

**Start Up Loans**

# The PR toolkit for start up businesses

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# Contents

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<b>1. What is PR?</b>	<b>6</b>
Why is PR important for a small business	
<hr/>	
<b>2. The key components of PR</b>	<b>12</b>
Press releases	
Editorial requests	
Social media	
Your business website	
<hr/>	
<b>3. PR strategy</b>	<b>18</b>
The 30 minutes a week PR strategy	
<hr/>	
<b>4. Wooing journalists</b>	<b>32</b>
Targeting	
Social media	
Segmenting	
<hr/>	
<b>5. Positioning news releases</b>	<b>38</b>
A template for success	
<hr/>	
<b>6. Responding to editorial requests</b>	<b>46</b>
Golden rules	

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<b>7. Distributing the news</b>	<b>50</b>
Traditional journalists	
Existing customers	
Social media commentators	

---

<b>8. The output value</b>	<b>56</b>
PR for small businesses	

---

<b>9. Getting the best out of a media interview</b>	<b>60</b>
Audience	
Messaging	
Approach	

---

<b>10. Where to go for a helping hand</b>	<b>68</b>
PR for small businesses	

---

<b>Success stories</b>	<b>74</b>
Philly & Friends	

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<b>Other free toolkits</b>	<b>76</b>
----------------------------	-----------

# **PR toolkit for small businesses**

**Would you like your brand mentioned in the nation's newspapers? What about watching your products trend on social media, or having the opportunity to talk about your business on local radio?**

**If the answer to any of these questions is yes but you don't really know where to start, then this guide could help get your business in the headlines.**

**Journalists and commentators genuinely want to hear the small business perspective just as much as big business comment. All you have to learn is how to get your brand in front of them and how to tell a compelling story when you do.**

## **Section 1.**

# **What is PR?**

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Why is PR important for a small business

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If you read nothing else in this guide, read this chapter. It will tell you what PR is all about and why big corporates spend hundreds of thousands of pounds a year on getting it right.



# 1. What is PR?

Public Relations implies customer service, but PR is so much more than that.

PR is what people say about your brand and your products and it's important. Regardless of your positive branding or marketing, if people are talking about your business in a negative way, it's likely to be costly for your business because people trust people.

Users buy based on recommendations, whether that's through word of mouth or reviews online, and PR taps into that.

PR is the pursuit of positive endorsements for your business, product or brand from trusted, independent sources. They're recommendations and they're arguably more effective than advertising when it comes to winning customers.

So think of PR as Personal Recommendations just as much as Public Relations.



## There are four key components to PR:

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- 1** Proactively distributing your news through press releases, trying to entice journalists, bloggers and broadcasters to include your brand in their articles.

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- 2** Responding to journalists' requests for spokespeople, comments and case studies as they compile their stories and need to include real life examples to make their copy interesting.

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- 3** Engaging with social chatter, whether through recognised channels like Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram, or simply by posting a blog, to become part of a real time conversation.

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- 4** Ensuring your shop window, (your website) is alive and current. That's where people check you out; whether it's those who you want to be writing about you or potential customers who have taken note of what others have said and are now on the verge of being convinced.

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## Why is PR important for a small business

Personal recommendations are a great way of getting sales. But imagine getting a personal recommendation in front of 10,000 friends?

That's essentially the impact coverage from a trusted journalist with an average readership can have. For a blog, the same can be achieved while for a regional radio station, that figure jumps much higher.

For small businesses, that kind of exposure can be incredibly valuable and drive significant sales, without the cost of a big marketing campaign.

### Assessing the value of PR for a small business

- PR doesn't have to be expensive
- PR agencies are expensive and may not be an affordable option for a start up but you don't have to spend large amounts to succeed

### PR principles to follow:

- Treat PR as part of the overall marketing mix
- Recognise the importance of independent third-party endorsements of your brand and product as high value
- Spend at least as much time on PR as on customer newsletters, advertising and sales promotions



## **Section 2.**

# **The key components of PR**

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**Press releases**

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**Editorial requests**

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**Social media**

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**Your business website**

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## 2. The key components of PR

Treat PR as your external image. How does everyone outside of the business view you? What's their perception of your brand and product? What do trusted commentators say about you?

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### Press releases

Most people have heard of press releases but lots of businesses don't think they're big enough to create and send their own.

That's not true – anyone can send out a press release and make a success of it. And it's simple and relatively cheap to do.

Press releases are a great way of getting your brand and your story in front of journalists, website owners and bloggers but it's vital they're written properly and relevant to the people you send them to.

Use common sense. If your press release is about your new IT product, don't send it to a sports journalist.

The following sections cover press releases – they should be the main tool you use to catch the attention of journalists and bloggers.

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## Editorial requests

Editorial requests are a dream for small businesses. Essentially, an editorial request will come from a journalist who is actively looking for comments on something they're writing.

Journalists will do this in different ways. For example, some will request input on social media, while others will reach out via agencies.

Follow relevant journalists and respond to any requests for comments. You're not guaranteed to get a reply or a quote in their article but it's always worth trying.

Do it well and you're likely to be top of the list when a journalist is looking for comment further down the line. We'll look at the rules to follow when you're responding to editorial requests.

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## Social media

Social media is a full-time job. It's dynamic, it moves quickly and if you're not monitoring it closely, you can miss opportunities.

There are lots of social media platforms and each has their own unique differences.



What they do have in common is the fact that they generally involve a conversation between poster and follower, which means they're an all-important tool for managing your business' external image.

We've mentioned that journalists use social media to hunt for editorial requests but they'll also use it for research on trending topics and developing news stories.

Businesses use social media to promote and position their brand. Customers use social media to comment, whether positively or negatively, on their experience with a brand.

That may sound overwhelming but it doesn't have to be. Small businesses can manage and run their own social media channels and develop strategies that work for them – and they can be effective PR tools.

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## **Your business website**

Having a website is a must for every business and the good news is you can build a website cheaply or get someone else to do it for you.

Before you launch your business, you should have a functioning website. It's the first port of call for most users when searching for products or services, so it's important that it represents your business in a positive light. It needs to inspire trust, it needs to promote your services and it needs to be active.

Once it's built the hard work begins because you need to update it regularly and keep it fresh. Stagnant, outdated



websites are more likely to damage your business' reputation than improve it.

## PR and your website

A working, up-to-date website is important for your customers but in terms of PR, your website's appearance can also influence the likelihood of a journalist referencing your business.

Media Centres, or somewhere to host press releases, are worth including. As are clear links through to your social media profiles.

## Building your website

There are a lot of free platforms and tools available to help you create a website for your business, or you can outsource it relatively cheaply.



**Section 3.**

# PR strategy

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The 30 minutes a week PR strategy

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## 3. PR strategy

Just 30 minutes a week can be all it takes to stay on top of your PR. The strategy itself may take a little longer to create but by following simple guidelines outlined here, a workable plan is easy to create and can be highly effective.

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### The 30-minutes a week PR strategy

Building your PR plan.

First things first, you should split your PR activity under three separate headings for each month of the year, including the following:

#### Activity

- Launches / proactive news / research / case studies
- Advertising
- Calendar events

#### Response

- News release to distribute
- Comment for website only
- Social media and blog

## Ad hoc

- Editorial request responses
- Google Alerts / social media prompts

## PR plan example – month one

	proactive news	research	
product launch and advertising			
website comment	social media post	website comment	social media post
	distribute news release		
alerts google twitter prompts editorial request response	▶	▶	▶

We've included a PR plan template for a full quarter at the end of this chapter – feel free to cut it out and use it!



## Activity

This has three components, all of which are under your control and can be planned.

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- 1 Any activity that the business has in its plan, whether the launch of a new product through to engagement in a local charity event, is worthy of an external comment.

Remember that even if it does not get picked up by journalists, it will sit as updated news in the media section of your website and ultimately keep the site lively and current to any viewers.

Research outputs, top tips and case studies that can be used by journalists in advice pieces are always in demand.

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**2** External PR should support any advertising that is planned at the same time. If media coverage is achieved, it will add to the effectiveness of the advertising.

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**3** If possible, piggy back on news and events from other businesses to promote your own.

This could be anything from the release of a government report on a subject that is relevant to your business, to a seasonal event, for instance Valentine's Day or the London Marathon, where a business can link what it does to the event.

The secret is to access a calendar where all the work has been done already in listing the events, and to get the timing right to coincide with the journalists' planning cycles. You can use an online retail marketing calendar as a guide to help your business capitalise on key events.

## Response

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**1** Actual, well thought out press releases. Journalists are wary of businesses that pump out press releases too frequently with the sole aim of the journalists doing their advertising for them. But for genuine news that you'd reasonably expect the general public to have an interest in, journalists will be keen to hear about it.

Planning the press release can be done weeks in advance and it can be held ready to distribute when the time is right.

It should be positioned around, and built on, anything that a business has identified in the 'activity' part of the plan.

**Every business should be planning a press release at least every three months.**

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**2** The business has to decide whether a piece of news, comment, response to some data being released, or the winning of a contract, is worthy of broad-scale distribution, or whether it just wants to use it as an update on its website.

The process is the same, in that the news comment is written and put onto the website, but just not distributed. It is then available for any visitors to the website, whether prospective customers or journalists, to read.



Critically, this keeps the website up-to-date, and retains visitors' interest.

**Your business should be updating the news or media section of its website at least every couple of weeks.**

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**3** As an alternative to trying to entice journalists, many businesses will schedule a series of social media blogs.

These are generally short advice-based or comment pieces that are posted on to your website and shared on social media, without being distributed to journalists via a press release.

Likewise blogs are a good way for a business to keep its website updated and to keep the business brand in front of commentators.

Bloggers are a good way of getting trusted thirdparty endorsements for your business. In fact, lots of journalists use recognised bloggers for some of their content.

Blogs don't need to be long but they need to be relevant and of interest to your users.

**Every business should try to write at least one blog per month.**

- 1 The world of news never sleeps and journalists are always looking out for new angles on trending stories. These can be generated in two ways.

### **Editorial requests:**

As discussed in section two, businesses should set themselves up on a platform to receive these from journalists when appropriate.

### **Pre-empting editorial requests:**

Businesses watching the news in their sector can comment on something trending. They can either post a quick press release or comment on social media.

This means your business needs to keep an eye on developing trends and stories, and be willing to comment on them quickly. News is short-lived, particularly on social media, so it's important to strike while the iron is hot.

Few businesses are keen to have their attention diverted away from their main day-to-day sales and cash collection priorities to spend too much time actively watching for ad hoc news items, but they can take three simple steps as prompts without being distracted:

- Set up Google Alerts for key words in your business sector.
- Follow key sector journalists on social media e.g. Twitter.
- Keep an eye on the news e.g. BBC News 24.

When something relevant appears, comment along the lines of ‘XXX, owner of YYY responds to the Prime Minister’s call for more job creation. Simplify the process, relieve employment law, and relax NI reporting if you really want small businesses engaging’.

The objective is purely to catch the eye of journalists and get your business name into print.



## **Top Tips: Recommended stories to issue to media**

**Consider issuing press releases to the media when you have news related to the following:**

- **Received a listing for your product(s) with a national retailer.**
- **An anniversary, first/second year of trading, etc.**
- **Plans to expand, or announcing an expansion of the business.**
- **Launched new product(s) or development within the business.**
- **A major new hire/appointment within the business.**
- **Hit/exceeded a big target or milestone.**
- **A strong news hook (i.e. a father and son business to tie into Father's Day).**

# Month 1

## Activity

	proactive news	research
product launch and advertising		

## Response

website comment	social media post	website comment	social media post
	distribute news release		

## Ad hoc

alerts google twitter prompts editorial request response	▶	▶	▶

## Month 2





### Activity

case study	event	proactive news	research

### Response

website comment	social media post	website comment	social media post

### Ad hoc

# Month 3





## Activity

case study	event	proactive news	research

## Response

website comment	social media post	website comment	social media post
			distribute news release

## Ad hoc

**Section 4.**

# Wooing journalists

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Targeting

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Social media

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Segmenting

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## 4. Wooing journalists

Journalists like to be the person that everyone listens to and takes notice of. And in their line of work, they also want to be the one that breaks the big, exclusive news.

Adding all that together, that means journalists are:

- Receptive of receiving good, relevant news stories
- Unreceptive of receiving weak news just to profile a business

It's important to use that as a filter when you decide whether to send a press release or news story to a journalist. Essentially, is your news story relevant to the journalist and their readers, or is it a shameless plug?

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### Targeting the right journalists

For every business, positive coverage in national media is the dream but in all likelihood, it's a pipedream for 99% of your news.

Coverage in local press or blogs is much more attainable, which is why you should look to tailor your PR targets.

To do that, you need to think about the audience you're trying to influence and look at the media and press that audience is engaged with.

If you're a small café based in Manchester and you're running a competition offering free meals, a national newspaper is unlikely to be interested in it because their audience is based all across the UK. Local newspapers, whose audience is local to your business, may want to feature it.

**Find local media outlets and trade media relevant to your business. Make a comprehensive list and use that as a starting point to target with your press releases and news.**

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## **Use social media to identify relevant journalists**

In a similar way, target journalists who cover topics and regions relevant to your business. Using the example of the Manchester café again, there's no point targeting sports journalists. Look for journalists who cover local businesses or restaurants and engage with them on social media.

### **Other tools to identify and network with relevant journalists**

Media databases list contact details for journalists. They're a paid-for service but they allow you to search for relevant contacts and access their contact details. If you don't have the budget for that, be proactive and scour media and news websites for contact details and make a contact list of potential targets.

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## Segment your contacts

The above exercises should enable you to quickly target the right journalists and contacts quickly, so when you have something newsworthy, you've already got the contact and journalist to hand.

What is also helpful is to group your contacts into segments and tailor your approaches to the contacts within those segments.

### Example – Café

The café in Manchester may keep a list of local food bloggers they've found on social media separate to business journalists within local press because they're going to be interested in slightly different news stories.



## Building media relationships

Some journalists will prove more receptive and therefore more valuable than others. For those select few, keep an eye on what they're doing and engage with them where possible.

Set up Google Alerts and keep on top of their social media profiles. Liking posts, commenting on what they're sharing and even direct messages can encourage a positive relationship – but try not to become a stalker!

Once you're in contact with a journalist, think how you can develop your relationship. Invite them for a coffee or to see your business in the flesh. By doing so there's a chance you could become a trusted, go-to source.

Some journalists won't respond, some won't take you up on your offer but if you're successful with even just one, it's good for PR purposes.

## **Being timely and relevant**

Gaining a journalist's trust – and mentions in what they write – is all about timing and relevance. If you're not either of those things, it doesn't matter how interesting your news is, it's unlikely to make it into what they're writing.

Be structured and strategic in what you're sending, and create some rules to follow:

- Don't send news if it's an obvious attempt to get column inches
- If your news is generic, distribute it to a broad list
- If your news is specific, send it to journalists that it's relevant to

**Section 5.**

# **Positioning news releases**

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A template for success

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# 5. Positioning news releases

You have about three seconds to capture the interest of a journalist, blogger or broadcast researcher. They get hundreds of emails and news feeds every day, and yours has to be the one that stands out.

In those three seconds, your press release has to fulfil a list of key points:

- The right headline hook
- A good initial summary
- Evidence of a quote
- Some facts
- A good visual image

A good way to achieve the right initial structure is to take the above and make it into a template for your press release.

That's exactly what we've done in the following section – use it as a template to create your press releases!





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# A template for success

## Headline

This is the most important part of your template. It is the one opportunity to hook the journalist and helps them decide whether your release is worthy of their attention.

You have no more than 15 words to convince the journalist that this is for them.

### Focus on four triggers

#### Regional angle:

If you are looking for regional coverage, then refer to the area: 'Kent business sweeps the board at awards evening'. This will catch the eye of local journalists but may well miss national coverage.

#### Subject pick-up:

If your focus is your sector or topic, looking for trade and subject pick-up, then refer specifically to it: 'Four super foods combine to combat insomnia'.

#### Think keywords:

Export, jobs, health, diversity, economy, or if it's relevant and not in any way open to libel challenge, use a famous person's name.

Journalists will have different ‘Google Alerts’ set up for news stories that they are interested in and will search for releases by keyword.

### Provocation, not boredom:

No one will pick up the headline: ‘Travel firm appoints new Finance Director’, but ‘Money man adds spice to weekend breaks’ may well catch a few eyes. As a general rule, don’t be offensive. Beyond that, be as edgy as you can to hook the reader.

### Timing:

If you’ve been able to convince a journalist to take your release as an ‘exclusive’, then you need to tell others that it’s ‘embargoed’ until a certain time.



Aside from embargoed releases, you need to set the time when you want your release to be distributed. There is an art to this.

Most journalists won’t pick up releases at the end of the day and tomorrow is too late. First thing in the morning they’ll be trying to clear their email inbox, especially on a Monday morning. So if it’s truly ‘breaking news’, then 7am is fine; otherwise go for 10am onwards.

Some journalists will have their own target deadlines too. For instance, for the Sunday papers most journalists will have their columns scoped out by the previous Wednesday. For monthly trade magazines deadlines will be weeks in advance. Consumer titles tend to have a threemonth lead time. If they are your target, then it is worth calling the editorial team and simply asking when the best time to submit content is.

## **Content:**

Presentation of this is important as, especially online, journalists may just copy and paste the whole content.

Copywriting services are available for those businesses without the time or in-house skills themselves.

The content itself is equally important though. There are four critical aspects to include:

- **A teaser**

The teaser is what will convince journalists to go to the next stage and read and use the release. It has to be factual and succinct, telling the journalist exactly what the release is about within the first line.

- **Including facts, data or research**

Journalists need a reason to put you in their columns, and if there is nothing new or interesting for them to

use, they will move on very quickly and consign your release to their junk box. Make it unique and include facts, data and research if you can.

- **A clear story**

You should include four or five clearly laid out paragraphs telling the story, without waffle. These paragraphs should draw out the key elements that you want the reader to focus on.

Bear in mind that this is the first time the journalist will have read it, so don't take for granted that they will know what you're talking about. Try and distance yourself from what you know and assume the reader is completely fresh to the subject and content. Make it clear and well laid out.

- **Quotes**

Journalists look to print expert opinion and views from commentators. This provides a great opportunity for you and your business to get a good name check. Include quotes that you're happy to be associated with – they'll be used word for word.

Try to have at least two quotes. One from the business and a second from a recognised expert adding credibility to the release. The more highly recognised they are, the more likely it is that the release will be picked up.

Using a local MP's name in a release, for example, will often trigger several Google Alerts that have been set

up by journalists, so they will be prompted to read your release.

### Notes for editors:

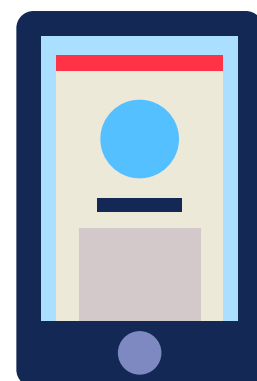
- Include a short summary of the business and your website details.
- List reference details for data and any research.

### Image:

- Include strong, high-quality images.
- Ensure your image is high resolution, relevant and that you have the right permissions in place for this to be used.
- Include your brand name or logo in the image if possible but don't let it takeover the image. It should be discreet.

### Contact details:

- If there are no contact details for journalists to follow-up on at the end of the release, don't be surprised if you don't hear anything.
- Include names, telephone numbers and email addresses. Be prepared to take calls from journalists at any time. If you're not available, they're likely to move on to the next story and forget about yours.



**Section 6.**

# **Responding to editorial requests**

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Golden rules

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## 6. Responding to editorial requests

Editorial requests fall into ad hoc work: answering requests from journalists for case studies and quotes from spokespeople to add to the articles they are already writing or planning.

There are two great advantages to responding to editorial requests:

- You don't have to entice the journalist.
- They are much quicker and easier to respond to.

You can either manage this yourself, or consider the value of an online subscription package designed for businesses wanting to receive editorial requests.

**Start Up Loans recipients can take advantage of an exclusive offer of 25% off a monthly or annual subscription to JournoLink and save up to £75 p.a.**

**Full details are available at  
<https://www.startuploans.co.uk/business-offers/journalink/>**



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## Editorial request golden rules

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- 1** Be brief but give the journalist a good reason to follow up with you. Don't just respond with 'I'm interested in talking to you' make it easy for them and outline what you can offer them. Keep it relevant, clear and short.
- 2** Respond quickly. Often the journalist will be working to a tight timeframe and they are more likely to look at, and contact, early respondents.
- 3** Provide good contact details, including a telephone number and email address. Be ready to take their call or respond to an email at their convenience, not yours. It may be that you have to get that order out in the next hour but by then the journalist may well have moved onto the next respondent.
- 4** Provide a link to any high-quality images you have of your business in your response. Good images can persuade journalists that you are the business they want to hear from. Make sure you have the right permissions in place to use any images you send.

## Section 7.

# Distributing the news

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Traditional journalists

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Existing customers

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Social media commentators

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## 7. Distributing the news

Distributing your news release is the one area where a helping hand is generally useful.

The objective should be that each piece of news or comment will be seen by:

- Trusted media commentators, both sector specific and general
- Existing and potential customers
- Social media audiences

Your release should be accessible for later viewing:

- Within search engine listings
- On your website

Distribution therefore breaks down into three channels:

- Traditional journalists
- Customer newsletters and website media room updates
- Social media commentators

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## Traditional journalists

If you have the time and resource to compile journalist lists and send out emails, the do-it-yourself solution may work.

But for some businesses, that may not be possible, in which case a distribution service could come in useful.

There are two options:

- Employing a PR Agency to do this as an outsourced service (£££)
- Using an online web-based service (£)

Distribution is a key element of the overall strategy and the target audience will already have been defined as part of that strategy.

Before pressing the ‘send’ button, go through the following press release template checklist to confirm you have filled all the criteria:

- Headline
- Timing
- Content
- Quotes
- Notes
- Image
- Contact details



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## **Existing customers**

Keeping existing customers informed of business developments and news is sometimes overlooked but it's typically easier – and cheaper – to sell to existing customers rather than winning new ones, so update your existing customers!

You can do this through regular email sends but think about segmenting your customers' email address into lists.

For example, if you sell women's and men's shoes, keep separate lists of customers based on the product they bought. If you have news that's specific to women's shoes, it's probably not worth sending an update to users who've only bought men's shoes.

But regardless of who you're targeting, make sure your news features on your website so that any visitors can keep up to date.

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## **Social media commentators**

For many businesses, the most important channel to be engaged in for attracting journalists' attention is Twitter.

You can do this yourself, or choose a release distribution service that will post your release on Twitter automatically when they send it to regular journalists.

This ensures that social commentators and journalists who lift news from Twitter and who follow your chosen distribution service, see your headline and can access the release through a link on the tweet.

But Twitter isn't the only one. Other social media channels may work better for your business and your audience, so think about where you're posting. For example Facebook and Instagram are increasingly being used in PR across a growing range of sectors.

**There are tools which allow you to post to multiple social media platforms at the same time.**



**Section 8.**

# The output value

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PR for small businesses

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## 8. The output value

Businesses often obsess about what media coverage they get from PR and how it should be valued. Don't, because there's no easy answer to this.

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### PR for small businesses

PR is part of an overall marketing mix. It should not be seen as an immediate route to large-scale media coverage but more of an ongoing tactic to capture the interest of trusted journalists and commentators so that, over time, the business is seen as a credible contributor to the news agenda. For this reason, commit to at least an annual PR strategy.

Track your coverage either by yourself or through a subscription to a full news cutting service, although these can be expensive for start ups.

Keep track of which journalists are showing an interest in your releases so you can build relations. A distribution service can help you assess whether the format and content of releases is catching the eye of journalists, or if the approach needs to be reviewed. If it is attracting coverage, stick to the game plan.

Print journalism isn't quite the draw it maybe once was. While there's obvious value in getting coverage in print, don't neglect online media coverage.

Online media coverage has the added benefit of improving your where you rank in online search engines

like Google, if your business' website is linked to – it also makes measurement much easier:

**It's easier to track clicks from media coverage to your site than customers who've read a story about your business in a newspaper and then gone to your site.**

In summary:

- If you have marketing spend available, consider carefully where best to use it.
- Track which journalists are showing an interest in you and build relationships with them.
- Commit to an ongoing PR plan, set out for the year ahead.
- Find the most economical service possible to help you in the key areas.



**Section 9.**

# Getting the best out of a media interview

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Audience

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Messaging

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Approach

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## 9. Getting the best out of a media interview

When you see people performing well when being interviewed on the news, don't assume they're just good at it; most have been coached by an expert.

And there's no reason why every small business owner can't be just as effective.

There are two things to remember:

- Make this your moment of fame and impact. It's your show and make sure you run it.
- The interviewer is under more pressure than you. It's their job to create a good interview and to do that, they need a good interviewee who's interesting and engaging. They're going to be helpful, so be prepared to help them out as well.

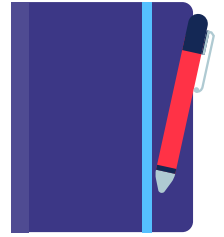
Your preparation should have four distinct elements:

- Agenda
- Audience
- Messaging
- Approach

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## Agenda

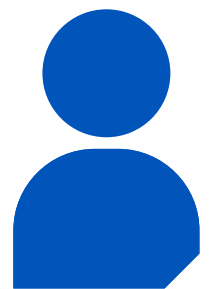
- Write down why you are doing the interview. You must have a very clear objective. What do you want to achieve?
- Is this to promote your brand or protect it? Or are you there as an expert in your field to add comments to trending news? This will dictate how you position yourself.
- Whether you will be in 'sales' mode or 'apologetic' mode.
- Whether you will lead the conversation, or whether you will allow the journalist to.
- What would be a good outcome for you from the interview? That's what you have to plan for.



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## Audience

- Who's your audience? It's important that you position what you're saying to the audience the interview is for.
- What's their level of understanding of your product and area? Don't assume they know as much about it as you. If they do, use acronyms and technical phrases, but if they don't, you need to keep things in plain English and avoid complexities.



- Think about the difference between a Radio 4 audience and a local radio station audience, or a reader of The Times compared to a reader of a local newspaper. Each has a different reason for listening and reading, and each expects something different.
- Have a picture in your mind of who you're talking to and do your best to maintain a conversation with that image in mind.
- The success of your interview and the impact you create will depend on how well you adapt to your audience.

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## Messaging

- See the interview as your opportunity to get your message over to your audience.
- Plan what message you want to land and ideally break this down into no more than three points.
- At the outset of the interview, make these three points very briefly so that everyone knows what you're talking about.
- As the interview progresses, concentrate on each point one by one, filling out the facts and detail of each one as you go.
- At the end, reinforce your three points and your message.

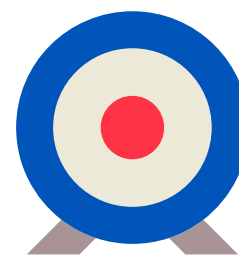




- Work out what quote you would like to see in the paper or be taken as a sound bite in an interview say it several times.
  - For a print interview, it often helps to have your preferred quote written out to give directly to the journalist. They'll appreciate having your exact words as much as you will seeing them in the article.
  - Have a good quality, high-resolution picture ready to provide to a print journalist too.
- 

## Approach

- Having thought about your agenda, your audience and your messaging, reflect on the overall approach you're going to take.
- Think what you should wear to create the right impression.
- Think about the tone of your voice and the speed of your delivery.
- As a basic test, put yourself in the position of the audience. How would you expect to see the interviewee (i.e. you) performing?
- Make sure you've practised the way you want to deliver your three key points and your message.

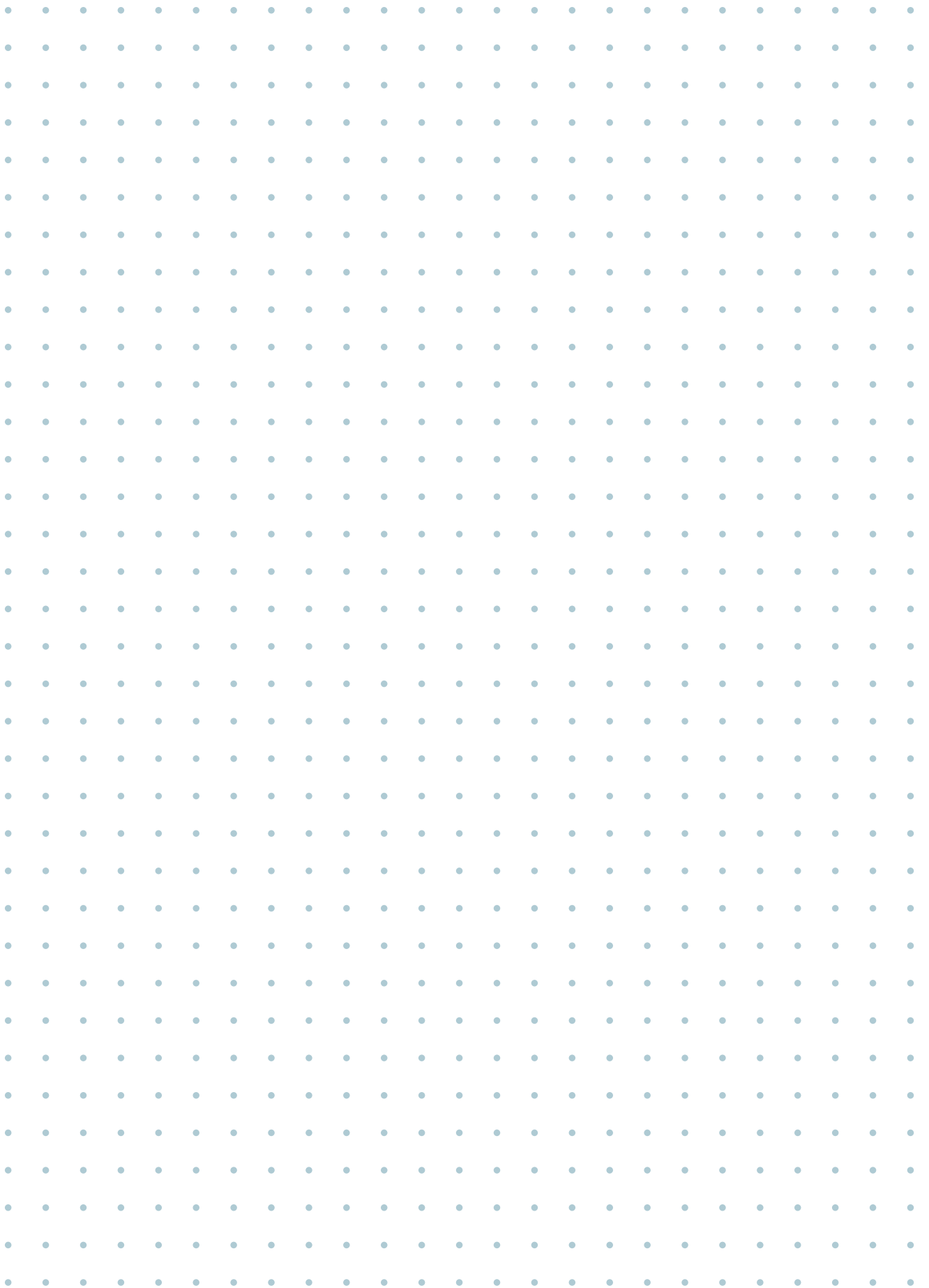


## A few final tips

- If there's a camera nearby, assume it is on you.
- If there's a microphone around, assume it's switched on.
- There's no such thing as an 'off-the-record' conversation with a journalist. In other words, don't get caught out unexpectedly.
- If you're being interviewed direct to camera, however weird it feels, talk directly to the lens. The audience will see you speaking directly to them and not to an anonymous person off camera.
- If your interview is 'local', make sure you position yourself as 'local' too. Find out the name of the interviewer and use it conversationally even if you're not sitting in front of them.
- Enjoy the experience. If you feel uncomfortable, that will come through, in print as much as it will on the television or the radio.
- Always remember that the interviewer is under greater pressure than you. And however you perform, everyone will say you did brilliantly.

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# Notes



**Section 10.**

# **Where to go for a helping hand**

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PR for small businesses

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# 10. Where to go for a helping hand

Most businesses will need help in at least some areas of PR. Choosing which depends on existing inhouse skills, time and budget.

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## PR for small businesses

This guide has been put together by Start Up Loans in conjunction with JournoLink, an online platform to help small businesses in those areas where they need that help.

JournoLink provides help with all the key aspects of managing your PR, from prompts on when and how to issue news content, to distributing that content to a whole range of journalists and bloggers, monitoring who is showing an interest in you, letting you know when journalists are looking for specific input and spokespeople for articles they are writing, and matching your content with the journalists most likely to cover you.

And it's been built with the small business budget in mind.

## Disclaimer

You understand that in providing details of corporate offers The Start-Up Loans Company is not endorsing any company, products or services other than its own and that you will be solely responsible for deciding whether to use or take up any of the products or services offered by any of the companies detailed here.

Start Up Loans recipients can take advantage of an exclusive offer of 25% off a monthly or annual subscription to JournoLink and save up to £75 p.a.

Full details are available at <https://www.startuploans.co.uk/business-offers/journalink/>

JournoLink is the online PR (Public Relations) Platform for small businesses to manage their PR and get in the local and national media. JournoLink is offering Start Up Loan recipients 25% off their subscription either paid monthly or annually. That means you could have an allround PR solution for as little as £150 for the year.

The subscription to JournoLink's services include:

- Premium Directory Listing
- Complete Access to PR Toolkit
- Events & Awards Calendar
- Enhanced Press Release Writing
- Discounted Professional Services

By redeeming this offer you will be able to send press releases, answer editorial requests, view your business calendar and learn about PR all from one easy to use online portal.

## Company details

JournoLink is an online PR toolkit that helps you get your business in the media. Whether you want to promote your product launch, announce your crowd funding campaign or comment on the latest industry stats, you can do it all through JournoLink. They have local, national and broadcast journalists from a broad range of industry sectors waiting to hear from you.

A subscription to JournoLink includes:

- Go-to Directory of business profiles for journalists to search and discover small businesses.
- Send your Press Release to a database of more than 6,000 journalists all tagged by industry and location so the right people are hearing your news.
- SME Events Calendar research all the key dates in your business calendar, when to apply for awards and attend networking events.
- PR Top Tips and Knowledge Centre offering in-depth articles on writing a pressrelease, press releases, using social media and more.
- Editorial Requests sent via email allow journalists looking for specific quotes or comment to contact targeted businesses.
- A Media Room, filled with all of your previously distributed press releases, can be directly linked to your business website as a widget or plug-in.



If you're a small business looking to grow you should be harnessing the power of PR and JournoLink can help!



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## Notes

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# Success stories

“ My Start Up Loan allowed me to self-publish my first book, turning my vision into a reality. ”

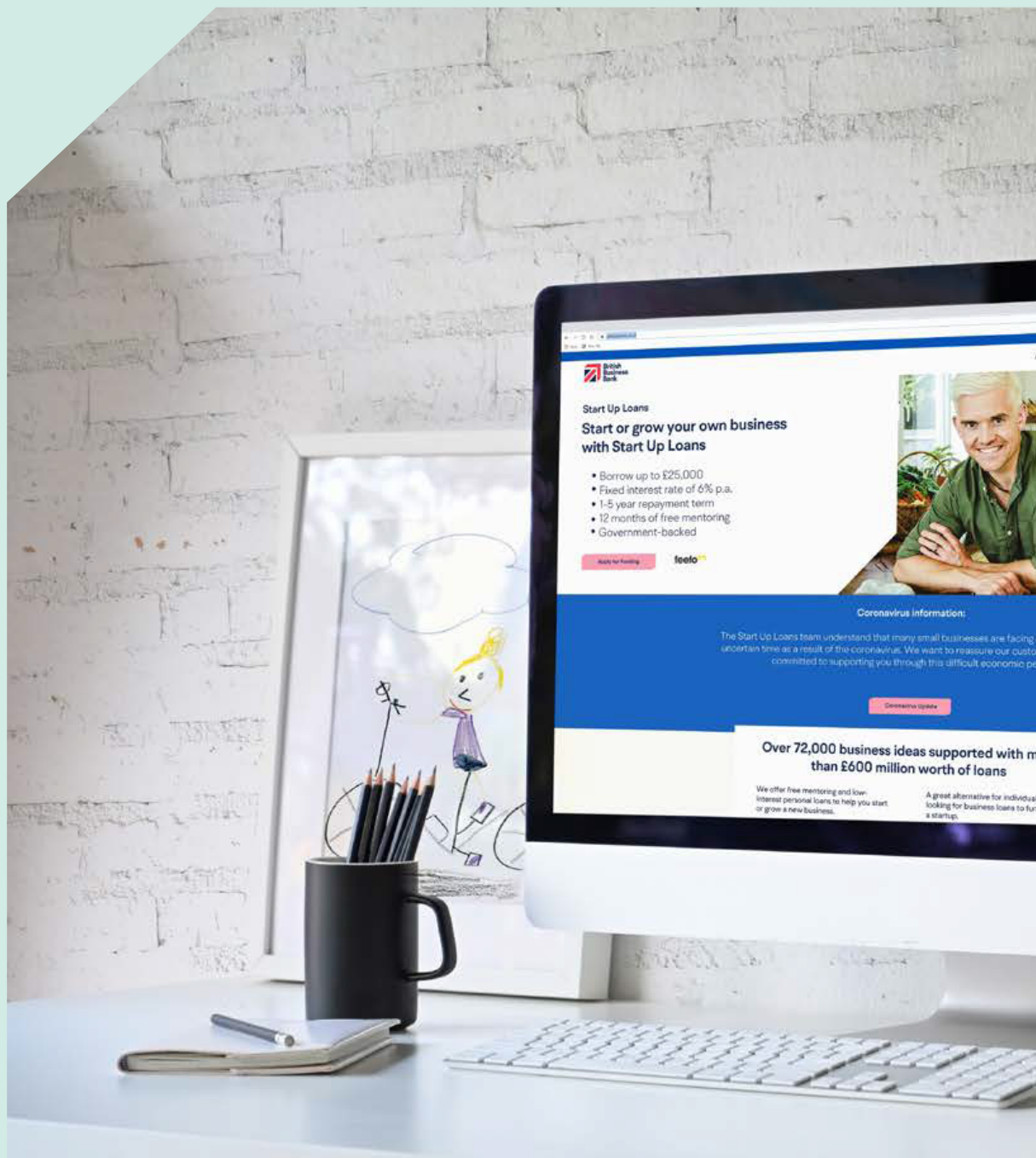


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Founder, Philly & Friends



# Other free toolkits

We've created free toolkits, covering some of the most important topics for start ups like yours, including:



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The essential guide to starting a business

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Social media toolkit

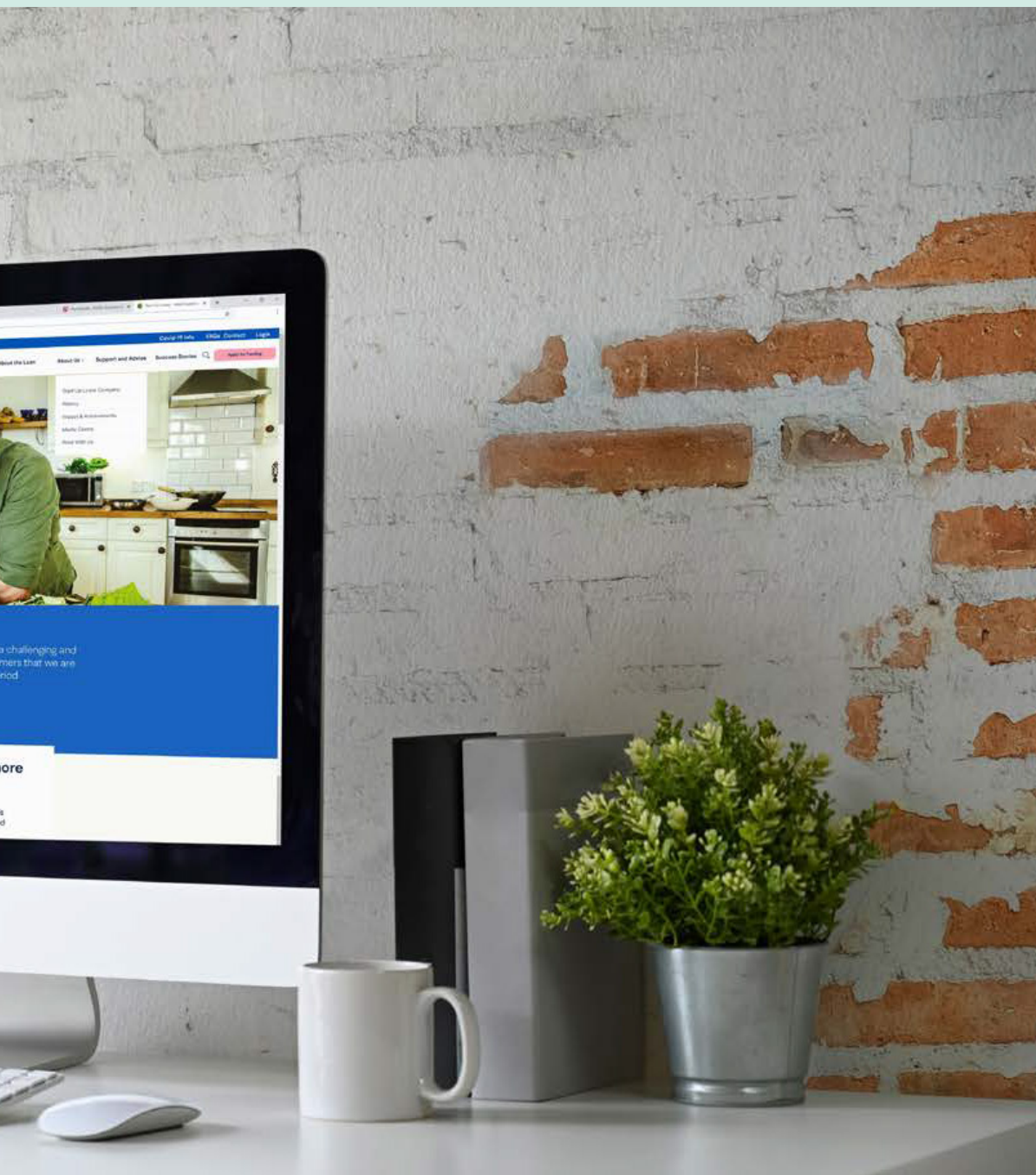
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Marketing toolkit

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SEO toolkit

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Disclaimer: This guide is designed to help new businesses understand more about starting a business. Whilst we make reasonable efforts to keep the information in the guide up to date, we do not guarantee or warrant (implied or otherwise) that it is current, accurate or complete. The information is intended for general information purposes only and does not take into account your personal situation, nor does it constitute legal, financial, tax or other professional advice. You should always consider whether the information is applicable to your particular circumstances and, where appropriate, seek professional or specialist advice or support.

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Lines are open weekdays 9.00am to 6.00pm



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