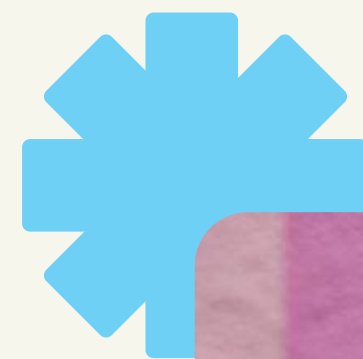




2024 Small Business Marketing Report

The scoop on all things marketing from our survey of small business owners and consumers

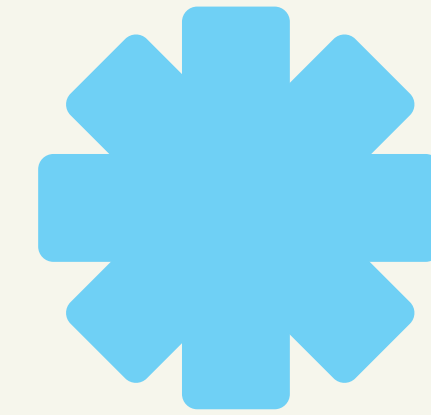
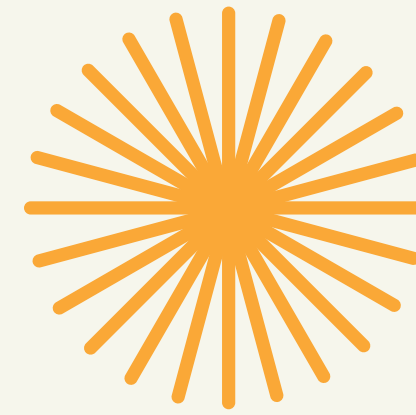
Presented by VistaPrint in partnership with Wix



Confident and experimenting

Small business owners have a lot to juggle, from inflation to the lingering effects of the pandemic to the shifting demands of the digital world. With a record number of new business applications filed in 2023 (U.S. Chamber of Commerce), and e-commerce giants like Amazon to contend with, standing out from the competition is more important than ever.

But that's what great marketing is for. At VistaPrint, we see first-hand how much it helps small businesses connect with consumers, even in tough times. So, to understand how they're navigating the ups and downs of the last 12 months and the year ahead, we partnered with Wix to survey 1000 small business owners and 1000 consumers across the US.



And guess what? We're really encouraged by what we found. Despite the challenges, small business owners are marketing better than ever. They're confident in their abilities, upskilling to fill the gaps, and experimenting with new tactics to get the word out about their brand.



We heard good news from the consumer side, too. By and large, consumers we surveyed want to shop small and support their local community. But it's all about reaching them with the right mix of digital and traditional marketing.

Ultimately, we hope this report will help small businesses – by giving them insight into what their peers are doing, and what customers are saying they want to see – so they can create a stellar marketing strategy that really works.

LET'S DIVE IN!

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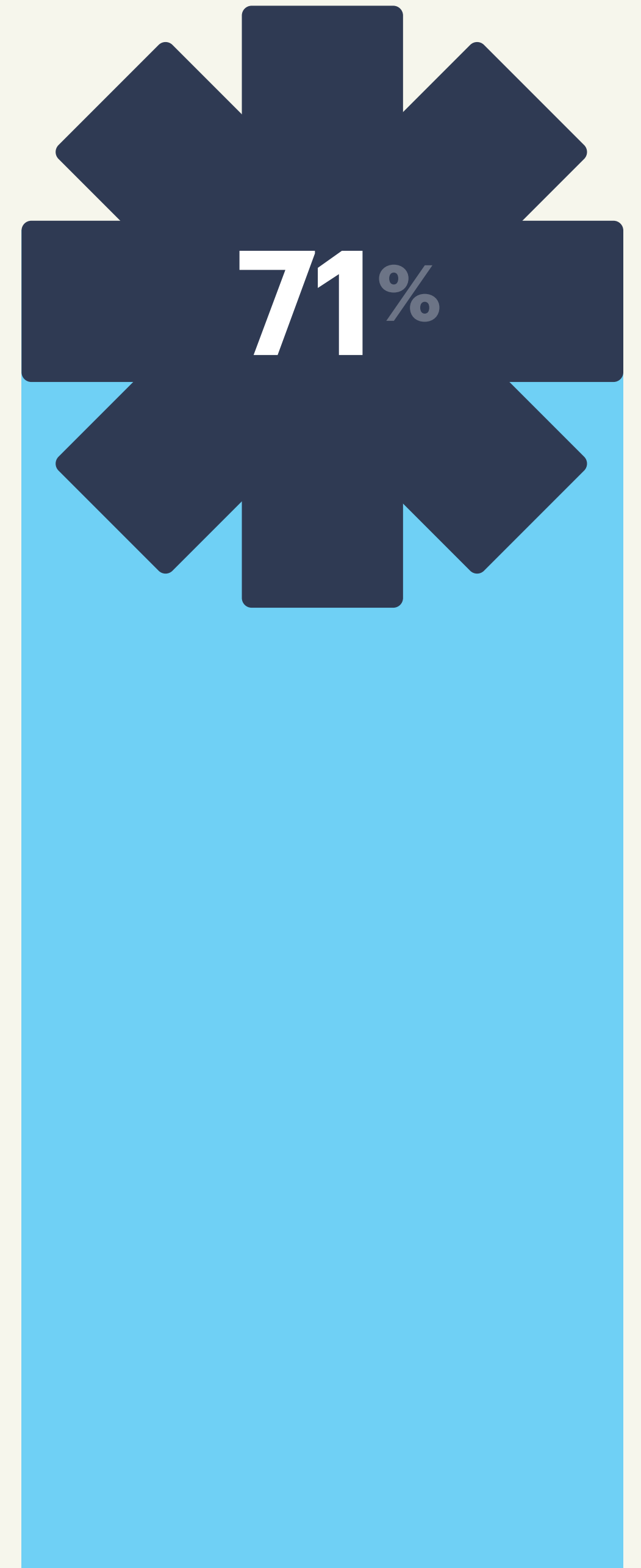
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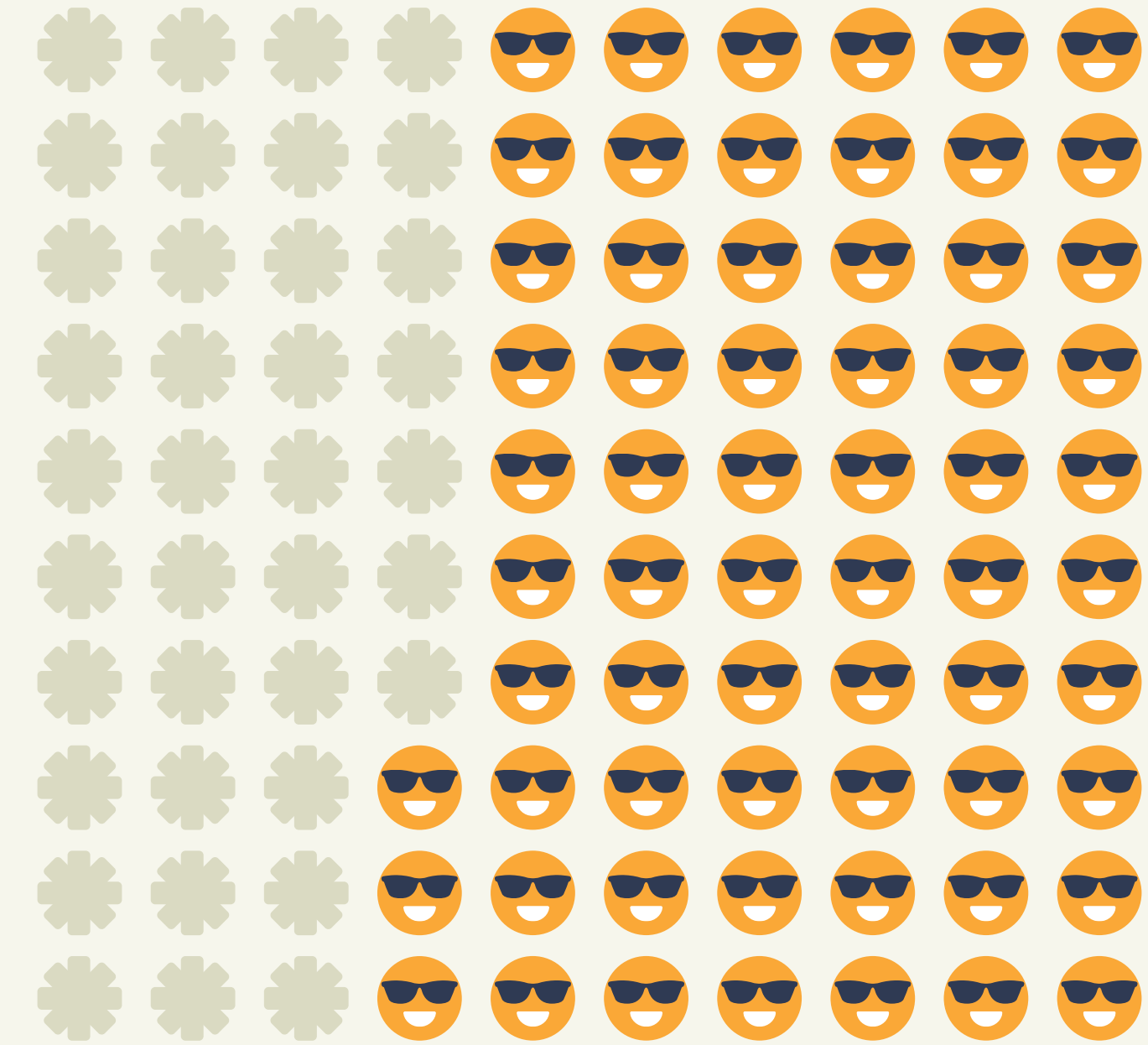


Confidence and knowledge:

SMALL BUSINESS SUPERPOWERS

Everyone knows small business owners have to wear a lot of hats, including marketing manager, with 71% of businesses saying they do all their marketing themselves (21% employ a marketing manager or team, while the rest work with an external agency). The good news? Owners feel like they know what they're doing. Even better, they're taking steps to hone their skills.





63%

feel more confident in their marketing knowledge now than 12 months ago



Small business challenges

Though small business owners may feel good about what they've achieved as marketers, they still face a myriad of challenges. Standing out in a crowded market is their biggest hurdle.

49%
budgets

53%
standing out from
the competition

47%
choosing the right
marketing tactics for
their business

35%
keeping up
with trends

Their
biggest
hurdles

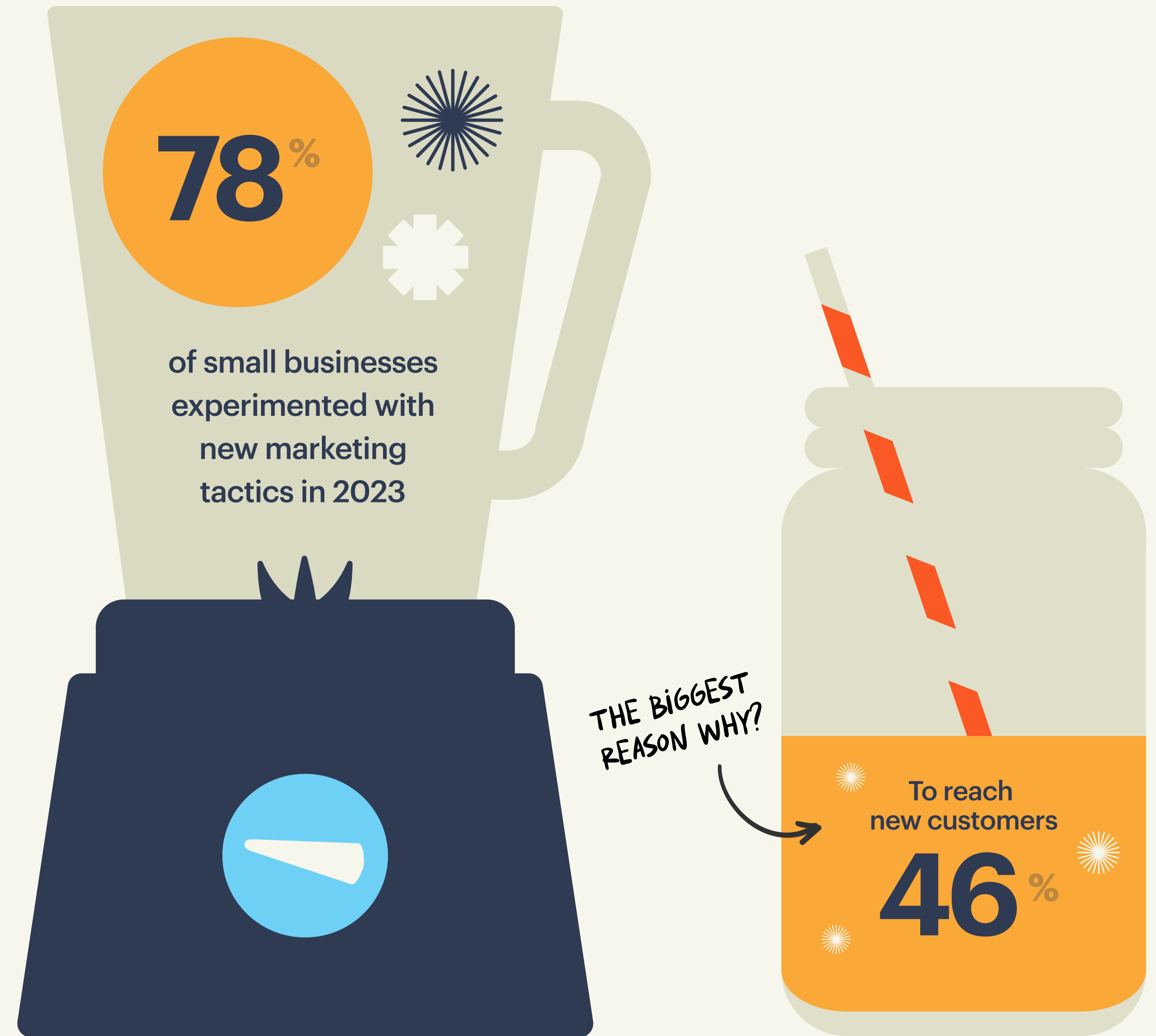
"Lack of expertise"
was the factor that
least concerned them

24%

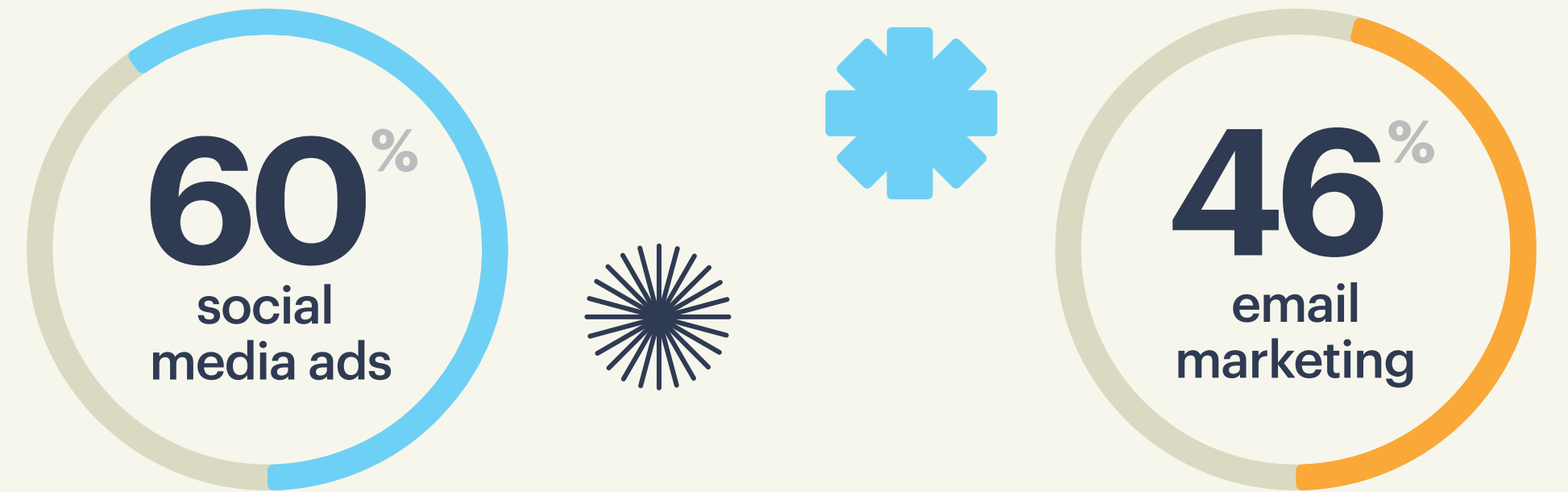
*BUT ALL THAT
UPSKILLING IS
PAYING OFF!*

Experimenting with the marketing mix

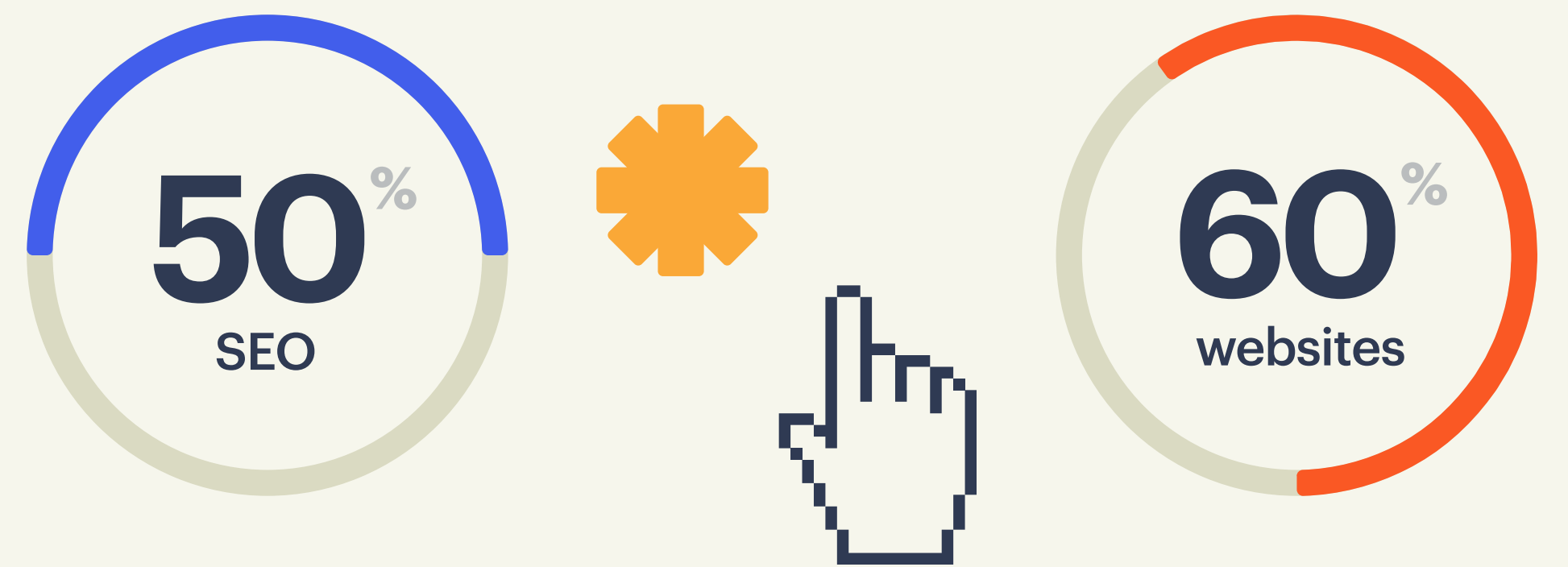
In a digital world, it's no surprise to see small businesses investing in digital marketing. But not everything is about social media and search engines. Our data presents a more complex picture, one where 78% of small businesses experimented with new marketing tactics in 2023, balancing digital with traditional marketing to find a mix of strategies that work best for their business.



Balancing digital and traditional



Top digital marketing tactics small businesses chose in 2023



Top traditional marketing tactics small businesses invested in in 2023:



Business cards

50%



Events and tradeshows

32%



Print advertisements

31%



Promotional materials

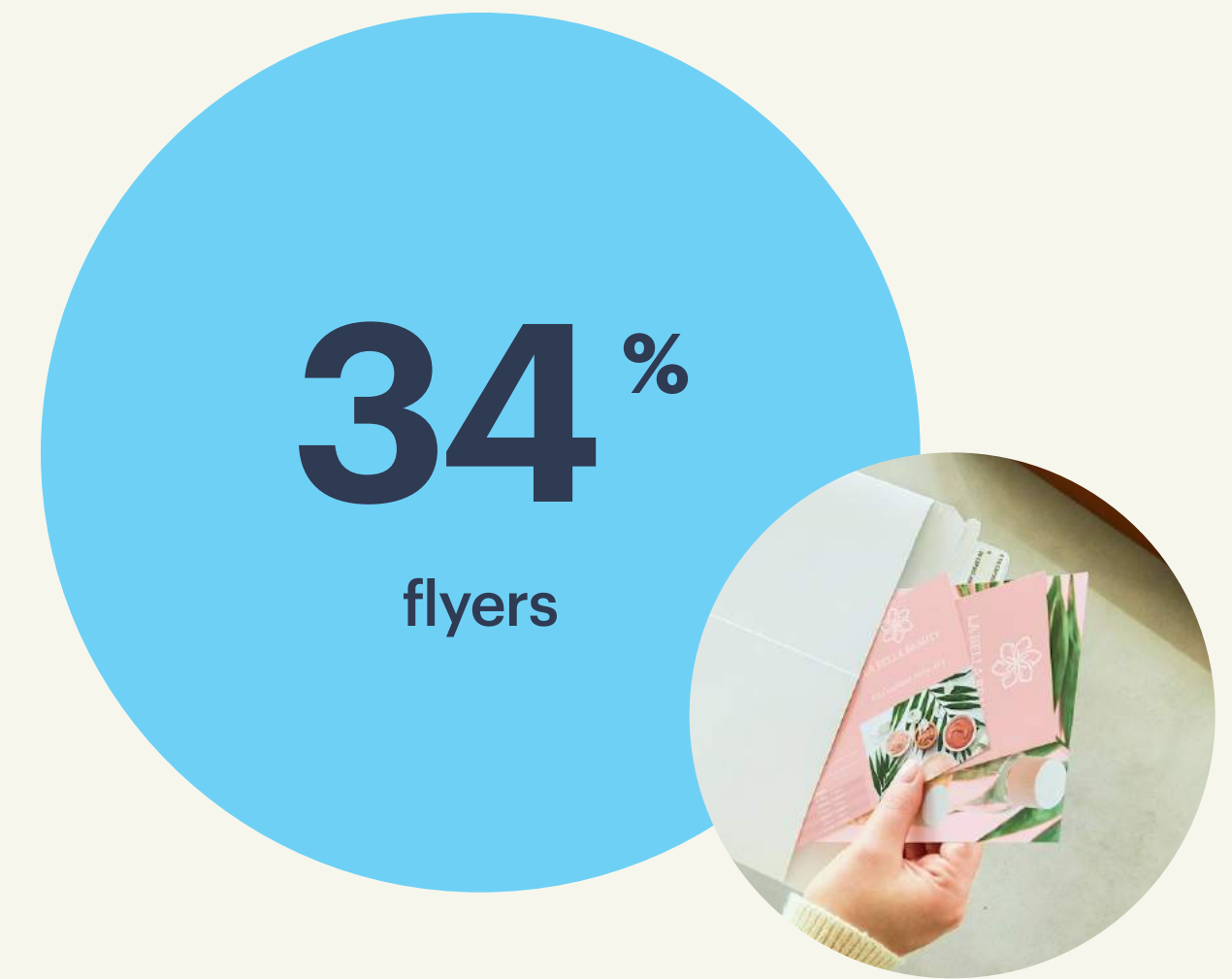
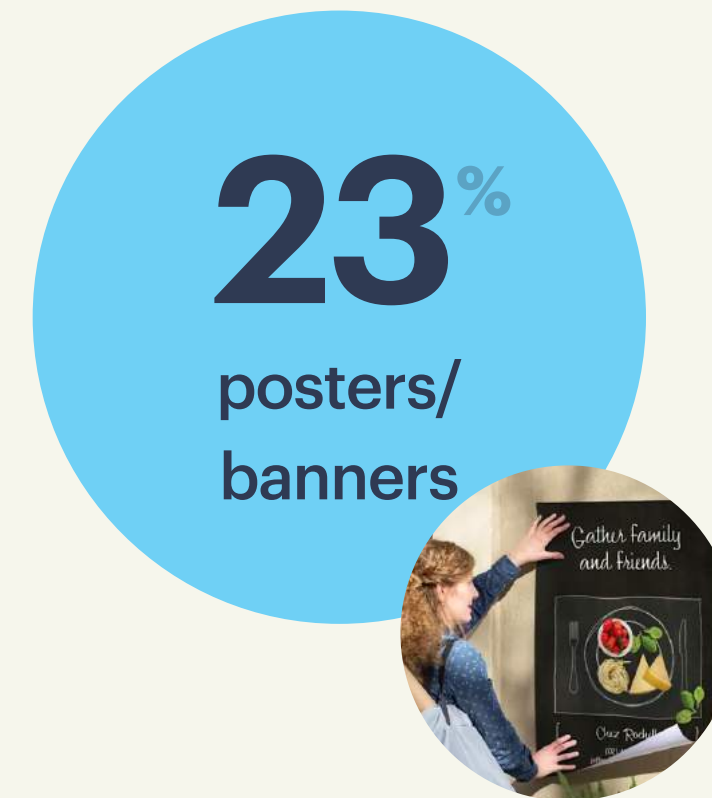
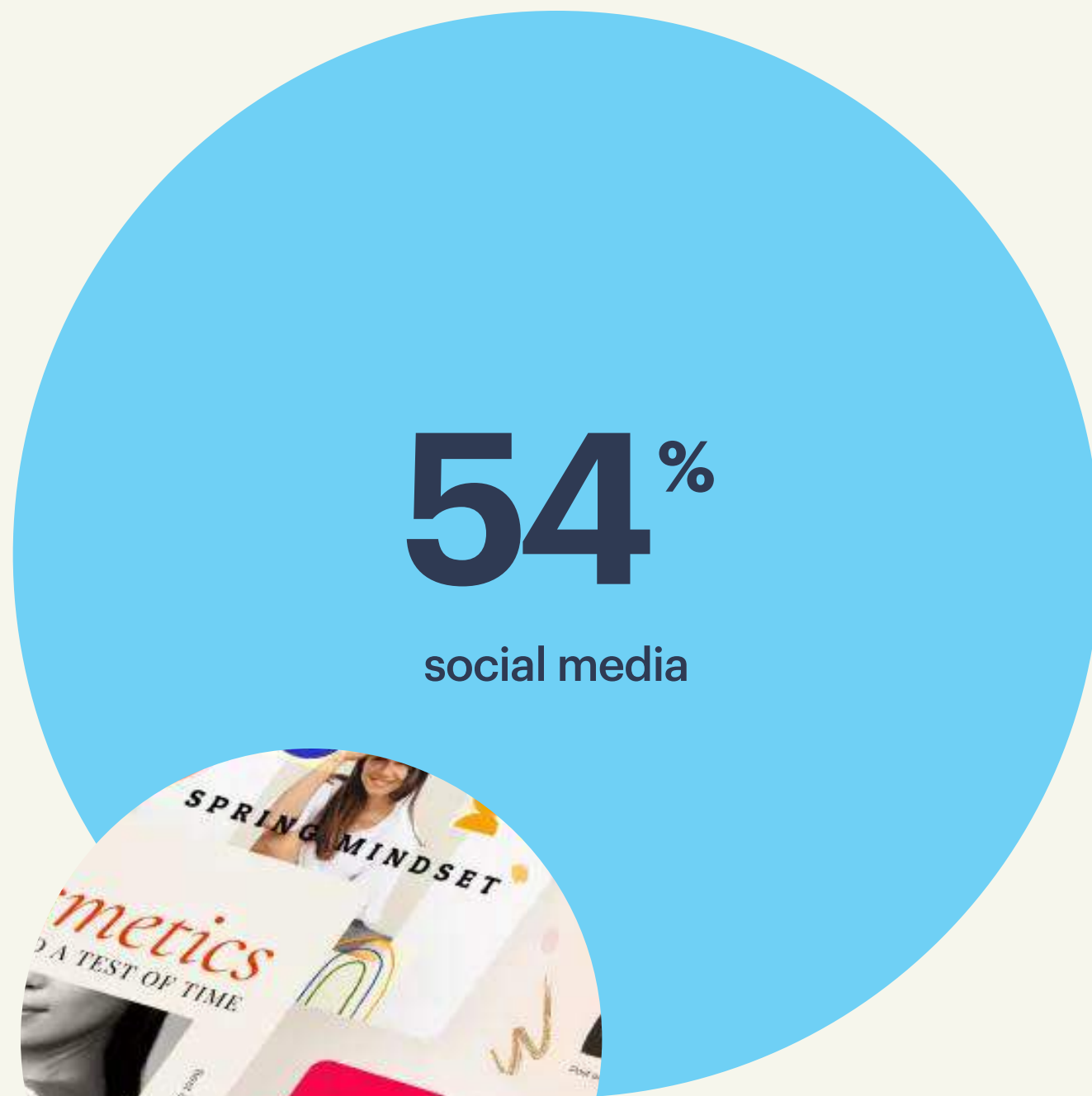
29%



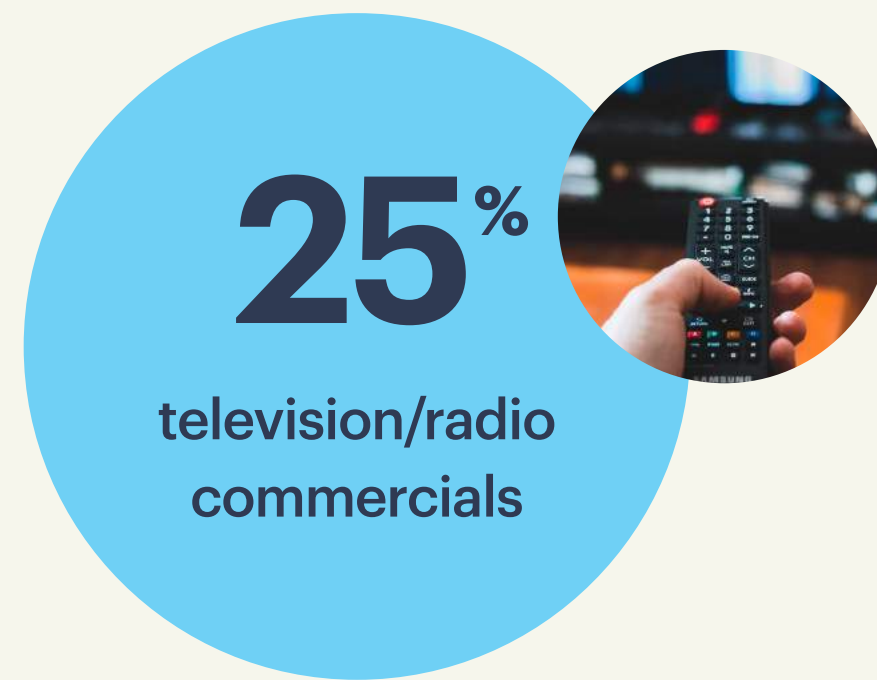
Traditional marketing still has a seat at consumers' tables

Though it feels like everyone's talking about AI and digital algorithms, traditional marketing still plays a key role for small businesses, with 71% saying that physical marketing tactics, such as flyers, banners, posters and loyalty cards, are important. And it clearly also has a place at the table for consumers. They still value real-life experiences and physical touchpoints — that's where traditional marketing comes into play!





Top marketing tactics that help consumers find small businesses:



What do consumers say?

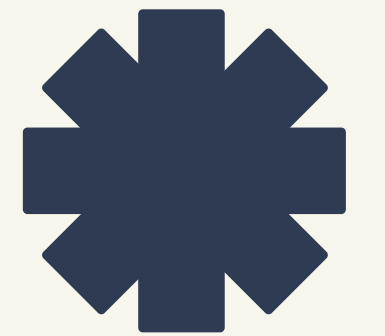
78% say it's important for them to shop small

LOVE IT!



41%

say one of the reasons they would shop small over big is to support a local business



Though it can feel intimidating to compete with major retailers and corporate giants, small businesses have one huge advantage – consumers want to feel connected to their local neighborhood. Marketing that emphasizes location, loyalty and community can help keep them coming back.

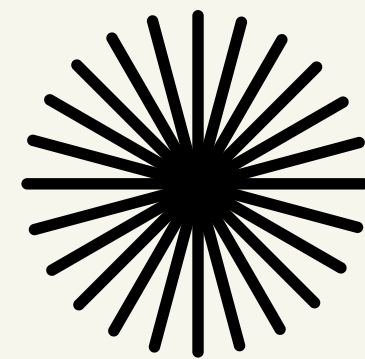


How often do you shop small?

11%
every day

40%
once or
twice a month

36%
once or
twice a week



46%

of consumers
regularly

 **seek out**  

small businesses
in their community



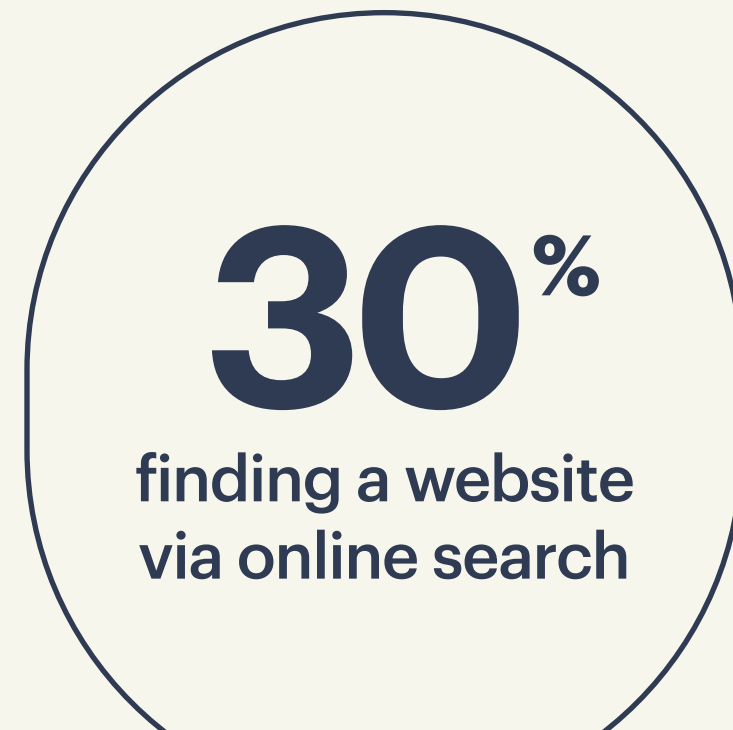
Top 5 reasons consumers choose small businesses over big:



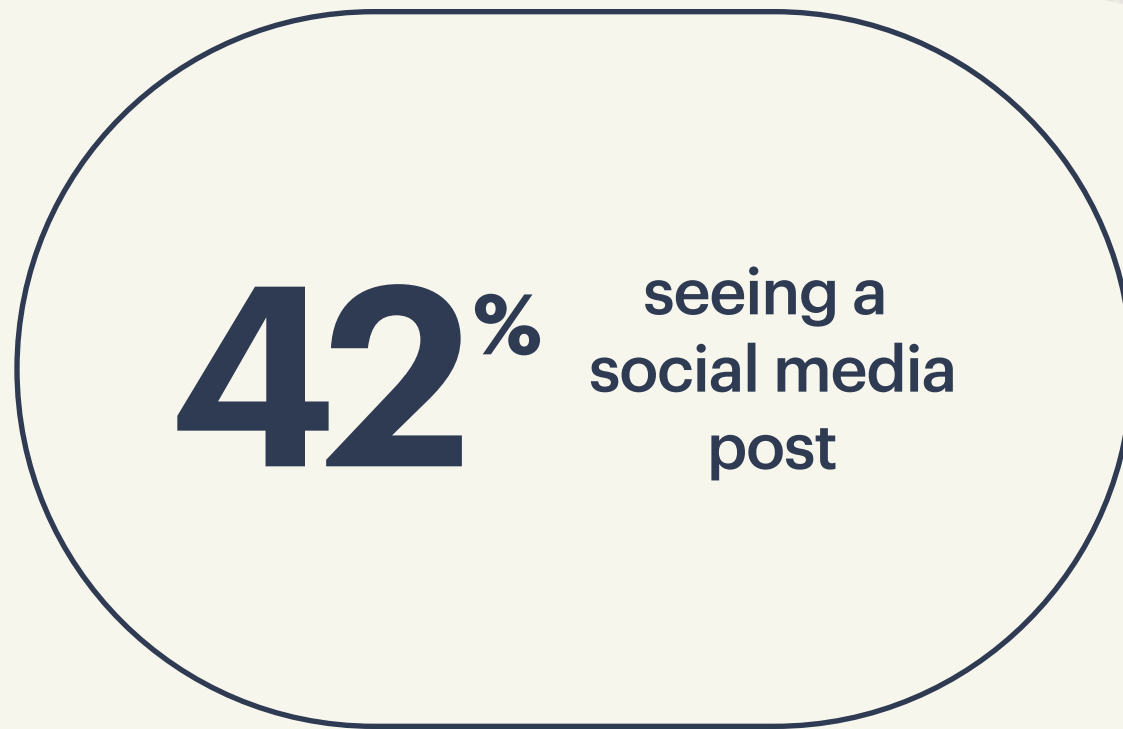
Getting them in the door

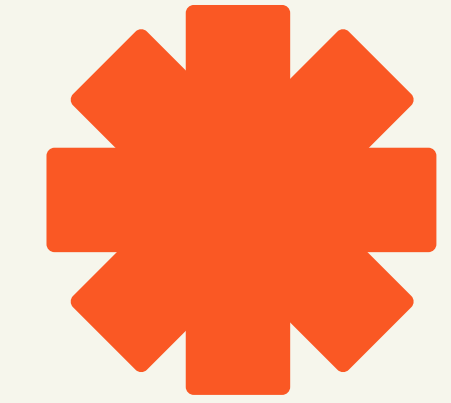
Word-of-mouth is always going to be a small business's best friend for brand awareness. But a range of different touchpoints are important when it comes to consumers setting first foot in the door (physical or digital!). And while discounts and loyalty offers are always going to be attractive to customers, there's other points of connection that also play a huge role in keeping them coming back.





Reasons consumers have visited a local small business





Top 5 things that would make consumers more likely to shop at a small business

29% OF SMALL BUSINESSES HAVE GOT THIS... NICE!



Promotional discounts



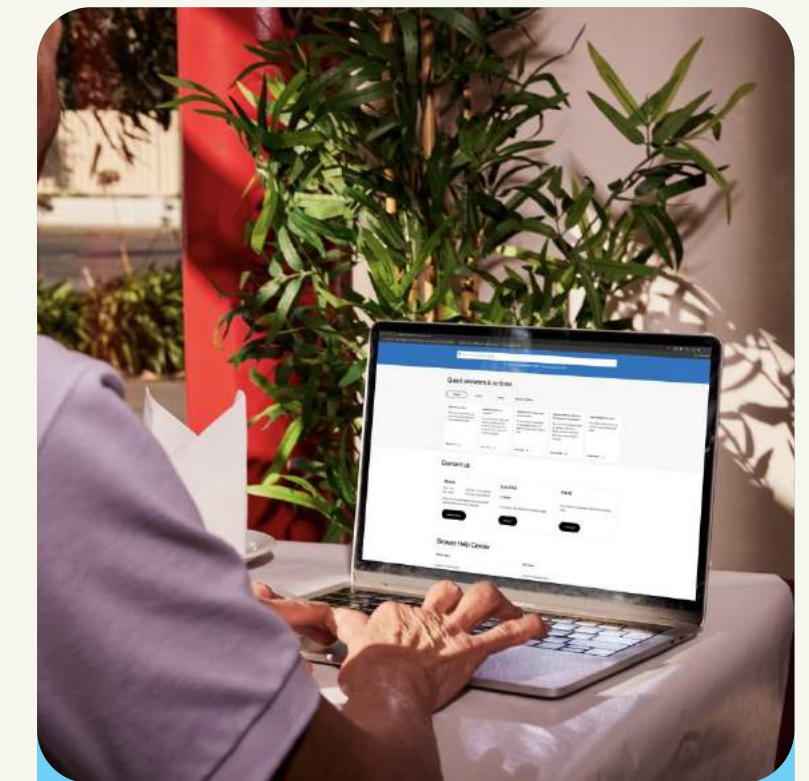
Knowing the owner/staff



Loyalty offers



Promo products



Regular communication

51% OF SMALL BUSINESSES ARE ALREADY DOING THIS!

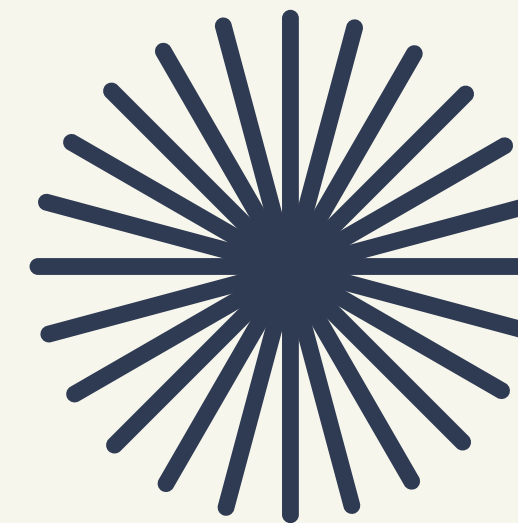
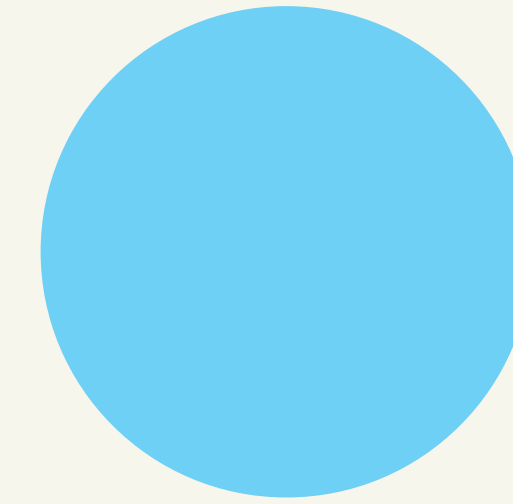


By the ages

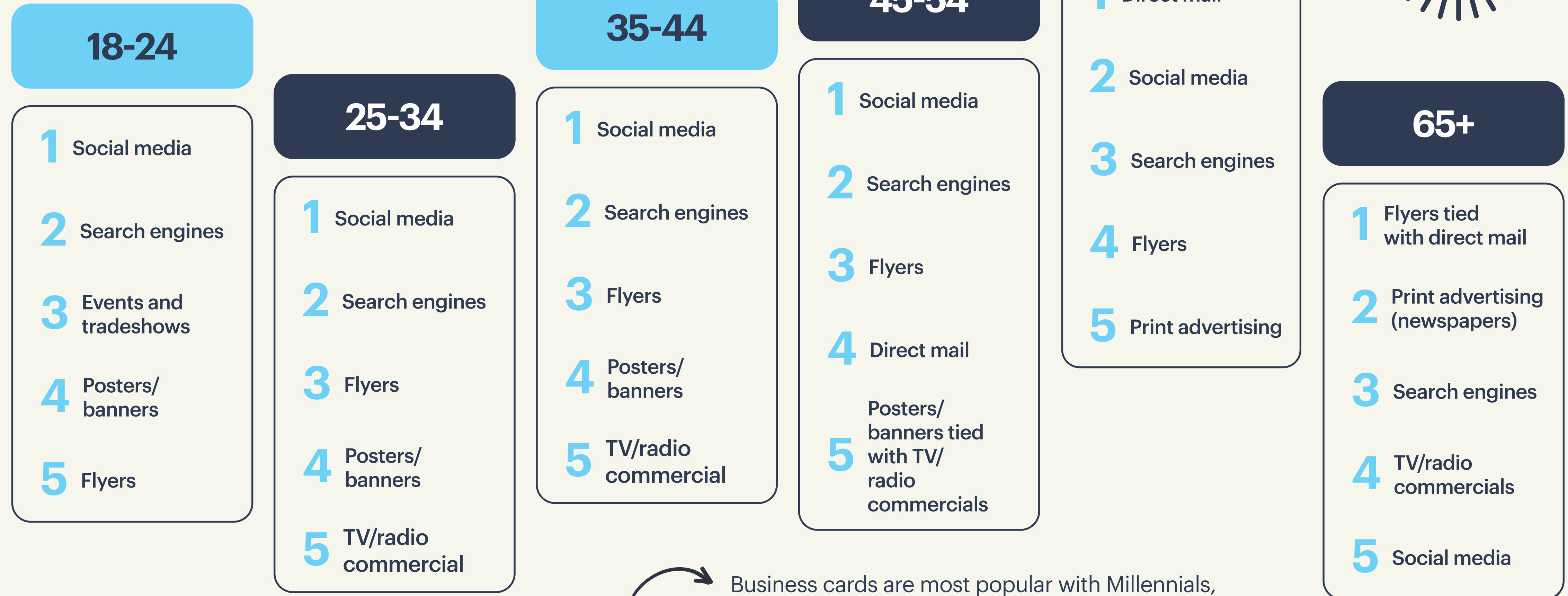
AGE MAKES
A DIFFERENCE

Age matters, at least when it comes to choosing the right marketing mix for your small business. This year, younger generations of consumers are driving the dominance of social search, with 66% of 18-24 year-olds and 69% of 25-34 year-olds saying they like learning about local businesses through social media, even more than search engines.

But digital marketing isn't the only way to target young people, who still discover new local businesses in traditional ways, like events, posters and flyers. Likewise, while older generations do prefer print marketing, like direct mail and flyers, they're still using search engines and social media. The takeaway? Don't be afraid to mix it up where it makes sense for your business.



Top methods for discovering local businesses by age



****A FUN FACT WE LOVE!** Business cards are most popular with Millennials, who rated them more highly than any other age group

The Gen Z — gap

Gen Z shoppers love supporting local small businesses (more than any other age group!). But they can struggle to find them.

46%

shop local small businesses once or twice a week

21%

always actively seek out new small businesses in their community



42%

struggle finding small businesses in their area

So, what are some ways to target Gen Z?

Young people do tend to rely on social media to discover and connect with local small businesses. But that doesn't mean they can only be found online. Our research shows that Gen Z still value real-world experiences, such as events and in-store shopping. They just like the flexibility of being able to do both.

61%

Gen Z consumers say they balance online and offline shopping

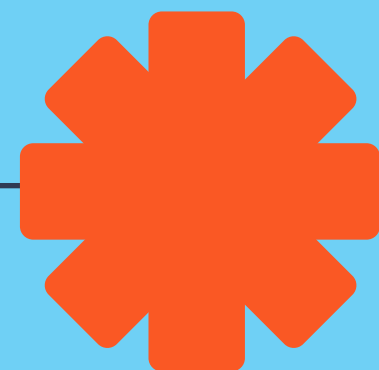


"IN REAL LIFE"

Meet them IRL

32%

of Gen Z consumers discover new local businesses at events



MORE THAN OLDER AGE GROUPS



For Gen Z, not all digital marketing is created equal. Search engines were less popular with 18-24 year-olds than any other age group, while social media was their top choice by a huge margin.

👍 66%

say they like finding new local businesses through social media compared to 37% choosing search engines

Meet them on social

❤️ 68%

purchased products through social media in the last 12 months

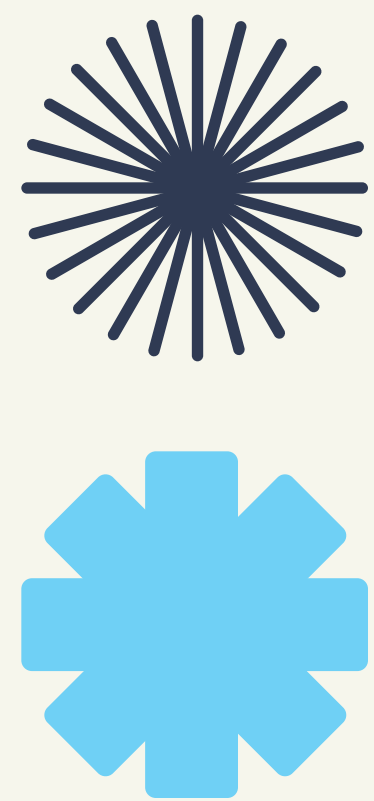
COMPARED TO 45% OF ALL CONSUMERS

#But only 36%

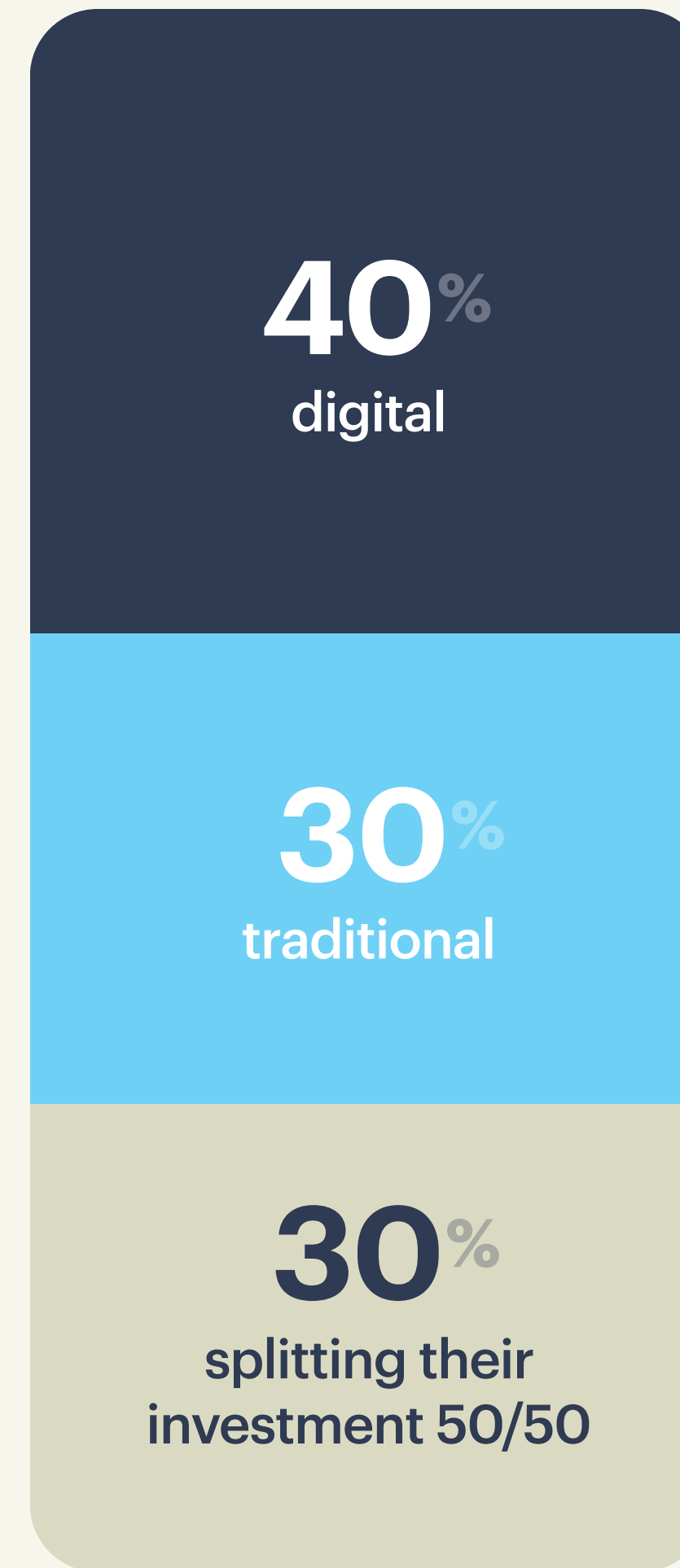
of small businesses see social commerce as a priority for boosting their online sales and visibility

In 2024...

Expect even more marketing! In the coming year 48% of small business owners plan to spend more on marketing and experiment with new tactics, while another 30% will spend more on marketing, but stick with the same approach.



Small business owners will be investing more in...

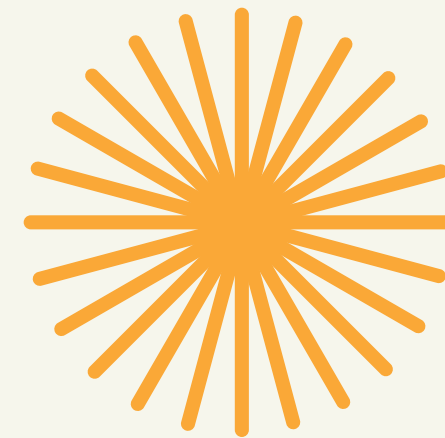


They see their biggest growth opportunities as...





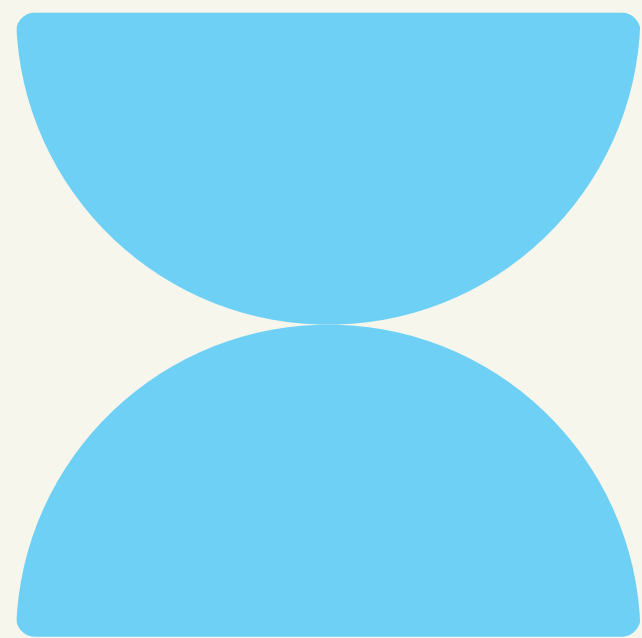
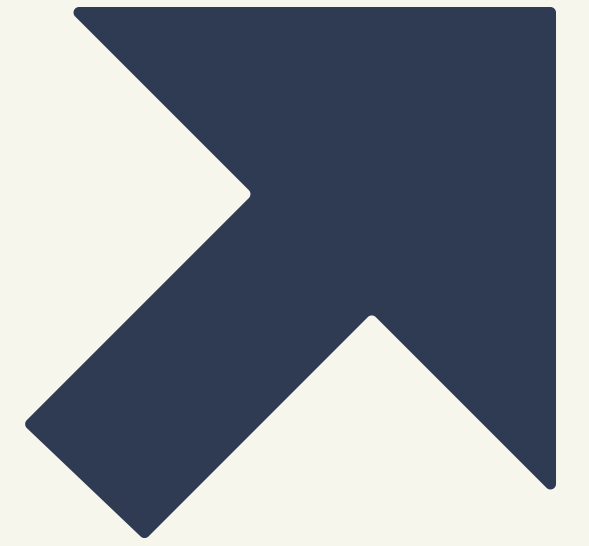
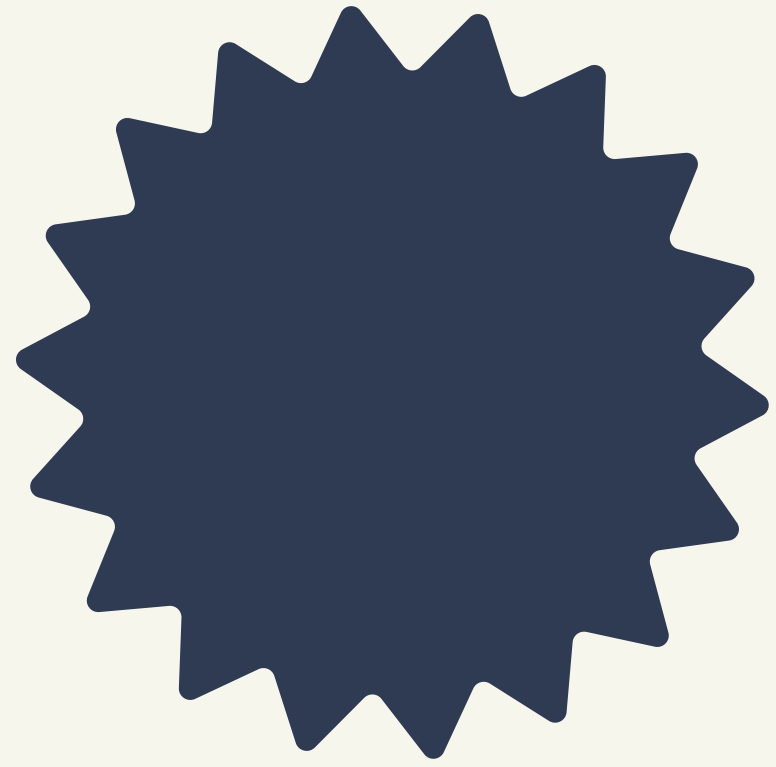
What we've learned



Small business owners are making it happen. When it comes to marketing, we shouldn't underestimate their ability to rise to the challenge. Small businesses are more than capable of great marketing, even when they're managing so much of it themselves.

Small businesses are experimental marketers, willing to believe in themselves, keep on top of trends, and make sure they're standing out in a competitive world. Yes, times are tough. But they've got the drive, confidence and willingness to work wonders with their marketing. They just need the right information and tools.





Methodology



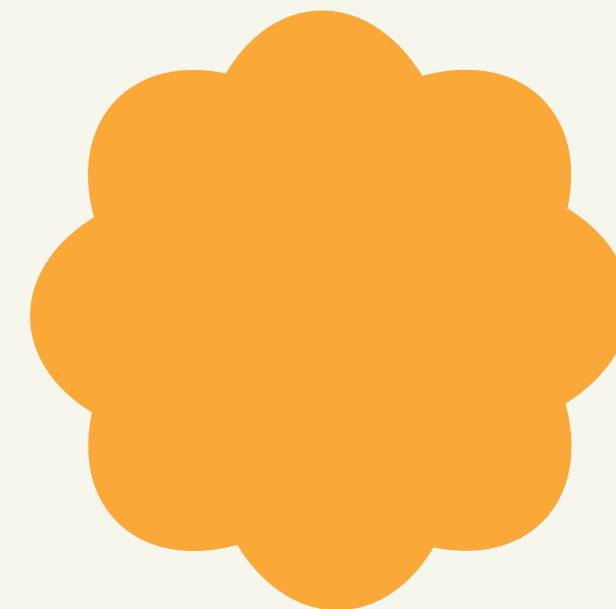
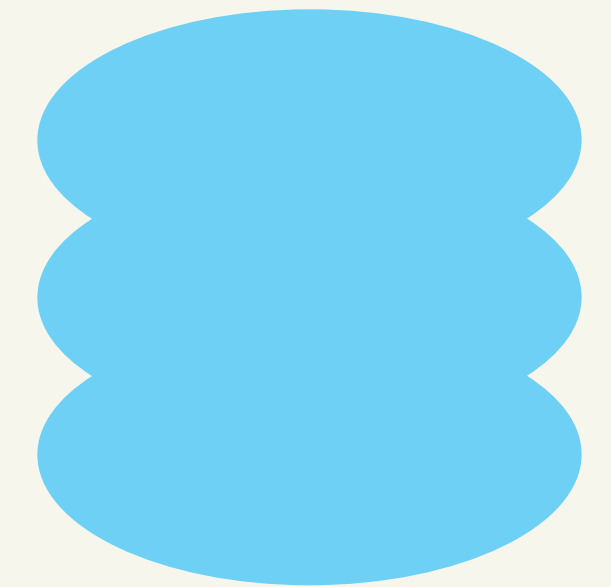
The data for this report was collected by VistaPrint and Wix, via market research platform Corus, in March 2024.



Need marketing ideas for your small business?

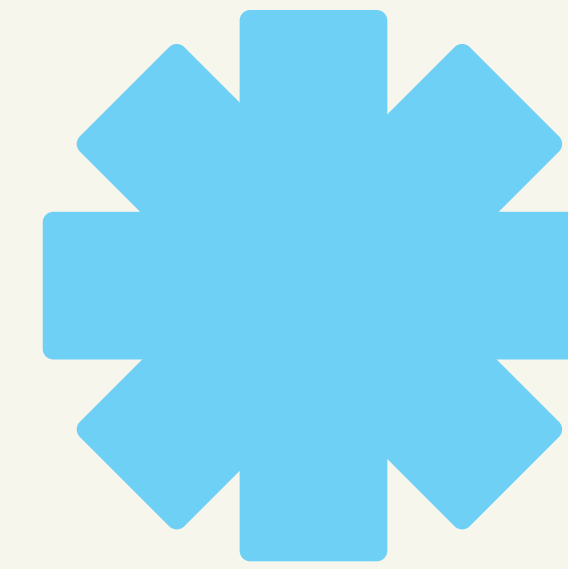
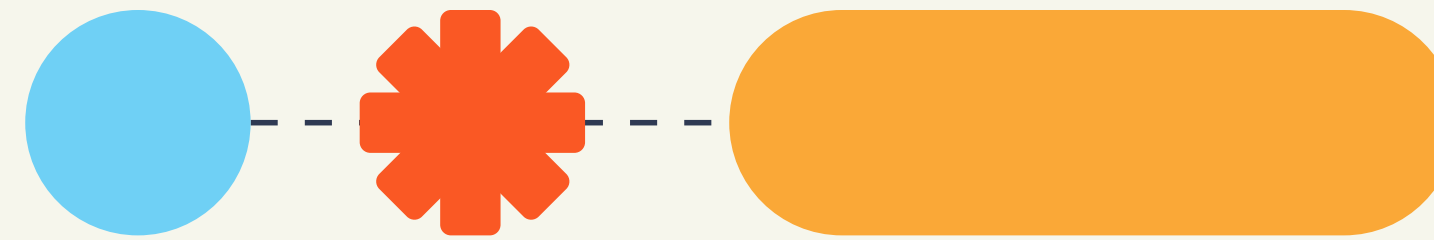
Head over to vistaprint.com/hub for helpful tips, practical advice and inspirational stories – just for small businesses like yours.

GET INSPIRED 



About vistaprint

VistaPrint is the design and marketing partner to thousands of small businesses around the world. We help small business owners bring their ideas to life through custom print products, easy-to-use digital tools and expert design support. When it comes to marketing your small businesses, VistaPrint is here to help.



About WIX

Wix offers integrated tools for marketing, sales and customer management – all in one place. Create a professional website in minutes, no coding required, and start growing your business without feeling overwhelmed. At Wix, we give you the most efficient and innovative tools to help you succeed at every stage of your journey.

Meet our designer!

Shwin is a designer and creative director based in Asia. He started his career on 99designs by Vista, before getting the opportunity to work in London. After many years working agency-side, he packed up his bags and left for Asia, swapping the office for cafes in Vietnam and Thailand.

