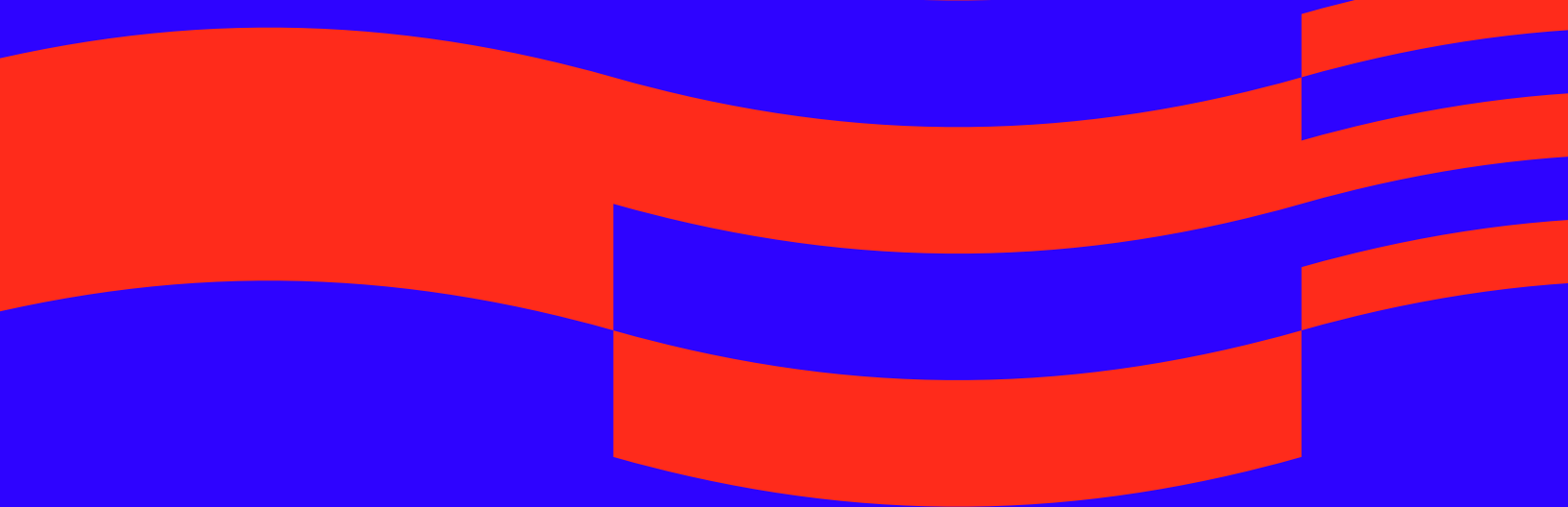


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**USING AI TOOLS
TO MARKET YOUR
SMALL BUSINESS**

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INTRODUCTION

By now it's clear artificial intelligence (AI) isn't just a passing trend – and it's not just for big corporations with deep pockets. The right AI tools can give small business owners a serious edge, helping you work smarter, not harder. But with so many tools on the market, how do you know what's going to be useful for your small business?

Small business owners wear a lot of hats: CEO, head of operations, distribution manager, chief HR officer and head of marketing, to name a few. Pulling this off with limited time, budget and bandwidth isn't easy.

That's where AI comes in. In this eBook, we'll show you how to use AI to take some of that load off your shoulders – without losing your unique brand voice or spending weeks learning new tech.

You'll find recommendations for free and paid AI tools for each of your main marketing tasks, designed to help you save time and put your focus back where it belongs: running your business.

At the end of this eBook you'll find a 90-day implementation plan, breaking down the steps for integrating AI into your marketing plan without breaking the budget or requiring weeks of work.

AI isn't a magic wand, but it can be a powerful tool when used with purpose and a plan. This eBook is your first step to building that plan. Next stop? Marketing impact with minimal hassle.

SETTING THE SCENE

WHY MARKETING AUTOMATION MATTERS FOR SMALL BUSINESS

When you're hands-on running your business, the idea of automating your marketing can be daunting. Can you really trust a software or program to manage your brand for you? In fact, the real question might be – can you afford not to?

Committing to a consistent marketing strategy can be an incredible time drain on a small business owner. Repeating manual tasks like posting content, sending emails, and following up with leads can eat into hours every week.

Then when you're busy, marketing is often the first thing to fall by the wayside. This leads to long gaps between posts and emails or rushed content that isn't on brand. When this happens, you might never know the opportunities you've missed and what they cost you.

For example, a café owner who posts manually on social media three times a week might spend two to three hours just writing, designing, uploading and monitoring engagement on their posts. With automation tools, that time could drop to 30 minutes.

Leveling the Playing Field

Automating some of your marketing functions can give you an edge to compete with larger players. By making smarter use of the resources you have and leaning on tech to fill the gaps, automation can make your small team look like a big brand. This can also improve your customer experience and give you access to better insights and data about your customers, competitors and operations.



WHAT AI CAN (AND CAN'T) DO FOR YOU

Just like us, AI has its strengths and weaknesses. Before getting started, it's important to know where AI has the most to offer, and where your uniquely human skills are better used.

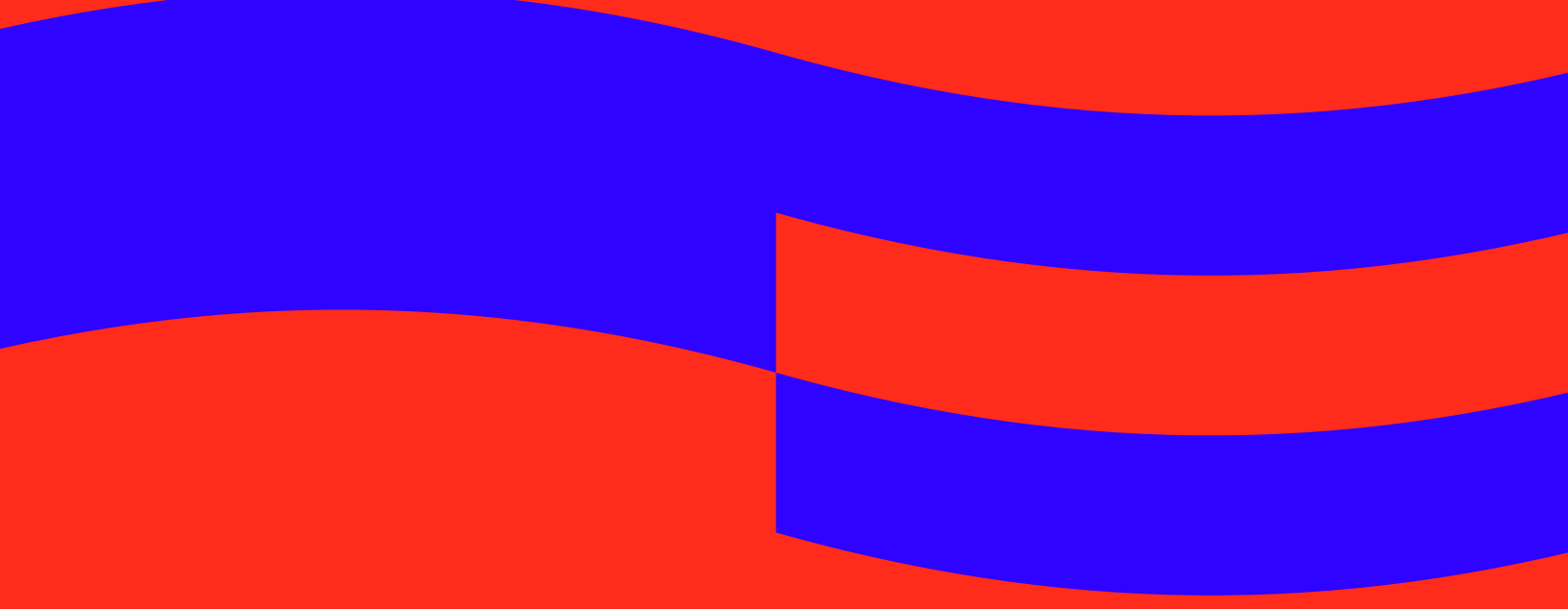
What AI Can Do	What AI Can't Do (Yet)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speed up content writing • Instantly analyze data and make recommendations • Test, iterate and optimize • Operate 24/7 • Generate and build on ideas • Integrate with some common business systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make judgment calls • Understand nuance and tone • Nail your brand voice automatically • Integrate with every online business system • Make ethical decisions • Tell deeply human stories • Guarantee legal or compliance assurance

In short, AI works best as a super-quick assistant with access to a lot of data and processing power. What it can't (and shouldn't) do is replace you and your unique perspective, plan and passion for your business.



HUMAN MOMENT

Throughout this eBook, look out for 'Human Moments' that will highlight potential risks of using AI and where you should consider having more oversight or input.



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01

**GETTING STARTED WITH AI
MARKETING TOOLS**

GETTING STARTED WITH AI MARKETING TOOLS

CHOOSING THE RIGHT TOOLS

Before we break down common marketing functions and some of the best tools for each, it's important to assess your business's specific needs.

You'll need to consider things like the type of business you run, what budget you have to spend, what marketing you're doing now and what you'd like to do in future, and what you're aiming to achieve with your marketing.

Check out the self-assessment checklist below to help with this process. These answers will help you determine what sort of tools you're likely to need, based on the tasks you want to automate.

SELF-ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST: WHY DO YOU NEED AI?

Before choosing your AI marketing tools, take a minute to reflect on where you actually need support. Your answers will help narrow down what tools are worth your time (and money).

Tick any that apply:	
I spend too much time writing social media captions or blog posts	<input type="checkbox"/>
I struggle to keep up with posting consistently on social media	<input type="checkbox"/>
I want to send regular email campaigns but don't know where to start	<input type="checkbox"/>
I'm not sure how to segment my audience or personalize content	<input type="checkbox"/>
I want to run digital ads but feel overwhelmed by the setup	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have no idea what's actually working in my marketing	<input type="checkbox"/>
I need a better way to organize or automate my workflows	<input type="checkbox"/>
I'm not making use of my website data or customer insights	<input type="checkbox"/>

Tip: Start with the 1–2 areas where you feel most stuck. That's where automation and AI can make the biggest impact first.

ASSESSING AI TOOLS

Once you've analyzed your marketing needs, it's time to get serious about what you want from an AI tool. With so many services to choose from, here are a few key criteria to help you sort through them.

- Ease of use – is it user-friendly to navigate? Do you need technical or marketing expertise to use it confidently? Does it provide useful guides and tutorials? Is there customer support available?
- Integrations – does it connect with tools you already use? Does it support other automation tools?
- Price – is there a free plan or trial? Is the pricing structure reasonable? Are you paying for features you won't use?
- Scalability – will it still be useful as your business grows? Does it have more features in development?

Remember, if you're not sure – start small. Many tools offer a free plan or trial so you can test the waters before committing.

A SNAPSHOT OF THE AI MARKETPLACE

There are countless AI tools and applications available now to support businesses of all sizes.

We'll explore many of these tools in this eBook, but here's a snapshot of some of the most popular or commonly-mentioned to give you a taste of what's out there.



ChatGPT

Generates ideas, drafts, and answers to help with writing, brainstorming and problem-solving.



Claude

Helps with writing, analysis, summarising long documents, and thoughtful business decision support.



Notion AI

Adds AI-powered summarizing, drafting and organizing features to Notion's all-in-one workspace.



Zapier

Connects different apps so they can share data and trigger automated workflows.



HubSpot

Combines customer database, marketing, sales and customer service tools in one platform, with automation built in.



Buffer

Schedules and publishes social media posts across multiple platforms from one dashboard.



Jasper

Creates marketing-focused copy and content using AI templates tailored for business needs.



Canva

Lets you design graphics, documents and videos with drag-and-drop templates and AI design tools.

MAKING YOUR TOOLS WORK TOGETHER

There are so many useful and powerful tools for online marketing and often, you'll use a combination of them to achieve everything your business needs. But if you have one platform for social media management, another to house your customer data, another for your email marketing and yet another managing your website, you can quickly reach 'app overwhelm.'

Integration means connecting your various platforms together, usually through one consolidated app that can access and control the others. Integration is great for:

- Reducing overwhelm by having fewer logins and app switching required
- Sharing information between tools so you're not duplicating work
- Creating smoother workflows so tasks get done automatically in the background

In short, integrations mean you can click one button and trigger a whole chain of events to happen automatically – saving you time and effort better spent elsewhere.

Automation workflows IRL

Still unsure what integrating tools and setting up automated workflows can look like? Here are some examples.

Content distribution	Lead capture & follow-up	Social media posting
<p>Trigger: You publish a blog post on your website. Automations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Share the blog link to Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram via Buffer• Send the blog to your email list via MailChimp• Save the post link in a Google Sheet for future reference	<p>Trigger: Someone fills in a contact form on your website Automations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Add their details to your customer database• Tag them by interest (e.g. "event catering enquiry")• Send a personalized email acknowledging their enquiry	<p>Trigger: You upload a new photo to a specific Dropbox folder. Automations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• AI generates three caption options• Your scheduling tool queues the post for your chosen platforms• Post analytics are logged in a spreadsheet

Tips for keeping integrations simple

1. Start with one or two small automations and test them
2. Document what you've set up so you can fix it later if something breaks
3. Try using 'dummy data' such as a test mailing list rather than real customer details until your setup is correct
4. Use tools you already know before adding new ones
5. Review automations regularly to make sure they're still working



Add your **own email** to your customer mailing lists so you receive marketing emails alongside your subscribers. This is a great way to **instantly see if they're working correctly** and identify any automation issues quickly.

SETTING UP DATA FOUNDATIONS

Before you add shiny new AI tools to your marketing, it's worth making sure your data foundations are in place. AI works best when it has accurate, relevant information to work with, so the better the data you can provide, the better the outcomes will be.

You don't need to become a data analyst, but you do need to set up and connect some basic tools to track how your marketing platforms are performing.

There are three core tools to start with:

- **Google Analytics** – tracks who visits your website, where they come from and what they do while they're there. Read 'Set up Analytics for a website and/or app' from Google.
- **Google Tag Manager** – makes it easier to manage your website tracking codes without editing your site's code every time. Read 'Get started with Tag Manager' from Google.
- **Meta/Facebook Pixel** – tracks activity from Facebook and Instagram ads so you can see if people click through, buy something or sign up. Read 'Set up and install the Meta pixel' from Meta.



If you use GoDaddy, Squarespace, WordPress or similar, there are often step-by-step guides for connecting these tools directly in your site settings.



TOOLS TO TRY

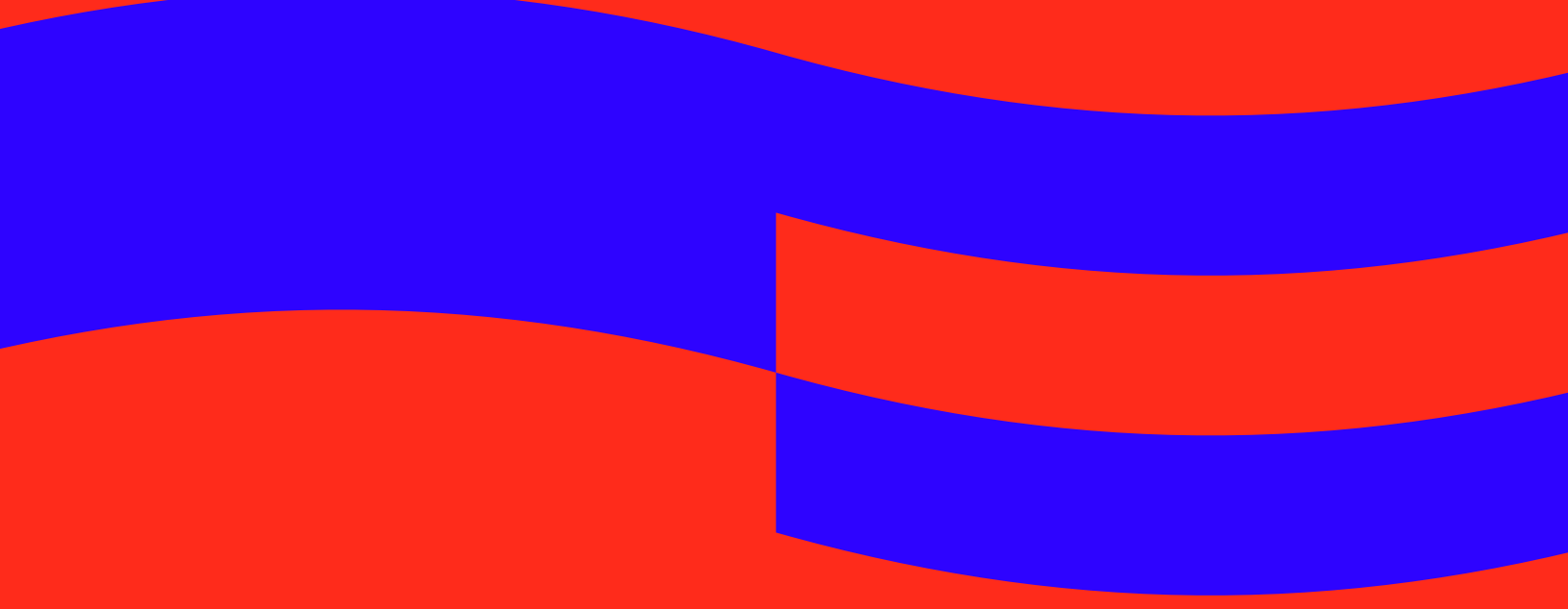
Ready to get started? Here are some AI tools for **integrating multiple platforms**

Zapier (zapier.com)

- Free account for up to 100 tasks per month, with paid tiers beyond that
- Library of automation templates available to guide you
- Connects to nearly 8,000 different tools to automate processes using AI

Make (make.com) – formerly Integromat

- Free account for up to 1,000 operations per month, with paid tiers beyond that
- No coding skills needed and a visual interface for ease of navigation
- Includes more than 2,500 apps including Buffer, ChatGPT, Canva and Shopify



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02

SOCIAL MEDIA

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is now a necessity for small businesses. Today's customers will check you out on social media before deciding to do business with you, and a polished social presence can be the difference between landing a sale and missing out.

But a solid social media marketing strategy takes time. Not just in planning and deciding what to do, but in capturing content, writing and scheduling posts, and then monitoring comments and engaging with followers.

With so many processes to keep consistent, social media management is a great place to use AI tools and save you time and hassle.

We'll look at four main areas of automation in this eBook:

1. Planning and scheduling posts
2. Writing captions
3. Building a hashtag strategy
4. Auto-responding to direct messages (DMs)

PLANNING & SCHEDULING POSTS

When you're busy running your business, the last thing you want to do is stop working to post on social media. So how do you stay consistent and organized without needing to post in real-time every day? That's where AI-powered social scheduling comes in.

There are many social media management platforms designed to give you a single dashboard to view all your social accounts together and manage them in one place. Tools like Buffer, Later and Planable offer features like visual content calendars with drag-and-drop scheduling and previews. Load in your posts, choose when you want them live and the tools will publish them for you.

Planning and scheduling ahead ensure a steady flow of content and reduces last-minute stress and missed posting opportunities. It also makes it easier to plan for events, promotions and trends. Whether you're an Instagram-focused brand or going all-in on TikTok, there's a platform to suit you.

Now with AI capabilities built in, many of these platforms will even help you out with your planning. You can prompt the assistant tools to develop recurring content ideas (such as 'Tip Tuesday' or 'Behind-the-Scenes Friday'), suggest seasonal or campaign-based topics or even build a month's worth of post ideas in one sitting.



With AI, you only get out what you put in. **Writing a strong prompt** to ensure your AI tool has all the information and direction it needs will give you a better chance of receiving useful suggestions. Use the **Prompt Builder** on the next page to get started.

AI PROMPT BUILDER: GENERATING SOCIAL POST IDEAS

Pro Tip: Frame your prompt in the second person, telling AI what role to take on. Use “you” to clearly direct how it should act.

“You are a [type of business] that offers [products/services] to [target audience]. Your brand voice is [describe tone e.g. friendly, professional, playful, inspirational]. Suggest {number} content ideas for [platform e.g. Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn] that will [goal e.g. engage followers, promote a new product, educate my audience]. Focus on topics related to [specific themes e.g. wellness tips, behind-the-scenes, customer success stories], and make sure the ideas feel [additional notes e.g. locally relevant, seasonal, shareable]. Avoid [specific exclusions e.g. generic stock photo ideas, overly salesy language, sensitive topics, industry jargon]”

For example:

You are a **home organizing and decluttering service** that **works with busy families in Des Moines, Iowa**. Your brand voice is **friendly, practical, and encouraging**. Suggest **10** content ideas for **Instagram** that will **educate** followers and **promote** the **Spring Home Refresh Package**. Focus on topics related to **decluttering tips, before-and-after transformations, and organizing kids’ spaces**, and make sure the ideas feel relevant to **spring cleaning season in Des Moines**. Avoid topics about **extreme minimalism, capsule wardrobes, or organizing for business – keep the focus on family homes**.

WRITING CAPTIONS

Keeping your content fresh, engaging and relevant to your audience is often the hardest part of the process – and the reason many give up before they’ve begun. You know your business better than anyone, but it takes a lot of creativity to come up with new posts every day of the week.

AI can help you overcome ‘blank page syndrome’ by drafting your posts and captions for you or even just giving you an outline. When you’re trying to create a bulk of content at once, this cuts down the time required and eases the pressure on you.

It can also edit, adjust and provide variations to choose from based on your feedback, so you’re still in the driver’s seat. Some tools to check out include ChatGPT, Copy.ai and Anyword.



AI is great for generating lots of ideas and creating drafts quickly – but without living and breathing your business (like you do), it can’t judge whether they’re a good fit for your brand. Use your own discretion to decide if a post sounds like ‘you.’ If not, you consider editing to:

- Add brand-specific language, local references or personal touches
- Remove overly generic or repetitive AI phrases
- Be specific about the tone of voice (e.g. professional, authoritative, confident, playful, fun, witty, casual, etc.)
- Keep formatting consistent (hashtag placement, emojis, line breaks)

BUILDING A HASHTAG STRATEGY

Hashtags are a mystery to many and a challenge to all. Most of us know they're important to boost reach, join trending conversations and connect with niche audiences – but how do you find the most useful and relevant hashtags without hours of research and browsing?

AI tools can help suggest relevant, trending and niche hashtags, group them into collections for campaigns and content types, and even track their performance over time. Tools like **Hashtagify**, **RiteTag** and **Flick** take the guesswork out of hashtag research and give you a clear plan for boosting your content to the right audience.

For best practice, mix popular, niche and branded hashtags and avoid using spammy or overused tags.



If customers want a quick response for basic information, AI is a great solution. But not everyone will be thrilled about talking to a 'bot.' Always provide the option to speak to a real person and make sure to review messages regularly to ensure they're responded to accurately. Complaints, sensitive issues and high-value customers should always be handled by a human.

AUTO-RESPONDING TO DIRECT MESSAGES (DMS)

Suddenly found your inbox flooded with DMs? It's a nice problem to have, but it can be overwhelming when you're a small team or even a solopreneur with limited time on your hands.

Luckily, AI-enabled chatbots can play the role of your receptionist, responding to DMs with basic inquiries or holding messages until you have time to reply yourself. They're particularly useful for responding to frequently asked questions, managing after-hours messages or directing inquiries to the right place – such as a contact form.

Some social platforms have these abilities built in. For example, Meta's Inbox automations for Facebook Messenger, Instagram and WhatsApp can be set up to instant-reply with expected response times, provide an away message, respond to FAQs, or supply basic information like your location, contact details, or business hours. They can also reply to messages based on specific keywords or flag messages that haven't received a reply so they don't fall through the cracks. Find out more by reading ['Set up Inbox automations on Meta Business Suite desktop.'](#)

Third-party AI tools like **ManyChat** consolidate and manage your messages from outside the platforms themselves.



TOOLS TO TRY

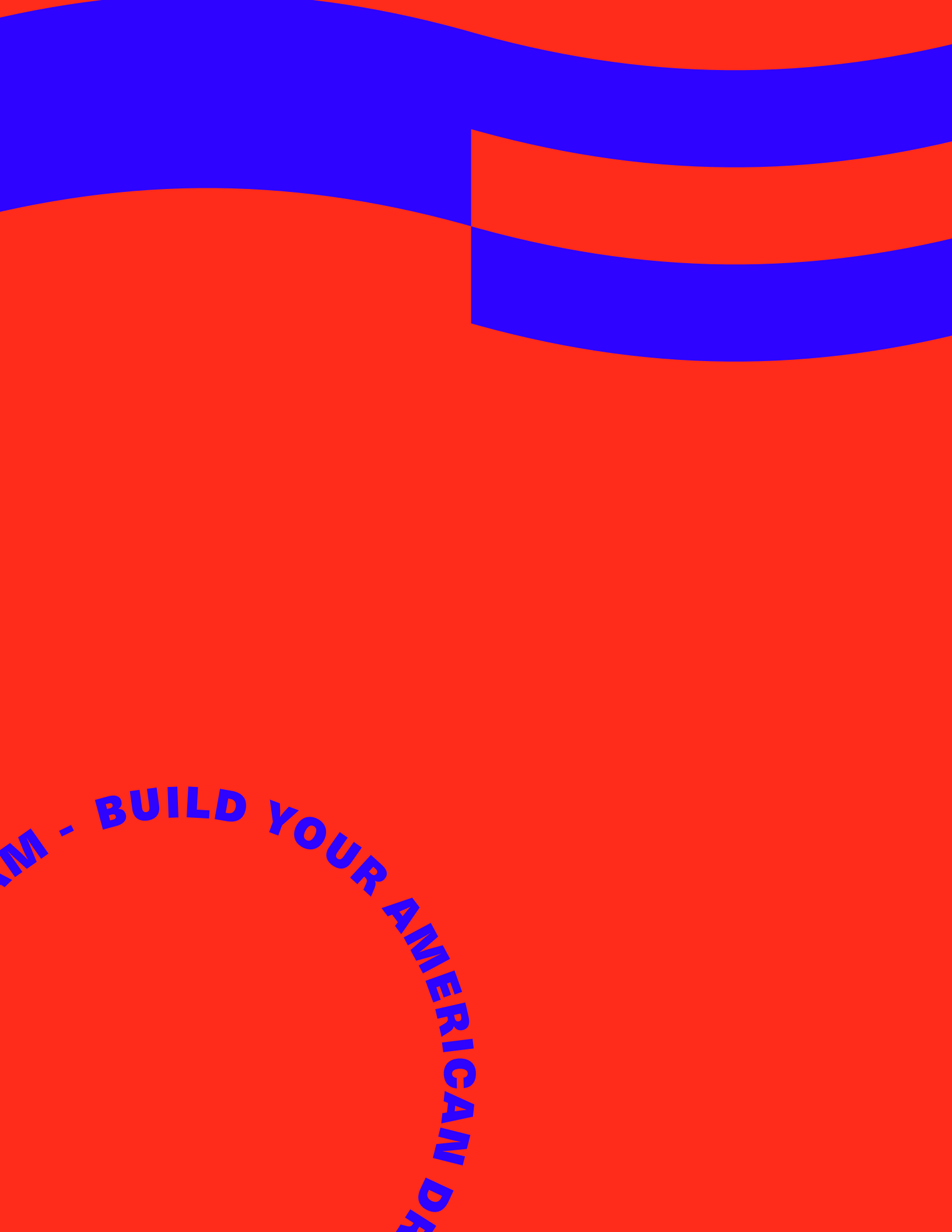
Ready to get started? Here are some AI tools for streamlining social media to check out.

ChatGPT (chatgpt.com)

- Free account with some limited functionality, paid options for more advanced features
- Quickly generates caption ideas, social posts and content variations
- Flexible prompts let you match your brand's tone and style (once you edit and refine)

Buffer (buffer.com)

- Free plan for a few social channels, with paid plans for expanded features and analytics
- Schedules posts across multiple social platforms in one dashboard
- AI Assistant suggests post ideas, drafts and repurposes content and tailors posts for each channel



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03

EMAIL MARKETING

EMAIL MARKETING

Email marketing is one of the most reliable ways to stay connected with your customers. Unlike social media, where algorithms decide who sees your posts, emails land directly in your customer's inbox – giving you a direct line to the people who already know and trust your business.

But like all marketing efforts, writing, personalizing and sending emails regularly takes time. From setting up welcome messages to creating engaging campaigns and making sure they're tailored to different types of customers; the workload can quickly pile up.

That's why email is another great place to bring in AI. With the right tools, you can set up campaigns that run automatically in the background, create subject lines and body copy in minutes, and even personalize emails based on customer behavior.



In this chapter, we'll look at three main areas where AI can help you work smarter, not harder:

1. Setting up automated campaigns
2. List segmentation with AI
3. Writing and personalizing emails

SETTING UP AUTOMATED CAMPAIGNS

Let's start with some marketing terminology before we launch in. A drip campaign is a series of automated emails that 'drip' out to your customers or leads over time.

You've probably received them yourself from online stores – emails that check in on items you placed in your cart, offer discounts for repeat purchases or ask you to review products. No one is sitting in the marketing office sending these emails manually; they're powered by automated systems based on how customers interact with you online.

There are different types of drip campaigns:

Welcome series – typically start when someone first joins your mailing list and can be used to introduce your brand, point to key promotions and build trust from the outset.

Abandoned carts – for product-based businesses, these remind customers of items left in their cart and encourage them to complete the purchase. Sometimes they'll offer special deals on the selected items as extra incentive.

Re-engagement campaigns – designed to target people who haven't opened or clicked in a while, by enticing them with fresh offers or content.

Nurture sequences – ideal for service-based businesses, these offer valuable content like tips, case studies or FAQs to build credibility and guide leads towards becoming paying clients.

Automated email campaigns might sound complicated, but they're simply a way to 'set and forget' a sequence of emails that nurture your customers over time.

Use the planner on the next page to plan your first automated campaign.

AUTOMATED EMAIL CAMPAIGN - PLANNER

Choose your campaign type

e.g. welcome series, nurture sequence, abandoned cart

Think about what your goal is to determine the right campaign type – do you want to build trust, convert leads, or sell products?

Map out the sequence

Think of your emails as steps in a journey. Outline the process you want your audience to go through.

e.g. Welcome series

Email 1 – Thank them for joining and set expectations

Email 2 – Share your story or brand values

Email 3 – Offer a helpful tip, discount or call-to-action

Draft your email content – using AI to speed up the setup

AI can draft subject lines, outline your sequence or suggest calls-to-action.

*Example prompt: "Write a 3-email **welcome series** for a family **photography business**. The tone should be **warm and approachable**. Each email should have a **clear call-to-action**, like **booking a session or downloading a factsheet**. Avoid sounding **overly salesy**."*

Test and refine

Don't set and forget your campaign forever. Check open rates, click-through rates and conversions. Many platforms have AI-assisted analytics to tweak content and subject lines for better results.

WRITING & PERSONALIZING EMAILS

Writing emails can be one of the most time-consuming parts of marketing. But luckily, it's also one area where AI can save you serious time and effort.

AI can help generate subject lines, draft outlines or complete email text, and insert customer information like names and past purchases to hyper-personalize the message each contact receives.

Any time you ask AI to write for you, your prompt is very important. Be sure to include:

- The goal of the email – what you want your customer to think, feel or do
- Who the audience is
- A description of your brand voice and tone
- Key messages to include
- What not to do

For example, you might say “Write a 200-word promotional email for a local landscaping business. The tone should be friendly and approachable. The email should target previous customers who haven’t booked in the last six months. Include one main call-to-action to book a spring clean-up service and suggest three subject line options. Avoid pushy sales language.”

Remember that reading and editing your content is still an important step to making sure it still has your personal touch.



When subscribers choose to give you their contact information, they’re trusting you to keep it safe. You also have legal obligations to protect it. Check the data privacy terms of your marketing platform and be cautious about importing customer data into third-party AI tools.



LIST SEGMENTATION WITH AI

Not every customer on your email list is the same. Some are brand new and just getting to know you. Others might already be loyal buyers. Sending everyone the exact same email can mean parts of your audience tune out . . . or worse, unsubscribe.

That's where list segmentation comes in. Segmentation means dividing your email list into groups based on things like behavior, interests or stage of the customer journey. The more relevant your message, the more likely people are to open, click and act.

AI can assist with list segmentation by:

- Analyzing how subscribers interact with your emails and suggesting ways to group them
- Automatically applying tags or labels to audience lists to save manual sorting
- Forecasting who's most likely to buy again, or to unsubscribe

Many email marketing platforms have integrated AI tools to do this thinking for you. Trial it with your current subscriber list or ask an AI tool to suggest the most relevant email campaigns based on your audience segments.



TOOLS TO TRY

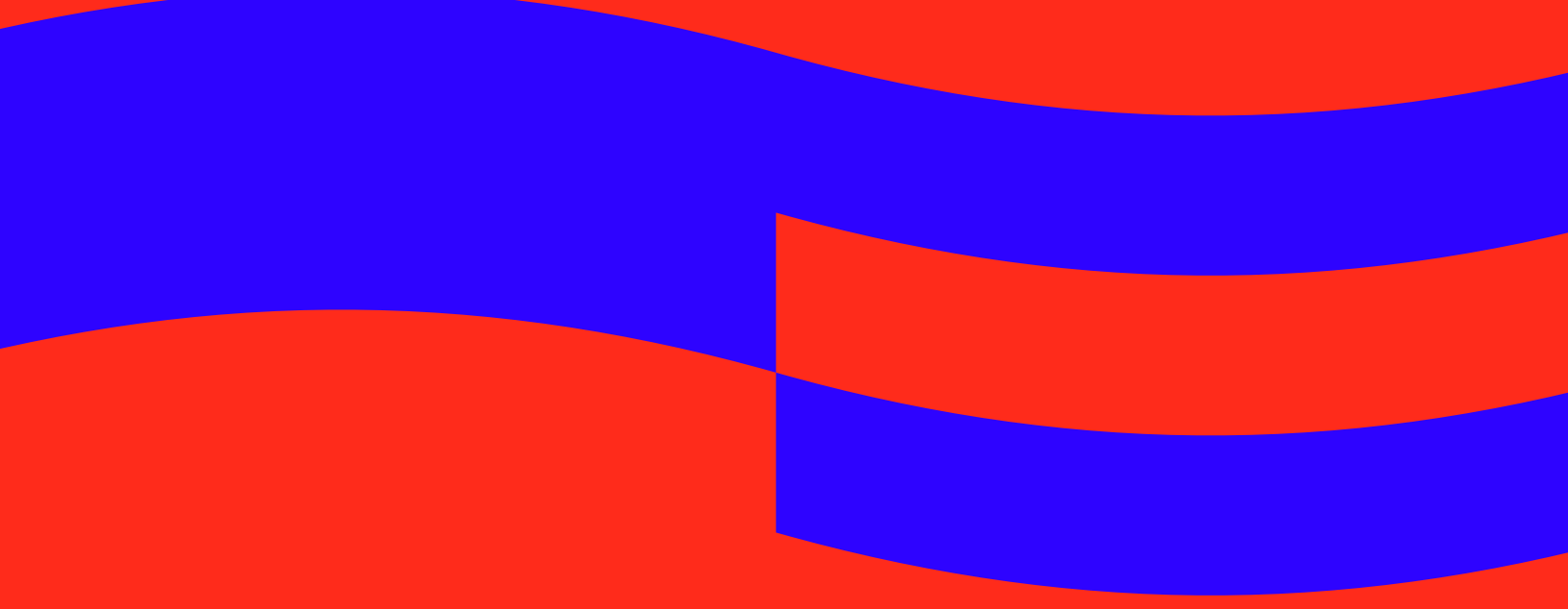
Ready to get started? Here are some AI tools for automating email marketing to check out.

Mailchimp ([mailchip.com](https://mailchimp.com))

- Paid service – automate up to four flow steps on the Essentials plan, or upgrade to Standard for 200 flow steps and added AI features (no automations available on Free plan)
- Templated email flows to help get you automated quickly
- Integrations with other platforms, like Stripe to synchronize with customer and order data, or Shopify for product-specific messages

Brevo (brevo.com)

- Free service for up to 300 emails a day, with paid tiers beyond this
- Free tier includes AI content generator for subject lines and email content, but no A/B testing or predictive sending AI tool
- Templates for automated drip campaigns with auto-responses



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04

**PAID SEARCH &
DIGITAL ADVERTISING**

PAID SEARCH & DIGITAL ADVERTISING

Between figuring out targeting, writing copy, designing visuals and keeping budgets under control, it's easy to feel like digital advertising is only for big brands with big teams.

But AI has changed the game. Smart ad tools from Google, Meta (Facebook/Instagram) and other platforms are designed to do the heavy lifting for you – from automatically finding the right audience to adjusting your budget so you get the best results for every dollar spent.

That doesn't mean you can "set it and forget it" completely, but with AI on your side, running effective ads no longer requires a full-time marketer or a big budget.

In this chapter, we'll look at three main areas where AI can simplify digital advertising for small business:

1. Smart campaigns with Google & Meta
2. Retargeting ads
3. Budget optimization

SMART CAMPAIGNS WITH GOOGLE & META

Google and Meta (which owns Facebook and Instagram) are two of the largest digital advertising platforms for small businesses today. When you schedule an ad, it shows up either in people's search results on Google or in their social feeds. You pay based on the goal structure for the campaign – for example, you might pay for maximizing the number of people you want to see your ad (impressions), driving website referrals (clicks to your landing page), or to maximize online sales (referred to as a 'conversion').

However, digital advertising requires a lot of decisions: who to target, where to place the ad and how to adjust it once it's live. AI-powered smart campaigns aim to reduce that burden.

Google Smart Campaigns use your business goals (like calls, web visits or sales) to

automatically show your ads to the right people at the right time. Setting them up is simpler than creating an ad manually and they can even suggest ad copy for you using AI tools. However, there are some limits on how you can optimize live campaigns and some of the targeting tools you can access. Read 'Start converting new customers with Google Ads' from Google.



Meta Advantage+ is a suite of advertising tools that uses AI to analyze real-time campaign data and make changes to your

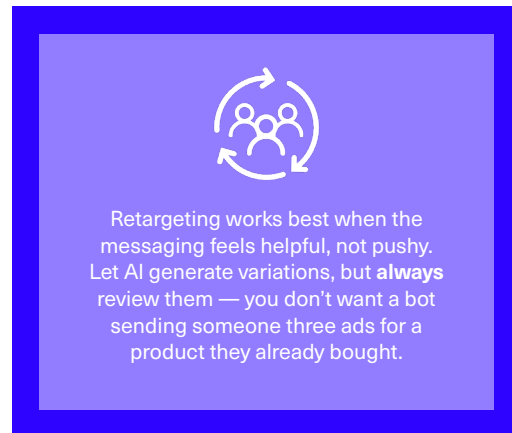
ads to achieve better results. Based on your campaign goals, Meta's AI matches ads to the people most likely to act. It can be applied as an 'end-to-end' solution or used in specific parts of the campaign setup if you want more control. Read 'Meta Advantage+' from Meta.

RETARGETING ADS

Most customers won't buy the first time they see your website or product. Retargeting ads are designed to gently remind them to come back.

Retargeting ads use tracking pixels (like the Meta Pixel or Google Tag) to show ads to people who've already visited your site or engaged with your content. Instead of spending money on cold audiences, you're focusing on people who've already shown interest. Check out chapter 1: Getting Started with AI Marketing Tools for more info on setting up tracking pixels.

Depending on your platform of choice, AI can help with the challenging process of developing ad creative— even adding further personalization for different audience segments. Instead of showing everyone the same ad, AI can automatically generate tailored versions using different images, headlines or calls-to-action depending on what the person viewed previously.



It can also run small variations of ads at once, figure out which ones perform best and push more budget toward the top performers.

For example, a home cleaning service sets up a retargeting campaign for visitors who clicked the 'Book now' button but didn't finish scheduling.

With AI's help:

- One person sees an ad that says "Still thinking it over? Book your first clean today and save 20%"
- Another sees a customer testimonial ad, showing before-and-after photos
- AI monitors which approach gets better clicks and automatically shifts spend to the higher-performing creative

BUDGET OPTIMIZATION

One of the trickiest – and scariest – parts of running ads is figuring out how much to spend and where to spend it. Should you put more money into Facebook, or is Google Search bringing in better leads? Do you increase the budget for an ad that's performing well, or spread your spend across different campaigns?

This is where AI really shines. Instead of manually adjusting numbers every day, modern ad platforms use smart bidding and budget optimization to do the thinking for you.

AI can help with budgeting by:

- Making real-time adjustments: AI can automatically increase spend on ads or audiences that are working and cut back on ones that aren't
- Applying smarter targeting: Platforms learn which types of people are most likely to click, call or buy and they prioritize showing ads to those audiences
- Create better return on ad spend: By putting dollars where they'll have the most impact, AI helps your limited budget stretch further

For example, a personal training business launches ads on both Google Search and Instagram. At first, the budget is split evenly. After a week, AI notices Instagram Stories are driving more sign-ups at a lower ad cost. Instead of you needing to monitor and adjust, the platform automatically shifts more budget to Stories. This maximizes results without extra time or guesswork.





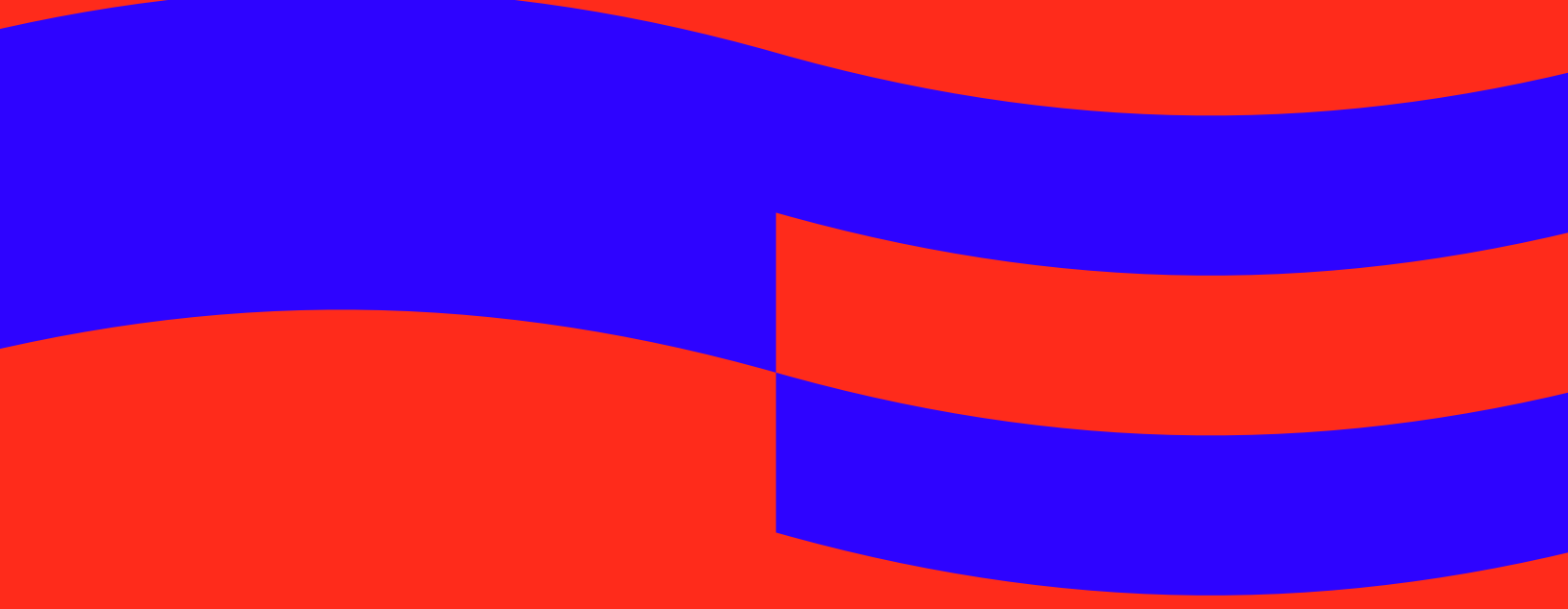
TOOLS TO TRY

Meta Ads Manager (facebook.com/business/tools/ads-manager)

- Starting platform for all Meta ads, free to use tools – just pay your advertising spend
- Set up, monitor, test and adjust campaigns from desktop or the mobile app for on-the-go insights
- Meta's AI advertising tools are only available through the Meta Advantage+ suite and only optimize across Facebook, Instagram and Facebook Audience Network (FAN) (paid service)

AdRoll (adroll.com)

- Consolidated digital advertising platform for display, native, video and connected TV ads
- AI tools make predictions to improve ad performance, reach engaged audiences and give tailored recommendations on your ad campaigns
- 'Pay as you go' package requires a minimum daily spend of \$5 and minimum daily budget of \$10 to launch a campaign. This tier does not include social media advertising. Costs increase for managed services and more ad coverage



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05

**CONTENT CREATION &
BLOGGING**

CONTENT CREATION & BLOGGING

Creating valuable content is one of the best ways to attract new customers and build trust with your audience. Blog posts, articles and guides can show off your expertise, answer common questions and improve your visibility in search results.

The challenge? Writing takes time, and it's not everyone's strongest skill. From brainstorming topics, to structuring your post, to polishing the final draft so it reflects your brand voice, AI can step in to make content creation easier and more effective. Used well, it can help you generate fresh ideas, draft outlines and even create full posts that you can then edit and refine.

In this chapter we'll look at three areas where AI can smooth the process:

1. Generating blog topics and outlines
2. Writing the content (and adding the human touch)
3. SEO-optimized writing



GENERATING BLOG TOPICS & OUTLINES

One of the hardest parts of blogging is simply deciding what to write about. Staring at a blank page wastes time and makes it easy to give up before you've even started.

Instead of starting from scratch, AI can help:

- Suggest topics tailored to your niche
- Create ideas for seasonal, holiday or trending posts
- Design structured outlines with a logical flow, headings and subheadings

As always, AI's suggestions are only as good as the prompt you put in. The more information and direction you provide, the more appropriate its ideas will be. Use the tool below to add more structure to your AI planning.

AI CONTENT PLANNER

Goals: What do I want my content to achieve? (e.g. attract new leads, educate customers, boost SEO, built trust)

Target audience: Who am I writing for? What do they care about or struggle with?

Format & channel: Blog post, guide, checklist, or video script? Will I repurpose this into social posts or email content?

Exclusions: Topics, phrases or angles to avoid (e.g. too salesy, off-brand topics)

Tone/brand voice: The way you sound when you communicate (e.g. warm and friendly, professional and expert, playful and witty etc.)

Use your answers above to complete the AI prompts below, then insert into ChatGPT or a similar tool.

"You are a content strategist for a <description> business. You want to achieve <goal>. Your target audience is <description> and they care about <key motivators>. Your content will be posted on <format & channel>. Your content should not <exclusions>. It should sound <tone/brand voice>."

- "Generate 4-5 key content themes that suit this brand and its audiences."
- "Suggest 10 blog post ideas that provide helpful advice, answer common questions, and show my expertise."
- "Create an outline for a 500-word article titled <headline>. Include an introduction, 3 main points with short explanations, and a conclusion with a call-to-action."

WRITING THE CONTENT

AI can be a huge time-saver when it comes to writing content. It can take your idea or outline and turn it into a draft in minutes, which you can then shape into something that feels true to your business. The key is to use AI as a starting point – not the final product.



'Hallucinations' are a risky element of content creation with AI. As a rule, if you don't know a fact already or can't learn or verify it with a quick web search, it's best not to include it in your content. At the end of the day, your content should reflect your expertise – not that of a computer or worse still, made up facts.

DOS AND DON'TS OF WRITING WITH AI

DOs	DON'Ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use AI to expand your outline into full sections, giving you a first draft to work with• Ask for multiple variations of a paragraph or headline to compare options• Use it to make editing suggestions on your own writing• Use it for the 'boring bits' like meta descriptions, FAQs or summaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Copy and paste AI text without editing• Let AI decide your tone or style – it won't know your brand voice unless you tell it• Skip fact-checking. AI can sometimes "hallucinate" details that sound convincing but aren't true.



AI can never replicate the true human touch in storytelling.

- Consider injecting personality through personal stories, local references or customer examples that AI wouldn't know.
- Simplify formal, stiff language so it feels natural and approachable.
- Stay authentic and only use words or phrases you'd actually say to a customer.

SEO-OPTIMIZED WRITING

Great content is important, but only if people can find it. Search engine optimization (SEO) refers to the steps you can take to make your content discoverable by search engines like Google.

AI can help with SEO through:

- Keyword research: suggesting keywords and phrases your audience is actually searching for
- On-page optimization: generating meta descriptions, title tags, and alt text for images
- Readability checks: suggesting edits to make your content clearer, shorter, and more user friendly.
- Content scoring: grading your draft against SEO best practices and showing what's missing.
- Some AI tools are specifically designed for SEO optimization, including Surfer SEO, Frase and Clearscope.



TOOLS TO TRY

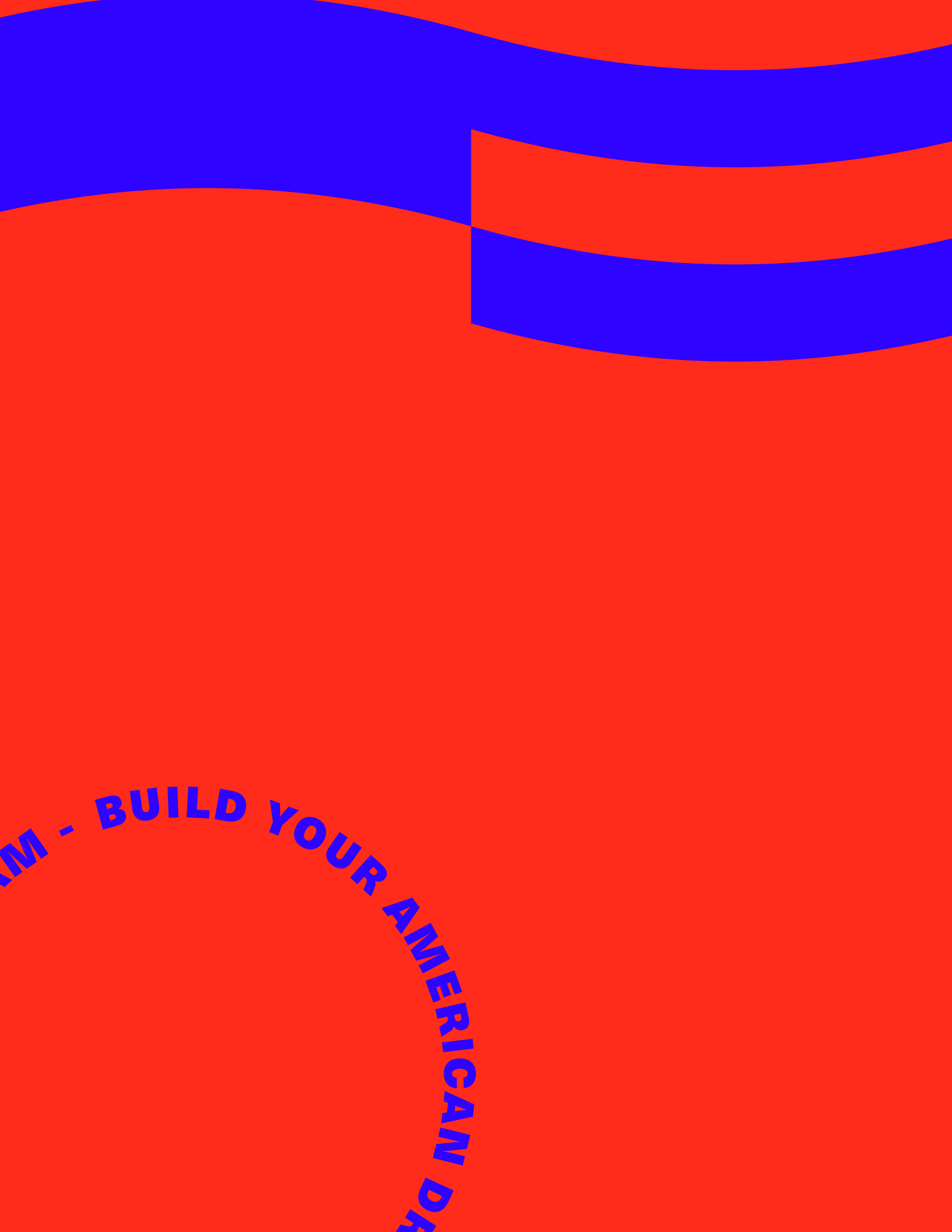
Ready to get started? Here are some AI tools for automating email marketing to check out.

ChatGPT (chatgpt.com)

- Generates blog ideas, outlines and full drafts to kickstart your writing
- Flexible prompts let you tailor tone, structure and length – the more you train it, the better it will become
- Hybrid tool – free plan with limits, paid options for advanced features

Jasper (jasper.ai)

- Designed for marketers, with templates for various content types including blog posts, product descriptions, marketing copy and more
- Learns about your business to improve its suggestions and provide insights
- Integrates with other tools like Gmail, Wordpress, Docs or LinkedIn
- Paid service with \$69/month fee for Pro package or customized Business package



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06

**CUSTOMER INSIGHTS &
ANALYTICS**

CUSTOMER INSIGHTS & ANALYTICS

Good marketing relies on knowing what's working and what isn't. The more you understand your customers, the easier it is to make smart decisions about where to spend your time and money.

Unfortunately for small businesses, data can be overwhelming. Luckily, today's tools don't just track numbers, they interpret them, highlight patterns and even explain them to you in simple terms so you can act quickly.

In this chapter we'll look at two key areas where AI can simplify analytics and give you clearer insights into your customers:

1. Google Analytics and user attributes
2. AI dashboards and reports



GOOGLE ANALYTICS & USER ATTRIBUTES

When your website is set up correctly (see Chapter 1), every visitor will leave behind clues about what brought them there and what they did once they arrived. Tools like Google Analytics collect this data so you can understand them better and improve your marketing.

Analytics data can tell you things like where your customers came from (clicked on a social post or email link, searched on Google etc.), who your audience is (age, location, device type and interests), and what they do on your site (which pages they visit, how long they stay, if they take action like filling out a form or making a purchase).

This helps you see which marketing channels are actually driving results, what kind of content your audience finds useful, and where they're dropping off – so you can fix issues that cost you leads or sales.

AI tools in platforms like Google Analytics simplify the wall of data by offering plain-language summaries, highlighting trends and suggesting actions you might take, such as improving a page with high traffic but low conversions.

AI DASHBOARDS & REPORTS

Even when you have the right tracking in place, making sense of the data can be a challenge. AI-powered dashboards take away the overwhelm by providing plain-language insights, automated highlights, custom views and time savings.

They help teams move from reactive to proactive decision-making by surfacing trends, flagging anomalies, and suggesting next steps, enabling faster decisions and continuous optimization.



TOOLS TO TRY

Hotjar (hotjar.com)

- Shows how users interact with your site through heatmaps, session recordings and behavior tracking – to reveal where users click, scroll or get stuck
- Adds detail to your data by collecting feedback surveys and other information to understand customer behavior
- Hybrid tool with limited Free plan and paid options for enhanced features

Looker Studio (lookerstudio.google.com)

- Free tool from Google that creates custom data dashboards and visualizations
- Connects with a range of data sources including Google products, databases, and social media platforms
- Optional paid Looker Studio Pro product for larger enterprises



Data only matters if you use it. Don't get lost in numbers – convert this information into action. We've provided some examples below.

Instead of 'session duration increased 22%' > you get 'visitors are staying longer on your services page this month.'

What to do about it: Think about why that page is working – is the content clearer, more engaging, or answering a common question? Apply those same strengths to other pages on your site.

Instead of spending hours trying to spot patterns in charts > you get automatic highlights like 'traffic from Instagram doubled last week'

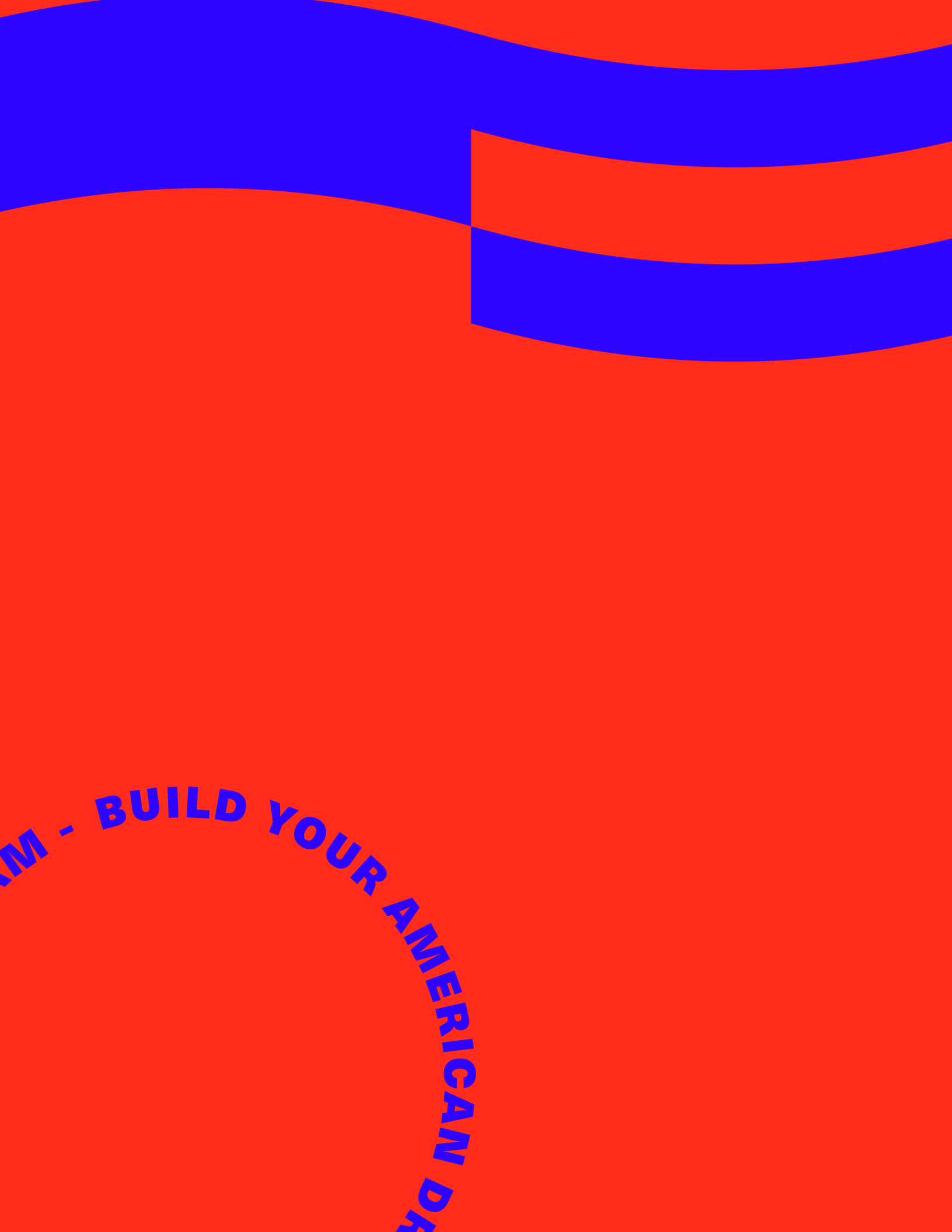
What to do about it: If one channel is suddenly bringing more visitors, consider putting more effort into it – posting more often, running ads or repurposing top-performing content.

Instead of a generic dashboard packed with every possible metric > you get a simple view that focuses on what matters to your business.

What to do about it: Decide on 2-3 key metrics that link directly to your goals, such as bookings, sales, or email sign-ups. Check these regularly and ignore the 'vanity metrics' that don't drive results.

Instead of manually creating reports from multiple platforms > you get an automated report delivered straight to your inbox in plain language.

What to do about it: Schedule these reports to arrive on a regular basis, such as weekly or monthly. Use them as a quick check-in to guide decisions like adjusting your ad spend or planning content.



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PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

By now, you've seen how AI can support your marketing across social media, email, ads, content, and analytics. This is where it gets exciting: putting the tools to work and watching them free up your time and energy.

It's not about doing everything at once; it's about building momentum. Start small, keep it manageable, and let AI take more off your plate as you grow.

To make this simple, we've created a 30–60–90 day check list you can use as a roadmap. Think of it as a step-by-step checklist: start with the basics, layer in new tools, and then refine what's working.



DAYS 1-30: BUILD THE FOUNDATIONS

- Choose 1–2 AI tools to start with (e.g., ChatGPT for content, Buffer for scheduling).
- Set up basic data tracking (Google Analytics, Tag Manager, Facebook/Meta Pixel).
- Automate one quick win (e.g., schedule a week’s worth of social posts, create a welcome email series).
- Test your setup to make sure everything is collecting data correctly.
- Note 2–3 metrics you’ll track from the beginning (e.g., email sign-ups, website visits, social engagement).

DAYS 31-60: EXPAND YOUR USAGE

- Add 1–2 more tools to your stack (e.g., an email platform or design tool).
- Build your first automation workflow (e.g., new blog post > newsletter > social post).
- Begin segmenting your email list with AI suggestions (active vs inactive, interests, purchase history).
- Create your first dashboard or report to track results across platforms.
- Adjust campaigns based on early insights (e.g., post more where engagement is growing).

DAYS 61-90: OPTIMIZE & PERSONALIZE

- Review what’s working well and scale it up (double down on the channels showing the best results).
- Add personalization to emails, ads, or chatbots (e.g., tailored subject lines or targeted offers).
- Experiment with one advanced feature (A/B testing, AI-generated creative).
- Refine your content calendar using AI topic suggestions tied to customer data.
- Lock in a routine: set aside time weekly or monthly to review reports and tweak campaigns.

QUICK AI TOOL REFERENCE GUIDE

Planning & Integration	Social Media	Email Marketing
<p>Zapier Connects apps and automates workflows between them.</p> <p>Make (formerly Integromat) Advanced workflow builder for automations.</p> <p>HubSpot CRM platform with built-in marketing and automation features.</p> <p>Notion AI Content planning, note-taking, and AI-assisted productivity.</p>	<p>Buffer Schedule posts and use AI Assistant for captions and ideas.</p> <p>Later Visual content calendar and post scheduler.</p> <p>Planable Collaborative content calendar for teams.</p> <p>Copy.ai AI tool for writing captions and marketing copy.</p> <p>Anyword AI for ad copy and social captions, optimized for performance.</p> <p>Hashtagify, RiteTag, Flick Tools for generating and testing hashtag strategies.</p> <p>ManyChat, MobileMonkey Chatbots for automating social DMs.</p>	<p>Mailchimp Email campaigns, automations, and AI subject line assistant.</p> <p>Brevo (Sendinblue) Email and SMS marketing with strong automation features.</p> <p>ConvertKit Email marketing designed for creators and service businesses.</p> <p>Jasper Templates for email copy, subject lines, and campaigns.</p> <p>ChatGPT Drafting and personalizing email content.</p>

Paid Search & Advertising	Content & Blogging	Customer Insights & Analytics
<p>Google Ads (Smart Campaigns & Smart Bidding) Automated targeting, bidding, and campaign optimization.</p> <p>Meta Ads (Advantage+ & Budget Optimization) Automated ad targeting, testing, and budget allocation.</p> <p>AdRoll Retargeting across web, social, and email.</p>	<p>ChatGPT Generate blog ideas, outlines, and drafts.</p> <p>Jasper Marketing-focused templates for blog writing.</p> <p>Ubersuggest Keyword and content topic suggestions.</p> <p>Surfer SEO, Frase, Clearscope AI SEO optimization tools for blogs and articles.</p> <p>Canva Easy-to-use design tool for blog graphics, visuals, and infographics.</p>	<p>Google Analytics (GA4) Website traffic and user behavior tracking.</p> <p>Google Tag Manager Manage tracking codes without editing website code.</p> <p>Meta Pixel (Facebook Pixel) Tracks website actions to connect with ad performance.</p> <p>Hotjar Heatmaps, session recordings, and user feedback tools.</p> <p>Microsoft Clarity Free behavior analytics similar to Hotjar.</p> <p>Looker Studio (Google Data Studio) Build custom dashboards and reports.</p> <p>Plecto Real-time dashboards with gamification features.</p> <p>DashThis Simplified, customizable dashboards and reports.</p>

AI & MARKETING GLOSSARY

AI (Artificial Intelligence) – Technology that can process information, recognize patterns, and generate content or insights in ways that feel human-like.

Automation – Setting up tools or systems to perform repetitive marketing tasks (like sending emails or posting to social media) without manual effort.

Brand Voice – The personality of your business in writing; the way you “sound” in emails, blogs, and social posts.

Chatbot – An automated tool that can answer common customer questions or guide them through booking/purchasing online.

Content Calendar – A schedule that shows what content you’ll post, where, and when — often used for social media or blogs.

Conversion – When someone takes a desired action (like buying, booking, or signing up) as a result of your marketing.

CRM (Customer Relationship Management) – A system for storing and managing customer information, like contact details and interactions.

Dashboard – A visual display of data from one or more marketing tools, showing results at a glance.

Drip Campaign – A series of automated emails sent over time, often used to welcome new subscribers, follow up on interest, or re-engage inactive customers.

Engagement – How people interact with your content online — likes, comments, shares, or clicks.

Heatmap – A visual tool (used in analytics platforms like Hotjar) that shows where visitors click, scroll, or spend the most time on a webpage.

Keyword – A word or phrase that people type into search engines; using the right keywords helps your content show up in search results.

Meta Description – A short summary of a webpage that appears in search engine results, written to encourage people to click.

Pixel (Facebook/Meta Pixel) – A small piece of code you place on your website to track visitor behavior and connect it to your ads.

Retargeting Ads – Ads shown to people who have already interacted with your business (like visiting your website), reminding them to return and take action.

Segmentation – Dividing your email list or audience into smaller groups based on behavior, interests, or stage in the customer journey.

SEO (Search Engine Optimization) – The process of improving your website and content so it ranks higher in search engines and is easier for customers to find.

Smart Campaigns – Automated ad campaigns (from platforms like Google or Meta) that use AI to handle targeting, bidding, and placements for you.

Workflow – A series of automated actions that happen in sequence (e.g., publish a blog > email subscribers > post on social media).

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