

business basics

If the thought of starting your own business sounds exciting *and* equally overwhelming, this workbook is for you. If you have a great idea but aren't sure how to put a business plan together, this will help. We break down business jargon into simple-to-answer questions that will leave you with the most relevant information you need to get started.

dalziel.co





welcome

Running your own business can feel overwhelming. Where do you begin? How do you actually get started? If you have ever worked in a corporate environment you know there are numerous departments with varieties of functions. Do you need to do all of that?

The answer is yes and no. 'Yes' in sense that as a small business owner you are responsible for everything. But, 'no' in the sense that not every single department is relevant to what you need at first. As your business grows and expands, so will it's needs and that's when new functions become more necessary.

So, what do you need to get started as a small business owners? Many people might argue this point, but hear me out. First and foremost to be in business, you need **sales**.

This workbook will help you advance past costly trial & error, guiding you through the pivotal foundational areas of focus to launch your business and start making revenues.

[CLICK HERE](#)



about

Why should you care? Hi, my name is Jessica and I'm the founder of Dalziel & Company. Over the past 15 years, I have partnered with clients from a multi-faceted global portfolio of Fortune 500, mid-size and micro-brands to facilitate growth. During my tenure as Vice President for a global digital communications company, I repeatedly exceeded my targets by 192-250%, YoY. I worked with international brands including The Estée Lauder Companies, International Flavors & Fragrances, Lowe's, Brookfield and more. In 2011, I founded an independent e-Commerce business for luxury artisan candles, called Wicked Candle.

I also founded the global networking organization for women, Peer Advisory Group. I sit on the Advisory Board for the Customer Experience (CX) Certificate Program at Ithaca College. I also hold an MBA from Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland and have a Bachelor of Arts degree from Grand Valley State University in Michigan.

My hope is that I can distill my professional experiences to help you set up your business to generate revenues and grow.

CONTACT: jessica@dalziel.co

content



05

WHAT ARE YOU SELLING

Let's start off with some basics.

12

8-WORD MISSION

A useful tool to summarize your business.

06

DELIVERING THE GOODS

How will you plan to deliver your offer?

14

FOUNDATIONS OF A BRAND

Aspects to building a strong brand strategy.

09

HOW WILL YOU SELL

How do you plan to make transactions?

18

BRAND DESIGN BRIEF

A guide to help you kick off your brand project.

10

WHO ARE YOU SELLING TO

This is one of the key aspects.

20

MARKETING STRATEGY

Evolution and comprehension for today.

11

SWOT ANALYSIS

Quick assessment based on what we know.

25

CONTENT TIPS

One way to get started.

TIP: You may need a separate document to capture your full answers. We suggest a notebook dedicated to your new business venture.

What are you selling?

- Product(s):** Usually a tangible item
- Service:** Provided or performed
- Hybrid:** Combination of two

To the best of your ability, describe what your product, service or hybrid is:

Does this product or service solve anything?

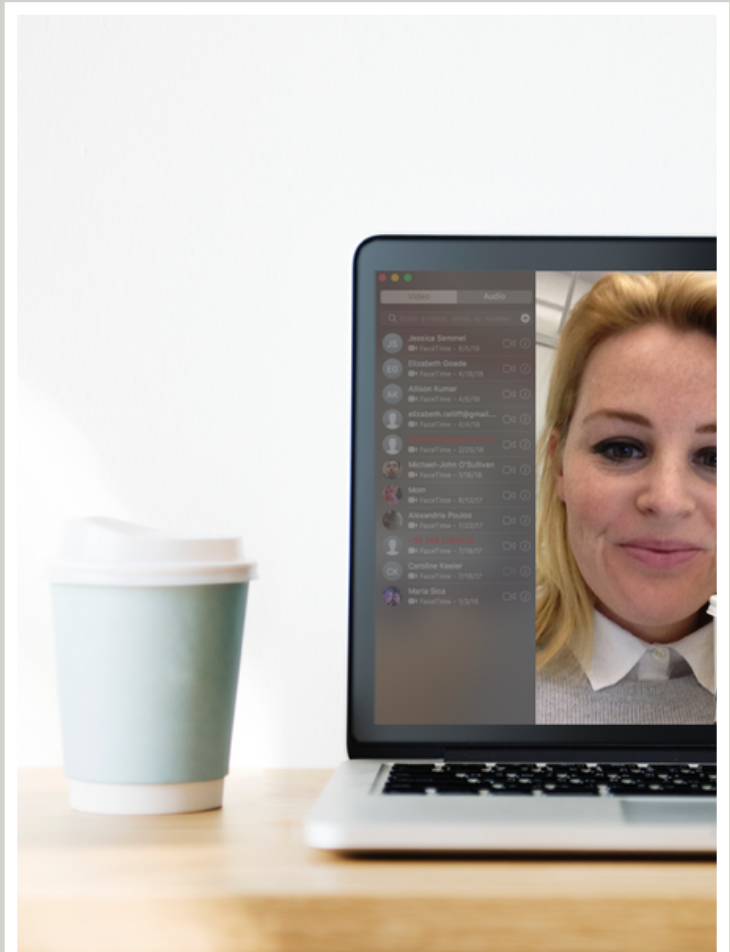
Yes

If yes, what problem does it solve?

No

Without overthinking this, why do people care about this product or service?

Are you doing anything unique with your product or service? Or are you qualified in a way your competitors are not?



Who else does what you're doing (or very similar to it)? List all below.

Is there something people will buy instead of your product? Is there a substitute for it? For instance, if you are a newspaper a substitute might be reading your news online.

How do you plan to deliver your product or service?

If you are selling a **product**, these are some of the questions you will need to consider:

- Are you producing the product yourself?
- Do you have space to do this yourself?
- How long does it take to produce 1 unit?
- Are there licensing requirements?
- Do you have a list of suppliers?
- Have you researched other suppliers?
- Should you consider manufacturing?
- Will you buy products from a wholesaler?
- What is their process?
- What are their lead times?
- What are the minimums?
- Have you considered dropshipping?
- Have you considered print-on-demand?
- How will you handle order fulfillment?
- Did you budget for packaging costs?
- Will you provide branded packaging?
- Do you need to consider shipping?
- Have you researched shipping vendors?
- Do you need to outsource fulfillment?
- Can you reduce the package weight?
- Can you reduce the package size?
- Can you offer local delivery?
- Are you shipping internationally?
- How will you manage inventory?
- Do you need inventory software?
- How are you handling local taxes?
- Do you need product photography?

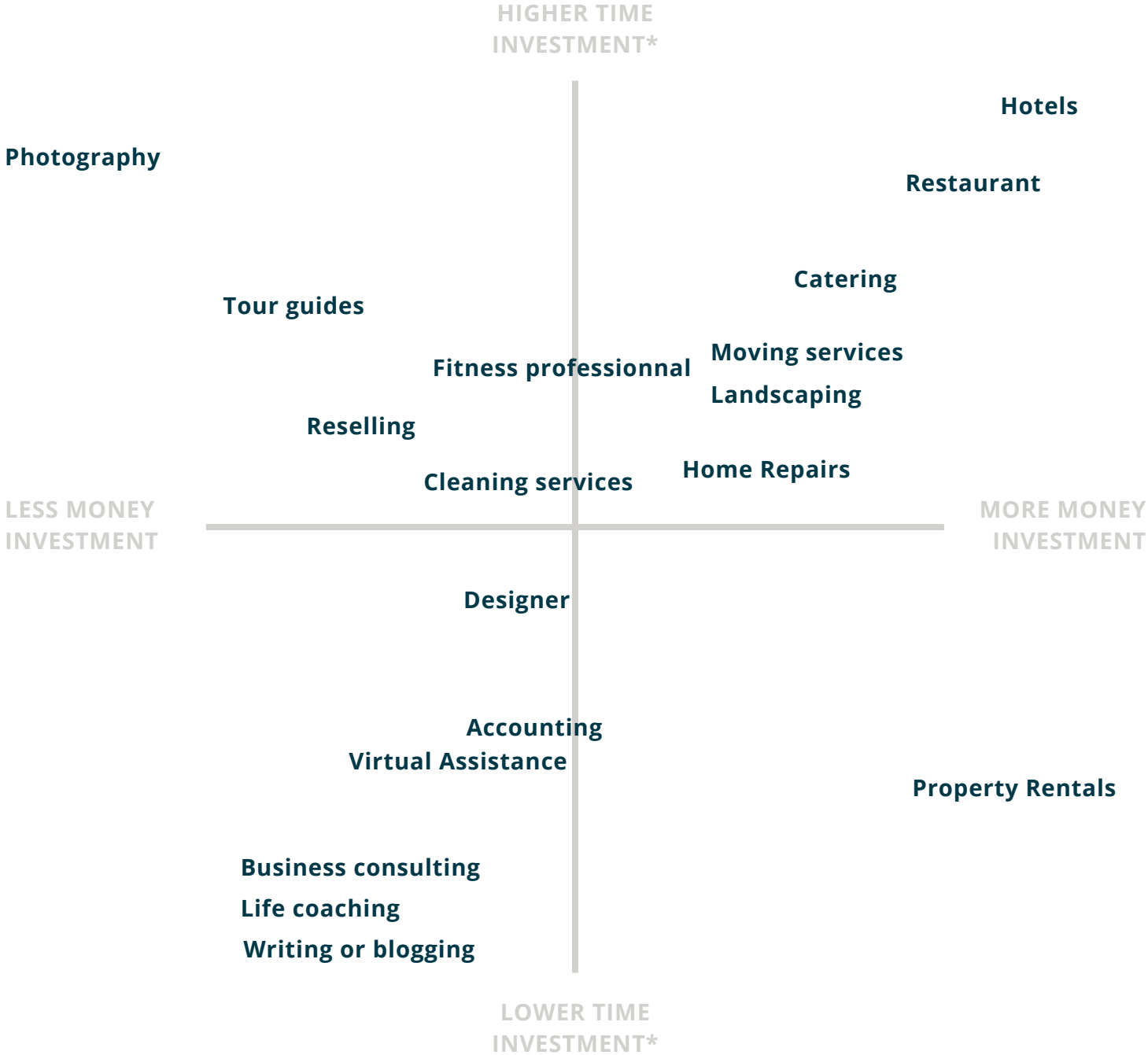
Make a note of any costs based on answers to the above questions.

If you are selling a **service**, these are some of the questions you will need to consider:

- What industry are you working in?
- Are there licensing requirements?
- What service will you offer?
- Are specific skills required?
- Are specific qualifications required?
- Are you delivering the service yourself?
- Do you need to hire specialists?
- If so, what are industry averages for pay?
- Are there deliverables included?
- How long does it take to create deliverable?
- Do you offer 1:1 services?
- Do you offer group services?
- Is there a way to create recurring revenue?
- Is there a seasonal aspect to your business?
- Will you deliver in person or online? Both?
- Do you have a location to deliver?
- Do you require supplies to deliver service?
- If so, what supplies are required?
- How much do the supplies cost?
- Do you need a website to deliver service?

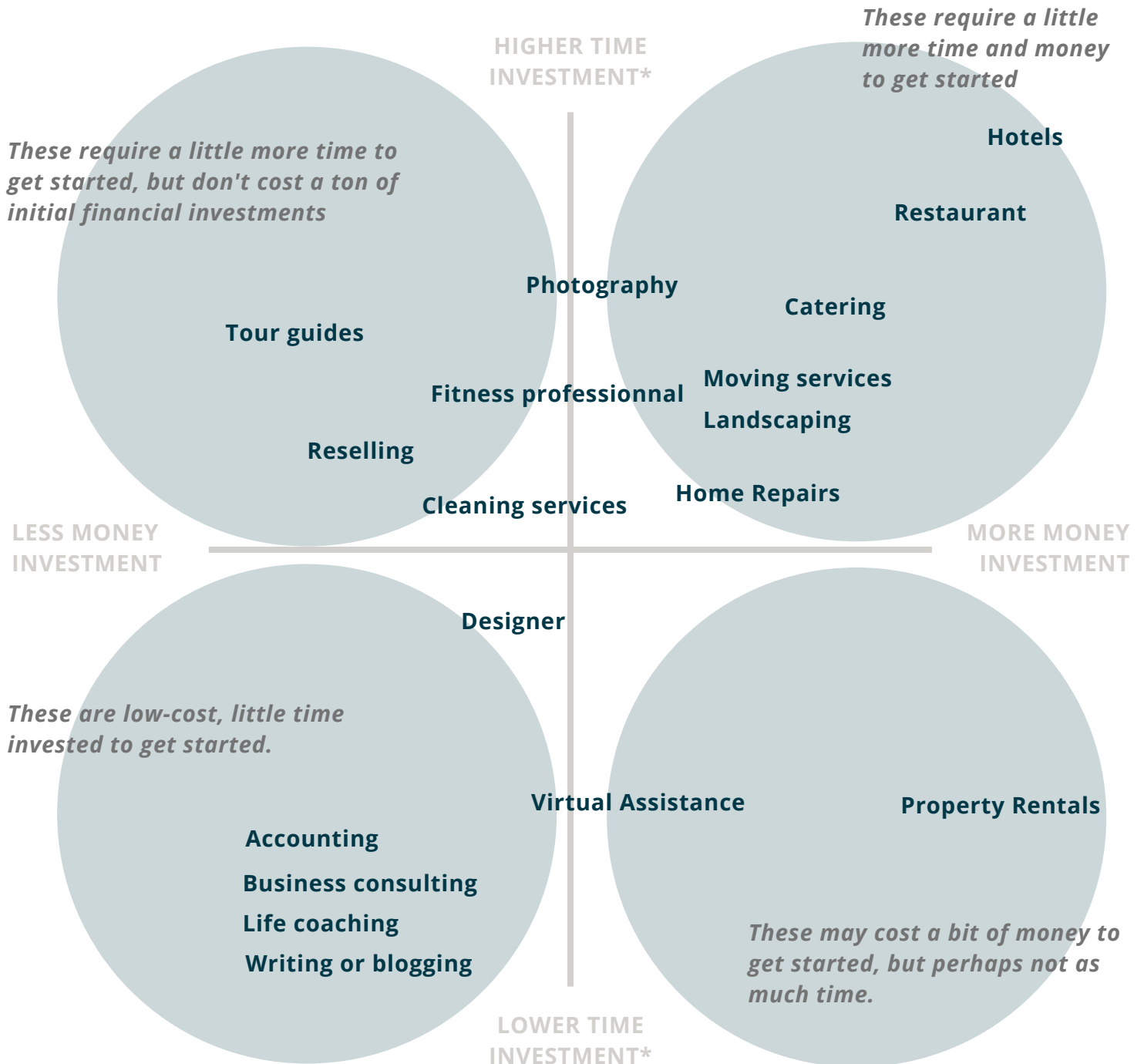
Make a note of any costs based on answers to the above questions.

Now we will run through a very quick demonstration where we look at service-based business types based on time investment vs. cost investment to launch.



*Note: does not consider time for learning specialized skill or trade.

Now we will run through a very quick demonstration where we look at service-based business types based on time investment vs. cost investment to launch.



*Note: does not consider time for learning specialized skill or trade.

Where do you see your service business landing?



Based on your responses to the right, what do you anticipate being the **primary way** you will sell your products or services (where most of your income will come from)?

How much will it cost to get your primary way of selling ready? For instance, if you are selling on a new website, consider all of the components you will need including a domain, DIY website builder or programmer, payment processor, etc. It may be helpful to utilize the [business cost tracker](#), created by Dalziel & Company.

How do you plan to sell your product or service?

Where will you be **selling** your product or service? This is where the transaction(s) occur, check all that apply.

- Bricks and mortar location (you own)
- Bricks and mortar location (you lease)
- Mobile location (think: food truck)
- Leasing space in someone's shop or salon
- Physical marketplace (booth rental)
- Affiliate programs
- Consignment
- Wholesale distribution
- My own website (that already exists)
- My own website (needs to be built)
- Existing platform (see several options)
 - Amazon
 - Etsy
 - Shopify
 - Poshmark
 - Bonanza (fashion retailers)
 - Walmart Marketplace
 - Facebook Marketplace
 - Facebook Store
 - Instagram Store
 - Handshake (wholesale marketplace)
 - Faire (wholesale marketplace)
 - Bulletin (wholesale merchandise)
- My own bricks and mortar location (own)
- My own bricks and mortar location (lease)
- Other (please describe):

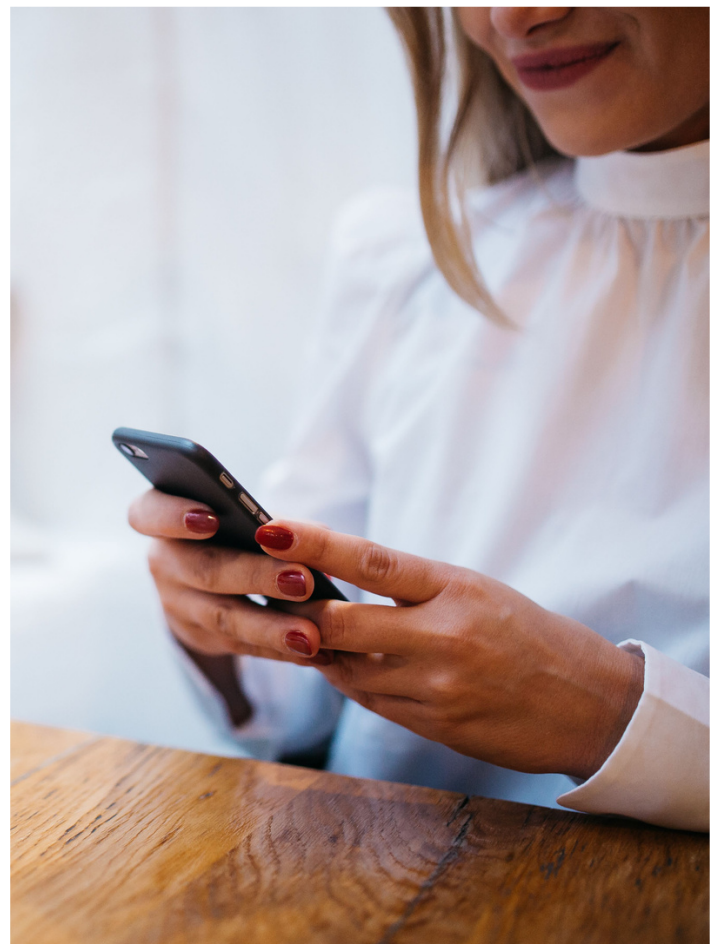
Who are you selling your product or service to?

Before we deep dive into additional questioning, please go back to page XX and reflect on your answer to this question, "why do people care about this product or service?". When you answered that question you had a type of person in mind. If you don't know who you're selling to, try starting with this person you thought of first.

How does your product or service solve a problem?

Who has this problem? Describe in as much detail as possible?

How would these people describe this problem in their own words? (If you don't know that's fine, just note it so we can make a plan to find out)



Why would this group of people want to feel after using your product or service?

Are there demographic or behavioral similarities with this group of people? Describe:

Let's do a quick SWOT analysis exercise.

Hint, you may not have all of the answers right now and it's very likely that those answers may continue to evolve as you complete this workbook

Based on your responses to the previous questions, where do you feel your company has its **strengths**? For instance, when answering the previous questions did you identify something unique about how you are solving a problem?

Based on your responses to the previous questions, where do you feel your company has its **weaknesses**? For instance, were there any questions that you couldn't answer? This may not be a weakness as much as an opportunity to gain a better understanding.

Based on your responses to the previous questions, where do you feel your company has its **opportunities**? For instance, when answering the previous questions did you think of a new idea about how to sell your product or service?

Based on your responses to the previous questions, where do you feel your company has its **threats**? For instance, is there a substitute to your product or service that you didn't think about before?

The 8 word-mission

Have you heard of the 8-word mission statement? It's a personal favorite of mine originally coined [by Kevin Starr](#). It was designed to help investors in impact understand exactly what the organization was trying to accomplish. This was done by defining the following:

verb

What is your business or organization doing for your clients?



target

Who are you serving? Whatever you are doing in your business, this is where you outline who you are doing it for.



outcome

This is where you outline what the measurable results you strive to achieve. (hint: revisit the problem from earlier)

The objective of this mission statement is to simply be able to answer the question, "*how would I best know if I'm fulfilling my mission?*".
Let's look at this in practice. We'll use one by Kevin Starr:

Prevent maternal-child transmission of HIV in Africa.

verb, 'what'

desired outcome, in this case it would be zero maternal-child transmission of HIV

target audience, in this case, the people of Africa

Try it yourself!

● Quick summary



At this point, you now have:

- Decided what you're selling
- Explored how you are going to produce it
- Understood the problem you're solving
- Investigated how you will actually sell it
- Noted some competitors
- Noted some alternate substitutes
- Started to document your startup costs
- Started to identify operational expenses
- Began describing your ideal client
- Began your 8-word mission statement

Wow, you have accomplished so much already! Some of these things feel silly to document, but when you do you uncover aspects of your business that you may not have spent time thinking of before.

The next section we will hone in on what makes your business uniquely yours.

Foundations of a brand

We have established the *'what'* about your business, now it's time to define the *how*. How do you want people to feel when interacting with your brand? (hint, don't just say 'good'; check our list of helpful descriptors below)

How will (or does) your brand make customers or clients feel?



Helpful Descriptor Words:

Brilliant	Attractive	Serene
Joyful	Blissful	Sentimental
Gracious	Cheeky	Understood
Dignified	Cheerful	Heard
Hopeful	Adored	Worthy
Trendy	Amazed	Trusting
Amused	Confident	Thrilled
Humbled	Courageous	Accepted
Alert	Curious	Extraordinary
Inspired	Driven	Keen
Attentive	Ecstatic	Charming
Enthusiastic	Enchanted	Eager
Relaxed	Intrigued	Respected
Calm	Insightful	Devoted
Peaceful	Nostalgic	Witty
Resilient	Passionate	Empathetic
Empowered	Lustful	Entranced
Determined	Loved	Relieved
Included	Compassionate	Appreciated

The first '**why**' that we want to discuss is the why you are in business for yourself. There are a million different answers and each one is highly personalized to your life, needs and wants. So, why do you want to own your own business? Do you want a flexible lifestyle where you can work for yourself, on the projects you want? Do you want to make your own schedule? Are you very passionate about something? Jot down some thoughts here.

Foundations of a brand

Often times you'll hear business coaches say, 'you just need to figure out your *why*' as though it's a magical unicorn that will solve all of your business woes. Then, you get completely halted at this juncture because they failed to mention that there are at least **two** whys that you need to figure out. We'll help you sort both out today.

The second '**why**' is the why about your business and potential clients. Why would someone buy your product or service over a competitor or alternate/substitute? Why did you start this business in the first place? Why do you think it is unique? Why is this helpful to your potential clients?



Foundations of a brand

When you are interacting with people, what is important to you? In other words, what do you value? (e.g. honesty, dignity, respect, transparency, kindness, etc.) How does that translate to how you want people to remember with your brand?

If your brand were a famous person or celebrity, who would they be? Why?

"brand is the sum total of how someone perceives a particular organization. branding is about shaping that perception."

-- ASHLEY FRIEDLEIN

In your own words, how does your brand promise the end result of the feeling you described in previous questions? How does this address their problem or pain point?

● Quick summary

Your brand is what other people say about your company when you're not in the room.

You have more control over how people perceive it than you think.

The foundation (strategy) of a strong brand begins with your **core values** and translates into how you **communicate those values**, what the **promise** is that you're making to potential customers and how you can let your **brand personality** shine through enough to **differentiate** from any other competitors or substitutes available.



What about the cool logos, colors and typefaces? How does that fit with brand values?

Creating your brand mark can be a very fun process and sometimes people get so excited that they leapfrog right to this point without spending much time establishing the other critical elements to a strong brand foundation. What ends up happening is that the budding business

owner loves the mark for the first few months and then wants to edit or rebrand a shortly later. Very costly! And confusing for customers. Establishing your brand foundations will inform how it (visually) shows up. Next up, we will show you how to brief your designer on your brand work.

Brand Design Brief Guide: **New Brand**

Name of your company: _____

Overview of your business (what do you do, what is your mission):

List your brand values:

Branding objectives:

Market awareness Market leadership Increase customer loyalty
 Differentiation from competition Other: _____

What problem are you hoping this branding project will solve for your business?

Target audience:

List any known demographic information:

What challenges, needs or wants does this group have?

Industry insights:

What industry are you working within? Is there anything about the industry that the designer should know or be aware of?

List any competitors to your business here:

Project requirements:

What deliverables are you hoping to include in this branding project? Select all that apply.

Logo Font selection Custom font creation Color palette selection
 Photography mood board Custom icon design Detailed style guidelines
 Other: _____

Brand Design Brief Guide: **New Brand**

Project requirements:

Do you have any specific or unique requirements that the designer should be aware of?

Do you have a firm deadline when this needs to be completed? If so, please explain.

What budget do you have for this branding project?

Who are the primary decision makers who will approve the final deliverables? Please list all.

Please describe your selection process, how will you pick the designer that is right for this brand project? When will they be awarded the work?

Lastly, if you have any examples of work that you like (can be in or outside of your industry), please share and include what you like about it.

Building a sustainable marketing strategy in an ever-changing world



“instead of one-way interruption, web marketing is about delivering **useful content** at just the right moment that a buyer needs it.”

-- DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT

You have now chartered:

- What your business will do
- Who you will do it for
- The desired outcome you will achieve
- The values your company will adhere to
- The promise your company is making
- Beginnings of differentiation
- What drives you personally
- Requirements for your brand design

Now, it's time to let the world know about your business. Simply 'build it and they will come' is no longer a viable strategy in a very saturated global marketplace.

A lot of small businesses rely on word-of-mouth, which no shame if it works (and it demonstrates you have a strong client experience, i.e. you are fulfilling your brand promise).

But, by not implementing a more intentional marketing strategy - what kind of business are you leaving behind? What money are you leaving on the table for another brand that decided to show up more deliberately?

We will now explore various ways that as a small business owner you can make solid, long-lasting connections with your existing and potential future customers.

Building a sustainable marketing strategy in an ever-changing world

A quick history lesson

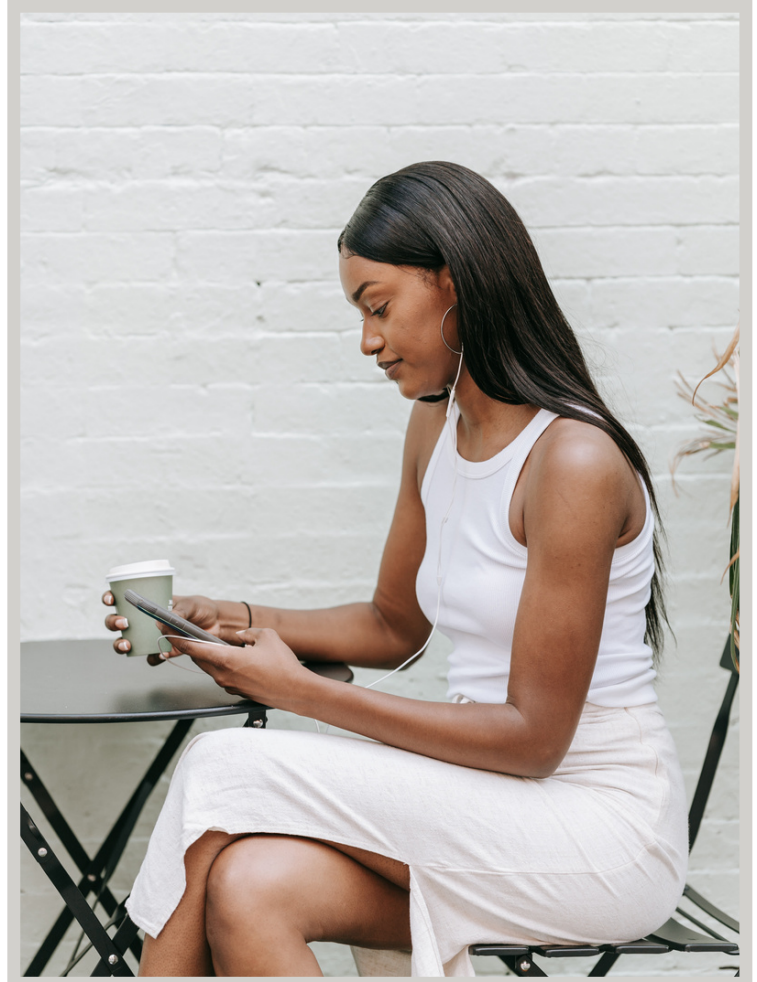
Once upon a time, marketing could be incredibly successful with a one-way dialogue. A message would be 'pushed' to a targeted audience and this took the form of television commercials, radio ads, newspaper or magazine print ads, billboards or radio ads. These are all traditional ways of marketing.

Now, there are generations born never knowing a world without the internet and as small business owners or marketers, we have access to an entirely new set of tools. This is a great opportunity, but can feel daunting to not only learn everything -- but stay up to date with the latest.

The crux of marketing **today** (and we've leapfrogged past several decades of online marketing tactics), is building a relationship with your consumers and does not solely rely on one-way communications.

Whereas we used to push and tell people about our product, now we need to listen and engage. This is why several years ago you have seen a large push toward storytelling which has since evolved to focus on content (really just means all of the various ways and formats that you can tell that story) and making that as personalized as possible.

We are in the midst of taking it another step further to facilitate user generated content. What will come next?



Now, is it starting to make sense why we need to spend time on our values and who we are as a business? How will you be able to tell your story if you don't know who you are? How will others be able to recognize who you are if you don't know yourself?

Building a sustainable marketing strategy in an ever-changing world

Many small business owners will begin with digital marketing tactics as there are methods that can be generated independently at a very low cost without additional production agencies. Understanding who your ideal client is will help you hone in on where they spend their time and how to get the right mix.

This is where your main story should live, where you can move toward a transaction of the sale.

OWNED

- Website
- Email
- Catalogs
- Digital products
- Magazines
- Blogs
- Mobile

This is how you can amplify your message to boost exposure to newer audiences (for a fee).

PAID

- Display ads
- Pay-per-click ads
- Social media ads
- Influencer programs
- Paid content promos
- Endorsements

EARNED

- Shares
- Mentions
- Likes
- Saves
- Reposts
- Reviews
- Ratings
- Press

SOCIAL MEDIA

While this may be your reserved channels and it is your content, you don't own the platform

Social media is where you will 'start' the dialogue by pushing out your story in order to best help achieve earned recognition and drive back to your owned channels to facilitate a sale.

"Earning" engagement through strong content can gain more exposure to new audiences without spending money on a paid ad. This is why people want to go viral.

● This seems great, but how do I actually get started? This seems overwhelming!

What you put together in terms of your marketing strategy is going to be as unique as the brand itself and the audience that you serve. The goal is to set up KPIs (key performance indicators) which basically mean you can monitor if something is performing or not and make adjustments. This will likely be one of the most time consuming aspects of your business and why first hires are usually in sales or marketing!

1. First, determine if you need a website (it's likely a yes)

- Secure the domain that you want
- Before, check that your social channel names are available. It's easier for consumers to remember if it's consistent
- Research how you wish you build your site.
 - If you plan to build it yourself, there are many all-in-one solutions (we use Squarespace)
 - If you are hiring someone, we recommend creating a brief (similar to the brand brief enclosed) to help guide the project more smoothly
- Outline what content you want on your site. Most sites will have a variation of the following:
 - About us / About me
 - Our services or Shop (with products, description, a way to accept payments)
 - Contact information (if you have a brick and mortar location this can include hours)
 - Blog or News section, which sets the expectation this section will be updated frequently (note: you can launch without a blog and introduce it later)
 - You could add 'Testimonials' or 'Reviews'
 - Add links to social at the top or bottom of the site

2. Before you launch, figure out a way to capture email addresses to people visiting your site (e.g. Mailerlite, MailChimp, etc.).

- You may need to integrate or connect the email tool to your website. There are usually many videos that will walk you through this depending on what providers you pick. Just type "[website company name] and [email marketing company name] integrations"
- Most email marketing platforms will offer a way to automate the system. You will want to set up a 'welcome' email to thank people for subscribing to your list. Once you set it up once, it should work for every time a new person subscribes

3. Set up your social channels.

- Determine what channels you want to utilize. This will be based heavily on who your ideal customer is and where they spend their time so the more you know, the better off you'll be
- Many times people will utilize the site launch or relaunch to create their first post or message that they have launched
- The frequency in which you need to post in an ongoing basis will depend heavily on who your ideal customer is and the algorithm of the platform you're using (which changes a lot)
- Pro tip: make sure your social channels look similar, have a similar message and look like an extension of your website

Summary

You now know:

- What your business will do
- Who you will do it for
- What problem your business is solving
- Your company values
- The promise your company is making
- Beginnings of differentiation
- What drives you personally
- Requirements for your brand design
- How to brief a designer on your brand
- Presumably your brand identity
- Digital marketing mix aspects
- That you can make sales on your site
- That you can capture site visitor emails
- That you can reach through social

In other words, you now know:

- ✓ **What** you're selling (product or service)
- ✓ **Why** you are selling it (motivators)
- ✓ **Who** you are selling it to (ideal client)
- ✓ **Why** they care (shared values)
- ✓ **How** to mitigate objections (differentiation)
- ✓ **How** they can buy from you (website)
- ✓ **How** to reach for more clients

You are MORE than ready to sell.

You are ready to deliver.

You are ready for results.

Next up, we will provide a couple tips and things to consider while you are getting started and earning revenues. Be sure to follow [Dalziel & Company](#) on our Instagram page and subscribe to our emails to access even more enriched content in your business ownership journey.



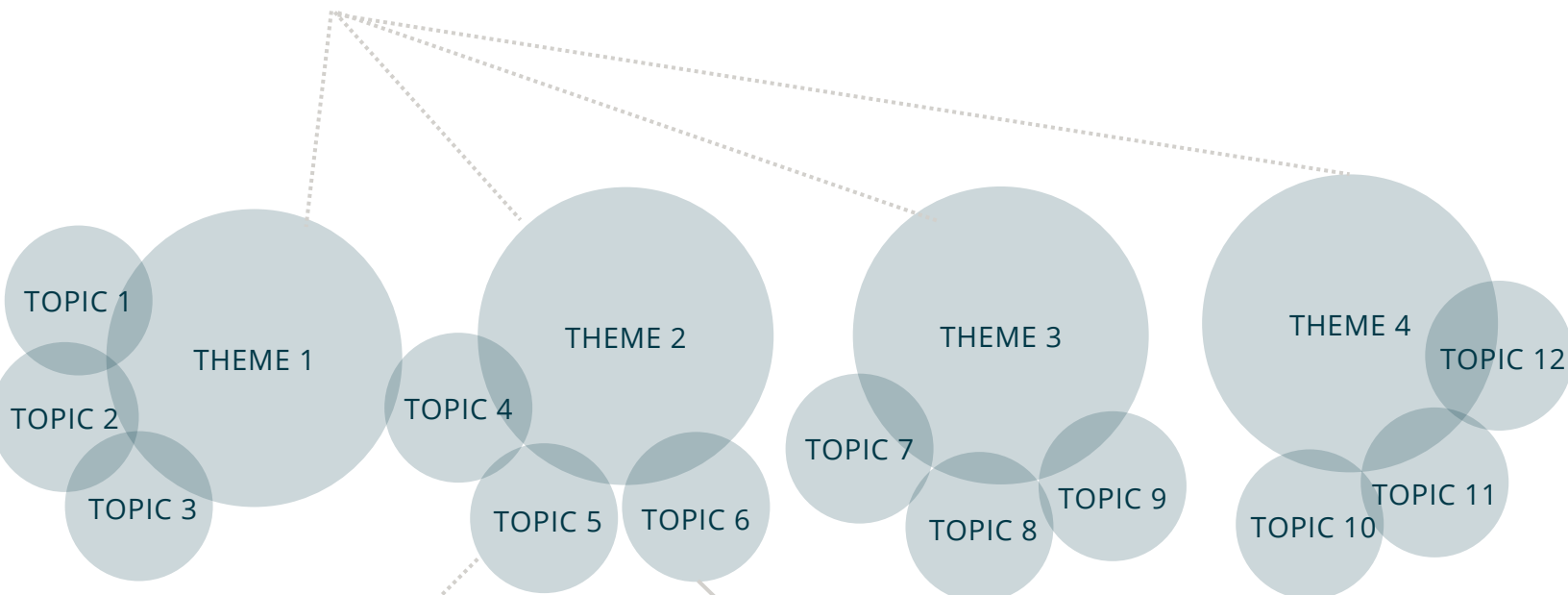
pro tip:

Once you have your business plan and idea ready to hit the ground running, but before your first transaction -- speak with a tax professional, lawyer or research your local jurisdiction regarding registering your business. You can set up your business in a variety of ways (e.g. sole proprietor, LLC, etc.). Do your research! Your company structure will be best suited to your unique business needs. Then, you can file for an EIN (employer identification number), which will allow you to open up a bank account for your business and will be used when you file your taxes.

Tips for creating content

Brain dumping can be one of the best ways to get all of your thoughts documented before you forget something, before you spend time editing into a comprehensive format. What do you know about your business? Your industry? Who are you? Write everything down and try not to interrupt yourself or your thought process. You can edit and polish it later. Outlined below is an example of **one** way you can format your content if you are producing yourself as this can be a very time-consuming activity.

Pick a quarterly theme relevant to your business or seasonality (4 per year). Then create a monthly topic for each theme. There will be 12 in total for the year.



For every topic, create a static Instagram post that can be pinned at the top of your Instagram channel, you can also share this on Pinterest. These should be updated quarterly when the theme changes.

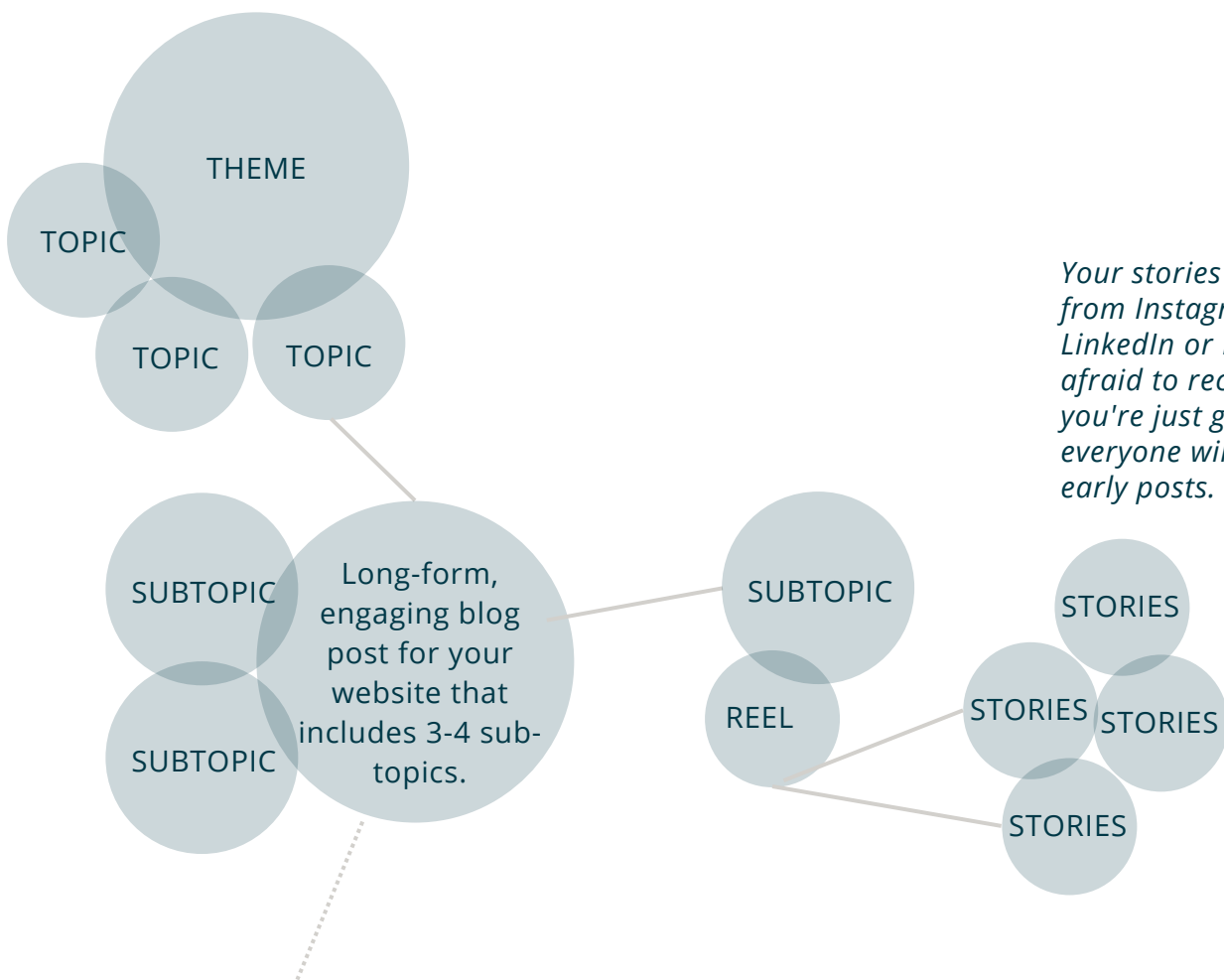
Long-form, engaging blog post for your website that includes 3-4 sub-topics.

For each subtopic, create a video reel (that can be used on Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, or LinkedIn). Try to post these weekly. Maybe interview a guest with an adjacent product or service.

Stories can then be created daily based on the reel or subtopic.

Tips for creating content

Brain dumping can be one of the best ways to get all of your thoughts documented before you forget something, before you spend time editing into a comprehensive format. What do you know about your business? Your industry? Who are you? Write everything down and try not to interrupt yourself or your thought process. You can edit and polish it later. Outlined below is an example of **one** way you can format your content if you are producing yourself as this can be a very time-consuming activity.



Your stories can be repurposed from Instagram to Facebook to LinkedIn or Pinterest. Don't be afraid to recycle content when you're just getting started. Not everyone will go back and read your early posts.

Your long-form engaging posts should consider SEO, or search engine optimization. There are many aspects to this, but the first usually begins with taking that understanding of your ideal client and researching keywords that they may use and finding relevant ways to integrate into your content.

Ideas for more frequent posts (stories, etc.):

- Share a process of quick tip that makes life easier
- How was last month?
- What is one of the favorite things to do in your business?
- Gratitude, thank 1-2 people and tag them
- Answer a commonly asked question about your business
- Just saying hello! Snap a selfie or quick video
- Client testimonial
- Relevant, famous quote
- What is trending in your industry or business now?
- Day in the life video
- Dog/coworker pic

book a session

While we strive to make the Business Basics e-workbook completely comprehensive, this work can be very overwhelming. **You do not have to do this on your own!** Dalziel & Company offers a variety of ways to work 1:1, through VIP Days, Ongoing Executive Consultations or even our paid email called ***The Guide*** where you will find even more helpful frameworks and exercises to keep your business running smoothly.

[CLICK HERE](#)