

EMAIL GUIDE

#SMALLBIZSTUDIO

*little
word
studio*



OVERVIEW

re: keeping in touch

Say what you want about email but it's still one of the best ways to communicate with current, past and prospective customers. There's a reason even the tech-iest startups have entire teams dedicated to crafting and testing emails on major services, segmenting messages, A/B testing subject lines and more. For you, my small business friend, email is a COVID-19 lifeline to create a digital touchpoint when you can't create a physical one. It's also a 1-1 communication unmitigated by an algorithm, unlike social media. Send an email, receive a response (maybe). Whether or not you get a reply, you will at least know your email isn't being ranked according to certain factors, like a typical Facebook or Instagram post. For the most part, an email appears chronologically in your recipient's inbox. So, now that we've got the WHY out of the way. Let's focus on the HOW. This guide will explain ways you can use simple email marketing techniques to your advantage to stay connected with your customers no matter how socially distant they may be ...



EMAIL MARKETING PLATFORMS

Which one will you choose????

(There is no right answer.)

Selecting the right email marketing platform is like selecting the right donut from a delicious donut shop. There are advantages to a classic powdered confection (Mailchimp), the strawberry sprinkled number (Constant Contact) or even the bacon-glazed version (Kajabi). This guide will not tell you the platform you should use. We'll simply go over three popular platforms and then, you can decide.



OK, I said I wouldn't be biased but I LOVE Mailchimp, so I'm putting it first. Mailchimp has some amazing templates you can drop your logo and images into and send very professional-looking emails. Plus, the team is on the cutting edge of the cutting edge of email marketing, so updates and new tools are constantly rolled out for better A/B testing, template creation and more.



If you've seen the Constant Contact commercials, the company is making a push to compete with Mailchimp. While Mailchimp offers about 80 different customizable platforms, Constant Contact has 100. Constant Contact also reportedly has less of their emails end up in spam folders. If you have a lot of recipients, you might want to consider Constant Contact as your email marketing platform.



Including HubSpot on this list is a little misleading. It really isn't an email marketing platform exclusively. It's a marketing automation and business growth tool with email automation features. However, if you're really looking to track your lead generation efforts, you can tailor your email marketing to certain contact behavioral triggers, creating a powerful way to stimulate business.

Quick Tip

Even if you don't end up using Mailchimp, visit the Mailchimp website - www.mailchimp.com and check out the Marketing Glossary for a comprehensive list of terms you'll hear around the marketing elite that you should probably know. You should also watch and listen to "Mailchimp Presents" content, which includes a series of short films and podcasts produced with entrepreneurs and small businesses in mind.

CONTENT IDEAS

Awesome, you selected a platform, played around in it and now you've got a blinking cursor in front of you, wondering what to say. With the world quarantined to its living room, what do people even want to read?

DISCOUNTS, DONATIONS AND EXCLUSIVE OFFERS

If you downloaded our press guide, you'd already know by now the two types of communications seriously resonating with audiences are free deals and donations. If you're offering your products or services at reduced pricing, you've already got your next email practically written. Simplify your message, put your deal or free offer in bold and BOOM. You can also tease an email-only offer on your website or social media platforms, (e.g. sign up for our newsletter/to receive email from us and you'll get 25% off on your first order). As for donations, describe how purchasing your products is giving back to the community and world.

VALUE-ADD TIPS + INSPIRATION

People are craving positivity and inspiration. Now is the time to exercise those creative writing chops and let your inner motivational speaker fly. If you can send a message that you believe in your tribe (AKA customer), it'll create a digital rallying effect and they'll start to believe in themselves, too. Maybe you send five work-from-home tips or if you're a clothing company, three ways to wear sweatpants but make it chic. Another piece to this inspirational puzzle is to give your readers value-add tips that will somehow make their lives better than they were before they opened the email. (This technique increases the chance they'll open your next electronic epistle.) For instance, if you're a fitness instructor, your email could contain four at-home workouts for a flatter tummy or four ways to stay active while working from your couch. And speaking of workouts ...

ON-BRAND LIFESTYLE CONTENT

PEOPLE ARE BORED. We are baking banana bread and doing push ups and putting glasses on our dogs and having them pose in front of our makeshift home-office desks. This is your opportunity to double down on relevant lifestyle content, even sending one lifestyle email a day if you can swing it. For instance, if you sell natural soaps, you could send three really messy but delicious dessert recipes that will require you to wash your hands even more than you're doing already. Or, a week of stay-at-home fashion inspired by Joe Exotic. A lesson in flower crowns to look like Carole Baskin. Or, just simply send the five Netflix shows to binge right now. You could even put together a list of your favorite musicians going live with Instagram concerts this week. Food, fashion, entertainment creativity ... life hasn't stopped because people are at home.

COMMUNITY CONTENT

If you're running a donation-based sale then you've probably touched on community content but you can also send an email with all the local businesses that are doing drive-through or free delivery. Places to get toilet paper. Highlight a local business. Virtual events hosted by your town. The list goes on ...

If you're a real estate agent, this is an opportunity to inform your contacts about what loans are available and what funding options they can explore if if, for instance, the main provider in the family has been laid off or furloughed. Embrace your role as trusted advisor with value-add emails!

Realestate tip

SUBJECT LINES

Open me please!! (No, don't use that ...)

Best Practices

ASK A QUESTION

This is an old trick but it works. Think of a question (and caveat: you must answer it in your email) that will entice readers to open. E.g. "Draving ice cream?" "Did you know our delivery is free?" "Have you tried this at-home workout?" "50% off take-out beer? You read it right ..."

GET TO THE POINT

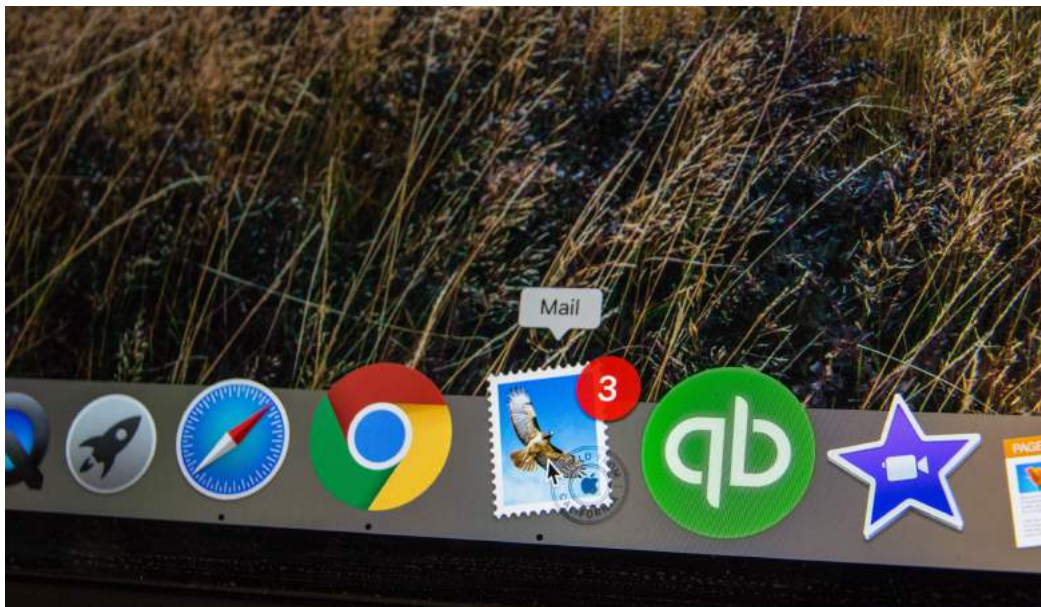
Depending on the email service, you have very little space to convince a recipient to open your message. Try getting to the core of what your offer/deal/content is in four words or less. (You can use the preview text for additional messaging.) Thee faster you can get to the real point, the more likely your customers are to respond.

USE EMOJIS

Conservative studies estimate subject lines with emojis receive 50% higher open rates and 93% higher Click Through Rates (CTRs). Bottom line: If it feels on brand, add that heart emoji or smiley face. Your business will thank you.

RUN A SIMPLE A/B TEST

Run simple A/B testing by sending two emails with two different subject lines. (Your email marketing platform should allow you to track open rates and CTRs, and if it doesn't switch to one of the three listed in this guide). If you keep all else the same but change the subject line, you'll know which one had the greater impact with your contact list and can write something similar for the next email.



EXAMPLES

There's nothing wrong with taking inspiration from what's working for other people. We are all in this together, remember? In the spirit of our collective together-ness, here are a few emails that might spark your imagination ...

A simple but helpful list of live courses from the Female Founder Collective

Meet us in the interweb! 🌐



The FFC Team <ffc@femalefoundercollective.com>

Thursday, April 2, 2020 at 3:48 PM

melissa@littlewordstudio.com

[Show Details](#)



Female Founder
Collective

Connect with us from wherever you are!

Friday, April 3rd

Jumpstart your weekend with Kristin Merrick at **10 AM EST** on IG Live - Coffee Talk: Small Business Resources That You Need ASAP

10 AM EST [How to Create Compelling Content When You're #WFH](#) | Join Sway Co-Founders Nicole Hyatt and Rebecca Karamehmedovic for a 30-minute interactive Zoom session filled with tips and ideas for creating new content when you're working from home.

1:30 PM PST on IG Live Navigating the new "norm" with Amy Nelson | There's no playbook to navigating this new "norm". Working from home, caregiving, homeschooling -- sometimes all three at the same time. But we're doing the BEST WE CAN! And we're doing it together!

3 PM EST [The 3 things you must understand to scale your eCommerce business](#) | Erin Hooley, Founder and CEO of multi-million dollar E-commerce brand Bailey's Blossoms is sharing the 3 things you must understand to scale your eCommerce business. She'll also be sharing how to continue to scale these three ideas during times of crisis, and the essential concept of establishing and growing your community through service opportunities during hard times.

Canva segmenting emails based on website/product usage (e.g. creating this presentation triggered a follow-up email)

Keep the conversation going with your audience 📣



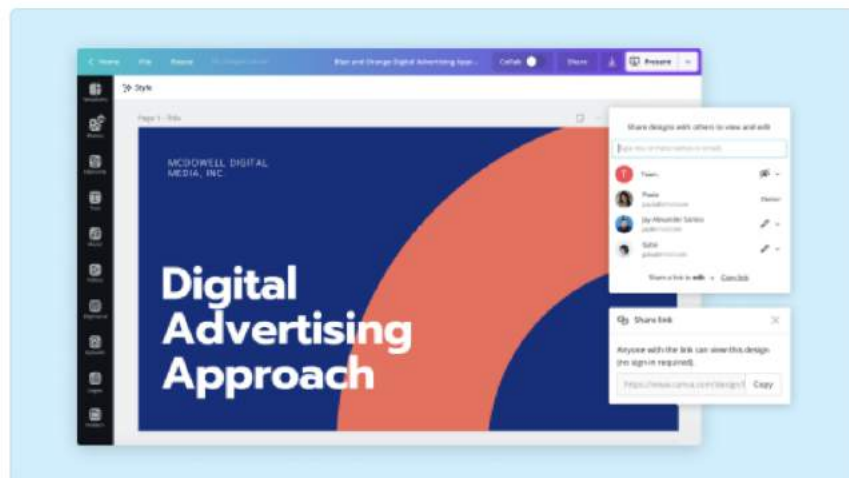
Canva <start@engage.canva.com>

[Show Details](#)

The next steps to impressing your audience

Congratulations, you did it! Now that you've finished your presentation, here are a few ways you can take it to the next level.

[Share and collaborate now](#)



I know what you're thinking ...

This might be a bit tricky to pull off without a data team or a solid way to track website data. However, you can check your website analytics via Google Analytics or even WordPress Stats and see the pages people are clicking on and engaging with then craft an email accordingly.

A one-image email with a Call to Action (CTA) to click and learn more about a charitable initiative

Help Support our Team Members!



by CHLOE. <emails@thanx.com>

Thursday, April 2, 2020 at 2:08 PM

[Show Details](#)



Rifle Paper Co. addressing the hardships with on-brand positivity and sales-focused messaging

The New Peonies Rug



RIFLE PAPER Co. <news@riflepaperco.com>

Thursday, April 2, 2020 at 11:49 AM

[Show Details](#)

Big and small ways to cheer up your space.
Our new rugs feature die-cut shapes and
fresh sayings to brighten up your everyday.



Simple text with an offer of free services, because sometimes straightforward just works

Free Development Help During COVID-19



Sajeel Qureshi <sajeel@computan.com>

Thursday, April 2, 2020 at 9:49 AM

[Show Details](#)

Hi

I know these are unprecedented times for you and your business. If you need it, Computan is happy to offer you 6 hours of development totally free. No catch and no further commitment required. Let us know what kind of dev help you need, and we'll do anything we can to help.

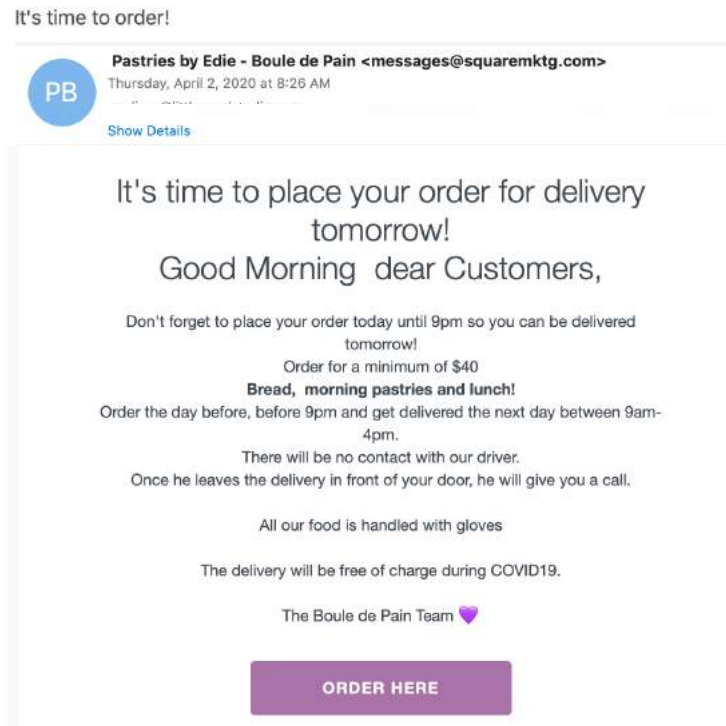
Let me know if there's something you need help with and I'll be happy to take a look. I know we probably don't know each other, but these are unprecedented times and we need to help one another when we can.

Take care and stay safe,

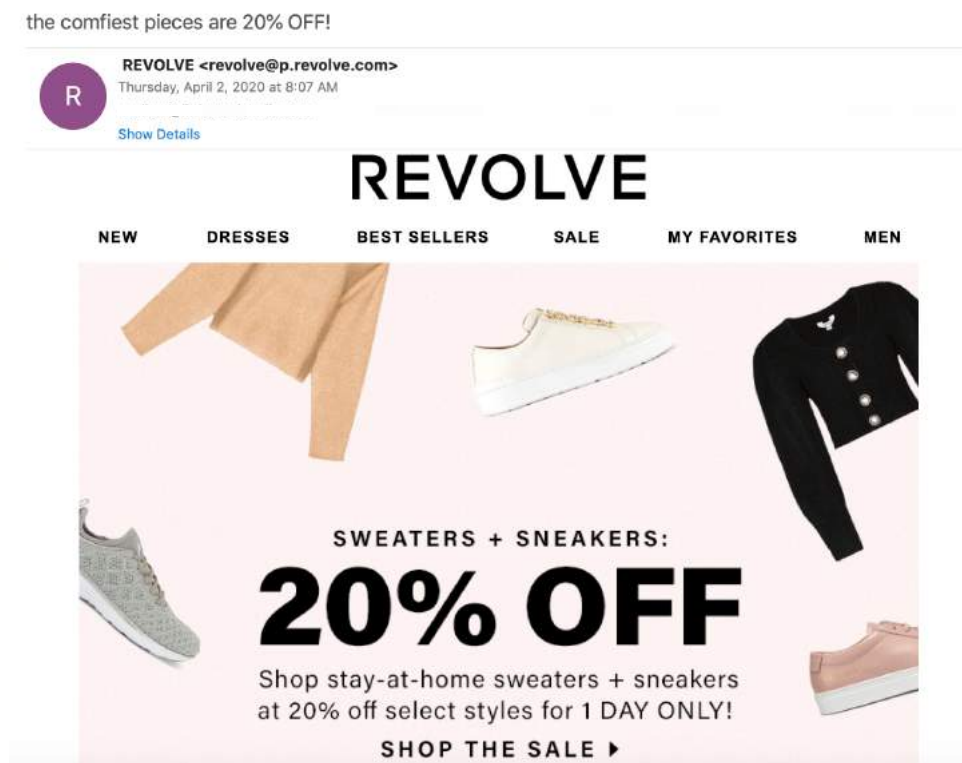
Thanks,
Sajeel Qureshi
VP Operations
www.computan.com

PS: If you don't wish to hear from me anymore, just let me know.

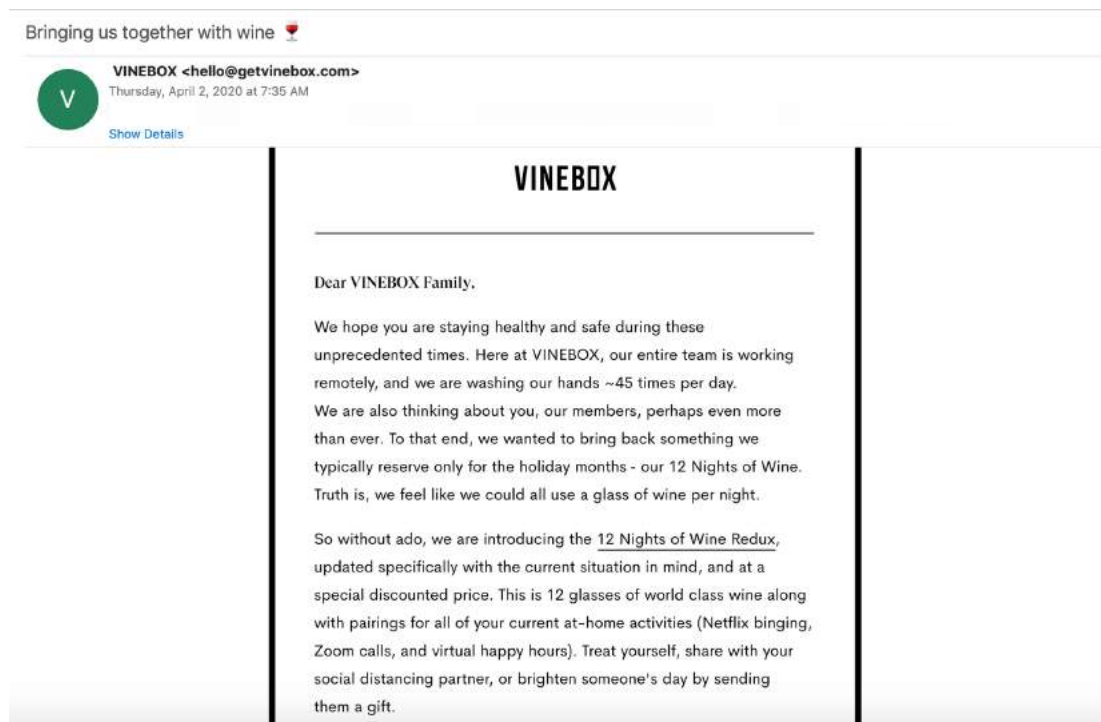
Another simple message that addresses customer safety concerns (social distancing, sanitizing) and includes offers (free delivery, etc.)



REVOLVE gets it - a reference to staying at home, a discount and warm, inviting colors

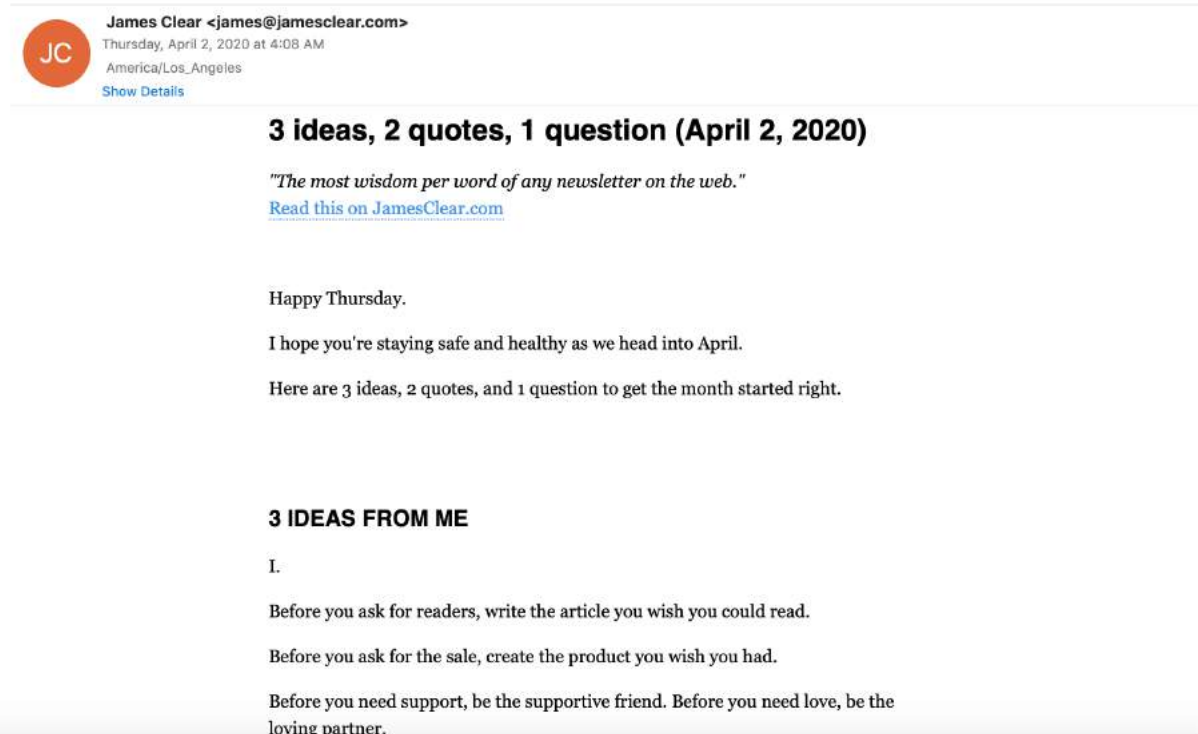


Text with an elegant border, an emoji in the subject line an uplifting and relevant message, a discount on product and WINE



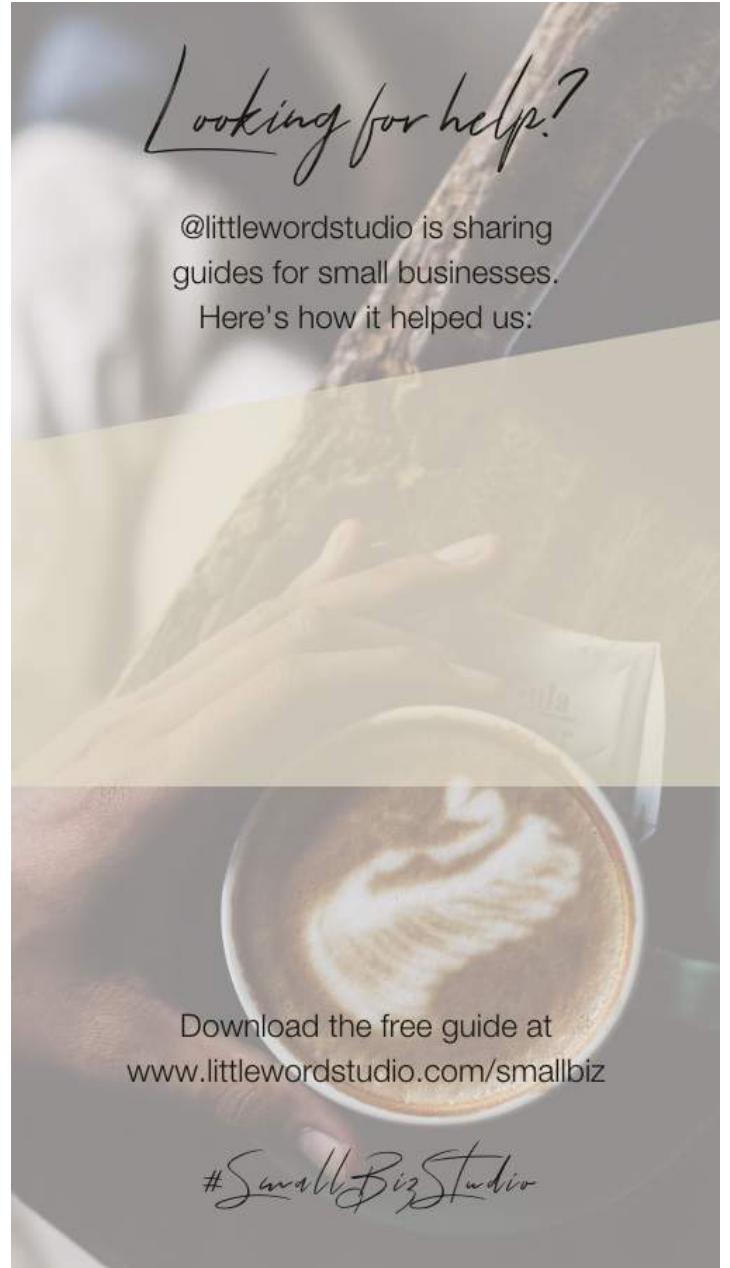
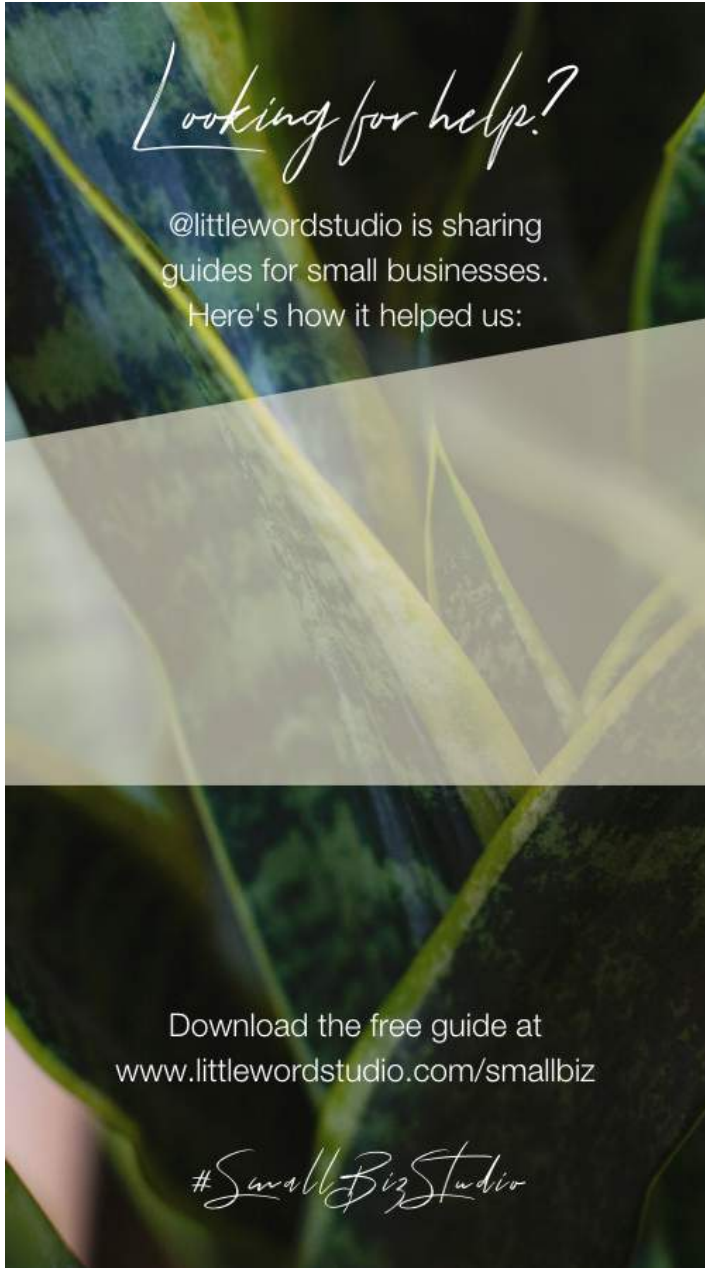
Text-only message, upfront synopsis of email takeaways and value-add for readers

3 ideas, 2 quotes, 1 question (April 2, 2020)



SHARE THIS!

If you liked this guide, you can share one of these images to your Instagram story to help other small businesses just like yours.



Questions? Get in touch:

hello@littlewordstudio.com