. Social media followers and likes

You can easily track your social media numbers using the analytics tool in each social platform. You'll want real-time access to social metrics so you can spot which social posts are getting engagement (likes and shares), when and how you're gaining followers and whether people are clicking on your shared content.

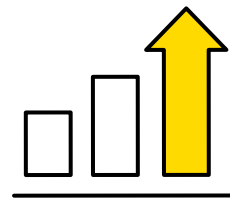


4. Growth of your client base

Ultimately, your marketing, brand profile-raising and social activity are intended to bring in more business. So measuring the impact of your marketing on retention or client portfolio are key measurements of success.

Having a customer relationship management (CRM) system helps you record your client interactions and track how effective they are. By tracking the emails sent, the phone calls received or the number of introductory meetings held, you build up a picture of where your marketing is driving prospects to get in touch – and where it's falling short.

There are many CRM systems to choose from too – it's worth using the free trials and sales support that most offer. This will allow you to see how each fits with your business, the functionality it offers, how easy it is to use and the pricing model.



5. Feedback from your clients

Use a survey to find out what part your marketing activity played in that decision process.

A few key questions to ask:

- How did you find out about us?
- Did our (social post) play a part in your decision to work with us?
- Do you find our blogs and emails useful? What would you like to see more of?

The better you understand the impact of your marketing on your client conversion and retention rates, the more insight you have into how well your campaigns and social content are doing – and how you can improve them.

Playing the long game with content marketing

It's worth remembering that content marketing is a long-term process of raising the profile of your brand and demonstrating value to your audience. So while it may not deliver an instant impact it will put you in a great position when your prospect is choosing an advisor.

Increasing touch points through smart use of marketing allows you to keep existing clients engaged and convert prospects.

For a prospect to move from cold to engaged, they may first have:

- Followed you on social media – so they could get more updates and advice
- Read an article – having followed a link from your social marketing
- Met you at an event – where you talked about your product
- Signed up for your weekly newsletter – to find out more about your products

And your content marketing provides the communications, interactions and awareness that starts this ball rolling.

To do:

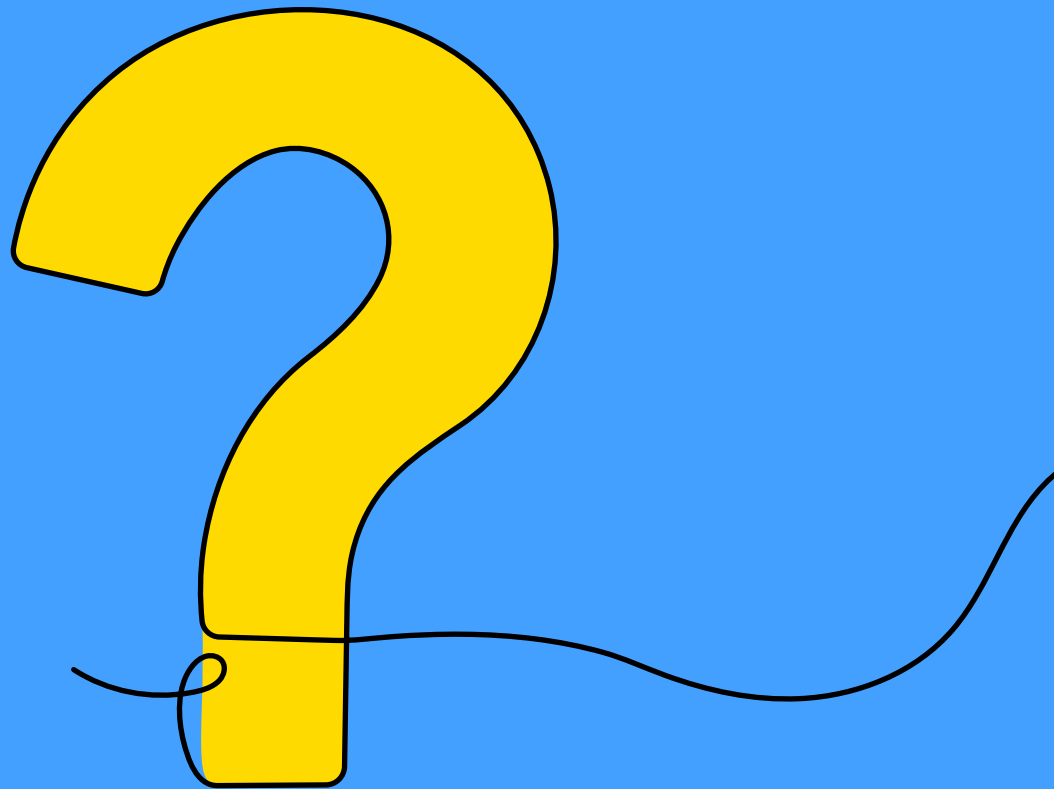
- Think about the goals for your marketing and how you will measure each marketing activity.
- Use analytic tools to track performance.
- Use this data to inform your next activity.



CHAPTER 10

Final Word

So, where to next?





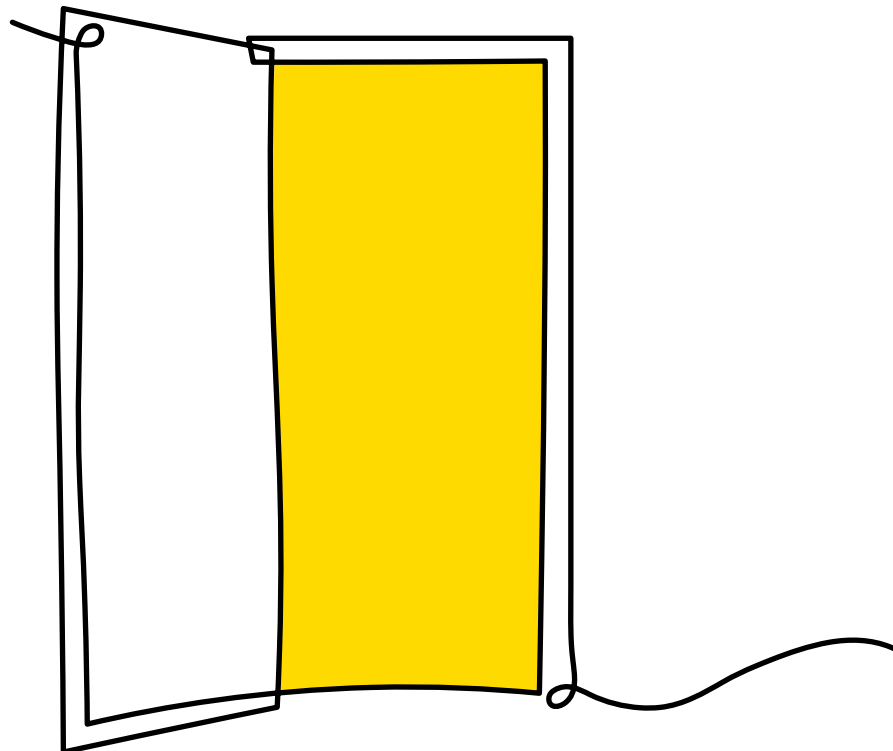
Next steps...

So, where to next? Simple: start using the incredible tools available out there. Marketing in the digital age is about strategy and consistency – think carefully about what activities might work well for your brand and audience, and put plans in place to do them regularly – every day, every week or every month.

Here are some steps to get you started:

- Book a meeting slot into your week - some time each day, or a big chunk each week. Set up in a meeting room or a cafe and take some time out to plan your approach.
- [Book a demo](#) with BOMA to see how you can easily connect with and get closer to your clients, using BOMA's business advisory content and easy digital marketing tool.
- Work your way down the marketing cheat sheet below. Have your laptop handy to look up extra information as you go. Solidify your plan and it will make implementation far easier and more effective.
- Use these same regular bookings to implement your plan - create and post excellent content, update and improve your website and keep in touch with your audience on email and social media.
- Track your activity with ROI and analytics and ask yourself how each can be improved. Don't be afraid to tweak, change or scrap something entirely if it's not working, and note the activities that are.

Once you get rolling this should be a regular and even enjoyable part of your week. It's about consistent effort - not flashes of brilliance - that will make the most difference to your business in the long run. With a little focussed, consistent effort, you'll be surprised at how quickly you'll begin to see the rewards.





Marketing guide cheat sheet

Plan your marketing

- Think about what your company represents beyond what you do day to day.
- Write a one-sentence description for your business. What are you really selling?
- Who are your clients? Build a picture of your buyer persona.

Create and review your brand assets

- Review existing assets to ensure they connect with the right people.
- Ensure new assets deliver on your brand, your audience and your value proposition.

Build a great website

- Make sure your website design is clear and spot any missing elements you'll need to add.
- Think about what you want your visitors to do at each point in your site and ensure you push them towards that action.
- Test your load speeds and check your site is mobile responsive.
- Look for opportunities to have other authoritative or relevant websites link to yours.
- Attract more users to your site with interesting content, special offers, events or give-aways.

Check the SEO

- Review page titles and descriptions so they accurately describe the page content.
- Ensure your site is logical and easy to navigate by regularly reviewing your site's categories and subcategories, page titles and descriptions, buttons and links.
- Write down the broad categories for your business and think about the keywords people will search.
- Choose keywords specific to your products and services and focus each page around a keyword.
- Include these keywords in headlines, subheads and the 'slug' of your url.
- Use Google Analytics to assess each page and spot and improve pages with poor bounce rates.

Develop great content

- Create a plan to regularly create and share useful, interesting or amusing content that demonstrates your expertise and/or answers an audience need.
- Use Google's keyword planner to help spot areas where people are looking for information that you could deliver on.
- Use a content tool like BOMA to make sharing your content easier.

Send great emails

- Build a purpose-built database - and get permission.
- Create a content plan of useful, compelling emails that deliver to your marketing goals.
- Share your great content on social media and drive traffic back to a sign up form on your website.

Social media

- Set up your social media accounts on the channels that best suit your brand
- Build a community first, sales second. Be authentic and share the 'real you' here to fans and followers.
- Be responsive - show you are engaged and listening by responding to messages, tweets and mentions.

Test and measure your activity

- Decide on your goals and how you'll measure each marketing activity.
- Use analytic tools to track performance.
- Use this data to inform your next activity.

Good Luck!

You'll find more advice and guides at www.bomamarketing.com



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