



## POWER MOVES:

### *How Small Businesses Are Winning with Smart Tech Strategies*

May 4–10 is National Small Business Week, so we're celebrating the business leaders who use smart tech strategies to work smarter, serve customers better and grow stronger. Here's how small businesses are making big moves with smart technology – and how you can too.



#### Getting Your Business Seen in the Age of AI Search Engines

Once upon a time, ranking on Google was the holy grail of online visibility. Today, AI-powered assistants like ChatGPT, [Google Bard](#), and Microsoft Copilot are the new gatekeepers of information. If you're not showing up in their answers, you're missing out on potential customers.

The secret? Keep your website fresh, relevant and easy to understand. AI tools prioritize well-structured, informative content – so make sure your site answers the questions your customers are asking. A regularly updated blog, an FAQ section that reads like a helpful conversation, and clear descriptions of what you do can boost your visibility.

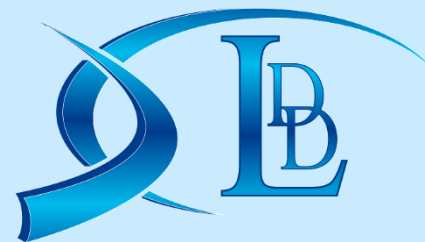
It's like Mom used to say: "It's not just about *what* you say – it's *how* you say it." AI prioritizes real-world language, so write like a human, not a robot. Focus on clear, engaging content that is relatable to your audience. And don't underestimate the power of customer reviews. AI systems scan feedback for mentions of your company, so encourage happy customers to share their experiences.



#### AI: The Secret Weapon for Small Business Agility

Small businesses have a natural advantage: they're not held back by the legacy systems that often slow larger corporations. This agility makes AI adoption easier – and

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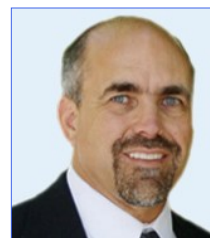
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- ✓ **One platform for all communication**



This monthly publication provided courtesy of David Luft, CEO of LDD Consulting, Inc.

### Our Mission:

*We promise to provide knowledgeable, courteous and prompt service. We care as much about your business as you do. If you are not completely satisfied, be sure to let us know. If we cannot resolve the issue, we will refund your money.*

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the results speak for themselves. Nearly one in four small businesses have integrated AI into their operations, seeing a 12-point increase in profit growth potential compared to non-AI users, according to the US Chamber of Commerce.

With AI-powered tools, small businesses can automate tedious admin work, optimize inventory with predictive analytics and enhance customer service with chatbots – all without the friction of outdated infrastructure. The key, however, is to start small. Pick one challenge, such as improving inventory management. Then, try a simple

Small businesses that recognize these trends and adapt their offerings can build deeper customer connections and gain a competitive edge.

But nostalgia isn't the only factor driving consumer choices. Shoppers are increasingly drawn to businesses that align with their values – whether it's sustainability, inclusivity or ethical sourcing. Transparency and authenticity matter, which is where small businesses have an advantage. Unlike large corporations, small businesses can cultivate genuine relationships with their customers, authentically tell their

**“The most successful small businesses will be those that leverage AI to enhance, rather than replace, the human touch.” The takeaway here is to use tech smartly – not just for efficiency, but to strengthen customer relationships.**

solution, like a low-stock alert powered by an AI-assisted system. Even a simple strategy like this can make a big difference in optimizing inventory without a significant upfront investment.

But success with AI isn't just about using it – it's about using it wisely. Customers still value human connection, so the most successful small businesses will be those that leverage AI to enhance, rather than replace, the human touch.



### Tapping Into Consumer Trends for Growth

Staying ahead in business isn't just about adopting the latest technology – it's also about understanding what customers want right now. Consumer habits are shifting, with growing demand for self-care, comfort and experiences that spark joy.



### Smart Tech, Smart Business

Running a small business has plenty of challenges, but technology can make things much more manageable. Whether you're streamlining daily tasks with AI, improving your online presence or paying attention to shifting consumer trends, small changes will lead to meaningful results. As you celebrate Small Business Week, think about how tech can help you work smarter and connect with customers in new ways. Your next big move starts now.

### “I DID NOT KNOW”

**Unfortunately, that Excuse Doesn't Replenish Bank Accounts, Resolve a Data Breach or Erase Fines and Lawsuits**



It can happen to anyone. That day when a hacker steals critical data that renders your office useless.

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We have the perfect way to help reduce your risk and keep you safe! Simply sign up to receive our FREE Cybersecurity Tip of the Week. We'll send these byte-sized tips to your email in-box. Every tip is packed with unique and up-to-date, real-world solutions that keeps you one step ahead of the bad guys. And because so few people know about these security secrets, every week you'll learn something new.

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## Don't Feed The Phish.

- ✓ Hover over links before clicking
- ✓ Double check the sender's email address
- ✓ When in doubt, don't click



# The Art of Effortless Networking for Small Businesses

Did you know the word “sales” was originally derived from the Scandinavian term for “to serve”? But when was the last time you thought a salesperson was *serv*ing you? This is why so many small business owners cringe when it comes to networking. It feels, well, icky to try to “sell” your business. But what if networking were more than awkward handshakes and business card exchanges that rarely lead to anything meaningful? What if it were about crafting an authentic story so compelling that people sought you out instead? That’s the vision Matthew Pollard, “The Rapid Growth® Guy,” presents in his approach to networking: ditch the random encounters and master the art of strategic connection.

## Craft a Networking Hook

We’ve all been there – listening to someone drone on about their job title while we nod politely, waiting for an escape. Pollard challenges business owners to embrace what he calls the “networking hook.” “People want to identify with a message, and for that, they will pay a premium. So what’s yours?” he asks. Instead of stating your role, describe the unique impact you make. If you can make someone stop, think and say, “Tell me more,” you’ve already won.

## The Power of Specialization

“Speaking to everyone is speaking to no one,” Pollard warns. In a world drowning in generic pitches, specializing is the key to standing out. Pollard himself zeroes in on business coaches, chiropractors and attorneys – not because he can’t serve others but because these industries need his expertise *most*. Finding your niche isn’t about exclusion – it’s about sharpening your value to those who need it most.

## Know Exactly What to Say

Most people fumble when asked, “What do you do?” Pollard’s advice is to keep it simple and intriguing, and let the conversation unfold naturally. For example, skip the elevator pitch and start with a question or a bold statement. “I’m the [insert your unified message],” he suggests. Your unified message should help you authentically connect to the particular person/audience you’re speaking to. Then, pause. Let curiosity do the

heavy lifting before you continue. “Well, I hate seeing [niche] [define problems],” or “I love seeing [niche] [define success], but I find that [define problems] often get in the way.” This structure turns a monologue into a dialogue, inviting engagement instead of forcing a sale. It also makes it easy and smooth to ask, “Do you know anyone like that? to elicit a response.

## Find the Right People in the Right Places

Pollard’s golden rule for finding prospects is to be selective: “What meetups do they go to? What annual conferences do they attend? What associations are they part of?” These aren’t rhetorical questions – they’re a *road map*. The secret to effective networking isn’t meeting more people; it’s meeting the right people in the right places.

## Master the Follow-Up

Great connections are meaningless without follow-up. Pollard introduces the concept of “Momentum Partners” – peers who open their networks to you – and “Champions” – high achievers whose credibility you can leverage. The best networkers don’t just collect contacts; they cultivate relationships, check in with thoughtful messages and offer value before asking for anything in return. The ultimate goal of networking? To never need to network again. “My goal,” Pollard says, “is to help you master the room so you never have to go back into one.” When you become known for your expertise, craft a compelling hook and nurture relationships, opportunities start coming to you.



## Client Spotlight

### A Local IT Partner that Delivers

Since partnering with LDD Consulting, our software glitches and computer problems dropped by over 70% in the first year. After 14 years of daily IT headaches, we thought tech issues were just part of the job—until we met David Luft.

He listened, respected our budget, and offered smart solutions. Nearly 11 years later, we’re still amazed. When issues arise, a real person answers the phone, and support arrives fast. LDD is professional, trustworthy, and incredibly responsive.



*Dr. Greg LoPour  
Owner  
LoPour & Associates  
DDS, Family & Cosmetic  
Dentistry*

## Quick Little Bytes



### Traveling Abroad? Avoid Uber’s Hidden Fee

If you’re heading overseas, check your Uber settings before you go. The app’s new “Preferred Currency Pricing” keeps charges in your home currency—but quietly adds a 1.5% conversion fee. That convenience comes at a cost. Want to skip the fee? Open the Uber app > Account > Wallet > Preferred Currency > and select “No preferred currency.” A few quick taps could save you money every ride.

### AI Bionic Arm Breaks New Ground

After a devastating accident in London, a woman who lost her arm beneath two underground trains is now making history. She received the world’s first AI-powered bionic arm—an incredible advancement that learns and adapts by interpreting subtle muscle twitches and turning them into movement. It’s not just a medical breakthrough—it’s science fiction turned real.





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«Name»  
«Company Name»  
«Street Address 1», «Street Address 2»  
«City», «State» «Postal Code»

## VACATION SMARTER—SAVVY TECH TOOLS



You've earned your vacation—don't let travel stress ruin it! These smart tech tips will keep you organized, secure, and stress-free.

### Logistics Made Easy

- ✓ **Road Trips:** Apps like Roadtrippers help you easily add 20+ stops (you can only add nine in Google Maps). Plus, you can plan trips in advance in the app.
- ✓ **Itineraries:** Skip the email digging—

apps like Triplt or TripCase automatically compile travel details into one master itinerary.

- ✓ **Travel Prices:** Apps like Hopper predict when to book for the best deals on flights, hotels, and car rentals. For bus or train travel, use comparison apps like Wanderu.
- ✓ **Accommodation:** Stick to trusted platforms like Vrbo or Airbnb and keep payments and communications within the platform so that customer support can step in if something goes wrong.
- ✓ **Local Deals:** Find local discounts on excursions, spa treatments, and restaurants through apps like Travelzoo.

### Pack Smart

Digital packing assistants like PackPoint create lists based on your destination, activities, and trip length so you pack only

what you need. In crowded areas, a phone lanyard can also be a lifesaver. For extra security, an RFID-blocking wallet can protect your credit cards and passport from electronic pickpocketing.

### Protect Your Data

We would be remiss if we didn't mention data protection. Update your devices, enable multifactor authentication, and if you'll rely on public Wi-Fi, use a VPN to encrypt your connection.

### Bonus Tip: Stay Connected

Bring a compact power bank so your devices stay charged while you're out exploring. If you're traveling internationally, a universal plug adapter will save you from scrambling at the airport kiosk—and many now come with built-in USB ports for convenience.

With a little tech prep, you can trade travel chaos for calm confidence—now go enjoy that vacation!