

# THE DIGITAL **PLAYBOOK** for Sri Lankan SMEs

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Eight practical guides to take your business digital. Step by step, in plain language.  
No technical background needed.

Available in **English** - Sinhala - Tamil

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# Getting Online

A Facebook page is not a business website. This module takes you from wherever you are now to having a real online address: a proper website, a professional email, and your business showing up on Google Maps.

~90 minutes to complete - No tech skills needed

**Why this matters:** When a customer hears about your business and looks you up, what do they find? If the answer is nothing, or a Facebook page last updated in 2022, they move on. Your online presence is your first impression for every new customer, every bank, and every future partner.

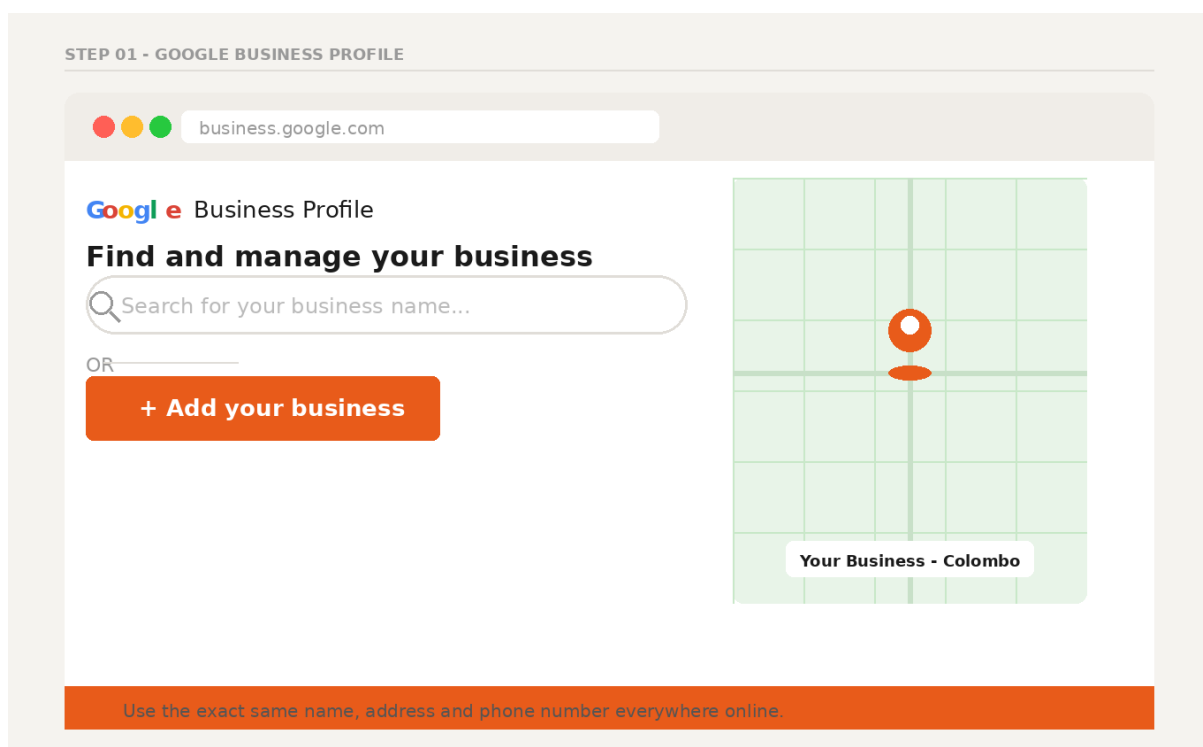
## STEP - BY - STEP GUIDE

### 01 Register on Google Business Profile

Go to [business.google.com](https://business.google.com). Click Manage now and type your business name. If it appears, claim it. If not, add it. Enter your address, phone number, and business category (e.g. Retail shop, Restaurant, Clothing store). Google will verify you by SMS or post. Once verified, your business appears on Google Maps and Google Search immediately.

Google Business (free) - Your mobile number

*Tip: Use the exact same business name, address, and phone number everywhere online. Inconsistency reduces how often you appear in searches.*



Google Business Profile registration screen - find or add your business and get verified

### 02 Register a .lk domain name

Your domain is your address on the internet, like yourbusiness.lk. Go to domains.lk (the official registry) or a local hosting provider and search your business name. If it is taken, try adding your city. A .lk domain costs around LKR 3,500 to 5,000 per year. Register for at least 2 years so you do not accidentally let it expire.

domains.lk - Lanka Internet - Exabytes.lk

*Tip: Write down your domain login and renewal date somewhere safe. Many businesses lose their domain because they forgot the password or missed renewal by a day.*

The screenshot shows the 'domains.lk' website interface. At the top, it says 'STEP 02 - REGISTER A .LK DOMAIN'. Below that is a search bar with 'domains.lk' in the address bar. The main heading is 'Find your perfect .lk domain'. There is a search input field containing 'yourbusiness', a dropdown menu showing '.lk v', and a 'Search' button. Under 'SEARCH RESULTS', there are two entries: 'yourbusiness.lk' which is 'AVAILABLE' for 'LKR 4,200 / year' with a 'Register' button, and 'yourbusiness.com.lk' which is 'TAKEN'. At the bottom, there is a note: 'Register for at least 2 years and set a renewal reminder.'

*Domain search on domains.lk - check availability and register your .lk address*



### 03 Set up a professional business email

A gmail.com address looks personal. An info@yourbusiness.lk address looks credible to customers, banks, and suppliers. Google Workspace starts at about LKR 1,200 per month per user. Zoho Mail has a free tier for up to 5 users. Sampath IT Solutions sets this up as part of their email solutions package.

Google Workspace - Zoho Mail (free tier) - **SITS Email Solutions**

*Tip: Use info@ for general enquiries and yourname@ for client relationships.*

STEP 03 - PROFESSIONAL BUSINESS EMAIL

Before - personal Gmail	After - business email
 nimals.shop@gmail.com Personal account	 info@yourshop.lk Business account
INBOX - personal mixed with business	INBOX - business only
<b>Supplier Lanka</b> Invoice #4421 - please pay	<b>Supplier Lanka</b> Invoice #4421 - please pay
<b>Nimal Perera</b> Re: Family dinner Sunday?	<b>New Order #1082</b> Order placed - LKR 4,500
<b>Customer Order</b> Where is my order???	<b>Customer Inquiry</b> Do you ship to Kandy?
<b>Bank Alert</b> OTP: 847291 for login	<b>Daraz Seller</b> Your payout is ready
<b>Mom</b> Are you coming home tonight?	<b>New Order #1083</b> Order confirmed - LKR 2,200

Use info@ for general enquiries and yourname@ for client relationships.

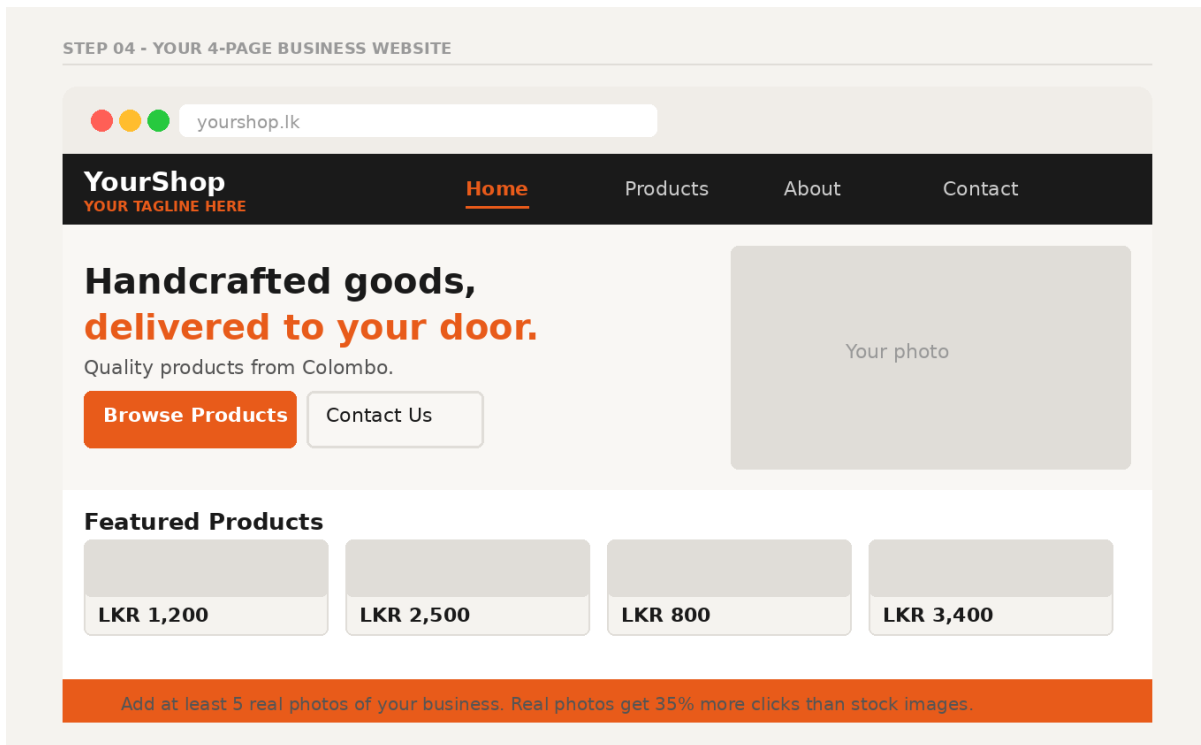
*Before and after: a mixed personal inbox vs a clean business-only inbox at your own domain*

## 04 Build a simple 4-page website

You need four pages: Home (what you do), Products or Services (real photos and prices), About (your story), and Contact (phone, email, address, simple form). Wix and WordPress both support Sinhala and Tamil text. SITS builds this professionally if you want it handled for you.

Wix (from free) - WordPress + local host - **SITS Website Development**

*Tip: Add at least 5 real photos of your business or products. Listings with photos get 35% more clicks than those without.*



*A simple 4-page business website: Home, Products, About and Contact with real photos*

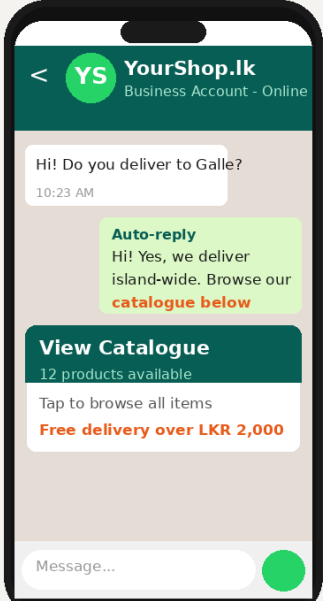
## 05 Connect WhatsApp Business to your website

Download WhatsApp Business (free) on a phone dedicated to your business. Set up your profile: name, category, address, hours, and a product catalogue. Add a Chat on WhatsApp button to your website. This is the fastest way to turn a website visitor into a customer in Sri Lanka. Most customers prefer messaging to calling.

WhatsApp Business (free)

*Tip: Set an automatic greeting for outside business hours: Hi! We received your message and will reply within 2 hours. Our hours are 8am to 6pm.*

STEP 05 - CONNECT WHATSAPP BUSINESS



**WhatsApp Business**  
5 features - all free

- 1. Business Profile**  
Name, address, hours and website
- 2. Product Catalogue**  
List products with photos and prices
- 3. Quick Replies**  
Automate your 10 most common answers
- 4. Greeting Message**  
Auto-reply outside business hours
- 5. Message Stats**  
See how many messages you send

Use a separate phone for business WhatsApp. Keep personal and business messages apart.

*WhatsApp Business features: product catalogue, auto-replies and business profile, all in one free app*

### AFTER THIS MODULE

- ✓ Your business appearing on Google Maps and Search
- ✓ A professional email at your own domain
- ✓ A website showing what you do and how to reach you
- ✓ New customers able to message you directly from your site
- ✓ An online presence that looks credible to banks and partners

### COMMON MISTAKES

- ✗ Using a personal Gmail for all business communication
- ✗ Building your site only in English if customers speak Sinhala
- ✗ Not adding your address. Customers want to know where you are
- ✗ Using only stock photos. Use real images of your business
- ✗ Forgetting to renew your domain. Set a calendar reminder one month before

### GLOBAL INSIGHT - SINGAPORE START DIGITAL PACK

DBS and OCBC found that SMEs who completed their online presence setup through a bank-facilitated programme had **42% higher engagement with every subsequent digital tool**. Starting with visibility, not payments or accounting, made the whole digital journey feel achievable. This module follows that same proven first step.

