



# QUALTRAIN AUSTRALIA

## *Ongoing Professional Development*

[qualtrain.com.au](http://qualtrain.com.au)

[support@qualtrain.com.au](mailto:support@qualtrain.com.au)

1300 185 349

Registered Training Organisation Provider Number 51465

## Resources for registered marriage celebrants:

- Guidelines on the Marriage Act 1961 Version 4 July 2018
  - The Guidelines provide essential information on the solemnisation of marriage in Australia – the most accurate information and guidance available.
- Marriage Act 1961
- Marriage Regulations 2017
- Information and resources for celebrants available on the Attorney-General's website:  
<https://www.ag.gov.au/families-and-marriage/marriage/resources-marriage-celebrants>

QualTrain encourages registered marriage celebrants to regularly review the Guidelines and the resources on the Attorney-General's website.

QualTrain recommends membership to a celebrant association/network. A list of associations can be found on the Attorney-General's website: <https://www.ag.gov.au/families-and-marriage/marriage/resources-marriage-celebrants/networks-associations-celebrants>

Information in this OPD workbook has been reviewed and approved by MLCS. The information is updated regularly and is correct at the time of printing. Where case studies appear in workbooks, they are examples only and any comparison made with other persons either living or deceased is purely coincidental.

Copyright Ownership 2020-2021

QualTrain Australia Pty Ltd CAN 622 208 182

All rights are reserved. This workbook may not be reproduced or copied either in part or in whole nor used for financial gain without the express approval in writing of the owner, QualTrain Australia Pty Ltd.

P O Box 279, Maylands, WA 6931.

QualTrain Campus Office is situated at 193 Guildford Road, Maylands, WA 6051.

Telephone: 1300 185 349 Email: [support@qualtrain.com.au](mailto:support@qualtrain.com.au)

*Thank you for choosing QualTrain  
We hope you enjoy your OPD activities*

## **RE: important information regarding fulfilling 2021 OPD obligations as per Section 39G of the Marriage Act.**

**Please read the following information thoroughly:**

To complete your OPD (4-hour component) in accordance with section 39G of the Marriage Act **you are required to:**

1. **spend a minimum of two-hours reading through the learning material prior to attending the Zoom session.** Your trainer will ask you questions in relation to the learning material to gain assurance that you have read the material. Asking appropriate questions as well as sharing your own experiences will satisfy the trainer that you have completed the two-hour self-paced study component
2. attend the two-hour webinar (a zoom link will be sent to you prior to the webinar)

If you cannot satisfy the trainer that you have spent the appropriate amount of time reading through the learning material, you will be transferred to OPD online, where you will need to complete a formal test for each activity.

As we have had a small number of celebrants not able to satisfy the trainer that they have spent two-hours reading through the learning material, QualTrain has created a questionnaire to prompt celebrants to ask questions. The questionnaire is available in downloads section. **Please complete the questionnaire, print or save a copy ready for use during the webinar.**

## 21QT042 Develop the celebrant's customer journey map 2 hours

At the end of this activity participants will have learned skills and knowledge required to develop, implement and improve their customer journey map.

### What is a customer journey map?

Customer journey maps are a visual representation of your customer's journey with your business. They can be used as a reference point for yourself when you are making business decisions. All decisions must keep the customer journey in mind because the customer journey directly relates to customer experience.

A customer journey map creates a logically ordered sequence of events for your customers to interact with your business.

Each touchpoint is a potential "customer moment of truth": a key moment in the customer journey where the brand has the opportunity to make a positive impression. A customer journey map is a powerful tool for helping you evaluate the quality of the experience the customer receives at each touchpoint. To ensure that no interaction or potential customer slips through the net, it is important for every touchpoint and interaction to be mapped.

### The benefits of Customer Journey Mapping:

- It helps you create a more **efficient** customer journey. *Do you spend more time with clients than you have to?*
- It helps create a more **effective** customer journey. The route your customers take has to make sense to them. We all navigate sites differently or respond better to some things than others, and that's fine. The key is to create an experience that is overall effective and captures most of the wants and needs of your customer base.
- It helps you **understand your customers better**. To implement an effective customer journey, you need to understand your customers. This means you understand how they behave, what they want, and more importantly, what they don't want. This is an important part of running a successful business, but it's often missed by business owners who are too eager to create the perfect journey for them (rather than the customer).
- It helps you create better **goals**. By taking a more scientific approach to your customer journey, you're brought closer to the real things that make your business work. You can make changes and assess their benefit in real-time. This can then drive your decisions and goals going forward.

- It helps you identify customer **pain points**. Customer pain points can cost your business. Before setting out on your customer mapping exercise, you might not realize just how many pain points there are for your customers, or how severe they are.
- It helps you **innovate**. Innovation doesn't happen by accident, and successful innovations certainly don't happen by accident.

Let's break the celebrant's customer journey map into 4 main areas:



### 1. AWARENESS & CONSIDERATION

The initial stage where a couple finds you and decides to book your services.

### 2. PURCHASE

The process of booking your services.

### 3. EXPERIENCE & ENGAGEMENT

The journey from once they have booked to when the wedding has been completed.

### 4. ADVOCACY

How you can continue that relationship after the wedding.

## ACTIVITY

### Background Analysis

**Self reflection:** In one or two sentences, regarding the journey that clients take with you, write a snapshot of where you are right now, where you have been and where you want to go.

## 1. AWARENESS & CONSIDERATION

This is the first step on the journey where the customer needs to find your services and consider you as their celebrant. There will be a number of factors that determine whether they choose to book your services or not.

Consider the following customer journey map. Where do you think your strengths and weaknesses are leading to the 'buy' phase?

### CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:

#### SEARCH

How do clients find you? Online, referrals, advertising, social media, print, directories?

#### BRANDING

When they do find you, do you have a strong, striking and clear brand? Are you consistent across all channels? Your website, social media, directories, business cards?

**REVIEWS**

Do you have good reviews? Is it easy for them to find your reviews? Could you navigate customers to your reviews more easily?

**MARKETING**

- What marketing do you have in place to persuade them to book you? Content marketing? Social media posts?
- What info is available on your website? What info do you email them?
- Are you upfront with your costs and services?
- Are customers replying to your emails? If not, what could the reasons be?
- Are you receiving referrals? If not, what can you do to change that?
- Do you respond to inquiries in a timely manner?

**TARGET**




Do you target a specific audience? Do you make them feel like you are the right fit for them?

Is your location convenient?

**The Celebrant Market**

Before we continue looking further at the customer journey, let’s examine the celebrant market and your customer market. Understanding these markets will allow you to maximise the experience you give a customer when they are considering your services as their celebrant.



	<b>Past experience</b>	<b>Awareness</b>	<b>Purchase</b>	<b>After purchase</b>
THINK 	What is this product?	What makes this product different?	Is it worth my money?	Will I buy it again?
FEEL 	Curious	Intrigued	Excited	Excited
DO 	Look	Research	Buy	Excited

The **ABS** (2017) report on marriages in Australia  
– <https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/>

*Number of marriages in 2017 were 112,954 of which 78.0 per cent were conducted by civil celebrants = 88104 marriages.*

*As there were 8486 celebrants in 2017, this means an average of 10.4 weddings per independent civil marriage celebrant per annum compared with 35 in 1999, and 64 in 1995.*

**Question** 'are you happy with **your market share** of weddings?' Are you 'very satisfied' / 'fairly satisfied' / 'not satisfied' / 'seriously want more'.

Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Not satisfied	Seriously want more

Improving your customer experience will lead to greater recommendations and referrals which will result in more business!

## Market Research

Market research is the process used to identify clients, determine their needs and expectations and identify existing and potential clients. Knowing your target marketing is crucial so you can create a customer journey map that's right for them.

### Celebrants may find it helpful to evaluate their client base

The process of creating either a client profile or client persona will help you to clearly define your client's needs by understanding their motivations for requiring your services. Your clients should be the driver behind every marketing decision in your business. Consider the following points.

Who are your target clients and how do they behave?

- What are the specific demographics of your ideal client? (such as age, social status, education and gender)
- What are your clients' lifestyles, activities, values, needs, interests or opinions?
- Where are they located? What type of environment do they live in?
- What are the key phrases or quotes that they would use to describe their needs (that your celebrant service will remedy)?
- When are they likely to make a purchase? Is the service you provide associated with seasons or emotions – examples: Valentine's Day, Christmas, Mother's Day? How? Why? Statistics show that a lot of proposals happen around Christmas, the New Year and Valentine's Day.



## Your Target Market

- **Self reflection:** In one or two sentences, summarise the key features for your target market. This may include the size and growth potential of your market, as well as key demographics such as age, gender, location income level etc.

## Business Location

In regard to the **location of your celebrant business** – whether that’s a home office, leased office or local café... How convenient is it for your clients?

Consider the following:

- Easy to find – well sign-posted?
- Is it inviting? Comfortable?
- Good parking facilities or located near public transport?
- Centrally located?
- Workplace health and safety has been considered and hazards reduced for visitors? Well-lit / no potential trips or falls / pets out of the way / what else?
- Are there complementary businesses located nearby?
- If online – do you chat via a professional channel? Good connection?

## 2. THE PURCHASE

So the couple have gone through the first stage of a customer journey map and they want to book you. Congratulations! Then the next part of the journey begins.

Think about the next stage and the experience that the customer gets? Do you make it easy for them to book you? Do you send them a booking form? Agreement? Invoice? Is it easy for them to read and sign the agreement and pay your booking fee? Remember that the couple might be booking in multiple vendors at the same time so the more simple, easy and user-friendly you can make the booking experience, you will become a stand-out vendor.

Do you offer the couple different ways in which they can pay your booking fee? There a number of applications out there that provide small businesses with the opportunity to accept credit card payments.

Both Square and Paypal offer affordable and portable solutions.

- **Square** lets you accept tap-and-go cards, mobile wallets and chip cards, whether you're on the move or at your counter.  
<https://squareup.com/au/en/hardware/reader>
- **Paypal** – customers purchase your service (or product) – Paypal processes the payment with financial details protected – your business receives the money.  
<https://www.paypal.com/au/business>

### 3. EXPERIENCE AND ENGAGEMENT

Once the booking has been completed, think about the next stage of the customer journey. This is the longest time spent with the customer and will have the greatest impact on their overall experience with you.

In this phase, there are three areas to explore, nurture and complete:

- **LEGAL**
- **CREATIVE**
- **RELATIONSHIP**

#### LEGAL

First and foremost, we must complete our legal obligations which include signing the NOIM, seeing the appropriate documentation, preparing the Declaration of No Legal Impediment to Marriage and the required Marriage Certificates.

Think about the experience you create for the couple. Do you make it easy for them to sign the NOIM? Do you give them options? If they live far away, could you perhaps recommend they get it witnessed elsewhere and send it to you? Could you pre-fill the NOIM and send it to them? Do you give them options in how they can show you their documentation? In person, via email or online via a video call?

The key is to provide options to couples but don't bombard or confuse them!

Do you get them to double-check all the spelling and information on all the legal documents to try and minimise errors after the marriage has been solemnised? It's not a good look or a positive experience if a couple receive their marriage certificate and it has an error on it as a result of a celebrant oversight.

#### ACTIVITY

**Self reflection:** how you fulfill the **legal** requirements of getting married. Is there an area that you could change to improve the customer experience?

## **CREATIVE**

This is where the real fun begins! The creative side is the journey the couple take with you to create their ceremony. How do you get from the very start to executing a beautiful, meaningful and heartfelt ceremony?

Most celebrants will meet with their couple and explain to them a range of different options from ceremony structure, music, vows, readings, involving family and friends and personalising the ceremony. After that meeting, it's important to provide them with information and resources for them to take home and digest. How do you provide these resources to couples? Are they modern, up-to-date and user-friendly? Whilst some couples still like to incorporate traditional elements, many couples these days are opting for more personalised and relaxed ceremonies. Do your resources reflect that?

### **Creating and Writing the Ceremony**

When the time comes to writing the ceremony, how do you obtain the information from your clients? Some celebrants gather this information via face to face, others ask their couple to complete a questionnaire.

If you provide a questionnaire, is it simple, easy to complete, concise? Remember that every vendor is going to ask the couple to complete a questionnaire so make sure yours is detailed enough to gather all the information but not too long so it feels like a chore!

### **Delivering the Ceremony**

Consider how and when you will deliver the ceremony to your couple. This may be influenced by when they return the information to you but do you aim to send them the ceremony enough time before the wedding, so they have plenty of time to review it and make any changes?

Is your ceremony clearly laid out with headings and easy for the couple to get a sense of how it will run?

Remember, whilst you may have done many weddings before, your couple have not so give them as much detail and instructions in the ceremony script as possible.

### **The Rehearsal or Final Meeting**

What options do you give the couple regarding a rehearsal or a final meeting? Are you flexible to work around their schedule? Think of everything you need to cover. This is the time our couples can be the most nervous and anxious so it's imperative that you instil as much confidence and trust. This is a crucial touchpoint on the customer journey map, and for the couple, the final week is a very memorable and emotional time.

Use this time to confirm the following:

- All ceremony details – date, time, location
- All the people involved in the ceremony
- All legal documentation is correct and prepared
- All payments have been received (most couples appreciate a friendly reminder if they have monies owing)
- The couple understand how the ceremony will run and what is required of them

Whilst unexpected things will always happen on a wedding day, the attention to detail you have at this stage will only lead to a smoother ceremony and ultimately, a greater customer experience for the couple.

### The Ceremony

Show time! This is the climax of the customer journey map and if you have delivered excellent customer service up until this moment, then it will all come together in a very incredibly special ceremony.

Think about the experience and the engagement a couple receive from you on the big day.

- Do you contact the couple the morning of to say good luck?
- Do you arrive at the ceremony with enough time to go through everything?
- Do you see the couple before they walk down the aisle?
- Are you constantly reassuring and guiding them during the ceremony?
- During the signing, do you remind the couple what's going to happen next?
- After the ceremony, do you take the time to say goodbye to the couple?

### ACTIVITY

Reflect on the **creative** process. What area do you think you excel in? What area could you improve in?

### RELATIONSHIP

There will be times throughout your journey when there are no legal or creative obligations to be met but they are **still** your customer... so are you contiously engaging with them? Are you still providing excellent customer service?

Here are some ideas on how to engage during this time:

- Post tips, hints and inspiration on social media
- Send an email just touching base and seeing how their wedding plans are progressing – set a reminder 6 months before their wedding
- Send newsletters to your couples
- Invite them to any expos or open days you are attending
- MOST IMPORTANTLY, respond to any of their messages in a timely manner, even if their wedding is 12 months away. Always make your couples feel just as important to you, no matter how far away their wedding is.

Overall, ensure that your customer feels valued, connected and engaged every step of the way. After all, it's all about the experience.

## 4. ADVOCACY

### **After the wedding and into the future...**

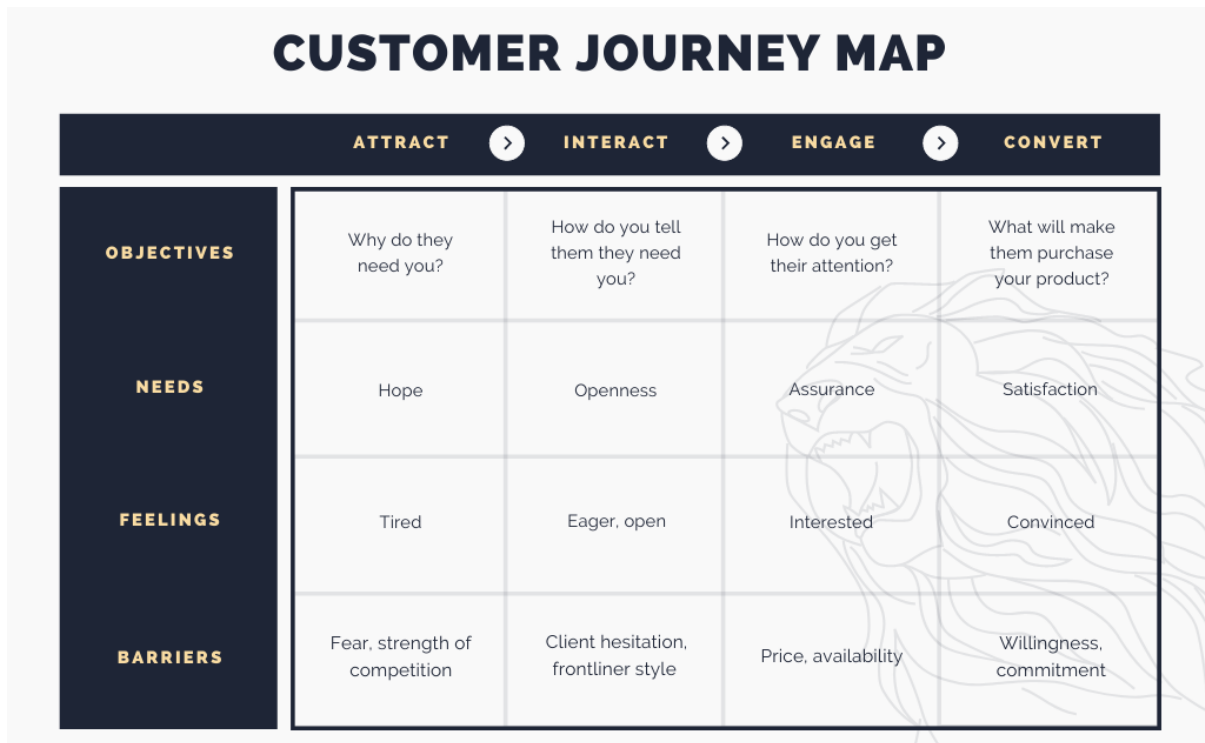
Once the wedding is over, a crucial part of the customer journey map remains... advocacy. The aim is that the couple will recommend you to and it results in referrals.

Soon after the wedding, contact the couple to congratulate them and inform them about the process of obtaining their Official Marriage Certificate. This is the time to ask for reviews, photos and thank them again for engaging your services.

When should you contact the couple? Not too soon after the wedding for they might be on their honeymoon and basking in their newly married glow but don't leave it too long for it may seem unprofessional. You might want to follow up a day or two later with a very short and sweet congrats message and then a week or two later follow up with the legal information and other info.

Looking into the future – how can you continue to engage and make that couple feel valued? Some ideas include:

- Send them a thank you card or little present
- Post about their wedding on social media. Obtain professional photos, if applicable. Make sure you credit the photographer, vendors and of course, the couple!
- Contact them on their one-year anniversary to say congratulations
- If you do receive referrals from them, contact them again to say thank you for the referral.



**Consider ...** What is something you could do **after the ceremony** to make your couple feel valued?

### Use competitors to improve your customer journey map

Examining your fellow celebrants and their experience and engagement they provide to their couples can inspire you to improve your own business.

Identify three main competitors, answer these questions about each one. And be objective. It's easy to identify weaknesses in your competition, but less easy to recognise where they may be able to outperform you:

- What are their strengths?
  - Price, service, convenience, extensive range of services are all areas where you may be vulnerable.
- What are their weaknesses?
  - Weaknesses are opportunities you should plan to take advantage of.
- What are their basic objectives?
  - Do they seek to gain market share? Do they attempt to capture premium clients? See your industry through their eyes. What are they trying to achieve?
- What marketing strategies do they use?
  - Look at their advertising, public relations, etc.
- How can you take market share away from their business?
- What do they provide couples during that "Awareness and Consideration" stage?

### To gather information, you can:

- Check out their **websites** and **marketing materials**. Most of the information you need about products, services, prices, and objectives should be readily available. If that information is not available, you may have identified a weakness. Or is it really a strength?
- Evaluate their **marketing and advertising campaigns**. How a celebrant advertises creates a great opportunity to uncover their objectives and strategies.
- **Browse**. Search the Internet for news, social media and other mentions of your competition. Search blogs and feeds as well as review and recommendation sites.
- **Chat** to your competitors – at celebrant seminars, association meetings and OPD.

While most of the information you find will be anecdotal and based on the opinion of just a few people, you may at least get a sense of how some consumers perceive your competition.

Competitive analysis can also help you identify changes you should make to your business strategies and your customer journey map. Learn from competitor strengths, take advantage of competitor's weaknesses, and apply the same analysis to your own business plan.

**A good business plan anticipates and accounts for new competitors.** Now consider:

- Who are my current competitors?
- What is their market share?
- How successful are they?
- What market do current competitors target?
- Do they focus on a specific client type, on serving the mass market, or on a particular niche?
- How will your business be different from the competition?
- What competitor weaknesses can you exploit?
- What competitor strengths will you need to overcome to be successful?
- What will you do if competitors drop out of the marketplace?
- What will you do to take advantage of the opportunity?
- What will you do if new competitors enter the marketplace?
- How will you react to and overcome new challenges?

While your business plan is primarily intended to make sense of your business, keep in mind your strengths and weaknesses relative to that competition, and understand you will have to adapt and change based on that competition.

## Ten good tips to help you stand out from the crowd:

- 1. Optimise your website for your target market** - Ensure your website is optimised for search engines. Make sure you research keywords and insert them into your pages to drive traffic to your business online.
- 2. Your website should be your 'home' of branding** - Once your potential clients act on your marketing campaign whether it be from print or online, they will connect with your website next. Having your website as the hub for your brand marketing is important.
- 3. Use the same logo, colours and fonts in all future marketing media** - Consistency will allow your target market to recognise you instantly, whichever way they connect with you.
- 4. Tell your story** - why you are in the celebrant business and how your business came to be. Your clients want to know who you are, why you do what you do, and how you came to be a celebrant. They want to like you and be able to trust you.
5. Make sure you work **to keep your name in front of your market** - 'Out of sight, out of mind'. This also applies in business. If your market can't see you or your brand on a regular basis, you won't be at the forefront of their mind when it comes to needing your services.
- 6. Provide hints & tips** for the clients on your database. Write a helpful Blog or send newsletters with helpful information through to your database either in print or via email. Keep in regular touch with your potential clients and let them know you are the best person in your field with expertise and knowledge.
- 7. Increase your content output** - Link your newsletter back to your website to allow your market to connect with you on several platforms. Create a blog, write articles, use this content to increase your brand awareness online as well as in print.
- 8. Use social media** - You can promote your brand further by using just a few social media outlets. Investigate Facebook for Business.
- 9. Think about multiple content platforms** to distribute your branding - using video as a way to get your content out to your clients via YouTube, also podcasts would reach your market easier.
- 10. Be visible in the community** - there is no better way to get your branding out to a wider audience than to support community events.

## **ACTIVITY** Conduct a **SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)** analysis exercise on your customer journey map.

- Use a SWOT analysis to distinguish between where you are now and where you wish to be
- Be realistic about your strengths and weaknesses
- Be specific — only include key points and issues
- Relate strengths and weaknesses to practical success factors



- Always aim to state strengths and weaknesses in competitive terms
- Rank points in order of importance and
- Finally, keep it brief and manageable
- Draw up four quadrants on A4 paper ...

<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>WEAKNESSES</b>
<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>THREATS</b>

**Strengths** refers to what you are currently doing well. Think about the factors that are going in your favour as well as the things you offer that your competitors just can't beat.

When identifying **weaknesses**, consider what areas of your business are the least profitable, where you lack certain resources, or what costs you the most time and money.

Consider your **opportunities**. This is your chance to dream big. What are some opportunities for your social media strategy you hope, but don't necessarily expect, to reach? For instance, maybe you're hoping your Facebook ads will attract a new, larger demographic. Maybe you're hoping your YouTube video gets 10,000 views and increases sales by 10%.

Writing down your **threats** helps you evaluate them objectively. For instance, maybe you list your threats in terms of least and most likely to occur and divide and conquer each.

Now that you have identified your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, what are you going to do next? A list of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats makes for a handy business guide, but you'll want to create strategies and plans to improve your business.

- Strengths and weaknesses are **internal** to your business and are controllable, whilst
- Opportunities and threats are uncontrollable **external** forces that act upon the situation.

## 21QT015 Use technology to effectively coordinate business resources (2 hours)

By the end of this activity participants will have learned skills and knowledge required to use the tools of modern technology to run your celebrant business effectively and successfully, whilst discovering technological resources and applications that will improve the function of their business operation and help alleviate pitfalls.

This information relates to a unit of competency from CHC41015 Certificate IV in Celebrancy.

The topics that will be covered in this activity relate to elements from BSBADM409 Coordinate business resources and include:

- 1 Determine resource requirements
- The Web – Website, email and domain
- Search engine optimisation
- Google My Business and Adwords
- Invoicing and billing – software / hardware

### What are business resources?

Here are a couple of examples:

**Business.gov** <https://www.business.gov.au/>, created by the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science – AusIndustry, is a whole-of-government online resource providing essential information on planning, starting and growing a business. In addition, this website offers information specifically for businesses, in relation to:

- grants and assistance offered by government to help businesses
- advisory services in your state or territory, some of which are free or have minimal costs involved
- events offered throughout Australia, including seminars, training courses and workshops.

**ASIC website** <https://asic.gov.au/> The best place to start is the Small Business Hub on ASIC's website, which has a range of small business resources to give you more comprehensive information. You will also have the option to sign up to ASIC's free monthly InFocus e-newsletter, designed to keep you up to date with ASIC-related news and information on companies and business names.

## In this activity we will focus on ...

### **Business technology resources**

**Technology resources** are a category of **business resources**. They include digital or 'online' resources that can be utilised to make operating a business more efficient and effective.

Here are some common technology resources that can be used to either start your new business, or to improve your existing business:

- Websites
- Emails
- Online calendars
- Google
- Social Media
- Point of Sale (POS) Systems
- Invoices
- Applications

### **Websites**

Websites are one of the most important channels to promote your business.

A website itself can be used to accomplish many different marketing strategies to help your business grow. A strategically developed website and online presence solution provides tremendous benefits and costing outlines.

Your website and social media accounts are accessible 24/7/365. Since your website is operational around the clock, from the convenience of the local coffee shop, their couch, your customers and clients can easily access your website and services.

By building a website you are giving your business the opportunity to tell consumers why they should trust you and the testimonials and facts to back up those opportunities. Using your website, you can continuously serve consumers online and increase your credibility as a business owner.

Consider the following:

- **WYSIWYG - *What you see is what you get***. WYSIWYG editor is a system in which content can be edited in a form closely resembling its appearance when printed or displayed as a finished product, such as a printed document, web page, or slide presentation.
- **Wordpress** has the ability to have certain sections to be shown as is. So no coding is required, just click on the area you want to edit and change it. Wordpress is the most used CMS (Content Management System in the world). By using Wordpress for your website you are ensuring you have the freedom of getting support from almost any web developer.

**Others - Other common CMS include**

- **Wix** and **Square Space**. Both are available on software as a service model offering monthly fees in combination to hosting and domain name purchasing.

Review: [WIX](#) [SQUARE SPACE](#) [WORDPRESS](#)

## What is a domain name?

A domain name is your 'website address'. It's the 'entity' people need to type into a web browser to locate your website. For example, typing 'qualtrain.com.au' into a web browser will take you to QualTrain Australia's website.

- Domain names are cheap. They can start at about \$10-\$15 per year
- Domain names generally do not include hosting

## Domain name tips

Here are just some simple rules to follow when purchasing your domain

- **Keep it simple:** when you are deciding on the name, think about how people will remember it; you don't want them to make errors when typing the address because the words were too long or difficult to spell / unusual spelling / etc.
- Where possible, use keywords
- Purchasing a **.au** domain helps with SEO for Australian business

## What do you think of these domain names?

- 'expertsexchange.com.au' (exchange experts!)
- 'speedofart.com.au' (online art equipment suppliers)
- 'teacherstalking.org' (teachers talking)
- 'gloria\_fishersfabulousweddingz.com.au'
- 'rosesareredvioletsarebluesoletmemarryyou.com.au'

*... not too well considered? ... a little confusing? ... too long?*

## Domain name research

Here are some well-known websites where you can find out more about domain names:

- <https://au.godaddy.com/>
- <https://www.crazydomains.com.au/>
- <https://www.name.com/domain/search>
- <https://www.netregistry.com.au/domain-names/>

## Website hosting

The next step is to get yourself a **hosting provider**. This will allow you to setup your website and potentially emails using the domain address. Example: website <https://qualtrain.com.au/> and emails associated with the domain [admin@qualtrain.com.au](mailto:admin@qualtrain.com.au) [nathanael@qualtrain.com.au](mailto:nathanael@qualtrain.com.au)

Consider the following when choosing the host for your website:

- How much storage space do you need from your web hosting company?
- How important are privacy and security to you? Will you be storing sensitive data on your website?
- Will you need full or partial control with the ability to change settings as needed?
- What is your level of technical knowledge and experience?
- What degree of support and assistance would you expect from the host provider?

## Create your own brand

“Your personal brand is a promise to your clients... a promise of quality, consistency, competency, and reliability”

*Jason Hartman, Author of "Become the Brand of Choice"*

Suggestions to establish your brand:

- Use the same logo across all of your online outlets.
- The colours you choose are important ... keep the same across all visual elements (logo, text, images, business cards, stationery).
- The types of content you publish ... keep it relative, interesting, fresh.
- Other identifying features to develop, such as quality, personality, reputation, customer response.

## SEO

SEO stands for Search Engine Optimisation. It is the term given to the process of trying to increase your ranking results for google searches. SEO is broken into two areas:

- Onpage - Ensuring that your webpage is optimised in such a way to identify as much as possible to your area of business.
- Offpage - SEO consists of creating backlinks, making posts and registering on directory sites.

Think of SEO as networking for your website, everywhere you place your contact details is like leaving a little business card

## POS

Ensuring payment is as easy and fast as possible creates a better experience. Securing payments for deposits in person has never been so easy. Both Square and Paypal offer affordable and portable solutions.

- Square lets you accept tap-and-go cards, mobile wallets and chip cards, whether you're on the move or at your counter.
- Paypal – customers purchase your service (or product) – Paypal processes the payment with financial details protected – your business receives the money.

## Email hosting

Email makes your email address look more professional, incorporating your own domain could also improve your brand image. Example:

<https://yourcelebrantwa.com.au/> and the email [kate@yourcelebrantwa.com.au](mailto:kate@yourcelebrantwa.com.au)

## Updating your website

If you haven't touched it since the day you launched it, you probably don't have a great SEO ranking. To drive more traffic to your website and increase its popularity, you need to give visitors a reason to keep coming back. Remember your content needs to be high quality, recent, and relevant.

## Calendars & Invitations

Using either **Gsuite** or **Microsoft Office 365** emails will allow you easy integration into their calendar app.

- Calendar Invitations - Appear just like an email but allows the recipient to reply yes/no/maybe and have all appointment details shown
- Less booking confusion - Setting alerts is also built in and will notify you on your phone and any device you are on.
- Auto appointment add - When creating an appointment in the calendar you can create an invite immediately.

Check these sites:

- **Google Gsuite** - Great for those used to the google ecosystem such as gmail. Using Apps on Phones such as Google calendar and Gmail to make it all work. Check it out here [https://gsuite.google.com.au/intl/en\\_au/](https://gsuite.google.com.au/intl/en_au/)

- **Microsoft Office 365** - Perfect for those used to using outlook on their computers. Integrates perfectly with the Microsoft Office suite (2013 or newer) Check it out here: <https://products.office.com/en-au/business/office>
- **POP/Imap Hosting** - Generally provided with website hosting. Doesn't provide calendar syncing to different devices. As mailboxes get bigger issues become more prolific. Read this interesting blog: <https://www.aussiebroadband.com.au/blog/whats-difference-imap-pop-email/>

## Google My Business

This is a must to ensure that all your details are perfectly setup and duplicated on all channels. Google My Business allows setting up service locations and service coverage areas as well.

- When registering - fill in as many details as possible – this will help when people search for you specifically and also aid with SEO.
- Make sure that as much contact information is placed in your Google My Business Profile in the EXACT way as everywhere else (that includes spaces in phone numbers, capital letters etc)

Check it out here: [https://www.google.com/intl/en\\_au/business/](https://www.google.com/intl/en_au/business/)

**ACTIVITY:** Google your business name. What appears? Do you have a Google My Business? Is the information correct? Is there information missing? What can you improve?

List

YOUTUBE VIDEO <https://youtu.be/xGhgjEZuVAM> How Social Media helps attract traffic to a website

## Social Media

### Popular platforms

- Facebook - 60% of Australia uses Facebook
  - Most users are aged between 18-55
- Instagram - 37% of Australia uses Instagram
  - 90% of users are under 35

Check out this

information: <https://www.facebook.com/business> [https://business.instagram.com/getting-started?locale=en\\_GB](https://business.instagram.com/getting-started?locale=en_GB)

### How to get it right

- Don't use social media for the 'hard sell'
- Show what you do in a creative way
- Take them behind-the-scenes
- Expand your reach by tagging people
- Create a human voice for your business
- Post regularly
- Encourage comments and reply quickly

### Social Media Tips - Use 3 Ps of Posting

To make sure you get engagement and reach on your social media page. Use the 3 Ps of posting to add value and interest for your followers.

- **Be Present**
  - You must be present; don't post and then not attend to responses, let your followers know you are there to receive responses and have interest in them.
- **Post in Real Time**
  - Life, ideas, events all happen in the 'now'. Don't wait to share with your listening audience.
- **Plan Content in Advance**
  - What's happening? What's coming up? Milestones ... events ... latest news ... Keep your posts lively and interesting.



## Choose Your Profile Pic Wisely

People want to see faces not product shots and logos. Don't use your logo, use your real face instead. Your face is your personal brand. It helps you get recognised on other social media platforms as well.

## Tell Stories

The reason why stories work is because it's personal and your fans will probably have a similar story or situation that they're going through. This allows you to connect on a personal level.

YOUTUBE VIDEO <https://youtu.be/ZOt04dgskZO> Use stories to enhance social media posts

## Ideas continued:

- Post Selfies
  - Selfies are some of the most popular posts on Facebook. It not only humanises your brand but gives your brand a personality of its own.
- Share Random Thoughts
  - What's on your mind today? You'll never know if some of your fans might be thinking the same.
- Post Videos
  - Videos are the hottest commodity on Facebook. There are over 8 billion videos watched on Facebook daily.
- **Include:** Quotes Memes and more!  
Example: <https://www.brainyquote.com/topics/free-quotes>
  - Share Inspiring Quotes because they can connect with literally anyone.
- **Act Human**
  - We're all human - Act that way! Show your real side and just be you. Act like how you are in real life. Your fans will appreciate that and you'll get more likes and comments.
- **Post at the Right Time** (based on Facebook Insights)
  - The best time to post is: 12 PM + 3 PM + 7 PM
  - Every study will show a different result because the best time to post varies based on industry and demographic. Use Facebook Insights to determine when your fans are online.

- **Experiment with How Often You Should Post ...** The response from your fans might surprise you.
- Be Consistent regardless of how often you post - make sure you're consistent.

YOUTUBE VIDEO <https://youtu.be/lxw9nNnDytY> Social media for small business

## **Selling to Millennials**

80% of marrying couples are millennials!

Millennials spend an average of four hours on mobiles per day. Is your website mobile friendly?

The main aspects they look for in a website is great pictures and minimal text.

It's not just the bride looking for a connection, the modern-day groom is often a lot more involved in the process of finding a celebrant and becoming married.

Online reviews are important in this modern age – millennials will take the opinion of former clients whom had spent time reviewing your service.

There are a growing number of Millennials who consider the wedding ceremony the most important aspect of their wedding.

## **Are you ready for Gen Z?**

At the moment Gen Z people range in age from 2 – 19 but prepared because they are on their way!

Gen Z are innovative, phone-obsessed, and they crave authentic experiences. They're conscious about the environment, choose visuals over text and prefer incognito social media platforms that their parents and grandparents aren't on.

In order to attract Gen Z, you will need to –

- Be as authentic as possible
- Use spontaneous photos and videos
- Focus on social influence by offering a quality service
- Invite them to provide videos, images and stories

YOUTUBE VIDEOS <https://youtu.be/frCTrbrcyH4> <https://youtu.be/fP5z-rKfYag>

## TIPS

QR codes published on your social media channels will lead customers to your website.

Include visuals, hashtags, short text and emoticons in your posts when relevant for more interaction. You can post links, images; you can re-share, post quotes.

Posts with visual elements such as images have a significantly higher engagement than the ones that don't.

Make sure it's easy to share your website content on social media and that all links from your social media posts work perfectly.

## How frequently should you post?

According to the Australian Bureau of statistics More than a third of people now access social media more than five times per day (35%), which is up from 26% last year. Among 18-29 year olds 89% check-in at least once per day.

The most popular times are:

- In the evening (up from 49% to 57%) and first thing in the morning (up from 49% to 57%) have become even more popular and are the most popular times for using social media.
- Almost half are now accessing social media on their break (up from 33% to 47%) or at lunchtime (up from 36% to 47%).

Ref: <https://www.sensis.com.au/about/our-reports/sensis-social-media-report>

**ACTIVITY:** Consider your next post. Write your post intro using some of the ideas mentioned above.

Here are some helpful links:

Square: <https://squareup.com/au/en>

Paypal: <https://www.paypal.com>

Waveapps: <https://www.waveapps.com/>

Wordpress: <https://wordpress.com/>

Wix: <https://www.wix.com/>

SquareSpace: <https://www.squarespace.com/>

## Applications

### **Try new technologies, use free programs, or give new start-ups a chance**

Don't be afraid to try new things. Most new technologies offer trial periods, so take advantage of these. Free programs or 'apps' are useful for small businesses; just because a program is free, doesn't mean it isn't good!

Here are some examples free solutions that you can use as alternatives to paid programs. Taking advantage of these will help you save money.

### **File Creation**

- **Google Docs:** With Google Docs, you can write, edit, and collaborate wherever you are. For Free. <https://www.google.com/docs/about/>

### **Client Relationship Manager (CRM)**

A CRM can help you keep track of your process with each couple and you can store contact details, financial records, client progress and notes. A CRM can take a little while to set-up but once organised, it can save you a lot of time and energy in the future. The wedding industry has a number of CRMs including:

- Studio Ninja - <https://www.studioninja.co/>
- Celebrant Easy - <https://www.celebranteasy.com/>
- Tave - <https://www.shootproof.com/tave>
- 17 Hats - <https://www.17hats.com/>

## File Storage

In today's modern world, it's convenient if you can access your files from any location rather than just your home office. There are a number of cost-effective cloud storage options.

- **Dropbox:** Sign up for 2 GB of storage, and start accessing and sharing photos, documents and other files from any device. <https://www.dropbox.com/basic>
- **Google Drive.** Free with a Google account that allows for cloud file storage. Google Drive can be accessed from any device or platform with an internet connection.

## Video Calling

Many celebrants today are interacting with their couples via phone or 'video' call for their initial meet and greet. There are a number of technologies to use to enable this:

- **FaceTime:** available on Apple products
- **Skype:** Skype makes it easy to stay in touch - Talk. Chat. Collaborate: <https://www.skype.com/en/>
- **Zoom meetings** stay connected with colleagues and customers even when meeting in person is not possible.
- **What's App.** A messenger device that also allows video calling. There is useful for non-Apple users.
- **Facebook Messenger.** A subsidiary app to the Facebook app that allows messages and video calling.

## Ceremony Reading

As many celebrants move to reading their ceremony on digital devices, there are a number of applications you can use to read your ceremony from including:

- **Adobe Acrobat Reader.** Once a ceremony has been completed, you can convert your document into a PDF and then open the PDF in Adobe Acrobat Reader which is an app for viewing and editing PDFs
- **iBooks.** This primarily for reading books but also handy for opening PDFs and reading from them.
- **Pages for iPad.** Designed for viewing documents on iPads

## Audio Recording

- **Otter.** Automated meeting notes with audio recording, transcribed text and highlight summary.

## Location

- **Waze.** Waze is a GPS navigation software app and a subsidiary of Google. It works on smartphones and tablet computers that have GPS support. It provides turn-by-turn navigation information and user-submitted travel times and route details, while downloading location-dependent information over a mobile telephone network.

## Weather

- **Rainparrot.** Get notified 30 minutes before it's going rain! A very useful weather app.

## Financials

There are a number of apps available to use for your business finances which allow you to invoice, track expenses and be used for taxation purposes. Note if you have another business, these apps can be used in conjunction with that business so all your financials are recorded in the one place.

The most common ones in Australia are:

- **Zero**
- **QuickBooks**
- **MYOB**

## Music

Many celebrants offer to organise and play the ceremony music for their couples. For a small monthly fee, there are a number of music apps that allow you to access a huge library of songs. And remember the monthly fee is a tax deduction!

- **Spotify**
- **Apple Music**

## Password Storage

- **1Password** is a password manager. It provides a place for users to store various passwords, software licenses, and other sensitive information in a virtual vault that is locked with a master password.

## Image and Video Editing

There are a huge number of apps out there that allow for image editing to use images on your website, social media, marketing collateral etc. Remember you should never edit a professional photographer's photo without permission. Download some and have a play! Some of these apps include:

- **Unfold.** A toolkit for storytellers. Create beautiful and engaging stories from minimal and elegant templates.
- **Canva.** A graphic design platform, used to create social media graphics, presentations, posters, documents and other visual content. The app includes templates for users to use.
- **Adobe Lightroom.** Adobe Lightroom is a creative image organization and image manipulation software.
- **Animoto Slideshow Creator.** Create and share videos for free with Animoto's video maker.
- **iMovie.** A video editing software application.
- **Layout from Instagram.** A better way to make collages. Layout lets you create one-of-a-kind layouts by remixing your own photos and sharing them
- **Split Video: Long Story Maker.** Split Video is a free app that lets you split long videos into smaller clips and post them to your Instagram stories or other social networks.

## Social Media Management

These applications allow you to manage all your Facebook and Instagram pages in the one place:

- **Facebook Business Suite.** A Facebook tool that helps you organize and manage your business.
- **Facebook Creator Studio.** Creator Studio lets creators and publishers manage posts, insights and messages from all of your Facebook Pages in one place.
- 

## Social Media Scheduling

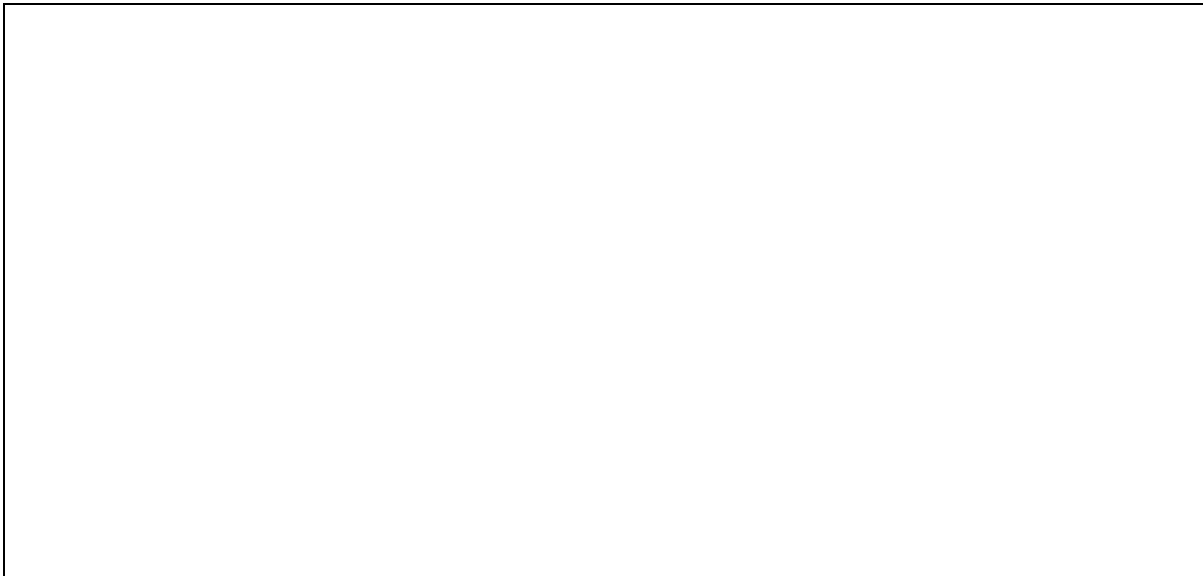
In today's busy world, posting on social media can get neglected or seem too hard at times. Using a scheduling and management app allows you to write and schedule posts in advance. Many successful businesses plan their social media content a month in advance so they don't need to do it on a daily or weekly basis.

- **Planoly.** A visual planner for Instagram and Facebook.
- **Later.** Visually plan your social posts, publish automatically, and get tailored insights to help you reach more people.
- **Hootsuite.** Hootsuite is a social media management platform. The system's user interface takes the form of a dashboard, and supports social network integrations for Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube.

***Some of the biggest names in technology began from humble backgrounds, and the businesses that gave them a chance at the start are now reaping the rewards.***

YOUTUBE VIDEO <https://youtu.be/qFuBKTz6LP4> Beyond digital transformation

**CHALLENGE:** What changes will you make in your use of business technology resources? What apps do you think might benefit your business? Create a plan to continuously improve business performance and success!



**ACTIVITY:** Choose an app from the list above. Download it, have a play and see how it could improve your celebrant business!

**NOTES**