

PLANT EBOOK
PLANTING THE
SEED.
A GUIDE TO
LAUNCHING
YOUR BUSINESS.

BY SEED & SAGE

Embarking on the journey of starting a new business is a significant undertaking, filled with both excitement and critical decisions. For entrepreneurs, understanding the essential steps for a strong start is paramount to long-term success.

This eBook serves as a practical guide to navigate these initial phases. It condenses the complexities of establishing a new venture into clear, actionable steps, ensuring a robust and compliant launch.

Within these pages, you will find a structured approach to critical elements such as defining your brand identity through name creation and logo design, and the necessary legal registrations including your business name and ABN. We also explore effective, cost-efficient strategies for establishing your initial online presence through social media and a basic functional website.

Our aim is to demystify the startup process, providing you with the confidence and knowledge to transform your business concept into a tangible, operational entity. This guide offers the foundational insights necessary to begin your entrepreneurial journey on solid ground.

Use this eBook in a way that works for you. Jot down ideas and notes as you work through it. It's a simple but contains powerful information that can lead you on your journey to becoming a business owner. Remember you can always reach out to us if you need assistance in kickstarting your startup business idea.

To new beginnings!

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1.

NAME CREATION & LOGO DESIGN. CRAFTING YOUR BRAND IDENTITY.

Your business name and logo are often the first impression potential customers have of your brand. They are crucial for recall, recognition, and setting the tone for your business. The journey starts with a name. It's your brand's first impression, the spark that should reflect your values and speak to your audience. Sit down and take some time to brainstorm and start jotting down words that connect to your business idea. Consider the emotions you want to evoke, your industry language, customer expectations and company culture.

To help you think creatively, use free name generators and different AI tools. These are great for brainstorming combinations or uncovering ideas you may have missed.

Pro Tip: Once you have a few contenders, visit the ASIC Business Name Register to check if your desired name is available to register. It's also a smart move to check if the domain name is available for your website, you can use GoDaddy or Crazy Domains for this. Another good Pro Tip is to see if your name is available on social media platforms. Search your name and check if the name has been taken already. Don't be disappointed if there is a social page that has taken your name, you can always add something to your name on your socials that allows you to create a page with your name in it. Use free AI tools to suggest some variations to your business name for social pages on different platforms.

A DEEPER DIVE AND PRACTICAL STEPS.

Brainstorm names that align with your vision and audience.

Define Your Brand Essence. Before brainstorming, clearly articulate your business's core values, mission, target audience, and unique selling proposition (USP). What emotions do you want your brand to evoke? What problem do you solve for your customers? What products or services are you offering? What is that special thing that sets you apart from others in the market? These are the types of questions that need clear answers in the beginning.

Pro Tip: Create a simple document that outlines these points that you can always reference and evolve over time.

Keyword Integration. Consider including keywords relevant to your industry or services. Though this is not set in stone but this can aid in search engine optimisation (SEO) and clarify your offering. We'll discuss SEO later on and how it is important for your business's digital presence.

Simplicity and Memorability. Aim for names that are easy to pronounce, spell, and remember. Simplicity doesn't mean boring, it's about choosing a name that is easy to remember and that is cleverly iconic.

Pro Tip: Think of the most well-known brands and their names, you'll see that most of them are simple and easy to remember. Avoid overly complex or trendy names that might quickly become outdated.

Availability Beyond ASIC. While ASIC is key for business name registration, also check for domain name availability (.com.au, .au, .com), social media handles (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, TikTok, etc.), and even trademark databases (IP Australia) to ensure broad brand consistency and prevent future conflicts.

Gather Feedback. Share your shortlisted names with trusted friends, family, and potential customers. Ask for their initial impressions, what comes to mind, and if they find it memorable.

Check Name Availability using ASIC Name Search.

ASIC Connect Portal. As mentioned, use the [ASIC Connect portal](#) to search for business names. This will tell you if the exact name is already registered or too similar to an existing one.

Understanding Business Names vs. Company Names.

It's important to differentiate. A business name is the name you trade under, while a company name is for a proprietary limited (Pty Ltd) company. You can trade under a business name without registering a company, but if you form a company, its name is automatically registered. Your business name might be different from your company name. For example, "ABC Pty Ltd" might trade as "The Coffee Spot."

Beyond Exact Matches. ASIC's search will also flag names that are deceptively similar.

Pro Tip: Be prepared with several alternatives or different variations of your desired name. Again, using free AI tools to help you generate different versions can be a great place to start.

Design your logo to create a strong brand identity.

Designing your logo can be fun and empowering! There are a few free online platforms and apps that you can use to inspire and customise your logo ideas. Using free AI tools and platforms can also be a great way to start. Canva's free logo maker allows you to experiment with colours, fonts, and icons in an intuitive, drag-and-drop interface. Keep it simple, scalable, and consistent with your brand tone. If creative design isn't your strength you can always reach out to us and we can help you get your logo and brand identity to where it needs to be.

Canva for a quick start. Canva is excellent for creating a professional-looking logo quickly and cost-effectively, especially if you have a limited budget.

Utilise Templates. Canva offers a vast library of logo templates. Choose one that resonates with your brand's aesthetic and industry.

Customise Elements. Change colours, fonts, icons, and text to make it unique. Ensure your chosen colours align with your brand's personality (e.g., blue for trust, green for nature, red for energy).

Download in Various Formats. Download your logo in different formats (PNG with transparent background, JPG, PDF) for various uses (website, social media, print).

When to Hire a Professional Designer?

Unique and Differentiated Brand. If your budget allows, a professional designer can create a bespoke logo that truly stands out, is strategically aligned with your brand, and is legally defensible (e.g., ensuring it doesn't infringe on existing trademarks).

Comprehensive Brand Guidelines. Designers often provide a "brand style guide" which dictates logo usage, colour palettes (with HEX, RGB, CMYK codes), typography, and imagery, ensuring consistency across all marketing materials. This is invaluable for long-term brand building.

Scalability. A designer will provide vector files (AI, EPS, SVG) that can be scaled to any size without losing quality, crucial for everything from a favicon to a billboard.

Consider Brand Consistency from Day One. Even with a basic logo, apply it consistently across all touchpoints (website, social media, business cards, email signatures). This builds recognition, continuity and in turn trust.



2.

REGISTER FOR AN ABN. YOUR BUSINESS IDENTIFIER.

Got your name and logo perfect? It's time to make it official! In Australia, you generally need to have an Australian Business Number (ABN) or at least have applied for one before you can register a business name with the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC).

When you go through the process of registering a business name with ASIC, one of the required steps is to enter your ABN or your ABN application reference number.

An Australian Business Number (ABN) is a unique 11-digit number that identifies your business to the government and other businesses. Think of it as your business's ID number. It's essential for various business activities like issuing invoices, registering a business name, and dealing with the ATO (Australian Taxation Office).

You can apply for an ABN through the Australian Business Register in under 30 minutes. Before you begin, gather your personal details (including your TFN), your proposed business activities, and your projected expected turnover.

For extra convenience, use the Business Registration Service, which lets you apply for an ABN and register your business name in one go. If everything checks out, your ABN will be issued instantly. If further checks are needed, it may take up to 20 days.

A Deeper Dive and Practical Steps.

Applying for an ABN through abr.gov.au:

The purpose of an ABN. Your ABN is crucial for:

- Identifying your business to the ATO for tax purposes.
- Invoicing and receiving payments without Pay As You Go (PAYG) tax being withheld.
- Claiming GST credits (if registered for GST).
- Registering a domain name (e.g., .com.au).
- Interacting with other businesses and government agencies.

Eligibility. To get an ABN, you generally need to be carrying on an enterprise (a business or undertaking). This typically means you're operating with a view to making a profit, in a structured and ongoing way.

Information Needed for Application.

Before applying on the [Australian Business Register \(ABR\)](#), have the following ready:

- Your business structure (sole trader, partnership, company, trust).
- Proof of identity (e.g., driver's license, passport).
- Details of your business activities (what you'll be doing).
- Your contact details.
- Date your business started or will start.

Online Application Process. The ABN application is free and usually takes less than 15 minutes online. Many applications receive their ABN immediately. If your application requires review, it can take up to 20 business days.

Updating Your ABN Details. It's vital to keep your ABN details up to date (e.g., changes to address, contact information, business activities). You have 28 days to update these changes on the ABR.

Consider GST Registration (If Expected Income > \$75,000) and Get BAS-Ready if Required.

- **GST Threshold.** The current GST turnover threshold in Australia is **\$75,000** (or \$150,000 for non-profit organisations). This refers to your *gross income* (sales), not your profit.
- **Voluntary Registration.** Even if you're below the threshold, you can choose to register for GST. This might be beneficial if your business makes significant purchases where you can claim GST credits. However, if you register, you *must* charge GST on your sales and report it.

- **When to Register.** If you start a new business and expect your GST turnover to reach \$75,000 in the first 12 months, you should register for GST within 21 days of becoming aware you'll exceed the threshold.

What GST Registration Means.

- **Charging GST.** You must include GST (10%) in the price of most goods and services you sell.
- **Claiming GST Credits.** You can claim GST credits for the GST included in the price of your business purchases.
- Lodging Business Activity Statements (BAS). This is where "BAS-ready" comes in.

Getting BAS-Ready.

- **What is a BAS?** A Business Activity Statement (BAS) is a form used to report and pay your tax obligations, including GST, Pay As You Go (PAYG) instalments (if applicable), PAYG withholding (for employees), and other taxes.
- **Record Keeping.** Being BAS-ready primarily means having accurate and organised financial records. This includes:
 - Sales invoices (showing GST charged).
 - Expense receipts (showing GST paid).
 - Bank statements.
 - Payroll records (if you have employees).

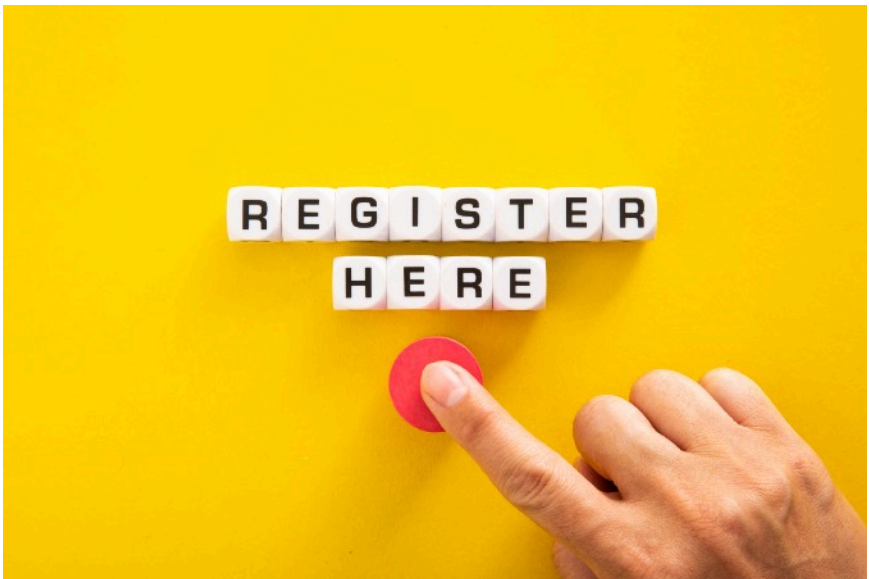
Accounting Software.

Implement accounting software like Xero, MYOB, or QuickBooks from day one. These platforms automate much of the record-keeping, GST calculation, and BAS preparation, making lodgement much easier.

Reporting Cycle. Most small businesses lodge BAS quarterly. Larger businesses (GST turnover of \$20 million or more) lodge monthly.

Tax Agent/BAS Agent. Consider engaging a registered tax agent or BAS agent. They can:

- Advise on GST registration and obligations.
- Help set up your accounting system.
- Prepare and lodge your BAS accurately and on time (they often have extended lodgement deadlines).
- Provide advice on managing cash flow in relation to your tax obligations.
- Help you avoid penalties for incorrect reporting or late lodgement.



3.

REGISTER YOUR BUSINESS NAME. FORMALISING YOUR PRESENCE

Registering your business name is a legal requirement if you're trading under a name other than your personal name, as a sole trader. Head to ASIC Connect and create an account. From there, you can search for your business name one more time to be sure it's yours for the taking.

As stated before, you'll need either an **ABN (Australian Business Number)** or a reference number from your ABN application. Registration is straightforward, you'll be prompted to provide your business name, your entity type (sole trader, company, etc.), and contact information. Fees start at \$42 for one year or \$98 for three.

Pro Tip: Be sure to follow ASIC's naming guidelines; names can't be misleading, offensive, or too similar to existing ones. Once registered, you'll receive a certificate you can proudly print and frame on your office wall.

A Deeper Dive and Practical Steps.

Go to ASIC Connect to Secure Your Chosen Name.

Understanding Registration. Registering your business name with ASIC doesn't grant you exclusive rights to that name in all contexts (e.g., trademark). It primarily prevents others from registering the *exact* same business name in Australia.

Sole Trader vs. Company.

Sole Trader. If you operate as a sole trader under a name different from your own legal name (e.g., "John Smith" trading as "Smith's Carpentry"), you *must* register the business name.

Company. If you register a company (e.g., "Smith's Carpentry Pty Ltd"), the company name is automatically registered with ASIC, and you don't need a separate business name registration unless you want to trade under a different name.

Step-by-Step on ASIC Connect.

1. **Create an ASIC Connect Account.** If you don't have one, you'll need to set one up.
2. **Perform a Name Availability Search (again).** Even if you did this during brainstorming, do a final check just before registration to ensure no one has sneaked in.
3. **Complete the Application.** Fill in the online form with your business details, proposed name, and the type of

business you're registering (e.g., sole trader, partnership, company).

4. **Pay the Fee.** There's a fee for business name registration.
5. **Receive Confirmation.** You'll receive confirmation of your registration and a business name number.



4.

DO YOU NEED TO REGISTER FOR GST?

Not every startup needs to register for **GST** right away; but you should understand the rules. If your expected annual turnover exceeds \$75,000, GST registration is mandatory. You can register via the ATO's Online Services for Business. Once registered, you'll begin lodging **Business Activity Statements (BAS)** either monthly or quarterly, depending on your setup.

If you're unsure whether you'll cross the threshold, it's okay to wait. Just keep accurate income records and revisit the decision as your business grows.

Pro Tip: Consulting a registered accountant will be a good idea if you are unsure of your GST obligation. An accountant can assist you in doing realistic projections of your expected turnover and also provide you with sound record keeping practices to ensure your income records are accurate and kept up to date.

5.

START WITH FREE MARKETING TOOLS. BUILDING YOUR INITIAL ONLINE PRESENCE.

In today's digital age, an online presence is non-negotiable. You can leverage free tools and free trials to kickstart your marketing efforts without breaking the bank. Marketing doesn't have to cost thousands, many incredible tools are free, especially when you're starting out.

Pro Tip: Using free trials on various platforms and tools is a great way to determine which system or platform works for you. Take advantage of free trials to learn and get a good feel for certain platforms that offer powerful marketing tools.

A DEEPER DIVE AND PRACTICAL STEPS.

Social media that works for you. Setup your business profiles on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.

Platform Selection. Don't feel compelled to be on every platform. Choose the ones where your target audience is most active and where your content can thrive.

Pro Tip: Take advantage of free AI tools and ask which social platforms would best suit your business. This should give you a good idea on which social platforms you should be engaged in.

- **Facebook.** Ideal for community building, local businesses, and a broad audience. Create a Facebook Business Page, not a personal profile.
- **Instagram.** Visually driven, excellent for products, services that can be showcased visually, and building a strong aesthetic brand. Use Instagram for Business.
- **LinkedIn.** Essential for B2B businesses, professional services, networking, and thought leadership. Create a Company Page.

Other Platforms to Consider (depending on your business).

- **TikTok.** For short-form video content, reaching younger demographics, and highly creative marketing.
- **Pinterest.** Great for visually-driven businesses (e.g., fashion, home decor, food) and driving traffic to websites.
- **YouTube.** For video tutorials, product demonstrations, and educational content.

- **Google Business Profile.** Crucial for local businesses. This free tool allows you to manage your online presence across Google Search and Maps. List your business hours, address, phone number, website, and customer reviews. This is often the first place local customers search and look for businesses they need. A Google Business Profile is essential for boosting local visibility, building trust, and attracting customers through Google Search and Maps through SEO (Search Engine Optimisation). When combined with Google Ads and Google Analytics, it provides powerful insights into customer behaviour and ad performance. Integrating this with Meta Business Suite allows businesses to manage and report on ad campaigns across Google and Meta platforms in one streamlined dashboard, making it easier to track ROI, adjust strategies, and ensure cohesive multi-channel marketing.

Optimise Your Profiles.

- **Complete Information.** Fill out every section of your profiles accurately and thoroughly (contact info, hours, services, "about us" section).
- **High-Quality Visuals.** Use your new logo and high-resolution images.
- **Compelling Bio and Description.** Clearly state what your business does and who it serves.
- **Link to Your Website.** Drive traffic to your website from your social profiles (We discuss building a website next).

Use Your Logo and a Consistent Colour Palette to Keep Your Brand Cohesive.

- **Visual Identity is Key.** Consistency builds trust and recognition. Your logo, colours, and fonts should be uniform across all your online and offline materials.

- **Colour Palette.** If you worked with a designer, use the specified HEX/RGB codes. If you use Canva, choose 2-3 primary colours and 1-2 accent colours and stick to them.
- **Font Consistency.** Select 1-2 fonts and use them consistently for headings and body text.

- **Content Pillars.** Beyond visuals, consistent messaging and content themes are also vital. What topics will you regularly post about? What value will you provide?

Pro Tip: Use free AI tools to generate posts and captions for your images. You can also ask AI to generate a schedule on what to post and when. Many platforms automate this task for you and you can take advantage of free trials to find the one that works for.

- **Content Calendar.** Plan your social media posts in advance using a simple spreadsheet or a free tool like Buffer (free tiers usually allow for a limited number of scheduled posts).

Email Like a Pro.

If you haven't built an email list yet, now's the time to start. It's one of the easiest (and most valuable) ways to stay connected with your audience, and the best part? You don't need a big budget to make it work.

Free platforms like Mailchimp or MailerLite, lets you create slick, branded emails and automate the whole process. Whether you're sharing updates, offers, or just staying top-of-mind, email puts you directly in your customer's inbox, no algorithms, no distractions.

Feeling like there's just *too much* to do and not enough time to figure it all out? You're not alone, and honestly, you don't

have to do it all yourself. If you're staring down your to-do list wondering where to even start, we've got you. Our team can step in, take the load off, and handle the marketing side of things so you can focus on what you do best.



6.

BUILD A BASIC WEBSITE: YOUR DIGITAL SHOPFRONT

A website is your business's central online hub, providing credibility, information, and a platform for engagement and sales. Having a website is the start to having a professional digital presence online.

There are many website builders that you can use to create your website on a budget with many templates to suit your look and feel.

Here's a simple guideline on what to include:

- **Home Page.** Who you are, what you do, and why it matters.
- **About Page.** Share your story: passion is contagious.
- **Services/Products Page.** Make your offer crystal clear with bullet points or packages.
- **Contact Page.** Include a form, your email, phone number, and links to your social pages.

Add calls to action to turn interest into enquiries. Use buttons like:

“Book a Free Call”

“Get a Free Quote”

“Start Your Trial”

Consistency is key, apply your logo, fonts, and colour palette throughout to reinforce your brand.

Pro Tip: Use images that relay your company culture and are relevant to your market offering. This creates consistency throughout your brand. Remember you can always use AI generated images not to pay for licensed images or use public domain images that are free.

There are many aspects which you can add to your website to increase performance and enhance SEO (Search Engine Optimisation). If this all seems overwhelming, reach out to us and we'll give you the help you need.

LET'S BRING YOUR BUSINESS TO LIFE, TOGETHER.

If you have made this far, you've just taken the first steps toward turning your idea into something real, and that's huge!

If reading through this guide has left you feeling inspired **but also a little overwhelmed**, we totally get it. There's a lot to think about, and sometimes the best move is simply letting someone take the reins so you can breathe a little easier.

Whether you need help with branding, setting up your digital presence, or pulling together a simple, solid strategy, we're here for it. Reach out any time. We'll make the process smooth and actionable.

Let's grow something great, together.



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