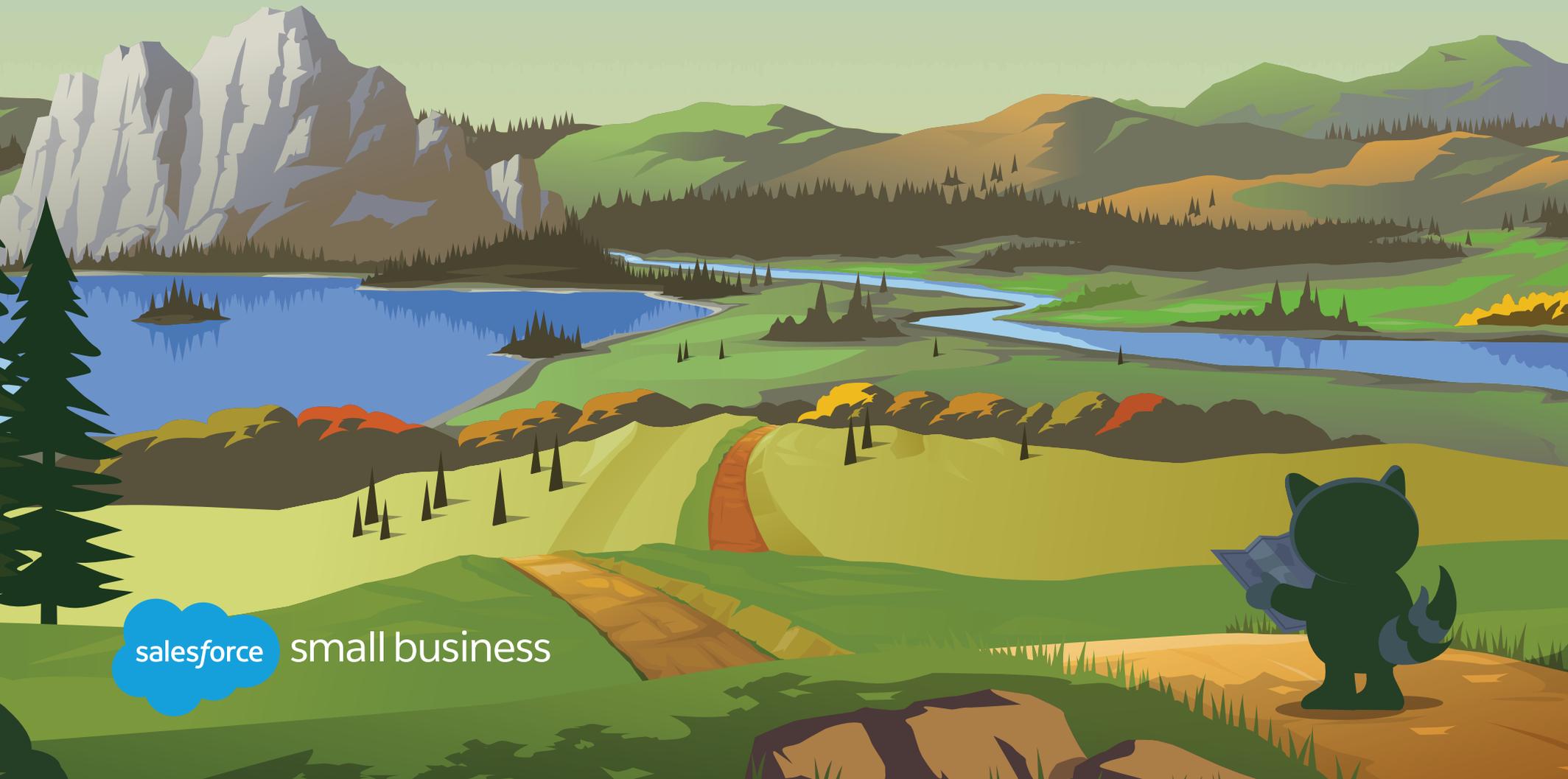


6 small business sales and marketing challenges

How to turn them into opportunities



salesforce

small business

Sales and marketing underpins growth

Sales and marketing is critical to the success of your small business. It powers your path to growth, it helps you find and win new customers, and sets your business up for a strong future.

In an environment that's more competitive by the day, it's vital to make sure you're getting your sales and marketing efforts right. With the rise of technology, customers are more empowered than ever before, and as a result their expectations have changed, explains Salesforce's Vice President of Commercial Sales, Adrian Towsey. "The challenge for small businesses is adapting to these changing expectations, and really living up to your customers' wants and needs."

In our digital world, it's no longer enough to rely on word-of-mouth or ad hoc

sales and marketing strategies to get customers through the door. Customers expect a personalised experience, and for you to be on the digital channels they are, explains Deloitte's Director of E-commerce, John Preston.

Because of this, Salesforce asked Deloitte Access Economics to investigate how well small businesses, like you, are implementing various sales and marketing tactics – those that are critical to meeting customer expectations, now and in the future.

The resulting Digital Opportunities for Today's Small Business report found that overall you are quite attuned to focusing on your customers. But, the report reveals six areas of sales and marketing that you're struggling with the most. How does your business rank?



Customers expect a personalised experience, and for you to be on the digital channels they are.

John Preston,
Director of E-Commerce, Deloitte



A mixed sales and marketing report

In some ways, you are ready to rise to the challenge of changing customer expectations, with many SMBs reporting good customer knowledge and the ability to target your customers based on previous interactions. But, there is still significant room for improvement.

Social media is a giant missed opportunity

Most surprising is the underutilisation of social media. You can't afford to not be on social media – it's where your customers are.



The good and the bad

You believe you're doing a top job in some areas:



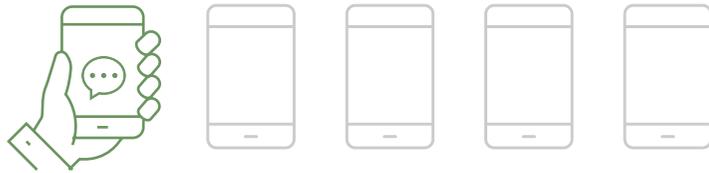
But, admit to falling behind in others:



3 in 4 Australians **ARE ON SOCIAL MEDIA.**



Yet, only **1 in 5** SMBs regularly use **SOCIAL MEDIA TO ENGAGE CUSTOMERS.**

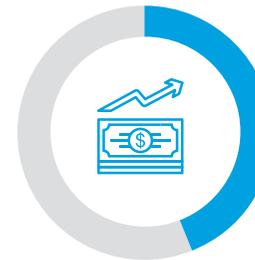


Digital tools are untapped

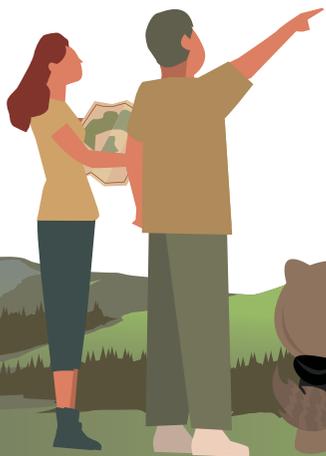
More broadly, sales and marketing technology is key to engaging your customers and ensuring quality interactions.



Yet, **70%** of you have **NO SYSTEM OR ONLY A BASIC SYSTEM** to record and analyse your sales, marketing and customer service information.



Those SMBs that do have a CRM system enjoy **44% HIGHER REVENUE.**



It doesn't have to be hard

Based on the report's findings, there's a clear opportunity for small businesses to rely on technology to help tackle the six areas of sales and marketing that are proving more difficult. Here's some tips to get you started.



TIP 1: Artificial intelligence

Artificial intelligence (AI) has taken a huge leap forward in recent years and it's poised to be a game-changer, giving businesses (big and small) a real competitive advantage. Given AI's newness it's no surprise that only 10% of you are currently using the technology across multiple business functions, mostly in predictive analytics and automated product recommendations. A further 23% of you have trialed AI in some way.

"AI is a secret weapon for small businesses, enabling you to automate repetitive tasks that take up hours of your time each week. This means you can spend more time focusing on business strategy and being creative," says Towsey.



TIP 2: Social media

If you're not on social media, you're missing out on a significant opportunity to connect with customers. Towsey warns, "If you're unable to listen and engage, then you have no control over what's being said."

The biggest barrier to social media marketing is often resource, says Jeremy Smith, Salesforce's Regional Vice President of Sales A/NZ. But automation tools can do a lot of the heavy lifting for you. "For example, automated replies can be set up for a good 90% of customer comments. That only leaves 10% that require escalation to a customer service rep."



TIP 3: Timely forecasting

Timely forecasting has big ramifications for your business, yet only half of SMBs say they have accurate visibility into the current and/or next month's revenue. Observing high-level trends impacting your business is difficult when sorting through data manually. "Thankfully, there's sales forecasting technology that can take the manual labour out of the process for you," says Smith.



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Jeremy Smith,
Regional Vice President of Sales A/NZ, Salesforce





TIP 4: Measuring ROI

A third of you are confident your marketing is working, but can't identify which strategies are more successful. The accurate measurement of ROI is a stumbling block for many, but so important in making your marketing dollars stretch further.

"First step is to pinpoint what your marketing strategy is trying to achieve. People get stuck on ROI because they haven't set clear goals to start with," advises Smith.



TIP 5: Personalised marketing

SMBs might state they know their customers, but only 22% of you are personalising your marketing based on previous interactions or purchases. Yet, we know personalisation is so important – 52% of customers say they'll switch brands if a company doesn't make an effort to personalise. Towsey adds, "People have become very immune to the mindless batch-and-blast marketing that most businesses still do."

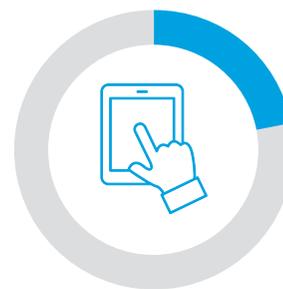
Smith's advice is to first and foremost, make sure the content you're giving a customer is relevant based on the information they've provided you. Preston adds, "Marketing automation tools are increasingly able to digest customer interaction data in near real-time, and use predictive intelligence to provide customers with personalised content and product recommendations, driving improved conversion and customer engagement."



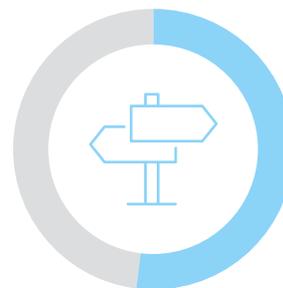
TIP 6: Analysing customer data

Analysing customer data and using insights to provide a better customer experience is increasingly vital in today's digital age. But, it's something businesses of all sizes struggle with.

"My advice is to be clear on your business objectives and start small. Identify the key characteristics of your customers, and look at how different content and channels perform," says Smith.

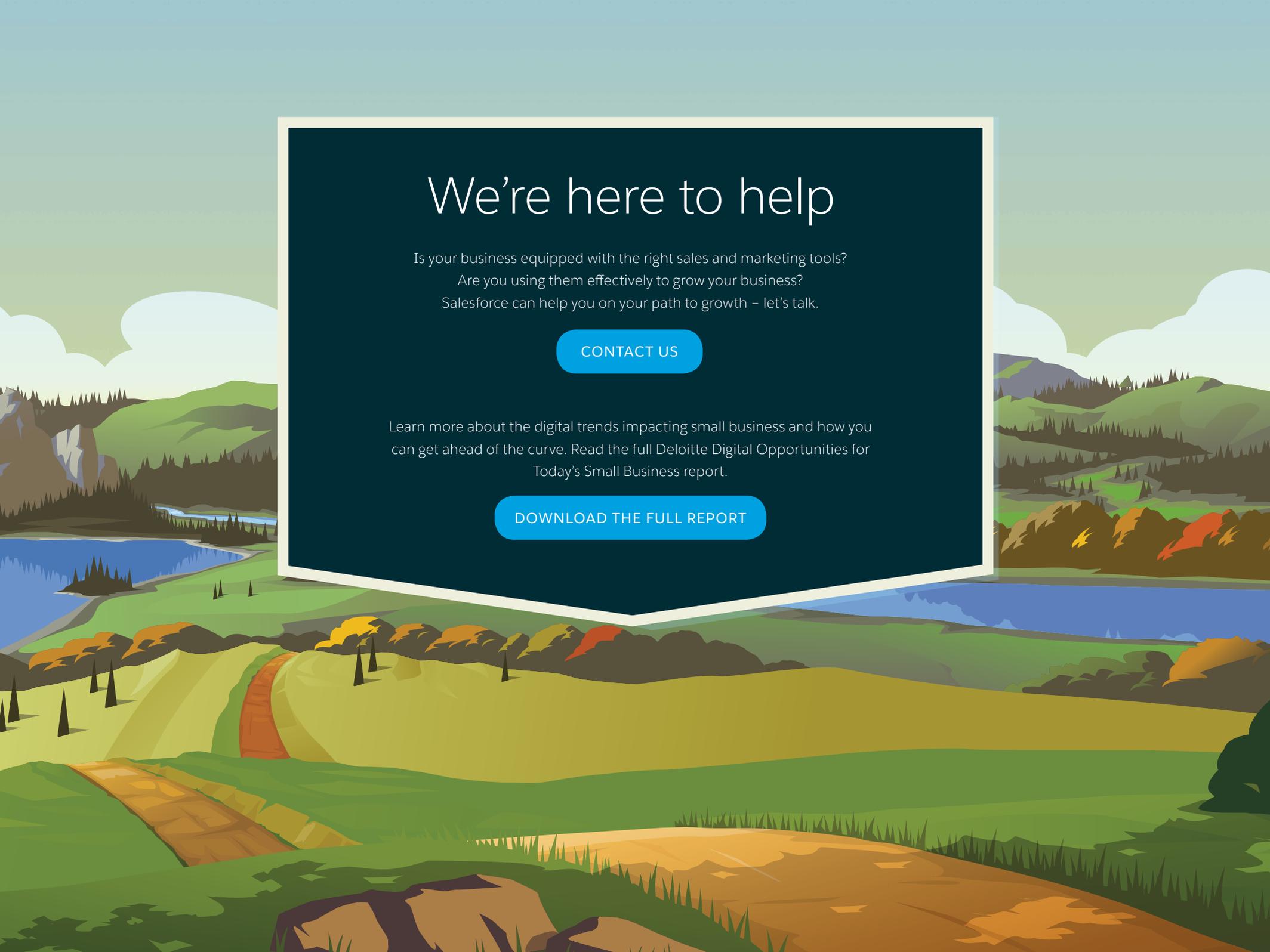


22% of SMBs are **PERSONALISING MARKETING** based on previous interactions or purchases.



52% of customers are likely to **SWITCH BRANDS** if a company doesn't make an effort to personalise to them .





We're here to help

Is your business equipped with the right sales and marketing tools?
Are you using them effectively to grow your business?
Salesforce can help you on your path to growth – let's talk.

[CONTACT US](#)

Learn more about the digital trends impacting small business and how you can get ahead of the curve. Read the full Deloitte Digital Opportunities for Today's Small Business report.

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