

Boost Your Business

2025 Expert Guide



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Growing Your Business

Have you started a business in Surrey and looking for help to take it to the next level?

With 110,000 registered businesses in Surrey, you are not alone – with thousands of people in a similar situation.

At Business Surrey, it's our role to provide free help and support to businesses like yours.

That's why we have put together this handy guide, to provide you with some easy-to-access tips to grow your business.



Five top tips



1. Understand Your Market

Before you can grow your business, it's crucial to understand your market. Conduct thorough market research to identify your target audience, their needs, and preferences. Analyse your competitors to see what they're doing right and where there are gaps you can fill. This knowledge will help you tailor your products or services to meet the demands of your customers effectively.

2. Build a Strong Online Presence

In today's digital age, having a strong online presence is essential. Create a professional website that is easy to navigate and provides valuable information about your business. Utilise social media platforms to engage with your audience, share content, and promote your products or services. You may also want to think about bringing in some paid support to help reach your target audience more effectively.



3. Focus on Customer Experience

Providing excellent customer service can set your business apart from the competition. Ensure that your customers have a positive experience at every touchpoint, from the initial contact to after-sales support. Listen to their feedback and make improvements based on their suggestions. Happy customers are more likely to become repeat buyers and refer your business to others.



Five top tips (continued)



4. Diversify Your Offerings

Expanding what you offer can attract new customers and increase sales. Look for opportunities by looking at market demand and customer feedback. You could introduce new products, offer complementary services, or explore new markets. It can also help mitigate risks by reducing dependence on a single revenue stream.

5. Invest in Marketing and Advertising

Effective marketing and advertising are key to growing your business. Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy that includes both online and offline channels. Utilise content marketing, email campaigns, pay-per-click advertising, and social media marketing to reach a wider audience. Track the performance of your marketing efforts and adjust your strategies based on the results to maximise your return on investment.



Common Concerns

Growing a business is not easy and there are many issues that may crop up which you may not have thought about or dealt with before.

Some of the most common themes include:

- Access to Funding
- Talent, recruitment and apprenticeships
- Marketing, promotion and sales
- Going green
- Innovation and technology
- Leadership, management and transformation
- Export and import
- Legal and regulatory support

The key thing to remember is that you are not alone and there's lots of help out there. Sometimes you just need to ask – which is where Business Surrey comes in.

About the Author

William Wilsnagh | Expert Business Advisor

William has over 30 years of business experience with various executive leadership roles across cyber security, gambling, gaming, recruitment and manufacturing.



Want to talk to William about growing your Surrey business?

Contact the team via our Business Support Form

Using Marketing to Grow Your Surrey Business

Marketing is an essential tool for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) aiming to expand their reach and grow their business.

Here's an in-depth guide we've put together to help you navigate the marketing landscape effectively.

If you need more help and advice, our team of Business Surrey experts are available to provide free support. Get in touch via our [Business Support Form](#).



Why does marketing matter?

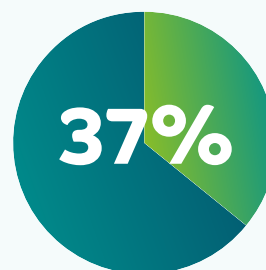
Many small businesses don't think they "do marketing," or need to "do marketing."

Around 37% of small businesses in a Hubspot survey of 500 small businesses don't have a website to market their products and services.

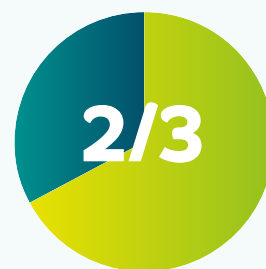
And according to a 2024 survey by The Marketing Centre, two thirds of SMEs have no marketing plan.

But if you want to achieve your business potential, then a well thought out plan to showcase what you do to the right audience is crucial to driving sales and growth.

For those unsure where to start, this handy guide will provide focus and tips on developing a marketing strategy to support your Surrey business.



SMEs with no website



SMEs with no marketing plan



Events and workshops

- Surrey is a well-connected region with an open and collaborative networking scene. Take a look at upcoming events on the events section of our website.

[Upcoming Events](#)

Seven steps to market your Surrey business

1. Understand Your Market and Audience

The first step to marketing your business is knowing who your audience is.



Market Research: What do you know about your target audience? Thorough market research can help you understand them, their needs, and preferences. Tools like surveys and market analysis reports are good starting points, helping you identify market trends and customer behaviours that can inform your marketing strategies.



Customer Segmentation: Segment your audience based on demographics, behaviour, and purchasing patterns to tailor your marketing efforts more effectively. By understanding the unique characteristics of each segment, you can create different messages that resonate with different groups.

2. Develop a Strong Brand Identity

Being clear and confident about who you are as a business is just as important as knowing who your audience is.



Branding: Create a consistent brand identity that reflects your business values and resonates with your target audience. This includes your logo, colour scheme, and messaging. A strong brand identity helps build trust and recognition among your customers.



Storytelling: Connect with your audience on an emotional level. Share your brand's journey, mission, and values. And share authentic stories – they can humanize your brand and make it more relatable to your audience.

3. Leverage Digital Marketing Channels

Getting online is the easiest and quickest way to get in front of customers in this digital age.



Website Optimisation: Ensure your website is user-friendly, mobile-responsive, and optimised for search engines (SEO). Use tools like Google Analytics to track performance and identify areas for improvement. A well-optimised website can enhance user experience and improve your search engine rankings.



Social Media Marketing: Utilise platforms like LinkedIn, Facebook, and X to engage with your audience, share content, and build a community. Regularly post updates, respond to comments, and participate in conversations to increase your brand's visibility and engagement.



Email Marketing: Develop targeted email campaigns to nurture leads and maintain customer relationships. Services like Mailchimp and HubSpot can help manage your campaigns. Personalize your emails to make them more relevant to your recipients and increase open and click-through rates.

4. Content Marketing

There's no better way to remind customers about who you are than by creating content which they can see and relate to.



Blogging: Regularly publish blog posts that provide value to your audience. Focus on topics relevant to your industry and address common pain points. High-quality content can position your business as an authority in your field and drive organic traffic to your website.



Video Content: Create engaging video content to showcase your products, share customer testimonials, and provide tutorials. Videos are highly shareable and can help you reach a wider audience on platforms like YouTube and social media.

5. Network and Collaborate

Surrey has a fantastic, vibrant and collaborative business scene – so make the most of that and get out to promote yourself with face-to-face networking.



Industry Events: Attend industry conferences, trade shows, and networking events to connect with potential clients and partners. These events provide opportunities to showcase your products, learn from industry experts, and build valuable relationships.



Partnerships: Collaborate with other businesses and influencers in your industry to expand your reach and credibility. Partnerships can help you access new audiences and leverage the expertise and resources of your partners.

6. Measure and Analyse Performance

Keep track of how you're doing by regularly reviewing your activity. If things are not working then don't be afraid of stopping them!



Analytics Tools: Use tools like Google Analytics to track the performance of your marketing campaigns and make data-driven decisions. Regularly review your analytics to identify what's working and what needs improvement.



KPIs: Define key performance indicators (KPIs) such as website traffic, conversion rates, and customer acquisition costs to measure success. Setting clear KPIs helps you stay focused on your goals and track your progress over time.

7. Stay Compliant and Informed

Once you have your plan in place and running, it's vital you keep refreshing it and keeping yourself up-to-date with emerging trends. There's lots of free training out there, such as courses offered by Google. Make sure you stay aware of data rules too if you are handling personal data.

About the Author

Suzie Newbold | Expert Business Advisor

With more than 25 years of commercial experience working in large and small businesses, as well as her own start up, Suzie is well placed to offer advice to help Surrey companies grow.



Want to talk to Suzie about growing your Surrey business?

Contact the team via our [Business Support Form](#)

Recruitment

Getting the right people to help you grow your business has always been a challenge for owners of small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

Get it right, and you'll have a committed, talented and enthusiastic team around you to help drive innovation and efficiency. It's only by hiring a strong team, that your company will reach its potential.

But get it wrong and it can be stressful, time-consuming, and reduce productivity. It could also cost your business money in the long run.

To help guide Surrey SMEs through this process, we've put together this expert guide.

And remember we're always on hand to provide more bespoke support. Just get in touch with our team of Business Surrey experts via our Business Support Form.



Why does recruitment matter?

Recruitment is a critical process for SMEs as it directly impacts their growth and success.

Key factors include:

1. **Enhanced Productivity:** Skilled employees contribute to higher efficiency and output.
2. **Innovation:** Fresh talent brings new ideas and perspectives, fostering innovation.
3. **Scalability:** A robust team allows the business to scale operations and take on new challenges.

Effective recruitment is not just about filling positions but about building a team that can drive the business forward. By carefully selecting candidates who fit both the role and the company culture, SMEs can create a strong foundation for sustained growth and success.

Business support directory

- Find the expert support your business needs via our online directory of local, regional and national support.

[Support Directory](#)



How will you know you're ready?

Investing in growing your team is a big business decision. But providing you have solid foundations it should not be scary.

Here are some key questions to answer when deciding if your business is ready to scale up your headcount.

Financial

Are you consistently growing? If your business has experienced steady, double-digit year-on-year revenue growth, it indicates strong demand for your products or services.

Are you increasing your profit margins? Higher profit margins despite rising costs suggest that your operations are efficient and scalable.

Market and customers

Do you have a loyal customer base? A strong, loyal customer base that consistently supports your business can provide a stable foundation for growth.

Do you have high customer demand? If customers are asking for more products, services, or locations, it's a sign that there is unmet demand.

How will you know you're ready? (continued)

Operational

How efficient is your current operation? Efficient operations and processes that can handle increased demand without compromising quality are vital.

How capable and resilient is your current team or set up? Having a capable and reliable team in place is essential for managing the increased workload that comes with expansion.

Strategy

Do you have a clear vision and plan? A well-defined growth strategy and clear business objectives are crucial for successful expansion.

How is your sector or industry performing? If your industry or market is growing, it's a good time to consider expanding to capitalise on new opportunities.



Top tips to help you recruit the right people

1. Define Your Needs Clearly

Write a clear and detailed job description. Specify the skills, experience, and qualifications required. Identify the key responsibilities and expectations for the role. And be clear about closing dates, so that prospective candidates can respond in time.

2. Attracting the Right Candidates

Use specific and attractive job adverts. Highlight unique benefits like flexible working hours, career development opportunities, and company culture. And then promote them in places that your ideal candidates will likely be looking. LinkedIn and online jobs boards are increasingly popular. Make sure you utilise your professional network and employee referrals too.



3. Screening and Interviewing

Once you have a number of applications, use phone or video calls for initial screenings to save time. If you want to progress a number to interview (five is normally a good number) prepare a set of standard questions to ensure consistency and fairness during interviews.

4. Making Your First Hire

Ensuring the candidate aligns with your company culture and values is important. You can do this either at interview or by getting to know the person with a follow-up discussion.

You could also consider offering a trial period to assess the candidate's fit and performance before making a permanent offer.

5. Onboarding Process

Your relationship with a new employee starts when a role is accepted - so think about how to make the onboarding process as smooth as possible. Before their first day, keep in touch with regular updates and ask for key information like bank details. Develop a plan for what the first few days will look like. And consider assigning a mentor to guide the new employee during their probation period.

6. HR Advice and Support

Those of you hiring for the first time will want to make sure you're abiding by employment rules and best practice. It could be a good idea to engage with HR consultancy services for expert advice and support. They can help with compliance, policies, and procedures. Online platforms like ACAS and CIPD also provide useful HR guidelines and best practice guides.

7. Retention Strategies

Once you have a great new employee, you'll want them to grow with you. Invest in training and development programs to enhance employee skills and satisfaction. Implementing regular feedback sessions to address concerns and improve engagement is also important.

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Funding and Finance

Running a business – large or small – is hard. And if your company is to reach its potential, chances are you will need some investment along the way.

By securing an investment of cash at the right time you can ensure that your business embraces opportunities and maximises results.

But where do you start in accessing funding, grants and finance?



Where to start

Sole-traders, microenterprises, small, medium, and large firms will likely all need some form of finance to kickstart their growth journey.

With the right investment, businesses can have a positive impact on wider society, creating jobs, playing active roles in communities and supporting wider regional growth.

Before applying for funding and finance to grow your business, it's well worth taking time out to complete three easy steps.

- 1. Prepare a Strong Business Plan:** Clearly outline your business goals, financial projections, and how the funding will be used.
- 2. Maintain Good Financial Records:** Accurate and up-to-date financial records are crucial for securing finance.
- 3. Seek Professional Advice:** Consider consulting with a financial advisor or accountant to discuss your current position and possible financing options for your business.

By doing this BEFORE you approach investors, you'll save time and have a strong compelling case to present.

It will also demonstrate to funders that you are serious, competent and committed to making a success of the proposal.

Business support directory

- Find the expert support your business needs via our online directory of local, regional and national support.

Support Directory



Reasons your business may need a cash injection

There are many reasons why your business could benefit from additional investment. Here are some of the most common.

1. Expanding or moving to new premises
2. Hiring more employees
3. Entering new markets
4. Launching new products or services
5. Investing in new technology or equipment
6. Covering unexpected expenses or financial challenges
7. Managing cash flow
8. Investing in marketing and advertising campaigns
9. Funding research and development
10. Acquiring another business

Seven sources of finance and funding

Here's a concise guide for SME owners in the UK on accessing finance to support business growth:

1. Traditional Bank Loans

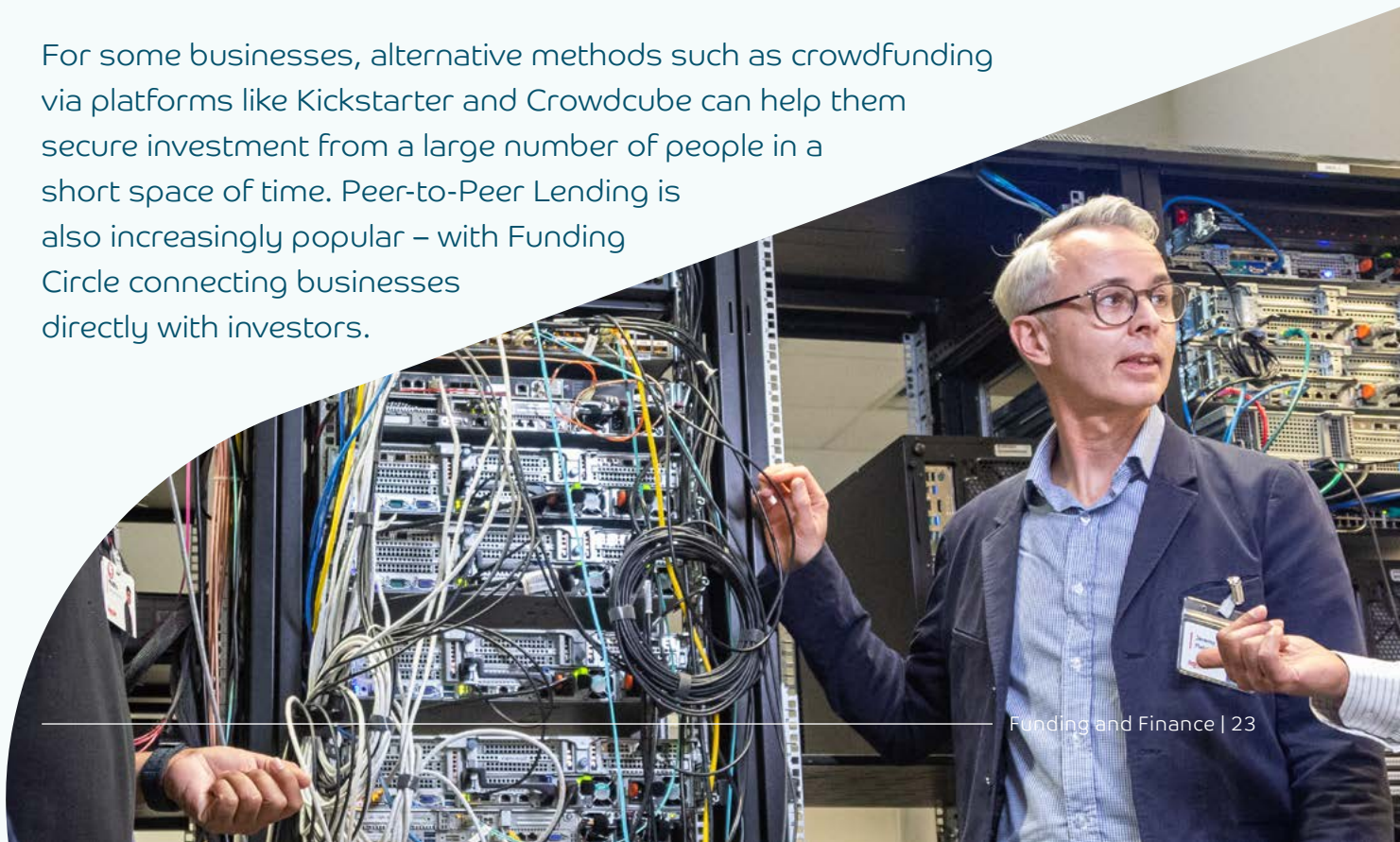
Banks offer various loan products tailored for SMEs. These loans typically require a solid business plan and financial statements. Major banks often have dedicated SME support teams.

2. Government Grants and Schemes

The UK government provides numerous grants and schemes to support SMEs. For instance, the British Business Bank is a government-owned business development bank dedicated to making finance markets work better for smaller businesses.

3. Alternative Finance Options

For some businesses, alternative methods such as crowdfunding via platforms like Kickstarter and Crowdcube can help them secure investment from a large number of people in a short space of time. Peer-to-Peer Lending is also increasingly popular – with Funding Circle connecting businesses directly with investors.



4. Venture Capital and Angel Investors

For high-growth potential businesses, venture capital firms and angel investors can provide significant funding in exchange for equity. This is ideal for businesses looking to scale rapidly.

5. SME Finance Charter

Banks and lenders have committed to the SME Finance Charter, which outlines their support for small businesses, including access to finance and guidance. Talk to your financial advisor to explore options.

6. Search for grants

For some sectors there are grants available to support business growth or capital investment. A great starting point is GrantFinder, which is a continuously updated database covering local, national, and international sources of funding, including grants, loans, and advisory schemes

7. Business Development Programs

Programs like Innovate UK Business Growth or SETSquared Surrey offer training, mentorship, and financial support to help SMEs grow and become more productive.

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William has over 30 years of business experience with various executive leadership roles across cyber security, gambling, gaming, recruitment and manufacturing.



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A Helping Hand

Surrey is a great place to do business. The blend of international corporations, innovative start-ups, and many micro-businesses and SMEs means we have a vibrant business scene.

Business Surrey provides free practical advice and support for businesses at all stages of their journey to start, grow, and thrive in Surrey.



Business Surrey is committed to helping businesses in Surrey get the right kind of advice and support.

Our team of experts can provide independent and impartial advice on exploring opportunities and how to tackle various challenges.

We work with you to understand your unique business needs and can direct you to the right resources and opportunities.

Whatever your business, our experts are here to help you succeed by providing access to quality resources, expert local knowledge and professional insight.

We have a number of ways you can access free support.

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Support Directory



Events and workshops

- Surrey is a well-connected region with an open and collaborative networking scene. Take a look at upcoming events on the events section of our website.

Upcoming Events

One-to-one support

- Is your business on track to grow significantly in the next five years? Get tailored free business advice from our team of experts.

Support Form





Business Surrey is a Surrey County Council service.
www.businesssurrey.co.uk

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