

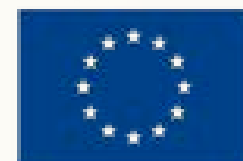


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AgriVETourism

Enhancing Sustainable Agritourism through
Vocational Education and Training for Rural
Development

Project Reference: 2024-2-BG01-KA210-VET-000267044



Co-funded by
the European Union

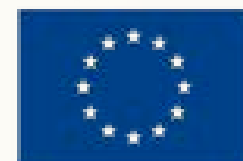


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Welcome to Module 2

The “Market” in Agritourism

Reaching Guests with Digital Tools



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Learning Objectives

After completing this module, learners will be able to:



- Understand how digital presence affects visibility and bookings in agritourism



- Apply simple digital tools for communication, reservations, and sales



- Create or improve a basic online profile for their agritourism business



- Use basic AI tools to support content creation and customer interaction



- Use social media strategically to attract and engage visitors

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Core Content Units

This module is divided into three practical units:



Unit 1: Building a Basic Digital Presence



Unit 2: Using Social Media to Attract Visitors



Unit 3: Selling and Communicating Online with Simple AI Tools

Each unit addresses a specific skills gap commonly found among agritourism operators and includes real examples, practical exercises, and concrete outputs.





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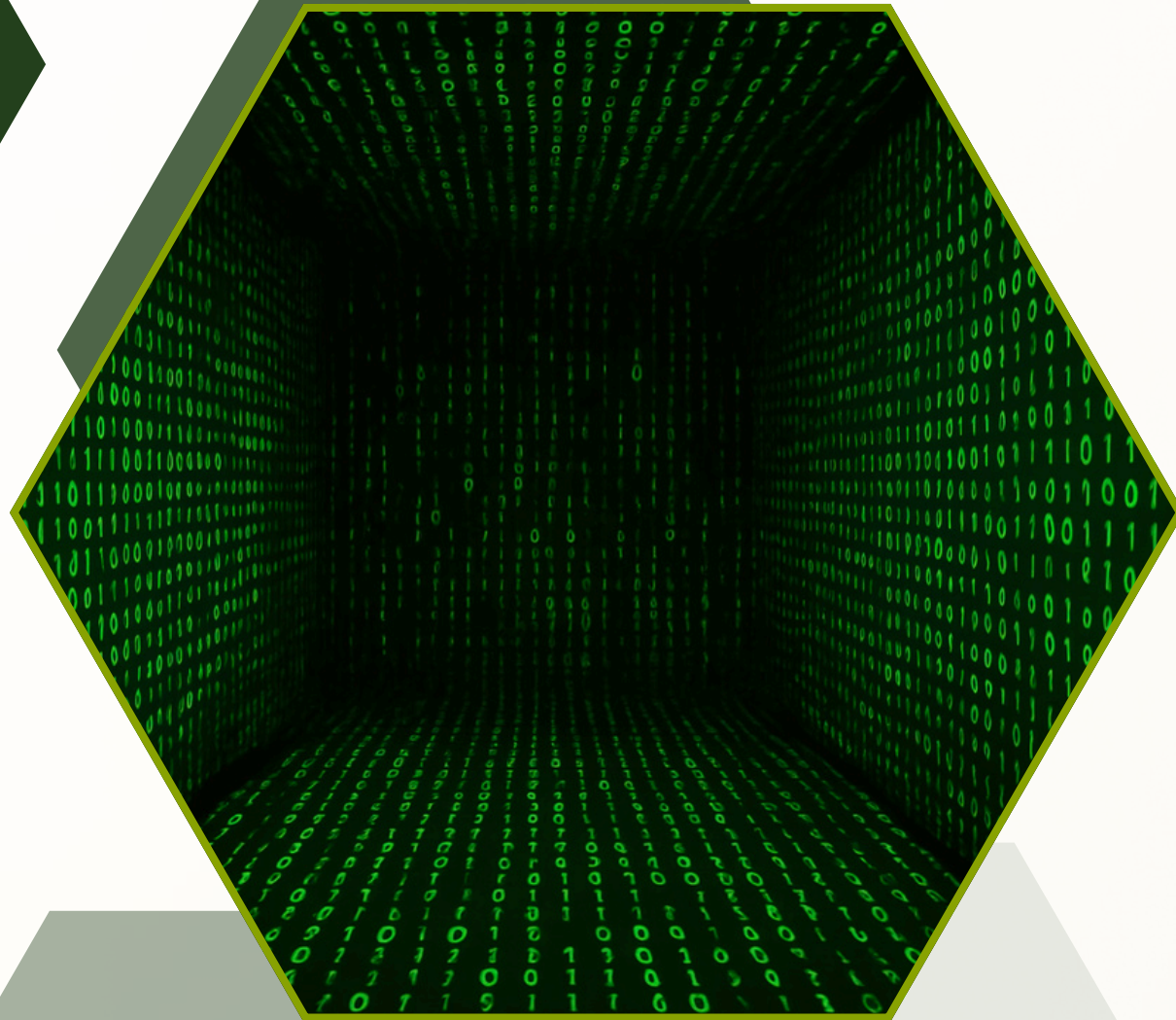
INTRODUCTION

- Everything visible about your farm online is your digital presence.
- Covers: Google Business Profile, website vs. social media, 5-step profile.
- Output: a completed Digital Profile Checklist

Skill gap addressed: weak or nonexistent online presence

Many agritourism operators rely on **word of mouth or local networks** to attract guests. While personal recommendations remain important, today most visitors first search online. Without a **clear digital presence**, potential guests may never discover the experience.

This **unit focuses** on the minimum digital presence every agritourism business should have in order to be visible, trustworthy, and easy to contact.





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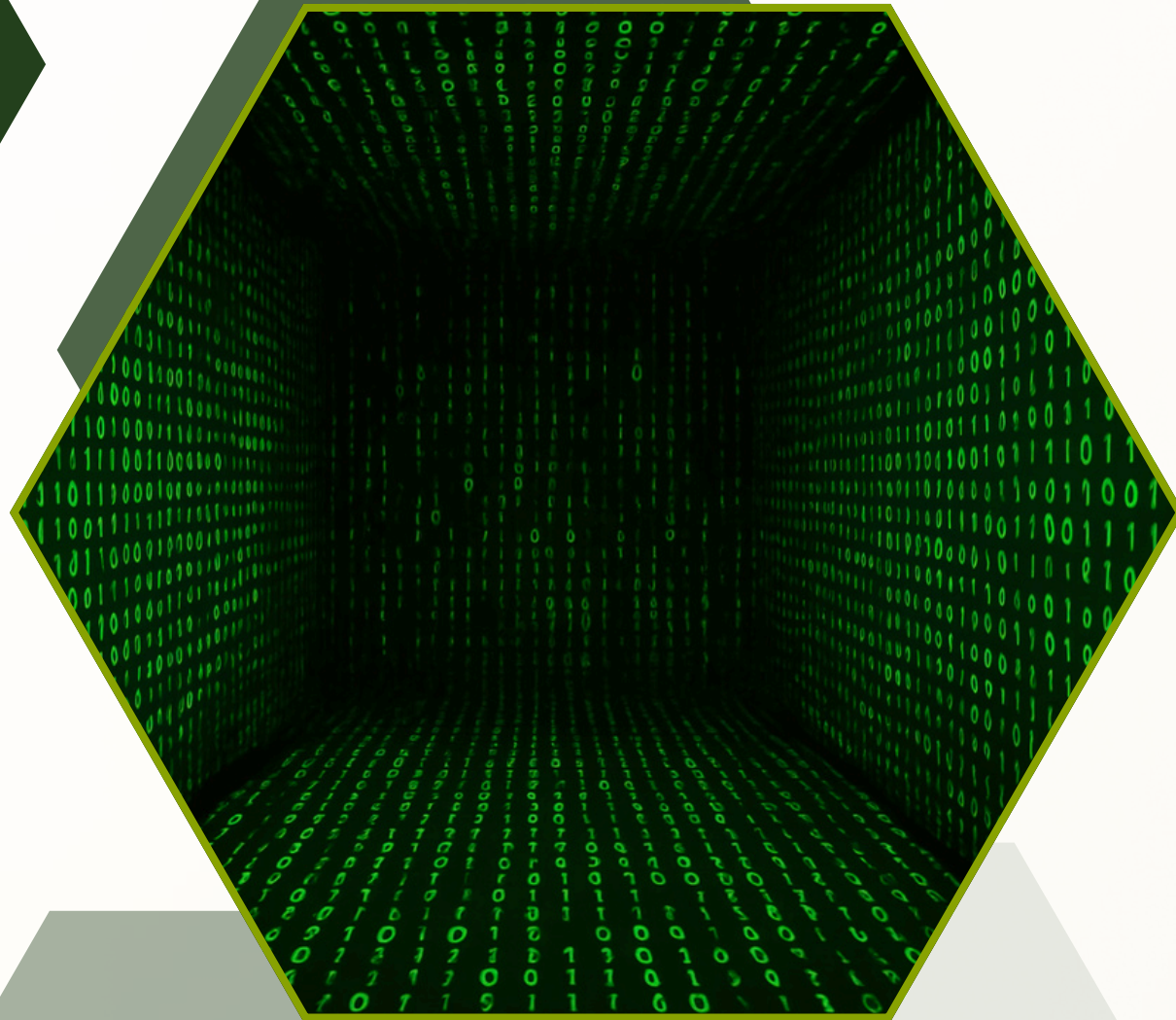
Unit 1

Building a Basic Digital Presence

Skill gap addressed: weak or nonexistent online presence

Many agritourism operators rely on **word of mouth** or **local networks** to attract guests. While personal recommendations remain important, today most visitors first search online. Without a **clear digital presence**, potential guests may never discover the experience.

This **unit focuses** on the minimum digital presence every agritourism business should have in order to be visible, trustworthy, and easy to contact.





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The Problem (Reality Check)



Many agritourism operators face the following challenges:

- Their business does not appear on Google Maps or appears with incorrect information
- They have no website and an inactive or confusing social media profile
- Guests cannot easily find prices, photos, location, or contact details





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Real example



In Greece, a rural hospitality business documented that guests struggled to find reliable information and that bookings depended heavily on intermediaries.

As part of the solution, they created a Google Business profile so visitors could locate the place easily and leave reviews; the case study reports strong performance improvements after implementing the full digital plan.”





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Key Concepts / Tools Purpose: Learning

Main concepts:

- Digital visibility
- Online trust and credibility
- First digital impression

Tools introduced:

- Google Maps / Google Business Profile
- Basic website or social media page
- Online reviews

The focus is on **clarity, accuracy, and consistency**, not technical complexity.





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How to Apply This in Practice

Step-by-step guidance:

- Step 1: Claim/create Google Business Profile (business.google.com)
- Step 2: Add 5 real photos — exterior, activity, product, welcome, people
- Step 3: Write a description under 300 words — specific and honest
- Step 4: Add contact info and a WhatsApp booking link
- Step 5: Ask your first 5 guests for a Google review

The goal is to make your agritourism business easy to find and easy to trust.





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How to Apply This in Practice

- Search your farm name on Google — what comes up?
- If a listing exists: claim it, add photos, check contact info.
- If nothing appears: go to business.google.com — fill every field.
- Send one message to a recent guest asking for a Google review.

Operators with a complete Google listing receive 3-5 times more enquiries. The difference is visibility, not quality. A full profile already outperforms most local competitors.





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Do's and Don'ts



- DO: Start with Google Business Profile — free and the most important step
- DO: Use real photos of your farm, products, and activities
- DO: Ask guests for reviews — 5 genuine ones make a real difference
- DON'T: Try to be on every platform at once — one complete profile wins





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Case Study / Best Practice

Country: Portugal (EU)

Context: Terras de Trás-os-Montes



A peer-reviewed study (MDPI, 2025) audited the online presence of rural tourism businesses in Terras de Trás-os-Montes (including Agro-Tourism enterprises). The researchers used the official National Tourism Register to identify legally operating rural tourism businesses, then evaluated their digital readiness and website performance.

Resource





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Case Study / Best Practice

What was found (problem → opportunity)

- Out of 57 registered rural tourism enterprises, 26 had no website listed and 10 websites were not functional, meaning a large part of the sector had weak or broken digital visibility.
- The paper highlights that rural tourism businesses in the region face significant digital visibility challenges, even though the destination has strong tourism potential.





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Case Study / Best Practice

What was done (best practice actions)

The study identifies “best practice” patterns among the stronger performers and recommends practical actions that are highly relevant for agritourism operators:

- Fix basic online discoverability (functional pages, clear descriptions, updated information)
- Improve local SEO elements (clear titles/meta descriptions, mobile performance, fresh content)
- Strengthen “local search readiness” (the paper explicitly links rural tourism visibility to local SEO practices and the need to leverage tools used by travelers when planning trips)





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Case Study / Best Practice

What changed / benefit (why this is best practice)

The study's key takeaway is that simple, low-cost digital improvements (functional online presence + local SEO basics) are essential for rural/agro-tourism businesses to compete and be discoverable in a market where most travelers plan online.

Practical link to Google Maps / Google presence

To connect this directly to your Unit 1 learning outcomes: Google's own guidance for hospitality businesses explains that a Business Profile helps owners manage business info and interact with potential customers—exactly the “visibility + trust + contactability” gap this unit addresses.





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Practical Exercise

Task: Digital Presence Improvement Checklist

Learners must:

- Check if their business appears on Google Maps
- Identify missing or incorrect information
- List at least 3 improvements to make immediately

Output:

Completed Digital Presence Improvement Checklist

Estimated time: 45 minutes

Check the exercise here





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Practical Exercise

- Audit your current digital presence — identify the key gaps
 - Output: Digital Profile Checklist — what is done and what is missing
 - 20 minutes (15 min work + 5 min sharing)
 - Operators: use your real business.
-
- Debrief: each person shares their biggest gap and one first action this week.
 - Common finding: no Google listing, no photos, no reviews — almost every time.
 - Some will find an unclaimed listing — help them claim it live during the session.





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Unit 2:

Introduction

Unit 2: Tell Your Story on Social Media

- Social media is where visitors spend time before they travel — at zero cost.
- Covers: visual storytelling, 3 content formulas, 1-Month Content Calendar.
- Output: a completed 1-Month Content Calendar

Notes:

- Tell Your Story on Social Media
- One post per week, every week — consistent and real — is worth more than ten posts in one day and then silence





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The Problem (Reality Check)

- Posts randomly when there is time — or not at all
- No plan = no consistency = invisible to potential visitors
- Generic content with no story, no product, no call to action
- Farm exists but online presence builds no momentum

Notes / Example

Two farms, same product. One: 'Fresh eggs, call to order.' The other: warm egg photo with a short story. The second gets ten times more reactions. Same eggs, different story.





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Key Concepts / Tools Purpose: Visual Storytelling



- Visual storytelling: real farm life that makes people feel something
- Post 1-2 times per week on ONE platform — consistency beats frequency
- Natural light: the single biggest factor in a good phone photo
- Real farm elements: animals, harvest, hands, products, food

[Notes / Example]

What NOT to post: blurry photos, stock images, long text blocks, generic greetings. If you would not show it to a visitor in person — do not post it.





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How to Apply This in Practice

3 Content Formulas for Agritourism Farms

- Farm Moment: something real and seasonal happening right now
- Offer Reminder: specific — what, when, price, how to book
- Behind-the-Scenes: how something is made, grown, or prepared
- Plan one month in 20 minutes: 8 posts, 2 posting days per week

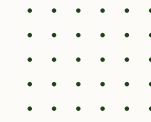
[Notes / Example]

A herb farm plans April content in March: herbs, workshops, availability, products. Four posts. Four weeks. No daily stress.





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How to Apply This in Practice

- Choose ONE platform — Facebook (local, older) or Instagram (younger, international)
- Set two posting days per week and keep to them — every single week
- Ask: 'What am I doing today that a visitor would find interesting?'
- Plan 8 posts using the 3 formulas: Farm Moment, Offer Reminder, Behind-the-Scenes

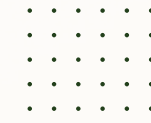
[Notes / Example]

A chestnut farm in Northern Greece posted one photo per week. Within one season: 340 followers. Four groups booked the following autumn because of photos seen months earlier.





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Do's and Don'ts



- DO: Post once or twice per week — same days, every week
- DO: Use real photos with a specific caption and a clear next step
- DO: Plan posts one month in advance — removes daily stress
- DON'T: Post only when you need bookings — build presence before you need it

[Notes / Example]

A guesthouse posts every Tuesday and every Friday. Two posts per week, planned every Sunday. 30 minutes per week. Zero cost. Consistent presence that guests rely on.





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Examples from Greece and Bulgaria



- Greece — Peach orchard, Imathia:
- 40 to 600 followers in one season | 23 direct booking messages
- Bulgaria — Winery near Melnik:
- One Friday post per week — Instagram following doubled in 6 months

[Notes / Example]

Posts with a specific food product, a seasonal element, and a human face receive significantly more engagement than product-only posts. Authenticity outperforms perfection.





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Best Practice



- Vineyard near Sandanski, Bulgaria — 80 followers, posting irregularly
- Challenge: experiences existed but were invisible — no description, no price, no promotion
- Solution: clear Offer Card + weekly Friday post + WhatsApp Business for bookings

[Notes / Example]

- Result: 34 bookings | followers 80 to 420 | waiting list in October
- Investment: zero | Time: 30 min/week
- Key: one consistent post per week compounds across a whole season





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Practical Exercise

- Plan one month of social media content for your farm
- Output: 1-Month Content Calendar — 8 post ideas, platform, 2 posting days/week
- 20 minutes (15 min planning + 5 min sharing)
- Operators: use real upcoming activities.

[Notes / Example]

- Debrief: share your favourite post idea — 'Which would get the most reactions and why?'
- Common blocker: 'I don't know what to write.' Ask: 'What are you doing Tuesday? Take a photo of that. That is your post.'





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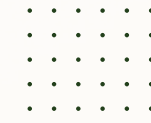
Unit 3: Sell and Communicate Online



- Operators lose bookings from slow or unclear replies — not from price or quality.
 - Covers: WhatsApp Business, booking platforms, AI tools for offers and replies.
 - Output: Online Offer Card + 5 Ready Guest Replies
- [Notes / Example]**
- Sell and Communicate Online
 - A ready reply in 30 seconds is often the difference between a booking and a lost guest.



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The Problem (Reality Check)



- Slow replies lose bookings — visitors book elsewhere within 24 hours
- No written offer = no bookings from those who cannot call
- Every reply from scratch = 20-30 minutes per enquiry
- Digital confidence low — no tools, no templates, no time

[Notes / Example]

A saffron farm near Kozani: every Facebook reply took 20-30 minutes from scratch. After WhatsApp Business with 5 quick replies: under 5 minutes. Bookings improved immediately.





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Key Concepts / Tools Purpose: Online Communication Tools



- WhatsApp Business: free, your guests already use it
- Offer Card: 80 words max — what, when, price, how to book
- Ready Replies: 5-10 pre-written for your most common questions
- Platform choice: start with ONE channel and do it well

[Notes / Example]

Key rule: choose ONE primary channel and do it well before adding any others.





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How to Apply This in Practice

- **AI Tools for Small Agritourism Operators**

- Free AI tools: ChatGPT, Gemini — on any smartphone, zero cost
- Write offer descriptions in clear, natural language
- Create ready replies for your most common guest questions
- Generate social media captions and Google listing improvements

[Notes / Example]

One rule: AI can be factually wrong. Always review before publishing.
Check prices, dates, and activities — you edit, that is the important step.





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How to Apply This in Practice



- Step 1: Download WhatsApp Business — convert your farm number for free
- Step 2: Write your Offer Card — one experience, under 80 words, specific price
- Step 3: Create 5 Ready Replies — booking, directions, pricing, cancellation, thank-you
- Step 4: Try AI on your phone — prompt, review, edit, then publish

[Notes / Example]

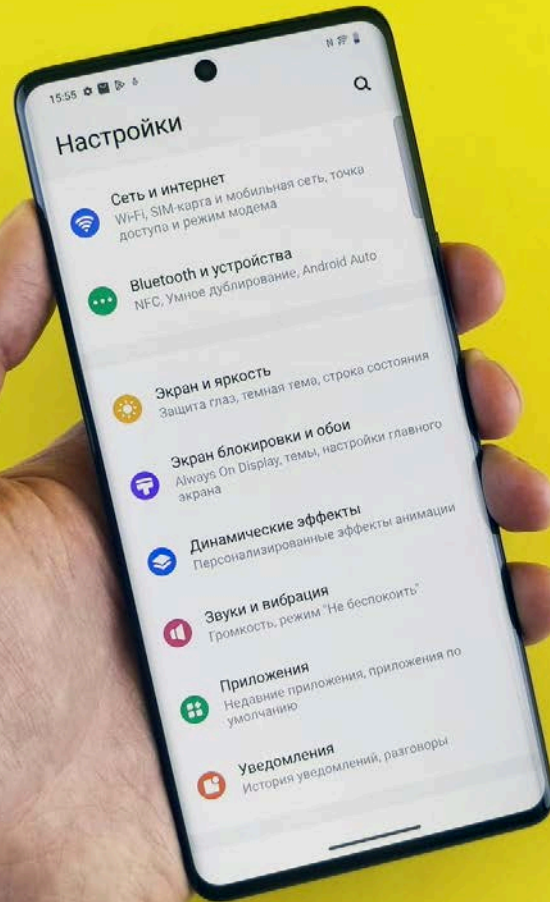
AI prompt example: 'Write a short offer for a herb workshop in Northern Greece. 75 minutes, 20 euros per person, 8 guests max, take-home herb blend.' Edit three things. Publish.





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Do's and Don'ts



- DO: Set up WhatsApp Business — free, guests already use it
- DO: Write a clear offer — what is included, duration, price, how to book
- DO: Create ready replies — response speed converts enquiries to bookings
- DON'T: Use personal WhatsApp for business — you lose all the features

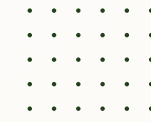
[Notes / Example]

A farm set up 3 WhatsApp quick replies: booking, directions, pricing. Response time dropped from hours to minutes. Bookings that fell through from slow replies are no longer lost.





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Best Practice



- Greece — Saffron farm, Kozani:
- Facebook replies 20-30 min to WhatsApp quick replies under 5 min
- Bulgaria — Farmstay near Melnik:
- WhatsApp plus AI offer — experience bookings tripled at zero commission

[Notes / Example]

Cross-country finding: the most common reason a visitor does not book is a slow or unclear response. Ready replies and a clear offer card solve both problems directly.





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Practical Exercise



- Write one offer and five ready replies you can use immediately
- Output: Online Offer Card (under 100 words) + 5 ready guest replies
- 20 minutes (15 min writing + 5 min sharing)
- Part A: offer — use AI if available, then edit to sound like you.

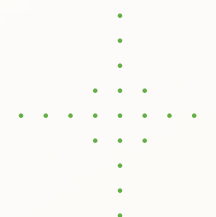
[Notes / Example]

- Debrief: two learners read their offer aloud — 'Would you book this? What one thing would you change?'
- Common replies to write: what is included, directions, what to bring, cancellation, thank-you.





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Key Takeaways

3 templates to take home today:

1. Digital Profile Checklist

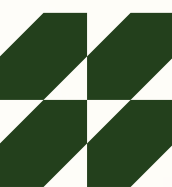
- online presence audited

2. 1-Month Content Calendar

- 8 posts planned

3. Offer Card + Ready Replies

- one offer + 5 replies ready now





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Self-Assessment

- What is the biggest gap in your digital presence — one action this week?
- Which of your 8 content posts would be easiest to start with today?
- Which online communication tool fits the way you already work?
- Did you try the AI tool — and for what task would you use it again?
- If you had 30 minutes this weekend, what exactly would you do first?



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Thank You



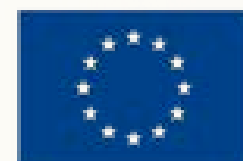


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