

A man and a woman are working in a workshop. The man, wearing a yellow long-sleeved shirt, is leaning over a table, looking at a large sheet of paper. The woman, wearing a light blue sleeveless top, is sitting at the table, looking at a laptop. In the background, there is a mannequin and a brick wall.

How smart advertising technologies are empowering SMBs in Australia

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Many Australian small- and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) are already taking advantage of smart advertising solutions to help their companies succeed. Powered by machine learning, these digital advertising technologies are designed to make it simpler and easier for businesses to start, manage, and track their digital marketing. Smart advertising can help SMBs use time effectively, bring in new customers, stay competitive, and ultimately grow their businesses.

Inspired by Ipsos' latest report, "[Smart advertising, Smart Business](#)," we've identified some of the issues facing Australian SMBs today and how smart technology can help them be more successful online.

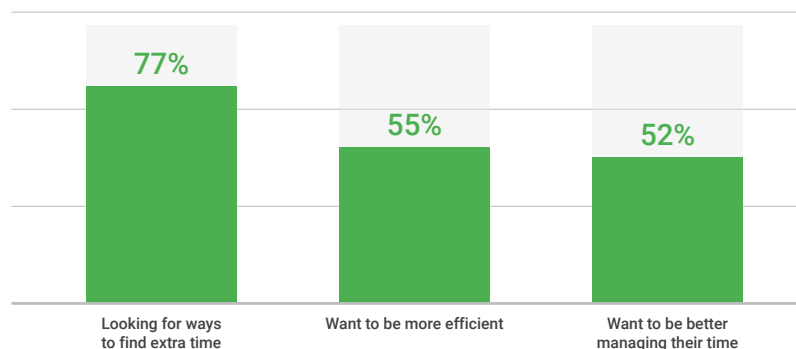
think with **Google**

SMBs need to make the most of their time

Australian SMBs have a lot on their plates: nine in ten business owners claim that working for an SMB requires them to handle a variety of responsibilities. Consequently, they are investing a significant amount of time into their businesses: nine in ten SMBs work 50 or more hours a week.¹

Unfortunately, spinning all those plates and sinking all those hours doesn't necessarily equate to getting everything done. Most SMBs (57%) claim that lack of time is a daily challenge, and about half (47%) say they have trouble getting all their tasks completed.

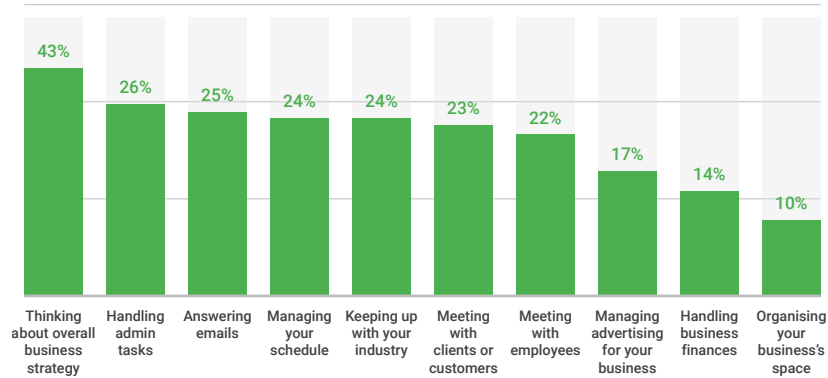
Time-management issues facing SMBs



Because of this, SMBs want to make the most out of every day: three out of every four (77%) claim that they are always looking for ways to save time at work, and over half wish to be more efficient (55%) and better at managing their time (52%).

When asked which work-related tasks they would choose to focus on if given a free hour, the top three tasks Australian SMBs prioritise are thinking about overall business strategy (31%), handling administrative tasks (26%), and answering emails (25%). Managing advertising for their business is the eighth priority. What's more, SMBs are 4.9X as likely to prioritise any other work-related task over managing advertising for their business (83% vs. 17%, respectively).

Top priorities for Australian SMBs



Digital technology has opened the door for SMBs to connect with new customers

To stay in business and build their companies, Australian SMBs need to keep generating opportunities to connect with their target audiences. Over half of SMBs (55%) say that finding new customers is the biggest challenge they face. The good news is that SMBs recognise the value of trying new techniques to win clients: 69% of SMBs are open to trying new and innovative advertising methods to connect with customers.

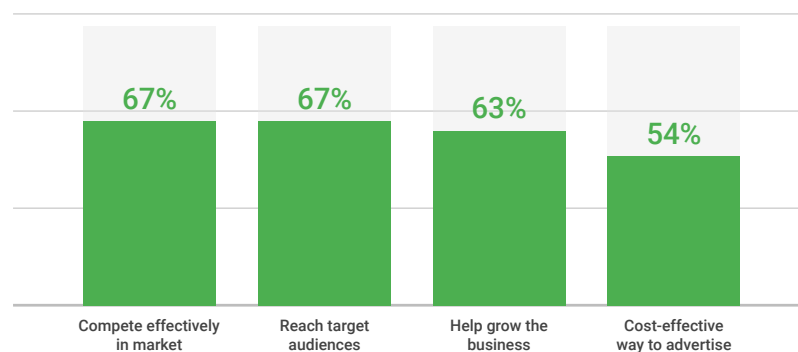
With the average internet penetration in Australian households hovering at 86%² and smartphones becoming an integral part of consumers' lives, Australians are more connected than ever. In fact, Aussies check their phones 150 times a day.³ Every time a consumer picks up their mobile device, SMBs have an opportunity to connect with them.

In an environment where data consumption is increasing and smartphones are seemingly omnipresent, Australian SMBs can utilise these platforms to win new customers.

Smart ads help SMBs remain competitive

SMBs can take more control of their advertising by utilising emerging tools. Australian SMBs believe that automated advertising solutions enable them to compete effectively in the market (67%), reach their target audiences (67%), grow their business (63%), and be more cost-effective (54%).

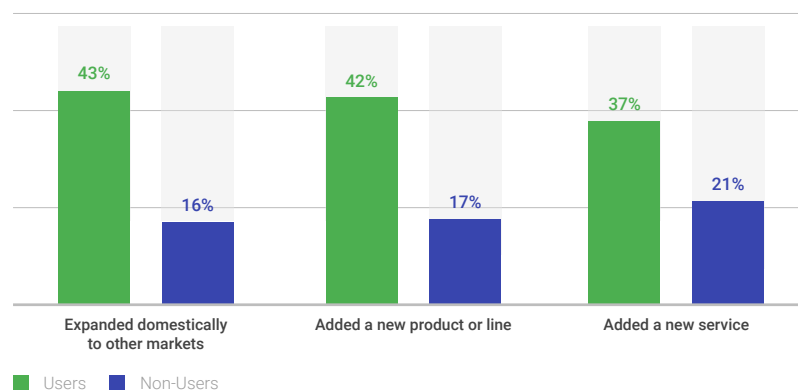
The benefits of smart advertising



Smart ad usage is linked with business growth

Early adopters are already seeing the positive effects of smart advertising technologies. In the Australian market, 25% of SMBs are already using automated ads to promote their businesses—and a full 84% of those using automated ads claim they have had a positive impact on their company's success.

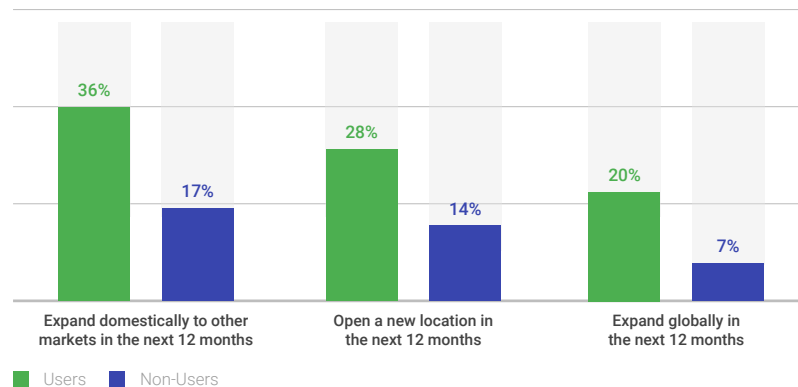
SMBs already using automated ads have...



Smart advertising is also linked with business growth. Australian SMBs currently using automated ads were significantly more likely than non-users to grow in 2017 (95% vs. 77%, respectively). Specifically, SMBs already using automated ads were:

- 2.7X more likely to have expanded domestically to other markets in the past 12 months (43% users vs. 16% non-users).
- 2.5X more likely to have added a new product or line in the past 12 months (42% users vs. 17% non-users).
- 1.8X more likely to have added a new service in the past 12 months (37% users vs. 21% non-users).

SMBs using automated ads are more likely to...



Automated advertising usage is also linked with future growth among Australian SMBs. It turns out that SMBs using automated ads are significantly more likely than non-users to expect growth (94% vs. 75%, respectively) in the next 12 months. Specifically, SMBs using automated ads are:

- 2.1X more likely to expand domestically to other markets in the next 12 months (36% users vs. 17% non-users).
- 2.0X more likely to open a new location in the next 12 months (28% users vs. 14% non-users).
- 2.9X more likely to expand globally in the 12 months (20% users vs. 7% non-users).

The future of advertising is smart

Use of smart advertising among Australian SMBs is only expected to grow. One in three (36%) SMBs plan to increase their smart advertising spend in the next 12 months, and half (53%) believe they will do so over the next five years.

Australian SMBs expect that nearly half (45%) of their company's advertising will be automated, and over half (57%) expect the vast majority of advertising overall to be automated in the next five years. Early adopters are realising the value of smart technologies and their ability to generate business growth and maximise efficiency.

Embracing smart advertising

Many Australian SMBs are already using smart advertising technologies and experiencing tangible benefits. For those yet to embrace these technologies, below are two recommendations to get started:

1. **Start with the basics.** What's the tangible marketing objective you'd expect from your digital marketing ads? Whether it's driving calls to your business, visits to your storefront, or actions on your website, defining these objectives is an important first step.
2. **Launch your campaign.** Get started with the new Google Ads [Smart campaigns](#) and create your first ads within minutes so you can get back to what you do best: running your business.

Sources

- 1 Scottish Pacific Growth Index Report, March 2018.
- 2 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Catalogue 8146.0—Household Use of Information Technology, 2016-2017, Australia.
- 3 Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers, Internet Trends Report, 2013.



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