

## 1. STRATEGY & FOCUS

Before tactics, tools, or content, clarity matters most.

- I can clearly describe my ideal customer
- I understand the primary problem my business solves
- My marketing goals support real business outcomes (not just visibility)
- I know what success looks like for marketing in 2026
- Our marketing efforts are aligned with business priorities

**If fewer than 3 are checked:**

**Lack of focus may be limiting results more than lack of effort.**

## 2. MESSAGING & DIFFERENTIATION

Strong marketing starts with clear, consistent messaging.

- Our value proposition is easy to understand
- Our website clearly explains why someone should choose us
- Our messaging is consistent across channels
- We talk about outcomes, not just services
- Prospects understand what makes us different

**If this feels unclear:**

**Messaging may be creating friction in sales and marketing.**

# THE 2026 SMALL BUSINESS MARKETING REALITY CHECK

**A PRACTICAL CHECKLIST TO  
IDENTIFY GAPS, OPPORTUNITIES,  
AND NEXT STEPS**

This checklist is designed to help you quickly assess where your marketing stands today and where the biggest opportunities lie for 2026. This is not a task list. It's a clarity tool.

Answer honestly. Notice where you feel confident... and where you don't.

## 3. CONTENT & VISIBILITY

Content should support trust and decision-making.

- Content answers real customer questions
- Publishing is consistent (even if limited)
- Content supports the sales process
- We know what content performs best
- Content feels intentional, not reactive

**If consistency is an issue:**

**A smaller, sustainable plan is often more effective.**

## 4. CHANNELS & EFFORT

Focus beats presence everywhere.

- We know which channels drive leads
- Platforms align with our audience
- Effort is focused, not scattered
- Decisions are based on performance
- Channel management feels manageable

**If this feels scattered:**

**Reducing channels may improve results faster than adding more.**



## 5. SYSTEMS & FOLLOW-UP

Marketing impact depends on what happens next.

- Lead sources are tracked
- Follow-up is timely and consistent
- Systems support marketing and sales
- Nothing critical slips through
- Tools are used effectively

**If gaps exist:**

**Even small system improvements can significantly increase ROI.**

## 6. TIME, BUDGET & SUPPORT

Effective marketing must be realistic.

- Time availability is clearly defined
- Marketing isn't constantly deprioritized
- Budget supports stated goals
- Expert guidance is available when needed
- The plan feels sustainable

**If marketing feels overwhelming:**

**The strategy may need simplification — not more effort.**

**READY TO SHINE?**

Let's Talk...