



BUSINESS PRESENCE AND OPPORTUNITY GROWTH GUIDE

JULIA WARNER
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Abstract

A strong presence helps a business attract attention, earn trust, and open new paths for success. In today's connected environment, customers and investors first look online to learn about products, services, and reputation. When a business is easy to find and clearly communicates its value, interest increases and opportunities expand. This guide explores how visibility influences growth and how improved communication, branding, and engagement can support better outcomes. Strategies include strengthening identity, building credibility, and making it simpler for people to connect and engage. With practical insights and reliable sources, this guide aims to support business owners in presenting their strengths, reaching more people, and positioning for long term success.



Getting Started

Every business has a story to tell, and being visible ensures that story reaches the right audience. Getting started begins with understanding how people discover and evaluate a business today. Simple improvements to online presence, branding consistency, and customer interaction can quickly enhance recognition and trust. Begin by reviewing how information is currently presented, identifying what customers need most, and making sure the business appears active, professional, and approachable. Focus on clarity, accuracy, and ease of access. The goal is to show potential customers and partners that the business is established,

dependable, and prepared for growth. Small steps now can create bigger advantages later as interest increases and new opportunities arise.

Our commitment to a Small Business Friendly Brisbane

Council is proud to be part of the Small Business Friendly initiative. Read about our commitment and performance.



Brisbane City Council is proud to be part of the Queensland Government's Small Business Friendly program, helping small and family businesses thrive. Find out about our commitments and performance in the areas of community, connection and care. Council's support of this program reinforces our longstanding dedication to making it easy to do business in Brisbane. For practical support and opportunities, see Business support.

Small Business Friendly Brisbane initiative

We are focused on becoming Australia's most small-business-friendly council, supporting the growth of local businesses. Small businesses drive local jobs, provide essential goods, and help grow Brisbane's economy. We're committed to making business easier and providing top-notch service to support you.

Our Community Experience reflects our vision for how businesses, residents, visitors, and Council employees interact through shared values of community, connection, and care. Our small business commitment shows our dedication to improving how we engage with and support local businesses.

When small businesses thrive, Brisbane thrives. That's why we've set clear goals to support small businesses and publish our achievements against these commitments for the 2024-25 financial year.

Our small business commitment and our performance



Community

Our commitments

- We will raise the profile and capability of small businesses.
- We will promote and showcase small businesses.

What we've done



Raise profile and capability

- Relaunched the Business in Brisbane Facebook group as a public group during May 2025 Queensland Small Business Month, connecting over 3,482 local business owners with information and support (as of June 2025).
- Delivered 65 training and education sessions at Brisbane Business Hub, 26 capacity-building sessions at Suburban Business Hub and 7 business workshops in Libraries.
- Maintain precinct websites for Fortitude Valley, Racecourse Road, Banyo Village and Rosalie Village precincts.
- Held the 19th Lord Mayor's Business Awards, celebrating 44 finalists and awarding 11 businesses and business leaders.
- Recognised the contributions of 4 multicultural business leaders through the Lord Mayor's Multicultural Business Dinner and Awards.
- Awarded \$250,000 in Lord Mayor's Women in Business Grants to 53 female business owners.
- Ran Future Food and MedTech accelerators to help businesses scale.
- Trained 40 solo entrepreneurs through the Maker Entrepreneurship program.
- Delivered over 70 scholarship placements through the Lord Mayor's Multicultural Business Scholarship Program.

Promoting and Showcasing Businesses

- Featured the Small Business Award and the Micro Business Award in the Lord Mayor's Business Awards.
- Provided regular updates to chambers and trader groups via email, and promote their offerings via postcards, Council's website, and the Business in Brisbane Facebook group.
- Featured articles and updates in the Business in Brisbane e-newsletter and printed newsletter on events, opportunities, and support.
- Recognised long-standing businesses as #localicons in the Business in Brisbane Facebook group to boost their profiles.
- Promoted #supportlocal in the Business in Brisbane Facebook group each month, encouraging participants to comment to share information about their business.
- Engaged with industry groups to promote sector activities and members.
- Grew the Visit Brisbane website with more than 2 million users and 4.6 million page views to reach visitors and other businesses.
- Showcased 29 Brisbane makers in the Local Business Showcase window at Suburban Business Hub, driving sales and awareness.

Connection



Our commitments

- Actively communicate and engage with small businesses.
- Develop and promote place-based programs for small businesses.

What we've done

Communication and engagement



- Established the Brisbane Business Hotline in 2012, offering 24/7 support for businesses.
- Held 7 Small Business Roundtables, with input from the Queensland Small Business Commissioner.
- Engaged with 1,091 businesses at the Suburban Business Hub and hosted workshops for over 2,000 attendees at the Brisbane Business Hub.
- Continued the Business in Brisbane e-newsletter and reintroduced a printed Business in Brisbane newsletter.
- Provided dedicated Council contacts, strengthening ties with business networks.
- Welcomed new Brisbane businesses to introduce support available, and provide the right information to set them up for success.

Place-based programs

- Delivered the Better Suburbs – Places and Spaces initiative with active project in Ryans Road, Nundah and Lambert Road, Indooroopilly.
- Delivered Growing Precincts Together to support 45 businesses through bespoke programs including business coaching, support for food businesses and visual merchandising.
- Sponsored Kenrose Street Festival (Carina) and the Giddy-up Country Festival (Sandgate).
- Delivered the March Munch & Win promotion (Rosalie Village) and Support Local promotions (Banyo Village and Racecourse Road)
- Delivered full day AI-powered social media masterclasses in Eight Mile Plains, Keperra, Carina and Nundah with 53 businesses participating.

- To support the almost 300 precincts Brisbane-wide, we added the Better Access, More Customers guide to the Precinct Playbook online resource.



Care

Our commitments

- Reduce red tape for small businesses.
- Ensure fair procurement and prompt payment terms.
- Support business resilience and recovery.
- Measure and report our performance.

What we've done

Simplify administration and regulation

- Maintained a dedicated complaints page with clear guidelines on investigations.
- Regularly updated policies on local laws, planning, and procurement.
- Refreshed this website to make it easier for small businesses and other customers to interact with Council through digital channels.

Fair procurement

- Maintained 7-day payment terms for small business suppliers.
- Offer the Better Brisbane Proposal process for market-led proposals.
- Published our 2024-25 Procurement Policy and Plan on this website to be transparent about our procurement and to acknowledge our Small Business Friendly commitment.

Resilience and recovery

- Provided co-working opportunities and workshops at Brisbane and Suburban Business Hubs.
- Delivered over 100 one-on-one mentoring sessions through Brisbane Business Mentors.
- Posted monthly #supportlocal messages in the Business in Brisbane Facebook group.
- Offered Business Continuity Planning as one of 4 topics provided through on-demand workshops for business networks.
- Delivered the free Vibrantly Vacant art decals program to improve vacant shopfronts.

Measure and report

- Held regular Small Business Roundtables to gather feedback.
- Provided a dedicated Council contact for business networks.
- Published this page to share our small business commitments.

Small Business Roundtable



Council launched the Small Business Roundtable in 2021 to respond to small business needs.

Meeting regularly, it connects Council officers, industry representatives, and business leaders to address issues, gather feedback, and shape support for small businesses.

E-commerce business support at your side

If your e-commerce business is looking to break into new international markets, you can share and develop your business ideas and export plans with our team.

We help Queensland businesses navigate all elements of taking a business online.

From starting an e-commerce business to launching your store in global markets and mastering the art of online selling, Trade and Investment Queensland (TIQ) has a dedicated team ready to support you.

E-commerce business and selling online



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Customised e-commerce support services

Our knowledge and services for e-commerce and online selling include:

- market research and analysis
- how to select the right e-commerce platform
- digital marketing and content creation for e-commerce and international markets

- logistics and fulfilment
- data analytics and insights
- customer support and engagement
- cross-border payment solutions
- international market entry strategies
- international security and privacy
- scaling and optimisation
- compliance and regulatory support.

Digital marketing strategy



Your marketing strategy should clearly show the steps and actions to ensure potential customers are:

- aware of your business
- aware of your branding
- persuaded to take up your products and services.

Read more about general marketing strategies.

Your digital marketing strategy is a plan that covers your online marketing and advertising activities. These activities should help you to:

- know your audience
- engage with your customers
- retain and manage digital customers.

Know your audience

To effectively target your advertising and marketing efforts, you need to understand who your customers are. This is easier to do when you segment your market. This means separating your current and potential customers into groups according to specific characteristics.

Benefits of market segmentation



Market segmentation can help you:

- connect with your customers and understand their needs and values
- get the best value from your marketing efforts by focusing your resources on specific audiences
- create compelling messages that speak directly to your target group
- increase customer retention
- reveal gaps in the market and opportunities to create a new niche product or service.

Consider using both traditional and digital market segmentation to analyse your customers.

Steps to segment your market

1. Define what you want to achieve. Do you want to:
 - increase digital marketing?
 - reach into new segments?
 - better target existing customers?
 - build a more consistent online brand?
2. Decide on the traditional and digital segmentation categories which will be most relevant to what you want to achieve. Divide your customers into groups accordingly.
3. Once you've defined the market segments, you can create digital customer personas (see below) that can help you better understand different customer segments and their behaviours and needs.

Digital customer personas



A digital customer persona is a detailed description of your target online customers in each market segment. These personas can be based on real people and built using marketing analysis and research data.

You can search online for examples of customer personas and templates for creating personas.

Customer segments often change over time. Update and maintain your digital customer personas to reflect real customers interests and preferences.

Build a persona for each market segment

Build a least 1 persona for every market segment you've identified.

To do this, look at:

Google Analytics



your website data

social media interactions

other communication with customers.

This can show you:

- what customers have bought in the past
- what questions they've asked
- what they've complained about
- how often they visit your website
- what their interests are

- what their needs are.



For example, a person clicks through from a landing page you created for a specific geographical area and buys items for young children.

Based on this, you know they:

- are using a website
- prefer to access via a landing page
- are in a geographical area that the landing page was shown in.

You can also assume:

- they're most likely an adult between 25–45 years old (due to the age of children they are buying for)
- they're most likely parents.

From this point, you can:

- research parents in the particular area
- look at competitors in the area and their practices
- assess statistics from the Australian Bureau of Statistics related to income and job types for this area and age range
- develop a profile based on what is known and assumed.

Once you have a basic persona, you can build on this over time to learn about your customers. You could collect information from:

- social media engagement and posts
- check-out surveys
- surveys to get entry to competitions.

Engage with your customers



Once you have taken action to understand your audience, including segmenting your market and creating digital customer personas, you need to engage with your customer base.

Run targeted digital marketing or advertising campaigns

Targeted marketing focuses your marketing efforts on a specific group of people. This allows you to offer the right product to the right person at the right time to maximise your opportunity for a sale.

As part of your digital marketing strategy, develop a targeted online campaign for each market segment you've created.

Targeted digital marketing involves:

- selecting the most relevant online platform
- choosing the right local area to market to

- setting the tone and style to suit each target group
- determining the timing of posts and engagements
- providing pathways to your product that align with the online behaviour of each digital market segment.

Create conversion funnels



A conversion funnel is a marketing tool designed to turn potential customers into actual customers. It's a series of steps that encourage visitors to your site to take the action you'd like them to.

You can use conversion funnels to:

generate leads more efficiently and effectively
 make your digital marketing strategies more productive
 increase your business profit through more effective marketing.

Stages of conversion funnels

Each stage of the conversion funnel has a different purpose and a different set of tools you can include in your digital marketing strategy.

Retain your digital customers



The final step in the digital marketing strategy is planning how to retain and maintain your online customer base.

Optimise your website

This means improving how your website performs. You could:

- reduce the time it takes for pages to load
- update content
- check links to ensure they're working
- create customised landing pages for your targeted marketing campaigns.

Analyse your data

Digital customers may expect you to offer a personalised service online. Use the customer data you collect to target market segments appropriately and personalise customer enquiries.

Review the results of campaigns

Check if you need to adjust your digital customer personas based on your campaign results.

Ask for customer feedback

Understanding how your customers feel about your business will help inform your products, services and customer experience. You can conduct surveys via email, social media, or directly from your business website.

On the road with RDDOs: Driving digital inclusion across regional Queensland

Digital inclusion is making a real difference in regional and remote Queensland—and State Library's Regional Digital Development Officers (RDDOs) are leading the charge to build digitally confident communities.

From small towns to outback hubs, RDDOs are working alongside councils, libraries, and community groups to deliver hands-on digital learning that's practical, empowering, and tailored to local needs.



South West Queensland: From Cricut to ChatGPT—59 ways to learn, create and explore

In South West Queensland, RDDO Mitch Greig led an incredible 59 digital workshops across Murweh, Bulloo, and Paroo Shire councils in July and August. Held in libraries, cafés, community hubs, and even a historic outback hotel, these sessions built digital confidence, supported local skills development, and encouraged creative exploration.

From Canva design and ChatGPT to Cricut crafting and robotics, Mitch's workshops showed how digital tools can be used in practical and imaginative ways.



North-North West Queensland: Big region, big impact

RDDO Rick Hospers has been travelling extensively across one of our largest regions, covering thousands of kilometres to connect with communities.



Central West Queensland: Digital confidence through connection

In Central West Queensland, RDDO Louise Gronold delivered a Seniors with Tech workshop in Aramac, creating a welcoming space for participants to build confidence with their devices. The session focused on practical skills—like adjusting screen settings for better usability and recognising online scams—and encouraged open discussion, with participants sharing their experiences and learning from one another.



Far North Queensland: Innovation and inspiration

Far North Queensland has been a hive of activity led by RDDO Ricky Clark, whose digital programming offers an eclectic blend of skills building opportunities. His monthly Munch and Learn sessions for small businesses continue to attract strong interest in Mareeba and Kuranda, so much so, he's locked in extra sessions during October!

Other popular events include 3D Design and Printing sessions and Digitising Memories workshops that have captured the interest of local historical societies keen to preserve community history and build digital skills.

Rick is delivering lots of workshops in the coming months so keep an eye on what's happening through your local council or the Digital and You app.



Western Queensland Alliance of Councils (WQAC) Assembly: Building strategic partnerships

Michelle Carter, Director Digital Inclusion, joined RDDOs Mitch Greig, Louise Gronold, and Rick Hospers at the WQAC Assembly in St George during August. With 25 councils represented, the event was a valuable opportunity to provide an update on the Digital and You program and share the exciting news about the launch of State Library's Digital Starter Grant Program 2025/26.

The team's participation helped build awareness and momentum for digital inclusion activities and reinforced the importance of strategic partnerships with councils to deliver locally tailored solutions for more connected, digitally capable communities.



How can I improve my business's online presence?

Significant changes in the marketplace are the result of new technology trends. Over the past decade, new technology and online inventions seem to be introduced every week, with impacts on 21st century businesses, our lives, and shaping our digital future.

Technology has transformed the way businesses approach their customers, allowing SMEs (small to medium enterprises) to adapt the latest digital products to compete with larger organisations, and develop competitive advantages. Web technology now holds a key role in strategic planning to aid businesses in creating a strong online and branding presence.

The ease of creating websites and use of social media helps small businesses tap into new economic markets, reaching regional, national and international audience, allowing small businesses access to affordable advertising.

The myriad social media platforms and mobile applications also improve communication processes between organisations and their consumers, enabling customers to provide a feedback. When positive, this feedback acts as strong word-of-mouth referral advertising, and when negative, gives businesses the opportunity to learn, improve, and repair a damaged relationship to create a satisfied lifelong customer.

Many artists with fledgling businesses lack the know-how to take their business from the basics to a leader in the field with an engaged online following. Leesa Watego, founding partner and manager of Iscariot Media and successful businesswoman, talks through setting up an online branding and social media presence in tomorrow's workshop for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists. This workshop will help participants establish a strong online presence for their business, improve their service offering online, and reach new customers.

The Importance of Digital Presence When Selling Your Business



Selling a business requires a lot of preparation at the backend. It may seem like a simple task that gets done by signing the contract and handing over the assets. However, it is far more complicated because of the groundwork needed to attract the right buyer and get the best price. The business should be in its prime with strong financial backing, systematic processes, tech-savvy operations and a solid customer base. Besides showcasing profitability, the business for sale in Brisbane must have a prominent online presence to establish its credibility.

Without a positive online reputation, a business is considered as good as non-existent in the digital age. Customers are using online searches to look for products and review the business website to check the reliability of a brand. They read customer reviews about their products and compare prices with other brands before purchasing. Thus, creating a virtual existence for all types of businesses has become crucial. Here is everything you must know about the importance of digital presence when selling your business. Entrepreneurs cannot complete the sale profitably without this feature.

1. Brand Awareness and Exposure



In the age of smartphones, everyone is just a tap away from searching for products online. If a business does not appear in the search list for its products, it will not be found by its target base. Traditional advertising methods help generate widespread awareness but do not get targeted traffic and leads. These ads are viewed by people who may not be interested in the products or even skip the message because it interrupts their entertainment.

Thus, it is vital to invest in search engine optimisation and have a well-designed and user-friendly website that buyers can find when the business is listed for sale. Most business brokers, buyers and investors conduct primary research online to find the business address, images, values, work environment, etc. Thus, businesses should have high-quality visuals and easy-to-navigate sites with valuable content that captivates users.

2. Trusted and Reputable Business

Most business buyers want to acquire a trusted brand with goodwill in the market that can leveraged to grow the entity. A virtual storefront and higher rank on the search engine results page ensure the business maintains a credible reputation that brings conversions and revenue. A reputed brand can help the buyer secure funding quickly and get started with the negotiations before it goes off the market.

Since retiring entrepreneurs prefer online business listings to sell their ventures, it is vital to have a reliable presence that helps find customers, suppliers and investors easily. In addition, the seller can ask for a higher price because of the popularity of the brand and its enviable online presence that makes it stand out in the crowd.

3. Increased Customer Engagement

Budding entrepreneurs looking for a business for sale Brisbane opt for entities that retain customers and have a minimum churn rate. Maintaining long-term customer relationships is essential for generating repeat orders, sustainability and getting referrals. They are also responsible for brand advocacy and help promote the business through word-of-mouth.

Loyal customers keep the entity afloat even during an economic downturn. A robust online presence helps in managing these relations and increasing engagement. Businesses can interact with them through social media, review sites and discussion forums to connect and build relationships through different touchpoints. Without social profiles and online visibility, businesses cannot engage effectively with customers, impacting the sales process.

4. Global Recognition and Sales



One of the primary benefits of having a virtual presence is that businesses can reach a wider target audience across countries. Traditional advertising has limited reach and high costs. A website incurs a lower expense and helps generate global conversions. It increases revenue and creates an additional stream of income through online sales.

It helps to add value to the business and makes it more appealing to buyers who want to cater to a larger target audience. It increases the opportunity for expansion and improves the growth potential of the entity. In addition, it can pivot quickly in case of a natural calamity like a pandemic or flash floods.

5. Utilisation of Digital Marketing

Entrepreneurs who intend to put up their businesses for sale in Brisbane can generate a buzz with their online ads. They can post business listings on business buying and selling websites to attract qualified leads. They can also promote the sale in their social media networking groups, which usually include investors, business owners and aspiring entrepreneurs. Using digital marketing makes it easier to find a buyer with a genuine intent to purchase the venture.

The seller can get enquiries from buyers directly in their email and scan the potential buyers by reviewing their digital financial records and credit scores. They can tweak the business listing and add relevant keywords to get more views and increase the probability of closing a successful deal.

6. Tracking Brand Mentions and Traffic

Tracking brand mentions is essential for businesses in the current scenario where a single negative comment can create a lot of negative publicity and criticism. Digital marketing includes monitoring brand mentions and customer reviews on different sites to ensure the business is projected positively and has a solid online reputation.

Since every business buyer will examine customer feedback and brand reputation before making a decision, it is vital to use marketing efforts in this direction. Quick responses and appeasing dissatisfied clients with rewards and refunds can help maintain a good rapport with the audience.

7. Improving and Adjusting with Feedback



Understanding customers and assessing their feedback can help entrepreneurs gauge the pulse of the target audience. It allows them to improve their products, processes and sales performance. It helps boost revenue and increase the efficiency of employees by following the suggestions of the customers.

Individuals looking for a Brisbane business for sale will look for entities that take feedback seriously and utilise it to grow. A venture that does not pay attention to the desires and needs of the target audience cannot succeed. Digital marketing can help in this regard by tracking feedback received through emails, websites and social media. Businesses can stay relevant and in demand with this technology.

Wrapping Up

A stunning digital presence is essential for businesses to retain their customers, acquire new clients, and increase sales. It is equally important for building a reputable entity that gets sold quickly to optimise the return on investment.

Help your small business get ahead online with .au

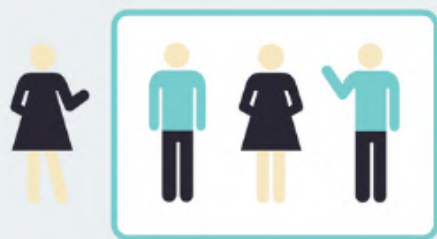


The numbers are in and they paint a clear picture: Australian consumers overwhelmingly prefer to shop online with businesses that have a .au website. auDA's 2025 Why .au? report reveals that half of all Australian consumers will only shop at a website ending in .au. This reinforces just how crucial a trusted online presence is for small businesses and how.au can help your business get ahead in the digital market.

An online presence is vital for small business

In today's digital world, an online presence is no longer a luxury for small businesses—it's a necessity. Australians, and consumers worldwide, rely on the internet to find products, services and information.

A business website is an important part of any business' online mix, with auDA research finding three in four Australian consumers will only purchase from a business online if it has a website. In our webinar, Bruce noted "having a website shows you're a real business and that you're credible. A social media page can be good for brand awareness but a website holds key information that customers rely on before making a purchase."



3 in 4

Australian consumers are more likely to trust an Australian business if its website ends in .au

A .au website provides advantages online

Aussies choose a .au domain name to anchor their online presence because it is Australian, recognisable to their customers and trusted. In fact, as evidenced in auDA's Why .au? research, three in four Australian consumers are more likely to trust a business with a .au domain.

Half

of Australian consumers will only purchase from a business online if it has an Australian website ending in .au



HELP FOR SMALL BUSINESS USING DIGITAL MARKETING



Digital marketing can be vital to the success of a small business yet one-in-three end up in a dispute with their provider, according to new research.

And almost 70% of small businesses last fewer than 12 months with the digital marketing provider they choose.

The high proportion of disputes and the large turnover in providers has prompted the Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman, Bruce Billson, to release a best practice guide for small business to provide simple steps they can take to better match their needs and expectations with those of digital marketing service providers.

“The growth in disputes involving digital platforms and digital service providers has motivated us to provide a guide to preventative steps and better practice guidance that might help reduce the harm these disputes are causing,” Mr Billson said.



“Digital platforms have fundamentally changed the way in which small businesses connect and sell to their customers and enable them to reach a significant portion of Australian and international markets.”

The Ombudsman commissioned a study by researchers at the University of the Sunshine Coast, which is among the first in the world to investigate the specific relationship challenges

between small businesses and digital marketing service providers. This collaboration has produced the information checklists in the best practice guide for small businesses being released today.

The study found most of the disputes came from a mismatch in understanding what each party required.

“A digital marketing service provider is a person or agency that you engage to help with your online presence. This may include branding, website, search engine rankings and marketing strategy that can help grow your business and brand,” Mr Billson said.



“But for too many small businesses this relationship can be unsatisfactory, and for one-in-three it ends in a dispute.

“Our guide gives small business actionable tips on receiving great service and building a real partnership with a digital marketing service provider.”

There is also a guide for digital marketing providers to better understand the needs of small businesses.

The study found digital marketing service providers often did not communicate risk; were not transparent with details about services, timeframes and results; and did not treat their clients as collaborative partners.

It concluded that a lack of digital literacy among small business owners prevented them from proactively asking relevant questions about the services being provided by digital marketing service providers. Half of small businesses said that their providers pushed them to buy expensive and irrelevant services.

“Before you talk to a provider, identifying the assistance you need and what you want the provider to do and what you want to do yourself,” Mr Billson said.

The lead researcher at the University of the Sunshine Coast, Dr Karen Sutherland, said the common reason for relationships ending up in a dispute was a lack of open, informed and honest communication between small business and a digital marketing provider.

Conclusion

Visibility plays a major role in shaping the future of any business. When a business presents itself clearly and confidently, it becomes easier for customers, partners, and investors to recognise value and choose to engage. Building a strong presence is not only about reaching more people, but also about creating trust, demonstrating capability, and showing readiness for growth. The strategies in this guide highlight practical ways to enhance recognition, strengthen reputation, and support long term advancement. As the business environment continues to evolve, adapting and staying visible will remain essential. By investing in presence and communication today, businesses can enjoy greater opportunity, stronger results, and a more successful path forward.

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