

THE VAN PLAN

Your Van plus a Marketing Plan

We know most tradespeople & small business owners are great at what they do but don't have time for marketing. **THE VAN PLAN** gives you more than just a signwritten van - it's a simple 8 step marketing guide for trades & small businesses to help you attract better clients and build a business you're proud of.

About this Guide

Ultimately we, The Sussex Sign Company, want to wrap or signwrite your van or vehicle! That's what we do.

But we also want that van or vehicle to do the very best job it can for you, helping you achieve the goals you have for yourself and your business. And to do that there are too often parts of the jigsaw missing.

THE VAN PLAN is an educational guide - a checklist of marketing activities, that together, along with your sign written van will deliver results far beyond what a van can do on its own.

8 steps to get you noticed, increase enquiries, & grow your business.

INTRODUCTION: MEET ROGER - A Tradesman similar to you maybe?

Roger is a hardworking, reliable sole-trader. He's an electrician, plumber, tiler, or gardener - and he's great at what he does. But there's a problem:

Roger is invisible to new clients.

He's been relying on word-of-mouth for years, but it's no longer enough. His van is unbranded, his online presence is next to nothing, and he's overwhelmed by the confusing world of marketing. He doesn't want to waste money. He doesn't want to get ripped off. He just wants to:

- Look professional
- Attract consistent local work
- Feel in control of his business

Roger doesn't need flashy branding or a massive marketing agency. He needs a clear, simple guide - written by people who understand trades like his - that helps him stand out and grow steadily.

That's where **THE VAN PLAN** product offering comes in from The Sussex Sign Company.

ABOUT US: THE SUSSEX SIGN COMPANY

We're a vehicle signwriting business first and foremost. For over 30 years, we've helped thousands of local tradespeople wrap their vans and promote their businesses. But we've seen the same pattern again and again:

- Great tradesmen with no marketing direction
- Wasted money on tactics that aren't suitable
- Inconsistent branding that confuses potential clients

We created **THE VAN PLAN** offering because we wanted to offer something more than just vinyl. We want to share 30 years of our own marketing & business experience to give trades and small business entrepreneurs like you & Roger a step-by-step guide that helps you create the marketing machine around your signwritten van, the little tweaks to your business that will make the signwriting turn that van into a rolling lead machine.

WHAT IS THE VAN PLAN offering?

THE VAN PLAN gives you more than just a signwritten van - it's a simple trades marketing guide to help you attract better clients and build a business you're proud of.

It's built around a proven set of eight core tactics that will make your van and your brand work better, processing new business opportunities far more effectively:

In simple terms the **Magic8** include:

1) Use a Local Landline Number

A local area code number builds trust and makes you look more established. It can still forward to your mobile, but 01273, 01444, 01903 on your van assures customers you are local whereas a mobile phone does not and simply says "one-man-band".

Calling a mobile phone number can feel too personal, invading your privacy, a local telephone number is far more professional and as we know, first impressions matter.

2) Set Up a Professional Email Address

You know when you see emails with a company name .co.uk , that's called a "branded domain" (e.g. roger@rogerselectrics.co.uk) - instead of using Hotmail or Gmail (e.g. rogerselectrics@gmail.com).

It does two things:

Firstly it instantly upgrades your image & credibility - it says a business not a one man band - which might work for some, but for other customers “one man band” is a bit of a red flag - let’s avoid turning away any customers and keep the pond as large as possible!

Secondly, while it’s an email address, it also tells us what your web site address is without having to repeat ourselves, which means less clutter and much clearer messaging, e.g. roger@rogerselectrics.co.uk, tells us the web address is www.rogerselectrics.co.uk.

A “branded domain” is easy to set-up, low cost and as we’ll need it for the website coming next, it’s any easy win within the MAGIC8 checklist.

3) Create a One-Page Website

Customers these days like to do their own research before reaching out, it doesn’t need to be complicated but a simple website, that is just a few pages is your brochure to introduce yourself and your trade.

Photographs of you & your work, past customer reviews, customers FAQs, your contact info, it’s just another piece of the marketing jigsaw - a place where you can send people from them seeing your van in the local area that tells them more about you.

4) Google My Business (GMB) Setup

GMB is great for local businesses being found, it’s what Google created it to do. Register your business and post photos of your work regularly and this improves your local search visibility fast.

5) Collect and Publish Google Reviews

Through your Google My Business account we can now ask customers to leave a review & even attach photos of your work. This turbo charges the local search reputation and the number of times Google present you and your business when people search for your trade in your local area.

Link them to your website and your reputation & trust goes through the roof while they research more.

6) Use a Call Answering Service

You’ve invested in the signwritten van, it’s professional & showcases what you do. It sends people to a website that tells them more and builds confidence when reading your reviews.

They now call your number.....ring ring, ring ring, ring ring.....you’re busy right, you only have two hands. It’ll only be Darren calling about the footy....won’t it?

All that effort, all that investment and Mrs Armitage doesn’t want to leave a message, she tries the next on her list.

A call answering service pays for itself every time.

We used to recommend a professionally trained local receptionist to answer your calls, professionally with your business name. Incredibly this can now be done by Ai, no seriously, it's really really good!

Either way, your receptionist lets Mrs Armitage know you're on the tools and will call her back at 4:00PM. Mrs Armitage completely understands, she's reassured, feels looked after and knows now that your phone is always answered - that bodes well if she gives you the job and wants to get hold of you.

7) Start a Simple Social Media Channel

You really don't need to be down with the kids, but sharing photos and videos of your work, just through your smart phone's camera builds trust through consistency.

It's amazing how Facebook & Instagram can showcase your work to interested people, all of a sudden you have followers that know they'll need your services in the coming months, they follow you to remember you and if you keep showing up then the trust grows and the job is as good as yours cause they feel like they know you like a friend.

You know how it works. You can see it happening on your own feed.

8) Neighbourhood Cards

Your now signwritten van is parked outside Number 38., and now all the neighbours know that Beryl is having the kitchen done, the bathroom done, the electrics sorted, a garden room, whatever it is that is *your thing*.

They know your name & brand from the van, so leaving behind branded cards for neighbours with a little extra info, link to the web site, special offer etc might just turn one job into three.

Neighbours talk, they'll pop round to Beryl, what was Roger like, did he do a good job, can I see, etc.

The sign-written van is working, the neighbourhood card is on the fridge, they're checking out your web site, they're loving the reviews and they love what Beryl's had done.

They follow you on insta and after pay day they make that call and Margaret (your telephone answering receptionist) takes their message and their number and you are seeing them tomorrow.

The meeting and the quote is a foregone conclusion, they know your work, they know they like you, they want what you can do, they're assured by Beryl, by Margaret and the other reviews.

You've upsold and quoted full price and they don't even haggle.

This is the **THE VAN PLAN** marketing BONUS guide from The Sussex Sign Company working as we know it will.

THE 9 BIG QUESTIONS TRADIES TYPICALLY ASK US.

1. I know I need to do some marketing, but where do I even start?

See our full answer in the Appendices that follow below.

Step 1: Signwrite your van & turn it into a lead magnet

Step 2: Set-up The Sussex Sign Company **MAGIC8**

Step 3: Never miss a lead again

Benefit: You'll look like a real business and start attracting quality work

2. Should I bother with leaflets or is that a waste of time now?

See our full answer in the Appendices that follow below.

Step 1: Only leaflet where you're already working

Step 2: Keep the leaflet simple and clear

Step 3: Use leaflets to support your other marketing

Benefit: Leaflets amplify your visibility in the right context

3. What should I include on a simple website so I don't scare people off?

See our full answer in the Appendices that follow below.

Step 1: Explain what problems you solve, what you do and where you do it

Step 2: Use real photos and real reviews

Step 3: Make it easy to contact you

Benefit: A clear site builds trust and drives enquiries

4. Do I really need social media as a tradie? What do I even post?

See our full answer in the Appendices that follow below.

Step 1: Use social media as proof you're active and reliable

Step 2: Post what you're already doing (photos, video, van shots)

Step 3: Stay consistent - not constant

Benefit: People remember what they see repeatedly

5. How do I get more Google reviews without pestering my customers?

See our full answer in the Appendices that follow below.

- Step 1: Ask right after the job, when the client's happy
- Step 2: Make it easy - send a review link by text before you leave
- Step 3: Build a habit - ask one person on every job
- Benefit: A steady stream of reviews builds powerful credibility

6. What kind of phone number and email looks the most professional?

See our full answer in the Appendices that follow below.

- Step 1: Use a local landline (even if it forwards to mobile - but ideally gets professionally answered!)
- Step 2: Get a "domain-based" email address not @hotmail or @gmail
- Step 3: Keep your contact info consistent everywhere
- Benefit: These small touches make a big difference in how you're perceived

7. Is it better to have a flashy van wrap or just a clean, simple design?

See our full answer in the Appendices that follow below.

- Step 1: Clarity beats cleverness - say what you do clearly
- Step 2: Match the design to the business you want
- Step 3: A clean design builds more trust
- Benefit: A strong, simple van wrap builds awareness and credibility fast

8. Do I need a logo before I do anything else?

See our full answer in the Appendices that follow below.

- Step 1: Yes - start with a simple, solid logo
- Step 2: A good logo doesn't need to be fancy, just consistent
- Step 3: Build everything else around the logo
- Benefit: Saves time, money, and makes everything feel cohesive from day one

9. What if I spend money on this and still don't get more jobs?

See our full answer in the Appendices that follow below.

- Step 1: Invest in tools that work 24/7 (like your van wrap)
 - Step 2: Back your investment with a simple system
 - Step 3: Measure results by phone calls and quotes
 - Benefit: You'll know what works without wasting money
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YOUR NEXT STEPs: DIY OR DONE FOR YOU?

Option 1: DIY

Now that you've read **THE VAN PLAN**, follow the plan, one step at a time. You now have the tactics and the clarity to start building a consistent, trusted, local brand. If you have questions regarding the Plan one of our Trade Marketing Mentors can help.

Option 2: Let us help


We offer a “**Done for You**” service that can handle any (or all) parts of the Plan. From logo design to web setup, social media branding, Google listings & Call Answering - we'll help you look like the business you want to be.

FINAL WORD

You don't just want a signwritten van, you want a business that looks the part and pulls in consistent work, and for that you need a **Plan** that considers the **MAGIC8** components in your marketing system.

With **THE VAN PLAN**, you now have a clear way forward - one that goes far beyond the signwriting and helps you build a business you're proud of.

MAGIC8 CHECKLIST

- Landline Telephone No.
- Professional Email Address
- Website
- Google My Business
- Reviews
- Call Answering
- Social Media
- Neighbourhood Cards
-  **Networking (Bonus suggestion - networking events - BNI breakfasts)**

Marketing is never done, it's a constant evolution as your business grows, next stages could include Facebook Ads, Search Engine Optimisation and a CRM (database) system. But the **MAGIC8** are your foundation pillars, start here first!

APPENDICES:

THE 9 BIG QUESTIONS TRADIES TYPICALLY ASK US - The full answers!

For those wanting more than our three step short answers, here's our complete answer to each of your big questions:

1) I know I need to do some marketing, but where do I even start?

“From Invisible to In-Demand: How to Make Your Van (and Your Business) Work Harder Than You Do”

Ever sit in your van after a job and think, “*I’m good at what I do but why’s the phone so quiet?*”

You’re not lazy. You’re not doing it wrong.

You’ve just been relying on word-of-mouth in a world that’s already moved on.

The real problem? No one knows you’re out there.

And unlike SEO scams or expensive websites that never pay off, this approach starts with what you already have: your van, your tools, and your reputation.

Use this dead-simple 3-step system to look the part, book more local work, and finally feel like your business is *actually* growing.

How to turn your van into a rolling job magnet and build a brand clients trust

You don’t need to figure out Facebook Ads or become a TikTok star.

You just need to get these three things right:

Step 1: Parked is Promotion

Your van is your billboard. Every kerbside, job site, and trip to the builders’ yard is a chance to be seen. When it’s unbranded, you’re invisible. When it’s signwritten with clear design and contact info, you become the go-to guy down the road.

👉 *Tip:* Highlight your specialty. “Plumbing | Heating | Bathrooms” is better than just a name and number.

Step 2: Be Found Before You’re Needed

Most clients Google before they ask around. A basic one-page website, a Google My Business Profile, and a few Reviews make you easier to find and trust. No need for anything fancy - just show you’re real, local, and reliable. Use our **MAGIC8** formula to make sure all the cogs in the marketing system are in sync.

⚠ *Mistake to avoid:* Using a personal email or mobile as your only contact. It screams “one-man band.” Get a local landline and proper domain email.

Step 3: Answer Every Opportunity

What’s the point of great signage and a solid web presence if no one answers the phone? A call answering service means your business sounds professional, even when you’re under a floorboard. Every lead gets picked up, logged, and followed up.

Why this works:

This 3-part system connects everything - so you can stop stalling and start gaining traction.

Reason #1: You become instantly visible

Every street becomes a marketing opportunity. The next job could come from someone walking their dog past your parked van.

Reason #2: You build instant trust

Even if they’ve never heard of you, your Google reviews and website prove you’re legit. No hard sell required.

Reason #3: You stop missing work

Missed calls = missed income. Fixing this one issue can pay for itself in the first week.

You’ve already got the skills. Now it’s time the world sees them.

Start with your van then the plan - and get the marketing working as hard as you do.

2. Should I bother with leaflets or is that a waste of time now?

“Are Leaflets Dead? Not If You Use Them Like This”

Ever wondered if dropping leaflets is just old-school marketing that nobody cares about anymore?

You’re not wrong to question it.

Thousands of trades have wasted money printing glossy flyers that got ignored, binned, or worse rained on before anyone read them.

But that doesn’t mean leaflets don’t work.

It just means *most people use them wrong*.

Luckily, there's a simple way to make leaflets actually bring in jobs - and not end up in the recycling.

And unlike digital ads that disappear with a scroll, a smartly timed leaflet can get you seen, trusted, and called - especially when paired with your van and online presence.

How to use leaflets to book more local jobs (without wasting a penny)

Here's how to make old-school leaflets work like a modern-day marketing tool:

Step 1: Only leaflet where you're already working

Don't drop hundreds around town and hope. Instead, target the 10–20 houses nearest where you're currently on a job.

Your van's already there, your tools are out, and you've got built-in credibility just by showing up. That's why we call them Neighbourhood cards, you only drop them where you've been working, where you & your van have been seen.

👉 *Tip:* Use a neighbourhood card that says "You've probably seen my van this week at No. 22 (it's a BLANK SPACE where you right the house number) - here's what I do."

Step 2: Keep it simple — the leaflet's job is to get a call, not make a sale

Most leaflets fail because they try to list every service, every offer, and every testimonial. Don't. All you need is a clear headline, a few bullet points about what you do, and one easy way to get in touch.

⚠️ *Mistake to avoid:* Bad design and too much text. It makes you look unprofessional or desperate.

Step 3: Make it part of your bigger presence — not your only move

Leaflets or Neighbourhood Cards should back up everything else people are already seeing.

Your signwritten van parked outside. Your online reviews. Your clean, simple website. A leaflet just connects the dots.

📌 *Example:* A gardener we worked with dropped 15 neighbourhood cards on his first day using this tactic - one neighbour booked him the next day after seeing both the van and the card.

When done right, leaflets aren't a waste - they're another nudge that turns a "maybe" into a "give him a call."

Chris, a plumber from Patcham. He used to print 1,000 flyers, got nothing back, and called it a loss and a waste of time. We switched him to hyper-local drops: 10-20 per job, same road, same postcode where he was working that day or week. He branded his van, set up a Google profile, and left clean, well-designed neighbourhood cards. Result? Jobs from next door & across the road, and even repeat calls from the same street months later.

Why this strategy brings old-school trust to modern marketing

This works because people still *love* local — they just need a little reminder to take action.

Reason #1: You're showing up everywhere they look

They saw your van. They checked you online. Now they're holding something with your name on it. That kind of presence builds trust fast.

Reason #2: You're marketing like a neighbour, not a stranger

Leaflets dropped in your work zone feel helpful - not spammy. It's a "hey, I'm here if you need me," not a hard sell.

Reason #3: It's repeat exposure without repeat cost

A single leaflet drop can keep working for weeks. People pin them, attach them to fridges, share them, and call when they're finally ready.

Leaflets aren't dead - just *lazy leaflets are*.

When you combine the power of your van, your online reputation, and smart local drops, you create a brand people see, trust, and remember.

So no, it's not a waste of time (or money) - if you do it the right way.

Start with where you're working.

Keep it clean and clear.

And watch your next job come from just a few doors down.

3. What should I include on a simple website so I don't scare people off?

"Just the Stuff That Gets You the Job!"

You know you need a website - but every time you sit down to think about it, you freeze.

You're not trying to become the next Amazon. You just want something that makes you look legit and helps people get in touch.

But most trade websites either look like they were made 15 years ago... or they're overbuilt, full of fluff, and impossible to update.

Luckily, a high-performing website doesn't have to be complicated.

In fact, the best ones are dead simple - as long as you include the right stuff.

And unlike cookie-cutter templates or overpriced designer builds, this kind of site actually *does its job* - getting you found, trusted, and contacted.

How to build a simple trades website that brings in local jobs (without overthinking it)

Here's all you really need to look professional and book more work:

Step 1: Make it obvious what you do and where you do it

Your homepage headline should say exactly what you offer and where you work. "Plumbing & Heating in Crawley" is better than a clever slogan.

Follow that with a list of your main services: "Boiler installs, bathroom refits, emergency callouts." Local town names help you get found.

👉 *Tip:* Add a short "About" section with a photo of you - makes you feel more real and less like a faceless company.

Step 2: Add real photos and real reviews

Skip the stock photos. Use real pics of your van, your work, your tools - anything that proves you're out there doing the job. Drop in 2-3 short reviews from Google or messages clients have sent you. Even screenshots from texts work.

⚠️ *Mistake to avoid:* Don't list 10 five-star reviews with no names or towns - it looks fake. Keep it authentic, real jobs, real people, real photos add some much to trust.

Step 3: Make it stupid-easy to get in touch

Have your phone number (local telephone) in big bold text. Add a contact form that asks for name, job type, and postcode - nothing else.

Bonus: a "Call Now" button that dials straight from their phone. If people have to hunt for your details, they'll leave.

Build it this way, and your site won't feel like an online brochure - it'll feel like an open door.

Sam, a tiler from Haywards Heath. He'd had a website for years but hated it - too wordy, too outdated. We rebuilt it in one page: a headline, a few before-and-after photos, his top services, 3 customer reviews, and an enquire now form. First ten days after relaunch? Three new calls, two confirmed jobs.

Why this works (and keeps working while you're out working the tools)

This setup works because it mirrors how real people choose a trade: fast, local, and based on trust.

Reason #1: It answers the two questions every client has

"Can you help me?" and "Can I trust you?" The headline, service list, photos, and reviews do exactly that.

Reason #2: It keeps you from looking like a 'cowboy'

No more email addresses like big-dan1981@gmail.com. A clean site with a proper domain makes you look professional - which helps you charge more too ;)

Reason #3: It turns visitors into callers

There's nothing to read, click through, or get confused by. They see your work, feel confident, and hit the button.

You don't need a fancy website.
You just need one that does its job.

Tell people what you do.
Show them you're the real deal.
Make it easy for them to call.

That's it. That's your website.

4. Do I really need social media as a tradie? What do I even post?

“Do Tradies Really Need Social Media? Only If You Want More Local Work”

You've probably heard it a hundred times:

“You've got to be on socials - it's free marketing!”

And yet, here you are... not posting.

Not sure what to say.

Not even sure it's worth the effort.

You're not alone.

Most tradespeople avoid social media because they think it means dancing, hashtags, or being glued to your phone. And when you're already flat-out on the tools, the last thing you want is another job.

But here's the thing social media for trades isn't about going viral.

It's about showing people that you're *real*, *active*, and *doing good work nearby*.

Used the right way, it's dead-simple, surprisingly effective, and it helps turn “some guy with a van” into the *go-to name* in your area.

How to use social media to build trust and get local jobs (without feeling like an influencer)

You don't need followers - you need visibility and credibility. Here's how to get both:

Step 1: Use social media as a trust builder, not a popularity contest

You're not trying to be famous. You're showing potential clients you're active, reliable, and doing good work. A Facebook or Instagram profile with regular posts tells people you're out there working - not just a phone number on a leaflet.

👉 *Tip:* Think of it as your job diary, not your highlight reel.

Step 2: Keep it simple - just post what you're already doing

Finished a kitchen? Snap a photo. Fixed a leak? Record a 5-second clip of the fix. Parked up outside a nice property? Take a shot of the van. These aren't promotions - they're proof.

⚠️ *Mistake to avoid:* Don't wait for the "perfect photo." Just post what's real. People trust real more than polished.

Step 3: Post consistently, not constantly

One post a week is better than nothing for six months. Choose one platform (Facebook is great for local trades), keep your profile tidy, and commit to showing up regularly - even if it's just a quick photo and caption.

By posting consistently, you don't just *look* professional — you feel more confident showing off your work.

Why this works (and why it's easier than you think)

This works because *seeing is believing*. People don't hire trades off a business card anymore — they check online first.

Reason #1: It shows you're active and in demand

An updated profile says, "I'm busy, I'm trusted, and I'm working in your area." That's the kind of business people want to hire.

Reason #2: It builds local recognition over time

You're not trying to go viral - you're trying to be remembered. Consistent posting means you're the one they think of when the boiler breaks or the garden needs fixing.

Reason #3: It's low-effort, high-trust content

Photos of your work do more than any sales pitch. They show quality, consistency, and care - without saying a word.

You don't need to be a content creator.

You just need to show your face, your van, and your work.

Post once a week.

Share what you're already doing.

And let people see the expert you already are.

5. How do I get more Google reviews without pestering my customers?

“Want More Google Reviews Without Bugging People? Here’s the Stress-Free Way”

You know you need more Google reviews - they make you look legit, boost your local ranking, and help customers feel confident calling you.

But let’s be honest: asking for them can feel awkward.

You don’t want to nag. You don’t want to chase. And you definitely don’t want to seem desperate.

The good news? You don’t need to be pushy to get great reviews.

There’s a simple, low-pressure way to build up reviews from happy customers without sounding like you’re begging for a favour.

And unlike marketing tactics that cost you time and money, this one is free, fast, and builds trust every time someone Googles your name.

How to collect more Google reviews (without feeling like a nuisance)

Here’s a simple 3-step process you can use on every job:

Step 1: Ask at the right moment which is when they’re happiest!

Don’t wait a week. Ask right after you finish the job and they say something like, “*Looks great - thanks mate.*” That’s the moment they’re most appreciative and most likely to say yes.

👉 *Tip:* Say it casually: “Hey, if you’ve got 30 seconds, I’d really appreciate a quick Google review it helps more than you’d think”....”*and if possible can we add a photo....*”

Step 2: Make it dead easy - one link, one tap

Nobody wants to search for your business or figure out how to leave a review. Text them the direct link. Shorten it, save it in your Notes app, and have it ready after every job.

Or you can even save a QR code to your notes, let them scan it in front of you and their phone will be open on your Leave a Review section of Google My Business.

⚠️ *Mistake to avoid:* Don’t hand them a card that says “Please leave a review!” and expect it to work. If it’s not easy, it won’t happen.

Step 3: Make it a habit - one ask every job, no pressure

Don’t aim for 20 reviews in a week. Just make it a habit to ask *one* happy customer at the end of each job. If they say yes, great. If they don’t, move on. No awkward follow-ups.

This approach feels good, sounds professional, and slowly builds a review list that sets you apart. And to be honest a happy customer is 99/100 happy to recommend you if you've done a great job.

Why this works (and builds long-term trust)

This works because it's based on real connection, not tricks or pressure.

Reason #1: You're catching people in a good mood

When the job's done and the problem's solved, your client is at their happiest and most willing to return the favour.

Reason #2: You're making it effortless for them to help you

People *want* to help a good trades person but only if it's quick and easy. A ready-to-go link removes all the friction.

Reason #3: You're building momentum, not burning bridges

You're not chasing. You're not begging. You're just asking once, at the right time and that's exactly what makes it work.

You don't need 100 reviews overnight.

You just need a system that gets you one great review at a time.

Finish the job. Ask nicely!

Share the link.

Say thank you - and move on.

That's how you build trust without pestering anyone.

6. What kind of phone number and email looks the most professional?

“Still Using a Hotmail and a Mobile? Here's How to Instantly Look More Professional”

You might not think twice about your phone number or email address, after all, you're great at your trade, and that's what should matter most, right?

But here's the truth: before anyone calls you, they've already made a decision based on how professional you *look*.

And that decision? It starts with the small stuff.

Using a Gmail account or just a mobile number might seem fine... but to a customer looking for someone trustworthy, it can feel like a red flag.

Luckily, upgrading your contact details is quick, simple, and makes a big difference to how people see your business.

And unlike expensive ads or fancy websites, this change costs very little, but pays off every time someone picks up the phone.

How to upgrade your contact details so clients take you seriously (without adding tech headaches)

Here's exactly what to use and why it matters:

Step 1: Use a local landline number - even if it forwards to your mobile

A number like 01273 123456 looks more established than just giving out your mobile.

It says, "I'm based locally, I'm legit, and I've been doing this a while."

You can use a call-forwarding service so you never miss a ring, or better use a call answering service who expertly answer your phone, engage with the caller, take a message and let them know you will be calling back at a pre-agreed time.

👉 *Tip:* Choose a landline number with your local area code, it builds instant trust with nearby customers and confirms, yes you're local.

Step 2: Set up a custom email using your own domain

If your email is *rogerheating@hotmail.com* or worse, *sparkyman88@aol.com*, it's time for an upgrade. A clean address like *roger@rogerheating.co.uk* tells clients you're a real business, not just moonlighting. It's easy to set up and still works with Gmail or your phone.

⚠️ *Mistake to avoid:* Using free email accounts on marketing materials. It drags down your brand - even if the work you do is top-notch. It's all about perception and first impressions.

Step 3: Keep your contact info consistent everywhere

Your van, your website, your Google profile, your leaflets - everything should match. One number. One email. One message. It builds confidence and helps people remember how to reach you.

These tweaks take minutes to set up, but they instantly raise the bar on how clients see you.

Why this works (and turns small upgrades into serious credibility)

This strategy works because trust starts *before* the first call - often in a split second.

Reason #1: Local landlines feel safe and familiar

People are more likely to call a number that feels close to home. It says "neighbourhood tradie," not "random mobile."

Reason #2: Custom emails show pride and professionalism

If you care enough to get a proper email address, you probably care enough to do the job right. It's subtle - but powerful.

Reason #3: Consistency builds brand recognition

When every point of contact says the same thing, it creates confidence. That's what gets you called, recommended, and remembered.

You don't need a big rebrand.
Just tighten up the details.

Get a proper number.

Use a clean, branded email.

And show people you're serious - before they even say hello.

7. Is it better to have a flashy van wrap or just a clean, simple design?

"Flashy or Simple? Here's What Your Van Design *Really* Says About Your Business"

You want your van to stand out.

You want to look professional, get noticed, and have clients say,
"I saw your van - looks smart!"

But now you're stuck wondering...

Should I go bold and flashy? Or keep it clean and simple?

It's a fair question. Because get it wrong and your van becomes a rolling mess that confuses people more than it attracts them.

The good news? You don't need neon graphics or gimmicks to get noticed.

You just need the right kind of clarity, confidence, and design thinking.

And unlike wrapping your van with a million colours and hoping for the best, this approach is designed to make people look twice - *and remember your name.*

How to design a van that gets noticed - and respected - every time it hits the road

You don't need to shout to stand out. Here's what works:

Step 1: Clarity always beats cleverness

Your van should say *what you do* and *how to contact you* - instantly. That's it. Skip the slogans. Skip the clutter. When someone drives by or walks past, they've got about 3 seconds to decide whether they get it.

👉 *Tip:* Use bold, readable lettering - trade, town, and website are your priorities. A website is far easier to remember than a telephone number, and it'll be their first port of call to research you anyway before calling. So website keeps the clutter down and looks neater than a string of numbers.

Step 2: Match the design to the business you want to build

If you offer high-end work, your van should reflect that: clean, minimal, premium. If you're a bold personality with an energetic style, a more colourful or creative wrap might suit. There's no one-size-fits-all, but there *is* a right fit for you & also your budget.

⚠️ *Mistake to avoid:* Copying someone else's van just because it "looked cool." What works for a landscaper might not suit a plumber.

Step 3: Keep it clean - literally and visually

Busy graphics, 10 services listed, and tiny contact details? That's visual noise. Stick to one or two strong colours, one font, and a few key elements: trade, logo, web address. Keep it easy to read from across the street or in a rearview mirror.

With the right design, your van doesn't just get seen - it builds trust before you even say a word.

Why simple, clear van designs get more jobs than flashy ones

This works because people don't remember "cool" - they remember "clear."

Reason #1: Your van is a moving business card

If it's confusing or cluttered, they'll tune out. But if it's clean and clear, they'll remember who you are, and what you do.

Reason #2: Simplicity builds credibility

The cleaner the design, the more confident you look. It shows you take your business seriously, and that makes people more likely to call.

Reason #3: You make it easy to say yes

A clear van with the right info means fewer missed calls, more enquiries, and better quality leads. People don't have to work to find or trust you.

You don't need a flashy van.

You need a *smart* one.

Say what you do.

Show up with clarity.

And let your van do the talking - even when you're off the clock.

8. Do I need a logo before I do anything else?

“Why You Should Sort Your Logo *Before* You Touch Your Van, Website, or Marketing”

If you're just starting to think about marketing, you might be asking:

“Do I really need a logo right now? Can't I just get something up and running first?”

It's tempting to skip it, just whack your name on the van, set up a free email, maybe throw together a quick flyer.

But here's the catch:

When you start without a proper logo, you end up doubling back, redoing your van design, reprinting your cards, rebuilding your website.

It's like laying bricks before you've measured the foundation. You can do it, but you'll regret it later.

The smart move?

Get a clean, professional logo up front. It doesn't have to be fancy - it just has to be **right**.

And once that's in place, everything else becomes easier, faster, and way more consistent.

How to build your business the smart way — by starting with a proper logo

Here's why this one step saves time, money, and stress:

Step 1: Start with a simple, solid logo - not a rushed name on a van

Without a logo, you're making it up as you go, and it shows. You might get something on your van, but later you'll want to redo it. That means paying twice. A clear, confident logo up front means every piece of marketing you touch has a solid anchor.

👉 *Tip:* Even a basic logo with your business name, colours, and trade specialty gives your brand a foundation.

Step 2: A good logo doesn't need to be fancy - just consistent

You're not building a fashion label. You just need something that looks sharp, feels trustworthy, and works on a van, a website, or a quote template. Our design team can create something clean and professional without the big-agency price tag.

⚠️ *Mistake to avoid:* Trying to DIY it in Canva or using a £5 logo from a random site. It ends up costing more to fix later. Sure come with your ideas, but let our design team polish and create for you in all the right formats that mean van, web, clothing, leaflets etc are all going to be seamless.

Step 3: Get your logo sorted first - then build everything else around it

Once your logo's done, everything else falls into place: your van signage, your website colours, your social profile image, even your business cards. It gives you direction and cohesion which looks professional, even if you're still small.

Start with the logo, and you save yourself the time, cost, and mess of trying to patch things together later.

Remember perception and first impressions count.

Why getting your logo first sets you up for every win after that

This works because it creates alignment across every part of your business - from day one.

Reason #1: It gives your business a proper identity

People remember visuals. When your van, quotes, and socials all match, you look credible, reliable, and well-run.

Reason #2: It saves you from doing everything twice

Design your van, then realise you want a logo? Now you're reprinting, redesigning, and spending more. Starting with a logo prevents that.

Reason #3: It makes you feel proud of your business

When your brand looks sharp, *you* feel sharper. It boosts your confidence, improves how you show up, and helps you attract better clients.

You don't need to go full branding agency.

You just need to get your logo sorted *before* everything else.

Start with your name.

Turn it into a clean, professional brand.

And let the rest of your marketing build around it - the smart way.

9. "What if I spend money on this and still don't get more jobs?"

"Worried You'll Waste Money on Marketing? Here's How to Make Sure It Pays Off"

You're not being negative, you're being smart.

You've probably tried something before: a leaflet drop, a Google ad, an expensive web designer.

It cost money, didn't work, and left you more frustrated than before.

That's because most marketing advice comes from people who don't understand trades or how local clients actually choose who to hire.

But getting results isn't about spending *more*, it's about spending *smarter*.

And unlike one-off flyers or throwaway social media ads, this Plan creates a system that keeps working long after you've paid the invoice.

Here's how to invest once and build a marketing machine that brings in work again and again.

How to make sure your marketing spend actually brings in more jobs

Marketing shouldn't feel like a gamble. Here's how to turn every pound into visibility and leads:

Step 1: Start with what works 24/7 - not once-and-done

Your van isn't just transport - it's one of the most powerful marketing tools you've got.

Signwriting turns every drive, every parked moment, and every job site into an ad. Unlike leaflets or Instagram posts, it never stops working & keeps working for years.

👉 *Tip:* Think of it like shop signage - if your shop had no sign, no one would walk in.

Step 2: Back your spend with a simple system, not guesswork

A sharp-looking van gets attention, but attention means nothing without action. That's why you need the basics behind it, our [MAGIC8](#), your phone and email presentation, Google Business Profile, simple website, google reviews, social media, neighbourhood cards & call answering. These tools working together convert eyeballs into phone calls.

⚠️ *Mistake to avoid:* Skipping the follow-up steps. A wrapped van without an online presence is like having a shop with no phone number.

Step 3: Measure what matters - not what marketers tell you

Forget fancy dashboards. All you need to track is this: Are more people calling? Are they mentioning your van or reviews? Are you quoting more work? That's your signal it's working and what to double down on.

When you follow this system, your marketing spend doesn't feel like a risk, it feels like an engine that keeps paying you back.

Why this framework turns fear into fuel

This system works because it's built around **confidence, not guesswork**.

Reason #1: You see results with your own eyes

You're not waiting on SEO reports. You see the van. You hear the phone. You watch the enquiries come in.

Reason #2: It's layered, not random

Each step builds on the next. The local phone number and email say professional. The van grabs attention & steers traffic to the web site which informs what you do, and the reviews which build trust. The social media adds to the relationship. The phone answering closes the loop.

Reason #3: It puts you in control

No more crossing your fingers. You'll feel the credibility of you & your business improve, your confidence in yourself is boosted, phone calls will increase, quotes and sales calls will rise, conversions will improve as the customer is better informed, they want you doing their work, your profits will increase, there will be less negotiation, your calendar will fill and your lead times will extend and now you'll be back asking us to signwrite van no.2!

You've wasted money before - because the advice wasn't built for trades like you.

This time, you're not gambling.

You're building a system that works harder & better the longer you use it.

Start with your van. Build out the [MAGIC8](#).

And finally get the steady flow of work you've been waiting for.
