



ASCENDEA

AI / BUSINESS GROWTH / GUIDE & WORKBOOK

Landing-Page Hero Message Builder

A practical, evidence-led landing-page headline and subheadline workbook for UK small business owners. Build a clear hero message, use customer language responsibly, check claims, align traffic sources and run a beginner-friendly comprehension test without relying on hype or unsupported conversion promises.



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Free Ascendea resource

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Chapter links and PDF bookmarks support navigation. Writing areas are for handwritten or separate notes, not interactive PDF forms.

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A practical workbook for UK small businesses

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Your landing-page hero is the first message people see. Its job is modest but important: help a suitable visitor understand whether they are in the right place, what you can help with and what to do next. It cannot make an unproven result true, repair a weak offer or persuade every visitor. It can make a credible offer easier to understand.

This workbook helps you build that message without hype. It is for owners and managers of UK small businesses, including trades, professional services, independent retail and B2B firms. You do not need marketing software or copywriting experience. Work through the pages with your current homepage or campaign landing page open beside you.

How to use this workbook. Write a rough answer first. Mark each statement as either **known**, **assumed** or **needs evidence**. Then turn only the supported parts into public copy. The examples are fictional and illustrative. Adapt them only when they accurately describe your own offer.

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1. Start with clarity, not pressure

A visitor normally needs a quick answer to five practical questions:

1. Is this for a business like mine?
2. What practical problem or goal does it address?
3. What is actually included or different?

4. Why should I believe this particular statement?

5. What is the sensible next step?

Your hero area does not have to answer every question in one line. A headline, supporting sentence, proof point and clear call to action can work together. The important thing is that the page does not make visitors guess.

A useful hero message sets an expectation that the rest of the page can meet. If the headline says “fixed-price quote”, explain what is covered. If it says “for accountants”, make sure the examples, service and enquiry route really suit accountants. If it promises a timescale, show the conditions that make it possible.

The difference between a benefit and an unsupported promise

A benefit explains why the work may matter. A promise states something the reader may reasonably take as a result, availability or guarantee. The second needs more care.

Instead of	Try this direction	What you need before publishing
“Double your sales in 30 days”	“A structured follow-up service for missed enquiries”	Keep any numeric result only if you hold relevant, current evidence and can explain the basis and conditions.
“The UK’s best bookkeeper”	“Bookkeeping support for owner-managed businesses”	A “best” claim is comparative and needs an adequate basis; a precise service description is usually clearer.
“Instant emergency repairs”	“Request an urgent call-back during our stated hours”	State the real coverage, location, availability and any limits.
“AI that writes perfect content”	“AI-assisted drafting with human review before publication”	Describe the actual process and retain human checking.

The ASA says marketing communications must not materially mislead and that marketers should hold documentary evidence before distributing objective claims capable of substantiation.¹ A favourable testimonial is not, by itself, enough evidence for a wider factual performance claim.²

Your starting audit

Copy your current headline and subheadline below. Do not improve them yet.

Current headline:

Current supporting sentence:

Who would know this is for them?

What could a cautious reader misunderstand?

Which words are claims that need evidence or clearer limits?

2. The four-part hero-message formula

Use this as a drafting frame, not as a legal or performance guarantee:

For [specific audience in a real situation]: [practical outcome], with [truthful proof, method or boundary] [and a timescale only if you can support it].

The four parts are **who it is for**, **what they get**, **why they can trust the statement**, and **clear, brief language**. You may place every part in the headline, or put the detail in the supporting sentence or nearby proof. Do not cram so much into the headline that it becomes difficult to read.

Part 1 — who it is for

Start with a business type, decision-maker, location, working context or urgent situation that is relevant to the offer. Specificity helps the right people recognise themselves. It also allows the wrong people to self-select out, which can improve the quality of enquiries.

Broad	More useful	Why it is stronger
"A new solution for businesses"	"For independent opticians managing missed calls"	Names a recognisable audience and operational situation.
"Marketing help for everyone"	"For B2B consultancies with a specialist service to explain"	Links the service to a meaningful context.
"Websites for local firms"	"For established trades firms ready to replace an out-of-date brochure site"	Signals the starting point without claiming an outcome.

Avoid unnecessary personal traits. Your audience normally needs a role, business context and problem—not a stereotype. "Busy mums", "ambitious founders" or "serious businesses" may be vague, exclusionary or unsupported unless they are genuinely relevant to the offer.

Audience-definition exercise

1. **Broad audience** — which type of business or buyer do you serve?

1. **Useful characteristic** — what makes this group different from every small business? Consider sector, company stage, location, role or service model.

1. **Situation or problem** — what is happening when they look for help?

1. **Who is involved?** Who uses the service, who chooses it and who pays?

Working audience identifier: For who

Part 2 — what they get

Describe the useful end state, not just the mechanism. “We use automation” tells a visitor what you do. “A clearer way to route new enquiries” explains why it may matter. The outcome should be practical, observable and within your control where possible.

Specific does **not** have to mean numerical. A precise statement of scope, process or boundary is often more honest than a percentage that cannot be supported.

Type of outcome	Vague wording	More concrete, safer wording	Evidence or limit to check
Time or effort	“Save time on admin”	“Reduce repeated manual booking steps”	Compare the same task before and after; do not turn capacity into cash savings automatically.
Revenue or demand	“Increase revenue”	“Make it easier for suitable buyers to request a quote”	Revenue, lead-volume and conversion claims need a documented basis.
Problem removal	“Solve your reporting problem”	“Set up a monthly reporting template and handover”	Be clear about what the service includes and excludes.
Confidence or status	“Become the local expert”	“Publish a practical service guide for prospective clients”	Do not imply market leadership, endorsement or recognition that has not been earned.

Outcome-clarity matrix

Complete the row that best fits your offer. If a number appears, write its source and conditions beside it.

Customer's desired change	Plain-language outcome	How the customer could observe it	Known / assumed / needs evidence
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

The outcome I can responsibly describe today:

The result I must not promise until I have evidence:

Part 3 — why a reader can trust you

Trust is not a decorative badge. It comes from saying something true, relevant and checkable. Choose one or two proof elements that genuinely support the exact message. A long list of logos, badges or generic superlatives can obscure the point.

Potential proof elements include:

- an accurate service boundary, such as “written scope before work starts”;
- a genuine, relevant qualification, registration or accreditation, stated exactly;
- years trading or experience, where the calculation and relevance are clear;
- a documented process, such as a named handover or review step;
- a real customer count, independently meaningful review record or case result, only where records support it;
- a truthful availability, price basis or location statement; or
- a genuine customer testimonial used with permission and retained evidence of authenticity.

Do not use “award-winning”, “trusted by thousands”, “proven”, “guaranteed”, “scientifically proven”, “market-leading” or “recommended by” as filler. Each can be understood as an objective claim in context. Keep records of the proof before publication and recheck it when the page changes.¹

Credibility inventory

Possible proof	What you can truthfully say	Evidence location or person who can confirm it	Suitable for the hero?
Experience / time trading	_____	_____	Yes / No
Customer result or count	_____	_____	Yes / No
Qualification / membership	_____	_____	Yes / No
Process or service boundary	_____	_____	Yes / No
Review / testimonial	_____	_____	Yes / No
Other	_____	_____	Yes / No

Choose one proof element and write it in ordinary language:

Part 4 — keep it clear and brief

There is no universal perfect word count. Aim for a headline that a person can understand on a phone without rereading. Most landing-page messages become clearer when you remove empty adjectives, internal jargon and claims the next section cannot prove.

Use this word-economy audit:

1. Underline the words that say **who**, **what**, **proof** or **boundary**.
2. Circle words such as “innovative”, “next-generation”, “revolutionary”, “world-class” and “seamless”. Remove any that do not add a verifiable meaning.
3. Replace technical phrases with a customer's everyday words. For example, use “online booking system” instead of “omnichannel appointment infrastructure” if that is what you mean.
4. Read the line aloud. If you need to explain it before it makes sense, move detail into the supporting sentence.
5. Check that every remaining factual claim has a record behind it.

Draft before cutting:

Words I can remove or simplify:

Clearer draft:

3. Assemble the message and the supporting sentence

Bring the four parts together. If a time frame, “without” statement or numerical result is not supported, leave it out. A well-scoped offer is more useful than a bold but fragile promise.

Hero-message builder

Who it is for:

What practical outcome they want:

Truthful proof, method or boundary:

Any timescale or ease statement, plus evidence/conditions:

Combined headline:

Fictional UK SME examples

These are writing models, not claims about Ascendea clients or results. A business should use them only where every statement is true of its own service.

- For independent retailers: simpler stock-reorder routines with staff handover included.
- For property managers: a clearer route for maintenance enquiries, with urgent cases checked by a person.
- For accountancy practices: practical client onboarding content, reviewed before it is published.
- For trades firms serving Bristol: a brochure website with a clear quote-request route.
- For B2B service firms: a focused landing page for one specialist offer.

Notice that these examples explain a direction, scope or safeguard. They do not invent a percentage improvement, a customer count or a deadline.

Write the subheadline

The subheadline gives the detail that would make the headline too crowded. Use it to clarify the mechanism, add a second practical benefit, address a reasonable concern or tell the reader what happens next.

A straightforward pattern is:

[What you provide]. [How it works or what is included]. [Relevant limit, review step or next action].

Fictional example:

“We map your current enquiry route, build the agreed internal workflow and document a manual fallback. Start with a short assessment to decide whether the process is suitable.”

This example does not promise automatic sending, instant implementation or a particular commercial return. It names the work and the next step.

Subheadline worksheet

Clarify the headline:

Add one practical benefit or included item:

Address the main objection or boundary:

Set up the next action:

Combined subheadline:

4. Mine the language your customers actually use

Useful wording often comes from how customers describe a problem, not from a thesaurus. Review permitted sources such as sales-call notes, customer interviews, support messages, surveys, reviews and feedback. Look for their words for:

- the event that made them seek help;
- the work, delay or frustration they wanted to avoid;
- the result or experience they valued;
- the words they use for your service category; and
- the objections or questions that stopped them taking the next step.

Do not quote someone publicly merely because they said something helpful in a call. Do not use a private support ticket as a testimonial. The CAP Code requires evidence that a testimonial is genuine, requires permission before featuring one (subject to limited exceptions), and requires factual claims in testimonials not to mislead.²

A proportionate way to handle feedback

Use only the material you need. Remove names, email addresses, account numbers, health details and other unnecessary personal or confidential information from a working copy. Keep the source notes in an approved business system, limit access to people doing the page work, and delete working extracts when they are no longer needed. This is practical risk reduction, not a compliance guarantee. The NCSC's small-organisations guidance covers protecting accounts, devices and backups; use it alongside your own policies and professional advice where appropriate.⁴

If you invite people to a feedback session by email or text, check the route before sending. ICO guidance says the position differs for corporate subscribers, such as limited companies and LLPs, and individuals including sole traders and some partnerships; business-contact personal data can still engage data-protection duties. An email address alone does not settle the person's status. Identify yourself, provide a clear opt-out where required and recheck the current ICO guidance, which is under review following the Data (Use and Access) Act.³

Voice-of-customer worksheet

Use short, accurate phrases. Mark whether the wording can be used only as private insight or has permission for public quotation.

Source and date	Exact or close wording	What it reveals	Private insight / permission confirmed
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Repeated words or themes:

Phrase that may improve the headline, without turning it into a claim:

5. Generate options before choosing one

Do not expect the first draft to be the final answer. Set a short, contained writing session and generate alternatives that focus on different truthful angles: the audience, the problem, the service boundary, the process or the next step. Quantity is useful here because it stops one early phrase becoming “the answer” by default.

A 20-minute drafting sprint

1. Set a timer for 20 minutes.
2. Use the four-part formula to produce at least 10 variations. Do not polish each one as you write it.
3. Include at least one version that states a clear boundary, such as human review, named location or defined service scope.
4. Mark any numerical or time-based statement with an asterisk until its evidence is checked.
5. Pause. Select three to five candidates only after the timer ends.

Headline variations:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

First-cut selection

Score candidates against the criteria below. A high score means “more defensible and clearer”, not “guaranteed to perform”.

Candidate	Clear audience	Clear outcome	Evidence behind claims	Fits the actual offer	Plain language	Total / 25
A	/5	/5	/5	/5	/5	/25
B	/5	/5	/5	/5	/5	/25
C	/5	/5	/5	/5	/5	/25
D	/5	/5	/5	/5	/5	/25

Shortlisted headlines: 1. 2. 3.

6. Test for understanding, then test responsibly

A headline test should answer a real question: do suitable visitors understand the offer more clearly, and does that lead to a useful next step? It cannot prove a universal conversion result. Start with understanding before using paid traffic or changing a live page.

The five-second comprehension check

Show one headline, and if relevant its subheadline, to a few people who resemble your intended buyer. Show it briefly, then ask:

1. Who do you think this is for?
2. What do you think the business is offering or helping with?
3. What part sounds credible, and what needs explaining?
4. What would you expect to find next on the page?
5. Would you read on? Why or why not?

Record what people actually say. Do not lead them towards the answer. Treat this as qualitative feedback: it exposes confusion and wording gaps, but a small set of answers does not establish a performance rate.

Version tested	Participant type	What they understood	Confusion or concern	Keep / revise / reject
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Choose a measured live test only when ready

If you have enough relevant visitors and a technically suitable way to compare versions, decide in advance what you will measure and how long you will observe it. Possible measures include completed quote requests, booked calls, purchase steps or the proportion of enquiries that fit your service. Choose a measure that is close to the business purpose, not merely a click.

1. Keep the audience, offer, price, call to action and major page elements as consistent as possible.

2. Change one meaningful message variable at a time. For example, compare two headlines, not a new headline plus a new form, price and design.
3. Record the start date, versions, traffic source, observation period and any events that could distort the comparison.
4. Review enquiry quality and operational capacity alongside the headline result. More unsuitable enquiries are not automatically progress.
5. If a version loses clarity, attracts complaints or creates a misleading expectation, stop and correct it rather than waiting for a planned test to end.

If your experiment uses cookies or similar tracking technologies, review the ICO's current guidance before running it. The ICO says people must be told about cookies, given clear information about their purpose and give active consent unless an exception applies; its detailed guidance is being revised. Cookie and privacy compliance depend on your actual setup, so get appropriate advice rather than treating this workbook as a compliance checklist.⁵

Test design worksheet

The decision this test will inform:

Version A:

Version B:

Audience / traffic source:

Primary measure and why it matters:

Observation period and conditions:

Privacy / cookie check owner:

Decision rule: what would make us keep, revise or stop?

7. Keep the message aligned with the route to the page

A person should not feel that an advert, email, search result or social post sent them to a different offer. Reuse the customer problem or service category that brought them there, then add the detail that page visitors need to decide whether to continue.

Paid advertising

Match the useful idea in the advert to the hero, but do not repeat an unsupported claim just because it was used in an advert. If the advert offers a “free assessment”, state what the assessment includes, who it is for and any important limits. Check the advertising rules and platform requirements that apply to the actual campaign.

Organic search

Use the searcher’s language naturally when it matches your offer. A page aimed at “commercial boiler servicing in York” should show what service is offered, where, to whom and what the next step is. Do not add the phrase merely to attract visitors if the page is not genuinely about that service.

Email campaigns

Let the subject line open a question; let the landing page answer it. The hero can repeat the core topic, explain the offer and remove an ambiguity. If the email included a time-sensitive offer, make the landing page conditions and dates easy to find.

Social media and local profiles

A social post can start a conversation. The landing page should make the commercial next step clear without inventing familiarity or implying that a follower has already agreed to something. For local service businesses, keep towns, service areas and availability consistent across the post, profile and page.

Referrals and partnerships

A referred visitor may expect a particular service. Make the hero precise enough that they can confirm the fit. Do not display a partner logo, approval statement or customer name without permission.

Traffic source I am aligning:

The language or concern it creates:

How the hero continues that message truthfully:

8. Common traps and better alternatives

Feature-first wording

Trap: “Advanced AI-enabled marketing automation.”

Better direction: State the customer task and the human boundary: “Draft campaign content with an editorial review step.”

The feature may still matter further down the page. Lead with the customer's working situation, then explain the tool only where it helps a buyer assess the offer.

Vague hype

Trap: "Game-changing results for ambitious companies."

Better direction: "A focused landing-page review for one service offer."

Words such as "game-changing" do not tell a reader what they receive. Replace them with scope, process, relevant proof or a clear next step.

Targeting everyone

Trap: "Marketing help for every business."

Better direction: "For specialist B2B consultancies preparing one new service page."

A focused audience does not stop you serving other people. It makes this page easier for its intended reader to understand.

Making your business the hero

Trap: "Our award-winning platform transforms your marketing."

Better direction: "Make your specialist service easier for suitable buyers to understand."

Put the customer's task first. If an award, platform or method is relevant, explain it as support for the offer rather than the whole message.

Treating a time frame as decoration

Trap: "Results in 30 days."

Better direction: "A 30-day content-planning sprint" — only if that is the actual delivery period and scope.

Time frames can mean delivery time, a testing period, a customer outcome or a guarantee. Say which one you mean. Do not turn an illustrative timetable into a customer-result promise.

Letting a case study carry a claim it cannot support

Trap: "Get the result our last client achieved."

Better direction: "Read how one client approached [specific context], including the limits of the result."

A real case study can explain context. It does not prove that every customer will get the same outcome.

9. Adaptable patterns for common UK SME offers

These patterns help you start drafting. They are not ready-to-publish claims. Replace the brackets with facts you can support and remove any outcome, time or proof statement that is not true.

Trades and local services

For [homeowners / property managers / local businesses] in [area]: [defined service] with [clear service boundary or next step].

Example direction: “For property managers in [area]: planned maintenance support with a named contact for scheduling.”

Professional services

For [role or business type]: [defined advisory, finance or legal-adjacent service] with [review, scope or handover boundary].

Example direction: “For owner-managed firms: monthly management-reporting support with an agreed reporting timetable.”

Do not imply legal, tax, regulated financial or other professional advice unless you are authorised and the statement accurately reflects the service.

Independent retail and ecommerce

For [customer or retail business type]: [product or operational benefit] with [availability, delivery or service condition].

Example direction: “For independent retailers: practical support to organise seasonal product information before launch.”

Be exact about stock, delivery, price, return terms and availability when those details influence a buying decision.

B2B software, automation or managed services

For [team or business type]: [bounded workflow or service outcome], with [human review, access boundary or implementation scope].

Example direction: “For small service teams: enquiry-routing setup with a human review queue for unclear requests.”

Avoid saying a system is “fully automated” if people must approve, correct or supervise important steps.

Consultants and coaches

For [specific client type]: [defined planning or implementation help] through [accurately described process].

Example direction: “For independent consultants: a structured offer-page review with prioritised copy recommendations.”

Do not imply client volume, income, health, career or performance outcomes you cannot substantiate.

10. Pre-publication checklist

Use this checklist before the page goes live or a significant hero message is changed.

- ☐ The message says who it is for without relying on unnecessary stereotypes.
- ☐ The practical outcome is clear and the rest of the page can deliver it.
- ☐ Every numerical, time, price, availability, comparison, testimonial and performance claim has a documented basis.
- ☐ Important conditions and limitations are clear rather than hidden in a contradictory footnote.
- ☐ A testimonial, customer name, logo, review or quote is genuine, relevant and used with appropriate permission.
- ☐ The headline uses plain English and avoids jargon that a prospective customer may not understand.
- ☐ The subheadline explains the method, scope, objection or next step without making a new unsupported promise.
- ☐ The call to action tells people what will happen next.
- ☐ The message matches the advert, email, search result, social post or referral context that leads to the page.

- ☐ The offer, contact route, service area, price basis and availability are still current.
- ☐ If tracking or experimentation is used, the responsible person has checked the current privacy and cookie setup.
- ☐ A person outside the drafting process has completed the comprehension check and their feedback is recorded.

11. Your next 90 minutes

You can complete a useful first pass in one focused session. The durations below are illustrative planning prompts, not a required timetable.

1. **Minutes 0–15 — audit.** Copy the existing hero, identify the audience, outcome, proof and claims needing evidence.
2. **Minutes 15–35 — gather language.** Review permitted customer notes, enquiries and reviews. Record useful wording without copying private details into a public draft.
3. **Minutes 35–55 — draft.** Produce 10 headline variations using the four-part formula.
4. **Minutes 55–70 — narrow.** Score the strongest three to five against clarity, truthfulness, evidence and fit.
5. **Minutes 70–80 — add support.** Write a subheadline and call to action for the best candidate. Check any conditions or exclusions.
6. **Minutes 80–90 — plan feedback.** Choose who will complete a short comprehension check and decide what you will revise if they misunderstand it.

Final decision record

Hero headline to test or publish:

Supporting sentence:

Call to action:

Evidence record location:

Owner: Review date:

A strong hero message is not the loudest claim. It is a clear, specific explanation of an offer that your business can stand behind. Keep checking it against the service you actually deliver, the evidence you hold and the questions your customers really ask.

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