Stone Business Consultancy

Seminar Running Sheet

Topic: Artificial Intelligence and ChatGPT for Small Business
Duration: Approximately 60 minutes
Format: Online Seminar

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1. Introduction and Opening Remarks

The Seminar commenced with introductory remarks welcoming attendees and outlining the purpose of the session. Participants were advised that the Seminar would focus on improving **AI literacy for small business owners**, with a particular emphasis on the practical use of **ChatGPT as a business productivity tool**.

The presenter, an AI consultant specialising in practical AI implementation for business operations, was introduced. The presenter has experience assisting organisations and small businesses in adopting artificial intelligence tools to improve workflow efficiency, communication, and information processing.

The objective of the Seminar was to demonstrate how AI tools can be used safely and effectively within small businesses to support tasks such as:

- Client communication
- Document preparation
- Research and summarisation
- Administrative efficiency
- Idea generation and planning

Attendees were informed that the Seminar would include both **conceptual explanations and a practical demonstration** of AI being used for a real business scenario.

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2. Understanding AI Literacy for Small Businesses

A key focus of the Seminar was improving **AI literacy**, which refers to understanding how artificial intelligence tools operate and how they can be used responsibly in a business environment.

The presenter emphasised that AI should be viewed as **a support tool rather than a replacement for human decision-making**. The most effective use of AI occurs when human judgement and expertise are combined with the speed and processing capability of AI systems.

The AI Usage Principle

One of the central concepts introduced during the Seminar was a simple framework describing how AI should be used within business workflows.

The model described a three-stage process:

10% – Human Input
The user provides context, background information, and instructions to guide the AI.

80% – AI Processing
The AI generates content, performs research, or produces draft outputs.

10% – Human Verification
The user reviews, edits, and confirms the accuracy and suitability of the final output.

This structure highlights the importance of **human oversight** when using AI tools in professional or commercial settings.

The presenter stressed that businesses should **never publish or send AI-generated material without verifying it first**, particularly when the information relates to client communication, financial information, or contractual material.

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3. Personalising ChatGPT for Business Use

Another key topic discussed during the Seminar was the **importance of personalising AI tools** so that they better understand the context of the business using them.

The presenter explained that AI systems perform significantly better when they are provided with clear information about:

- The business type
- Services offered
- Target clients
- Communication style
- Professional tone

Providing this context allows the AI to produce responses that are **more accurate, more relevant, and more aligned with the business's communication style**.

Participants were shown how to configure ChatGPT to include **custom instructions** that describe the business and the role the AI should play.

Examples of useful customisation include instructing the AI to:

- Write in a professional but friendly tone
- Produce clear and concise communications
- Focus on small business contexts
- Avoid overly technical language

The presenter also discussed creating **AI personas**, where the AI is instructed to act in a particular role such as:

- Administrative assistant
- Marketing assistant
- Research assistant
- Business advisor

These personas allow users to quickly generate outputs suited to different tasks.

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4. Data Privacy and Confidential Information

During the Seminar, the presenter addressed concerns around **confidential information and data privacy** when using AI systems.

Participants were advised to exercise caution when entering sensitive information into AI tools.

Best practice recommendations included:

- Avoid entering personal client data into AI systems
- Remove identifying information when using real examples
- Use business versions of AI platforms where possible
- Treat AI tools as external systems when handling confidential material

The presenter noted that anonymising information can allow businesses to still benefit from AI assistance without exposing sensitive details.

This topic prompted discussion among participants regarding how to balance productivity gains from AI with responsible data management.

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5. Effective Prompting Techniques

A significant portion of the Seminar focused on the concept of **prompt engineering**, which refers to the way instructions are given to AI systems.

The presenter explained that the quality of the output produced by AI is highly dependent on the clarity of the instructions provided.

Participants were introduced to a structured approach to writing prompts that includes the following elements:

Role

Define the role the AI should take.

Example:
“Act as a professional business administrator.”

Context

Provide background information relevant to the task.

Example:
“I run a landscaping business that provides maintenance and installation services.”

Task

Clearly explain what the AI should produce.

Example:
“Write a professional email responding to a customer enquiry.”

Output Requirements

Specify tone, length, or format.

Example:
“Keep the email professional and friendly, and limit it to two paragraphs.”

This approach helps produce **more reliable and useful outputs** from AI systems.

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6. Practical Demonstration: Business Email Templates

A live demonstration formed a central part of the Seminar, where the presenter worked through a practical business scenario.

A participant who operates a **gardening and landscaping business** asked for assistance with creating professional email responses for client quotes and communications.

The presenter demonstrated how ChatGPT could be used to generate **customised email templates** tailored to different types of landscaping work.

Examples included templates for:

- General landscaping quotes
- Garden maintenance services
- Landscaping installation projects
- Small residential jobs
- Commercial landscaping projects with multiple stages

The AI was guided using clear prompts that described the business and the purpose of the email.

The generated emails were then reviewed and refined to ensure they were appropriate for real client communication.

The presenter highlighted that once created, these templates could be **saved and reused**, significantly reducing time spent on repetitive administrative tasks.

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7. Organising AI Work Using Projects

The Seminar also introduced participants to methods for organising AI interactions.

The presenter explained that users can create **separate projects or folders** to group related conversations and documents.

Examples of project categories may include:

- Client communication templates

- Marketing content
- Business planning
- Operational procedures

By grouping related prompts and responses, businesses can build a **structured knowledge base** that can be reused and expanded over time.

This approach helps ensure that AI tools become part of a **consistent business system rather than isolated interactions**.

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8. Additional AI Capabilities

During the Seminar, the presenter briefly demonstrated additional capabilities available within modern AI platforms.

These included:

Document Analysis
AI systems can process long documents quickly and summarise key points or identify relevant information.

Extended Reasoning Features
Some AI tools include advanced reasoning modes that allow more detailed analysis and improved responses for complex tasks.

Image Generation
AI can also generate images and graphics based on text prompts, which can be useful for marketing or content creation.

While these tools were demonstrated briefly, the presenter emphasised that the **primary focus for small businesses should remain on practical productivity applications**.

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9. Cost Versus Value of AI Tools

Participants also discussed the cost of AI tools.

The presenter noted that subscription-based AI services can provide significant value for small businesses, particularly when used for:

- Administrative assistance
- Document creation
- Communication drafting
- Research tasks

The time saved through automation and assistance can quickly offset the cost of the software.

Attendees were encouraged to consider AI as **an operational tool that improves efficiency rather than simply a technology expense**.

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10. Closing Remarks and Future Seminars

The Seminar concluded with closing remarks and a brief overview of upcoming events hosted by Stone Business Consultancy.

Participants were informed about a future Seminar focused on **financial advice and planning for small business owners**, which will cover topics including financial strategy, planning considerations, and business financial management.

Attendees were encouraged to provide feedback following the Seminar and to continue exploring how AI tools can support their business activities.

Seminar Key Takeaways

The Seminar highlighted several important lessons for small business owners:

- Artificial intelligence can significantly improve productivity when used correctly.
- AI tools should support, not replace, human decision-making.
- Providing clear instructions and context improves AI outputs.
- Businesses should avoid entering confidential information into AI systems.
- Creating reusable templates can save significant administrative time.
- Personalising AI tools allows them to better reflect the business's tone and communication style.

Overall, the Seminar provided participants with both **practical examples and foundational knowledge** to begin integrating AI tools into their business workflows.