

— AI MARKETING FOR SMALL BUSINESS

What are the five parts of an AI marketing machine?

The BUILD framework. What each part does, what it looks like when you are doing it by hand, and what it looks like when it is running.



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What is the BUILD framework?

BUILD is the Charisma Digital framework for turning AI from a scattered pile of tools into a marketing machine that runs.

Most businesses bolt AI on. A chatbot here, a prompt there, a subscription someone signed up for in January. Then they wonder why the output is generic and the time saving never arrives.

BUILD names the five parts that have to be in place for AI to actually do the work, and to do it on brand, on strategy and safely. The letters are the parts.

- B** **Brand foundation.** What your AI knows about you.
- U** **Use plan.** Where AI belongs, and where it does not.
- I** **Integration.** Tools chosen on purpose and wired together.
- L** **Loops.** The repeat work that runs without you.
- D** **Discipline.** The standards that keep it safe and on brand.

Read top to bottom they also read as a build order, from the foundation underneath to the discipline that keeps it honest. You cannot skip to the interesting part. The businesses that try are the ones producing generic work faster.

Five parts. One machine. In this order.

B Brand foundation. Does your AI know your business?

The source of truth the machine runs on. Brand voice, audience intelligence and business context, loaded so AI knows who the business is before it is asked for anything.

By hand. You type a prompt into a blank box and hope. Every output starts from zero and comes back generic, because the input was generic.

Running. There is a single source of truth, and every piece AI produces is built from it. The same voice, the same audience, the same facts, every session.

This is the part almost everyone skips. They load a brief instruction into a chat window, get flat output back, and conclude AI cannot do their brand. The tool was never the problem.

55% of New Zealand small businesses worry that using AI for customer communications will make their brand feel less human. (Xero NZ, 2026) That worry is well founded when there is no foundation. It stops being true when there is one.

It is also the part that makes everything after it possible. A use plan without a foundation automates generic work. Loops without a foundation produce more of it, faster.

Nothing else in the machine works properly without it. Which is why it comes first.

U Use plan. Which tasks should AI do, and which need you?

The decision about where AI belongs. What is yours, what is AI's, and what should run on its own. Strategy before tools.

By hand. AI gets used here and there with no real plan. A caption one week, a subject line the next, nothing joined up.

Running. There is a clear map of what is human work, what is AI work and what is automated, and it is followed on purpose.

The map matters more than the tools. Most businesses start by asking which AI tool to buy. The better question is which parts of the marketing should never be automated, because those are usually the parts your customers came to you for.

A use plan is also what makes delegation possible later. You cannot hand a system to someone else, or to a machine, if the decisions inside it only exist in your head.

Tools without a plan create busywork. You end up with six subscriptions and the same workload, which is the most common place a small business gets stuck.

A use plan is what stops AI being a novelty and makes it part of how the work gets done.

I Integration. How do your marketing tools work together?

The tool stack, chosen on purpose and wired together so the parts talk to each other.

By hand. One free chatbot, opened now and then, with everything moved between tools by copy and paste.

Running. A deliberate stack chosen for how the business actually works, wired so the output of one becomes the input of the next without a person in the middle.

The median small business now runs **five AI tools** that largely work separately. (SBE Council, 2026) Five subscriptions is not a system. It is a drawer.

Integration is where the copy and paste disappears, and it is usually where the first real time saving shows up. It is also where most of the fragility lives, which is why it needs the plan above it before it is worth building.

This does not mean buying more. It usually means using fewer tools properly, connected on purpose, with one of them carrying your brand foundation so the others inherit it.

A drawer full of disconnected tools is not a machine. Integration is what joins them.

L Loops. How much of your repeat work runs without you?

The repeat work that runs without you. Routine marketing set up to draft, schedule, report and repeat on its own.

By hand. Every step is done manually, every time. The work is never finished, because it never runs without you.

Running. Most of the routine work runs on its own, and one piece of content becomes many across platforms with little hands on.

Loops are where the time actually comes back. New Zealand small businesses using AI report saving **about a full working day a week**. (Xero NZ, 2026) That saving comes from loops. It does not come from typing faster into a chat window.

This is the part people imagine AI does on day one. It is actually the part that needs the three underneath it first, because a loop built on a weak foundation just publishes generic work on a schedule.

Start with the work you already do well and already do often. Those two conditions together are what make something worth automating.

Automate the work you have already made good. Not the work you have not.

D Discipline. Is the output good enough, and is it safe?

The standards that keep the machine honest. Two halves, and most businesses have neither.

Output discipline is the check that what AI produces is good, accurate and on brand.

Operating discipline is the guardrails around data, access and an AI policy.

By hand. Output goes out unchecked, and there are no rules about what AI can touch.

Running. Standards and checks are built into every piece, and there is a clear policy covering data, access and approved tools.

40% of New Zealand small businesses hold back on AI over data privacy, and **37%** do not trust the output. (Xero NZ, 2026) Discipline is the part that answers both, which makes it an unlock rather than a brake.

As AI moves from drafting to taking actions and touching real data, the operating side matters more, not less. The Privacy Act 2020 applies in full, and the obligation sits with the business, not the tool.

Speed without discipline is how something off brand ends up in front of a customer.

Why do the five parts only work together?

The five parts build on each other. Brand foundation is the base everything draws from. The use plan decides where AI goes. Integration connects the tools. Loops set the routine work running. Discipline holds the standard across all of it.

A business can have one part without the others. The gains only compound when they work together.

A stack of tools with no foundation produces **generic work faster**. A foundation with no loops still leaves you **doing everything by hand**. Loops with no discipline publish mistakes on a schedule. Discipline with no plan is a policy nobody follows.

This is also why the order matters. Each part makes the next one worth building. Skipping ahead is the most expensive thing a small business can do here, because the work gets redone rather than extended.

You do not need all five at once. You need to know which one you are missing, and build that one next.

The machine runs when all five are in place. Not before.

How built is your machine?

The BUILD Scorecard rates each part out of eight, for a total out of forty, and places a business in one of four stages.

By hand, 10 to 17. AI is barely in the picture. Most of the marketing still runs on the owner. This is the starting point for most businesses and there is nothing wrong with being here.

Bolted on, 18 to 25. Tools are in use but nothing is joined up. More typing, less time saved, because there is no foundation underneath. The most frustrating stage to sit in.

Half-built, 26 to 33. Real systems are running and AI is doing actual work. The gap now is depth and join. A tighter foundation, more automation, discipline built in.

The machine runs, 34 to 40. AI is built through how the marketing works, on purpose. The job from here is keeping the machine right as the business changes, which is judgement work rather than build work.

Most businesses guess a tier higher than they score. The scorecard takes two minutes and tells you which part to fix first.

Take it free at charismadigital.co.nz/build-scorecard

How does BUILD map to the work?

The framework is also the path through the Charisma Digital services. One part at a time, in the order that makes each next part worth building.

The AI Marketing Foundation builds the B, the source of truth the whole machine runs on. It is the recommended starting point for every business, and the one that makes everything after it work.

The Accelerators, social, content repurposing and e-commerce, build out the U, I and L. The plan, the connected tools, and the loops that run.

The Wisdom Layer is the ongoing D. An experienced eye on the whole system, on strategy and standard, keeping the machine right month to month.

The AI Governance Check goes deep on the operating side of D, the guardrails around data, access and policy. It is free and takes two minutes.

BUILD does three jobs. It is the **diagnostic** that gives a business a straight read on where it sits. It is the **shared language** for talking about AI marketing as a system rather than a pile of tools. And it is the **map** that connects a starting point to the work that moves a business forward.

Want it built for you? charismadigital.co.nz/lets-talk