DigitalABCs Weekly Briefing for Micro-Business: 21 Oct - 27 Oct 2023

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# The Big Picture: AI, Automation, and Your Power

It’s been a refreshingly quiet week for major digital news affecting Australian micro-businesses. While it’s easy to feel like you should always be reacting to the next big thing, weeks like this are a gift. They offer a rare chance to pause, look inward at your own operations, and strengthen your foundations without the pressure of a looming deadline or a competitor’s latest move. This is the perfect time to shift from reactive to proactive, setting your business up for resilience and future growth.  
  
This foundational work is more important than ever in the age of AI and automation. The most powerful new tools and software agents rely on clear processes and organised data to function effectively. Think of it like building a house: you can’t put up the walls and roof until the foundation is solid. By using this quiet period to organise your digital world, you’re not just tidying up; you’re preparing your business to seamlessly integrate the simple, time-saving automations that give you and your team more power and freedom.  
  
Instead of chasing a new technology this week, the real opportunity is to focus on small, internal improvements. Ask yourself: what one repetitive task drains my energy each week? How can a simple rule or a basic automation handle that for me? By embedding these small efficiencies now, you build the 'automation muscle' needed to take advantage of bigger AI shifts down the road, ensuring technology serves you, not the other way around.

# Your Action Plan: Practical AI & Automation Takeaways

* Time-Sensitive Action: Use this quiet spell to map out one repetitive task—like sending appointment reminders or chasing invoices. Then, explore setting up a simple automated agent using your existing calendar or email software. This isn't about buying new tech; it's about telling the tools you already have what to do for you, freeing up your focus for more important work.
* Time-Sensitive Action: Review your customer data 'hygiene'. Future AI tools, like a personalised marketing assistant, will depend on clean, organised information. Spend 30 minutes this week ensuring your client contact list is up-to-date and consistently formatted. This simple act of digital housekeeping is a crucial first step towards effective automation.
* Time-Sensitive Action: Explore the hidden AI in one tool you already pay for. Many platforms (like Canva, Xero, or even Microsoft Office) have built-in AI features for drafting content, summarising data, or spotting trends. Pick one tool, search its help section for 'AI' or 'automation', and try one feature. It’s a low-risk way to build confidence with technology you already own.

# Ready to Take Back Control?

Don't let the technical talk drown you out! Just like Trish fought to find her feet, DigitalABCs is here to simplify these Key Updates. We show you exactly how to use simple agents and automation to turn this week's challenges into your next big opportunity.

# Sources

* https://business.gov.au/online/digital-business
* https://zapier.com/blog/what-is-automation/