SMALL BUSINESS

Set a useful content goal

Choose a business purpose before choosing a format.

SMALL-BUSINESS CONTENT PLANNING GUIDE

ONE GOAL, ONE AUDIENCE ACTION

Pick a goal such as answering pre-sale questions, helping customers use a product, earning local awareness, or inviting repeat visits. Then name the action you want the audience to take.

EXAMPLE

Goal: reduce appointment uncertainty. Action: visit the booking page after reading ·What happens at your first repair visit.·

GOAL CHECK

- ☐ The goal supports a current business priority.
- ☐ The audience can take the action easily.
- ☐ The content offers help before asking for a sale.
- ☐ Success can be reviewed with a simple signal.

This guide provides general communications planning, not legal or marketing compliance advice. Follow platform rules, accessibility standards, privacy rules, copyright law, and any industry-specific advertising requirements. Seek qualified help for regulated claims.

SMALL BUSINESS

Know the audience question

Useful content begins with a real question at a real moment.

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QUESTION INVENTORY

Collect questions from customer emails, calls, reviews, sales conversations, search suggestions, and staff. Remove personal details before recording them.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

What do people ask before buying?

What confuses customers after purchase?

What terms do they use, rather than our internal jargon?

PRIORITIZE TOPICS

- [ ] High frequency: asked often.
- [ ] High impact: affects trust or conversion.
- [ ] High fit: you can answer accurately.
- [ ] High timeliness: relates to a current season or launch.

SMALL BUSINESS

Choose content pillars

Pillars prevent a calendar from becoming random promotion.

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USE THREE TO FIVE REPEATABLE THEMES

Each pillar should connect a customer need to knowledge you can share honestly.

EXAMPLE

A neighborhood bakery might use: ordering tips, behind-the-scenes craft, seasonal menu, community stories, and storage guidance.

BALANCED MIX

- [ ] Teach: explain a process or answer.
- [ ] Proof: show a permitted example, result, or testimonial.
- [ ] Connection: share people, values, or local context with consent.
- [ ] Offer: clearly explain a product, date, or next step.

SMALL BUSINESS

Plan four weeks realistically

Publish at a pace your team can maintain.

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SIMPLE WEEKLY RHYTHM

Choose one main piece and adapt it into smaller posts. Leave space for customer service, approvals, and unexpected work.

EXAMPLE

Week 1: article on choosing bike tires; then one checklist post, one short video tip, and one email link to the article.

CALENDAR FIELDS

- [ ] Date and channel.
- [ ] Pillar and audience question.
- [ ] Format and working title.
- [ ] Owner, reviewer, and due date.
- [ ] Call to action and link.
- [ ] Status: idea, draft, approved, scheduled, published.

SMALL BUSINESS

Create with clarity and care

A clear structure makes content easier to read and approve.

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RELIABLE OUTLINE

- [ ] Lead with the question or outcome.
- [ ] Give three to five accurate, ordered points.
- [ ] Use a concrete example.
- [ ] State the next step without pressure.
- [ ] Check names, dates, links, and claims before publishing.

ACCESSIBILITY AND RIGHTS

Use readable headings, descriptive alt text, captions when appropriate, and sufficient contrast. Use only media you own, have permission to use, or are licensed to use; record the source and license.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Could someone understand this without sound or an image?

Have we made a claim we cannot support?

SMALL BUSINESS

Review and approve efficiently

Define who decides so drafts do not stall.

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APPROVAL WORKFLOW

Assign one content owner and one final approver. Ask reviewers to comment on accuracy, brand fit, accessibility, and risk·not personal preference alone.

EXAMPLE

Reviewer note: ·The price is outdated; replace it with the current booking link.· Not: ·I just do not like this.·

PRE-PUBLISH CHECKLIST

- [ ] Facts, prices, dates, and links checked.
- [ ] Permission obtained for people and customer stories.
- [ ] Required disclosures and platform labels included.
- [ ] Spelling, mobile display, and call to action reviewed.
- [ ] Final version and publication date recorded.

SMALL BUSINESS

Measure, learn, and reuse

Use a few signals to decide what to improve next.

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MATCH MEASURES TO THE GOAL

For awareness, review reach and qualified visits; for education, review saves, replies, or support questions; for action, review clicks or completed requests. Numbers need context and do not prove cause by themselves.

EXAMPLE

A guide with fewer views but five qualified booking inquiries may be more useful than a widely viewed joke.

MONTHLY REVIEW

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Which question earned meaningful engagement?

Which format was manageable to produce?

What did customers do after clicking?

What accurate piece can be updated or reused next month?

REUSE CHECKLIST

- [ ] Refresh dates and links.
- [ ] Adapt one main piece for another channel.
- [ ] Keep the original context; do not distort a result.
- [ ] Archive outdated content.