

A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR AUSTRALIAN SMALL BUSINESSES

Your Website, With Confidence.

A clearer plan. A more useful website.
One good next step at a time.

Your website does not have to do everything. It needs to help the right person understand what you offer, feel confident about it and take a useful next step.

Start with your customer, not a blank screen.

This guide helps you turn what you know about your business into a simple website plan, choose a starting design and check the journey before you publish.

Keep it. Print it. Put it to work.

No email address or membership is needed for this guide. Use the advice with The Big Shed, another website builder or a designer. You can make progress before spending anything.

Find your place:

- 2 - Your one-page plan
- 3 - A homepage that makes sense
- 4 - Trust, action and less friction
- 5 - Launch essentials and Australian checks
- 6 - Find your starting template
- 7 - Add your content and images
- 8 - Style, save and safely try ideas
- 9 - Download, deploy and keep a way back
- 10 - Choose the help that fits you

The Big Shed by DigiThat. A free learning resource, not a promise of rankings, sales or legal compliance. The studio instructions describe the current static edition; paid membership is still being prepared as at this edition date.

01 / A SMALL PLAN WITH A CLEAR PURPOSE

Give your website one useful job.

Think of one likely customer, one real need and one action. Fill this in using public business information. Keep private customer details, passwords and sensitive information out.

We help... (who, and where?)

They come to us because... (the problem or goal)

We offer... (what you actually deliver)

The next step is... (enquire, book, buy or join)

Turn it into a first sentence.

We help [people] with [specific need] in [service area]. [Clear next action]. Example: We help busy Adelaide households keep their gardens cared for. Tell us about your garden and ask for a quote.

Your work matters because it helps someone. You do not need grand claims to show that value. A clear, truthful explanation is a strong beginning.

Make the first visit feel easy.

1. Say what you do

Put a plain-English offer near the top, with who it is for and your actual service area. Avoid making people decode a clever slogan before they know whether you can help.

2. Show the next step

Use a button that describes the action: Request a quote, Ask about an appointment or Explore the collection. A label such as Learn more is useful only when the destination is clear.

3. Explain the offer

Give services or products useful names, short descriptions and relevant limits. If pricing varies, explain what affects it and how someone gets a quote.

4. Help people feel confident

Describe your process, show genuine work you have permission to use and answer practical questions. Add credentials only when current and relevant. Never invent reviews or customers.

5. Make contact predictable

Explain how to contact you and what happens next. Only promise a response time you can meet. Ask for the information needed to respond, not a complete life story.

Try a two-minute customer test.

Ask someone unfamiliar with your business: What do we do? Who is it for? What would you click next? Watch quietly. If they struggle, change the unclear words or the next step before adding another feature.

Before: Innovative solutions for your lifestyle.

Clearer: Custom cabinetry for Adelaide homes, from an initial design conversation to installation. Ask about your project.
Example only: use it only if it accurately describes your service.

Build trust. Remove the little hurdles.

Conversion simply means a visitor takes a useful next step. For a small business, a suitable enquiry can be more valuable than a large number of clicks.

1. Match the action to the business

A plumber may need a quote enquiry and a genuine urgent-contact path. A shop needs clear product information and a working checkout. A music studio may need session details and a booking conversation. One design does not create those systems for you.

2. Answer the hesitation

What does it cost? Do you serve my area? How does a first appointment work? Is this the right product? Put useful answers near the action they support. Be honest when the answer depends on an assessment.

3. Keep the form light

Start with the minimum fields needed for that enquiry. Explain why you need them and how the information is handled. Do not collect health details, payment data or confidential documents in a general enquiry form.

4. Use images that explain

Choose a real service, setting or product image where possible. Get the necessary permissions. Label examples honestly; an AI image must not imply actual staff, completed work or results.

5. Measure the whole journey

Test the enquiry arrives, the booking confirms or the order completes. Where you use analytics, make accurate privacy disclosures and respect choices. Page visits alone do not prove a business result.

One improvement this week

Choose one confusing headline, unanswered question or broken next step. Improve it, then ask a likely customer to try again. Useful progress can be small and visible.

Ready to launch?

Check the whole journey.

1. Truth and permissions

Check business details, prices, availability, claims and image/font permissions. Remove sample customer stories and placeholder contact information. Disclose relevant paid recommendations clearly.

2. Access and reading

Check your phone, keyboard navigation, readable text, image descriptions and colour contrast in both appearances. Avoid unnecessary movement. An automated checker cannot confirm complete accessibility.

3. Connections and ownership

Test enquiries, bookings and payments end to end. Use HTTPS. Keep your domain and provider accounts under business control, enable strong sign-in protection and preserve existing email DNS records.

4. Budget and recovery

Count renewals, hosting, email, plugins, transaction fees and support. Record who owns each account. Keep a website backup and know how to restore it before changing providers or software.

Australian requirements depend on what you do.

Consumer rights, privacy coverage, marketing, business-name and industry rules can apply differently. Your state or territory and the data/services you handle matter. A template or disclaimer does not make a business compliant.

[ACCC: online buying and consumer protections](#)

[OAIC: privacy coverage for small businesses](#)

[business.gov.au: official business guidance](#)

When to ask for specialist help

Get qualified advice for your actual offer, terms, privacy practices and regulated activity. Check requirements outside Australia before serving another market. This guide is general education, not personalised legal, financial or security advice.

05 / SEVEN TEMPLATES, ONE SHARED APPROACH

Find a starting shape that suits your customers.

Choose the structure that best supports your customer journey. Colours, fonts, photographs, words and many individual styles can change later.

1. Neighbourhood

Local services and trades: explain the job, your approach and the enquiry.

2. Good Things

Products and makers: show a collection, then connect to a real shop.

3. Perspective

Consultants and creatives: explain expertise, services and a useful conversation.

4. Gather

Appointments, places and experiences: practical details and a booking path.

5. Craftwork

Crafts, cabinetry and repairs: show the work and explain a considered process.

6. Frequency

Music and recording: an expressive presence with clear project or booking information.

7. Common Ground

Community, support and faith organisations: make joining or a first visit approachable.

[Take the free four-question template quiz](#) or [browse all seven previews](#).

Public previews are screenshots, not usable template files. The longer member quiz prepares a reviewed brief and backs up your draft before applying it. Membership and source downloads remain closed until launch checks are complete.

Make the template sound like your business.

These instructions describe the studio being prepared for members. In **01 Content**, expand a section and enter public business information. The preview follows your choices.

1. Your name and logo

Choose a styled company name, your logo image, or both. A missing logo falls back to the name. Use PNG, JPG or WebP up to 2 MB and 24 megapixels; SVG is not accepted. Logos keep their proportions.

2. Your first impression

Enter your offer, audience and service area. The offer becomes the headline unless you write a custom headline. Choose a clear main-button label.

3. Services, about and useful answers

Add up to six services/products and six question-and-answer pairs. Fill both sides of a question pair. Explain your approach and include only genuine, supported evidence. Blank proof is better than an invented testimonial.

4. A real contact destination

Add a public email or complete HTTPS booking/shop/enquiry link. A valid external link takes priority over email. A template does not create checkout, stock, availability or a booking service.

5. Your main photograph

In 02 Layout, select a sample or upload your own PNG, JPG or WebP. Photo and logo together must fit within the project limit of about 2 MB. Add an accurate description. Keep sample labels until you replace fictional imagery with authorised content.

A useful habit

Check every example sentence before publishing. Preview photos are AI-generated fictional samples, not evidence of your premises, products, customers or completed work. The responsibility for your actual claims and permissions remains with you.

Try an idea. Keep a way back.

1. Set the overall feel

02 Layout chooses the structure, card layout, button style and optional gentle motion. 03 Colour controls the palette, spacing and corners. 04 Type controls fonts, sizes and line spacing. Choose readable combinations before decorative ones.

2. Style a single part

Use Style my company name or Click to style beside a field. Per-part font, size, weight, alignment, line spacing and colour override global settings. Reset this part returns it to the template style.

Single-weight fonts cannot supply a true second weight.

3. Check both appearances

The header globe changes the editor. In 02 Layout > Visitor extras, edit your website globe labels, outline or visibility. The visitor switch lasts for that visit. Check fixed custom text colours in both appearances and use Desktop, Tablet and Mobile preview widths.

4. Save deliberately

Save on this browser keeps the working project on that browser. Save again after changes. Download design settings for an independent backup; project settings are private working files and are not encrypted.

5. Make a restore point

Saved versions holds up to eight named points. Restore, importing settings, original-starter reset, fresh start and applying a quiz brief save the current draft first. If storage fails or slots are full, replacement stops. Download a point before removing it to free space.

If something goes wrong

Check Saved versions or import your downloaded settings. A newer project may require a newer editor: do not overwrite the original. Clearing browser data can erase local copies. There is no cloud revision history in this edition.

Take your website into the world, carefully.

1. Review before exporting

In 05 Launch, read the checks and acknowledge the starting-point limits. The ZIP includes the static site, self-hosted fonts/licences, chosen images, private design settings and instructions. It does not include an installed admin, database, checkout or booking engine.

2. Unpack and inspect

Open START-HERE.html and the website preview. Keep the image and font folders beside website/index.html. Check content, contact destinations and mobile reading. An offline preview does not prove the hosted journey works.

3. Upload the right folder

Choose a suitable static host, check current pricing and follow its official instructions. Upload only the website folder with index.html at its root. Do not publish design-settings.json, private notes or the whole ZIP as your website.

4. Connect your domain

Follow the host's current domain and HTTPS instructions. Preserve business email records. Check the final domain and every action after DNS changes. Keep provider access and recovery details private and under your control.

5. Care for the site

Keep a backup before edits, check links and contact delivery regularly, review claims/prices and update connected services. If a font or image is missing, check the uploaded folders and filename case. If an export fails, keep your draft and download settings as a fallback.

[Read the The Big Shed hosting and launch guide](#) and consult [Netlify's official deployment instructions](#). Hosting and other providers have separate costs and terms.

Know what is current

The installed admin, automatic updater, update reports and five host-specific full-CMS installation paths remain planned. This static edition must not be mistaken for those future capabilities.

Your next step can be a small one.

You now have a way to plan a clearer website, choose a useful starting structure and check what matters before publishing. You can use that understanding wherever you build.

Keep exploring for free

Try the [template quiz](#), compare [the previews](#) or read an [Australian business website plan](#). Choose one change you can make today; there is no need to buy something to put the ideas in this guide to work.

When you want a guided workspace

The Big Shed membership is being prepared for people who want the lessons, editable templates, colour and type controls, saved versions and website downloads together. The longer member quiz helps turn your answers into a reviewed brief. See [the current membership details](#) for what is planned, what is available and the price before deciding.

As at 6 October 2026, sign-up, payments and live AI are closed. No purchase can be made through this guide. AI assistance, installed-admin updates and managed hosting must not be assumed included or available; check the actual offer at launch.

When you would prefer a tailored project

If your website needs custom design, integrations or a more involved customer journey, [DigiThat](#) is the related custom-service path. Explain what you do, who you help and what needs to work; ask for a scoped proposal before committing.

One question to finish with

What is the single thing a potential customer should understand or do more easily after your next website improvement? Write that down. That is a worthwhile place to start.

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