

Small Business AI Cheat Sheet

Simple and practical ways your business can get started with AI.
Created for Canadian small businesses, by the marketing experts at Canon Canada.

Prompting 101: The Key to Using AI

How do you talk to AI and get great results?

Using AI tools is a lot like giving instructions: clearer input means better output. The directions you give to AI are referred to as prompts.

Here's how to write prompts that get you what you need.

1. Be Specific

Instead of: *"Write me a blog post."*

Try this: *"Write a 300-word blog post about the importance of eco-friendly packaging for a handmade soap brand in a friendly tone."*

2. Add Context

Tell AI who you are and what you want it to sound like.

Example: *"I run a small gym in Brampton, Ontario. Write an email inviting members to our summer bootcamp. Keep it casual and energetic."*

3. Ask for Options

Not sure what you want?

Add this to the end of your next prompt: *"Give me three options to choose from."* **Still not happy with the results? Give feedback and ask for more options.**

4. Guide the Format

Tell AI the specific format you need.

For example: *"List the top 5 reasons to buy local using bullet points in a playful tone and format it for easy readability on LinkedIn."*

Smart AI Habits for Your Business

Empower Your Staff

Use AI to free up time for high-impact work.

Always Review

Keep the human touch for accuracy and tone.

Protect Privacy

Choose secure tools and anonymize sensitive data.

4 Tasks You Can Automate This Week

To start, open your web browser and go to one of these popular free generative AI tools: **ChatGPT, Google Gemini, or Microsoft CoPilot.**



1. Write Emails in Minutes

AI can turn bullet points into professional emails for clients, vendors, or your team.

Prompt: “Write a polite follow-up email to a client who hasn’t replied in three days confirming a quote for our architectural services.”



2. Draft Social Media Posts

Post more often without spending hours on content. Give AI the topic and ask it to write the caption, hashtags, and suggest an image for the post.

Prompt: “Write a Facebook post announcing our child care centre’s open house. Use a friendly tone and list the specific event details with relevant emojis beside them.”



3. Summarize Long Documents

Upload or paste documents and ask AI to break them down into quick summaries or action points. Great for busy owners or managers.

Reminder: do not upload any documents that include sensitive or confidential data.



4. Brainstorm and Plan in Seconds

Need ideas for a fundraiser, newsletter title, or training session? AI is your creative assistant.

Prompt: “Give me 5 creative and inclusive theme ideas for a staff appreciation event at our non-profit organization. Keep them fun, professional, and budget-friendly.”

Beginner-Friendly AI Tools

- ✓ **ChatGPT** | chatgpt.com
Get ideas, write emails or posts, summarize info fast.
- ✓ **Canva Magic Studio** | canva.com/magic
Instantly create posters, flyers, or social posts.
- ✓ **Grammarly Free** | grammarly.com/ai
Make writing clearer, friendlier, and more professional.
- ✓ **Notion AI** | notion.com
Organize, write, and summarize notes, meeting minutes, and lists.
- ✓ **Claude.ai** | claude.ai
Quickly summarize long or complex documents.

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