INNOVATIVE MARKETING TIPS TO MAKE YOUR BUSINESS SIZZLE
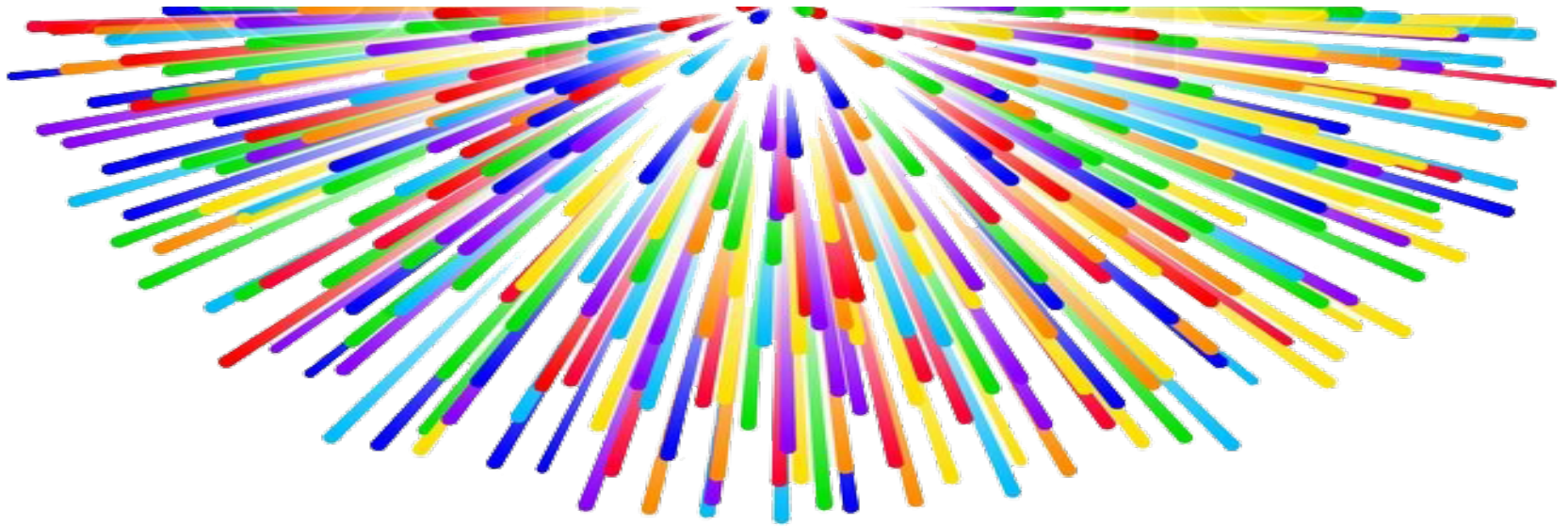
brother
at your side

BROTHER
CreativeCenter™

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The year was 2010. Back then I was co-writing the book "Visual Marketing: 99 Proven Ways for Small Businesses to Market with Images and Design" with David Langton. We saw the trend: visual content would take on more emphasis in the future.

That trend was being driven by several factors. Improved Internet access speeds and expanded bandwidth were making it faster to download Web pages containing imagery. Better cameras in smartphones made it easier for people to take high quality photographs spontaneously. The rise of social media platforms like Facebook made sharing of images part of our everyday culture.

Also, it was becoming easier to find qualified designers to help, because they had beautiful websites to show off what they could do. Improved graphics programs began making it easier for do-it-your-selfers on a tight budget to turn digital images into professional-looking marketing materials.

Now, five years later....

Small business marketing has become more visual, more casual, more personal.

Today we have so many more options, including tools like the Brother CreativeCenter™ Great images and design are within reach -- no matter what your budget. Creativity often trumps money in this new image-centric world.

The following 100+ tips contributed by the Small Business Trends community prove that there is indeed "wisdom of the crowd" when it comes to creative and innovative ways to market your business.

I was "wowed" by these tips.
What about you?
- Anita
Anita Campbell, CEO
Small Business Trends

PS, my tip: When compiling an ebook, put your photograph in the introduction, to personalize it.

In this eBook you'll find dozens of great suggestions to make your marketing content sizzle. Creating your own marketing materials is a great way to express yourself and promote your brand and business in critical person-to-person networking environments. Every great idea needs a jumping off point. Whatever industry you're in, you can use Brother CreativeCenter™ to customize templates for business cards, brochures, mailers, posters, letterheads, you name it!

DIY Marketing Materials: Here are some of the business materials you can start creating today -

Brochures – Create professional sales and service materials in just a few short steps.

Mailers – Design, print and mail a professional sales or service brochure in minutes.

Posters – Promote your products, services or events quickly, easily and professionally.

Business Cards – Customize, create and print a business card that helps you stand out from the crowd.

You will see that designing your own customized, integrated marketing materials is so easy!

Professional Results

Many small business owners can attest that when you run your own business, every penny counts. Unfortunately, there are some costs to doing business that you just can't avoid. However, there can also be many simple and easy ways to help save money, which includes owning the right business machine for your office.

Seeing that outsourcing your print jobs can be quite expensive, creating your own marketing materials with Brother CreativeCenter™ is a great option! Owning a good all-in-one printer that can undertake the task becomes imperative, like the Brother Business Smart™ Inkjet All-in-One Series. Not only can it help you save money, it can help you save time too.

The Business Smart ™ Inkjet All-in-One Series provides cutting-edge technology in a sleek and compact design all while delivering the Ultimate Combination of fast print speeds, easy-to-use features, low cost printing and up to 11″ x 17″ printing. Super high-yield replacement inks are also available, which help give you better cost efficiency over the long run and minimizes the number of times you have to change the cartridges. You'll be able to print virtually anything in-house from marketing materials and presentations to signs for your upcoming event with professional quality results. Use only Genuine Brother ink to ensure professional results, providing rich quality prints.

DIY marketing at its finest!

CHAPTER_1
SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS

Social media has evolved into a highly visual experience. Of course, there are image-oriented platforms like Instagram and Pinterest. Facebook is highly visual. But even platforms like Twitter and LinkedIn have evolved in recent years to place much greater emphasis on photographs, graphics and even video. Put it all together, and social media platforms are the perfect place to share visual content.

WATCH YOUR ORGANIC REACH GROW

"One way to give your blog posts and articles a visual boost is to harness the sharing power of Instagram, Twitter, Facebook and Pinterest. Encourage your followers to share their photos/images with you and publish those instead of the overdone stock image. Use images to take your followers behind the scenes of what happens in your day to day.

Video is another visual taking the blogging world by storm. Video views on Facebook have overtaken Youtube and Twitter have just released a video sharing feature. Upload your own videos to Facebook and watch your organic reach grow."
 - James Clifton of [Get App]

USE VISUALS TO REINFORCE YOUR BRAND

"Images increase engagement and are a great way to showcase your business and brand personality. Every piece of visual content you post on social media becomes part of your brand identity. You can use visuals to reinforce your brand and generate more leads and engagement by adding a call to action button to the images you post in social media to drive

Visual marketing has taken off over the past few years, and for good reason. As marketers, our job is to tell a story to the people who stand to benefit from what our brand offers. Visuals allow us to tell a story and take our target market through that story via different mediums.

Platforms like Pinterest and Instagram have succeeded because visuals are easier to share and relate to than text itself. When using visuals in your marketing, create something that evokes an emotion. Make sure your visuals can incite the response – anger, happiness, sadness – that you want."
 - Justin Beegel of [Infographic World]

CONSIDER THE VIDEO COMPONENT

"Questions that arrive by email from clients and prospects provide a wealth of ideas for creating videos that complement written responses, so every time a question is asked, consider the video component. Those videos not only populate your YouTube channel but also supplement your blog, Twitter, LinkedIn, and other social media accounts. Video is and will continue to be a dominant marketing force. Your consistent video creation can, in time, result in a huge traffic spike and increased revenue."
- Shirley George Frazier of Solo Business Marketing

DEVELOP AN INFOGRAPHIC FROM PODCAST

"Create a cross-platform, multi-tiered effect to "touch" target audience multiple times in short period of time. Let's say you have a podcast... Transcribe the podcast, summarize and turn into a blog. Develop branded images with quotes from podcast. Develop 10-20 slide powerpoint from podcast and share on SlideShare. Use powerpoint and audio clips from podcast and develop video on Animoto. Develop an infographic from podcast. Longer-term, turn 3-4 podcasts into a whitepaper and 10-13 podcasts into an e-Magazine. ALWAYS share each mini-project across all social media platforms and select ones in email blasts."

- Paul Segreto of Franchise Foundry

IGNORE CLICHES

"No More Stock Photos! Ten years ago I saw a tip about adding a photo to every blog post. They're today's cliches, with no truth behind them. If your message cannot stand on its own, a stock photo's not your solution. Blogs, Email, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest, etc., grant us the power to speak directly in our voices to our customers and employees and prospects. Our voices, verbal or writing or imagery, are the most powerful voices because they are unique and unique stands out. So, why distract that message with a stock photo?

- Zane Zafrit of Zane Zafrit

KEEP PROFILES CONSISTENT

"Keep your profile avatar consistent across social media accounts and outlets. A professional headshot that is recognizable multiple places online ensures that you are easy to spot. Potential clients, partners, and others will see who you are, and feel as though they already know you."
– Miranda Marquit of Miranda Marquit Freelancing, LLC

TALLER IMAGES USUALLY WORK BEST

"Visuals can help your content go further on social networks but different image dimensions work better on certain networks. For example on Google+ and Pinterest, taller images usually work best. When you publish your next piece of content, try creating unique images at the optimal dimensions for each of your key social networks."
- Adam Connell of Blogging Wizard

YOU WANT VIDEOS, RIGHT ?

You do not have to be an expert to share content that "Wows" your audience. An example is using Google Hangouts. You want videos, right? Instead of signing up for an expensive course to become videographers like us, simply set up a Google Hangout on Air and talk about your expertise during your hangout. Invite others to talk about the same topic. Ready-made dynamic content! There are many things that could be added to make it even more of a "Wow" factor, but the key is to believe in yourself and go do it!"
- Deborah Anderson of Social Web Café

94%

Articles with images usually get

More total views

"Readers prefer to read an article that has good looking images because it adds more value to the article. According to a research carried out by MDG Advertising, articles that have relevant images on them usually get 94% more total views than the ones without images. It also makes it easier for your readers to share it to sites like Pinterest. It is therefore very necessary to always include relevant images on your marketing in order to give it a maximum exposure because Images play such a large factor in our online infrastructure."
- Valentine Belonwu of [Business Gross](#)

USING IMAGES INCREASES ENGAGEMENT BY 56%

"As the internet and social media have matured, we've learned that quality content is king. Anyone can become famous on the internet if the content is good enough, from a cute baby to a profound article by a business leader. So we all find ourselves asking the same question: what makes good content? Unfortunately, there's no magic answer but one thing we have definitely learned at Journyx is that using images directly in our posts – be that social media or on our own blog or in a contributed article – it increases engagement overall by 56%."
 - Curt Finch of Journyx

DESIGN FOR CLICK-THROUGH

GoInflow @goinflow · Feb 10
"The (Content) Marketing Law of Attraction"
hubs.ly/y0wltd0 @goinflow Not to be missed.
#SEO #InboundMarketing

The (Content) Marketing Law
of Attraction, a Manifesto

View more photos and videos

"Always create an image specifically for social (i.e. Twitter cards and Open Graph tags for Facebook) for each piece of content. Include the title of the content in the image, or even a call-to-action (e.g. "Download the Marketing eBook!") instead of relying on the images within the content to automatically populate social images. This can have an enormous impact on click-through-rates and social engagement."
- Everett Sizemore of GoInflow

IMAGES ARE A DOOR INTO YOUR WORLD

"Images are powerful, a high proportion of the population are "visual" and engage far more with images than with text. Use platforms like instagram and Pinterest for an integrated marketing approach, so that every time you blog about something or have a theme you also create images related to the blog/theme and post on visual social platforms. Be creative with images, show personality, use images as a door into your world, your business and offer behind the scenes. Lastly don't use logos for your picture profile on Twitter and LinkedIn, who wants to be friends with a small business logo!"
- Jonny Ross of Jonny Ross Consultancy Ltd.

PHOTOS IN SPONSORED POSTS

"Use photos whenever you do sponsored posts on Facebook. People do not pay attention to text ads enough anymore. A quality relevant photo about your services or offer can do wonders to your conversion rate"
- Andy Nathan of [Smart at the Start](#)

CUSTOMIZE FOR QUALITY

"Customize your graphics to the final delivery platform. It might look great when you upload it, but if your image isn't the right size, dimension or resolution, then the end result is going to be less than impressive. In fact, it will be down-right embarrassing. Who's going to trust a business that can't get the details right? Facebook, Instagram, even printed materials – verify, verify, verify the requirements that will leave your graphics properly cropped and sharp BEFORE you upload those files."

– Denny Iny of [Firepole Marketing](#)

OPTIMIZE YOUR CONTENT

"Visual content is powerful but visual content with words that provide context is even more powerful. First, optimize your visual content for the medium where it will be published (e.g., the same image size and format isn't right for Facebook and Pinterest), and then add context without cluttering the impact of your visual content. You can do this by adding a description or a call to action to the visual content that communicates what people will get when they click on it. If you have the option to enhance your visual content with words, do it because context adds value."
- Susan Gunelias of Women on Business

TEXT & IMAGES

SHARE, SHARE, SHARE

"Now that Facebook has reduced organic reach to near-zero, accumulating Likes for your page does you very little good. Instead, encourage your customers to share photos of themselves at your business.

A) The most engaging images are often the ones taken by your customers, and

B) new prospective customers are more likely to see them than photos you would post yourself."

- David Mihm of Mihmorandum

TRANSFORM CONTENT
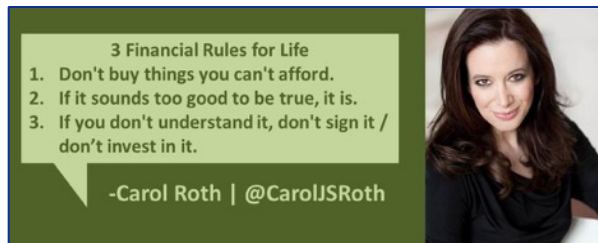
"I often transform written content into visual content to make it more noticeable and shareable on social media. For example, I will sometimes put my quotes into a visual format on Twitter so that they stand out from other tweets. I also include my "brand" name and Twitter handle somewhere on the graphic. This way, if the graphic is shared, it is always attributed back to me and potential followers know where to connect with me! Consider using a graphic-- styled consistent to your brand-- instead of text to promote a sale, special offer or just your sage advice."
- Carol Roth of Carol Roth: Tough Love for Business

VISUALS GENERATE EXCITEMENT

"Power your inbound marketing campaigns, including eBooks, with great visuals that generate excitement and awareness via social media campaigns and strategically throughout your website. Your eBook contains great content - show it off with enticing, engaging cover art and images that play well on your social platforms and encourage social shares, as well as downloads!" - Marie Alonso of [Compudata](#)

LOGOS GET REMEMBERED

"Create a logo that is reflective of your brand and make sure to brand your marketing materials, website and social media with it - prominently and proudly. A great logo will be remembered, and can win over brand enthusiasts along the way."
- CJ DiRoma of [Asterism Group](#)

STOCK IMAGES ARE BORING

"I've found that it's definitely worth investing in original, creative title images and figures for your content, particularly ones that are highly saturated in color and not too "busy." Super unusual and even crazy images like cats in outer space, or your own take on popular memes do exponentially better than boring stock images. Your images should be eye catching even at smartphone screen resolution and formatted properly for the social networks you're using to promote your content."

- Larry Kim of [Wordstream](#)

DON'T FORGET BRANDING

"When it comes to posting images on social media, don't forget the branding! Creating content that people want to share is only half the formula for effective social media marketing. The other half is being identified as the source of the content. You can ensure this happens by incorporating your logo, company name or other identifying element into every image you post on social media. @MindingHerBusiness on Instagram and Coffee.org on Facebook are two companies that are doing it right on social media!"

- Bonny Clayton of [Your Web Chick](#)

SCREENSHOTS

"Take a screenshot of an article or blog post, edit if necessary to optimize, and post that screen image as your own image to liven up your own post, update, or tweet. I'm not a lawyer but I understand there's no copyright violation if you show the page of the New York Times or Wall Street Journal web article with its picture, or even a logo. I use a screenshot editor that lets me capture a picture, edit it to optimize, add torn edges, and change the angle slightly. So that image brightens my content for my readers."
- Tim Berry of TimBerry.com

BLOG POSTS NEED IMAGES

"Sharing a blog post without an image is like not adding jelly to my kids' peanut butter & jelly sandwiches! Sharing imagery with content is vital to its success because that is what grabs people's attention first, even before the title. When choosing images for all of my content, I make sure to choose wisely and really think about it. Will the colors clash with the platform I'm sharing on? Is it better to post a person or graphic for that post topic? Take time to select the right image to ensure your content is seen by the masses"

- Nellie Akalp of [Corpnet](#)

STAND OUT

"The Three Cs of Branding: Successful branding is more than a pretty logo or inspiring tagline. It's implementing strategies that make your business memorable and recognizable. When used together, these strategies help make your business stand out: CONSISTENT: Select a logo or theme and stick with it. Use your brand colors and fonts on everything: business card, website, sell sheets, social media, etc. CREATIVE: While creative branding gets you noticed, it's creative delivery that makes an impact. Send messages in a unique way instead of the standard email. CONCISE: Describe your value clearly. Keep it short so it's easily remembered."

- Alicia White of [Back of the Room Productions](#)

Graphic by **Back of the Room** PRODUCTIONS™

ADD AUTHORITY

"Grab a real conversation from social media. Using the snippet tool you can easily demonstrate "live action" by documenting a real-life conversation. This adds authority to your content because you are "hearing" from a third party. Twitter works best because of the character limit and the super easy search function but really any social media platform will work. It's the content marketing version of reality tv."

 - Amie Morse of ContentEqualsMoney.com

CAPTURE YOUR CONCEPT

"One of the best ways to create shareable content is to incorporate visuals. Try adding a photo to your blog post to make it instantly shareable on social networks like Pinterest and Facebook. Not sure where to get photos? Stock photography sites like iStockPhoto and Shutterstock are a great place to start. Don't worry about trying to find photos that completely translate the content you've written. Instead, look for photos that capture the concept of your content while being attention-grabbing and generally interesting. This will encourage readers to click through to your content, then share it with their own networks."

- Alyssa Gregory of [Small Business Bonfire](http://SmallBusinessBonfire.com)

"USING VISUALS IN MY CONTENT HAS BEEN MORE BENEFICIAL THAN I IMAGINED IT WOULD BE.

Above and beyond getting more shares on Facebook and more retweets on Twitter (which HAS happened!), I love using images to take my audience on a journey with me. A photo from a recent event, from a presentation I've given - whatever it is, it enables my reader to commit to more than just 'scanning eyes', and I enjoy getting feedback on carefully picked images, too!"

- Chris Ducker of [Chris Ducker.com](http://www.ChrisDucker.com)

KEEP IT SIMPLE

"Keep your About Us page clear, concise, and brimming with personality! The text of the page should not be a huge, inaccessible block of information. Write a couple of brief and well-spaced paragraphs that highlight your business' strong points. Ask yourself, "How will my vision for this company help my customers?" This can help trim and refine your content.

Also, a company photo of all or most of your employees can add a personal touch and build trust with potential customers. It never hurts to show the Internet that your business is run by thinking, feeling, compassionate humans."

- Megan Garner of Biz Strong

IMAGES SHOWCASE PERSONALITY

"Add a unique image to your social media profiles. LinkedIn allows you to add a headline photo to your company page. Facebook offers the same thing. And twitter gives you the opportunity to add an image to the background of your profile page. It's a great way to showcase your company, products, services, and personality. Use images throughout your profiles to help establish your unique value proposition. Get creative with it; have fun! You'll make a greater impression when you use powerful images online."

- Diane Helbig of Seize This Day Coaching

IMAGE IS EVERYTHING

"Don't let your image go to waste. Take the time to condense the article or include a quote under it. Let the words be the 2nd way you pull eyes into reading what you've written."

- Maria Marsala of [Elevating Your Business](#)

IMAGES FOR TWITTER

"Some people still think that tweets are merely 140 characters of text. They are wrong -- Twitter is a powerful visual-marketing platform too. First, you can add an image to your tweets. This alone might double the impact of your tweets. Second, you can add up to four images to a tweet, so why stop at one? This is a great way to showcase an event or to tell a story that would be difficult with one picture. Third, you can also embed your tweets into blog posts and get more tweets and favorites."

- Sandy Klocinski of [A Winning Attitude](#)

IMAGES FOR PINTEREST

"One of the best opportunities to casually market yourself: share Pinterest photos onto Fan page for Facebook. I "secretly" share the pin onto my personal page, where only I can see it. Then, I share it to the public my business page. Pinterest pictures, like photos, get a LOT more traction on FB than print posts. This is one of the ways I build #Some connections to my site www.BoulderRealEstateNews.com"

- [Bob Gordon](#)

IMAGES ARE YOUR VOICE

"Today a picture is not worth 1000 words, it is worth MY ATTENTION! You want to grab attention then use an image. If you figure that Instagram is now over 300 million unique viewers a day then the value of a picture has surpassed 1000 words. A good image can be the voice of your marketing. Use them, select them and position them wisely, but whatever you do, don't ignore its value to your marketing and branding. MIT neuroscientists have found that the human brain can process entire images that the eye sees in as little as 13 milliseconds."

- John Lawson of John Lawson

CHAPTER_2
WEBSITE DESIGN TIPS

It used to be expensive, take a long time and require considerable tech expertise to develop a terrific website. These days, however, great website design is easier and faster to accomplish, and needn't be expensive. Consider some of these suggestions to creating a more visually stimulating and engaging Web presence.
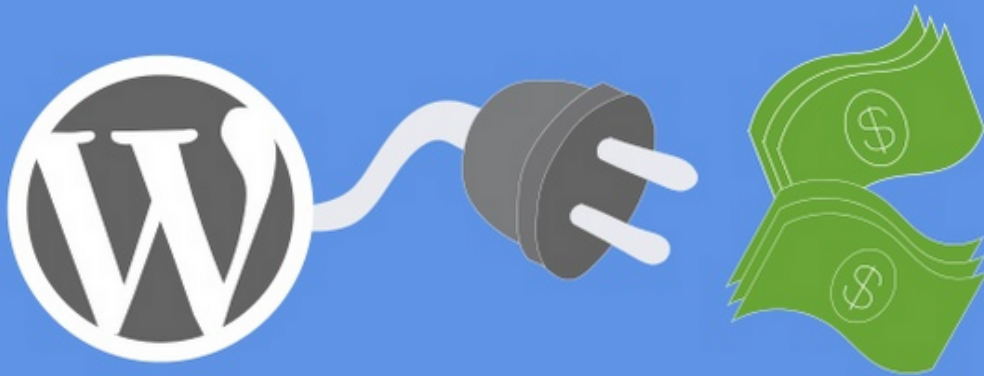
"Data visualizations grab attention, engage viewers, inform while entertaining and boost sharing action. For help, check out these free resources. To turn words into art go to wordcloud sites like Wordle or Tagxedo. To make infographic creation easy, check out the PowerPoint infographic templates available on the Hubspot site. For maps, sign into Google maps, click "my maps" and then click "make a custom map." For charts and graphics, go to Infogram, select a visual and follow the prompts to insert data and create your own customized visual. And that's just the beginning. Search "free data visualization resources" for more"

- Barbara Findley Schenk of Biz Strong

SLIDESHARE

"Publish nice looking presentations on Slideshare! Since we got started with content marketing, we published 15 presentations on Slideshare and got a total of 50k views. It's an excellent way to reach an audience of professionals looking for advice to grow their business and increase your traffic. Slideshares are easy to embed on your website and we've found that a lot of bloggers and businesses like to use them to add up to their own content. It gives your visual readers a new way to consume content and helps create more engagement."
- Aurelie Chazal
of Customer I Care

EMOTIONS SELL

"Emotion sells, so use images that evoke the emotions you want associated with your brand. For example, red barns bring to mind the hard work and determination of farmers. An American flag inspires patriotism & service. People buy on emotion and use logic to justify their decision. Get the emotions flowing with great images!"
- Robert Brady of Clix Marketing

CUT CLUTTER

"1. Visuals should enhance and support content, not overshadow it. 2. The less cluttered your images, the better. Confusing images only lead to clicks away from your web page. 3. Go with the unexpected sometimes. It's important to choose a relevant image, but surprise catches the eye faster than a relevant image."
- Charles Franklin of This College Dropout

BE STUNNING

"Always take off at least one piece of jewelry before leaving the house to make sure you are not overdoing it." Sage advice. I'd highly recommend you do the same with your images. Standing out with your images is easy. Standing out the right way is very different. Stunning image. Clean font. A few precise words. A touch of you. Then take one thing off. You are done. Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication."
- Ana Hoffman of [Traffic Generation Cafe](#)
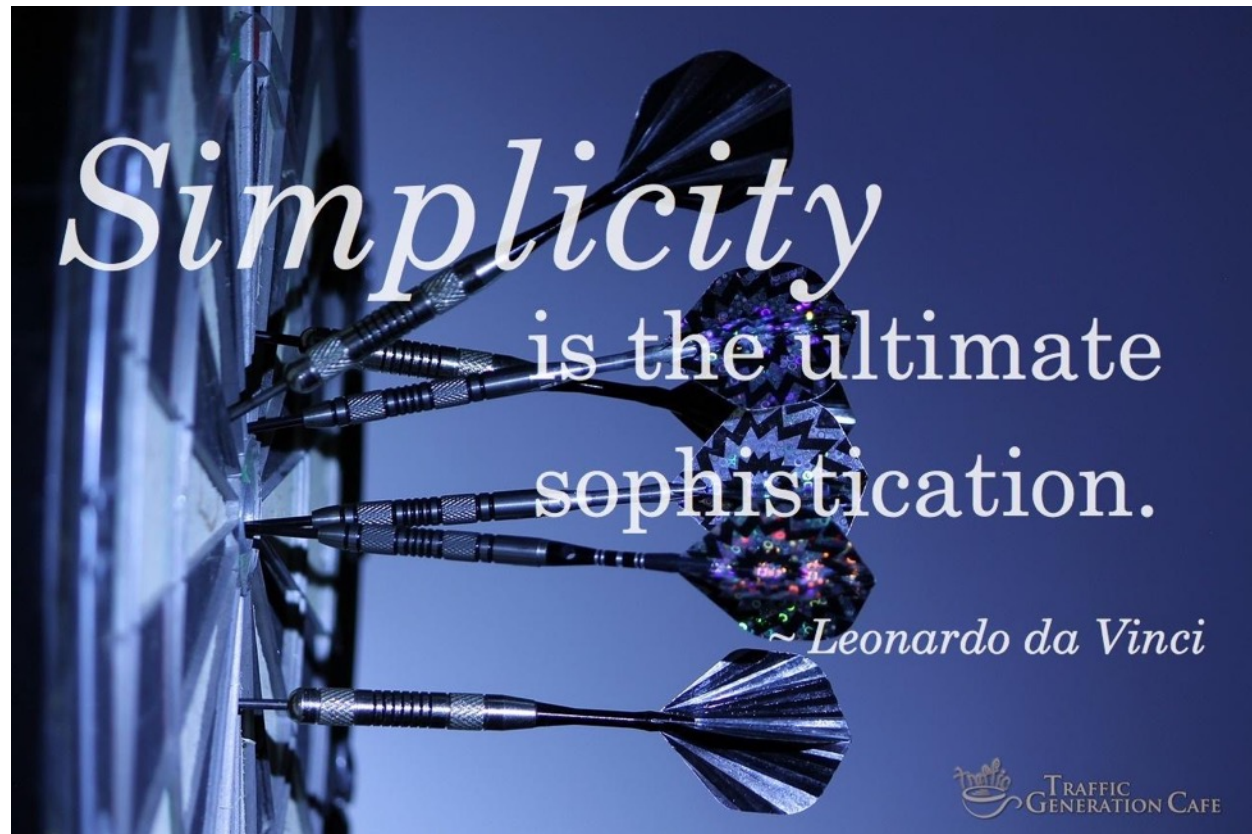
BE FAST

People are really visual, even if they aren't talented at creating art or graphics. Your images should be clean, professional, give a clear message, and above all, be of high quality. Aside from being visual, people don't have a lot of time, so keeping the image clutter-free and to the point is extremely important. If you do it right, your image could convert visitors in one glance to do what you want, whether it is to subscribe, fill out a form, share a post on social network sites, comment, or buy your product."

- Nile Flores of Blondish.Net

COLOR MATTERS

"A thoughtful, modern color story will go a long way in helping your marketing collateral feel fresh, appealing, and interesting. You want your marketing collateral to feel related to your brand, but you can branch out and add in a color or two that doesn't appear in your logo to liven things up. Search for inspiration online on sites like Pinterest, and find color palettes that include complementary tones to your logo and brand identity. For example, you can search for a specific color on http://www.colourlovers.com/ to see what other colors might complement it."

- Tiffany Monhollen of Reach Local

REMEMBER WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT

"Show Don't Tell! When designing product one pagers, the best thing you can do is show a prospective customer what your product will look like for their specific use case. If you're lucky enough to get someone to view or download a one-pager, assume you get their attention for just a few seconds. With that in mind, what's the most important message for you to get across? If you consider the design of a one pager with that assumption, you will be more successful at creating visuals that best convey your value proposition.!"
- Ilana Bercovitz of Sinch

OUTSOURCE

"If you have great concepts for visual content, but you don't have graphic designing skills, outsource. There's no sense in spending two days creating a graphic that someone else could create in ten minutes. Spend your time coming up with great ideas and promoting your visual content instead." - Kristi Hines of Kristi Hines Freelance Writer

"Web "design" doesn't matter. ....Wait:

48% of users cite a website's design as the #1 factor in determining credibility of a business.
(Brandpoint)

So don't get it twisted: Your design must be tight. But after those initial 1-3 seconds? Those "mere appearances" must move people to ACT.
Your website has a job to do. This is business. It's not a game. Who cares if your website is "beautiful," cutting edge... if it doesn't hit your targets? With ANY marketing piece, your design "wow" must spawn RESULTS. If it doesn't, your company is losing money. Period "
- Harmony Major of Raleigh Web Design Company

"Go **bold** with typography, pick one focal image, and then add just enough text to clarify and to pique interest."

- Kimber Converse of [Elim Books]

STAY TRUE TO YOUR BRAND

"Surprise people. Bring in laughter, tears, excitement, whatever works! Be emotional! To make your design/image stand out try these ideas: Create a compelling caption (be provocative! be unexpected! think ART, fun, humor!); be funny and/or outrageous; take previously created pictures and update them with new backgrounds, new stories, new messages. Connecting with people emotionally attracts loyalty and stimulates people to respond more positively. No matter what, always, always, be true to your CORE purpose in life"

- Yvonne DiVita of [Scratchings & Sniffings]

Betcha didn't think I'd fit, huh?

UNDERSTAND THE READER

"Useful beats pretty-but-gratuitous when it comes to content: simple text-based header images are fine to break up text, but a helpful visual representation of a concept or some data, screenshots illustrating a process, or anything that actually adds information and understanding for the reader is the best kind of visual."

- Tom Demers of CornerstonContent.com

SPEAK TO THE AUDIENCE

"Keep your design relevant to your customer. Before you design, you have to understand your audience. Find out what they enjoy, what they care about the most, and what keeps them up at night. Interview them, talk to them in person, and get to know them. That way, when you design marketing materials, you'll be using imagery that speaks to the recipients."

- Brock J Blake of Lendio

OFFER GOOD TIPS

"Since businesses that become top of mind in their market are usually those that offer the most help tips in most convenient times and ways, in all your content have an image of your free e Booklet with a relevant title plus subtitle: "100 tips to..." In print, include the URL to get the e Booklet and include a link in digital content. Too often tips are general. Offer actionable tips plus examples, giving credit and links to the sources: employees, customers, etc. to boost their bragging rights. Ask readers to send their favorite tips that may appear in your next edition."

- Kare Anderson of Say It Better

"Remember that thing we thought was a thing? It's not a thing. But here's the thing, that *other* thing? *Totally* a thing!"

"Cartoons are the superfoods of content marketing. They are a terrific tool to convey ideas in a way that feel less like marketing and more like sharing a laugh with a friend. People love to share cartoons too. And studies show that information presented with humor is remembered longer."

- Mark Anderson of **Andertoons**

"Images are an important part of your online communications and they can also serve a role in your SEO strategy. Ensure that you optimize your website images with an alt tag - a tag that describes what the image is for search engines as well as visitors. It's also a good idea to use a file name for the image that is keyword rich. Leverage your images to their full potential!"

- Martina Iring of **Martina Iring**

SPARK A REACTION

"Now that your content is written, what should you add to start a social reaction? Optimize visuals for social sharing, of course. Having at least one eye-catching image will lead to more reads and shares. As visuals are processed MUCH faster in the brain than text, you'll be able to communicate more value (faster) to the users browsing the web. Humanize designs with relevant images, giving people a reason to interact with it. Don't just rely on stock images. Create your own original designs that illustrate your story and bring it to life."

- Penney Fox of [Fox Interactive](#)

www.innersocialmedianess.com

How To Tell Your Company's Visual Story

Discover your company's personality to tell your story
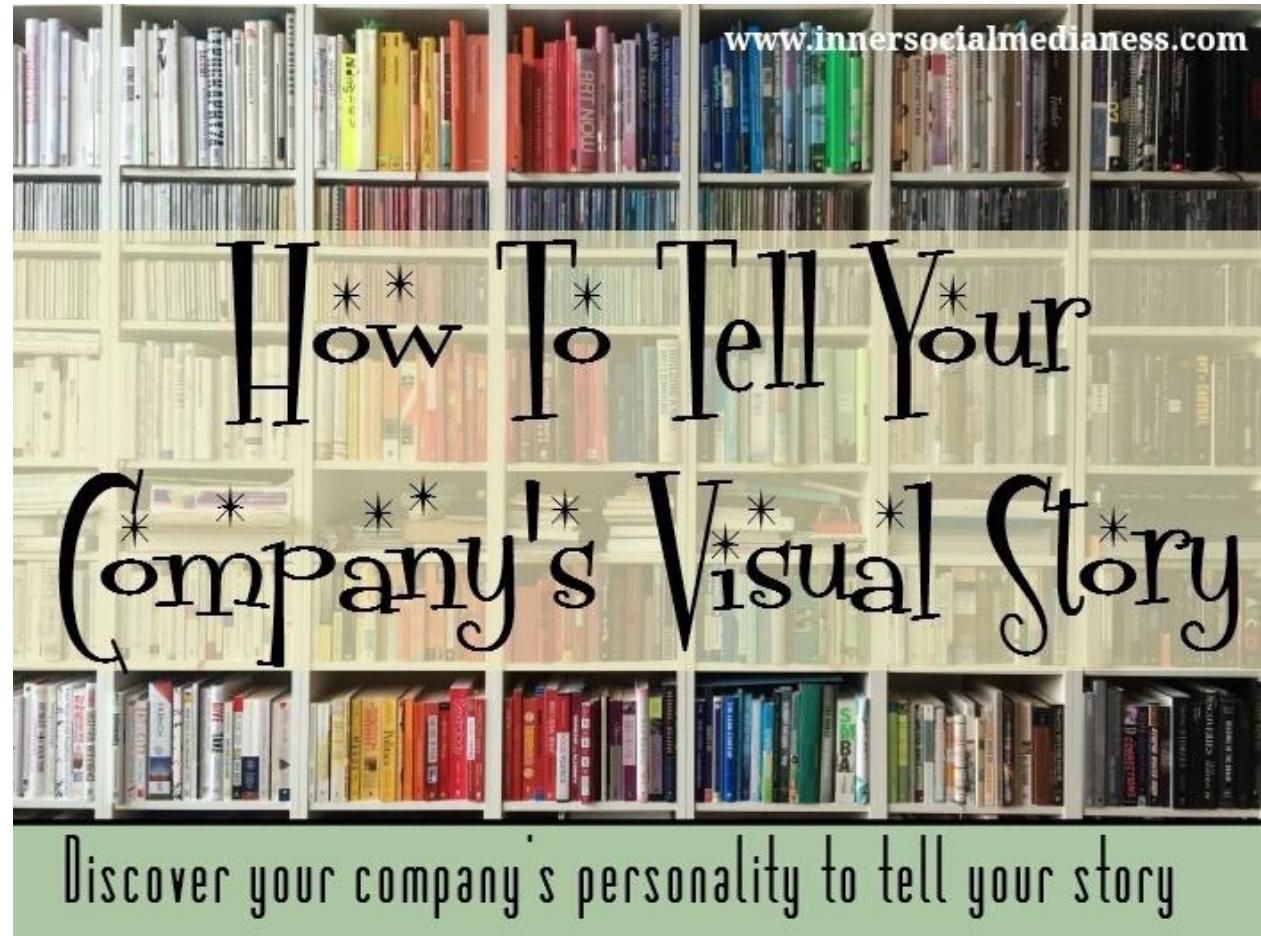
"Content with relevant images gets 94 percent more views than content without."

CUT THROUGH NOISE

"Done right, visuals cut through the content noise. Visual content can be a secret weapon, but only if you're focused on the right things. Your images have to be relevant. And they have to be high quality. You wouldn't pair a Stradivarius with a kazoo, so why do so many people add cheap graphics and generic stock photos to a great Web site, blog post, or presentation? Don't be those people. Make sure your visuals are not an afterthought, because it's easy to grab attention–but hard to keep it."

- Daria Steigman of Steigman Communications, LLC

CHAPTER_3
CONTENT MARKETING TIPS

Content marketing is one of the hottest kinds of marketing today. It's a way to inform customers and prospects; establish expertise and thought leadership; encourage engagement; and feed the search engines. And, of course, today it's more visual, as these tips demonstrate.

TIPS FROM BROTHER CREATIVECENTER™

Give your small business a boost with
a fresh design from the Brother CreativeCenter™.
Visit Brother CreativeCenter™ today to get started
designing your own effective, business-boosting collateral.

TIP #1: Creating your own business card? Here are a few simple dos and don'ts...

DO
- Have a hi-res logo that's a clean design
- Use a design for your card that's consistent with your website and literature
- Include important contact information like address, cell, website and list your social media handles
- Utilize the back of the card as an opportunity to sell yourself
- Consider a QR code to drive potential customers to your website
- Have a design that stands out – it's an advertisement of you, your company and your brand

DON'T
- Use a low resolution logo
- Have copy run over your logo
- List too many contact methods
- Put your contact information on the back
- Use ornate, hard to read fonts
- Use too many distracting colors
- Be too plain with the design

FRONT

BACK

ABC Corporation

Jane Doe
Vice President

123 Main Street
Suite 123
New York, NY 12345
Cell: 666-777-8888
janedoe@abc.com
www.companysite.com
@janedoe

Abc Corporation

Brand Development
PR/Advertising

View our portfolio

**BROTHER
CʀᴇᴀᴛɪᴠᴇCᴇɴᴛᴇʀ™**

TIP #2: Tips to create a better brochure to boost your business

Don't be overwhelmed! Nobody knows your business better than you do, and if you follow these simple steps below, the brochure you create can be used as an effective marketing tool to bring the attention of new customers to your front door.

Keep it clean. Sure, you have a lot to say. You have plenty of pictures you want to show. Use one or two larger images as opposed to lots of smaller images.

Keep it short. You don't have much time to engage your audience. They want the most important information, as fast as they can get it.. Bullets are more visually appealing and quicker to read and comprehend.

Tell them what to do. A clear call to action will tell your potential customers the next steps to follow.

Tell them where to go. Make sure your contact information is easy to find on the brochure.

Have a little fun. Never sacrifice clarity for cleverness. But look for ways to make your brand and your business stand out as memorable in a crowded field. An attention-grabbing headline is a great way to make a positive first impression with your prospective customer.

100s of FREE
Business Templates
you can customize and print in-house!

Give your small business a boost with a fresh design from our Business Center
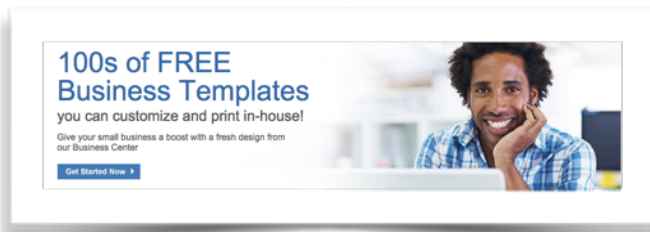
Get Started Now ▶

Visit **Brother CreativeCenter™** today to get started!

PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

"Business Plans continue to be a most effective way of documenting your business development. Some say they are no longer needed. Nothing could be further from the truth."

- Bob Shepherd of National Entrepreneur Center

EFFECTIVENESS WINS

"Before you design anything, get very clear on the GOALS of the communication. Spend time understanding WHY you are creating the piece, WHAT it needs to achieve, and to WHOM your collateral needs to resonate with. Clearly identifying these INTENTIONS behind your communication will result in far more focused and targeted creations, and will provide you with a clear benchmark to determine the effectiveness of the creation and how it can be improved."

- Tara Joyce of Elastic Mind

Keep It Long For SEO, Short For The Reader

"It's no secret that Google tends to prefer longer original articles to shorter ones. When I say longer, I mean

2,000 words

plus! Unfortunately, most readers don't like to read content that long. It feels like a major commitment of time and energy. To shorten the article, you can use the following techniques: put a one or at most two paragraph summary at the beginning, create links to important sections which reader might want to jump, and break the article up into lots of small easy to read sections."

- Marc Prosser of Fit Small Business

DRIVE TRAFFIC

"Design for Engagement: Every image you're sharing – or that you hope others are sharing! – needs to have an element in it that encourages viewers to engage further with your brand. Approach this strategically. Know where you want to drive traffic – to a landing page, a particular hashtag, to sign up for a SMS campaign – and begin your design process with that goal in mind. The best multi-channel marketing campaigns average six weeks in duration, make sure you generate enough images, in enough formats, to populate your social media channels consistently throughout that time."

- Jennifer Shaheen of [Technology Therapy](#)

SIMPLICITY WINS

"Don't overcomplicate your message: Searching and placing imagery into marketing content? Keep it simple. Make sure that whatever image you're using clearly demonstrates the idea you're trying to get across in a meaningful way. Using the right image can elevate your idea and make it much easier to understand. You don't want to use graphics and imagery that distracts from your central point. People have a limited amount of time, so the quicker you can get your point across, the better."

- Jonathan Belsky of [Shutterstock](#)

CUT THROUGH THE NOISE

"Small businesses are operating in a sound-byte world. Attempts to gain prospects' attention must be understandable in a nanosecond. Online marketing channels turned what once was a casual conversation with potential clients into total chaos. The noise from others competing for attention is deafening. Nothing fulfills the adage 'A picture is worth a thousand words' on a grander scale than digital images. Before we can get a prospect to read marketing content, we need their attention. Well selected images can grab attention, support your content, and make content easier to remember."

- Terri Maurer of Maurer Consulting Group

PROVIDE OPTIONS

"When I ventured into hosting live conferences last year, I knew I needed to count on my speakers for help in spreading the word about the event. By creating branded images that feature each speaker as a shining star, I give them something to share with pride. I provide them with two sizes. One suitable for their website sidebar and larger for posting to social media. Of course, I post and share the images widely myself too."

- Kelly McCausey of Solo Smarts

AVOID "STUFF"

"If you're not using images - relevant images - in your content then you are writing stuff and not marketing. The best marketing collateral is a combination of great content, images, pull-quotes, and callouts that send a clear message of the next step you want the reader to take."
- Tom Gazaway of [LenCred](#)

MAKE IT STICK

"Use images to show everyone how funny you are! It's one thing to share handy content, but partnering that content with a hilarious image or gif will not only be more effective at grabbing someone's attention, it will stick with them like gum in a kid's hair!"
- Kelvin Cech of [Function Writing](#)

NURTURE, NURTURE, NURTURE

"Sandler Rule: The three most important words in professional selling is nurture, nurture, nurture! Most sales people feel pressure to push, prod, convince, and cajole their prospects into doing something. In essence, they transfer the pressure to the prospect. The prospect attempts to transfer it back through objections, criticism, not returning phone calls, etc. There are 4 possible outcomes of every sales call. They are: Yes, No, Think it over and Clear future. The only one we don't think is good for you or the prospect is the "think it over"."
- Dan Stalp of [Sandler Training](#)

KEEP IT REAL

"Visual content is a great way to communicate an idea, but make it real, meaningful, maybe even insightful. Resist the urge to post inspirational quotes in images just because you can."

- John Jantsch of [Duct Tape Marketing](#)
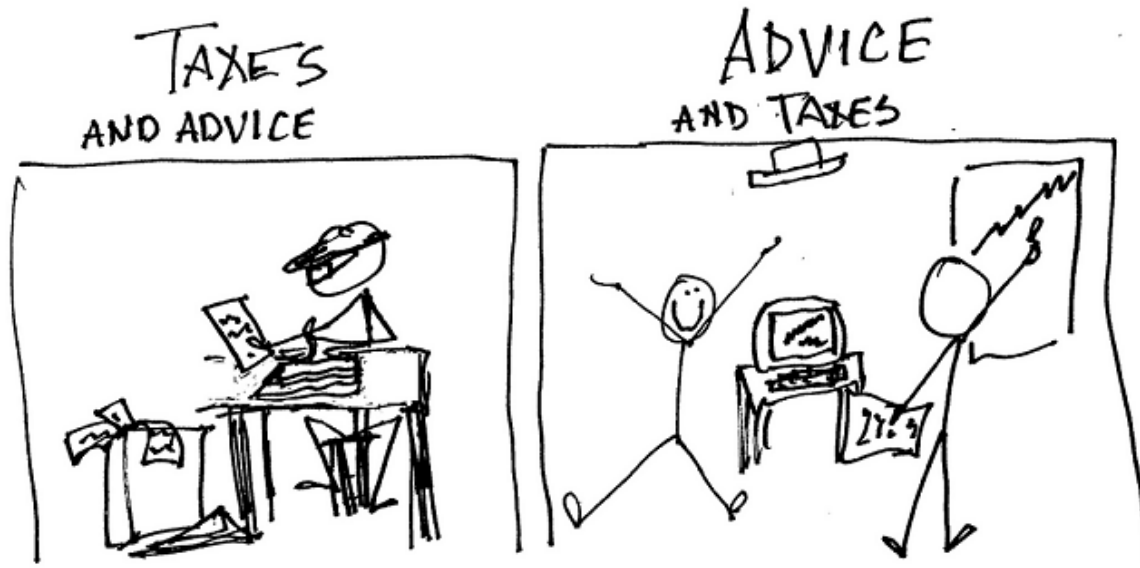
BE FUNNY!

Unique (funny, interesting) images that represent the content of the article can draw viewers even if the content isn't what they're looking for. Clip-art and stock images just don't do the trick and are frequently overused. While a picture can say a thousand words, it is far better if the picture speaks with the writer's voice and not someone else's. Make Sense?."

- Joannie Mann of Cooper Mann Consultling Group

TEXT IS SECONDARY

"Images aren't just about pretty pictures. They can also be a great way to control the way text is visually presented to the visitor. Unfortunately, having that visual control can often hurt your online marketing efforts. Text in images is largely hidden from the search engines and therefore not able to be a factor in the ranking algorithms. When using text in an image format, make sure it's secondary text, not the primary text that the search engines would need to determine the topic of your page. If text is valuable for search, keep it out of images altogether."
- Stone G deGeyer of Pole Position Marketing

A
BBB
CCCCC
DDDDDDD
EEEEEEEEEEEE

PREPARE FOR SKIMMERS

"If you watch a movie on mute, you'll probably understand what it's about. Likewise, if you only listen to the audio, you'll get it. While the story is more complete and compelling when the two are put together, you can still get the "gist" from consuming one or the other.

Your content is similar. Images can tell the story of your post in parallel with your text. That way, skimmers will still come away with value even if they only see your images and subheads."

- Alex Turnbull of [Groove](#)

DON'T BE ORDINARY

"Keep those images colorful, personable and happy. The more colorful your images the more eye-catching your content will be. Corporate photos become a blur; Ordinary photos aren't memorable. If you can draw attention to the eye with color, it will be more pleasing to content readers. Similarly, using personable and happy images will create the perception that your brand is relatable. Remember: It's not about images that make you and your company stand out. It's about how I can relate to you -- so really, it's about me. Pay attention to that and you'll wow 'em all!"

- Jill Salzman of [The Founding Moms](#)

1-2-3-4

"We feel with our eyes. Content marketing and visual marketing, use of images, pictures, drawings, art, charts, graphs, surveys all help us connect to and feel ideas and meaning. Sometimes just posting a bold, eye catching image and a few words is enough.

Here are three tips for using images:

1)   Choose images that enhance and compliment your content, not overwhelm it.
2)   Don't be afraid to use a series of images that tell the story with your text.
3)   Make sure you are using images that are legal and permission based.
4)   Use unique images and if you can original or custom images."

- Deborah Shane of Deborah Shane Toolbox.com

ELEVATE THE MESSAGE

"Whenever creating a featured piece of content, you can help make it stand out from other content by creating a custom logo for it. The custom logo helps elevate the perceived importance of the work. If the content is compelling, many people who write about and share it will also share the logo."

- Aaron Wall of SEOBook
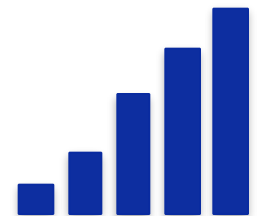
GET PUBLISHED

"Adding specific, direct proof of results you've achieved makes you look less like selling and more like teaching. Our favorite tactic is to publish our research on sites like AdWeek and Forbes, which gives us journalist cred. Never create "marketing collateral". Instead, interview your clients on what makes them successful. By lifting them up, they speak more about you than you ever could."
- Dennis Yu of Portage

PAINT PICTURES WITH WORDS

"Visual communication is where it is at. We learn more, retain more and buy more if we can see "it" rather than just read or hear about it. As a sales trainer I always include a section on "painting pictures with your words" and that is doubly true for marketing and content creation. Our fast paced highly cluttered world demands that we absorb information FAST and well, one pic is worth a 1000 words. (Wait...did I just make that up?!)"
- Adrian Miller of Adrian Miller Sales Training

BE AUTHENTIC

"Don't use stock images. Take pictures of your products, customers, employees and vendors so it is authentic!" - Barry Moltz of Barry Moltz: Your Business Unstuck

SHOW, DON'T JUST TELL

"My suggestion is to inspire consumers on how to use your products. Many people see things and think "Wow that's cool, but what would I do with it?". It also shows that you are thinking beyond the product and willing to help the consumer."

- Tricia Galbraith of [Tricia Galbraith](#)

BE STRIKING

"Be sure your visuals are both striking and smart. An image can be striking, but wrong because it's not conveying exactly the right message. My agency creates exciting advertising and this is my card. When I once found myself with someone asking what I do, I said: "I help get people excited" and handed her my card. She looked at it and said, "This is the first time someone has made a claim to me about their business and then immediately proved it. Great card." Three months later I signed a contract she offered for a $93,000 project."

- John Follis of [Follis Inc.](#)

JOHN FOLLIS
FOLLIS ADVERTISING INC.

john@follisinc.com 203-569-7515 www.follisinc.com

CHAPTER_4
PRINT MEDIA TIPS

Today, printing beautiful colorful
marketing materials is within reach of
everyone. Check out these tips.

MAKE ANYTHING EXCITING

"Feature your own photography in your presentations. I try to stay away from showing too many boring facts and figures in my presentations and focus instead on a few key words accompanied by seasonal photos that I take of my hometown Chicago. Making my area of expertise, "exporting," sexy or exciting is not easy so I have found that great pictures make things simple, fun and clear and serve as a perfect vehicle to warm up to the audience, especially after I tell participants that I am a runner and take all the photos myself."

- Laurel Delaney of GlobeTrade.com

BACKGROUNDS HELP

"Every piece of content must utilize vivid colors and include something compellingly cute. Images I've created that included kittens or cats generate the most organic virality. Any cuddly animal is likely to work. A SlideShare that really stood out to me featured a cover with a chihuahua sporting a multi-colored mohawk. Bright glossy business cards with image backgrounds stand out and get noticed. So do unusual sizes. Customize images to optimize size and text for each purpose. Display stats and case study highlights in graphic form. Think creatively while still using images that are representative of your brand."

- Gail Gardner of Growmap

Front of Business Card

BE QUIRKY!

"Play up an unexpected quirk or memorable character trait. Find a way to tie it into your brand. Stuck for ideas? Ask your best clients what they find endearing about you personally. When someone first meets you how would they finish this sentence, "I've never met someone in your field who is _____" or "I remember the first time I met you because _____". I'm often told I'm way too funny to be in finance. Clients will call me up just to hear me laugh. People buy from people they remember and like."

- Nicole Fende of [The Numbers Whisperer](#)

Back of Business Card

"We all know that personalization is especially effective in marketing. But it's not only personalized text that's engaging; relevant imagery work well, too. For example, if you're a car dealer marketing your service department, don't just send a bland, 'Come to us for your service needs' mailer to someone who recently purchased from you; send a mailer with a photo of the color/make/model vehicle that person purchased. Then any personalized text will be especially catchy: 'John, we know you want to keep your new Dodge Ram running smooth; so, come to
 us for your service needs.'"

- Ginger Conlon of [Direct Marketing News](#)

IT'S PERSONAL
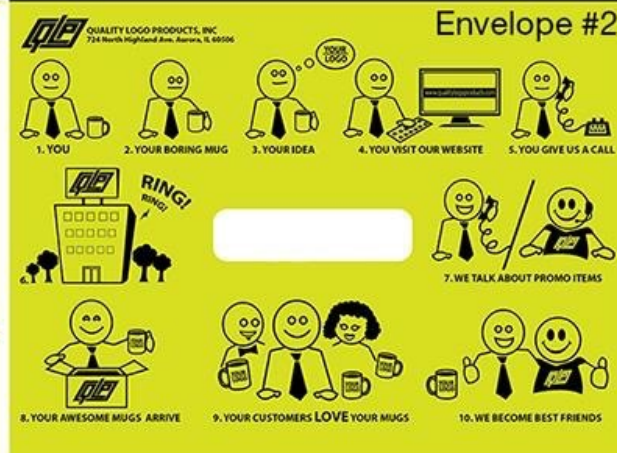
SAY "THANK YOU"

"Don't just use a boring stock card for your Thank You cards. Taking the time to create custom cards and envelopes shows your customers that you really care! Not only that, but an envelope with a unique, eye-catching design is far less likely to be tossed out with the junk mail. Send it off with a creative card that reflects your brand's personality, and you'll have a thank-you note that your customers are sure to hold on to – and remember."

- Sheila Johnson of Quality Logo Products

BUILT TO LAST

"Make it something they'll hang on to. A structural metal-bending client of mine had two main customer acquisition channels - their website and trade shows. They wanted a new corporate brochure that would NOT get thrown away with the other junk picked up at trade show booths. We chose to create a multi-page "magazine", loaded with pictures of end products, emulating luxurious architecture magazines you might find on waiting room coffee tables. We even used thick paper stock and some fancy printing tricks to give it that feel of luxury. And it worked! People hang on to this brochure."
- David Leonhardt of The Happy Guy Writing Services
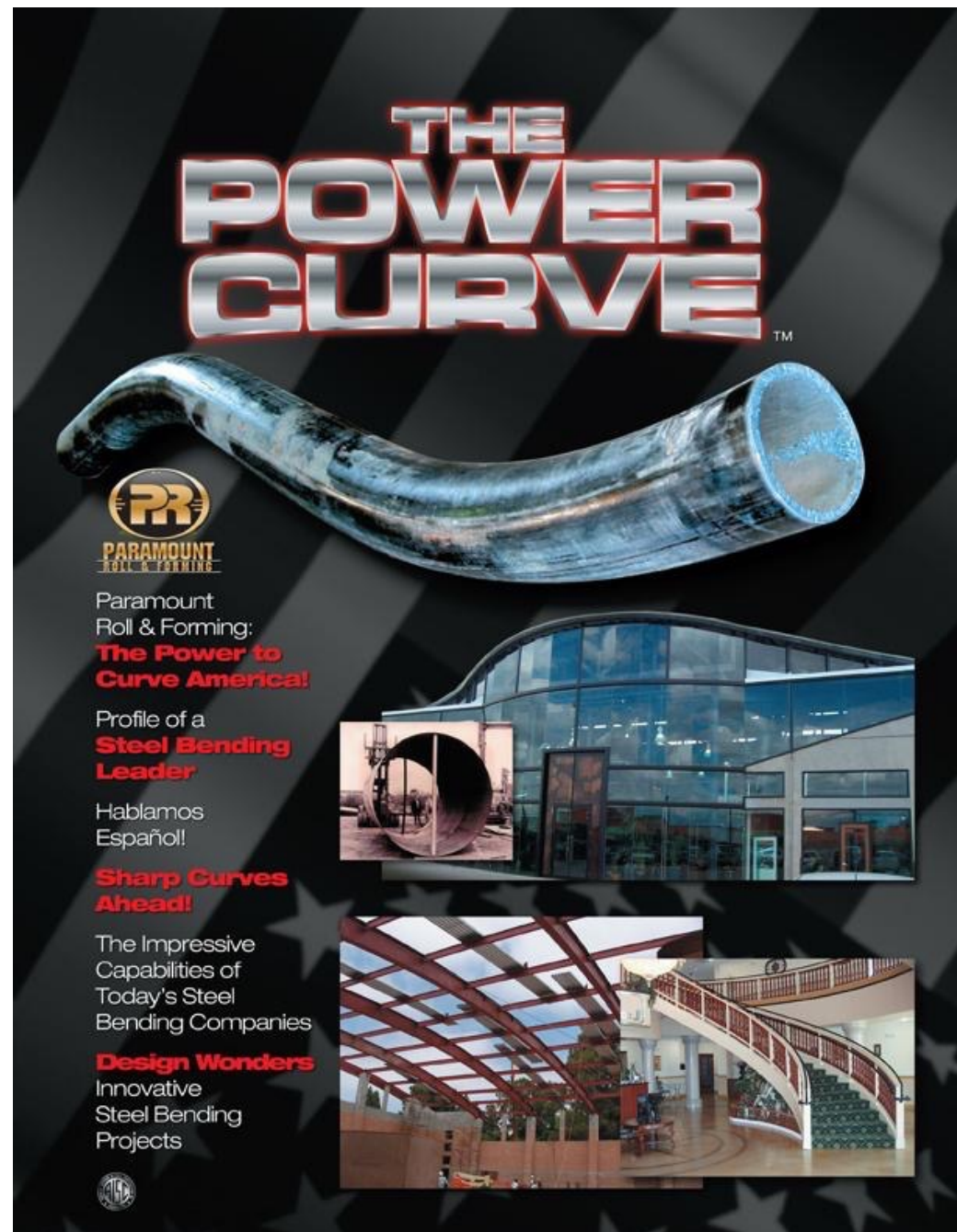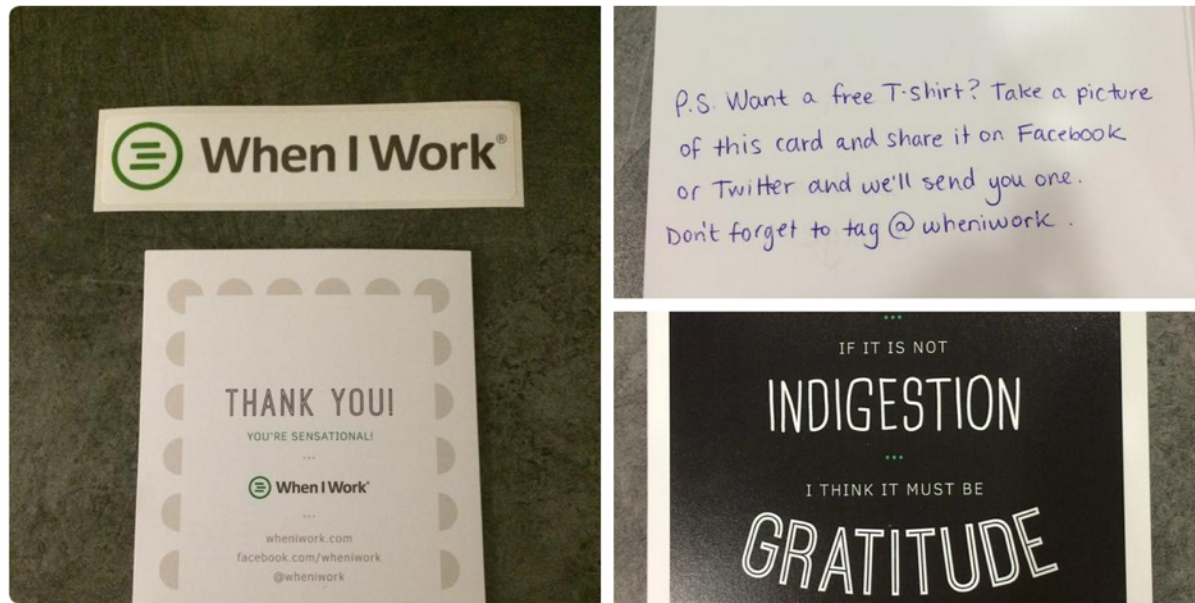
"In a world where everything is streamlined, automatic and instantaneous, personalization and human touch is more important than ever. This is especially true when it comes to business. One great way to WOW customers and differentiate from competitors is by taking the time to send each and every one of your customers a personalized thank you card as soon as they decide to do business with you and become your customer. Strengthen brand loyalty by including marketing collateral and visuals that represent your brand. Don't be afraid to ask recipients to share their card with their friends on social media."

- Sujan Patel of Sujan Patel.com

"When I started marketing my book Accounting for the Number Phobic, A Survival Guide for Small Business Owners, I printed the QR code to the books' Amazon link on the back of my business card. It's rare to see anything useful on the back of business cards so why not make this valuable real estate work harder for you? It also made it easy for someone to find this book with a hard-to-remember title. By providing the QR code, no one had to remember it.

All they has to do was point, click, and buy."

- Dawn Fotopulos of [Best Small Biz Help]

BE LOUD AMONGST WHITE NOISE

"If you want to maximize the impact of your content, without question it must include compelling images. Consider this fact: 8:10 people will see your content, 2:10 will click through. There's a lot of noise out there and your content is competing against millions of messages. Whether you seek to inform, entertain, advise or delight your audience, imagery is critical. Providing a visual hook, or some kind of stimulation is the key to getting that click through that you seek."

- Shelly Kramer of V3 Integrated Marketing

2:10

COMPELLING CONTENT WINS

"If you are sponsoring an event, you'll likely be creating marketing collateral. Because there are likely many companies who are submitting content, it is critical that your content stands out from the crowd. This is a mistake that many companies make–not creating compelling content. Instead of simply giving out brochures and one pagers that will surely get thrown away, consider turning your datasheet into an infographic. Creating a printed foldable infographic will be visually appealing, it'll stand out, and the content won't be a boring read."

- Aya Fawzy of Captora

"Add a caricature / avatar of yourself on your business cards! You will stand out from the crowd, and the same time you have created a picture of yourself with a twist, that the receiver of the business card will remember and can relate to.

Individuals should do business according to the trader principle, so a caricature / avatar that embodies your individuality could create a special "wow" factor."

- Martin Lindeskog of Ego NetCast

BE COMPELLING

"When I speak at events I hand out a two-sided rip card. The top has a summary of my 3 Pillars to PR Success™ System, information about me and my book, testimonials, and a call to action to download a free chapter of my book so I can collect their information. The bottom of the rip card is a removable two-sided business card. Attendees love this!!!"

- Christina Daves of PR For Anyone

CHAPTER_5
INFOGRAPHICS TIPS

Infographics are a visual way to deliver facts, statistics and other data. Take advantage of infographics in your marketing, with these tips.

USE STATS AND FACTS

"If you want to get people to notice and share your content, then I recommend you take statistics, facts and ideas that relate to your industry or topic and create a graphic representation connecting each to showcase on your website. Taking bigger concepts and turning them into visuals makes communicating with your target customer easier and more effective. Most businesses only use text so images can help you stand out from the sea of content that gets published every second."
- Dan Schawbel of [Workplace Trends](#)

IS A PICTURE REALLY WORTH 1,000 WORDS

"How many times have you heard "a picture is worth a thousand words"? Take an infographic - its popular because it has visuals and is informative. You can gain exposure, social media traction, and visuals also have SEO value.Just make sure your "visual" makes sense. Don't use a "motorcycle" when you're writing about a car. Don't make it look like an ad. If you are using other peoples images, make sure you give credit. A picture, a video, an infographic, or a slide presentation (great for repurposing content), are good ways to enhance user experience and capture audience attention."
- Francisco Perez of [iBlog Zone](#)

DON'T BE SHY

12%

the rate traffic grows with infographics

"Don't shy away from infographics because you think they are too complex or expensive. A well-crafted, high quality infographic can bring you traffic and leads for years to come. * Infographics are 30 times more likely to be read than text articles. * The use of Infographics grow traffic 12% faster. Find a compelling topic, do your research, create high quality, visually appealing graphics and then promote, promote, promote (think: website, email, social media). If this is not your forte, find an expert to do it for you. Infographics aren't just for larger companies. Jump in!"
- Brenda Stoltz of Ariad Partners

JUMP IN!

"Consciously craft content with original visual assets in mind. Brands like Salesforce do this exceptionally well. On the Salesforce Canada blog, the company's longer-form blog posts include numerous infographics to help readers visualize the strategies and tips that are shared within the article. The authors of each blog post partner with designers to create copy that can easily be repurposed for visual storytelling -- and the results are astounding. With thousands of likes, retweets and stumbles for every long-form article, Salesforce has figured out the perfect way to marry quality content with compelling images."
- Danny Wong of Grapevine

MAKE MOTION

"A picture is still worth a 1,000 words! Because we live in such a busy world where we are overly inundated with information each and every day, use imagery to help tell your story. Images will help reinforce the central theme of your post, article or even sales page. Take it step further and consider telling your story with information and motion graphics. In our ever-increasing "visual" society, infographics that are interesting and well designed are a favorite among users as they are easy to digest and appeal to visual senses."
- David Wallace of [Search Rank](#)

FEED THE BRAIN

"Did you know that visual content is processed in our brain 60,000 times faster than text? Yes, sixty thousand time faster! Regardless of the audience you target, remember that brain prefers visuals to text. This is not to say, however, that you should start communicating to your audience solely in infographics and images. It is not an "either... or..." situation, but a case where you want to be doing "both... and..." For maximum engagement intertwine visuals with text, enriching one with the other."
- Geno Prussakov of [AM Navigator LLC](#)

QUOTE IMAGES

"Other than infographics, quote images - when done right - can impact your branding and send traffic to your website or social profile. I regularly publish blog posts with relevant quote images on my BizEpic.com. Those posts generally receive more social shares than the standard posts with photos or illustrations. You can capitalize on this by 'branding' your quote images. Here is a branding hack for you: Make sure you add your company logo, website URL and/or social media account on the quote images."
- Ivan Widjaya of [Previso Media](#)

"Use infographics to "boil down" and present the important points hidden within a complex set of information (both numeric and nonnumeric) in an easily understood way. This lets your audience absorb your messages more quickly, a big boost in our busy workaday world and one that increases the likelihood of your message being heard. Using an infographic also serves a wider audience by accommodating those who prefer images over text and, even among those who prefer text, a well-designed infographic such as the "Infographic Creation Process" shown here can be preferable to a long page full of text and numbers."

– Matt Mansfield of Matt About Business
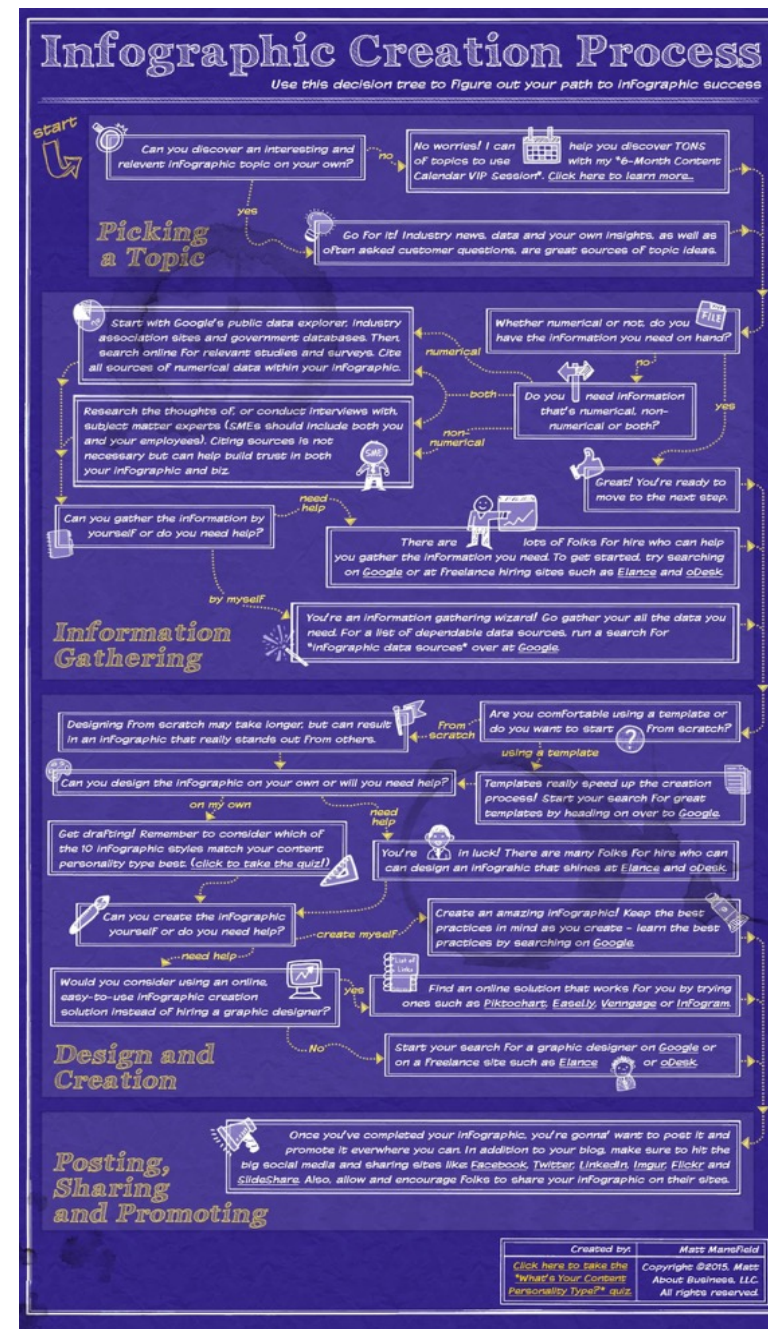
MAKE FACTS FUN-TO-READ

"Include infographics alongside your content when possible. The human brain processes images 60,000 times faster than text alone, so incorporating your facts with graphics in a fun-to-read fashion really helps drive home your message. This also makes your content easier to digest when the text is broken up with visual elements and that leads to greater comprehension and higher brand awareness."
- Megan Totka of Chamber of Commerce.com

IT'S ALL RELATIVE

"Don't think of visual content solely as something completely separate from your "regular" (read: text-based) content. Though content elements like infographics and video clips can stand on their own, you'll get more mileage out of everything you publish if you plan your content so that different elements and different formats relate to and support one another. The goal is to give individual audience members the content that interests them in the format they prefer. In other words, same message, different medium."
- Andrew Schulkind of Andigo New Media

PROMOTE EVERYWHERE

"Your team can have that "wow" factor in your content marketing by creating infographics and using other tools like Visual.ly to help promote it. Infographics will grab users attention and they're easier for other blogs to post and get your company name in front of more eyes."
- Drew Hendricks of Audience Bloom

CHAPTER_ 6
VIDEO & PHOTOGRAPHY TIPS

With today's cameras and high quality smartphones, anyone can take great photographs or video. When doing it yourself, these tips can help you get the most out of your photos and videos.

"Create beautiful decks with your key points from the articles. Presentations are engaging, beautiful and have their own channel to re-market: Slideshare. Slideshare decks are also clickable, so you can drive some traffic back to your site. Plus, they are fast to create using HaikuDeck. This one (attached screenshot) took me 30 minutes to put together and it went hot on Slideshare!"

- Ann Smarty of Internet

FIGHT SAMENESS

"With images becoming more and more important, it's often worth the extra expense to hire photographers rather than using stock photos–especially for "signature" images that will be used in multiple places, such as on your website's home page or in your print marketing materials. Arresting images can really make your business stand out in a sea of sameness."
- Rieva Lesonsky of [Small Biz Daily](#)

CREATE VALUE

"Video interviews are a great way to help showcase areas of interest to your clients and prospects, your subject matter expertise, and your interviewing skills! Look for opportunities to conduct a short, informal video interview with your clients and prospects when you're at tradeshows and events. Videos are great way to quickly create valuable content with a personal touch."

- Laurie McCabe of [SMB Group](#)

SMB Group talks to Sharon Rowlands, CEO of ReachLocal

QUALITY COUNTS

"Stay away from stock photos if you can. Find the best quality images that are eye-catching and convey a message. Use your eyes as a gauge."
- Charles Franklin of This College Dropout

TRY TESTIMONIALS

"On-video customer testimonials are integral to the success of our business. These days, prospective customers are doing more online research than ever before when it comes to making business decisions. Visuals such as customer testimonial videos are proven to work wonders in capturing and nurturing leads. At Nextiva, we travel to customers to film candid testimonials. We then post these on our website and on a dedicated YouTube page for the world to see (and easily search)."
- Yaniv Masjedi of Nextiva

EDUCATE CUSTOMERS

"By adding short how-to video's you can educate your customers, promote your expertise, and provide customers with a face to your name. Customers who recognize you will be able to feel more comfortable connecting with you."
- Lara Burchfield of Small Batch Marketing Co

KILL CLUTTER

"When using video, put the text to the left or right of the people in the video. Make the graphics simple and clean. You want people focusing on the conversation and your video message, not being distracted by a graphic that is too busy and hard to read. A cluttered slide with clashing colors will definitely get your viewers' attention. And they will pay attention to it rather than the message you want to convey."

- Ruth King of Profitability Revolution Paradigm

Imagine outsourcing all your follow-up tasks to a Virtual Assistant! ***JUST IMAGINE*** Hire Team VOIS now! Visit www.voisllc.com

"I use Canva to create great visual posts and Slideshare to add presentations on how a Virtual Assistant can benefit any business or startup."
- Carmen Saunders of VOIC, LLC

IMAGES DON'T HAVE TO BE COSTLY

"Images don't have to be expensive stock photos. There are lots of free sources of imagery that small business owners can take advantage of. CreativeCommons.org, for example, lets you search license-free photos that you can add visual interest to social media posts and blogs. PhotoPin.com is another great free tool that aggregates commercial and non-commercial images from across the web. Don't forget that other ubiquitous tool - your smartphone. Use it to capture photos of your business, your team, products, and happy customers."
- Caron Beesley of [April Marketing](#)

STICK WITH SELFIES

"Invest in a Selfie Stick. The Selfie Stick will revolutionize how you create content, allowing you to do so anywhere, anytime. Your future customers want to see authentic, unscripted videos from you and what better way to quickly make them, than with your smartphone. You can immediately share via your social networks and your website. The more they see you talking while hearing your voice, the more connected they will feel to you. Time named the Selfie Stick one of the best inventions of 2014 and I predict online marketers will name it their secret weapon of 2015."
- Ali Rittenhouse of [Ali Rittenhouse International](#)

CREATE A REPUTATION AND PROMOTE IT

"Visual/video testimonials are a powerful part of any sales process. Compiling marketing testimonials on yourself and your company helps build a substantiated track record. Begin gathering/using NOW! You need TO ASK FOR THEM TO GET THEM. When finishing a presentation, the audience fills out a two-page speech evaluation form, which includes a "with permission to use" testimonial section. ALWAYS show the Clients name, company, and city they reside in on ALL MARKETING TOOLS. Makes it easy for potential clients to search out those people on their own. EVERY marketing piece should have at least one "BRIEF" testimonial displayed: http://chuckbauer.com/reviews/"

- Chuck Bauer of Chuck Bauer

GOODBYE STOCK

"Custom photography always wins! Say goodbye to stock images and pull out your camera or phone and start taking your own pictures. When it comes to producing engaging content, people love original photography. So get out there in share your work with the world on Pinterest, Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter."

- Donny Gamble of
Personalincome.org

SHARE

"Instead of adding normal images, always share images or photographs that have people in it. This gives a good touch and personality to the post you are sharing. Also, this method would also portray the feeling that you are selling or promoting a product to human, for human and not otherwise."
- Reginald Chan of AskReginald.com

FIND HELPFUL APPS

"With the rise of mobile apps, it's no longer necessary to be skilled in photoshop to create compelling visual marketing. I'm a big fan of using apps like Canva, Wordswag and PicLab to place beautiful typography on my images. It's easy to create a photo quote in 60 seconds with these useful apps. I used Wordswag to create an entire books' worth of photo quotes!"
- Joel Comm of Infomedia, Inc.

STANDARD EFFECTS HELP

"Make sure that you have moving parts on your presentation visuals that at the same time are efficient and don't chew up bandwidth. Simple transitions and moves from box to box on a presentation add a dimension of action that impacts people since they are more attracted to viewing active things than static images. Even using standard effects from a Powerpoint or Keynote has significantly more impact than a non-moving visual representation of content. But use them strategically and judiciously. Too many and content becomes secondary and is trivialized. Ultimately, the moving visuals help them remember what is said." - Paul Greenberg of The 56 Group, LLC
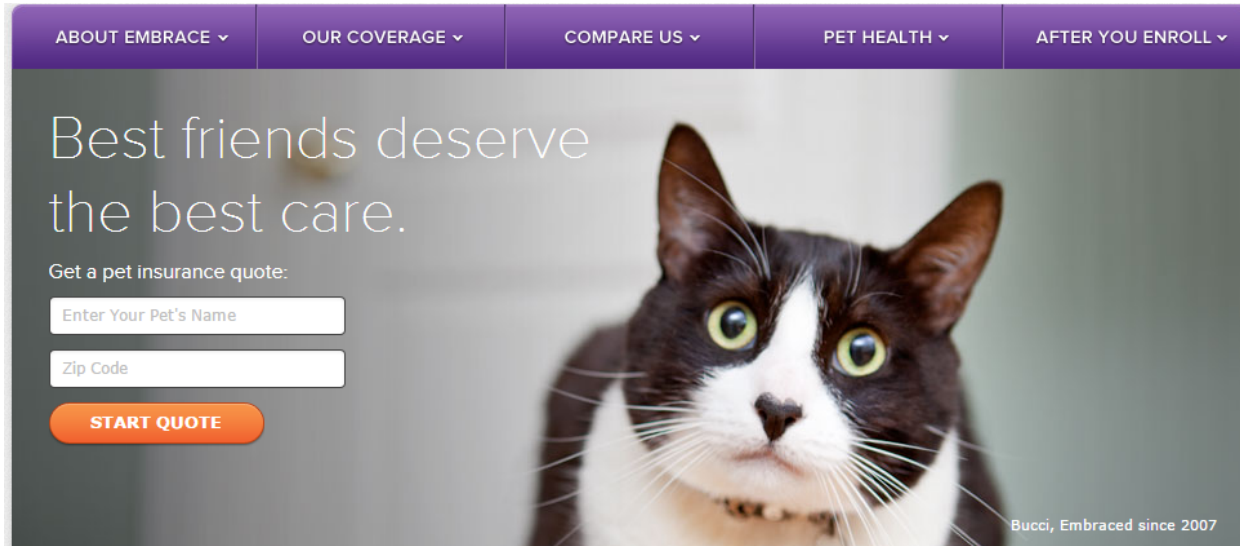
STRATEGIZE EARLY

"The success of any digital marketing campaign starts with its creative strategy. Images are the first thing that people notice, so it's important to focus on eye-catching imagery that captures their attention. Equally important are your copy and call to action. Choose words that give people a sense of what your product or service is about and convey urgency to get people to stop what they're doing and consider your offer. By regularly testing new layouts and messaging, you can determine what works and hone your creative so it truly engages people and connects them with your brand."
– Robert Glazier of Acceleration Partners

REAL IMAGES ROCK

"Avoid using posed stock photos whenever possible. Customers want to see your product or service in action and nothing says that better than a real photo. Labeling customers in your photos with their first name helps authenticate your images, and linking to a page which tells their story is even better.

When in doubt, use an animal or baby in your photo for maximum attention-grabbing."

- Kate Zirkle of Embrace Pet Insurance

WORK ON PHOTOGRAPHY SKILLS

"Short on images to fuel your marketing, blog, and social presence? There's definitely a lot to be said for professional, sharp imagery. But, there's also a lot of charm, authenticity, and value in ordinary, personal perspective photos. Look for regular opportunities to take photos of your business, products, and even (with permission!) your employees and clients. Learn some basic smartphone photography best practices, like using good natural lighting, framing the subject well, taking multiple options, applying photo editing tools, trying apps for text overlay. With these, you can generate some engaging, fun images for your content."
- Tiffany Monhollen of Reach Local

LINK IMAGES

"I use a slide show on my franchise business directory to showcase featured advertisers. It's a great way for visitors to quickly see the types of franchise opportunities and business opportunities that are available these days. The images link to custom listing pages that I've created that provide details about the opportunities being offered by my advertisers. It's working: Web traffic on The Franchise Biz Directory has been rising steadily every month!"
- Joel Libava of Franchise Biz Directory
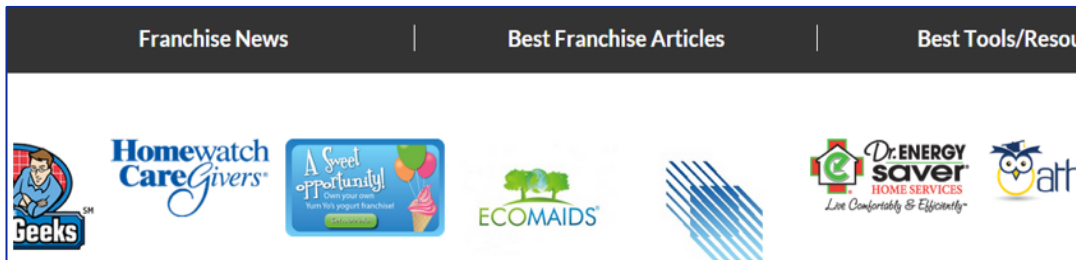
WOW or BLAH

"There is no reason to use terrible stock photography anymore. A great picture can mean the difference between wow and blah. Sites like unsplash.com and StockSnap.io are two great and FREE resources to find photos that will really stand out. Look for photos that aren't so literal and have more an abstract approach. Your audience will make their own connections with your content creating a deeper emotional appeal."

- Russ Perry of <u>Design Pickle</u>

JE NE SAIS QUOI

"Skip the cheesy photographs with models who don't work for your company. Instead, use photos of the genuine folks who work for your company. Real employees have that je ne sais quoi that's missing from the stock photos. If nothing else, trade the people stock photos for colorful images of abstracts and objects."

- Meryl K Evans of <u>Meryl.Net: Content Maven</u>

CREATE CUSTOM STOCK PHOTOS

"When I hired a photographer to take headshots, I also had her take some custom "stock photos". These are photos of me holding up a slate board, or opening my hands as if I'm featuring something. In some shots I'm holding tools like a shovel or a saw. I even have shots of me pointing and giving thumbs up. I use these for social media pictures and one is even featured on my home page www.diymarketers.com - where I'm holding the chalkboard. You can also see one on my Twitter page: https://twitter.com/diymarketers"

- Ivana S Taylor of DIY Marketers
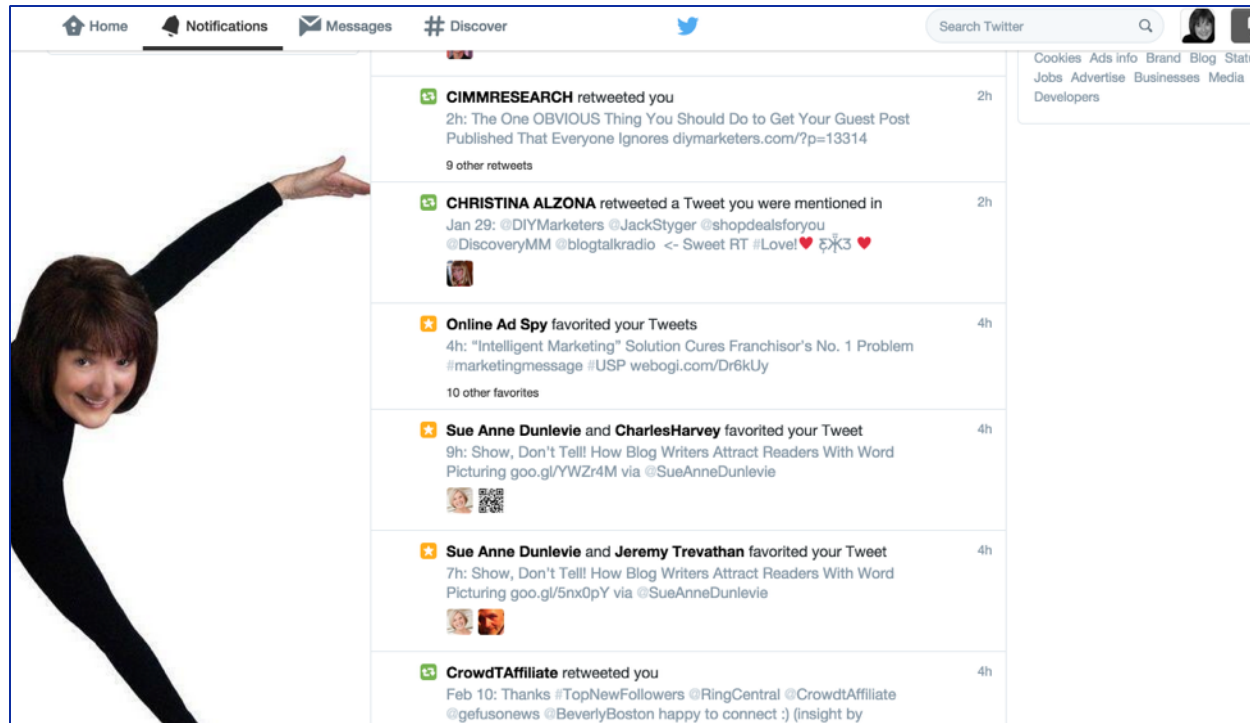
FEATURE REAL "MODELS"

"Stop using stock photos and instead, invest in quality photography. If you're on a budget, get in touch with local wedding photographers in your area. Many are looking to branch out beyond weddings, and may be willing to do the shoot for cheap (or even free) in exchange for a testimonial or referral from you. We always feature our real students in our marketing materials. Not only does this make us stand out from other schools with their tired stock photos, but it serves as social proof - you see the real kids who train with us!"

- Carmen Sognonvi of Urban Martial Arts

CONSIDER 3D

Depth adds value. Consider making your images into 3d. For example, a flat cover for your book or product image makes it look, well, flat. When you add a 3d effect to your images they look more professional and interesting. It's very simple, and cost-effective, to hire someone to add a 3d effect to your product image."

- Jim Kukral of Author Marketing Institute
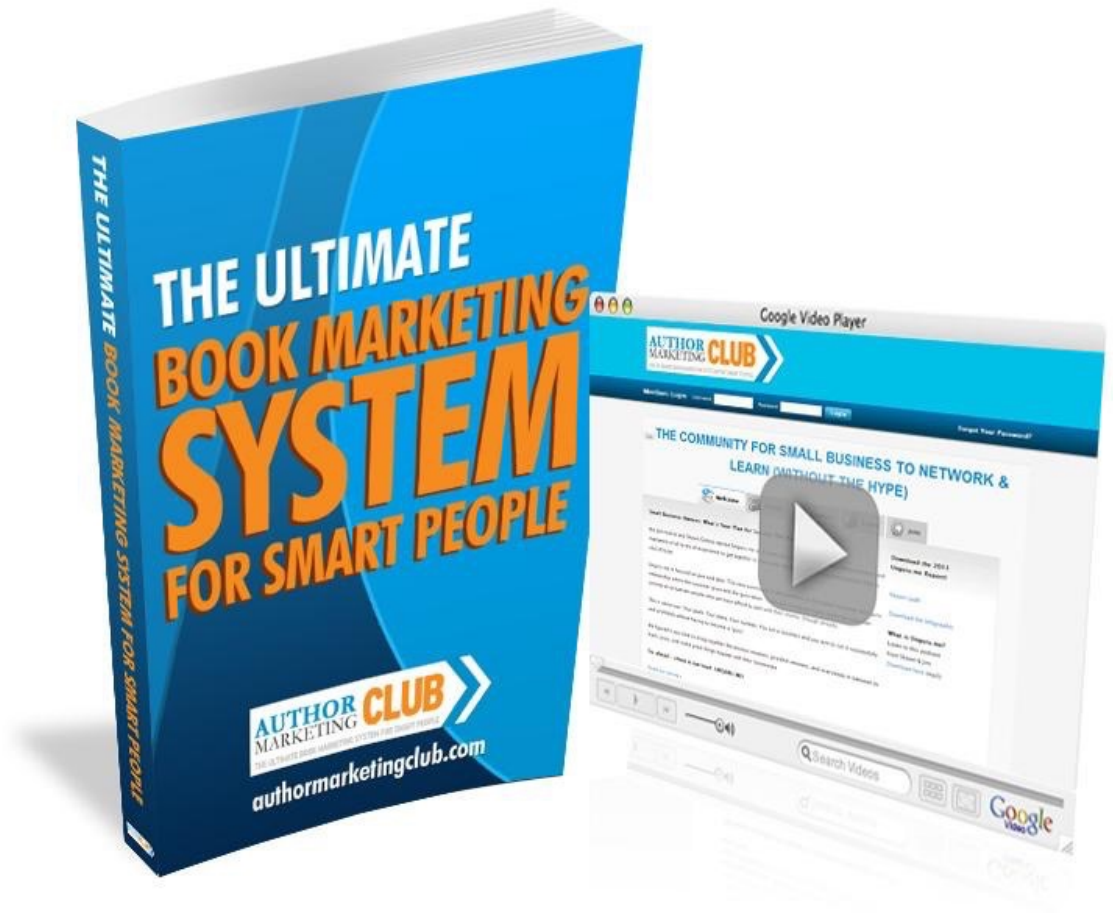
EVEN THUMBNAILS MATTER

I'm a writer and not naturally a visual person, but the big thing I've learned is to think big, simple images, ideally with faces. Complicated images with small shapes in them don't read well online. Think about how your image will look in a smaller thumbnail on Facebook or as a Twitter card, when you share that post. You want it to be eye-catching and great in social media. If someone's already done this one but no one has mentioned sight lining your photos yet, I could do a different one. ;-)"
- Carol Tice of Make a Living Writing
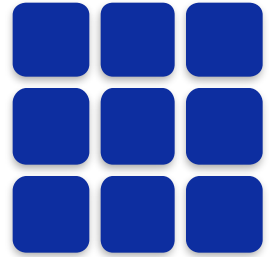
TEXTURES MAKE AN IMPACT

"Once we stopped posting stock photos on social media to promote our blog posts and used quotes (or even just the headline of the post on an image), I noticed engagement went up almost immediately. I create my own text-based images using PicMonkey. It's free and the 'design' tool lets you choose the background color you want, select a texture to jazz things up a bit, and then add text. It takes less than five minutes and you've got an eye-catching, share-worthy image that'll do well across the board. (E.g. blog posts, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, etc.)" - Shannon Willoby of ScottsMarketplace.com

RELATIONSHIPS MATTER

"In a world fueled by social media and personal relationships, making sure you include a personal touch to your digital communications is crucial. People are often uncomfortable with pictures of themselves in cyberspace – myself included – however, to be successful and really WOW people, it can be a smart marketing strategy. I took the leap last fall with a new website design, featuring a big ol' photo of yours truly. I've received rave reviews, more website traffic and higher customer conversion. People like to do business with people... it's that simple."

- Andrea Lindel of Lexabi Communications

USE TURNKEY SOLUTIONS

"We use turnkey marketing templates for creating marketing collaterals to "Wow" our customers. We believe in spending more time with customers and spending less time behind the computers to figure out designs to wow the customers. What we do is work with designers and content producers to purchase their turnkey modern templates so we can easily edit using Office 365 tools to share with our customers. Simple right?"

- Chaitra Vedullapalli of [Meylah](#)

DESIGN SELLS

"Spend time and money on design on everything from event invitations to your storefront and packaging. It costs more up-front but keeps paying back. Good design will pre sell for you. I learned this from a client, Salt of the Earth, whom I partnered with for my most successful blogger event. The invitation was gorgeous and they have an incredible warehouse. It was good enough to get Ikea as a sponsor, then Whole Foods. We not only filled the event, we had a waiting list. The company got a lot of great PR out of it. So did I."
- Janet Thaeler of [Newspaper Girl](#)

EVEN THUMBNAILS MATTER

"Zipr.co is an online startup focused to promote DIY and Craft videos on this site. We have built a very responsive and impressive site to channelize DIY videos. We have thousands of DIY and Craft videos. Individuals can now upload DIY video on YouTube or Vimeo and share/promote that video link on this site to get more views and visibility. Our mission is to promote DIY culture and connect people around the world. Current ranking of this site is in the range of 5500 in Greece and below 500,000 worldwide in a period of 3 month."
- [Preeti Pawar](#) of EWB, LLC

DON'T SWEAT IT

"Don't sweat the design work. If you aren't a graphic designer then getting your graphics to look good can be time-consuming. That is unless you get someone else to do the work for you. I use Canva which you can find at Canva.com. Canva has backgrounds, text layouts and images and it makes the process of creating anything from a Facebook header to a business card simplicity itself. When you use Canva your layouts look great, you spend less time designing and more time actually doing something with your graphics. In my book, that's a winner."
- Helen Bradley of [http design](#)

CHAPTER_ 7
TECHNICAL ADVICE & WARNINGS

These tips can help you stay on the right track when improving the visual appeal of your marketing. Review these dos and don'ts when it comes to the technical implementation of your images.

COLOR IS GOOD

"See a color you like on a webpage? Easily find out its exact online color codes with a convenient color-identifying web app like imagecolorpicker.com. It will show you the HTML code of the pixel you mouse over. For design professionals, it also shows you the color's HEX, RGB and HSV values. Upload is easy too, because it's done via URL or an image file upload."
- Alex Yong of Techmania411

USE KEYWORDS IN ALT TEXT

"If you write a blog on Wordpress, put an image in your post and make sure that you add a keyword or phrase that you are trying to get found on in the "Alternative Text" and include the link to the post in the "Link To" section. Select "Custom URL" as the option and then paste the blog post URL in. The reason for this is that your image may get picked up by Google (or other search engines) and when someone clicks on it, they will be sent back to your website".

- Chris Hamilton of Sales Tip a Day
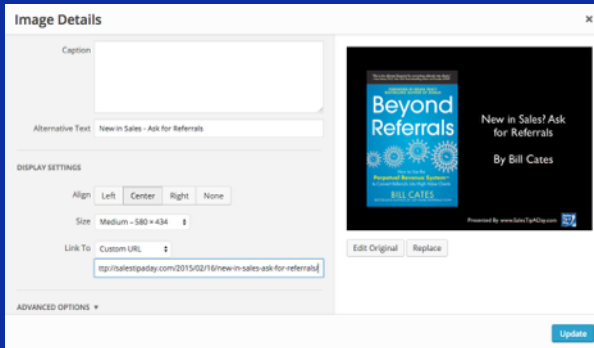
AUDIO?

Words and pictures are great, and everyone's experimenting with video, but have you overlooked audio? The simplest, most compatible, and most easily understood audio player you can add takes just one line of code. It looks great, is compatible with all modern browsers, and even handles audio correctly on most mobile devices. And because it's straight HTML5, it plays nice in both old-style and programmatically-driven sites like those based on WordPress or other Content Management Systems. Change the file you point to, of course, unless you want to hear me talking!"

- Jeff Yablon of The Word Press Helpers


```
<p style="text-align: center;"><audio controls="controls"><source src="http://example.com/my-audio-file.mp3" type="audio/mp3" /></audio></p>
```

COLOR IS GOOD

With today's cameras and high quality smartphones, anyone can take great photographs or video. When doing it yourself, these tips can help you get the most out of your photos and videos.

- Chris Hamilton of [Sales Tip a Day](#)

NEVER ASSUME AN IMAGE IS FREE

"When creating visual content, always make sure that you own the images or have permission to use them. Even images on Flickr that have Creative Commons licenses aren't always owned by the people who uploaded and applied the licenses to them. Never just assume that an image is okay for you to use. For images that you own, mark them with a copyright notice, so no one who infringes on your copyrights can claim that they didn't know they were doing so. Also, always register your copyrights, so if someone infringes them, you can collect lost profits and legal fees."
- Kelley Keller Esq. of [Innovation to Profits](#)

STAY OUT OF TROUBLE

"There's "wow"–and there's "Wow–holy s%*t–how did I get into this mess?" A fast way to the wrong wow (like a cease & desist letter) is using design or images you've pulled off the Internet"
- Nina Kaufman Esq of [Ask the Business Lawyer](#)