FREE DIY PLAYBOOK

The Content & Blogging Playbook for Small Business SEO

Write articles that answer real customer questions, rank on Google and bring in inquiries.

- 20 article templates: a year of topics
- Article template you can copy
- 90-day publishing calendar

SmallBiz Marketing
Written by the SmallBiz Marketing team · smallbizmarketing.net
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Why content still works

People research before they buy. They ask how much something costs, which option is better and what to watch out for. If your website answers those questions well, you meet customers before they have chosen anyone.

Content also gives other websites a reason to link to you and gives Google evidence of your experience. For a small business, two genuinely helpful articles a month can outperform a big competitor's generic blog.

Chapter 1: Pick topics people search for

Four article types that work for small businesses

Type	Example	Why it works
Cost	How much does a kitchen backsplash cost to install?	Huge buying intent; most competitors avoid prices
Comparison	Quartz vs granite countertops	People choosing are close to buying
How-to and problem	Why is my shower grout cracking?	Captures people with a problem you fix
Choosing a provider	What to ask before hiring a tile contractor	Builds trust; positions you as the expert

Where to find topics

- Questions from calls, emails, estimates and reviews
- Google People also ask boxes for your main services
- Search Console searches that show your site but have no matching page
- Reddit, Nextdoor and Facebook groups in your area or trade

> PRO TIP
> Keep a running list on your phone. Every time a customer asks a question, add it. In a month you will have more topics than you can write.

Chapter 2: A year of article ideas

Adapt these to your business. Swap in your services and towns.

- How much does [service] cost in [city]?
- What affects the price of [service]?
- [Option A] vs [Option B]: which is right for you?
- How long does [service] take?
- [Number] signs you need [service]
- What to ask before hiring a [trade]
- DIY or hire a pro: [task]
- How to prepare for [service]
- What happens during a [service] appointment
- Is [service] worth it?
- How to choose [product/material]
- Common [problem] mistakes and how to avoid them
- Seasonal checklist: [season] [maintenance task]
- Before and after: [project] in [neighborhood]
- Our process, step by step
- Permits and rules for [project] in [city]
- How to care for [product/material]
- The best [products/materials] for [use], from our experience
- Questions we get every week, answered
- How to tell if a [quote/provider] is too cheap

> MAKE IT A YEAR
> Each idea above works for several services or towns. Twenty templates times three services gives you a year of weekly topics.

Chapter 3: The article template

1. Title that matches the search: plain words, the question or benefit.
2. Short answer in the first two or three sentences.
3. The details: factors, steps or options, with H2 subheadings.
4. Your experience: a real example, photo or number from your own work.
5. A table or checklist if it helps people compare.
6. FAQ: three to five related questions.
7. Next step: link to the related service page and invite them to get in touch.

Article brief worksheet

Search I want this article to rank for:

The one-sentence answer:

Sections (H2s):

Our own example or photo:

Service page to link to:

Chapter 4: Write it well

- Write the way you explain it to a customer at the job site.
- Lead with the answer; do not make people scroll for it.
- Be specific: real ranges, real materials, real timelines.
- Show first-hand experience: what you have seen go wrong, what you recommend and why.
- Use short paragraphs, lists and subheadings for phone readers.
- Edit out filler. If a sentence would fit on any website, cut it or make it specific.

Using AI tools responsibly

AI writing tools can help outline and edit, but generic AI text with no real experience adds little value and is easy to spot. Use them as an assistant: add your own examples, photos, prices and opinions, and check every fact.

Chapter 5: Optimize before you publish

- [ ] Title includes the main search phrase and is under about 60 characters
- [ ] Meta description written to earn the click
- [ ] Short, readable URL
- [ ] One H1, clear H2 sections
- [ ] At least one original photo with alt text
- [ ] Links to the related service page and 1 or 2 related articles
- [ ] Category and tags set
- [ ] Author named (a real person or "the [Business] team")

Chapter 6: Promote every article

- Share it on your Google Business Profile as a post.
- Pin it on Pinterest with a tall image if your work is visual.
- Send it to past customers in your email newsletter.
- Link to it from older related articles.
- Send it to anyone who asked that question.

Chapter 7: Refresh old content

Every few months, check Search Console for articles that get impressions but few clicks or sit on page two. Update them: new information, better title, more examples, current year. Updating a page that already ranks is often faster than writing a new one.

90-day publishing calendar

Week	Article	Supports page
1		
3		
5		
7		
9		
11		
13	Refresh your best older article	

FAQ

How often should a small business blog?

Consistency matters more than volume. Two helpful articles a month is a strong pace for most small businesses.

How long should articles be?

As long as it takes to answer the question well. Cost and comparison guides are often 1,000 to 2,000 words; quick answers can be shorter.

Will blogging get me customers?

It works best when each article links to a service page and answers questions people ask before they buy.

Keep going

More free DIY playbooks from the SmallBiz Marketing team:

The Small Business SEO Playbook (start here)

The Keyword Research Playbook

The On-Page SEO Playbook

The Technical SEO Checklist Playbook

The Links & Citations Playbook

The SEO Tracking & Reporting Playbook

The SEO Budget & Hiring Playbook

All free DIY playbooks

Want it done for you?

The SmallBiz Marketing team builds fast, search-ready websites and sets up Google for small businesses. Get in touch through our contact page and tell us what you need.

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