




ShopHERE Starter Kit

Our guide to help small businesses
accelerate their online presence

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Hello!

Our current global situation has presented challenges to all businesses, but independent retailers have been hit the hardest. That's why Digital Main Street and Google Canada have partnered to help Canadian retailers like you move from offline to online, so we can weather the storm and build more resilient businesses, together.

In this starter kit, you'll find a step-by-step guide to help you get your brick-and-mortar business online or improve your digital presence. Whether you want to understand who your customers are, set up a website for the first time, or learn how to reach new customers through Google Ads — all the helpful tools you need are included inside.

[Let's get started.](#)



01

Getting to know your customer

Get to know your customer

Knowing who your customers are and how they behave is important to building and marketing your retail and online business. Consumer behaviour changes rapidly, especially during a pandemic:



When Canadians began working from home in early March, we saw search interest for **office chairs** rise by **more than 100%**.¹



A month later, after people had long been cut off from their barbers and hairdressers, search interest for **hair clippers** spiked by **more than 800%**.²



Searches for “delivery” in Canada increased 130% from March to April, compared to the 30 days prior.³

Consider using these free tools to get to know your consumers and to track their evolving needs:



Google Trends

Google Trends lets you follow the latest search trends across Google Search, YouTube, Shopping, and Images, and identify growing interest in products and search terms.

This data can be used to inform new product launches and future business decisions or to help you pivot your business during this time to better respond to consumer wants and needs. For example:

How is the customer demand in my industry changing right now?

How is demand changing across my product assortment?

Where can I find the most valuable customers?

- You can brush up on how to use [Google Trends](#) and consider subscribing to get [Google Trends alerts](#) on topics and searches in your region.



Google Alerts

You can also use [Google Alerts](#) to monitor the web for new content and important topics relevant to your business. Create custom alerts for your business (like tracking your company name, recent blog post, or product titles) to stay in the know when people are talking about your brand.

- Read [our guide](#) on how to set up an alert.

02

Start your Ecommerce store with ShopHERE

Every day, consumers are turning online to search and shop for what they want



Nearly all Canadians (82%) research and purchase online⁴



Ecommerce and in-store are better together



An Ecommerce website can complement your offline strategy by boosting your ability to reach and connect with your customers



Online sales can give you access to data and insights that you can use to understand your customers better



Bringing your store from offline to online doesn't need to be complicated

DMS shopHERE powered by Google

provides independent small businesses and artists with a quick, easy and no-cost way to get selling online right away. [Sign up here!](#)

ShopHERE gives Toronto independent retailers a quick, easy, and no-cost way to get started selling online right away. Thanks to volunteer developers, business students, and corporate partners, Toronto's small businesses and artists can access ShopHERE to build and launch their online store with hands-on support in just a matter of days. [Learn more](#) about the program here.

03

Reach your customers on Google Search and Maps



Appearing on Google Search and Google Maps is important for your business. People visit 1.5 billion destinations every month related to their Google searches. The good news is, with a [Google My Business Account](#), you can connect with customers across Google and Search, for free.

Set up your Google My Business Account for free


If you have a storefront location, and you don't have a Google My Business Account, [go here to claim your free profile](#). You can also watch [step-by-step](#) instructions on how to set up your profile.

 Expedite the verification process by contacting a [Digital Service Squad member](#)



Post your website on your Google My Business Profile

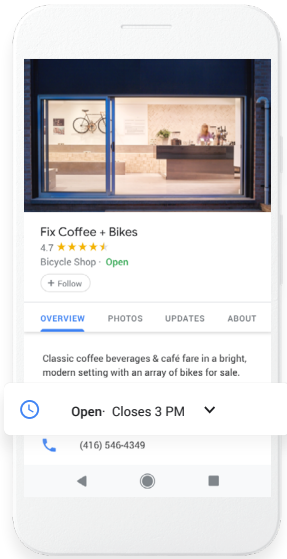
Make sure to post your website URL and photos of your products on your Google My Business profile, so they appear in Google's search results. You can also list any of your special promotions or offers so customers have an added reason to shop online with you.

 Get the most out of Google My Business with [free training on Skillshop](#).

Keep your customers informed

As a result of the pandemic, if you already have a Google My Business account, you may need to update your Business Profile. This might mean changing your hours, marking your business as temporarily closed, or changing the products and services you offer.

Here are four ways you can update your Business Profile on Google:



Update your Business Profile on Google

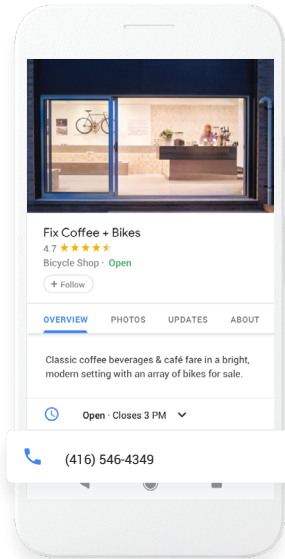
Update hours or status

Edit your [hours](#) or mark your business as "[temporarily closed](#)", if needed.

Confirm phone number

Post updates

Add or edit attributes



Update your Business Profile on Google

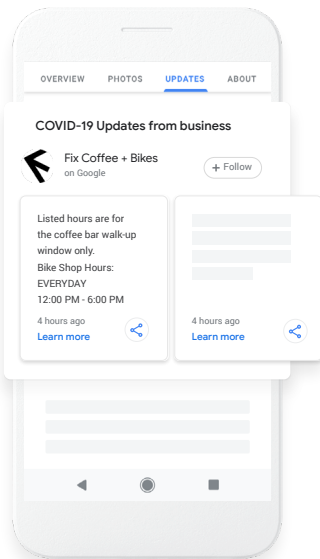
Update hours or status

Confirm phone number

Double check your [phone number](#) and turn on [messaging](#) to make sure customers can reach you.

Post updates

Add or edit attributes



Update your Business Profile on Google

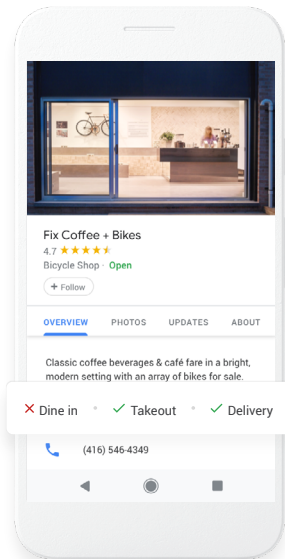
Update hours or status

Confirm phone number

Post updates

Use [Posts](#) to communicate timely information, like special delivery options or inventory updates.

Add or edit attributes



Update your Business Profile on Google

Update hours or status

Confirm phone number

Post updates

Add or edit attributes

If you're a restaurant or retailer offering delivery, takeout, or curbside pickup, mark these [services](#) on your profile.

Get [more information](#) on updating your business profile on Google My Business to reflect changes in operations as a result of COVID-19.

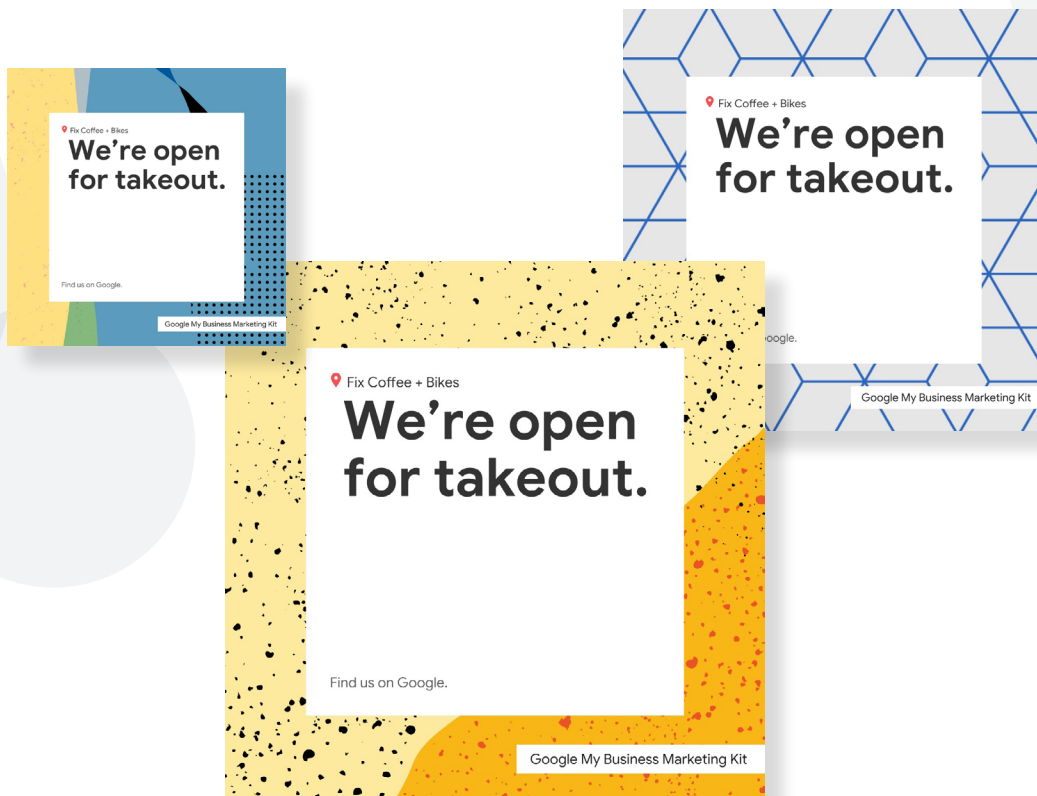
Access free marketing templates to help you show off what makes your business unique

We know designing marketing collateral can be tricky — luckily, there are free tools that can help. From your business profile, you can create free stickers, social posts, and more with the [Google My Business Marketing Kit](#).



Use Google My Business Marketing Kit to communicate changes about your business

In response to the pandemic, Google has added customizable posters and digital social post templates that focus on timely business updates. These tools can help you communicate changes about your business, like whether it's temporarily closed or if consumers can order takeout and delivery.



04

Build your brand

From creating your brand's unique value proposition to writing your product description, storytelling is an art and doing it successfully will help you drive sales and customer loyalty. But don't worry, if you're not a branding expert yet you can keep it simple in the beginning.

👉 Use [this course](#) to learn how to build memorable, compelling brand messaging.

Make the most of video to tell your story

Video is a great tool to help build awareness and differentiate your brand with shoppers across Google.



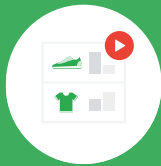
Canadians are watching more YouTube than ever. In the 28 days ending April 5, there was a **26% increase in YouTube watch time** compared to the previous 28-day period.¹



Over 90% of Canadians say YouTube helps them discover new products or brands.²

You can use video in advertising campaigns, website updates, and emails to connect with customers and keep them informed. When creating a video there are a few things you should keep in mind:

- ✓ What do you want to feature in your video?
 - ✓ What's the story you want to tell?
 - ✓ How can you best capture the sights and sounds for your video?
 - ✓ Once you've shot everything, what's the best way to edit it all together?
- 👉 Want to learn more about creating engaging online video ads? Check out this [5-minute lesson](#). And if you really want to get hands on, check out this lesson on how to [make the most of video](#).



If you need a little help getting started or if you're looking to take your videos to the next level, you can work with creative partners trained by Google in YouTube video ad best practices. [YouTube's Directory of Creators](#) can help you develop your brand's story and bring your business to life through stunning visual assets.

05

Start marketing your store to connect with more customers

Make it easy for people to find your business online

Now that your ShopHERE store is set up, let's make sure your business shows up when people are looking for you.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

is a marketing technique that optimizes your website and makes it easier for customers to find you through organic search results.

- Want to learn more about SEO? Check out this [video overview](#), or [this Digital Garage course](#).



Reach more customers with advertising

Connect through email

Not every customer buys the first time they visit your store. In fact, few do. As you grow your email list and build your audience, you're developing an owned channel to reach your customers and nurture a relationship with them.

Whether it's a newsletter announcing a new product or a thank-you email after a purchase, email marketing is the most cost-effective communication and marketing channel for your business.

- ▶ [Learn more](#) about email marketing. To learn more about email marketing, check out [this course](#).

Be found through Google Ads

Google Ads allow you to create ads that can appear on Google at the very moment someone is looking for your products or services. And you only pay for results, like clicks to your website or calls to your business.



Get the results that matter to you



Drive website visits

Grow online sales, bookings or mailing list signups with online ads that direct people to your website.



Get more phone calls

Increase customer calls with ads that feature your phone number and a click-to-call button



Increase store visits

Get more customers in the door with business ads that help people find your company on the map.




New to Google Ads? Get started with a special offer.

 Spend \$25, Get \$100

Need a bit of help setting up your first campaign?

 Call +1 833 895 3537 to get free support from a Google expert.

-  To learn the basics of Google Ads, try this [5-minute lesson on Primer](#). If you're ready to go deeper, check out the "[How to promote a business with online advertising](#)" course on [Digital Garage](#).

Sources

1. [Google Trends, Canada](#), March 15-21, 2020 vs. March 17-23, 2019.
2. [Google Trends, Canada](#), April 12-18, 2020 vs. April 14 - 20, 2019.
3. [Google Search Trends](#), Canada, February 13-March 13, 2020 vs March 13-April 11, 2020
4. [Nielson, Staying put: Consumers forced indoors during crisis spend more time on media](#), accessed 2020.

