

South Dakota Disadvantaged Business Enterprise

# Newsletter

April 2026



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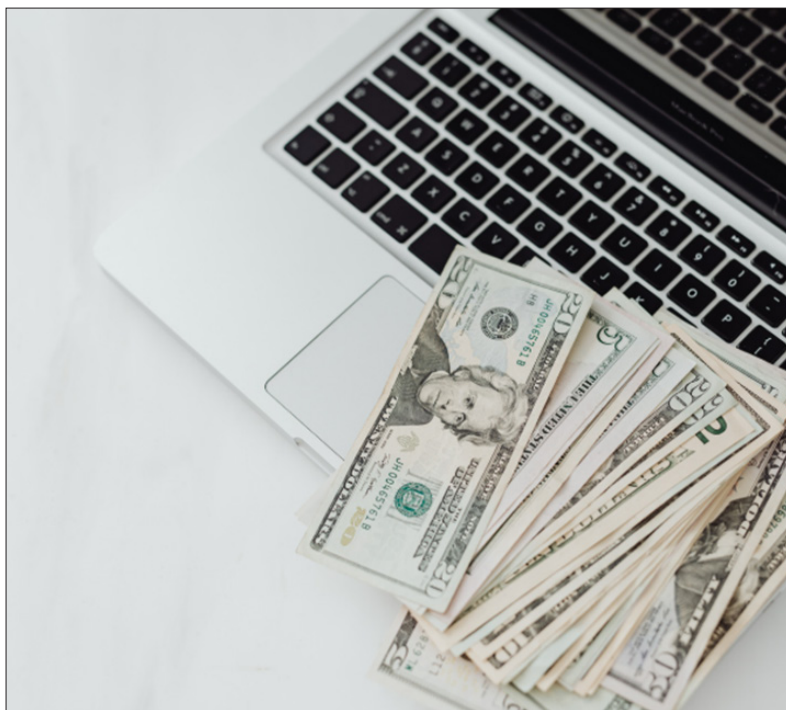
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# Tax Tips for Small Business Owners

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Now that tax season has just ended, you may find yourself looking ahead rather than back. Taxes are an unavoidable part of owning a business, but they don't have to feel confusing or overwhelming. Whether you've just completed your first filing or you've been doing this year after year, a few core practices can make the process easier and help you avoid common issues. The most important mindset shift is recognizing that taxes are something you manage all year long—not just when deadlines loom.

With the pressure of filing behind you, this post-tax-season period is an ideal time to get organized and plan ahead. A little intention now can save you stress later, turning next year's tax season into a smoother, more predictable experience rather than a last-minute scramble.



## **Start With Strong Financial Habits**

One of the most important steps a small business owner can take is keeping business and personal finances separate. Having a dedicated business bank account and credit card creates a clear record of activity and makes tracking income and expenses much simpler. It also reduces confusion if questions ever come up and helps ensure your records reflect your business accurately.

Consistent recordkeeping is equally important. Tracking income and expenses throughout the year—not just at tax time—can save hours of work and reduce errors. Many business owners use accounting software, spreadsheets, or online tools to stay organized, while others prefer working with a bookkeeper. No matter the method, what matters most is keeping records up to date and saving supporting documents like invoices, receipts, and payment confirmations.

Staying organized also makes it easier to understand where money is being spent and how the business is performing. When financial information is readily available, it becomes easier to identify trends, plan for upcoming expenses, and make informed decisions throughout the year.

## **Understand Expenses and Ongoing Tax Responsibilities**

Many business expenses may be deductible, which can help reduce taxable income. These often include ordinary operating costs such as office supplies, equipment, professional services, marketing, and certain travel or vehicle expenses. Since deductibility can depend on how an expense is used and how your business is structured, keeping detailed records is critical.

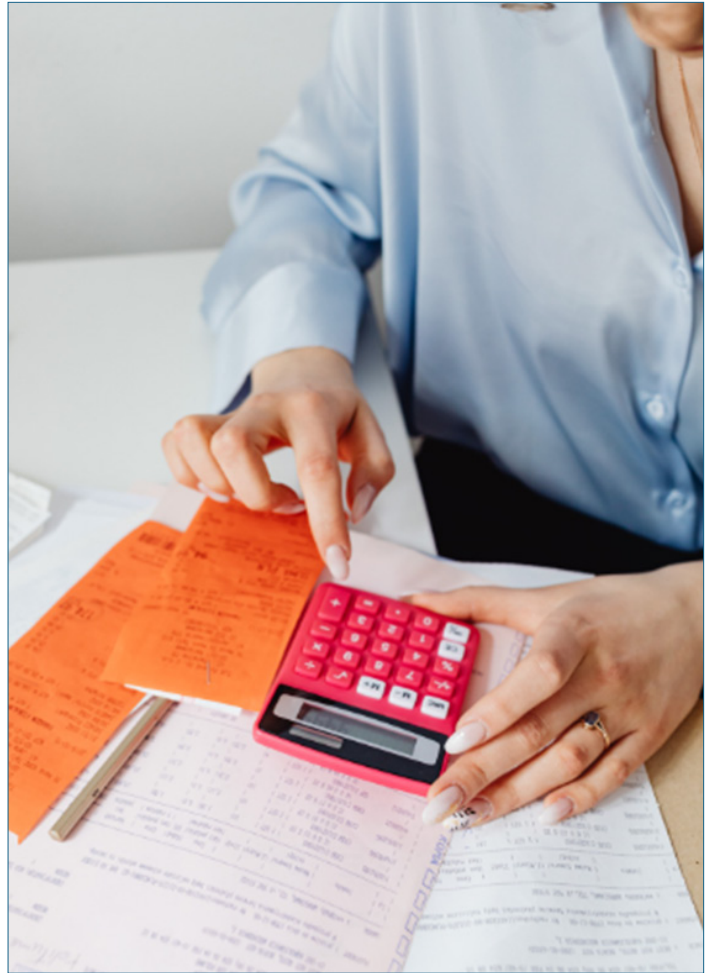
Rather than trying to determine deductibility on your own, it's often best to document everything and review expenses with a tax professional. It's easier to decide later whether an expense qualifies than to recreate records after the fact. Clear documentation provides flexibility and peace of mind.

In addition to expense tracking, small business owners should plan for taxes that aren't automatically withheld. This may include estimated tax payments during the year, self-employment taxes, or other obligations based on business structure. Setting aside funds regularly can help eliminate surprises and prevent cash-flow challenges when payments are due.

If your business has employees or utilizes payroll, employment taxes add another layer of responsibility. These taxes come with specific reporting deadlines and filing requirements. Using payroll services or professional support can help ensure filings are accurate and timely, particularly as a business grows.

### **Use Professional Guidance and Planning to Your Advantage**

Tax rules change, and each business situation is different. Working with a qualified accountant or tax advisor can provide clarity around your specific obligations and help identify opportunities for planning. Having someone who understands your business can be especially helpful when circumstances change, such as business growth, staffing changes, or new revenue streams.



Rather than viewing tax season as a once-a-year task, many business owners treat it as a planning opportunity. Reviewing income, expenses, and overall financial performance can support better budgeting and goal setting for the year ahead. Tax conversations can also highlight areas where adjustments may improve efficiency or long-term stability.

Ongoing communication with a tax professional—rather than waiting until deadlines approach—often leads to smoother filings and fewer unexpected issues.



Taxes may never be the most exciting part of owning a business, but they play an important role in long-term success. By building strong financial habits, staying organized throughout the year, and understanding ongoing responsibilities, small business owners can make the tax process far more manageable.

With steady attention and the right support, taxes become part of running a well-managed business—allowing more time and energy to focus on growth, customers, and day-to-day operations.

# Announcements

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## Important Notice for South Dakota DBE Firms: Reevaluation Process Underway

South Dakota–based DBE firms that wish to be reevaluated for participation in the updated SDDOT DBE Program are encouraged to submit their Personal Narrative (PN) and Personal Net Worth (PNW) Statement as soon as practicable.

Submitting reevaluation materials in a timely manner helps ensure firms are eligible to participate as certified DBEs once SDDOT completes the review process and resumes full DBE participation on federally funded projects. Prompt submissions also assist SDDOT in developing its federally required triennial DBE goal by establishing an accurate baseline of active, eligible DBE firms.

Project Solutions Inc. (PSI), the SDDOT Supportive Services provider, is available to assist firms with the preparation of their Personal Narrative as part of the reevaluation process. Firms seeking individualized support may request one-on-one assistance from a PSI consultant by emailing [dbe@projectsolutionsinc.com](mailto:dbe@projectsolutionsinc.com).

Firms may submit their PN and PNW documents by emailing [Kyle.Watkins@state.sd.us](mailto:Kyle.Watkins@state.sd.us), or by contacting Kyle at 605.773.4906 to request access to a secure SharePoint folder for document upload.

Under current Interim Final Rule (IFR) requirements, all South Dakota DBE firms are temporarily listed as inactive until they complete the reevaluation process.

- Firms that do not submit the required documents will remain inactive, and their participation on projects will not count toward DBE goals.
- Firms that are not interested in moving forward at this time should notify Kyle Watkins of their decision.
- Firms that are unsure may choose to submit their documents at a later date; reevaluation can occur anytime, but firms will remain inactive until it is completed.

If you have any questions about the reevaluation process or IFR requirements, please contact:

Kyle Watkins, SDDOT DBE Program Coordinator

605.773.4906

[Kyle.Watkins@state.sd.us](mailto:Kyle.Watkins@state.sd.us)



## Upcoming Training & Events

- Apr. 28** **The Power Of Data - Research Metrics & Analytics**  
Webinar | Tuesday, April 28, 2026 | 12:00 P.M. CT | Cost: \$50  
[Learn More>](#)
- Apr. 28** **Digital Marketing Demystified: Tools that Drive Real Results**  
Webinar | Tuesday, April 28, 2026 | 3:00 P.M. CT | Cost: \$30  
[Learn More>](#)
- Apr. 29** **Cash Flow Isn't Profit: How to Know If You'll Have Money in the Bank**  
Webinar | Wednesday, April 29, 2026 | 11:00 A.M. CT | Cost: \$10  
[Learn More>](#)
- Apr. 29** **Mastering Workplace Safety Audits: A Step-by-Step Guide**  
Webinar | Wednesday, April 29, 2026 | 1:00 P.M. CT | Cost: Free  
[Learn More>](#)
- May 13** **Rethinking Job and Cash Forecasting in Construction Finance**  
Webinar | Wednesday, May 13, 2026 | 1:00 P.M. CT | Cost: Free  
[Learn More>](#)
- May 21** **Elevate Seminar - Mitchell**  
Dakota Wesleyan University | 1200 W University Avenue, Mitchell SD 57301  
Thursday, May 21, 2026 | 11:30 A.M. CT | Cost: \$35  
[Learn More>](#)



# Did you know?

## Support and Resources for Preparing Your Personal Narrative

Project Solutions Inc. (PSI), the Supportive Services provider for SDDOT, is available to support South Dakota DBE firms in developing their Personal Narrative (PN) as part of the DBE recertification process. Firms interested in individualized assistance may request a one-on-one consultation with a PSI consultant by emailing [dbe@projectsolutionsinc.com](mailto:dbe@projectsolutionsinc.com).

For firms that were unable to attend a live Personal Narrative Workshop, SDDOT has made the complete PN Workshop recording available on the DBE website. This video, along with several supplementary resources, is intended to help firms successfully prepare their narratives. Available materials include:

- [PowerPoint slides from the PN Workshop](#)
- [A PN Workbook designed to assist with narrative development](#)
- [USDOT's Interim Final Rule homepage](#)

Firms are strongly encouraged to review the workshop recording and related materials before submitting their Personal Narrative or scheduling a one-on-one meeting with PSI.

Direct links to the Personal Narrative Workshop video and SDDOT's DBE Reevaluation page are provided below:

- [SDDOT Personal Narrative Workshop Video](#)
- [SDDOT DBE Reevaluation Information](#) (accessible via the top dropdown menu on the page)



# Mastering Digital Marketing: Tips for Social Media Success

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Social media has become one of the most important tools for small businesses—no matter the industry. Customers browse online to compare businesses, learn about services, and form impressions long before they ever reach out. For small business owners juggling a long to-do list, it can be easy to push social media aside. But with the right approach, it doesn't have to be overwhelming or time-consuming. A few well-executed strategies can go a long way toward building visibility, credibility, and trust.



## **Know Your Audience**

Before diving into content creation, it's important to understand who you're talking to. Every industry serves a different type of customer, and each group has its own habits and expectations. Spend a few minutes thinking about the people you hope to reach: What questions do they ask? What problems do they want solved? What motivates them to choose one business over another?

Once you have a clearer picture of your audience, you can choose the right platforms. A local community-focused business may find Facebook most effective, while a visually driven company might thrive on Instagram. LinkedIn is ideal for B2B networking. Rather than trying to manage multiple social networks at once, start with the platform where your ideal customers are already spending their time.

## **Share Content That Matters**

The heart of any successful social media presence is valuable content—material that teaches, inspires, or offers a peek behind the curtain. What you post should make followers feel more connected to your business, whether that means offering helpful tips, sharing a customer success story, or highlighting a new service.

The good news? You don't need to reinvent the wheel for every post. Much of what you do every day holds value to your audience, even if it feels like routine to you. Show them what sets your business apart. Let them see your team in action, talk about common questions you receive, or explain how your services make life easier for your customers. Genuine, relevant content will always outperform something that feels overly polished or impersonal.

## **Stay Consistent—Even When You're Busy**

Many business owners feel pressure to post constantly, but the real key is consistency. A steady rhythm—whether weekly or a few times a month—helps your business stay visible without adding stress to your schedule. One way to make this easier is by using scheduling tools, which allow you to create posts in advance and set them to publish automatically. This is especially helpful during busy seasons when day-to-day posting might fall through the cracks.

Most major platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn, offer built-in scheduling features, and there are also third-party tools designed to simplify the process. Setting aside a short block of time to prepare and schedule your posts can keep your online presence active even when you're focused on running the business.

Consistency creates familiarity, and familiarity builds trust. Even when you can't dedicate much time, staying present in your customers' feeds reinforces your reliability.

### **Engage Like a Human, Not a Brand**

One of the biggest advantages small businesses have on social media is their personal touch. People want to interact with real humans, not faceless corporations. When someone comments on a post or sends a message, take a moment to acknowledge it. A simple reply can leave a lasting impression and often leads to deeper conversations about services or products.



Interaction also boosts visibility. Platforms reward engagement, and the more you respond, the more your posts show up in people's feeds. Engagement doesn't need to be complicated—just genuine. Ask questions, thank customers for their feedback, or celebrate small milestones with your followers. These small actions build a feeling of community around your business.

### **Don't Be Afraid of Short-Form Video**

Video has become one of the most powerful ways for small businesses to reach both current and potential customers. While the idea of recording yourself may feel intimidating at first, the truth is that audiences prefer authenticity over perfection. A simple video clip showing how something works, sharing a quick piece of advice, or walking through a behind-the-scenes moment can spark strong engagement.

Short-form videos—like Instagram Reels, TikTok posts, or YouTube Shorts—don't require special equipment. Good lighting and clear audio are helpful, but even a basic smartphone can produce excellent results. Think of video as a way to show your business's personality and expertise in a format that feels approachable.

### **Use Paid Promotion Strategically**

While organic content builds long-term connection, a small amount of paid promotion can help amplify important messages. This doesn't require a big budget—many small businesses see strong results from modest spending when it's targeted well. Paid promotion works especially well for announcing new services, highlighting special events, or increasing visibility for posts that are already performing well.

The key is to start small and see what resonates. Over time, you'll learn which types of posts or audiences give you the best return on investment.

## Keep an Eye on What's Working

One of the most overlooked aspects of social media is analyzing your results. Each platform offers insights into how your posts perform. Pay attention to which types of content generate the most interaction or lead to website visits or inquiries. These patterns tell you what your audience finds most valuable.

Instead of guessing, use this information to guide your strategy. If behind-the-scenes posts consistently get more engagement, create more of them. If video drives more messages or calls, incorporate more video into your routine. Data doesn't need to be complicated—it simply helps you make informed decisions.

## Avoid the Common Pitfalls

Even with the best intentions, it's easy to fall into a few traps: posting without a plan, spreading yourself too thin across many platforms, or sharing only promotional content. Recognizing these tendencies makes them easier to avoid. Social media works best when it's balanced, intentional, and focused on connection rather than constant selling.

## Start Small, Stay Steady, and Build from There

You don't need a marketing degree to succeed on social media. Start with simple, manageable actions. Maybe that's posting once a week, recording a quick video, or responding to three comments. Over time, these small efforts build momentum and help your business stay visible and competitive.

Your customers are online—and with a thoughtful, consistent approach, your business can meet them there in a meaningful way.

