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## Small Business Survival: 6 Tips for Affordable Growth

It's not easy getting a small business off the ground. From real estate to capital investments to marketing, there's a lot of money to be spent before revenue starts flowing in. To manage risk when starting a small business, you need secure cash flow quickly and run lean until you're in the black. While it's easier said than done, there are no shortage of creative approaches that can help you boost cash flow without impacting the bottom line. Here are six to get you started:

### Rethink the Office

Except for businesses that require a brick-and-mortar storefront, paying for real estate in the first years is often unnecessary. Working from home provides a place to work without adding to business expenses, because you're using space, utilities, and furniture you're paying for regardless. It may be more affordable to rent a room in a [coworking space](#) or pay for lunch out than it is to rent a permanent office for occasional business meetings.

## Get Creative with Hiring

When it's time to add an employee to your business, don't think that a full-time, benefitted employee is the only option. While full-time employees are an asset to any small business, they're expensive to have. Consider [hiring part-time help](#), contracting out specific tasks, or even bartering services for those of a skilled professional like a CPA.

## Harness Social Media

Slow business is a common problem for new business owners, but rarely do they have the funds to invest in an advertising campaign. However, [social media](#) makes local advertising more accessible than ever. However, it is worth it to pay for the most professional images you can afford; research from the [American Press Institute](#) shows that more than half of consumers say visuals are very important in establishing credibility.

## Build an Email List

Email marketing is hardly a new strategy, but it's a proven one. According to a study by [MarketingSherpa](#), consumers want companies to interact with them via email more than any other method. In fact, 91 percent of American adults like receiving promotional emails from companies. Small business owners can send marketing emails that are engaging, professional, and on-brand with an [email marketing service](#), many of which offer low-cost plans for small businesses.

## Bootstrap Software Solutions

When it comes to streamlining business operations, expensive software solutions aren't the only option. With the advent of open source software, small business owners can access current software for little to no cost. Open source means that a piece of software is free to use and has its source code available for viewing and modifying. While costs can be incurred adapting software to your needs or migrating data to the new platform, open source offers big savings over traditional software licensing.

## Increase Search Visibility

A business that's hard to find loses potential sales with every web search. Adding a company's information to Google My Business is free, so there's no reason for a fledgling business not to claim its online listings. In addition to adding business hours, contact information, and address, add high-quality photos and link to a [professional-looking website](#). Encouraging customer reviews, blogging, and sharing your content on social media will build your business' credibility and drive web traffic.

A limited budget is a quintessential part of starting a business, and becoming successful requires finding creative ways to stretch your dollar without sacrificing the end product.

However, saving money doesn't need to feel like cutting back. If you're a small business owner, these innovative tips will enable you to make the most of your staffing, overhead, and advertising budgets.