

# Launch, Grow, Sell: Marketing for First-Time Founders



# Introduction

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Marketing doesn't have to be complicated.

Small business owners and founders are often told they need to be everywhere, do everything, and constantly pump out content to get results. But the truth? **You don't.**

The businesses that succeed know their customers well and focus on what actually matters—things that drive both **brand trust** and **sales**.

**So, what do you need to be doing well?**

**Understand your customer:** If you don't know who they are and what they need, your marketing will miss the mark.

**Brand building:** Customers need to trust you before they buy from you.

**Creating ads with strong copy:** Ads that speak directly to customer needs are what drive results.

**Email marketing:** One of the most cost-effective tools for nurturing relationships and driving repeat business.

I've written this short guide to strip away the noise, bring marketing back to basics, and give you simple steps to create marketing that works.

# Chapter 1: Start with your customer

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Let's be real: Nobody cares about your product or service until they see how it helps them. If your marketing is all about you—your product, your achievements, your services—you're losing your audience.

The secret to great marketing? Start by knowing your customer.

Here's how to begin:

- Who are they? What do they do, and what's their daily life like?
- What problem do they have that you can solve?
- What keeps them up at night? Worries about money, time, or something else?
- How can your product make their life easier or better?

## **Why This Matters:**

If you don't know your customer well, you'll create marketing that misses the mark. When you understand what they need, you can show them how your business fits into their life.

# Creating customer personas

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## Start by Creating Customer Personas

### *What is a customer persona?*

A persona is a profile of your ideal customer—their goals, challenges, and how your product or service fits into their life. Think of it as creating a “fictional character” that represents your real customers.

### *Here’s why personas are important:*

When you understand your customer’s struggles and desires, your marketing will connect with them and feel personal.

# Sample personas to get you started

## SMALL ACCOUNTING BUSINESS (PERSONA: MARK)

Mark, 42, Construction Business Owner

**Problem:** He's overwhelmed by tax deadlines and bookkeeping while running his business.

**Marketing Message:** "We help business owners like Mark avoid tax headaches and free up time to focus on their work."

# 01

# 02

## HAIRDRESSER/SALON OWNER (PERSONA: SARAH)

Sarah, 29, Busy Professional

**Problem:** She doesn't have time for long salon visits.

**Marketing Message:** "We make it easy to schedule quick appointments, so you can feel confident without spending hours in the salon."

# Sample personas to get you started

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## FINTECH STARTUP (PERSONA: EMILY)

Emily, 35, Freelancer and Part-Time Investor

**Problem:** She's confused by complex investment options.

**Marketing Message:** "We help people like Emily grow their savings with simple, easy-to-use financial tools."

03

04

## FURNITURE STORE (PERSONA: JAMES AND CLARA)

James and Clara, Young Family with Two Kids

**Problem:** They want furniture that's stylish, kid-proof, and affordable.

**Marketing Message:** "We help families like James and Clara create beautiful, practical spaces without breaking the bank."

# Action steps

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**WRITE DOWN THE ANSWERS  
TO THESE QUESTIONS FOR  
YOUR OWN BUSINESS**



1. What problem do my customers have?

1. How does my product or service help solve that problem?

1. What message will help them understand that I “get” them?

**If you do this exercise, you’ll be one step ahead of most businesses.**

# Chapter 2: Don't try to be everywhere

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Now that you know who your customers are, the next step is figuring out **where** to reach them. And here's the good news: **You don't need to be on every platform.**

One of the most common marketing myths in my experience is that you need to be active everywhere - Instagram, TikTok, LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter. It's exhausting, and most businesses can't do it well.

## **The Simple Rule: Quality Over Quantity**

It's better to show up on 1-2 platforms where your audience spends their time than to post mediocre content everywhere.



## Where to start

### Let's break down three platforms and how you can make them work:



#### Instagram

**Great for:** Visual products and brands.

**Example:** Starbucks posts photos of seasonal drinks, encourages user-generated content (customers sharing their coffee moments), and uses stories to give behind-the-scenes looks.

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#### TikTok

**Great for:** Creative, short videos.

**Tip:** Share quick tips, behind-the-scenes clips, or fun, relatable moments.

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#### LinkedIn

**Great for:** B2B businesses or service-based companies.

**Example:** Accounting firms or marketing agencies can share case studies, advice, or industry insights.

#### Action Step:

**Pick 1-2 platforms based on where your customers spend their time. Don't stretch yourself too thin. Master those platforms before adding more.**

# Chapter 3: Brand building vs. sales (why you need both)

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If I had a dollar for every time someone asked me how to drive sales without putting any effort into brand building, I'd be writing this from a private island. That's not how it works.

Brand-building and sales are two different things, and you need to give them both attention.

## **What's the Difference?**

Brand building: Helps people get to know and trust your business over time.  
Sales: Focuses on getting immediate revenue.

## **Why Brand Building Matters:**

If people don't trust you or know who you are, they won't buy from you.

Imagine launching a premium product online, but no one knows who you are. You run sales ads, but they don't convert. Why? Because no one trusts the brand.

Even if your product is the best on the market, most people won't spend a premium on a brand they've never heard of. This is why brand building isn't just about aesthetics—it's about creating credibility, trust, and desirability. A strong brand presence turns interest into sales, especially for high-end products..

# Action steps

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**Spend time creating content that builds trust:**

**Share customer  
success stories**

**Educate through  
videos or blogs**

**Show the “why” behind  
your business**

**Tell stories, not just  
features**

**Be consistent with your look  
and message**

**Focus on value, not  
just selling**

# Chapter 4: Creating ads that sell

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Once you've built trust, it's time to create ads that sell. Whether you're writing ads for Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn or any other platform, remember - ads work when they're customer-focused.

## The Simple Ad Formula:

**Hook:** Grab attention (a question or bold statement).

**Problem:** Highlight what your customer is struggling with.

**Solution:** Show how your product helps.

**Proof:** Include a testimonial or result.

**Call to Action:** Tell them what to do next.

## Example:

**Hook:** "Your living room deserves more than generic furniture."

**Problem:** "Struggling to find pieces that fit your style and space?"

**Solution:** "We custom-build furniture designed to match your home perfectly."

**Proof:** "Over 1,000 happy customers trust us."

**Call to Action:** "Book a free design consultation today."

## Action Step:

Try writing an ad using this formula, even if you're not ready to run it yet. Practice crafting messages that connect with your customers' needs.

# Real world example

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## Airbnb – "Live There" Campaign

Airbnb shifted the conversation from just booking accommodations to experiencing a destination like a local. Their "Live There" campaign encouraged travelers to ditch generic hotels and immerse themselves in real neighborhoods.

**This campaign is a great example of how to structure an ad that connects with customers. Let's break it down:**

**Hook:** "Don't go there. Live there." (Creates curiosity and challenges traditional travel).

**Problem:** "Hotels make you feel like a visitor. What if you could feel at home?" (Addresses the issue of inauthentic travel experiences).

**Solution:** "Book a home that lets you experience a city like a local." (Positions Airbnb as the answer).

**Proof:** "Trusted by millions of travelers worldwide." (Builds credibility and trust).

**Call to Action:** "Find a home that feels like yours." (Encourages action in a natural way).

### Key Takeaway

For your own ads, think beyond just what you're selling. Focus on how your product transforms the customer's experience. Whether you're in travel, eCommerce, or another industry, customers care more about the benefits and emotions than just the features.

# Chapter 5:

# Email is important

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In eCommerce and marketing, a powerful trifecta is:

- Building your brand
- Running ads
- Using email

If you have these three working together, you're on the right track.

First, you need a website. It should be user-friendly and, most importantly, designed to capture email addresses. I won't dive too deep into websites here, but remember what we covered in Chapter One: your website should be customer-centric and simple. The copy should tell a story and sell the product without overcomplicating things. ***It should speak to your customer personas.***

## Why Collect Emails?

Your website is more than a place to sell products - it's a tool to grow your audience. For example, if you're a clothing store, you can offer 10% off or another small perk in exchange for a customer's email address and a few key details, like their birthday.

**The goal?** To build a list of customers you can continue selling to by consistently showing up in their inbox.

## Simple Email Workflow - Example

1

Welcome Email – Thank them for subscribing and introduce your brand. Share your story, why you started, and what they can expect from your emails. Keep it personal and engaging.

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2

Your Brand & Mission – Explain what makes your brand unique. Highlight your values, product benefits, and why customers should trust you. This helps build connection and credibility.

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3

How Your Product Solves a Problem – Educate your audience on the problem your product solves. Use real-life examples or customer stories to make it relatable.

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Social Proof & Trust-Building – Share testimonials, early reviews, or behind-the-scenes content. If you don't have customers yet, showcase the work that went into creating your product.

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Call to Action & Offer – Encourage them to take action, whether it's making a purchase, following you on social media, or signing up for an exclusive offer. If possible, include a limited-time incentive to drive urgency.

# Email marketing made simple

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Email marketing doesn't have to be overwhelming—it's one of the most effective (and budget-friendly) ways to grow your brand. Here's how to get started, step by step:

## 1. Set Up the Right Tools

You'll need an email marketing tool that connects to your CRM or a CRM with built-in email capabilities. This helps you keep your contacts organised, segment your audience, and set up automations that save you time.

## 2. Make It Personal

People respond to emails that feel relevant to them. Something as simple as an automated birthday email with a special offer—like a discount or a free gift - can make customers feel valued and more likely to engage with your brand.

## 3. Stay Consistent

Email marketing isn't about spamming people with sales—it's about building trust. Share updates, styling tips, new product launches, or exclusive promotions. The key is to show up regularly with value, so your brand stays top of mind.

### The Bottom Line

When done right, email marketing can drive long-term sales and customer loyalty. Start small, keep it simple, and focus on building relationships—it'll pay off.



# Before you go...

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The biggest secret to marketing success?

**Consistency.**

Remember:

Know your customer.

Show up consistently on 1-2 platforms.

Balance brand-building and sales content.

Provide value in everything you post.

Use email marketing to stay connected and drive long-term sales.

# Contact Information

Looking for a full-service marketing partner who can take your new brand from strategy to execution?

I offer bespoke, end-to-end marketing solutions tailored to your needs – covering everything from brand positioning, website copy, and content creation to social media management, paid ads, and lead generation.

Every project is crafted to deliver real impact, ensuring your marketing works seamlessly across all channels. Let's create something that drives results – get in touch today.

**Anja Barisic**

[linkedin/anjabarisic](https://www.linkedin.com/in/anjabarisic)

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**Email**

[anja@anjabarisic.co](mailto:anja@anjabarisic.co)

[www.anjabarisic.co](http://www.anjabarisic.co)

