



# connections

An Immigrant's Guide to  
**Marketing your Small  
Business in Alberta**



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**BUSINESSLINK**  
Immigrant Services 

# How to Use this Guidebook

## Welcome to Connections: An Immigrant's Guide to Marketing your Small Business in Alberta

Do you want to market your business in Alberta? If you said yes, this guide is for you. It will show you how to market your business and understand how your cultural community is marketed to.

This guide is to help you get started. It does not give every detail of marketing a business. You will still need to do more research and use all the resources available to you.

We suggest you read all the sections of this guide but take your time. It is meant to introduce you to the marketing process. We recommend that you give yourself at least one day to work through each section and that you try the Activity Zone tasks before you move forward.

Each section should be learned in order. You may find there are topics you have experience in. We suggest you read every topic to help you understand the full marketing process.

### This guide also has some special features:



#### **DEFINITIONS**

Can help with certain vocabulary.



#### **CONNECTIONS**

Offer links and contacts that can help with the lesson.



#### **DID YOU KNOW**

Gives helpful hints and directions to useful resources.



#### **BUSINESS LINK**

Provides information about how Business Link can help you with your startup.



#### **ACTIVITY ZONE**

Gives extra opportunity to think about issues and ask yourself questions.

# SECTION 1

## An Introduction to Marketing

Marketing is an important part of growing your business. It does not matter if you have run your business for many years, or have just started up, you will always need to market your product or service.

### This guidebook will help answer the following questions:

1. Who are my potential customers?
2. How can I create marketing materials that will attract potential customers?
3. How can I make my business look different from my competitors? How can I create a **personality** for my business that is unique?
4. How is the personality I create for my business related to my brand?
5. Why should I use my brand when I create advertising materials?
6. How can I spend less money finding new customers?



**PERSONALITY** means the qualities that make someone or something interesting.



**DESIRE** is a want or wish for something.

You always need to find new and repeat customers for your product or service so your business can grow. A lot of thought and strategy is needed to attract a paying customer. It is also important to understand why not everyone will be a customer for your business. As you work through this guidebook, you will learn why some customers **desire** your products and services more than other people do.



# SECTION 2

## The Marketing Process

### What does it take to manage a small business?

A small business owner needs to manage supplies and products. They need to manage how they hire and organize employees. Small business owners must also manage how they collect money and pay suppliers. Each of these areas of managing a business uses a process. A process is the actions you need to do to get something done. Managing supplies and products uses an Inventory Process. Hiring and organizing employees uses a Human Resources Process. Collecting money and paying suppliers uses a Financial Process.

Finding potential customers is a process too. Trying to find potential customers is a *Marketing Process*. The Marketing Process is a strategy. This process has a number of steps that will lead to getting customers to use and pay for your product or service.



**MARKETING** means understanding who your customer is and why they want to buy from you.

#### In this section, you will learn:

1. What the marketing process looks like
2. How to write S.M.A.R.T marketing goals



## What the Marketing Process Looks Like

The marketing process can be pictured as a Marketing Funnel. The example below shows the steps in the process. The marketing process starts at the top of a funnel and moves downward.



“Marketing is getting someone who has a need, to know, like, and trust you.”

- John Jantsch  
author of [Duct Tape Marketing](#)<sup>1</sup>



[The Better Business Bureau](#)<sup>2</sup> (BBB) is a non-profit organization with locations across North


America. This organization sets the standards for ethically doing business. Businesses can register and pay fees to be part of the organization and promote trust in their services.




To learn more about the Marketing Funnel, download the [Marketing Guide](#)<sup>3</sup> from the Business Link website.

For more information about the Marketing Process, watch our [marketing video](#)<sup>4</sup>.



When you watch videos on YouTube, you can read the captions in your language. Click on the 

icon at the bottom of the video. Then click on the  icon. Select ‘Subtitles’. Finally, choose ‘Auto-translate’ and select a language.



You should think carefully about all of your marketing efforts. Planning helps you spend your money wisely and achieve your goals.

What are your marketing goals? How much money can you spend on marketing your business? Complete the following activities to start planning for your marketing process.

## S.M.A.R.T. Goals

It is important to create clear goals. Goals are something you are trying to do. When you write down a goal, it is more likely to happen. A S.M.A.R.T. goal is one way to organize your goals. When you write a S.M.A.R.T. goal, you will use a framework to clearly define your goal.



Create 3 S.M.A.R.T. marketing goals and write them down. You can use this information later to help you build your marketing plan. An example would be: “I would like to increase the number of visitors to my retail store from 20 per day to 30 per day by July 1st, 2021.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



Decide on a budget for how much money you wish to spend: I can spend \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per year on my marketing efforts.

Before you start a marketing process to sell your products or services to customers, it is a good idea to understand how other businesses market to you. Read the next section entitled “Understanding Immigrant Communities” to see how large businesses market to you and your community by dividing your community into “market segments”.



### **S - SPECIFIC**

Your goal must focus on one clear outcome.

### **M - MEASURABLE**

You need to be able to measure that outcome.

### **A - ACTIONABLE**

Set a goal that will be challenging, but you will be able to do it.

### **R - REALISTIC**

Is it possible to achieve your goals with the time and money you have?

### **T - TIMELY**

Every goal needs a deadline. It might be one year or several months.

Watch this [short video](#)<sup>5</sup> from Khan Academy explaining S.M.A.R.T. goals.

# SECTION 3

## Understanding Immigrant Communities

Canada is a multicultural country. It ranks fifth in the world for number of immigrants. One in five Canadians were born in another country.

There are many immigrant communities across Canada. Eighteen of those immigrant communities each have more than 100 000 people. Canada's large immigrant population means there are also many languages spoken other than English or French.

### This section will cover the following points:

1. Market segmentation
2. Diasporas

### Canada Immigrant Languages

Each large circle represents a language spoken in Canada by more than 100,000 people.







### MARKET SEGMENTATION

is the process of dividing a market of potential customers into groups, or

### SEGMENTS, based on characteristics.

The segments, or groups, are made up of consumers. These consumers react in the same way to marketing strategies. These groups of consumers, or segments, share similar qualities, such as living in the same area, or have similar interest or needs.

To find out more about Market Segmentation go to [Emyth.com](http://Emyth.com)<sup>6</sup>

## Segments: Being Part of the Whole

There will be segments of the population who desire your products and services more than others. **Segments** of your community may also desire your products and services more than others. **Market Segmentation** is how populations are divided up for marketing purposes. To better understand how this works, it helps to understand how other businesses market to you.



### MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES

are large companies with a head office in one country that

also sells goods and services in several other countries. McDonald's, Costco, and Walmart are examples of multinational corporations.

Large corporations spend billions of dollars each year to do market research. These large companies pay expensive consultants to tell them how to market and advertise to you. If you understand why they do this and how they think of you as a consumer, you can use the same techniques and information to create your marketing plan. Immigrants are highly attractive customers for **multinational corporations**. Your cultural community may be a valued customer for you also.



## How an Immigrant Community is Segmented

An immigrant community is called a **Diaspora**.

Immigrants must make decisions about how to keep their unique identity while living in a new country. Values differ from one culture to another. Buying habits and shopping choices can show the decisions immigrants make about how they are living in a new country.

Multinational Corporations, who spend millions of dollars in market research, have divided consumers in a Diaspora into four market segments. They are:

- 1. Assimilators** - Assimilators are quick to adjust to their new country. They do not keep many of the customs from their home country. A customer in this segment prefers to buy brands from the host country in which they live. In fact, this customer may wish to leave behind many customs from their homeland and look for every opportunity to “fit in” when they buy products and services.
- 2. Marginals** - Newcomers who have been forced to leave their homeland may have challenges with paying for everything during their first years in a new country. This segment of customer usually buys items they need and can afford. They do not have enough money to pay extra for items that are from their culture. It will not matter to this customer where a brand comes from, so long as it works well and is affordable.
- 3. Ethnic Affirmers** - It is important to this customer places to keep customs from their homeland. They will look for opportunities to shop within their cultural communities. This kind of customer may even feel the products and services from their homeland are superior to what they can find in their new country.
- 4. Biculturals** - This customer feels like they belong to their home and host cultures without losing their identity. This segment may enjoy cooking traditional food and dressing in traditional clothing from their culture while they are at home. This customer will also be comfortable dining out in Canadian clothing and enjoying North American food.



The term **DIASPORA** comes from the Greek word meaning “to scatter about.” That is exactly what the people of a diaspora do – they scatter from their homeland to places across the globe, spreading their culture as they go.



More and more businesses are becoming interested in marketing to diasporas. Since 2000, the number of first-generation immigrants worldwide has risen sharply, from 150 million to 214 million—a 42% increase. What many people do not realize is that Contrary to popular perception, many of these people work at good paying jobs. are affluent. For instance, in 2011 Indian Americans, Chinese Americans, and Vietnamese Americans reported median household incomes of \$90,529, \$63,538, and \$54,590, respectively, compared with an overall U.S. median of \$50,502.

Source: Harvard Business Review Article, Diaspora Marketing October 2013 by Nirmalya Kumar and Jan-Benedict E.M. Steenkamp





Think about your shopping habits. What choices do you make about the products or services you purchase? Where do you go to shop? Pick your favourite store and list four reasons why you choose to shop there regularly.

My favourite store is:

Reason 1:

Reason 2:

Reason 3:

Reason 4:

Based on your thoughts above, are you able to identify with one of the four market segments? Which segment do you connect to the most? Do you connect more with the assimilator, marginal, ethnic affirmer, or bicultural segment? Why?

You have now discovered that you prefer to purchase products and services based on your values and emotions. These products and services **resonate with** you. Large companies know this and create marketing messages designed to attract you to make purchases from them. If you are planning to open a new business or expand your current business, it is important to answer the questions below:



**RESONATE WITH** is when something has a special meaning or importance for someone.



Do any of the four market segments (Assimilators, Marginals, Ethnic Affirmers, or Biculturals) describe the type of customer you would like for your business?



Do you wish to sell your products or services within your cultural community?



If you are promoting your business in your cultural community, which market segment may value your product or service the most? Why?

Throughout this guide, you will learn strategies you can apply to attract the right type of customer to your business. Continue to the next section to learn more about creating segments of potential customers who will desire your products and services.



# SECTION 4

## Understand your Customers and your Competition

Your customers are the most important focus for your business. Without customers you would not be able to generate revenue for your business. Many business owners believe that everyone is a potential customer. Based on your reading so far, you are now seeing that this is simply not true. Not every person will desire what you are selling or appreciate the value of your products or services. This section will help you organize potential customers into “[market segments](#)” using “[ideal client](#)” profiles. You will also learn about the importance of researching who your customers and competitors are



A **MARKET SEGMENT** is a group of people who share one or more common characteristics. Each market segment is unique.



**CLIENT** is another word for customer.



**DEMOGRAPHICS** are the characteristics of the customers you have, or might have, that you can measure. Examples of demographics are income, age, location, and education.



**PSYCHOGRAPHICS** are the attitudes, opinions, interests, values, and lifestyle choices of your target customer market.



**BEHAVIOURAL TRAITS** show how people behave. These behaviours are usually based on people’s values.

### Describing your Market Segment

Before you start segmenting your market, it is valuable to think about how you would describe a market segment. What helps you describe differences between one market and another? The language we use for segmenting markets is called demographics and psychographics.

If you think about it, you use [demographics](#) all the time. Every time you speak about someone’s age, occupation, address, income, or education degree you are speaking the language of demographics. If your customer is a business, their demographics are somewhat different. Examples of demographics that relate to businesses include which industry they are in, the size of the company, and their corporate structure.


[Psychographics](#) in marketing is about understanding your customer’s emotions and values. If you try to understand what resonates with your client, you can market more accurately.


Every market segment has an ideal client. Think back to [Section Three](#) in this guide. In this instance the market segment was called a “diaspora”. Within this segment, there were four ideal client profiles: Assimilators, Marginals, Ethnic Affirmers, and Biculturals.

You can create a full profile of your ideal client according to their shared demographic, psychometric, and [behavioural traits](#). When you discover where your ideal client lives and understand what they like, you can create more effective marketing strategies.



You can learn even more about your customers by conducting additional [primary and secondary market research](#). You have already started to complete some basic secondary market research using the PRIZM website. There are many other databases that organizations use to help you. The Business Link and your local library are two examples of organizations that can help you with secondary market research

 **PRIMARY MARKET RESEARCH** is research you do yourself. It involves going to your customers, potential customers, and competitors directly to gather information. An example would be a customer survey or focus group.

 **SECONDARY MARKET RESEARCH** is a kind of research where you are gathering information from sources such as databases or other specialty companies who collect the data for you.

## The Importance of Primary Research

One of the best ways to understand your customers is to ask them lots of questions! What is it they like about your products and services? Why do they like your products and services? Customers appreciate being asked their opinions. You can learn so much from their answers. This kind of direct questioning is called “Primary Market Research”. Gather as much information from your customers as possible and they will tell you what is working for them. Your customers will also tell you what is not working.

You can ask questions directly at the checkout counter, create a telephone or online survey. Try to reward your customers for taking time to connect with you. And don't forget to ask for your customer's postal code now that you know the value of this information. Your customers have the right to say “no” but many of them will say “yes”!



[PRIZM](#)<sup>7</sup> classifies Canada's neighbourhoods into 67 unique market segments based on postal codes.

Click the link and enter your home postal code to see how your neighbourhood is viewed as a market segment.



Download and complete the [Ideal Client](#)<sup>8</sup> worksheet found in the “*Small Business Marketing Guides*” section. Create 1 to 5 ideal client profiles.



View the [Business Link Market Research Video](#)<sup>9</sup> to learn about these concepts.

Business Link can also help by [conducting market research](#)<sup>10</sup> for your business.



There are many free and cost-effective ways to create an online survey. Visit [SurveyMonkey](#)<sup>11</sup> to

learn how you can create a survey to send via email.



## Researching your Competition

Have you ever heard someone say, “We don’t have any competitors”? What they really mean is that they have no **direct competition**. A **direct competitor** may be another business selling the same or similar products and services as you are.

For example, you may have a retail storefront that specializes in selling custom fabric and clothing to customers in your community. You may be the only business in your area specializing in these specific items. It is true then that you may not have direct competition. However, an **indirect competitor** could be a large retail fabric store, such as Fabricland, which sells similar fabrics to your market segment. Another indirect competitor could be an online retailer that imports fabrics and clothing which ship directly to the same type of customers you serve.



If you are unsure about whether you have competition, answer the following questions:

1. What problem is my business solving for a potential customer?
2. How would a potential customer already be solving this problem without my business?
3. Is there an existing business that might already be solving this problem in a different way for my potential customers?

If you are researching a new business idea and cannot find any competitors, there may be a good reason. Lack of competition could indicate that the market is not big enough to support a **sustainable** business. Perhaps there is a lack of potential customers for your business. Therefore, it is important to conduct market research.



### **DIRECT COMPETITION**

is when two or more businesses offer the same product or service and

compete for the same market.

McDonalds and Burger King are

**DIRECT COMPETITORS.**

**INDIRECT COMPETITION** is when

two or more businesses offer different products or services and compete for the same market.

McDonalds and Pizza Hut are

**INDIRECT COMPETITORS.**



**SUSTAINABLE** means the

ability to continue for a long time.





NAICS stands for:  
**North American Industry Classification System**

- A code used to find data that is publicly available or on databases.
- Helps to find information specific to your industry.

You can learn more about conducting market research with NAICS codes and industry classifications by visiting the [Government of Canada](#)<sup>12</sup> website.

## How Secondary Research Can Help

Secondary research can reveal a lot of information about your industry and competition. This type of research can uncover hidden competitors, industry statistics and so much more. You can gather good information about your industry by identifying your industry's NAICS code.



Find your Industry NAICS code and identify key words that define your industry in Canada using the links provided. Search by classification [structure](#)<sup>13</sup> or [keyword](#)<sup>14</sup>.

Examples:

- 487110 Scenic and Sightseeing Transportation, Land
- 561510 Travel Agencies
- 721191 Bed and Breakfast

My NAICS code(s) are:

My industry's key words are:

**Congratulations!** You have completed the first four sections of this guidebook! You have learned about your target market and your competition. Now you are ready to position your business in the marketplace. In the next section, we will discuss how to stand out from your competition and create a Unique Value Proposition (UVP).



# SECTION 5

## The Value of Being Different

Many business owners try to copy their competitors. The real value of learning about your competitors is in understanding two things. The first is to understand how your competitors organize themselves. What are their business processes? The second thing to understand is who your competitor's ideal client is. What type of customer chooses them?

Be different from your competitors in meaningful ways that are of value to your ideal client.

This section will help you set yourself apart from your competitors by:

1. Understanding your market position
2. Writing a Unique Value Proposition, and
3. Creating a company vision statement.

### Understanding Your Market Position



If you are already in business, ask your customers to tell you why they chose you. Why do they stay as customers? Why do they refer you to their friends?



**MARKET POSITION** is what a customer thinks about your product or service.

**MARKET POSITIONING** is the process a business goes through to create an identity or brand.

Your difference from your competitors must be truly unique. This difference is called your **market position**. It is not enough to say that you provide great service. Great service is an expectation, and everybody says they provide it whether they do or not.

Your ideal client must value your **market positioning**. If your positioning takes care of a specific frustration common to your industry, then many of your customers may value it.

Your customers decide what is valuable. It doesn't matter what you think is valuable.

Your positioning must be easy to communicate. Your customers need to know and understand what the benefit will be for them.





## What is your unique value?

There are many ways your business can give a unique value to your customers.

### PRODUCT

Can you offer a product that is so unique or trendy that people only connect your business to it? Can you boost your product by offering a valuable service with it? An example of where this has been done successfully is with Peleton: a stationary bike or treadmill paired with a subscription for virtual fitness classes.

### SERVICE

The same goes for a service. Often this can be the packaging of a service as a product. Are you providing a service that is billed on an hourly rate? Perhaps you can market this service based on an outcome that has defined results and a fixed package price. This is a highly effective way to set your service offering apart from others. Remember to give the service a powerful name!

### MARKET SPECIALTY

Carve out a special place in your industry. Become the expert in your area. A nice bonus to doing this is you can usually raise your prices dramatically when you specialize in this manner.

### DISRUPTION

Many times, you can create your industry **niche** by creating a new solution to an established industry. Phone Apps designed for ease and convenience, such as Uber and Skip the Dishes, have disrupted the taxi and restaurant business.

### SOLVE A PROBLEM

A great way to be different from your competition is by solving a problem for customers that is not being solved by your competitors.



**NICHE** is a specialized market.



A **UNIQUE VALUE PROPOSITION (UVP)** explains what sets your business apart from your competitors. A UVP should answer three things:

1. How will your solution solve your customers' problem?
2. What are the specific benefits?
3. Why should your target customers choose you over the competition?

Is there something that customers in your market seem frustrated about? A good value proposition should speak to the emotions of your customers. It should be a statement that your customers understand.

Examples:

- “Our team of experienced tradespeople helps you sleep at night by guaranteeing your project will be completed on time and on budget.”
- “We help busy parents stay calm on Prom night by dry cleaning and altering their teenagers’ dress clothing in advance.”



Use the framework below to help create your own Unique Value Proposition (UVP).

		EXAMPLE UVP	YOUR UVP
1	Who are you helping? [adjective + noun]	<i>busy parents</i>	
2	What is the outcome? How do you want your customers to feel after they have used your product or service? [action verb]	<i>stay calm</i>	
3	What is the solution? [verb+ing]	<i>dry cleaning and altering</i>	
4	What is the problem? [adjective + noun]	<i>their teenagers’ dress clothing</i>	
5	When are you solving it? [adverb]	<i>in advance</i>	

Use the information you filled in the table above to write your own UVP.

We help [1] [2] by [3]  
[4] [5]



## Looking to the Future

Next you will need to create a vision statement. Vision statements are often confused with mission statements, but they are not the same thing. A vision statement describes where you want to be in the future and is often one or two sentences long. A vision statement describes your business' purpose. A mission statement is generally an internal document describing what your company does and what values it stands for. A great vision statement answers the question:

*“If I could wave a magic wand and see my company's future in 3 years, how would my company be impacting the (world, community or country?)”*



Create a company vision statement.

Look at the following examples of company vision statements. What do you notice?

**TESLA** - “To accelerate the world's transition to sustainable energy.”

**IKEA** - “Our vision is to create a better everyday life for many people.”

**NIKE** - “Bring inspiration and innovation to every athlete\* in the world. (\*If you have a body, you are an athlete.)

**MCDONALD'S** - “To be the best quick service restaurant experience. Being the best means providing outstanding quality, service, cleanliness and value, so that we make every customer in every restaurant smile.”

**OXFAM** - “A world without poverty.”

You may have noticed that these vision statements are short, clear, and look to the future. They are also a general, long term goal that is inspiring. Try to think about these points when you write your company's vision statement.

**MY COMPANY VISION IS:**

You are about to discover how all your hard work and research will help you when you move to the next section “Defining your Brand”. Your UVP and vision statement will help your business stay focussed on the emotional messages you wish to send to your customers.

## Before you read the next section, let’s review the activities and learning so far:

- 1** You are a member of a unique community called a diaspora. A diaspora is an example of a market segment. It is a set of ideal clients that large corporations identify to market their products and services to.
- 2** Marketing is a process that looks like a funnel. The marketing funnel shows how customers learn about your business. It demonstrates how customers go from knowing about your business to buying your products and services.
- 3** Not everyone is a potential customer. It is important to understand the customer market segments for your products or services and create ideal client profiles.
- 4** Researching your customers helps you understand the emotions they use when they make a purchase.
- 5** Researching your competition helps you understand who they are and how you can be different from them.
- 6** Creating a UVP and vision statement helps your business stay focussed on emotional messages.



# SECTION 6

## Define your Brand

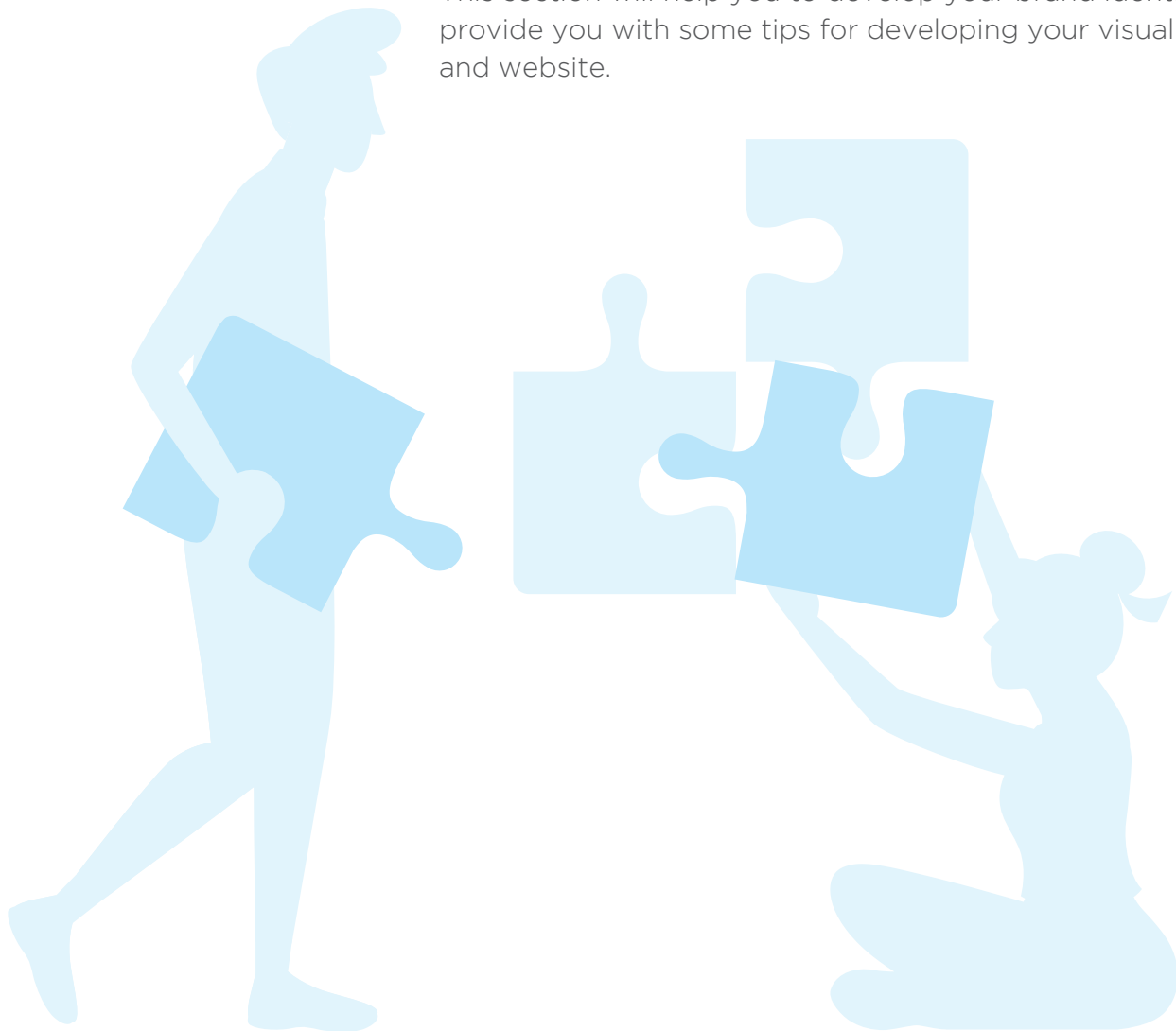
Now that you understand your ideal client and how to set your product or service apart from your competitors, it's time to develop your brand. A brand is much more than logos and taglines. Your brand is the experience your company provides for your customers. Every experience your customers have with you is a brand moment. Successful companies like Starbucks and Red Bull use their brand vision to inspire their employees and create a positive corporate culture. You can also think about your brand as the personality of your business.

It is important to consider your customers' opinions about your brand. This is why you have spent so much time in the previous sections defining your ideal client, creating your UVP and developing your vision statement. Now you can use everything you have learned to create a personality for your business that customers will connect to on an emotional level. This will help your brand **resonate with** your customers.

This section will help you to develop your brand identity, as well provide you with some tips for developing your visual identity and website.



**RESONATE WITH** is when something has a special meaning or importance for someone



## Developing Your Brand Identity



Pick two popular brands that sell similar items to their customers but at very different prices. An example of this is Starbucks and Tim Hortons. To do this activity, you can compare Starbucks and Tim Hortons, or choose two other brands you know. For even more fun, complete this exercise with family or employees.

	Company 1: <small>(Name of high-priced brand company, like Starbucks)</small>	Company 2: <small>(Name of low-priced brand company, like Tim Hortons)</small>
Who is the company's ideal client?		
How would you describe the personality of each brand? Is one brand fun-loving or down-to-earth? Does one feel patriotic or luxurious?		
If you are a customer, why are you choosing one instead of the other? (Try not to just list the price difference as a reason)		
Why is Company 1 able to charge so much more than Company 2?		



Review the Ideal Client list you completed in Section 4. Also look at the Unique Value Proposition and Vision Statement you wrote in Section 4. Ask yourself:

- What kind of brand personality could my business have to attract my ideal client?
- When my ideal client thinks of my business, what words do I want them to think of?

List a small group of words that create an emotional response you would like from your customers. Usually, 3-5 words work best. Words such as “fun-loving”, “upscale professional”, or “trustworthy” are a few examples.

**Congratulations!** You have just created your brand personality! Now let's begin designing marketing materials that will resonate with your customers.



Not sure how to describe your brand with emotional words? Visit [Marketing Doula](#)<sup>15</sup> and learn how to narrow down the words to describe your brand.





There are many great “Do-it Yourself” websites and tools that will help you create a logo

and visual materials on a budget, including:

- [Vistaprint](#)<sup>16</sup>
- [99 designs](#)<sup>17</sup>
- [Canva](#)<sup>18</sup>
- [Fiverr](#)<sup>19</sup>
- [Pixabay](#)<sup>20</sup>



The Business Link [blog](#)<sup>21</sup> contains many helpful articles about branding your business.



There are many website building platforms that make it easy for you, or anyone you may hire, to

build a professional website. A few popular ones are:

- [WordPress](#)<sup>22</sup>
- [Wix](#)<sup>23</sup>
- [Weebly](#)<sup>24</sup>
- [GoDaddy](#)<sup>25</sup>
- [Shopify](#)<sup>26</sup>



Download our Business Link’s [12 Golden Rules for Your Website](#)<sup>27</sup> to learn more about designing your website.

## Your Visual Identity

Your visual identity includes all the imagery and graphical information that expresses how your brand is different from others. It is everything from your logo to the fonts you choose. Your visual identity even includes the interior design of your store or restaurant. The purpose of a visual identity is to:

1. Create an emotional impression: Using a strong visual, consistent colours and images helps your customers remember your brand better.
2. Inform your target market about the type of products or services you offer.
3. Make sure that your brand personality is the same in all visual material.

Imagine you are creating an important first impression with potential customers. A visual identity gives customers an experience from the moment they discover you until they return to purchase from you again in the future.

It is a good idea to review the marketing budget you set in Section Two. You may want to seriously think about spending some money to hire a graphic designer to help you with developing your visual identity. You may find these costs less than you imagined. You have already done a lot of work, so you can tell your designer exactly what your brand personality is and who your ideal client will be. With this knowledge, your designer can accurately create materials in much less time.

## Your Website

Having a website is necessary for your business. Think of your website as a digital “calling card”. Your website tells the world you are available and ready to do business. Visitors will use your site to learn more about your company, research what other customers are saying about you, and make e-commerce purchases.

Do not forget that your website must be consistent with your brand. All the visual elements (fonts, logos, colours and pictures) must be consistent.

Creating your website is another stage in your marketing process. It may be of value to hire a local web design development team. You are already lowering the costs of your website development with your ability to describe your brand personality and having your graphic designs complete.



# SECTION 7

## Locate your Customers and Start Marketing



**MARKETING CHANNELS** are ways of sharing what your business offers to people.

The next step in the marketing process is to locate your potential customers. Your customers spend their time at work, at home and online. This means your marketing efforts should be focused both online and offline. In this section you will learn:

1. The difference between offline and online marketing
2. How to choose your marketing channels
3. How to group your customers into four main types
4. Create a Marketing Calendar
5. Tips for networking

### Offline and Online Marketing

Offline Marketing is any [marketing channel](#) you use that does not happen on the internet. Some examples of this are:

- Mailed flyers, brochures, and in store coupons
- Television commercials
- Radio interviews and commercials
- Magazines, newspapers, and other paper new sources including cultural newspapers, newsletters, religious organization bulletins, and both cultural and religious magazines
- Signs and billboards
- In-person networking, speaking engagements

Online Marketing is any marketing channel you use that happens over the internet. Some examples of this are:

- Facebook and Google Ads
- SEO (Search Engine Optimization) for your website
- Content marketing (blogs)
- YouTube videos
- Social Media Influencer marketing

### How to Choose Your Marketing Channels

With so many choices available, it can be difficult to choose which marketing channel to use for your business. You will probably choose a variety of offline and online options to market your business. Choosing the right channels may involve a little trial and error. It is helpful to review your “[ideal client](#)”<sup>28</sup> profiles and think about where these potential customers might spend their time.







Ask yourself the following questions:

1. Am I a Business-to-Business (B2B) or Business-to-Consumer (B2C) business?
2. What marketing channels do my competitors use?
3. If I were shopping for my own products or services, where would I look?
4. Will I be managing my own marketing channels or outsourcing this to a company to do for me?



**B2B** is a business model that focuses on selling products and services to other companies. Companies such as Salesforce.com are an example of a B2B company that sells software services to other businesses.

**B2C** is a business model that focusses on selling products directly to consumers. Starbucks is an example of a company that sells its products (coffee) directly to consumers.

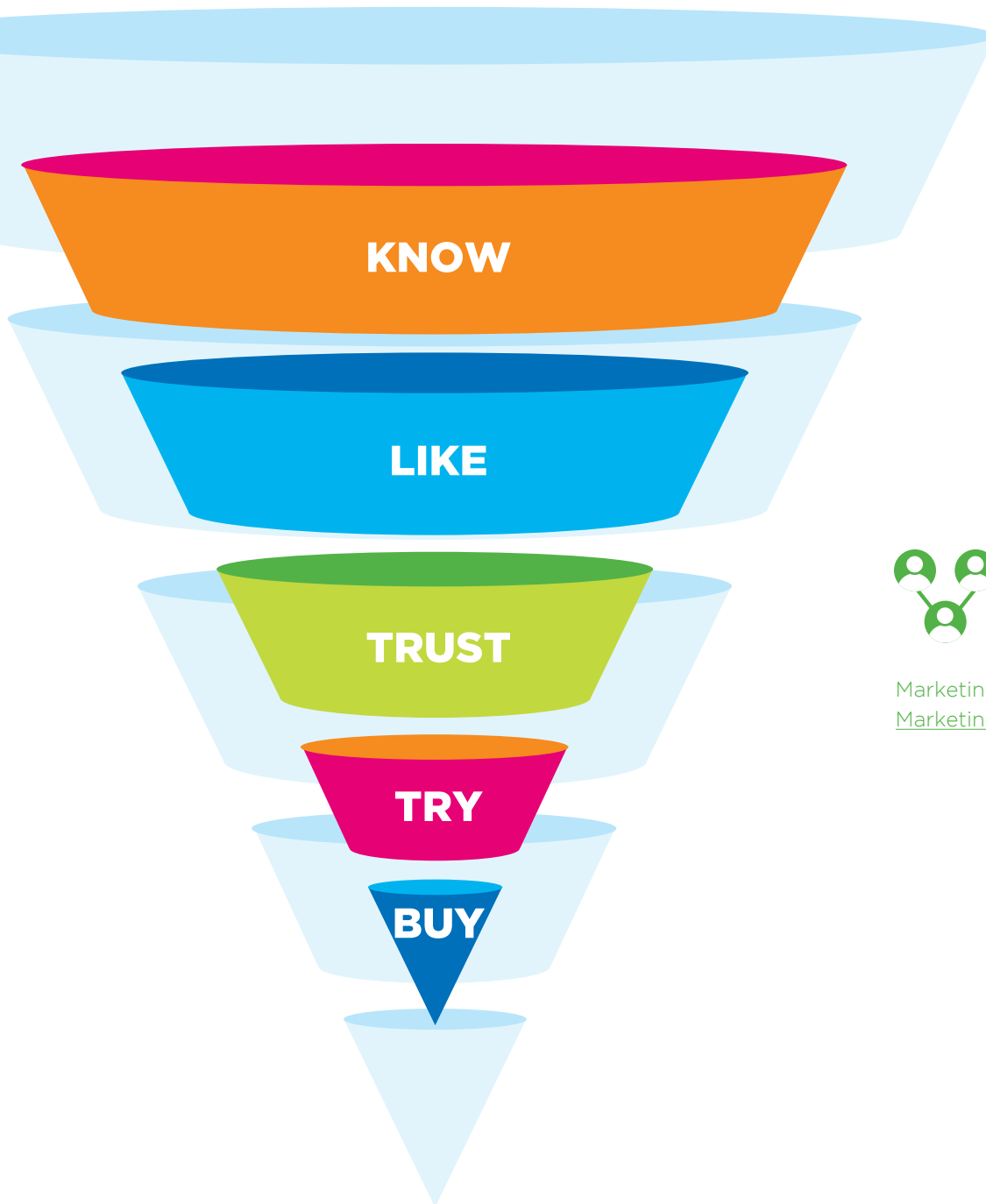


Download our Small Business Marketing Guide on [marketing channels](#).<sup>29</sup>



## Grouping your Customers

Review the marketing funnel below. Understanding the stages of the marketing funnel can help you to choose the best marketing material for your business. The funnel gives you an idea of when to use your marketing materials and where to aim your efforts. It helps to group your potential customers into four types: Suspects; Prospects; Clients; and Champions. You can then choose marketing materials for each type based on their stage in the funnel.



“Learn more about marketing funnels and customer grouping by reading [Duct Tape Marketing](#) or visiting the [Duct Tape Marketing blog](#).<sup>30</sup>”

Marketing or visiting the [Duct Tape Marketing blog](#).<sup>30</sup>



## GROUP 1 - SUSPECTS

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**Who they are:**

Everyone who has not yet come in contact with your business but fits the description of your “ideal” client.

**How to get their attention:**

This group is in the “know” phase of your marketing funnel so you should be grabbing their attention with advertising such as direct mail, or Google or Facebook ads with free offers or coupons. Directing site visitors to your blog and offering workshops, free e-book downloads, and sign-ups to your newsletter are all great marketing tactics to use with this group.

## GROUP 2 - PROSPECTS

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**Who they are:**

These are people who have responded to your company messaging in some way. They may have liked your Facebook page, or downloaded a free e-book from your website or attended a workshop or networking event with you.

**How to get their interest:**

Since this group has already connected with you, they are probably at the “like” stage of your marketing funnel. This group will probably respond well to a “free trial” offer or “first time buyer” discount. Offer this group marketing items such as “trial products”, taste tests or free service estimates.

## GROUP 3 - CLIENTS

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**Who they are:**

These are people who have already tried your products or services.

**How to keep returns:**

These people are now your customers in the “trust” and “buy” phase of your marketing funnel. Your marketing efforts should be designed to keep them coming back to you. Offers such as “loyalty rewards” and “frequent buyer” discounts work well with this customer group.

## GROUP 4 - CHAMPIONS

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**Who they are:**

Happy customers who are telling others to be your customer are in this group. They are acting as your unpaid sales team; encouraging friends and family to do business with you. Reward this group!

**How to get the referrals:**

Encourage this group to write Yelp and Google reviews. This type of customer will also write a great testimonial for your website. Reward these customers with additional loyalty rewards or surprise service rewards and discounts.

Your ability to turn customers into champions will greatly impact how fast you are able to grow your business. It is less expensive to market to happy customers than it is to market to “suspects” and “prospects”. The more your business grows the more you will be able to focus on creating a good referral marketing plan.



## Create a Marketing Calendar

For your marketing to work well, you will need to be consistent with your efforts. Measuring each activity and following a budget is also important. Refer to your original S.M.A.R.T. goals in Section Two. Use your goals and all that you have learned to create a marketing calendar for your business. It does not need to be complicated, but it should track the activities, budget, and return on investment (ROI) of your efforts.

## Networking

Networking is a way for you to get to know people and for others to get to know you. It helps you learn about programs and members of the community that could help with the success of your business. Networking is an opportunity to find out what you have in common with other people, groups, and businesses, and learn how you can help each other be successful.

Networking is an inexpensive way to market your business.



There are many great marketing calendar templates available online. Visit [Smartsheet](#)<sup>31</sup> and choose a free template to use for your business.



[Meetup.com](#)<sup>32</sup> is an online social platform that you can use to find networking events in your community. You can find groups meeting every day, enjoying all kinds of activities. You can network while enjoying hobbies, learning new skills, and volunteering. It is a low stress way to meet new friends and potential business associates.

### TIPS FOR NETWORKING

#### Build up a meaningful contact list

Set a goal to meet people when you go to a networking meeting but keep the number small. Meeting a lot of people at an event doesn't mean you have made meaningful contacts. It is important to look for quality as you develop your network, not quantity. It is more valuable to meet three good contacts who will remember you a few days later than 30 who will not. Spend a little time with people you already know. This may not be possible at first. As you network more and more, you will find that you are more likely to see people you have already met.

#### Invite yourself

Don't wait for someone to invite you when you are just starting out. You have to find your own events to attend.

#### Dress appropriately

At most networking events, people wear business suits. If you do not have a suit, wear clothes that are business casual.

#### Arrive on time

This is one of the few situations where it is appropriate to be a few minutes late. It is still a good idea to arrive on time so that you do not walk in after a meal or speech has started.

#### Jump right in

The hardest part of networking is learning how to walk over to somebody you don't know and introduce yourself. Remember that everybody in the room will also be meeting new people. If you are uncomfortable, bring someone with you the first time. You will get more confident when you know more people. They can introduce you to further contacts. Be prepared to shake hands, smile and make eye contact.

You know your business better than anyone else. Your excitement and passion are wonderful tools to use in your networking efforts. Take every opportunity to tell others about your business and lead by example. Even an elevator ride can be an opportunity to talk about your business. Whether you are networking in person, or online, be prepared to talk about what you do and inspire others to do business with you. An **elevator pitch** needs to be short and to the point. Your audiences should want more details after your 30 second pitch.



An **ELEVATOR PITCH** is a short, concise explanation of who, where, what and why you and your business is, or will be (pre-startup). It is not technical, or detailed. It is an introduction to make your audience want to know more, or just know who you are.

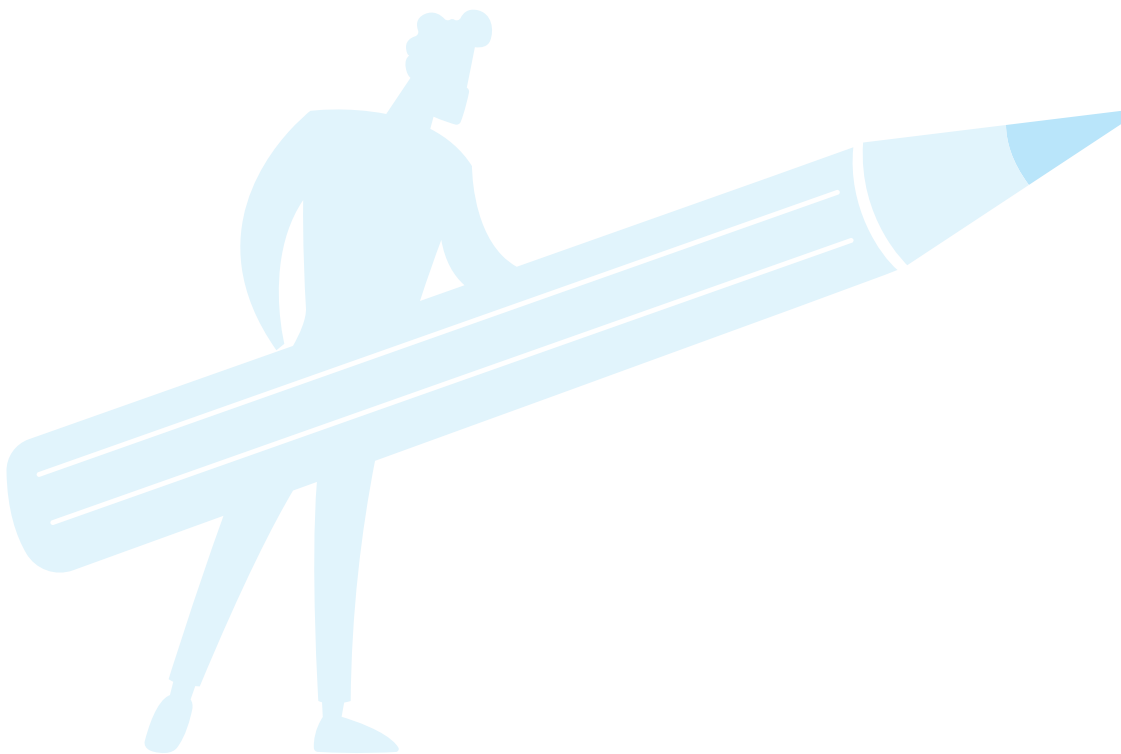
**CREATE AN ELEVATOR PITCH USING THE ACTIVITY BELOW**

Review your UVP from Section Five and see if you can become comfortable using it in your conversations with strangers.



Write down your elevator pitch in the space below. Practice it with friends and in front of the mirror.

Hello. I am \_\_\_\_\_, (of) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (Name) \_\_\_\_\_ (from, owner of) \_\_\_\_\_ (Company name)  
 I \_\_\_\_\_, to \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (what do you do - brief use nouns) \_\_\_\_\_ (what problem you solve - verbs) (Your UVP)



# SECTION 8

## Next Steps

**Congratulations!** You are on your way to mastering the marketing process. This guide is one in a series developed by Business Link. We are here to help you every step of the way.

### Our recommended next steps include:

1. Subscribe<sup>33</sup> to the Business Link Immigrant Entrepreneur Newsletter.
2. Contact our Market Research department to learn more about your business industry and competition.
3. Reach out via phone to our offices to access one on one support from one of our Immigrant Entrepreneur specialists.



Visit [businesslink.ca/resources](https://businesslink.ca/resources)<sup>34</sup> to download more guides and resources.



# APPENDIX

- <sup>1</sup> <https://ducttapemarketing.com>
- <sup>2</sup> <https://www.bbb.org>
- <sup>3</sup> <https://businesslink.ca/assets/uploads/2021/01/Marketing-Guide.pdf>
- <sup>4</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=-qLLsgD1Kbc&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=-qLLsgD1Kbc&feature=emb_logo)
- <sup>5</sup> <https://www.khanacademy.org/college-careers-more/learnstorm-growth-mindset-activities-us/elementary-and-middle-school-activities/setting-goals/v/learnstorm-growth-mindset-how-to-write-a-smart-goal>
- <sup>6</sup> <https://www.emyth.com/magnetic-marketing-message>
- <sup>7</sup> <https://prizm.vironicsanalytics.com>
- <sup>8</sup> <https://businesslink.ca/assets/uploads/2021/01/Ideal-Client-Worksheet.pdf>
- <sup>9</sup> <https://businesslink.ca/what-we-do/resources/small-business-basics>
- <sup>10</sup> <https://businesslink.ca/what-we-do/services-and-programs/marketresearchexpertise>
- <sup>11</sup> <https://www.surveymonkey.com>
- <sup>12</sup> <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/business/research.html>
- <sup>13</sup> <https://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p3VD.pl?Function=getVD&TVD=1181553>
- <sup>14</sup> <https://www.ic.gc.ca/app/scr/app/cis/search-recherche?lang=eng>
- <sup>15</sup> <https://www.themarketingdoula.com/2020/02/14/500-adjectives-that-can-define-your-brand-personality>
- <sup>16</sup> <https://vistaprint.ca>
- <sup>17</sup> <https://99designs.ca>
- <sup>18</sup> <https://canva.com>
- <sup>19</sup> <https://fiverr.com>
- <sup>20</sup> <https://pixabay.com>



<sup>21</sup> <https://businesslink.ca/category/general-information/marketing>

<sup>22</sup> <https://wordpress.org>

<sup>23</sup> <https://wix.com>

<sup>24</sup> <https://weebly.com>

<sup>25</sup> <https://ca.godaddy.com>

<sup>26</sup> <https://shopify.ca>

<sup>27</sup> <https://businesslink.ca/assets/uploads/2021/01/Website-Golden-Rules.pdf>

<sup>28</sup> <https://businesslink.ca/assets/uploads/2021/01/Ideal-Client-Worksheet.pdf>

<sup>29</sup> <https://businesslink.ca/assets/uploads/2021/01/Marketing-Channels.pdf>

<sup>30</sup> <https://ducttapemarketing.com/blog>

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.smartsheet.com/9-free-marketing-calendar-templates-excel>

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.meetup.com>

<sup>33</sup> <https://businesslink.ca/what-we-do/immigrant-entrepreneur-program>

<sup>34</sup> <https://businesslink.ca/what-we-do/resources>







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