

Overall Ethic

The photography style for Google SMB is clean, bright and optimistic.

Every image will consistently utilize open lighting style, simple design and clear communication of environment and purpose.

The look and feel is documentary and editorial—not overly produced or posed. Every image will look authentic and aspirational: a candid peek into the lives of a small business owner.

Capture details of the environment, the small business owner and their customers. Small business owners will be portrayed as focused and friendly in their interactions with both customer and product.

Every image will tell a compelling story.

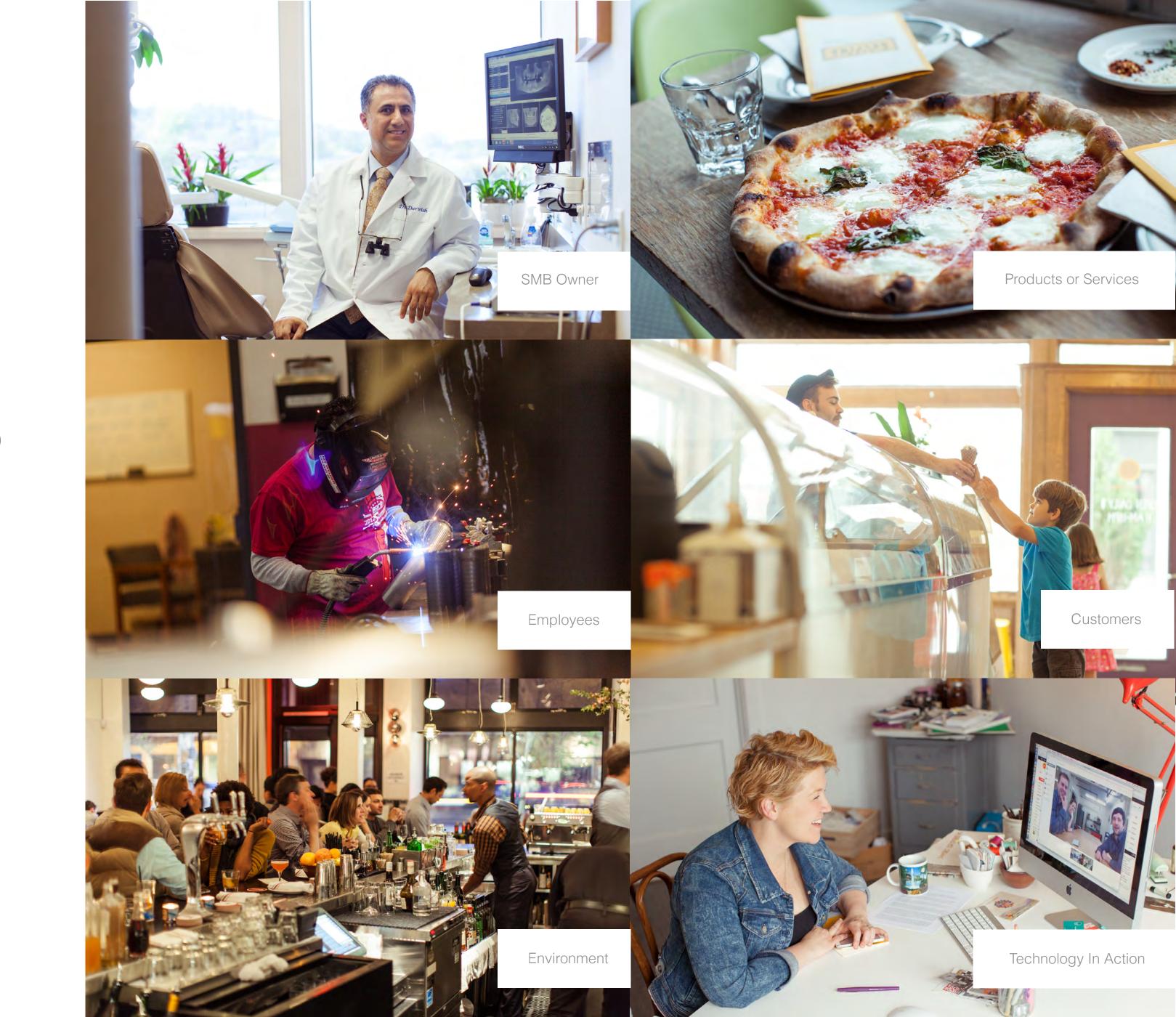


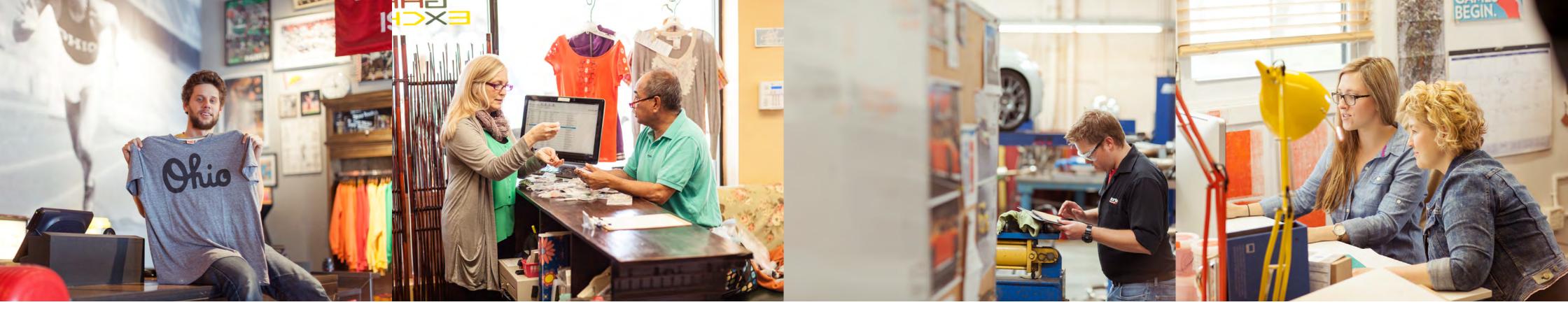
Shot List

In order to capture everything that a small business is, we have compiled a list of images you'll want to capture.

Recommended SMB Shot List

- 1. Small business owner (portrait and candid)
- 2. Small business owner's product and/or service in both detail and environmental
- 3. Employees
- 4. Customers
- 5. Environment (i.e. a store, office, or neighborhood)
- 6. Technology in action (e.g. a customer searching on Android phone for a local business)

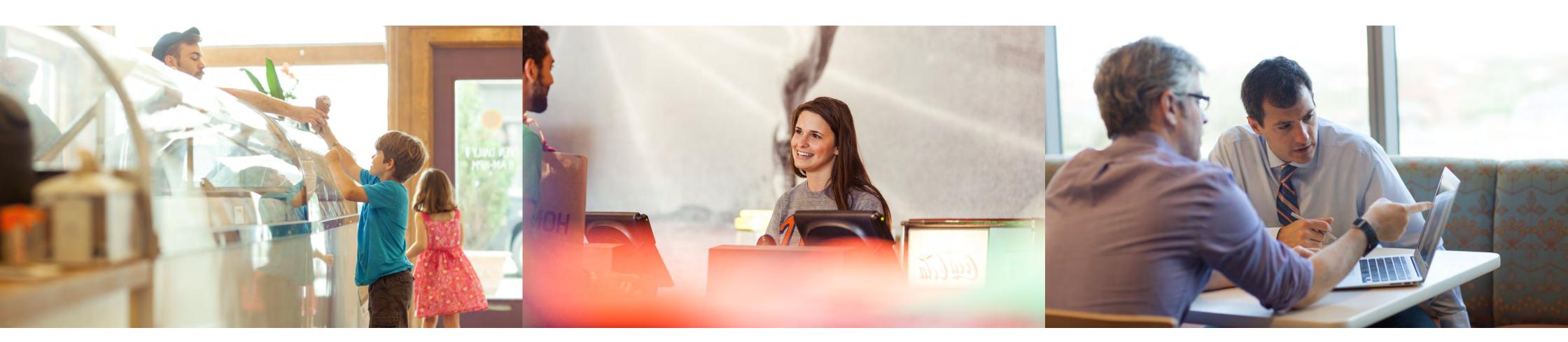




STRAIGHT ON PORTRAIT ENGAGING CUSTOMERS WORKING WITH EMPLOYEES

SMALL BUSINESS OWNER

The small business owner should be shown in several different ways: as a portrait, engaging with customers, working with employees and working on their own. They should be depicted as focused, hardworking and authentic.



CANDIDLY AND POSITIVELY EXPERIENCING THE SMALL BUSINESS

CUSTOMERS

Customers should be shot in a manner that is candid and never posed. Customers should be shown interacting with each other, employees and the small business owner. They should also be enjoying or using the product/service. Customers should be depicted as happy and authentic.



WORKING SOLO CANDIDLY WORKING WITH OTHERS

EMPLOYEES

Employees are to be captured much like the small business owner. However, we do not need nor require portrait style photography for employees. Employees should be shown assisting customers, working alongside the small business owner and working on their own. They should also be depicted as hardworking focused and happy with their job.



PRODUCTS IN THEIR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

PRODUCTS

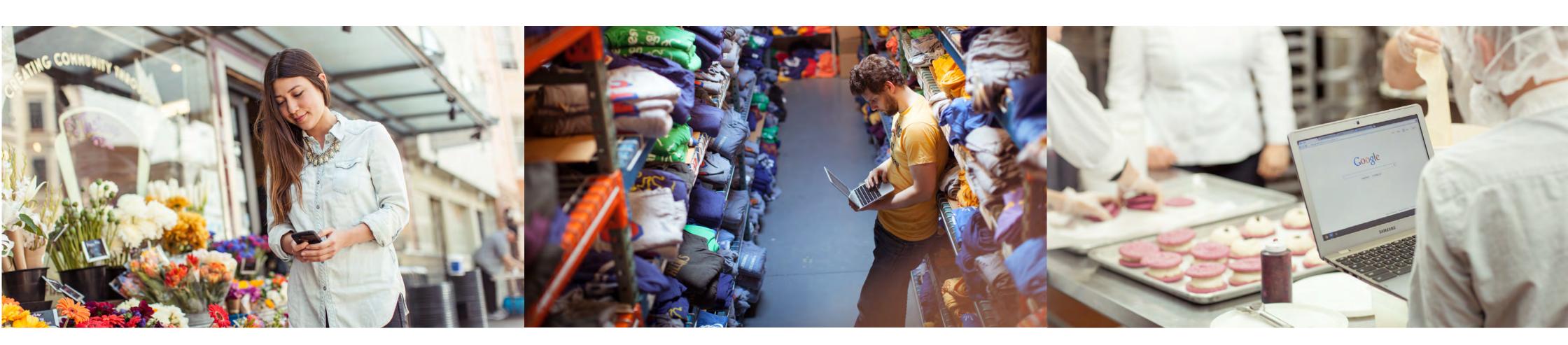
Products should be shown isolated via shallow depth of field as defined in this photo guide. Products should be shown clearly, crisp and in their natural environments.



OVERALL ENVIRONMENTAL SHOTS A BUSY LOCATION WITH LOTS OF ENERGY DETAILS OF THE SMB

ENVIRONMENT

There are many ways to capture the environment of a small business owner. You may use motion to show the hustle and bustle as well as grabbing detailed shots of SMB tools and assets. The environment should be clean and naturally lit.



CUSTOMERS OR THE SMALL BUSINESS OWNER ENGAGING WITH TECHNOLOGY

TECHNOLOGY IN ACTION

Show how technology (and the web) connect small businesses with their customers. These shots should be taken in context, or believable scenarios, where the SMBs' customers are searching for them using Google products. These shots should be depicted as natural, candid and unposed. Try to use Google or Android devices at all times.

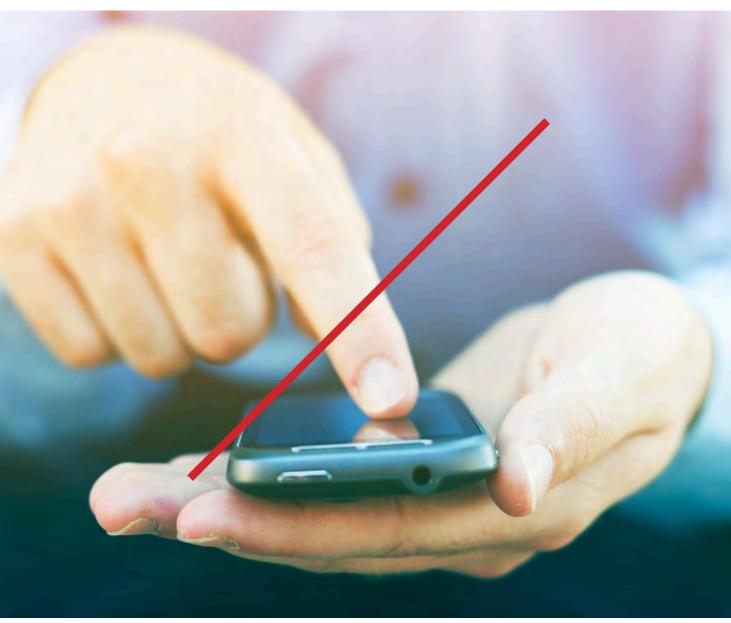


DO NOT: OVERLY POSED PORTRAIT STYLE PHOTOS OF EMPLOYEES

DO NOT: NON-CANDID CUSTOMER PHOTOS

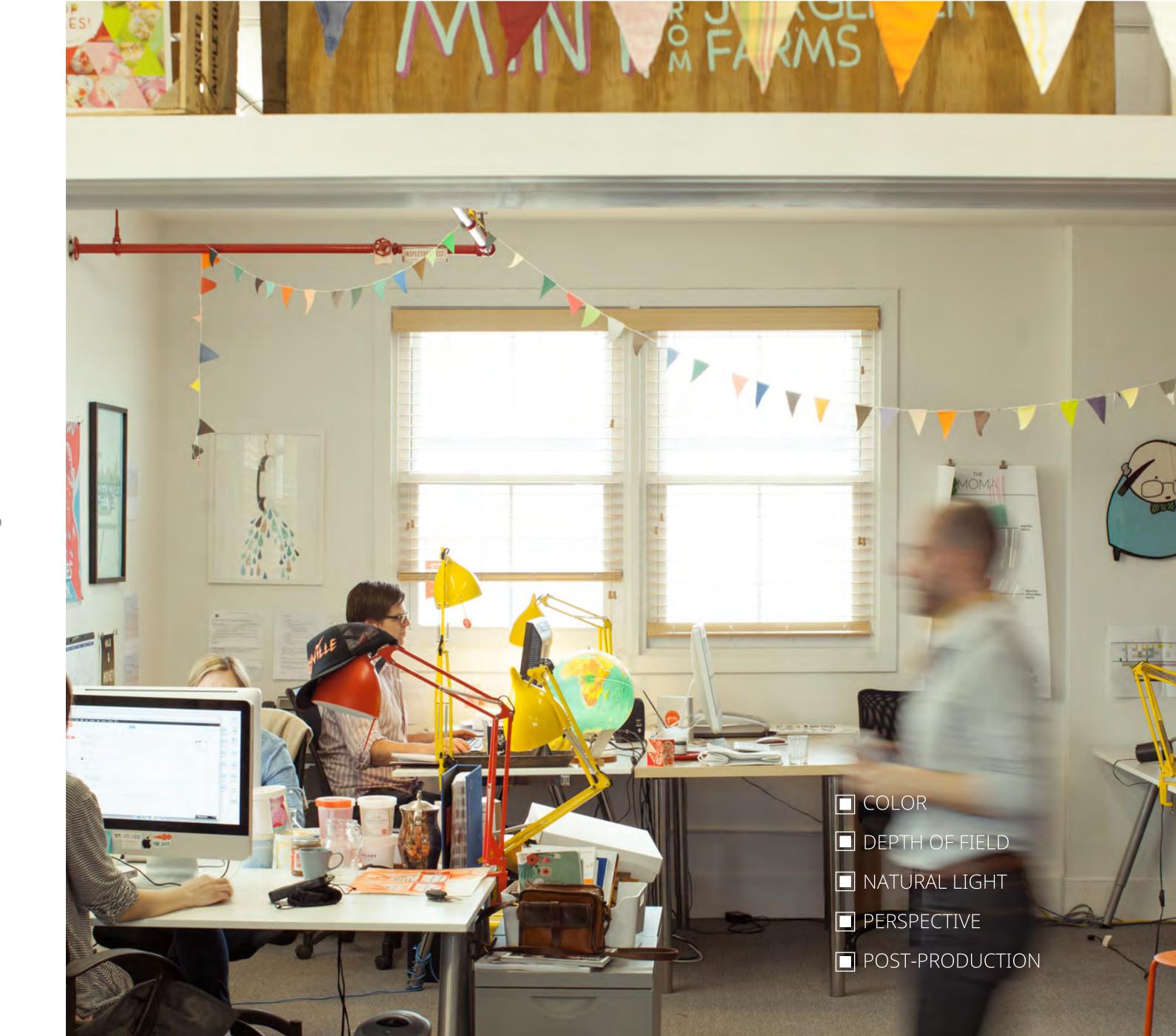






Design & Composition

All images should tell a compelling story in a simple, straightforward way. We'll use color, Depth of Field (DOF), motion and perspective to complement the design ethic. There should be natural framing of the subject, keeping the rule of thirds and DOF in mind. Natural light should highlight the subject.

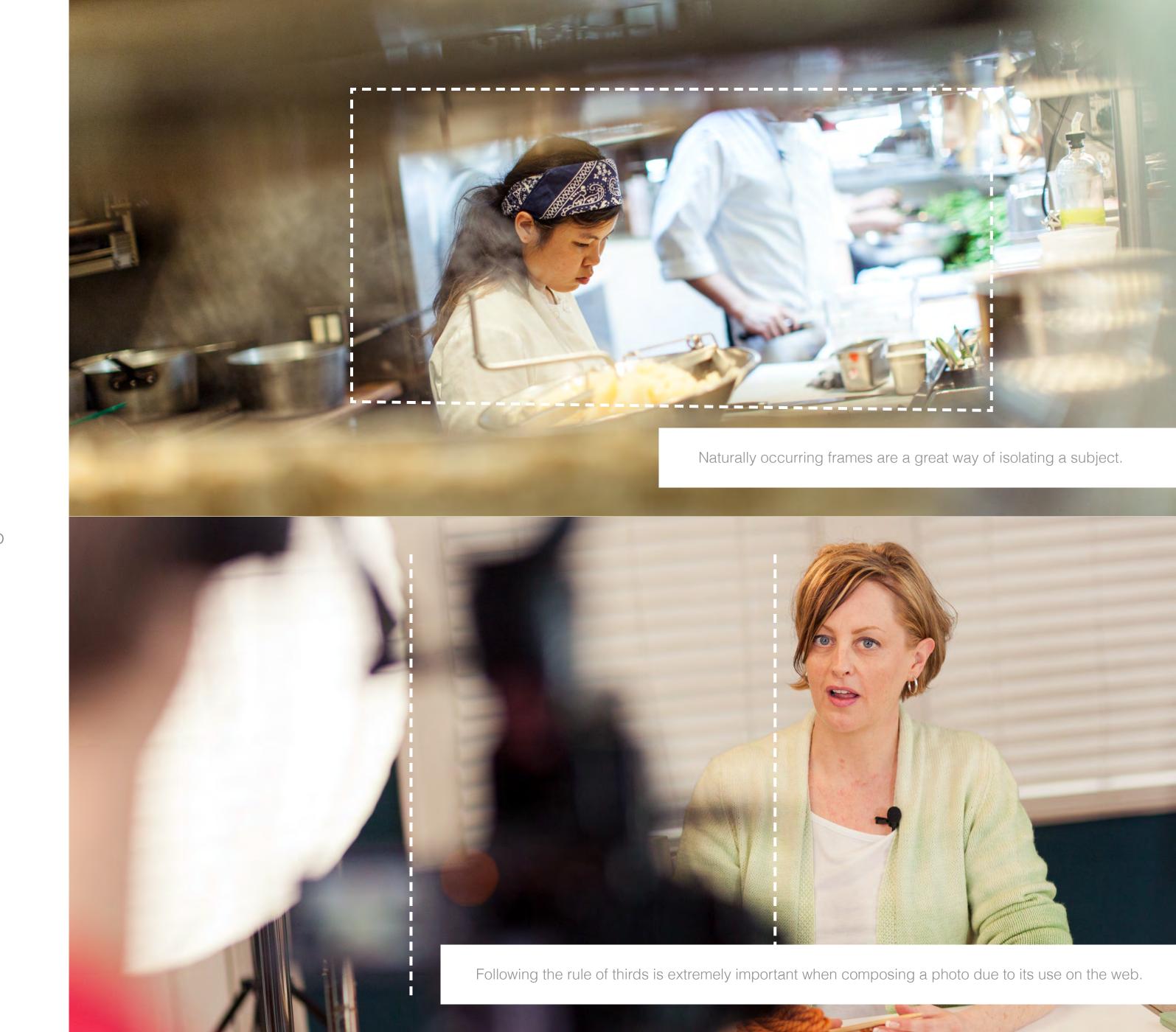


Framing

It is important to remember where the Google SMB images are going to appear. They will be largely used across the web, meaning composition is extremely important.

When composing a photo, follow the rule of thirds. Keeping the subject matter within 1/3 of your composition (see bottom right) allows us to place assets on top of the photograph. Provide varied compositions with the subject positioned in each of the three sections. This lends itself to extreme flexibility.

Keep a busy environment from becoming distracting by using naturally occurring framing (top right).



Applications

Photographs will appear across various marketing initiatives, but will often be placed prominently on web pages.

Images should be captured in landscape and should account for text overlays (in the case of the SMB Hub) as shown on the right.



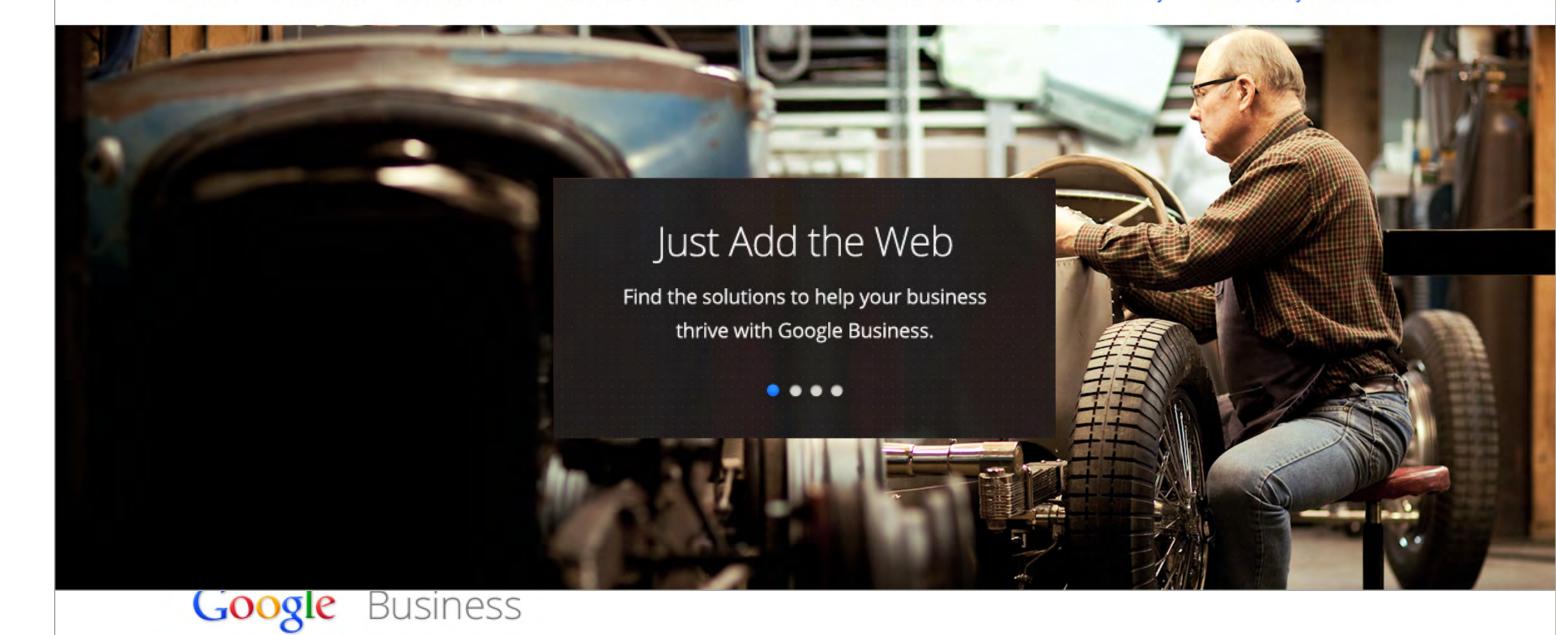
Home Build Your Web Presence Advertis

Advertise On The Web

Make Your Business Social

Community

Browse By Product



Home

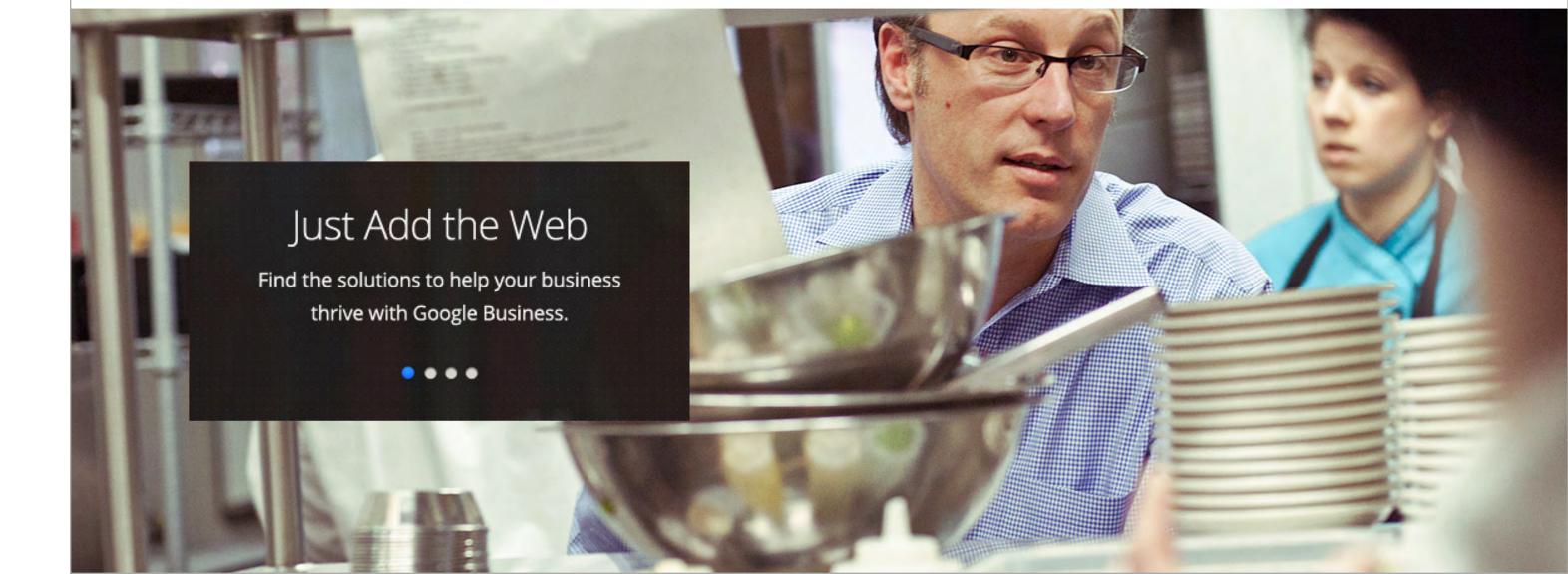
Build Your Web Presence

Advertise On The Web

Make Your Business Social

Community

Browse By Product



Use of Color

Color should be used to draw attention to the subject, streamline the composition and guide the viewer to the most important part of the image.

The tones should be warm and the colors should be soft. This can be achieved in post-production by increasing the contrast of images 10-30%. You may also manipulate the richness of the shadows by increasing the fill light. When increasing contrast, we want to avoid making the shadows too dark or solid pieces of black. This comes across as unnatural and strips the photograph of its depth.

Increasing the contrast between natural light and shadows can be a valid method for making the image pop. However, we must be careful not to perpetuate any unnatural colors. The image must be vivid while remaining true to the environment.

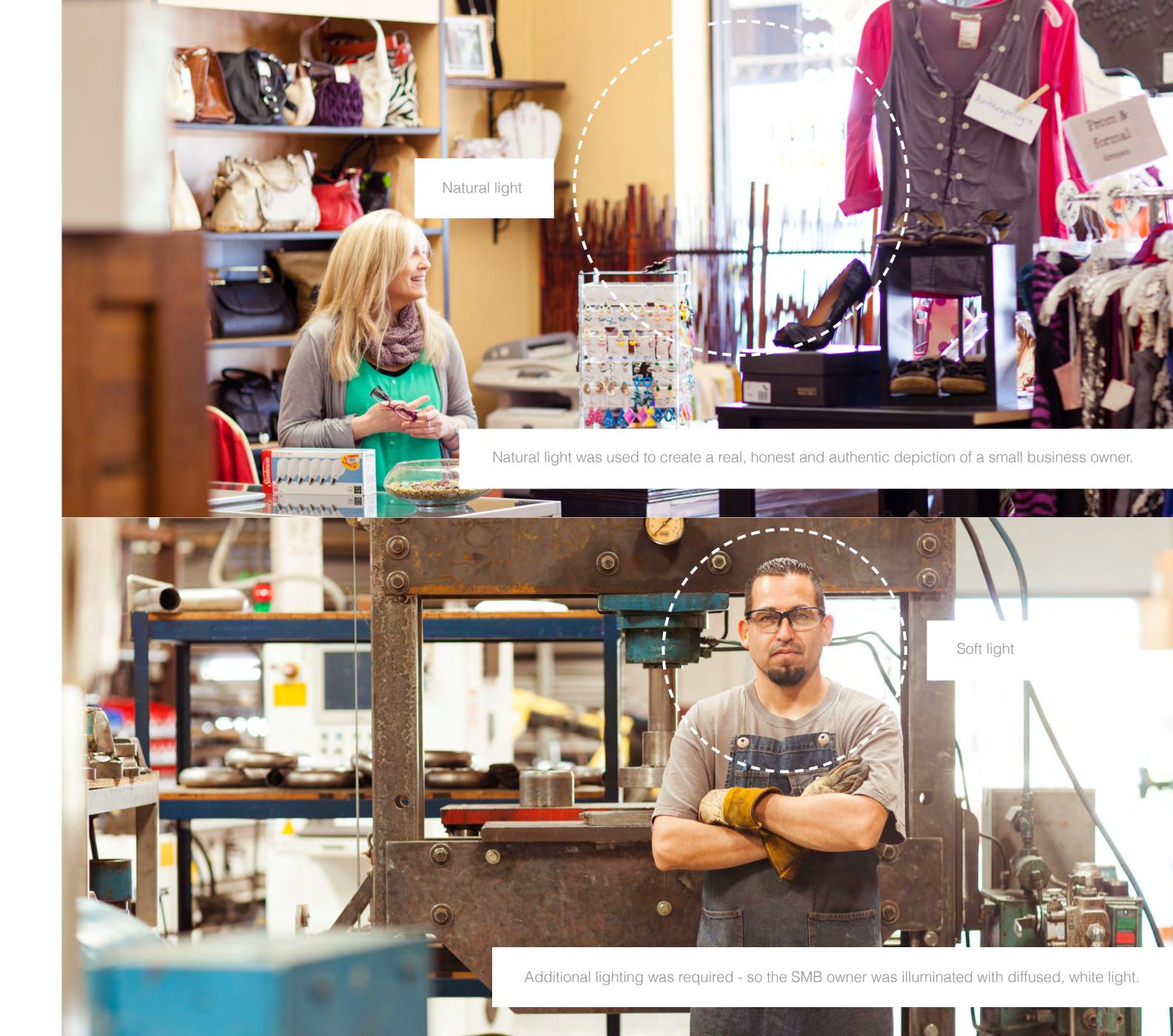


Use of Light

Images should be welcoming, open and bright.

Light is key to the image's final composition.

Natural lighting should be used whenever possible. Avoid direct sunlight that could be harsh and wash out the image. Natural and soft lighting diffused through a window is the perfect scenario. If you need additional lighting, it must give a sense of a larger, more natural light source. This should never be a direct light source projected onto the subject. It must be light via a diffuser, or reflected off-camera onto the small business owner and/or subject. It is important that the photos remain editorial and documentary, so always double check that your additional light does not give any sense of a stylized look.



Use of Depth of Field and Motion

Depth of field is the last and most important element of composing a photograph.

Many small business owners work in busy environments. Their bustling customers, tools, supplies and storefront can be rife with eyecandy; make sure they never distract from the subject of your photo. A shallow depth of field will isolate the main subject within the chaos that can be found in a small business. This DOF can be achieved by honing in on your subject matter and shooting your subject with a low aperture (f/1.2 - f/3.5).

Add energy to your photograph using motion blur. This should be used sparingly on environmental shots where the small business has a product that is in motion. Small motion blur will vitalize the photo and add movement to the room being photographed.



Attire and Make Up

We want our subjects to feel great during the shoot. They should look put together, but authentic and never overly dress or made up. Small business owners and their employees should wear what they typically wear to work.

Clothes need to be clean, fitting and flattering.

A color or simple pattern is encouraged. Make sure there are no large logos and/or graphics unless they are part of a uniform. Nothing should be too trendy or gimmicky.

Make up should look natural and not overly-applied. Accessories are fine, but keep them to a minimum. Nothing distracting or religious. Safety accessories like safety goggles should be worn while documenting work-in-progress for the small businesses that require them.

NOTE: Ask your subjects to bring 3-5 wardrobe options and a variety of accessories. For subjects who wear uniforms, ask them to bring whatever styles are available.



Post-production

Adjustments should not create an overly-polished look. Take care that it is not obvious that the images were retouched.

Possible adjustments include simplifying the background and/or environment. If elements of the shot need to be highlighted, contrast and color can be boosted. Additionally, the image can be sharpened or blurred to bring focus to the subject. Adding overall balance and adjusting color are expected. Shadows can be opened up to create light. Distracting copy, text and logos should be removed.



Google

Feel free to share this guide with your creative and agency partners.

? If you have any questions, email Judy Nam

