The Ultimate Small Business Marketing

Maximize ROI with the Right Gameplan

Smarter marketing starts with strategy. This playbook helps small businesses choose the right tactics, and do them the right way. Clear, actionable guidance for founders and lean teams who want to grow without wasting time or money.

FLYRISE

Welcome to Your Marketing Playbook

Built for Small Businesses That Want to Work Smarter, Not Harder

Why This Playbook Exists

- Marketing doesn't have to be overwhelming. But for small businesses, it often is. There's too much noise, too many tactics, and not enough clarity.
- This playbook is here to change that. It's about doing more with less. Smarter strategy, not bigger budgets.
- You'll learn how to:
  - Cut through the noise
  - Focus on the right things
  - Execute efficiently
  - Measure results the right way.

Who This Is For

You! This content is tailored to all types of small businesses, including:

- B2B companies
- E-commerce brands
- Brick-and-mortar businesses
- Solo consultants or early-stage teams

How to Use This Playbook

- Each section stands alone, so you can jump to the parts that apply to your business right now.
- Use it to audit what you're already doing, fill in the gaps, and prioritize your next moves.
- You don't need to do everything. You just need to do the right things—and do them well.

The Flyrise Framework

Four Simple Phases. One Clear Path to Smarter Marketing.

Plan

Start with strategy, not tactics. Before you build anything, get clear on who you're targeting, what you're offering, and what success looks like.

Promote

Build the right assets to show up credibly and convert. Your website, emails, landing pages, and branding all need to work together to turn attention into action.

Produce

Get in front of the right people in the right places. Promotion isn't about doing everything. It's about doing what works for your business model and goals.

Optimize

Track what's working. Improve what's not. This phase turns marketing from a cost into a long-term growth engine.

Key actions:

Plan

- Define your audience and offer
- Clarify your positioning and messaging
- Set goals and success metrics
- Audit what's working
- Choose your top 1–2 channels to focus on

Watch for: Starting with tools before you've nailed your message.

Produce

- Build or refresh your website
- Create/update essential marketing assets
- Set up tools like email platforms and lead capture forms
- Ensure your brand looks and sounds trustworthy

Watch for: Relying on one social profile instead of a solid site.

Promote

- Match your channel to your goal (e.g. SEO for long-term leads, Google Ads for quick wins)
- Stay consistent in messaging and cadence
- Don't chase every trend—focus on what fits

Watch for: Scattered tactics without a clear campaign strategy, AKA "random acts of marketing."

Optimize

- Set up analytics and dashboards
- Monitor your KPIs
- A/B test your messaging, landing pages, or offers
- Reinvest in what works best

Watch for: Doing "set it and forget it" marketing with no ongoing performance optimization and split-testing plan.

Branding

Build a Brand That Feels Trustworthy and True to You

Your brand is more than a logo. It's the overall impression people have of your business the moment they land on your site, see your name online, or walk through your door. Strong branding builds trust fast—and for small businesses, trust is everything. You don't need a full brand manual to show up professionally. But you do need consistency, clarity, and visuals that feel aligned with what you do and who you serve.

Key Terms to Know

- Brand Identity: Your visual system: logo, colors, fonts, and imagery.
- Brand Voice: The tone and style of your writing and communication.
  Positioning: How you differentiate from competitors in the market.
- Tagline: A short phrase that captures your brand's core promise.
- Color Palette: A small set of brand colors used consistently.
- Brand Guidelines: A document that outlines how to use your brand elements.
- Ideal Customer Profile (ICP): A clear description of who your brand is built to serve.
- StoryBrand: A messaging framework that makes your customer the hero.

The Fundamentals

> At a minimum, every small business should have a consistent logo, a basic color palette, and a clear sense of who they're trying to reach and how to speak to them. Your brand should reflect what matters to your ideal customer, not just what you like. When someone visits your site or sees your name online, they should instantly feel that your business is credible, relevant, and built for them.

What Winning Looks Like (KPIs)

- People describe your business the way you want it described
- Prospects recognize and recall your business visually or by name
- Higher conversions on your website or landing pages after a refresh

Frequent Fumbles

- Inconsistent colors, fonts, or messaging
- Using a DIY logo that looks unpolished or generic
- Trying to look like everyone else in your industry
- Relying only on visuals with no clear message
- Focusing on your business instead of your customer

What Play to Call

What to Prioritize Based on How You Operate

B2B – Prioritize clear messaging and a professional identity.
Buyers want to work with brands that feel established and credible. A polished, cohesive brand helps position you as a trustworthy partner.

B2C – Reflect your customer's personality.
Whether playful, bold, or heartfelt, your brand should feel relatable to your target audience. Visuals and tone should mirror their values and vibe.

Ecomm – Keep it clean and conversion-focused.
Product imagery, packaging, and UX come first. Your brand should guide shoppers toward purchase while making your site feel modern and trustworthy.

Service – Build personal trust through tone and visuals.
Use real photos, warm language, and consistent branding to show you're approachable, reliable, and skilled. Make it easy for people to feel confident hiring you.

Brick & Mortar – Make your brand visible everywhere.
From signage and uniforms to menus and packaging, ensure your brand feels consistent across physical touchpoints. Repetition builds recognition in your local market.

Preparing for the Playoffs

More small businesses are embracing personal, values-driven branding that feels human and authentic, especially post-AI. Your story, your tone, and your team all matter. The best brands feel real, not robotic.

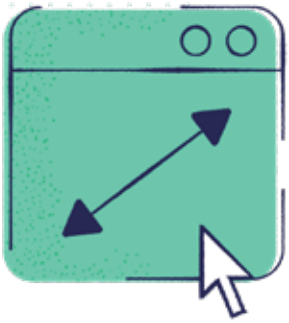
Web Design

Your Website Should Work Harder Than You Do

Your website is your digital home base. It's where people go to decide if they trust you, understand what you do, and want to take the next step. For small businesses, it's often the first impression, so it needs to do more than just look nice. A good website guides your visitor toward action. It should be easy to navigate, quick to load, mobile-friendly, and written for your ideal customer. You don't need a huge site. You need a clear message, a clean layout, and a compelling reason to stick around.

Key Terms to Know

- Homepage: Your main landing page; it should quickly communicate who you are and what you offer.
- Navigation: The menu structure that helps users move through your site.
- CTA (Call to Action): A prompt that encourages your visitor to take the next step.
- Responsive Design: A site that works well on mobile, tablet, and desktop.
- Copy: The written words on your site that explain, persuade, and guide action.
- Landing Page: A focused page designed around a single goal or campaign.
- Above the Fold: What visitors see on screen before scrolling.
- CRO (Conversion Rate Optimization): Improving the percentage of visitors who take action.



The Fundamentals

Every small business website should include a clear homepage message, intuitive navigation, strong CTAs, and credibility elements like reviews or trust badges. With just a quick homepage scan, it should be easy for someone to understand what you offer, who it's for, and how to move forward. You don't need flashy design—just a thoughtful, user-friendly structure. The goal is to help your visitors say yes without making them work for it.

How to Measure Success (KPIs)

- Visitors convert into leads, bookings, or purchases
- Bounce rate is low, and time on page is trending up
- Customers mention your website when explaining why they chose you

Frequent Fumbles

- No clear CTA on the homepage
- Outdated info or broken links
- Menus with too many options
- Design that prioritizes trendiness over usability
- Copy that focuses on the business instead of the customer

What Play to Call

What to Prioritize Based on How You Operate

B2B – Focus on clarity and credibility.
Your site should clearly outline your services, ideal clients, and include trust-building elements like testimonials or case studies. A clean design and clear messaging build confidence.

B2C – Make it easy for users to take action.
Guide customers through the site with simple layouts, friendly copy, and clear next steps. Design and voice should reflect your audience's mindset.

Ecomm – Simplify browsing and checkout.
Use clean product categories, great images, and smooth checkout flows. Make mobile usability and shipping details easy to find.

Service – Make your business feel approachable.
Use real photos, answer common questions, and make it simple to book or reach out. Build trust before someone even contacts you.

Brick & Mortar – Keep it local and up to date.
Show your hours, location, and offerings clearly. Add photos of your space, and make sure your site reflects what customers can expect in person.

Preparing for the Playoffs

Websites are getting simpler and more intentional. Small businesses are prioritizing clarity and conversion over flashy design. DIY builders are improving, but thoughtful messaging and user experience still make the biggest difference.

Sales funnel

Subheader:

A sales funnel is the journey someone takes from discovering your brand to becoming a customer. It's not just one page or one email. It's the whole sequence of steps that guides them toward a decision. For small businesses, a funnel doesn't have to be complex. But it does need to be intentional. Whether you're sending traffic to a landing page, nurturing leads through email, or offering a lead magnet in exchange for contact info, your funnel should meet people where they are and make the next step clear.

Key Terms to Know

- Lead Magnet: A free resource or offer used to capture a potential customer's email.
- Landing Page: A focused page with one goal—usually lead capture or purchase.
- Transitional CTA: A lower-commitment offer (like a discount code or free guide) that helps move someone closer to buying.
- Email Nurture Sequence: A series of emails that builds trust and moves leads closer to buying.
- Top of Funnel (TOFU): The awareness stage; getting in front of new potential customers.
- Bottom of Funnel (BOFU): The decision stage; turning warm leads into buyers.
- Conversion Path: The specific set of steps a user follows from interest to action.
- Buyer's Journey: The path a customer takes from first learning about your business to deciding to buy.

The Fundamentals

> Every small business should have at least one funnel in place—whether it's a straightforward lead form and thank-you page, or a structured flow from ad to email to offer. It could be as simple as a discount code, a helpful PDF, or a quick video intro. Funnels are about reducing friction and helping people say "yes" in steps. A good funnel anticipates questions, builds trust, and offers lower-stakes actions for those who aren't ready to buy or hire you right away. The goal is to make taking action feel easy and worthwhile.

How to Measure Success (KPIs)

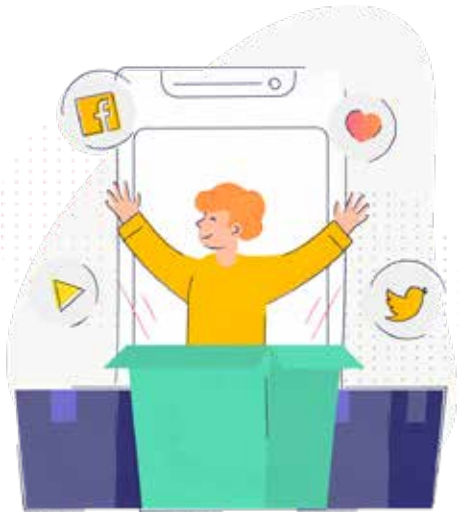
- Lead magnet or landing page converts a strong percentage of visitors
- Email nurture sequences lead to sales, bookings, or responses
- You see consistent movement from new lead to paying customer

Frequent Fumbles

- No lead capture or follow-up strategy in place
- Too many steps between interest and conversion
- An overcomplicated tech stack that's hard to manage
- Generic email sequences that don't feel personal
- Asking for too much too soon without building trust

What Play to Call

What to Prioritize Based on How You Operate



B2B – Focus on education and follow-up.
Offer lead magnets like checklists or whitepapers, then build trust through a short, well-timed email sequence. Help your lead feel informed and confident before they reach out.

B2C – Make it easy to say yes.
Use short, emotionally engaging funnels with quick wins, like a first-time discount or free sample. The goal is to remove hesitation, not pressure the sale.

Ecomm – Combine urgency with ease.
Guide visitors to act with clear landing pages, smart product recommendations, and automated email flows. Use limited-time offers or free shipping to nudge the next step.

Service – Lower the barrier to entry.
Use a free consult, pricing guide, or booking incentive to give people a risk-free first step. Then nurture with personal, helpful follow-up.

Brick & Mortar – Mix digital with real-world value.
Capture emails through in-store or online promos, then follow up with local events, loyalty perks, or seasonal deals. Keep it casual, consistent, and location-aware.

Preparing for the Playoffs

AI has made it easier than ever to build funnels and generate content, but that also means your audience is seeing a lot of the same stuff. To stand out, your funnel needs to offer real value. Get creative, stay personal, and solve a specific problem for your ideal customer. That's what builds trust and drives action.

SEO (Search Engine Optimization)

Help Your Customers Find You Right When They Need You

SEO is what helps people discover your business through Google. It's not just about ranking high for big keywords. It's about showing up when your ideal customer is searching for what you offer. For small businesses, good SEO starts with your website. From there, it's about creating helpful content, getting quality links back to your site, and making sure your site is fast, mobile-friendly, and easy for search engines to crawl. The goal is long-term visibility that brings in new customers over time, without paying for every click.

Key Terms to Know

- Keyword: A word or phrase your audience types into Google.
- Search Intent: The reason behind a search—what the user is trying to find.
- Meta Title / Description: The text that shows in Google results, pulled from your page.
- Local SEO: Strategies that help local businesses show up in map and location-based results.
- Google Business Profile: A free business listing that helps you show up in local search.
- Link building: The process of earning "backlinks" from reputable sites to boost your rankings and credibility.
- On-Page SEO: The process of optimizing your website content and structure.
- Technical SEO: Behind-the-scenes work to improve speed, mobile usability, and indexing.

The Fundamentals

SEO starts with understanding what your ideal customers are searching for and making sure your website speaks to those needs. You don't need hundreds of blog posts or expensive tools. Just a solid foundation: clear content, smart page structure, fast loading speed, and a Google Business Profile that's fully filled out. Small businesses that show up early in local or niche searches get more clicks, more trust, and more leads. It's about being found by the right people at the right time.

How to Measure Success (KPIs)

- Your pages start ranking for relevant keywords
- Organic traffic increases over time
- Leads or sales come from people who found you on Google

Frequent Fumbles

- Targeting keywords that are too broad or competitive
- Ignoring mobile usability and page speed
- Writing for Google instead of your customer
- Forgetting to update or optimize your Google Business Profile
- Publishing content without a clear SEO goal

What Play to Call

What to Prioritize Based on How You Operate

B2B – Target specific search phrases that match your niche.
Focus on specific services and high-value solutions that match your offer. Build trust by creating content that speaks directly to your buyers' questions.

B2C – Optimize for clarity and quick answers.
Use clear product or service pages and answer common questions directly. Help customers make a decision fast without digging.

Ecomm – Build pages that convert and rank.
Each product and category should have keyword-friendly titles, helpful descriptions, and fast load times. Use structured data to help search engines understand your content.

Service – Focus on local search and credibility.
Your Google Business Profile, reviews, and service area pages are key. Make it clear what you offer and where you offer it.

Brick & Mortar – Show up in maps and local searches.
Make sure your business name, hours, and location are consistent everywhere online. Ask happy customers to leave reviews to boost your visibility.

Preparing for the Playoffs

> Search engines are getting better at rewarding helpful, specific content written for real people. Small businesses that focus on relevance and clarity (not gaming the algorithm) will continue to win. Prioritize user experience, write like a human, and optimize your site's structure.

Social Media

Show Up Where Your Audience Already Spends Time

Social media helps small businesses build familiarity, stay top of mind, and connect directly with potential customers. It's not just for big brands or influencers. Even a simple, consistent presence can help legitimize your business and drive engagement. But social media doesn't have to be a full-time job. You don't need to be on every platform. You just need to be strategic, consistent, and aligned with where your audience actually hangs out. Done right, social media gives your business a voice and a face. It helps people feel like they know you, even before they buy from you.

Key Terms to Know

- Engagement: Likes, comments, shares, and other interactions with your posts.
- Organic Reach: The number of people who see your content without paid
- promotion.
- Hashtag: A searchable phrase that helps categorize your content.
- Social Proof: Evidence (like reviews, comments, or tags) that other people trust your brand.
- User-Generated Content: Content created by your customers or followers that features your brand.
- Boosted Post: A paid promotion of an existing social post to reach more people
- Algorithm: The formula platforms use to decide what content shows up in users' feeds.
- Insights: Analytics provided by each platform to measure your content's performance.

The Fundamentals

Every small business should choose one or two platforms where their audience is active and show up consistently. This doesn't mean posting every day. It means having a plan, creating useful or interesting content, and being available to interact. Focus on content that builds trust, answers questions, and shows who you are. You don't need viral posts. You need clarity, consistency, and a reason for people to follow or engage.

How to Measure Success (KPIs)

- Follower growth and engagement rates improve over time
- More traffic or leads come from social media
- People engage with your brand in meaningful ways (e.g. DMs, comments, shares)

Frequent Fumbles

- Posting without a strategy or goal
- Inconsistent branding across posts or platforms
- Only promoting your services without offering value
- Ignoring DMs or comments
- Spreading yourself too thin on too many platforms

What Play to Call

What to Prioritize Based on How You Operate

B2B – Focus on value and credibility.

Platforms like LinkedIn are ideal for building authority and staying visible with potential partners or clients. Share tips, case studies, and team updates that build trust over time.

B2C – Be relatable and engaging.

Use social to show your brand's personality and connect with your audience's lifestyle. Short-form content, stories, and behind-the-scenes posts help make your business feel approachable.

Ecomm – Make your products scroll-stopping.

Use high-quality visuals, product tags, and customer testimonials. Platforms like Instagram and TikTok can drive real traffic when content feels organic and helpful.

Service – Show the person behind the business.

Use photos, videos, or quick tips to build familiarity. Social is a great way to showcase your process, share customer wins, and answer common questions.

Brick & Mortar – Think local and visual.

Highlight events, seasonal specials, or customer visits. Geotags, hashtags, and community engagement can help you show up in local feeds.

Preparing for the Playoffs

Social platforms are evolving quickly, and the rules are always changing. Algorithms shift. Features come and go. Some platforms fade altogether. That's why it's smart to treat social as a traffic source, not your home base.

The most resilient businesses use social to build awareness and engagement, then funnel people to channels they actually own, like your website or email list. Prioritize long-term connection, not just short-term visibility.

Paid Ads

Get in Front of the Right People at the Right Time

Paid ads help you reach new customers faster by showing up exactly where they're already looking—on Google, social media, or other platforms. You set the budget, choose the audience, and tailor the message to match your goal. For small businesses, paid ads can be one of the most efficient ways to generate leads or sales in the short term, especially when organic reach is limited. The key is to start small, test intentionally, and focus on outcomes over impressions.

Key Terms to Know

- PPC (Pay-Per-Click): A pricing model where you pay only when someone clicks on your ad.
- Google Ads: Paid search ads that show up in Google results based on keywords.
- Social Ads: Paid ads that run on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, or LinkedIn.
- Targeting: Choosing specific traits like location, interests, or behavior to show your ads to the right people.
- Conversion: When a user completes a desired action, like a purchase or form submission.
- Remarketing: Showing ads to people who have already visited your site.
- Ad Creative: The visual and text content that appears in your ad.
- Cost Per Click (CPC): The amount you pay each time someone clicks your ad.

The Fundamentals

You don't need a big budget to get results with ads. You just need a clear goal, a focused offer, and a strong match between the ad and the landing page. Start with one campaign, track results, and refine from there. Make sure your messaging and visuals are aligned with your ideal customer's needs and where they are in the buying process.
Even small ad spends can go far when paired with high-intent keywords, sharp creative, and a landing page built for conversions.

How to Measure Success (KPIs)

- Cost per lead or sale is aligned with your customer acquisition budget
- Your ads are generating consistent, qualified traffic
- Landing pages convert clicks into action at a strong rate

Frequent Fumbles

- Running ads without clear conversion goals
- Sending paid traffic to a generic homepage
- Overspending before testing creative or keywords
- Ignoring mobile ad performance or loading speed
- Failing to follow up with leads after a click

What Play to Call

What to Prioritize Based on How You Operate

B2B – Use search and LinkedIn to reach decision-makers.
Target specific job titles or industries with Google Ads or LinkedIn campaigns. Promote lead magnets, consultations, or content that speaks to your buyer's pain points.

B2C – Keep it emotional and action-oriented.
Use Meta Ads (Facebook/Instagram) to tell a visual story and drive action. Focus on clear value and quick wins, like discounts or limited-time offers.

Ecomm – Focus on retargeting and product-based campaigns.
Use Meta, Google Shopping, and dynamic retargeting to show the right product to the right person at the right time. A/B test visuals, copy, and formats to improve ROAS.

Service – Use local targeting and niche platforms.
Run Google Ads for people searching specific services near them. If your audience is professional (like coaching or consulting), LinkedIn Ads can help build authority and generate qualified leads.

Brick & Mortar – Drive local traffic with smart targeting.
Use Google Ads and local Meta campaigns to highlight your location, offers, and events. Geotargeting and mobile-friendly promos help bring people through the door.

Preparing for the Playoffs

Ad platforms are automating more than ever, but strong creative and targeting still matter. With rising costs and shorter attention spans, small businesses that focus on clarity, speed, and value-driven offers will get the best results. Start with one campaign, test and tweak, then scale what works.

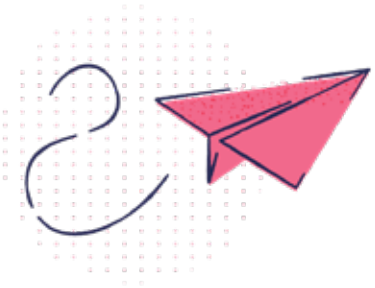
Email Marketing

Stay Connected with the People Most Likely to Buy

Email is still one of the most powerful tools in a small business marketing toolkit. It lets you speak directly to people who have already shown interest and build trust over time. And unlike social platforms, your email list is something you own and control. Whether you're sending regular newsletters, one-time promos, or automated sequences, email helps turn leads into loyal customers. It works best when it feels personal, relevant, and worth opening.

Key Terms to Know

- List Building: The process of growing your email subscriber list.
- Open Rate: The percentage of subscribers who open your email.
- Click-Through Rate (CTR): The percentage of recipients who click a link in your email.
- Segmentation: Breaking your list into smaller groups based on behavior or traits.
- Automation: Pre-scheduled emails triggered by specific actions or timing.
- Drip Campaign: A series of automated emails that nurture leads over time.
- A/B Testing: Comparing two email versions or subject lines to see which performs better.
- Deliverability: How successfully your emails land in recipients' inboxes.



The Fundamentals

Every small business should be building an email list from day one. Use it to nurture leads, share helpful content, and stay top of mind. Start with a simple welcome sequence for new subscribers and a consistent monthly email that adds value. Focus on clarity, good subject lines, and strong CTAs. You don't need a huge list to make email work. A small, engaged audience is better than a large one that never opens.

How to Measure Success (KPIs)

- Your open and click rates improve over time
- Subscribers regularly convert into customers or take action
- People reply, forward, or engage with your emails

Frequent Fumbles

- Buying email lists instead of building your own
- Sending emails too frequently or not frequently enough
- Skipping mobile-friendly formatting
- Ignoring subject line performance
- Failing to give people a reason to stay subscribed

What Play to Call

What to Prioritize Based on How You Operate

B2B – Nurture leads with helpful, timely content.
Use emails to build authority and move leads closer to booking a call or downloading a resource. Keep content professional but conversational.

B2C – Use email for promotions and customer connection.
Share exclusive offers, product tips, or event invites. Personal touches and seasonal content help build loyalty.

Ecomm – Automate and personalize at every stage.
Set up abandoned cart emails, purchase follow-ups, and loyalty sequences. Use behavior-based triggers to increase repeat sales.

Service – Build trust through regular communication.
Use newsletters or check-in emails to share helpful tips, highlight testimonials, or remind people to rebook.

Brick & Mortar – Tie email to in-person activity.
Promote local events, limited-time offers, or new arrivals. Encourage in-store visits and reward loyal subscribers

Preparing for the Playoffs

Email is here to stay, but it's shifting toward more personalized, behavior-based communication. Smart automation and strong storytelling will continue to outperform generic blasts. Businesses that respect the inbox and deliver consistent value will keep their audiences engaged.

Blog Content

Show Up in Search. Show Up With Value

Blog content is one of the most flexible and powerful tools in your marketing toolkit. It builds authority, improves SEO, and helps your audience understand why your business matters. When done well, it meets your customers at every stage of their journey by answering questions, solving problems, and driving action.More content isn't always better. What matters most is relevance. The best blogs begin with a clear goal—whether that's building trust, ranking for a specific keyword, or supporting a campaign. From how-to guides to customer stories, blog content helps turn curiosity into confidence.

Key Terms to Know

- People-First Content: Writing that's created to genuinely help your audience, not just satisfy algorithms.
- SEO Blogging: Blog writing that balances keyword targeting with useful, natural-sounding content.
- Evergreen Content: Topics that stay relevant over time and continue bringing in traffic.
- Content Pillar: A long, in-depth blog that serves as the hub for related posts on a topic.
- Topic Clusters: A group of related blog posts that support a central theme and improve site structure.
- Internal Linking Strategy: Intentionally connecting blog posts to guide readers and boost SEO.
- Content Audit: A review of your existing blog posts to see what's performing, what needs updates, and what's missing.
- Content Refresh: Updating old blog posts to improve performance, accuracy, or alignment with new priorities.

The Fundamentals

Start with your audience's real questions and challenges. Let keyword research guide your topics, but write for humans first. Each blog should serve a purpose—whether it's to educate, attract traffic, or support a sales goal. Keep it skimmable, include helpful visuals, and end with a strong CTA.

How to Measure Success (KPIs)

- Blog posts begin ranking for relevant keywords
- Readers visit multiple pages or return to your site over time
- Organic traffic leads to conversions or newsletter signups

Frequent Fumbles

- Publishing without a clear strategy
- Choosing keywords that are too broad or competitive
- Infrequent posting that slows momentum
- Overloading keywords or writing unnaturally
- Forgetting to link between posts or include a call to action

What Play to Call

What to Prioritize Based on How You Operate

B2B – Lead with insight.
Share expertise, address complex problems, and build credibility. Long-form guides, case studies, and industry-focused content work well here.

B2C – Be helpful and relatable.
Create content that feels useful and real. Answer common questions, highlight outcomes, and show how your offer fits into your customer's life.

Ecomm – Support the sale with content.
Use your blog to explain product features, address objections, and guide comparisons. Buyer guides and how-tos are especially effective.

Service – Build trust through education.
Focus on content that explains your process, builds confidence, and answers pre-purchase questions. Position yourself as a go-to expert.

Brick & Mortar – Think local and seasonal.
Write about topics tied to your location or time of year. Showcase events, behind-the-scenes stories, or seasonal tips that create connection.

Preparing for the Playoffs

With AI making it easier than ever to generate content, the bar for quality is rising fast. Search engines are getting better at recognizing content that's actually helpful, especially when it reflects real experience, clear expertise, and trustworthiness (known as E-E-A-T). Small businesses that lead with people-first content and build long-term credibility will stand out in an increasingly automated landscape.

Strategy

Know Where You're Going Before You Start Moving

Marketing without strategy gets expensive fast. The most effective small businesses don't do more, they focus better. Strategy is what turns scattered efforts into a clear plan, based on your goals, audience, and what actually works for your business model. At Flyrise, we use strategy to simplify. We help you cut through the noise, map your next steps, and align every channel to a purpose. No fluff. Just clarity, momentum, and smarter decision-making.

Key Terms to Know

- Unique Selling Proposition (USP): The one thing that makes your business different and better for your ideal customer.
- Messaging Strategy: A framework for what you say and how you say it to connect with your audience.
- Buyer's Journey: The stages someone goes through from realizing they have a problem to making a purchase.
- Customer Lifecycle: The full experience someone has with your business, from first contact to repeat buyer.
- SMART Goals: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound goals that guide your marketing decisions.
- KPIs (Key Performance Indicators): The specific metrics you use to track whether your strategy is working.
- Marketing Action Plan: A Flyrise roadmap outlining your next best marketing moves.
- Free Strategy Session: A Flyrise consultation where we help you audit, clarify, and map your next steps.

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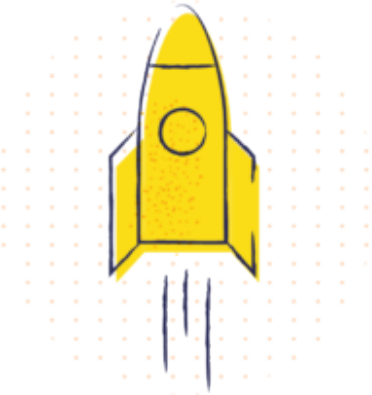


The Fundamentals

Start by getting clear on your business goals, your ideal customer, and the results you want from your marketing. Use those inputs to guide your channel choices, content focus, and budget. Good strategy means making smart tradeoffs—choosing what to skip as much as what to prioritize. Without it, even the best tactics can miss the mark. With it, you'll make faster progress using fewer resources.

How to Measure Success (KPIs)

- You have a clear plan and are no longer guessing at what to do
- Your marketing efforts feel aligned and focused, not scattered
- You see measurable progress toward your business and revenue goals

Frequent Fumbles

- Chasing every channel without a clear goal
- Copying competitors without knowing if it fits your audience
- Focusing only on tactics without defining success
- Forgetting to track or revisit your plan
- Letting your messaging drift without checking for consistency

What Play to Call

What to Prioritize Based on How You Operate

B2B – Build around buyer trust and education.
Focus your strategy on long sales cycles, multiple decision-makers, and informational content. Prioritize campaigns that position your team as the expert and move leads steadily toward a conversation.

B2C – Keep it simple and consistent.
Create a focused strategy that connects emotionally and encourages action quickly. Use promotions, reviews, and seasonal timing to stay relevant without overwhelming your customers.

Ecomm – Align everything around conversion.
Structure your strategy to support fast-moving buying decisions. Use retargeting, product-specific content, and smart promotions to shorten the path from scroll to sale.

Service – Build strategy around trust and visibility.
Craft messaging that answers common questions, explains your process, and gives customers reasons to choose you. Choose channels where they're actively searching or looking for solutions.

Brick & Mortar – Bridge digital and local strategy.
Center your strategy around driving foot traffic and repeat visits. Combine local SEO, email, and in-person events with digital channels to keep your business top of mind nearby.

Preparing for the Playoffs

> Strategy is becoming more important as channels get noisier and attention spans shrink. Smart businesses are prioritizing fewer, better campaigns that reflect real audience needs. The ability to adapt without losing focus is what separates sustainable brands from short-lived ones.

What To Do Now vs. What Can Wait

Use This Matrix to Prioritize the Right Moves for Your Business

Not every marketing task needs to happen at once, especially when you're a small business with limited resources. This matrix helps you sort high-impact, low-effort moves from the ones that require more time or budget. Use it to choose smart first steps based on where you are right now.

	Low Effort	High Effort
High Impact	Start Here  Quick wins that move the needle now. Examples: clarify your homepage copy, set up a Google Business Profile, run one ad campaign.	Plan + Invest  Worth it, but requires more time or budget. Examples: website overhaul, SEO content plan, brand refresh.
Low Impact	Defer or Skip  Tasks that don't drive much growth. Examples: chasing every social trend, updating your logo without a strategic need.	Avoid or Reframe  High effort with little payoff. Examples: expensive software you don't need yet, complex funnels for small audiences.

Action Step: Prioritize Your Marketing To-Dos

Not sure what to tackle first? Use this blank matrix to map your top priorities and decide what's worth your energy right now.
Write down the top 5 things on your current marketing to-do list. Then place each one in the quadrant that best fits its impact and effort.

	Low Effort	High Effort
High Impact		
Low Impact		

Sample Marketing Timelines

Budget Smarter with Realistic Expectations by Phase

Marketing takes time and resources. But with a clear roadmap, you can make steady progress without burning out. This page outlines rough timelines and typical cost ranges based on where you are in the Flyrise Framework. Use it to plan ahead, set expectations, and make better decisions based on your stage and goals.

Plan

Goals: Strategy, clarity, and prioritization

Produce

Goals: Build or improve your core assets

Promote

Goals: Get visible and generate lead

Optimize

Goals: Improve what's working and scale smart

Plan

- Includes activities like: Free Strategy Session, Messaging & Positioning, Channel & Audit Review
- Typical Timeline: ___
- Typical Investment: $___ – ___

Produce

- Includes activities like: Website build or refresh, Brand visuals and messaging, Marketing setup (CRM, email platform, etc.)
- Typical Timeline: ___
- Typical Investment: $___ – ___

Promote

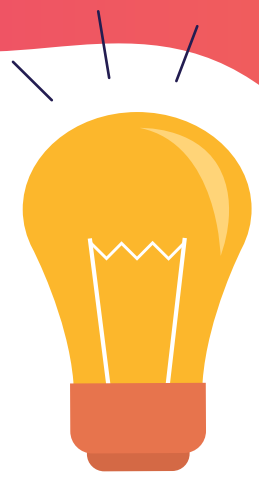
- Includes activities like: Paid Ads, Organic social or SEO, Email marketing setup
- Typical Timeline: ___
- Typical Investment: $___ – ___

Optimize

- Includes activities like: Paid Ads, Organic social or SEO, Email marketing setup
- Typical Timeline: ___
- Typical Investment: $___ – ___

Final Thoughts

Marketing That Works Starts with the Big Picture



The Film Room

Dig Deeper Into What Works

Want to keep honing your skills? Use these curated resources to explore each area of your marketing more deeply. We've included some of our top blog posts and favorite resources—organized by channel—so you can find exactly what you need, when you need it.

Branding

- Case Study: A High School Enjoys a Much-Needed Brand Refresh and Site Redesign
- Branding Inspiration to Bring Your Brand to Life
- Branding Packages for Startups: 10 Essential Elements

Web Design

- Website Design and SEO: How Deep Does the Rabbit Hole Go?
- Preparing for a WordPress Website Redesign or Rebuild
- Expertly Crafted WordPress Websites

Sales Funnels

- Using an Automated Sales Funnel to Generate and Nurture Leads
- Top of Funnel Marketing: Planting Seeds for Future Growth
- Mid Funnel Marketing: Building Consideration & Nurturing Leads

SEO

- Case Study: A Talented Local Photographer Gains the Organic Visibility She Deserves
- Organic SEO Services: Dominate Google the Right Way!
- SEO Positioning: Securing Your Place in Search Rankings

Social Media

- How to Do a Social Media Audit
- Social Media Mistakes to Learn From and Avoid
- What is a Social Media Kit? (And How to Get One!)

Paid Ads

- “Advertising My Small Business” Asked & Answered!
- Ad Campaign Optimization: Google, Facebook, & LinkedIn

Email Marketing

- Email Campaign Ideas: Enhance Your Email Marketing Strategy
- B2B Email Marketing: Steps to Generate Revenue
- Case Study: A Local Painting Company Books More Estimates with a Balanced Marketing Attack

Blog Content

- How to Hire a Blogger
- Inbound Marketing Funnel: Converting Leads into Customers
- Google’s Creating Helpful Content Guidelines

Strategy

- Case Study: An RV Resort Thrives as Local and National Visibility Skyrockets
- Succeeding With a Small Business Marketing Consultant
- Small Business Marketing Strategies that Still Work

How Flyrise Can Help