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The Pet Biz Blueprint

Transform Your Passion for Animals
into a Profitable Pet Business



By Lesley Huntley



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Hey, I'm Lesley, Author of the Pet Biz Blueprint!

It's nice to virtually meet you! Before we dive into this workbook, you might like to know a bit about me.

Who am I to be helping you with this?!

Well, in early 2003, I started out selling my own digital products online. The websites I created were no works of art, as the design was secondary to providing the information visitors needed to make a buying decision. In 2007 in true digital nomad style, I created a house sitting website and spent two years on a pet sitting tour of Australia and Canada.

In early 2009 we found ourselves pregnant (surprise!), so we cut our lifestyle short to settle back down in New Zealand.

Leading up to this point, I'd heard about online marketers getting great results for small business owners. As a brand new stay-at-home mum, I was super keen to start using my online marketing skills to help local business owners build their businesses.

I had no choice but to up my design game, so I learnt to create beautiful websites in the up-and-coming platform, Wordpress.

I helped over 100 business owners with their branding, design, and online marketing up until 2014 when my body started to warn me that sitting inside running my business designing websites beside the pantry all day, wasn't doing me any favours!

I decided it was now or never to start my heart business, embracing fun, sunshine, and movement while playing outside with dogs. I did this for the next 10 years. I'd never been so happy in my work!

Amongst other major changes I made, I welcomed an organic, whole-food, plant-based diet into my life. I now hand-make delicious dog treats with nutritious ingredients that pet parents can feel happy about feeding to their dear friends.

Over the past 10 years, I've had many business and health ups and downs, but I'm still going strong! 🙌 However, as much as I love making treats, I miss helping business owners with their marketing.

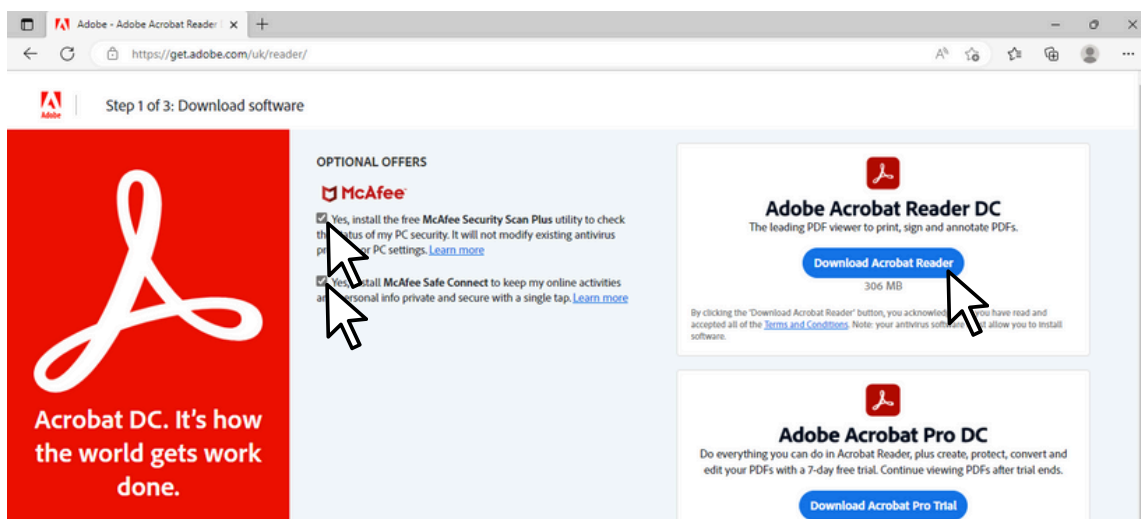
While many business owners cringe at the thought of marketing, I absolutely love it.

I get *such* a kick out of getting a business owner to the top of Google. I love making a few tweaks to a website and hearing stories of increased profits from day one. I'm now ready to use this and everything else I've learned to start and grow my pet care company, to help fellow Petpreneurs (like you!), build successful pet businesses too.

I feel truly blessed that you've chosen me to walk beside you on your journey to starting a pet care business. I'm here for you, and I'm looking forward to celebrating your every success!



Editing and Saving Your Work

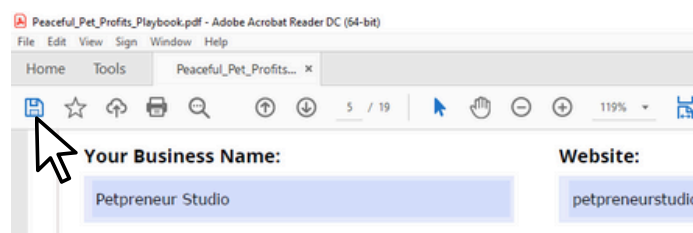


You have a couple of options for editing and saving the Pet Biz Blueprint, the safest option being with the Adobe Acrobat Reader. **Adobe bundle McAfee Antivirus with their download, so be sure to deselect both boxes to ensure they don't install at the same time.**

Once you have the Acrobat Reader installed, open the software, click **File > Open** from the menu and navigate to where you downloaded this PDF. You can then edit from within the software.

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Phase One

Getting Started

"The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step"

— Lao Tzu

Brainstorm Your Business Idea

"The creation of a thousand forests is in one acorn."
– Ralph Waldo Emerson

So you've decided you want to start a pet business. Go you!! It was the best decision I'd ever made to start my heart business working with animals. It was something I wanted to do my whole life, and once I had, I wondered why I'd waited so long.

The first thing I did, before I decided exactly what pet business I would start, was to brainstorm ideas on how best my skills would translate to the perfect pet business for me.

One of the first courses I took when I left school was baking (and I love cooking), so dog treats was an option for me to think about. A few years later I studied photography, so I mulled over becoming a pet photographer.

When brainstorming ideas for your new pet business, what works best is to really exhaust your mind of everything you can think of that you're good at. Coming up with as many ideas as possible will lead you off in directions you may not have thought of. Try not to limit yourself at this point. This step is to just get out as many ideas as come to mind without looking back.

Try not to expand on or judge any of the ideas at this stage, just write anything that comes up, no matter how silly you initially think it is. We're looking for quantity over quality at this point. This way, you can really begin to build up a picture of all the ways your particular skill set can best help people with their pets.

Brainstorming Worksheet

What unique skills do I have that I love doing?

What am I most passionate about?

What problems of my own have I solved?

A problem I would solve for the world would be:

Who would I most like to work with?

How do I best want to serve them?

Drilling Down

"Ideas are a commodity. Execution of them is not."

– Michael Dell

Your Chosen Business Idea:

Am I motivated and passionate about this idea?

What is the difficulty/time/effort level?

Will I be able to commit to making this work?

Do I have the skills or knowledge required?

If no, will I be able to commit to gaining them?

Will I make enough to support my lifestyle?

Can I do this on my own or need help?

Do I have the funds to start this business?

Does this business match my values and beliefs?

What are my strengths?

What are my weaknesses?

What resources do I already have?

What can the people I know help me with?

Who else is doing this successfully?

Who do they mainly serve?

Getting started goal (I will be set up and ready to launch by):

Choosing a Business Name

"If you don't build your own dreams, someone will hire you to build theirs."

– Tony Gaskins

So now you've brainstormed what sort of business you would like to start, it's time to start thinking about a name that best represents what you wish to do, and how you wish to do it.

I wrestled with where to include this aspect of starting your business in this guide, as this exercise is best done once you have completed the next two segments. However, I had decided on my business name before I even got started! So this may be something you work on now, or come back to later. Your business name may also evolve along the way.

The thing is, when I first started my pet business, I'd spent the past 10 years being a low-cost website provider. This time around, I wanted to offer a premium service and charge accordingly. I started VIPets - First Class Care for Very Important Pets.

I set up trading as VIPets Dog Walking and Pet Sitting, and registered VIPets Ltd as a company. Now that I have moved into making organic, plant-based treats, www.VIPets.co.nz still works. You want to choose something that allows you to make a transition later in your business if need be.

I also wouldn't recommend adding a city name, as it's possible you may move. By the same token, using your own name could pose problems should you decide to sell your business in the future. If your business name is taken, you may be tempted to use a misspelling. You will most likely just send traffic to the correctly spelled business in this case.

Your life experiences may have led you to the perfect name for your business right now, or you can come back to this exercise later.

The name I have chosen for my business is:

Does this name leave room for growth/change?

Is this business name memorable or clever?

Is it simple and short?

Does it tell a story?

Is it easy to pronounce and spell?

Is the domain name available? List it here:

Is the Instagram @handle available? List it here:

Is the Facebook @handle available? List it here:

Any other platforms you need to be on?

List alternative options here:

What do friends/family think of the name?

Your Services

"Never get so busy making a living that you forget to make a life."
– Dolly Parton

When you're first starting out, it's tempting to offer every service you can possibly think of to potentially start bringing in revenue. I started out offering every dog walking and pet sitting service under the sun. My laundry list of services included: one-on-one dog walking, group dog walking, individual doggy days out, overnight pet sitting, dog and cat visits, puppy visits, in-home doggy day care, pet taxi, small animal cage and fish tank cleaning, plus all house sitting services. Phew!

I ended up working 364 days a year, doing up to 16 visits a day. Needless to say, my work/life balance was way out of whack.

While it is tempting to try to cover all your bases, trying to be everything to everyone was a path to overwhelm and burnout for me. I was working *all* the time. I ended up making the decision to drop all services except daily dog adventures. I then became the go-to dog adventure company, finally allowing me to charge premium prices.

I recommend niching down as much as possible to 1-4 services (at most) within one narrow range (dog walking, dog grooming, pet sitting etc.). This way, you can be known for this one thing, positioning yourself as the go-to for this service in your market. We'll discuss premium positioning in later chapters.

Service 01

Price

How am I uniquely suited to this service?

Client benefits and problems this solves:

Service 02

Price

How am I uniquely suited to this service?

Client benefits and problems this solves:

Service 03

Price

How am I uniquely suited to this service?

Client benefits and problems this solves:

Service 04

Price

How am I uniquely suited to this service?

Client benefits and problems this solves:

Getting the Experience You Need

"Be undeniably good. No marketing effort or social media buzzword can be a substitute for that."
– Anthony Volodkin

There is nothing more important when starting a pet care business, than getting the experience you need to keep the pets in your care safe. The safety and care of the pets is paramount, they deserve nothing less than for you to have done all you can to ensure their safety while they are in your care.

You'll also need to have at least a basic understanding of dog body language, so you can detect the subtle changes in a dog's behaviour that communicates how they're feeling.

Pet first aid course:

Local or online animal behaviour course:

Pet businesses I could get work experience with:

Professional in-person meet-ups I could join:

Paid online courses I could take:

Every pet professional should undergo pet first aid training and have put staff through the same course. These are usually day-long courses that empower pet care providers with the knowledge to handle any emergency situation.

When I first started my pet care company, I already had extensive volunteering experience, two years full-time pet sitting, then started volunteering at Dogwatch. You can also offer to do work experience with a pet care company in your niche.

Booking date:

Start date:

Volunteering organisations to reach out to:

Online professional groups I could sign up with:

Free online courses I could take:

Assembling Your Business Team

"Growth is never by mere chance; it is the result of forces working together."

– James Cash Penney

Once you are on the path to gaining the experience required to provide the safest service for the pets in your care, it's time to research the appropriate business requirements for your city, state, or country. All that will be required for this will be to do a simple Google search of "how to start a business in [your city]." The first listing for me is a government website with a series of 10 steps that tell you all you need to know about becoming a sole trader, starting a partnership or registering a company.

While you are there, you will want to look into any specific regulations to run your pet business in your city. There are no requirements for dog walkers or pet sitters where I live, but other pet care businesses require licenses to be compliant.

What I did then was to speak to an accountant about next steps. Mine is now a trusted advisor. If you have no experience with doing your own taxes, I would recommend this as your first port of call.

Accountant details:

Community law advisors:

Pet business forms, policies and contracts:

As part of the service they provide, they can walk you through your options and help you set up with accounting software to track expenses. Ask family and friends, or research a small business accountant and check reviews to see if you're a good fit.

The next professional I spoke to was an insurance broker I knew from networking meetings I attended as a web designer. She researched and found the best option for public liability insurance for my dog walking and pet sitting business. I chose to work with a broker, as they also go into bat for you with the company should you need to make a claim.

Lastly, you will need to do some research on the best business bank for your needs, then organise to meet someone to advise you on next steps. You need to have a separate bank account for business anyway, so I would recommend reaching out to establish a relationship with someone from the bank, so you can liaise with them on all things banking.

Insurance company or broker details:

Bank and business banker details:

Pet business marketing professionals:



Phase Two

Business Philosophy

"The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams."

— Eleanor Roosevelt

Finding Your "Why" (or Purpose)

"People don't buy what you do, they buy why you do it"

– Simon Sinek



As Simon Sinek points out in his powerful Ted Talk, people are more likely to work with a business whose beliefs align with their own. People care deeply about your motivations, passions, and visions for the future of your business.

In Simon's book Start With Why, he suggests that your *why* and *how* are processed in the limbic system, the part of the brain associated with emotional responses. This is also the part of the brain that processes story. The *what* resides in a different part of the brain, known as the neo-cortex.

You may have heard the phrase "people buy on emotion and justify with logic." Well, according to Harvard Business School professor Gerald Zaltman, **95%** of our purchase decisions take place unconsciously. Due to the strong emotional connection people have to their pets, I would say that figure is even higher in the pet care industry.

When people connect with your story, you're able to shortcut straight to this deeper emotional core of their brain. To complete this process, their brain then sends that decision via an emotion to the conscious mind, which then justifies it with logic.

Finding your why not only lets you appeal directly to the subconscious mind of clients with similar values, it allows you to live a life of greater passion.

1). It frames your business and life's purpose.

Knowing your why gives you the reason to get up and keep moving forward every day. It gives you clarity and allows you to connect more deeply with what you're passionate about.

2). It promotes enthusiasm and strengthens your commitment when times get tough.

Simon discovered the idea for *Start With Why* at a time when he had lost any passion for his work. That's when he realised the importance of understanding your purpose, in business and in life. And let's face it, running a pet business is not for the faint-hearted. When you know your why, it gives you the energy to reach just that little bit further when you didn't feel like you had anything left to give. Finding your why can also restore your passion for your pet business if burnout has set in, and you're feeling like throwing in the towel.

3). It gives you focus.

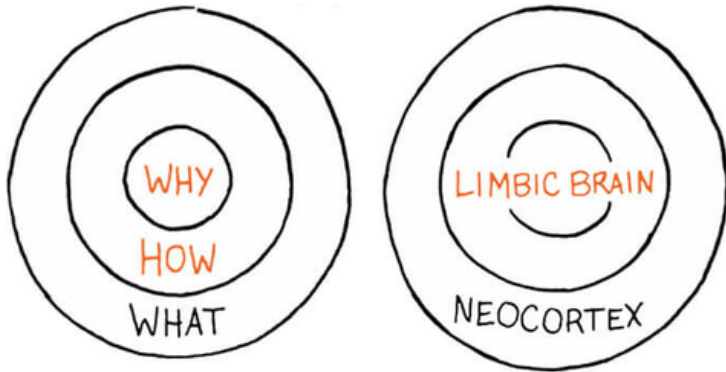
In a world that is ever-increasingly built on distractions, knowing your why empowers you to remain fixed on your goals, and less tempted by shiny objects that divert you from your path.

4). It's inspiring to your team.

People want to feel like their work matters. When they are able to embrace your core why, they feel like they are making a difference.

How to Find Your "Why"

"Tell me a fact and I'll learn. Tell me the truth and I'll believe.
But tell me a story and it will live in my heart forever."
– Indian Proverb

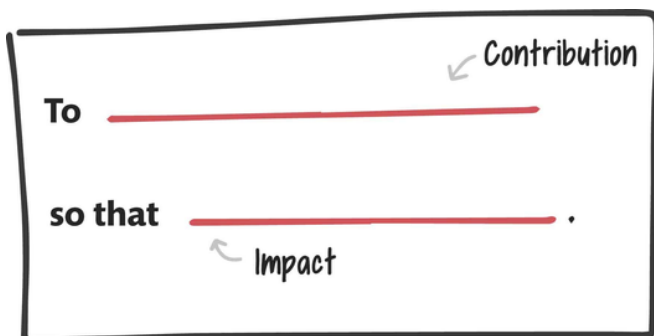


Source: *"Find Your Why"* by Simon Sinek

So as we've learned, our brains are hard-wired to identify with stories. Sharing stories is what connects members within any group, giving them a sense of belonging. Finding and sharing your why and how helps you create powerful messaging that centres around what you *stand for*, instead of what you *sell*.

But how do you find your why?

Simon suggests formulating your *why* statement in a **to...** (contribution) **so that...** (impact) format. The first line represents the contribution you make to the lives of pets and their parents. The second represents the impact of that contribution.



Source: *"Find Your Why"* by Simon Sinek

Start by making a list of the contributions you make to the lives of others or the animals you care for. It helps to think of specific stories of when you have felt most proud of your work. For example, my *why* statement for VIPets Ltd is as follows:

VIPets Ltd Purpose Statement

To ensure dogs live longer, feel loved and are better behaved through training adventures, so pet parents can enjoy extra quality time with their special friends.

List the contributions you make here (one per line):

Next, list the impact those contributions have. This is what your product or service allows the pet or parent to experience or become:

Other example purpose statements include:

Mera Pet Food

To produce ecologically high-quality pet food for a species-appropriate nutrition of dogs and cats, which enables a long and healthy animal life.

Happy Howies

Our passion is making healthy dog treats and partnering with our customers to grow a sustainable company while improving Detroit through community support and job growth.

Merge your favourite lines into your final WHY:

Finding Your "How" (or Core Values)

"Open your arms to change, but don't let go of your values"

– Dalai Lama

If your *why* is at the heart of your golden circle of guiding principles, your core values represent the *how* you run your business.

Your business core values are the principles that guide you every day. They represent your highest priorities in the day-to-day running of your business.

As most pet business owners are solo or run a small team, these principles usually reflect their own personal life values.

I'm sure you've heard the phrase; "people buy from those they know, like and trust." The same goes for businesses they respect and can relate to. By establishing your core values, you will connect with clients who share the same value system.

Your core values should answer the following:

- What does my business stand for?
- What does business success look like to me?
- How do I show my clients I care?
- Why would clients choose me?
- What habits do I value the most?
- What are my core competencies?

I've put together [a list of brand words](#) to help you brainstorm your core values, you will find that [here](#). You can also Google "brand adjectives" for more.

Some core values examples include:

Dogtopia

We love life unconditionally like a dog
We stay loyal to our pack
We chase the absolute highest standards of safety
We play to our full potential
We treat every day like it's our most exciting day ever

There are a couple of ways you can format your core values, either with definitions like The **Cat Butler UK**:

The Cat Butler UK

- **Reliability:** Our commitment and dedication ensure that our clients can trust our ability to provide the best cat care. We will always conduct our services professionally. Our clients can be sure that their cat and their home are in safe and capable hands.
- **Integrity:** Our clients and their cats' needs are our top priorities. We understand that their cat is a member of their family and, we pledge to treat their cat as a member of our own.
- **Excellence:** It is not enough to merely meet expectations. We strive to exceed standards with the quality of service we provide.
- **Caring:** This is much more than a business to us. Taking care of cats is our life's passion. Our clients will notice the excellent and professional service that we provide and the genuine care and love that we put into our work every day.
- **Community:** We are proactive in our communities, volunteering and supporting the voiceless and homeless cats and other animals.

You can also simply list your core values:

SPCA NZ

We are One
We are Kind
We are Brave
We Thrive
We Serve

Format your core value statement here:

Your Business Vision

"Nothing gives a person inner wholeness and peace like a distinct understanding of where they are going."

– Thomas Oppong

If your why is at the centre of the Golden Circle, the how are your core values, your mission defines what you do and your vision outlines where you are going.

Your vision statement is your plan for the future and what you want your business to become. Your mission statement explains how you will get there. Together, they form a roadmap for your business.

Your Vision Statement

...outlines your plans for the future, giving you purpose, meaning and direction.

It's a motivational tool that creates a mental image of what you wish to achieve for your business. It communicates values and long-term goals, giving you and your employees' direction for the future.

Your vision statement will influence all long-term business decisions, so it's here you want to dream big.

Your vision statement should instantly answer these questions:

- What is your purpose for your business?
- What is your dream for your business?
- What problems do you want to solve?
- Who do you want to inspire change in?

Your vision statement helps you keep sight of your future goals and plans. It ensures you and your employees are all working towards a clear vision, which acts as a unifying force.

Examples include:

Bella and Duke

We champion pet health and wellbeing, challenging the status quo so that pet-centred, species-appropriate nutrition becomes the natural choice for every pet owner.

Dogtopia:

To Enhance the Joy of Pet Parenthood and Enable Dogs to Positively Change Our World

A Closer Bond

Our vision at A Closer Bond is to become world-class leaders and a pet parents' first choice in the Pet Care Industry, providing a consistently exceptional and personalized experience for our clients, their pets, and our employees.

Dogsmith

Every DogSmith will work toward a world where people and their pets live together to the mutual benefit of each. Through our efforts, skills and training, we can significantly reduce the number of unwanted pets and provide abused, neglected, and abandoned pets an opportunity to find their "forever home".

Pet Biz Studio:

To be the best possible marketing resource for pet business owners so they can concentrate on providing the best service for pets.

Craft your vision statement here:

Your Business Mission

Your Mission Statement

...is a short, clear description of what your business is trying to bring about in the world.

It's a powerful tool to attract both dream clients and employees into your world. People who share the values in your mission statement will be immediately attracted to working with you.

Your mission statement should instantly answer these questions:

1. What do you do and who do you serve?
2. How do you serve them?
3. What value do you bring?
4. What are the stakes of you not succeeding?

Your mission statement forges the direction of your business. Having a solid mission gives you and your team focus. It should concisely articulate what you do and why.

Examples include:

SPCA International:

To advance the safety and well-being of animals.

Move your Doggie

To enrich the lives of pets and their families by providing excellent pet care, peace of mind trust and security. Our goal is to be the preferred choice for alternative pet care solutions by providing a variety of affordable pet care services.

The Dogsmith

The DogSmith exists to enhance the lives of pets and their owners by improving their relationship and the quality of the life they share, through;

- providing professional support and training to Pet Dog owners.
- supporting and assisting animal shelters and rescue organizations to minimize the number of unwanted animals.
- offering affordable and professional care to family pets so that pet ownership is never a burden.

Volhard Dog Nutrition

Our mission as nutritional consultants is to enable dogs to thrive, not just survive. We accomplish this by providing a nutritional solution that is biologically appropriate, natural, healthy and balanced. We are committed to maintaining the highest standards of quality assurance through rigorous assay testing. This ensures that we consistently deliver superior products every day.

Pet Universe

To provide innovative, high-quality, consistent, value-for-money, pet friendly health care that will make your pet want to come back again...and again.

The Unusual Pet Vets

To provide outstanding patient and client care, whilst setting a standard of excellence in the veterinary medicine and surgery of unusual pets. The team at Unusual Pet Vets take our mission statement seriously in order to better serve each and every one of our clients (and their pets).

Angels in the Making

We believe in the human-animal bond and that every dog, like every person, has a purpose. We love to work with all people and dogs, but especially those who have dogs that struggle to live in a human world, which can cause a rift in that bond. As a result of our work together, we will create teamwork and build a thriving relationship through fun and effective training, that is force free.

PetBizStudio.com:

To bring peace into the lives of pet business owners, empowering them to offer the best possible support for the pets they serve.

Craft your mission statement here:

Finding Your "Who"

"Choose your customers, choose your future."
– Seth Godin

Something I feel is absent from Simon's Golden Circle, is the **who** at the heart of the *what* you do and the *how* and *why* you do it. Due to the deep emotional bond people have with their pets, I actually feel the *who*, is perhaps even more important than the *why*, especially for anyone in the pet care industry.

If you don't know your *who* and the problems they are having, how will you know what and how to talk about to appeal to the clients you wish to attract? Or where to reach them with that content to build awareness with them about your services?

Don't get me wrong, I love Simon's work, but in my humble opinion, I just feel that in **our particular industry** especially, the *who* is arguably more important the *why*, *how* and *what* put together.

If you don't know your *who*, you'll end up casting your content marketing and advertising net far and wide on all platforms, wasting money and spreading your time and energy too thin to make any real impact.

However, once you have a picture of the pet parent who shares your same values, you can craft content, headlines, and ad copy with the exact solutions to the problems they're having.

In this exercise, I want you to start by concentrating on who your heart tells you want to work with. They may not be the most profitable clients, they may even be your most exasperating! However, it's imperative to start finding that even balance between whom you love to work with and clients that are the most profitable.

What services do you enjoy providing the most?

On a personal level, what kind of person do you most like to work with?

What are the personal values and philosophies of your personal favourite clients? Do you see any corresponding thoughts and beliefs you are drawn to in their personalities?

What do you absolutely refuse to tolerate in a client? Think of your dealbreakers – disrespect of your skills? Condescension? Cruel training tactics? This will also help you see red flags in advance.

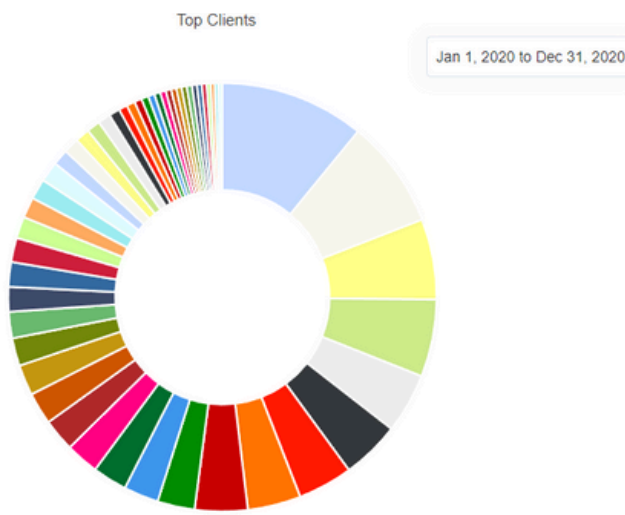
Creating Your Ideal Client Persona

Once you have worked out your why, what, and where, it's important to have a picture in your head of the pet parent who shares your same values, so you can craft content, headlines, and ad copy with the exact solutions to the problems they're having.

To start with, I want you to start by concentrating on who your heart tells you wish to work with. They may not be the most profitable clients, they may even be your most exasperating! However, it's imperative to start finding that even balance between whom you love to work with and clients that are the most profitable.

For this next exercise, I want you to actually look at real-world data within your business. If you use any kind of software, there is most likely a functionality to do this easily.

The pet care software I use is Time to Pet. I am able to go to the reporting section to get financial reports on just about anything. For example, to find out who my top clients are I can just click on *Reporting*, select *Top Clients*, enter the date range I wish to analyse (all of 2020 when I was pet sitting as well as dog walking) then click generate.



When I hover over a coloured segment, the name of the client and amount they've spent with me appears. This report for 2020 showed me my top 5 clients were all professional women, aged 35-45, home-owners, 4 had no kids at home, 4 were married, 4 from the UK, **all** (of course), deeply devoted to the health and wellbeing of their dogs.

Now that I have this picture, see how much easier it is to go about attracting more of the same people?

From accessing this data and self-analysing your heart clients, you will be able to create a fictitious overview of the ideal client you want to attract more of. You can add as much information to the profile as you like. However, a brief overview of your ideal client is better than no overview at all.

There are many ways to create client personas. The quick formula I follow to create profiles for every service I offer is as follows:

01 About your client and pet persona

Create a bio including a fictitious name ie: Dora Doodle Owner, occupation, income etc

02 What benefits are they seeking?

Next you would list the main benefits they receive from using your service

03 The process of how they found you

List all the steps they took in their path to scheduling a meeting with you

04 Previous solutions and pain points

What they've done up to this point and why that's not working for them

This is a great start when creating a fictitious persona to keep in your head when creating marketing materials that get to the heart of your ideal client's problems. However, the deeper you delve into the creation of your dream client, the better. The following worksheet will give you even more insight.

Ideal Client Worksheet

In this exercise we're looking to really hone in on one particular client, giving them a name, personality, and interests.

By getting to know who your ideal client is and how they spend their time on a daily basis, you will find it infinitely easier to attract them into your world.

Ideal Client Demographics

Ideal client fictitious name:

Gender:

Occupation:

Ethnicity:

Number and age of children:

Social media they use most:

Age:

Marital status:

Income:

Political/Religious views:

Hobbies/Interests:

How do they usually consume information?

How You Can Help Them

**What do they want in regard to your service?
What would their ultimate goal be?**

If they were able to make a wish and this problem would disappear, what would that wish be?

What results can they expect after working with you? What will their life look like?

**What are the problems they are having?
How is this impacting their life?**

How and why are you the best solution to this problem? How do you empathise with them?

What are the negative consequences they face if they don't work with you?

Ally Analysis

How to turn your competition into allies.

There's no escaping it. The pet industry is competitive. It's becoming harder to stand out in the crowd. It's hard not to compare ourselves to the competition with every move we make.

What I would like you to do with this exercise is to start to think of your competition differently. Comparing yourself to them only hurts **you**, much like holding a grudge against someone who has long forgotten you.

Yes, it's important to look at what others in your space are doing in your city, but only in a way that serves your growth. Micro-analysing their every move is a waste of your precious energy. It is much better spent focusing on what you do that makes your current customers happy, and working out ways to give them more of that.

Because I had just spent 10 years in the deeply competitive website design industry, I wanted to approach this new venture differently. I'd experienced true nastiness from web designers (like calling my clients and scaring them with fabricated issues), this time I wanted to start out by making **allies** of the leaders in our industry.

Instead of reverse engineering everything the top 3 listings in Google were doing and trying to compete with them, I looked at their services and tried to work out ways to compliment them. My main competitor only offered group walks. I wasn't experienced in handling multiple dogs, so I only offered one-on-one walks to start with. I was able to reach out and refer her all my group walk enquiries. Use this exercise to see where you can align yourself and make allies of your competition.

Ally Analysis

Competitor Name:

Website:

Main service:

Highest price:

How they differentiate themselves:

How you could help them:

How you could do things differently to be unique and/or compliment their services:

Their Vision Statement

Their Mission Statement

Ally Analysis

Competitor Name:

Main service:

How they differentiate themselves:

How you could do things differently to be unique and/or compliment their services:

Their Vision Statement

Website:

Highest price:

How you could help them:

Their Mission Statement

Competitor Name:

Main service:

How they differentiate themselves:

How you could do things differently to be unique and/or compliment their services:

Their Vision Statement

Website:

Highest price:

How you could help them:

Their Mission Statement



Phase Three

Building Your Pet Brand

“A brand for a company is like a reputation for a person.
You earn reputation by trying to do hard things well.”

— **Jeff Bezos**

Pet Business Positioning

"Charging a premium amount allows me to offer a premium service."

– Ramit Sethi

If you're just starting out, it's easy to just look around at what others are doing and undercut them slightly, just to get a foot on the pet business ladder.

When I first started my pet business, I was of the exact opposite school of thought. I'd learnt the hard way by being a low-cost website provider when I first started, and ended up feeling undervalued and resentful. Because I didn't understand the value I was bringing to their business in vastly increased revenue, I attracted clients who didn't either (what a surprise!). They were constantly trying to lowball my already rock bottom prices. I would have to hound them for payment, and when they did pay, it was grudgingly and without any real appreciation.

I was keen to avoid a repeat performance!

This time around, I wanted to offer a premium service and charge accordingly. I didn't want to just be a great dog walker, I wanted to be the **best**. I wanted to attract clients who saw my service as a luxury they couldn't do without. I wanted to position my business as an exclusive service clients felt lucky to secure a space with.

So I called my business "VIPets - First Class Care for Very Important Pets," and matched the prices of the most expensive pet care company in town. Since then, I've doubled that price, and now I'm by far and away the most expensive. **I'm still booked solid all week and have a waiting list.**

I've had clients refer to my services as the "Rolls-Royce of walks" and that's the way I like it!

The thing is, there are people out there who are willing to pay premium prices for an exceptional service. The ones that value high quality. The ones who want the very best for their dogs.

When you think about it honestly, who would you rather work with? Someone who grudgingly pays as little as possible for a 15-minute visit otherwise the dog will poo on the carpet, or someone who would do anything to ensure the happiness of their furry family? It's certainly the latter for me.

I know it can feel a little off to charge higher prices for something you love to do, but you *must* understand the value you are bringing to the lives of your pet parents. The peace of mind their pets are getting the best possible care from someone who loves animals as much as you? Priceless.

You may feel like you can't raise prices because you haven't been around as long, or you're training on location while others have fancy facilities. Yes, you **must** meet certain standards, but you can gain experience while still providing exceptional service.

Friends, it's all about positioning.

When I first started out, I had no experience walking multiple dogs, so I positioned my individual walks as an exclusive, safe, one-to-one service. I was able to charge more for this while gaining valuable experience and still offering a premium service.

There are many benefits to premium pricing for your business, most of which also serve clients:

- You can afford the little things others can't; high quality treats, safer equipment, etc.
- You can afford to pay for the best possible help when it's time to hire, not just some student who will do it for minimum wage.
- You work fewer hours for more money, meaning you have the energy and enthusiasm to provide the best service.
- You'll be viewed as prestigious and desirable, which creates a buzz around you.

Premium Positioning

The two most popular ways to stand out as a premium pet care provider are by niche specialisation, and by gaining expert status.

The latter is a little more difficult and can take some time to work up to. Specialisation however can be scary but is entirely possible. After I had been walking individual dogs for a couple of years, I started pairing dogs together and eventually ended up taking out groups. In the end, I dropped all other services and started offering just two-hour dog adventures. I doubled my prices and thought I would lose many clients. Amazingly to me, only a small percentage left.

There are cons to setting higher prices when you're just starting out. It did take me a little longer than I expected to become full-time. This was simply because when you charge premium prices, you have to reach more people to find the ones who are willing and able to pay for exceptional service.

Luckily, you are in the process of setting up systems to ensure you are found by the maximum number of people looking for your premium service. Raising your prices is scary, but you can use this exercise to look at ways to increase prices on your new website immediately, grandfathering in current clients after a set amount of time (I gave 4 weeks).

What services do you enjoy the most that make you the most money?

Raise this price by at least 10%. How much extra profit will this bring in each week? Month? Year?

What can I add to this service to justify premium pricing? Can you add a bronze, silver and gold service? Clients like to have a choice between three different packages, and studies show they will usually choose the middle tier. Try to always have three levels to decide from.

Are there ways you can specialise? Trainers, can you become the go-to expert for one particular behavioural problem? Groomers, could you specialise in a particular cut and be the person everyone thinks of for this? Walkers, can you become known for dog adventures? Small dog walks? Bull breeds?

Are there ways you can gain expert status? Have you always dreamed of writing a book? Self-publishing on Amazon makes this easy now. Can you create an online course that shares your skills? Do you have an interesting story surrounding your business that can get you featured in the local paper?

Finding Your Uniqueness

"It's very easy to be different, but very difficult to be better."

– Jonathan Ive

Determining how your business is unique can seem surprisingly difficult. There are very few businesses that are truly one-of-a-kind. In our industry, a lot of the services are very similar with nothing to really differentiate them.

In order to work out what USP (**Unique Selling Proposition**) will resonate most with your ideal client, you need to think of your services from their perspective. You might like to say, "we'll care for your home like it's our own." The problem with that is, they don't know you. You might be a little blasé about a bit of mess left lying around. They may be fastidious and require a high level of cleanliness at all times.

When I first did this exercise, I wanted to include "we care for your pets as if they were our own." When I thought about this, I realised, we don't actually care for pets as if they were our own. We don't walk into our own homes and do a 7 point health check. We actually care for pets as if they were someone else's! But how do you sum this up in a way that comes across as unique?

I worked on this for a while and as part of my philosophy I included the following bullet point: **"We clearly communicate with clients to ensure homes are run to their exact specifications, so pets are kept as close to their routine as possible."**

Developing Your Competitive Advantage

Are there any gaps in your local market you are able to fill? Referring back to the ally analysis, can you see anything that is missing, you can offer?

What are my strengths? Are you qualified when others aren't? Uniquely experienced in some way?

If you already have clients, what do they say is unique about you? Why did they choose you?

What is something that is a perceived shortfall you could flip and use as a USP? If you don't have facilities as a trainer, you could say something like, "we come to your home and work with you directly."

Building a Trustworthy Pet Brand

Branding is one of those daunting terms that feels like it should only be something that's explored within the realms of huge companies, like Coca-Cola, Nike, and Apple. The truth is, professional branding is just as important to the sole-trader who operates within a 20 km radius of their home as the CEO of a multinational conglomerate.

When most small business owners think of branding, they think of having a logo designed. However, your brand identity is just the tip of the iceberg. Your logo and business design is what people see on the surface. Your brand is the huge mass underneath, keeping your business afloat.

Your brand lets like minded-clients know who you are, what you stand for and why they should work with you. It gives you and your employees clarity, purpose, and a vision for the future.

Your branding should answer the following:

1. Who are you as a company?
2. What makes you different?
3. Why do you do what you do?
4. What are your values?
5. What is your vision for the future of the business?

Part of a professional branding strategy will take you through the process of finding the answers to these questions, and more. Effectively communicating these answers will attract clients who believe what you believe, and give them a compelling reason to trust you. In these ever-increasingly expensive times, resources are being spread even thinner, and people need a solid reason to believe in (and spend their hard-earned money with) you, over your competition.

Potential clients also need to feel like you understand their pain points, and you have processes, procedures, or products that solve them. They need to feel you know where they are coming from and can empathise with their struggles.

A professional brand strategy will help you uncover those problems and offer solutions, right at the point your ideal clients seek them.

These are a few of the warning signs you have no branding, a poorly designed website or weak copy:

- You're attracting unappreciative, difficult clients who don't respect you or your skills
- You're constantly needing to compete on price as clients don't understand your worth
- You're attracting clients who don't share your vision and values

Worst of all, the clients you do want to work with make snap judgments about your design, and leave your website without taking action. This can either be caused by one of two things (or both):

1. The words on your website are not grabbing their attention and compelling them to take the next step toward working with you
2. Your design fails to convey your professionalism or communicate your worth

The job of your website is to capture your client's attention and compel them to take the next step toward working with you. **The three most important steps you want them to take are:**

1. Sign up to your mailing list for a piece of credibility-establishing content (such as a PDF or video) that positions you as the expert
2. Request more information where they're redirected to a valuable download
3. Contact you directly for more information

Here are a few ways you will know your website and branding are working well for you:

1. You have clearly defined and are attracting ideal clients that you are connecting with on an emotional level
2. Your business stands out as one that is legitimate, credible, and established
3. Your business looks organised, trustworthy and professional, allowing you to charge premium prices for your services.

For help with your website and/or branding, feel free to book a free 30-minute strategy call.

Get Your Brand Story Straight

"Everybody wants to be taken somewhere. If we don't tell people where we're taking them, they'll engage another brand."

— Donald Miller, **Building a StoryBrand**

I talk a lot about Donald Miller in this guide, because basically, whenever we embark on anything branding, we try to follow the StoryBrand framework. Not to the letter, mind! As each business is individual and should be treated as such.

Even though storytelling has been around for thousands of years to convey messages that move people to action, the StoryBrand framework does this in a way anyone can understand.

In the StoryBrand Framework, Donald Miller refers to your clients as the hero, and you as the guide. In order to be the best guide you can be, you need to know the problems the hero is having and communicate how you can solve them.

Once a visitor lands on your website, it's now estimated you only have one-twentieth of a second to get their attention, so you need to get to the root of their problems, and fast!

Overall, who are the clients you wish to attract more of? *Trainers: Pet parents with new puppies. Sitters: Cat owners who travel frequently. Walkers: Dog owners who work long hours.*

What are the problems they are having? *Trainers: Dogs that are reacting in fear with aggression. Sitters: No-one they trust to care for their cats. Walkers: Dog that is becoming destructive because they are bored.*

What negative emotions are standing in their way of seeking help? *Trainers: worried about training techniques. Sitters: anxiety at a stranger being in their home. Walkers: Fear for their dog's safety.*

How do you help them solve their problems and allay those fears? *What services do you offer that help solve their problems, and systems are in place to avoid perceived pain?*

What results can they expect after employing your services? *Paint a picture of what their life will look like once you have worked your magic. What does success look like for them? How will they feel?*

Building Your Brand Message

"Brand is the story. Design is the storytelling."
— Susan Sellers

Now you have worked out who it is you would most like to work with and the problems they are having that you solve, it's time to put that all together to craft your brand message.

Donald Miller of Building a StoryBrand, calls this following exercise the **One Liner**, and it's a super powerful marketing tool when delivered at the precise time your ideal client seeks your services.

As an example, I'll share the Pet Biz Studio brand message, and how we arrived there.

01 Who do you wish to work with?

Pet business owners who want to restore a sense of peace to their lives.

02 What are their problems?

They feel completely burnt out trying to be everything to everyone.

03 What solutions do you offer?

We help them attract and onboard premium clients, practically on autopilot.

04 What results can they expect?

They work fewer hours for appreciative clients who pay what they're worth.

Our Final Brand Message

Most pet business owners are so drained in the evenings after caring for pets all day, they don't have the time, energy, or inclination to spend hours more on their marketing. So we've developed a system that attracts and onboards premium clients, practically on autopilot. This empowers pet business owners to work fewer hours for appreciative clients who pay them what they're worth.

Work on your brand message below. Try to be clear, specific and to the point. Don't overcomplicate with too many words. Your brand message should resolve all the major pain points your clients are experiencing.

How to Choose Your Core Brand Colour

"Design is the silent ambassador of your brand."
— Paul Rand

Your brand colours are the first thing potential clients are going to encounter when they see any of your marketing materials. Colours have the potential to elicit powerful emotions, so making the right choice is critical to your overall branding strategy.

Multiple studies have shown that consumers decide whether they like the look of a product in 90 seconds or less. Around 90% of that decision is based on colour alone. So you have around a minute and a half to make that all important first impression on a potential client, or they may decide your business is not for them and leave, possibly forever.

In order to choose colours that best represent your business personality, you need to know what that is, and which colours best represent that personality. For example, if you wish to be known as trustworthy and reliable, blue may work for you as your primary brand colour. If you want to align yourself with luxury and prestige, purple could be your best choice.

Try not to let your personal favourite colour choice cloud your judgement in this process. Always keep in mind what you want clients to **feel** when they encounter and interact with your brand.

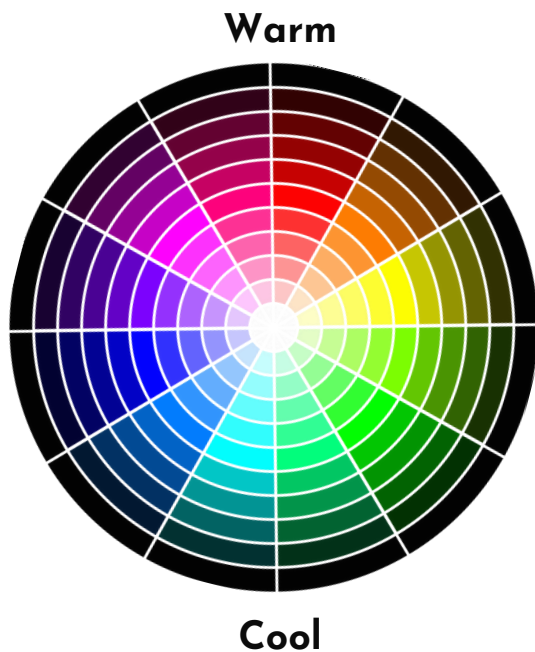
	Used for	Association		Mood
Red	Attention	+ Power + Energy + Intensity - Danger		+ Excited + Passionate + Romantic - Angry
Orange	Warmth	+ Safety + Fun + Creativity + Communication		+ Joyful + Excited + Enthusiastic + Optimistic
Yellow	Energy	+ Attention + Sunshine + Warmth + Humour		+ Happy + Optimistic + Playful - Frustrated
Green	Growth	+ Wellness + Wealth + Growth + Reliability		+ Tranquil + Harmonious + Kind + Balanced
Blue	Authority	+ Stability + Trust + Honesty - Cold		+ Peaceful + Confident + Relaxed + Secure
Purple	Creativity	+ Royalty + Luxury + Elegance + Sophistication		+ Spiritual + Prosperous + Intuitive + Calm
Pink	Compassion	+ Imagination + Love + Gentle - Immature		+ Femininity + Tenderness + Playful - Agitated
Black	Power	+ Sophistication + Elegance + Strength - Mourning		+ Calm + Confident + Serious - Intimidating
White	Purity	+ Innocence + Simplicity + Elegance - Cold/Sterile		+ Peace + Calm + Comfort - Mourning
Brown	Stability	+ Trust + Dependability + Strength + Organic		+ Comfortable + Secure + Calm - Sadness

The Basics of Colour Theory

"Brand is the holistic sum of customers' experiences, composed of visual, tonal and behavioural brand components, many of which are shaped by interaction design."

— Kate Kaplan

Now you have decided on your core colour you feel best represents your business personality, it's time to pick around 4-5 additional colours to represent your brand. You do this by consulting the colour wheel, originally invented in 1666 by Isaac Newton. This makes it easy to choose colours that combine harmoniously to create a pleasing effect.



Monochromatic

These are versions of the same hue (colour), they can be either different: **Shades:** Add black to the core colour to darken

Tints: Add white to lighten

Tones: Add grey to create a subtler version of the core colour



Complementary

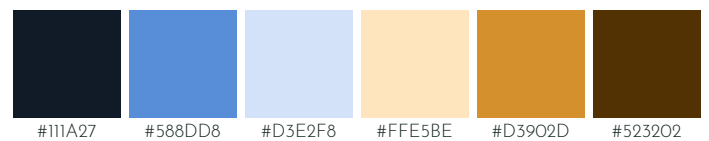
I recommend adding a second colour that's **opposite your core colour on the colour wheel**. This will be your highlight colour for buttons and accents.

For example:

- If your core colour is blue, pick red or orange as your complementary colour
- If your core colour is pink or magenta, choose forest green as your complementary colour
- If your core colour is purple, choose yellow or green to complement that colour

Now you have your core and complementary colours chosen, it's time to start working them into a palette. As an example, here is the process I followed for the Paws at Home template palette.

1. I wanted the brand to have a prestigious feel, so I chose gold as my core colour
2. I selected blue as a complementary colour
3. I added black to both colours for text and white for backgrounds and highlights.



If you have the [Pet Brand Blueprint course](#), you will have access to this and all the bonus colour palettes to choose from. However, with this knowledge, you will be able to create your own palette from scratch if you decide to do so.

Different colour combinations



Tetradic

These colours are spaced on the colour wheel in a square. They will result in a very bold palette. It's best to let additional colours be accents.



Triadic

Three colours that are evenly spaced on the colour wheel in a triangle shape. This will also result in a vibrant palette.



Analogous

Three colours side by side. It can be done, but I recommend having at least one contrasting colour.

Choosing Brand Fonts

Choosing the right fonts to represent your pet business is easily as important as selecting colours, they too will speak directly to your ideal client. Fonts tell a story just like colours, so selecting the right fonts to represent you and your business are a critical element in your overall brand strategy.

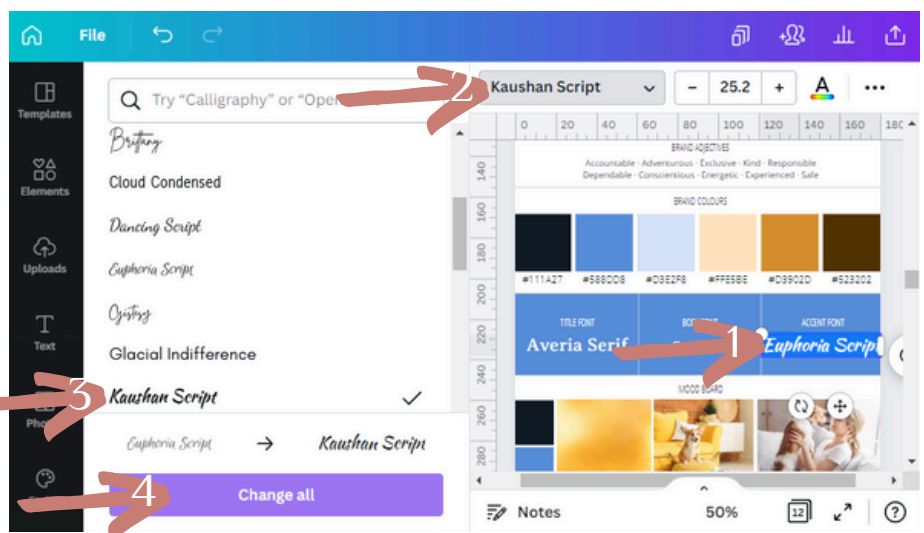
This is where this [free brand development board](#) may come in handy. You can open and edit this with the free version of Canva. Just sign up for an account, and you can have a play with this intuitive software. You are able to see your business name in the font you select, together with your complete vision for your brand.

It may help to read [Finding Your Who](#) on page 22 again to help you decide on the best fonts you feel will appeal to your tribe.



The easiest way to edit your brand fonts is to change them in the typography section.

1. Select the heading font you wish to edit
2. Click the font dropdown
3. Select a new font. Triple click to highlight and replace with the name of the new font.
4. Once you have decided on your font change, click the Change all button.

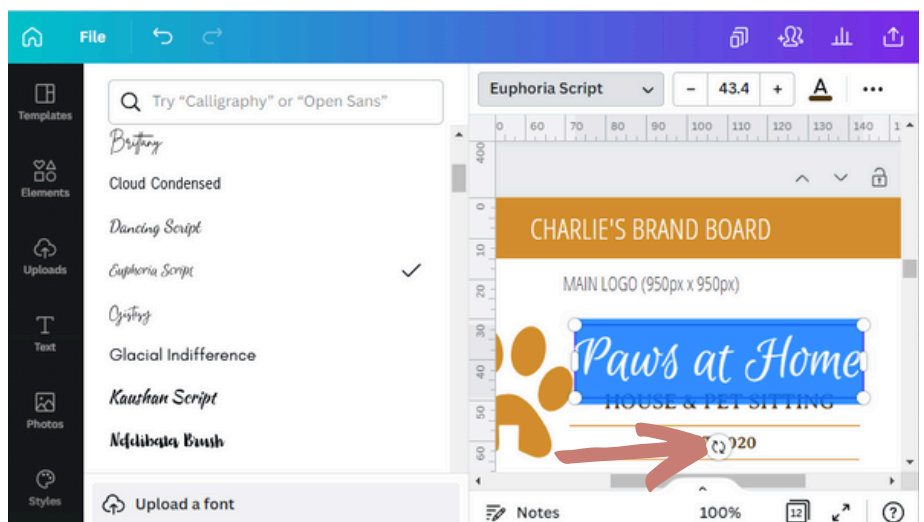


Your fonts will update in the brand development board.

To edit your text:

Highlight with a triple click or drag your mouse over the text. Change the business name.

Move or turn text with the circular icons that appear. You will need to edit the text in the alternate logos as well.





Phase Four

Website Design and Content

“Define what your brand stands for, its core values and tone of voice, and then communicate consistently in those terms.”

— **Simon Mainwaring**

The Five Minute Marketing Makeover

"If we pay a lot of money to a design agency without first clarifying our message, we might as well be holding a bullhorn up to a monkey. The only thing a potential customer will hear is noise."

– Donald Miller in **Building a StoryBrand**

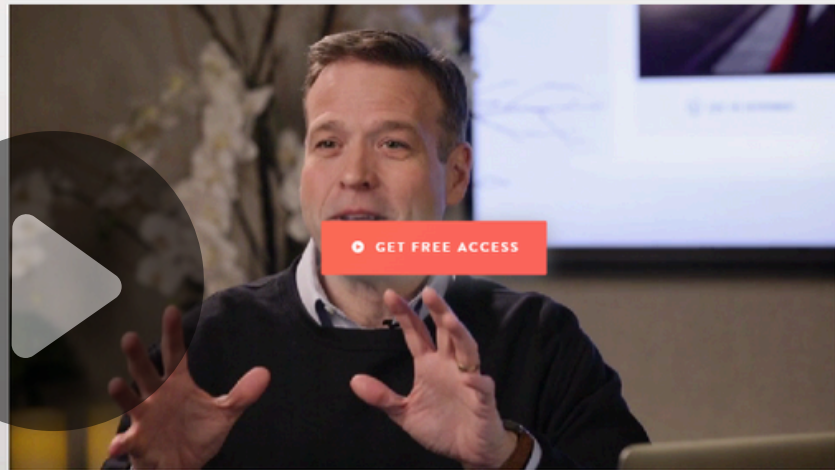
So now you've put in the work to discover exactly who you would like to attract into your business, and have identified the words that will best show them you could be the right fit to solve their problems. You've built a beautiful brand to visually communicate this, and we are now at the exciting stage of bringing this all together on your brand-new website. Congratulations!

Before we go any further, I'd like to introduce you to these three videos, brought to you by Donald Miller, author of **Building a Story Brand**. I highly recommend stopping here and taking the time to watch. Spending the next 15 minutes watching these three videos will help you understand how and why the website content we are about to create is so important.



5 MINUTE MARKETING MAKEOVER

Three videos to help you clarify your message and grow your business.



Watch each video and make tangible changes that will increase your revenue.

If you're interested in visiting the **Meyer's Tails Up Farm** website Donald analyses in video two please feel free to view that **here**.

I'm a big fan of the StoryBrand framework by Donald Miller. **Building a StoryBrand** is one of my all-time favourite marketing books, I keep coming back to it time and time again.

If you only have time for one, in **video three**, Donald goes over the importance of taking your visitor on a journey through your homepage content.

Even though storytelling has been around for thousands of years to convey messages that move people to action, Donald Miller explains has a way of explaining it, so anyone can understand.

We'll drill down through these video steps in the following exercises, showing you how we've put the Story Brand framework to work on all our websites.

[Watch The Free Training Here](#)

Your Final Business Plan

This is the place to bring all the work you've done to determine your brand tone, message and purpose together, to put it out there to the world on your new website.

Your Chosen Business Name:

Business Email:

Your active business idea:

Your main active business service:

Your WHY:

Your vision statement:

Ideal client persona

Your final brand message

Website Address:

City and Country:

Your passive business idea:

Your main passive business service:

Your core value statement:

Your mission statement:

Their problems and your solution

Brand colours and why you chose them

Website Inspiration

List the address of the websites that catch your attention here.

Website address

What I like about it

Website address

What I like about it

Website address

What I like about it

Website address

What I like about it

Uninspiring Websites

Website address

What I don't like about it

Website address

What I don't like about it

Website address

What I don't like about it

Website address

What I don't like about it

Your Homepage Content

"Your website is likely the first impression a potential customer will receive about your company. It's almost like a first date. The customer simply needs to know that you have something they want and you can be trusted to deliver whatever that is."

– Donald Miller ***Building a StoryBrand***

As I mentioned before, your website's job is to capture your client's attention, and compel them to take the next step toward working with you. Your homepage should be set up as a series of sections that take them on a journey to solving their problems.

As you can see on my website I have minimal header navigation. The two calls to action include clicking a button (a different colour to grab attention) to sign up for my newsletter. The second is to Shop Now. Either of those actions work for me.

Get 20% Off Your First Order!

DOWNLOAD THE COUPON

\$7 Flat Rate Shipping. FREE Shipping on orders over \$45.



HOME SHOP ABOUT CONTACT BLOG ADVENTURES  CART

SHOP NOW

What action would I like my visitors to take?

Next up comes the hero section, where I have a photo of a dog enjoying natural surroundings. I know healthy, organic, clean living is important to my audience, so my website colours reflect this.

What do I want them to do next?

There's no doubt from my headline and benefits banner what I provide. The aspirational identity is their pets are very important. I also wish to rank for "organic dog treats" so this is highlighted here.

PLANT-BASED &
ORGANIC DOG
TREATS FOR VERY
IMPORTANT PETS!

SHOP NOW



A hero image that will resonate with my visitor:

What are three to four significant benefits?

Work on a headline that captures attention, containing keywords you wish to rank for in Google:

Addressing the Problem

"A problem clearly stated is a problem half solved."

– Dorothea Brande

In this next section, I get into the cost, or the negative aspects of feeding pets traditional store-bought treats. I know from my research that my customers want to avoid e-numbers, preservatives, and anything artificial.

When creating content for this section, you may wish to refer back to [page 29](#) where we worked on the problems your ideal client was having. Be sure to highlight these concerns and let your visitor know you solve them.

JUST HEALTHY DOG TREATS. NO E-NUMBERS. NO NASTIES

Our delicious, organic dog treats are free from artificial flavours, colours, and preservatives, so you can feel happy about giving your dear one a tasty reward, that's good for them too.

These organic plant-based, healthy dog treats are handmade with love in Christchurch, New Zealand.

SHOP NOW



**What are the problems they are having?
Work on a headline highlighting them here:**

Next up is where you present yourself as the solution to their problems (the guide). Notice we haven't spoken about ourselves until now. The thing is, visitors don't care about you or your story!

**Note down some things they are trying to avoid
to present yourself as the guide:**

The only time they want to hear about you, is to hear about how your background benefits **them**. Here is where you will show you have the experience they are looking for and present yourself as the guide.



NUTRITIONALLY BALANCED DOG TREATS YOU'LL FEEL GOOD FEEDING THEM

VIPets Ltd started out as a dog adventure and pet sitting company, who made organic, human-grade dog treats for their furry clients to enjoy. Our delicious treats were such a hit, we decided to make them available on our website for your furry family to enjoy.

We have now cut back on how many adventures per week we run to concentrate on bringing your dear friends a nutritious, guilt-free treat for all occasions.

SHOP NOW

Why are you the best solution to their problems?

How does your experience benefit them?

Presenting the Solution

"Whatever creativity is, it is in part a solution to a problem."

– Brian Aldiss

In this next section, I show the visitor I have exactly what they are looking for by introducing my range of organic plant-based treats.

There is no doubt they need to look no further to find the healthy, nutritious, guilt-free treats they seek for their very important pets.

GUILT-FREE TREATS YOUR DOG WILL LOVE



ORGANIC BEETROOT AND COCONUT BITES

These dog treats are made with just 5 organic, human-grade ingredients and are packed full of healthy, nutritious goodness for...

[LEARN MORE](#)

ORGANIC CARROT AND PEANUT BUTTER DOG TREATS

These dog treats are made with just 5 organic, human-grade ingredients and are packed full of healthy, nutritious goodness for...

[LEARN MORE](#)

ORGANIC SPICED GREEN APPLE AND PEANUT BUTTER BARS

These dog treats are made with just 6 organic, human-grade ingredients and are packed full of healthy, nutritious goodness for...

[LEARN MORE](#)

Work on a headline presenting your solution:

In one of the final sections is where you want to ask for the sale. There is always some resistance here that getting started with you will be difficult. Here you will lay out the steps of how easy it is.

How is your service/product the answer?

Here is where you get the opportunity to show them there is no risk to getting started with you. They will not be losing their money, time or energy, they just need to take a series of simple steps.

Sounds Great! How Do I Get Started?

One

Fill in our form with all the information Lesley will need to work out where your dog will fit in with the group.

Two

Lesley will respond as soon as she gets in from an exciting adventure with an invitation to the client portal.

Three

Once all your details are filled in Lesley will come to meet you and your dog and organise a trial outing.

[SIGN UP](#)

Step One

Step Two

Step Three

Your About Us Page

Even though this is the page where you introduce yourself and your business, be sure to frame how your experience and your qualifications benefit *them*.

About Us pages are usually treated as an afterthought, when they are possibly the most important trust building tools on your entire website. As trust is paramount in pet care, this should be the primary objective of this page.

Your About Us page is your best opportunity to tell your story, explain how you got started, and communicate why you do what you do.

Here is your chance to provide social proof by linking to reviews, adding photos and testimonials from clients, and show off any awards or media coverage. My About Us Page is laser focussed to build trust with my audience and show them I am qualified to solve their problems.

Every section is there to guide them in to taking the first step of my on-boarding process.



List the benefits of choosing your business:

List where to find your best testimonials:

List the steps to getting started with you:

Anything else you think you should include?

Client Onboarding

The job of your website is to capture your client's attention, and compel them to take the next step toward working with you.

As I'm sure you're aware, when a potential client is looking for solutions to their pet problems, they are most likely to go online and start searching for an answer. They will almost always start by visiting the top listings in Google and branch out from there.

When they land on your website for the first time, they are almost always in the comparison phase, looking for the solution that's the best fit for their needs. However, if all the websites they visit look the same, with a similar design, similar words, and similar pictures of similar happy dogs, the only thing left for them to compare, is price. I'm not sure about you, but if there were nothing else to differentiate the businesses I was comparing, I'd probably go for the cheapest too!

Now, put yourself in your potential client's shoes for a second. Imagine they are looking for your services. They have searched a few websites, but none really stand out. They submit a couple of web forms asking for more information and get the standard message pop-up that someone will be with them shortly. As their questions haven't yet been answered, they continue on to the next website in the listings.

However, the next website they land on features a free eBook (or lead magnet) that promises to solve an immediate problem, one that's keeping them awake, with a link to download right at the top of the page. The pet professional has done their research and knows the big, painful problems their dream clients are trying to find solutions to. They've created a short PDF that gives them the complete solution.

For example, if the dream client was worried about the safety of their Pomeranian on midday walks when they were at work, the PDF may be "Five Questions You Must Ask Your Dog Walker Before Trusting Them With Your Special Friend." If they were an inexperienced first owner worried about finding the right person to introduce grooming to their doodle puppy, it may be something like "10 Tips for Maintaining Your Dog's Coat to Ensure the Best Grooming Experience."

The dream client gladly enters their email address in return for the PDF, and is added to the pet professional's follow-up list. It's a short, sharp read that subtly presents the pet professional as an authority in their industry and a trusted resource of credible information. By the end of the document, the potential client is well on the way to getting to know, like, and eventually trust the business owner.

Convinced this pet care professional knows their stuff, the potential client follows the contact link in the document to ask some final questions. Instead of the usual "Thanks, we'll get back to you shortly" popup, the potential client is redirected to a welcome PDF that answers all the questions they asked in the email and more. The pet business may also have a bot to answer simple questions. The document contains all there is to know about this business, including their Mission and Vision for the future, policies and procedures, terms and conditions, and what makes them stand out. Testimonials from happy clients prove their business is legitimate and established.

The potential client sees their personal values align with this business, has all their questions answered, and follows the link to book a callback. At this stage, this call is just to confirm the place and time for the meet and greet. The potential client is grateful to the business owner for solving their immediate headache, convinced this is the business they want to work with, and is looking forward to hearing they have been accepted as a client.

The other pet business owners the potential client reached out to, get home after a long day and start returning emails. If they're lucky, they'll get a response to say I'm all set, but what will usually happen is they'll get no response at all. Their potential client already has their questions answered, their need for more information met, and is eagerly awaiting a call back from the business they are already heavily invested in working with.

Following Up

Can you see the difference this positioning can have on your price point? This potential client is now heavily invested in working with this specific pet care business. The price is now a secondary consideration in the process of finding the perfect pet care professional, to provide an extraordinary experience for their precious pet.

However, your dream clients are busy. It's likely that at least for some, straight after they downloaded the document that solves their painful problem, they got a call, or the baby cried, or their teenager broke up with their boyfriend. Just me?! Ok, well, just like you or I, they too have a million distractions pulling them in just as many directions.

Later, when the distraction has passed, the potential client checks their email and finds a friendly reminder to check out their download. They remember what they were in the middle of and can quickly and easily pick up where they left off. These sequences can send friendly reminders and offers for a few days if required, totally hands-free for the pet business owner.

Email marketing is an especially valuable tool for pet business owners, as it allows you to connect with pet owners and pet lovers on a personal level. Pet owners have a deep, emotional connection with their furry friends and are often willing to go the extra mile for their well-being. It's important for pet parents to know, like and trust you so they know they are doing the very best for their furry family.

It is also a business asset you own and control completely, unlike any form of audience building on someone else's platform. It is something that can't easily be taken away from you, and is not subject to the whims of another entity that can delete pages and groups at their own discretion.

In the 10 years I spent as an Internet marketer and then working with small business owners, I've seen first-hand the incredible impact that a well-executed email marketing campaign can have on a business.

Luckily, it's very easy to set up an autoresponder, you can check out this complete guide to [setting up with MailChimp here](#).



Don't Hire a Dog Walker in Christchurch

...until you have downloaded this free report.

These are the top 12 questions you absolutely must ask your potential dog walker to ensure the safety and wellbeing of your special friend.

First Name

Email Address

DOWNLOAD NOW!

You'll also be signed up to our mailing list to receive special offers and any other valuable freebies we add in the future.

The autoresponder service I have chosen is:

A signup incentive for my list could be:



Phase Five Marketing

"It's important to remember your competitor is only one mouse click away."
— Douglas Warner

Finding What Works

In order to survive in business, you need to get your message in front of the people you wish to work with. The more people you touch with your message, the more premium clients you'll reach.

In one of my first jobs working for a print company in the typesetting department (yes it was that long ago!), our customers had to decide between a tri-fold brochure, a DLE flyer or an ad in "The Press."

In the digital world we do business in now, the possibilities to promote yourself are literally endless. If you even try to keep up with them all, your message will become diluted, and you'll end up spreading your marketing efforts way too thin.

The bottom line is, onboarding ideal clients is simply taking them on a journey from point A to point B. The following is a graphic representation of this:

Typical Pet Care Client Journey

STAGES	Awareness	Consideration	Onboarding	Retention	Devotion
STEPS	Clients become aware of your business and how you operate	They start to evaluate your business to see if your values align	They've decided you're the best fit and they want to work with you	They understand your worth and the value you provide them	They continue to use your services and consider you their only solution
TOUCHPOINTS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Website & SEO 2. Referral 3. Blog content 4. Paid ad 5. Social media 6. Print media 7. Networking etc. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Browse website 2. Check reviews 3. Newsletter signup 4. Certifications 5. Training 6. Social proof 7. Insurance etc. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Client portal 2. Welcome sequence 3. Agreement 4. Site Visit 5. Booking 6. Payment 7. Service 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Exceptional service 2. Customer focus 3. Loyalty program 4. Rewards 5. Incentives 6. Expert status 7. Gold standard 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Newsletter with: 2. Upgrades 3. Special offers 4. Cross-sell 5. Up-sell 6. Follow-up 7. Surveys

So as you can see, clients need to be taken through a series of steps, from not knowing who you are, to singing your praises to anyone who will listen. The goal is to identify what works best to bring as many clients in and keep them moving through to becoming your biggest advocates. You will generally find only one or two steps bring in the majority, and the rest don't work nearly as well.

For me, what far and away worked the best for client **Awareness** was SEO (search engine optimisation) to get to the top of Google. I spent the vast majority of my time working to get to the top of exactly where my ideal clients were searching for the solutions to their problems. You may find the majority of your clients become aware of you through paid ads. The goal is to establish what brings the most clients into your sales funnel, and do more of whatever that is.

With **Consideration**, I spent the majority of my time focusing on professional design and the words on my website to communicate my worth. I also made it a priority to have clients sign up for my mailing list by providing a piece of valuable content. I was then able to reach out regularly with news and offers.

With **Conversion**, I found getting clients to sign up to my portal in *Time to Pet* was an investment in time and energy they were unlikely to back out of.

With **Retention**, you pretty much have to give it your all on this one. You need to have policies and procedures in place to be the very best you can be in every way for the pets in your care.

I kept my clients **Devoted** to me with one simple tool, a monthly newsletter that delivered them upsells, cross-sells and kept my service top of mind.

Free Marketing Methods

This is the place to bring all the work you've done to determine your brand tone, message and purpose together, to put it out there to the world on your new website.

There are so, **so** many ways to attract potential clients to your business. The sheer volume of marketing methods that exist can be overwhelming. Check out this article on "[how to market my pet business](#)" for a growing list of marketing methods.

The trick is to find what works best for you, allowing you to play to your strengths. If you're great on camera, perhaps making YouTube videos will work best. If you are a great writer, content marketing may be your thing. If you love to spend hours on social media, creating and moderating a group of pet owners may be the best use of your time.

So today we're just going to touch on what I found to be two of the most effective, which are:

1. **Attracting clients free:** Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) and Google My Business
2. **Attracting clients with paid ads:** Google Pay-Per-Click (PPC) and Facebook advertising

When it came to organic reach and long-term traffic sustainability, Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) was by far the best use of my time. You can find a [complete guide to optimising your pet business here](#).

Another powerful tool in your arsenal is **Google My Business (GMB)**. The GMB business listings that appear right at the top of the search results, directly below the paid listings. Optimising my website for the phrases I wanted to be found for, and a top three placed GMB listing, was how I got the vast majority of my clients. Being listed at number one of the top 3 of these listings for "Dog walker Christchurch" was a game changer for my business.

What marketing methods play to your strengths?



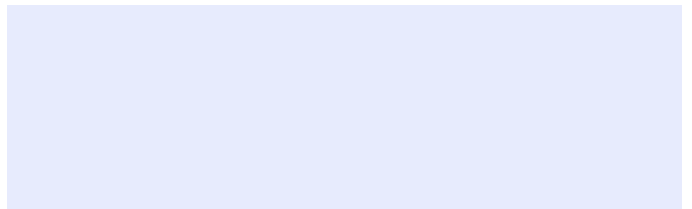
In order to have the best possible chance of snagging one of these highly coveted top three spots in local search, you want your listing to be as complete as possible, and updated with fresh content as often as you can.

Here are the top ways to optimise your listing to have the best chance at one of those spots:

1. Ensure all the information provided in your GMB listing is accurate, complete, and consistent with other listings in local directories and on your website.
2. Select the most relevant categories that accurately represent your pet business.
3. Craft a compelling and concise business description that speaks directly to your visitors.
4. Upload high-quality images and videos that showcase your services.
5. Positive reviews are a powerful tool for gaining trust and credibility, also, the more reviews you have, the higher you rank. Encourage satisfied clients to leave honest reviews for you.
6. Use the "Posts" feature on GMB to share updates, promotions, events, and news about your pet business.
7. Optimise your website and other online profiles with local keywords and geotagging. This will help Google associate your pet business with specific locations and improve your local search rankings.

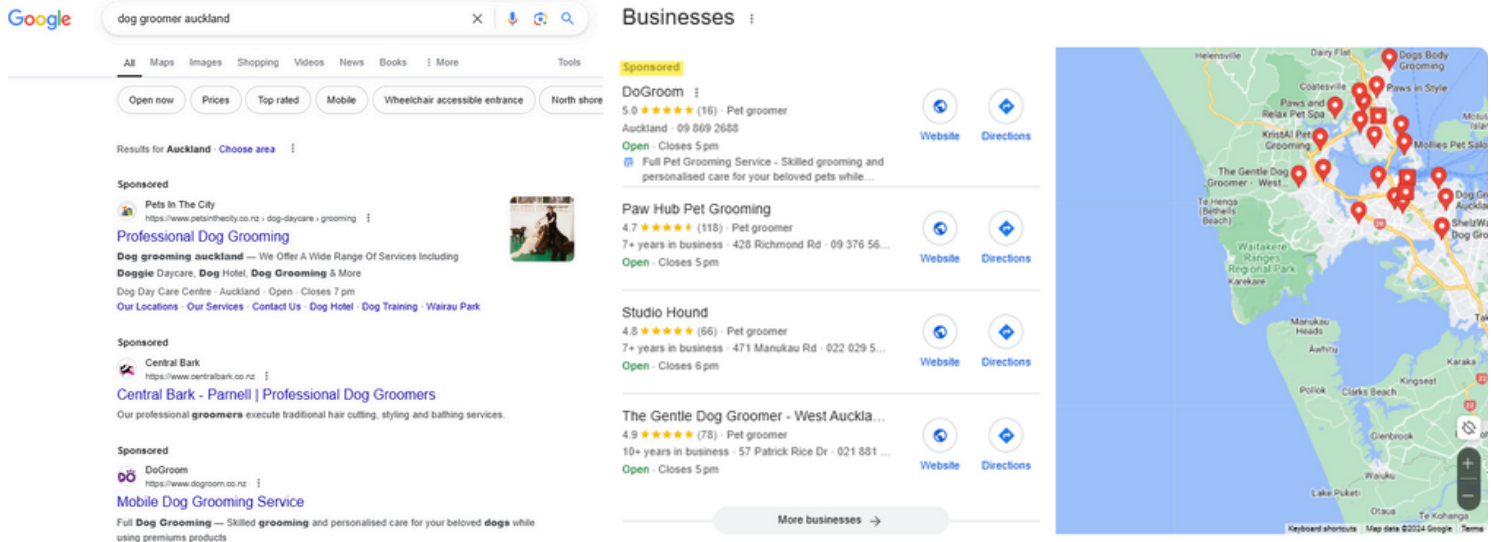
By following these GMB optimisation strategies, your listing will be in prime shape to attract more customers and achieve higher rankings on local searches.

What are 1-2 marketing methods to focus on?



Paid Advertising

Paid ads can put your business in front of the people you wish to work with, right when they are seeking your products and services. Do a Google search and look at the sponsored listings to see what other businesses are doing in your area. Do any of the ads stand out? What attracts you to them?



While you're waiting for your website and GMB listing to climb in the rankings, creating a sponsored listing in Google or on Facebook can get you in front of potential clients right away.

Let's start with Google Pay-Per-Click (PPC) ads. These ads appear at the top of search engine results pages, above all organic listings. With Google Ads, you have control over your budget and can target specific keywords and demographics. You are able to run ads that show to people searching for your service within 5-10 km from your home. If you are wanting to start a business where you travel to the client, I recommend keeping your service area as small as possible. Driving adds hours to your workday, and can be physically and mentally exhausting. For me, all the driving exacerbated my feelings of burnout with pet sitting.

You can set your budget as low as \$5 or \$10 per day when you're first starting out to avoid burning through your ad spend when you are learning the PPC ropes.

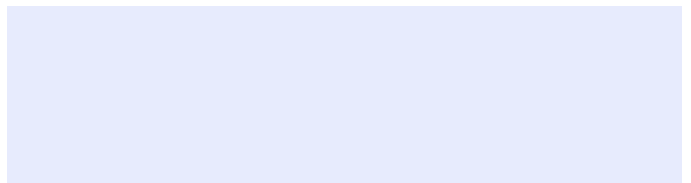
What headlines catch your attention?



Facebook advertising is another paid option that allows you to reach your local audience. You're able to create eye-catching ads with long, captivating captions that contain lots of the keywords you've researched that your dream clients are using. You can narrow down your audience based on location, interests, age range, and much more. Not only that, but you are able to take advantage of this very targeted approach to ensure your ads reach those most likely to become dream clients.

While paid advertising can generate immediate traffic to your services, it's important to maintain a healthy balance between paid and free traffic methods. SEO and Google my Business may take time to produce noticeable results, but they offer long-term benefits by establishing your online presence and attracting free, organic traffic. Pair these methods with targeted paid advertising campaigns to create a comprehensive marketing strategy.

Work on your ad copy:





Phase Six

Onwards and Upwards

"Stay committed to your decisions, but stay flexible in your approach."
— **Tony Robbins**

Business Goals

"If You Fail to Plan, You Are Planning to Fail"
– Benjamin Franklin.

Goal setting is a powerful process to motivate us to business success. When we are directionless, we tend to meander off the beaten track, covering many more miles than necessary. It also helps us avoid the paralysis of the sheer number of things we usually need to get done in our business.

We've all heard of SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound).

The SMART system is a great tool for making sure our goals are actually possible and setting a time frame for achieving them.

Big Audacious Business Goal #1

What do you want to achieve in your business? Be specific...

How will you know you have achieved this? Make it measurable...

Is this goal within my power to accomplish? Make it achievable...

Can I actually achieve this goal? Is it realistic?

When do I want to achieve this by? Give this goal a time-restraint...

Action Steps

- 01
- 02
- 03
- 04

Big Audacious Business Goal #2

"A goal without a plan is just a wish."
– Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

What do you want to achieve in your business? Be specific...

How will you know you have achieved this?
Make it measurable...

Is this goal within my power to accomplish?
Make it achievable...

Can I actually achieve this goal?
Is it realistic?

When do I want to achieve this by?
Give this goal a time-restraint...

Action Steps

- 01
- 02
- 03
- 04

Strategies

Updates

Big Audacious Business Goal #3

"Success is easy to achieve once you set your mind on a specific goal."
– Aristotle

What do you want to achieve in your business? Be specific...

How will you know you have achieved this?
Make it measurable...

Is this goal within my power to accomplish?
Make it achievable...

Can I actually achieve this goal?
Is it realistic?

When do I want to achieve this by?
Give this goal a time-restraint...

Action Steps

- 01
- 02
- 03
- 04

Strategies

Updates

Income Goals

"The goal isn't more money. The goal is living life on your terms."
– Chris Brogan

Now you've done the groundwork for everything moving forward, and you know what is possible in your business, it's time to set some income goals.

Income goals should serve to push you to taking steps towards the next level, but not discourage you by being too far out of reach.

Income Goal Planner

Average monthly earnings in the last quarter:

This is your base income.

Within what time frame would you want to see this increase?

Price of your most popular service:

Can this be raised by the percentage above?

Are there any premium add-ons you could bundle with this service to increase value?

By what percentage would you like this to increase?

New monthly income goal:

This should be enough to make you smile a little :)

How many of these would you need to perform at this price? Is this possible currently?

How will it feel when you have achieved this income goal?

Action Steps

01



02



03



04



05





Thank You!

I'm deeply grateful you're here and honoured to be a part of building your business to the very best it can be. You are one of a select group of pet care professionals who are willing to put in the hard yards, and I'm happy to be in such great company.

If you are looking for extra support and additional resources for marketing your pet business, please feel free to reach out at any stage and ask any questions you have in our group for **Pet Business Owners.**

If you're ready to start onboarding dream clients into your business, I would love to help you. Click the button below to schedule a 30 minute, no obligation chat to get started now.

Book a FREE Discovery Call

Pet Biz Web

Have the beautiful pet business website you've always dreamed of, that actually converts visitors into clients

Finally, have the beautiful website everyone thinks you paid a fortune for, without the custom price tag.

We offer a template customisation service so you too can have a high performing website that converts visitors into potential clients.

Check Out Our Pet Business Website Template Customisation Service

The Pet Biz Report

Attract, Nurture and Turn Dream Clients into Raving Fans with a Beautiful, Professionally Written Newsletter

We provide everything you need to quickly and easily create pet industry newsletters that are captivating, engaging, get opened and shared.

Email is the ultimate digital marketing tactic when it comes to attracting and turning website visitors into raving fans in your pet business.

Check Out The Pet Care Pro Report