



Rising operating costs and inflation in 2026: the hidden threat to small business profit (and how to stay ahead)

Rising operating costs and inflation are reshaping how small businesses operate in 2026. Wages, supplier pricing, rent, utilities, insurance, and interest repayments have all increased — often simultaneously. While revenue may appear stable, margins are tightening, and cash flow pressure is building. Many SMEs are discovering that profit on paper doesn't always translate into cash in the bank. When expenses rise faster than pricing adjustments, businesses feel squeezed from every direction. [Tips](#).

'LIVE' AI Webinar Series 'AI for Everyday Business'

Your Digital Intern: Automate the Boring Stuff

14th April, Tuesday, 9am-11am (AWST Perth) \$110 - [\[BOOK NOW\]](#)

Stop sacrificing your evenings to admin. Learn to leverage free AI tools to instantly generate professional invoices, distil long meeting notes into action items, and reclaim hours spent on repetitive paperwork. Turn AI into your most productive (and free) employee.



Marketing on a Shoestring: Big Brand Looks for Small Budgets

21st April, Tuesday, 9am-11am (AWST Perth) \$110 - [\[BOOK NOW\]](#)

You don't need a hefty agency fee to stand out. Discover how AI can craft high-converting social media captions, enhance your brand imagery, and generate a 30-day content calendar in under 30 minutes. Scale your visibility without increasing your marketing spend.



Chat with Your Spreadsheet: Insights Without the Headache

28th April, Tuesday, 9am-11am (AWST Perth) \$110 - [\[BOOK NOW\]](#)

You don't need to be a math expert to understand your sales figures. We will show you how to securely upload a spreadsheet to an AI tool and simply ask it questions like, "Which day was my busiest?" or "What product is losing me money?"



Welcome to BEC members - Rose De Rossi, Diversifi

EASTER SPECIAL – 18months for the price of 12

BENEFITS OF BEC MEMBERSHIP - Members can access 30-60mins free advisory with an accountant; lawyer; HR specialist; or IP Attorney to discuss your issues. Members also receive free webinars during the designedge innovation festival, free business sundowners, buying mission opportunities, access to mentoring at discounted rates, supply chain linkages. Bronze, Silver & Gold Levels available. Membership is tax deductible. [Join](#)

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Global Sources Hong Kong shows – April 2026

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Check out the wide range of international fairs and trade shows [here](#). Register for shows in Hong Kong for: Consumer electronics, Mobile electronics, Home and kitchen and Sports and outdoor – [here](#).



REMINDER - Are you a Speaker or Presenter?

Like to present during 22nd designedge Innovation Festival?

BEC, TCF & BPW Members are invited to register interest in being a presenter or speaker during our 22nd designedge Innovation festival, which will run 4 months June to September to our national & global network. Speakers can run LIVE or recorded ONLINE. [View 2025 Festival Sponsor Opportunities also available](#). Contact [Carol Hanlon](#)



LAST CHANCE- Sponsorship Opportunity

33rd Belmont & Western Australian Small Business Awards 2026

Join us to sponsor a category in the 33rd Annual Belmont & Western Australian Small Business Awards in 2026, providing recognition to small businesses across WA. Launching in June and running through to October. Gain extensive promotion and marketing opportunities for your

business. [View 2025 winners & sponsors](#) Further info contact [Carol Hanlon](#)



Top challenges small businesses will face, and how to overcome them
As we move into 2026, Australian small and medium-sized business (SME) owners face an evolving landscape marked by rising costs, digital disruption, regulatory changes, and staffing challenges. This article highlights the top challenges SMEs are likely to encounter in 2026 and provides practical strategies to navigate them with confidence. We also explore how working with a trusted business adviser like Cosca can help you stay ahead of the curve and turn challenges into opportunities. [Tips](#).



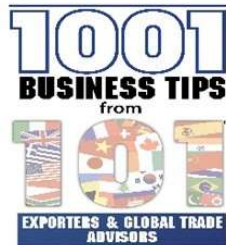
Grants and assistance programs in Australia

Find grants, funding, and support programs from across government to help YOUR business grow and succeed! When searching for funding, keep in mind that you'll generally need to meet certain criteria to be eligible, and that, aside from funding assistance, many programs can help your business by building your skills and knowledge. [Do you qualify?](#)



International Volunteer Year (IVY2026)

The United Nations officially declared 2026 International Volunteer Year which is a global opportunity to recognise the vital role volunteering plays in building inclusive, resilient societies. One of the main messages of International Volunteer Year is that removing barriers to volunteering is key. This makes it a great time to review how your organisation can make its volunteer program more inclusive and open to all. [Newsletter](#).



Are you an exporter or global trade advisor?

1001 Business Tips from 101™ Exporters and Global Trade Advisor Experts

Would you like to be featured in our new eBook with your 10 tips for Exporters and Global Trade Advisors? Each expert will be allocated two pages. Participation includes additional promotional opportunities as an expert and you may also be invited as a presenter in future 1001 Business Tips Online Forums. Interested to share your expertise and gain exposure? **Contact** [Carol Hanlon](#)



In case you lose your mobile phone

Open Settings. Then the lock screen, then contact information. Add another phone number or email. This contact will show on your phone screen, even if it is locked, so that someone finding your phone can use it to contact you.



Know someone remote who can help with your computer problem?

Give someone remote access, control and support that works with almost any desktop and mobile platform. They can connect remotely to anywhere in the world and use them as though they were there. Download to any device to manage and monitor your IT anytime, anywhere. Use TeamViewer [here](#). **OR** the Windows free option, search/open 'Quick Assist' on your computer.



Small Business News

Small business owners are actively exploring growth and transformation opportunities, with a strong interest in expanding offerings, improving customer reach, and considering new markets. Research into technology and artificial intelligence remains elevated, alongside demand for practical, hands-on support to turn ambition into action. [Newsletter](#).



How to start a business with little or no money: a guide

Are you thinking about starting a business with little or no money? This guide will walk you through practical strategies to launch a business on a budget. From leveraging creativity and free tools to strategic planning and low-cost funding options, you'll gain the insights needed to turn your business idea into reality -without breaking the bank. With the right approach, building a strong foundation for long-term sustainability and growth is possible. [Like this](#).



Compliance and enforcement priorities from ACCC

ACCC states- We set out our priorities to achieve compliance with the Competition and Consumer Act 2010 and other legislation we enforce. Our policy outlines our enforcement powers, functions, priorities and strategies. You have rights and responsibilities when there's a problem with a product or service. You can also report an issue to us. [Here](#).



Free online cybersecurity course

Simple online learning for small business owners and employees

Cybercrime can disrupt your business for days, if not weeks, or even permanently. That's where Cyber Wardens come in. Funded by the Australian

government, Cyber Wardens is a free online training program that provides quick wins you can implement to help protect your small business against cyber threats. Cyber Wardens is a key initiative within the Australian Government's Cyber Security Strategy. Learn more and enrol [here](#).



Act Now. Stay Secure.

What are you risking online?

As technology rapidly advances and we spend more time online, Australians remain vulnerable to cyber-attacks. The Act Now. Stay Secure. campaign is educating Australians on the simple cyber safe actions that everyone can take every day to protect themselves online. [Like this](#).



Low-cost business growth tips

You've opened your very own small business, but now you need to grow it. You can either pay someone to market your company for you, or you can start implementing certain low-cost ways to grow your small business. Some of the most cost-effective ways to grow your business include self-marketing and advertising. It can be as simple as treating your employees well or posting frequently on social media. Certain businesses can do the hard work for you, but it's going to cost a pretty penny. Lucky for you, expanding a company doesn't have to be as difficult or expensive as many claim it is. [Ideas](#).



Another tip by Dr. Ricci Leong -from the now published - '1001 Business Tips from 101™ Cyber Security Experts

The attacker starts from the accounts. Data is the target of most attackers; the user's account is one of the most important keys to attack. All attacks will link up with accounts associated with processes or programs being compromised. So, attackers normally start by compromising systems with weak passwords or previously stolen passwords. Then, through the compromised accounts, attackers will further explore to obtain privileged accounts in the system or the entire environment. We should define monitoring mechanisms for the use of seldom used accounts and privilege accounts.



Build a strong data strategy in the cloud

Do you feel like you're sitting on a treasure trove of data but struggle to extract value from it? You're not alone. Business leaders have been on a quest to make data a strategic asset, but face persistent challenges ranging from complex data silos to teams not having the right tool for the job. These challenges, combined with the strategic imperative to deliver tangible business value, are intensifying the urgency to act and embrace building a data strategy in the cloud. [Like this](#).



Websites that you may find useful

Before sending a business email, cut/paste it into Claude and say something like 'make this sound as if a senior executive wrote it' – [access](#).
Before you send a presentation, upload the slides into ChatGPT and ask, 'What would an expert consultant change?' – [link](#).
Get the latest AI news, understand why it matters, and learn how to apply it in your work from *The Rundown* – [here](#).



Men experiencing difficult times

Although we all go through difficult times in life, men and women can experience and react to situations differently. Research shows men are less likely to seek support for mental health issues and are less likely to disclose a mental health problem to friends or family. It is important to remember that there are things we can do to get through tough times, and we don't have to go through them alone. Difficult times can be easier to manage with the right help and support. [Article](#).



Gemini 3 Pro – the first model in the 3 family – is a smarter tool to tap into the entire internet's knowledge for answering questions, writing code and analysing or creating media. Users of the Gemini app can choose to use Gemini 3 Pro to solve problems with advanced reasoning or even create interactive apps or presentations on the fly. [How?](#)



The Cyber Sushi

(serving up the cold facts, with some phish bytes)
Here's what is covered in this issue:

Recovery Scams: A Growing Threat for Scam Victims
Keeping Your Mob Safe Online: Our New Safety Takeaways Booklet
Behind the mask: The Guide to New and Trending Scams. [All here](#).



How to protect AI, data, and applications in the cloud

Zero Trust is evolving fast in 2025 as organisations adopt more cloud-native architectures and integrate gen AI into critical workflows. This Amazon Web Services (AWS) on-demand webinar, featuring experts from AWS and SANS Institute, explores how security leaders are redefining access controls, application protections, and data safeguards across a complex, distributed environment. To watch the [webinar](#).



Tips you may find useful

If you use Google Chrome to order and pay for goods online, open Settings – find Payment Methods and turn it off. If it is on your phone or computer, it could automatically fill in any form – even without your approval.
10 Hidden Features in Microsoft Word (You'll wish you knew sooner) [Here](#).
Be more efficient with these 23 quick tricks in Excel [click!](#)



Turn your data foundation into a lasting competitive advantage for AI

Drive success across common use cases with the right data strategy, now and in the future. As organisations race to implement artificial intelligence (AI), the winners are quietly mastering something more fundamental: their data foundation. A strong, unified data foundation with integrated analytics, AI, and built-in governance enable open access to all your data, accelerating business transformation and competitive advantage. [Learn more.](#)



Inventory management: how to manage small business inventory

Inventory management is the process of controlling a business's stock as it comes in and goes out, so you always have the right quantities of the right products available for sale at the right time. Good inventory management practices protect your cash flow and balance supply with customer demand while avoiding wastage. Like this.



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15% off storage boxes and 50% off the first 2 months of storage. Storage King can ship your parcels to anywhere in the world. Storage King arrange the booking and email consignment notes for clients to attach to their deliveries. We offer a wide range of self-storage options, from lockers to vehicle storage.

Phone Email, W: storageking.com.au

Our special thanks to Storage King Perth Airport for their great support in sponsoring storage of textiles and sewing machines donated for our next community village sewing projects.



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- [Pricing, Costing and Cashflow](#)
- [Starting Your New Business](#)
- [Understanding the Australian Privacy Changes](#)
- [Credit Management And Debt Collection](#)
- [How To Write A Tender Or Grant Submission](#)
- [Tips on Building a Successful Business](#)
- [Preparing For A Fashion Trade Show](#)
- [How To Start A Fashion Label](#)
- [Quality Control In The Fashion Industry](#)
- [Importing and Exporting](#)
- [Get Noticed By The Media](#)
- [How To Brief Your Website Developer](#)
- [TESTEX – Textile Accreditation and Labelling](#)
- [Avoiding Manufacturing Pitfalls](#)
- [Marketing On A Budget](#)
- [Strategies for Off Shore Outsourcing](#)

- [Sourcing in Asia via HK](#)
- [Sourcing Textiles & Apparel in India](#)
- [Buying Or Selling A Business](#)
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- [Ethical Fashion and the Triple Bottom Line](#)
- [Italian Fashion Media](#)
- [Preparing a Business for Sale](#)
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- [How To Grow Your Business](#)
- [Strategies for Off Shore Sourcing](#)
- [Establishing Your Label in the USA](#)
- [What Buyers Are Looking For](#)
- [Specification Sheets for Apparel Manufacturing](#)
- [Marketing for Small Fashion Business](#)

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