



young
equine
innovators

MODULE 5

Going Digital

*The digital layer around
your equine business —
customer journey, AI,
systems, money, trust*

www.youngequineinnovators.eu



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Important Information Before You Begin



This module is designed for education, enterprise planning and skills development. It introduces examples of digital tools, AI platforms, booking systems, payment services, software and online resources that may support an equine business.

Commercial References: References to third party providers are included as practical examples. Their inclusion does not represent a recommendation, endorsement or guarantee by Young Equine Innovators, the project partners, the European Union or EACEA.

Check Current Information: Prices, transaction fees, features, access levels, eligibility, security arrangements and terms of service can change. Always check current information directly with the provider and compare suitable options before creating an account, sharing information or making a payment.

Professional Advice: The module does not replace professional legal, financial, tax, insurance, veterinary, welfare, data protection or cyber security advice. Learners and businesses should follow the laws, regulations, age requirements and professional standards that apply in their own country and situation.

AI and Digital Responsibility: AI output and online information should be checked for accuracy, suitability, horse welfare, privacy, consent and business risk. Do not enter confidential customer, horse, financial or business information into a digital tool unless you understand how that information will be stored and used.

Your Decision: The final responsibility for selecting tools, approving content, protecting information, managing payments and communicating with customers remains with the user and the equine business.

Learning Outcomes



By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Map the digital customer journey for your own offer — seven stages, one digital touchpoint per stage.
- Build a minimum digital presence that lets a real customer understand and act on your offer.
- Set up core yard systems digitally — horse records, welfare logs, reminders.
- Choose digital tools for bookings, marketing, CRM, payments and admin.
- Use AI as a practical business assistant — with a 5-part prompt and the CARE check.
- Apply cybersecurity, GDPR and photo-consent rules in your yard.
- Roll out a new digital tool in 30 days without losing the team or the horses.
- Produce a one-page Digital Equine Business Plan that supports your first customers.

Your learner workbook – take what's yours

This module comes with a Learner Workbook. It's yours to mark up, write in, and share with a mentor.

One rule: there is no rule.

You don't have to complete every activity. Some won't apply to your idea, your stage, or your country. The point is to pick the ones that move YOUR venture forward and skip the rest without guilt.

A workbook half-finished but acted on beats a workbook fully completed and filed away.



01

Introduction

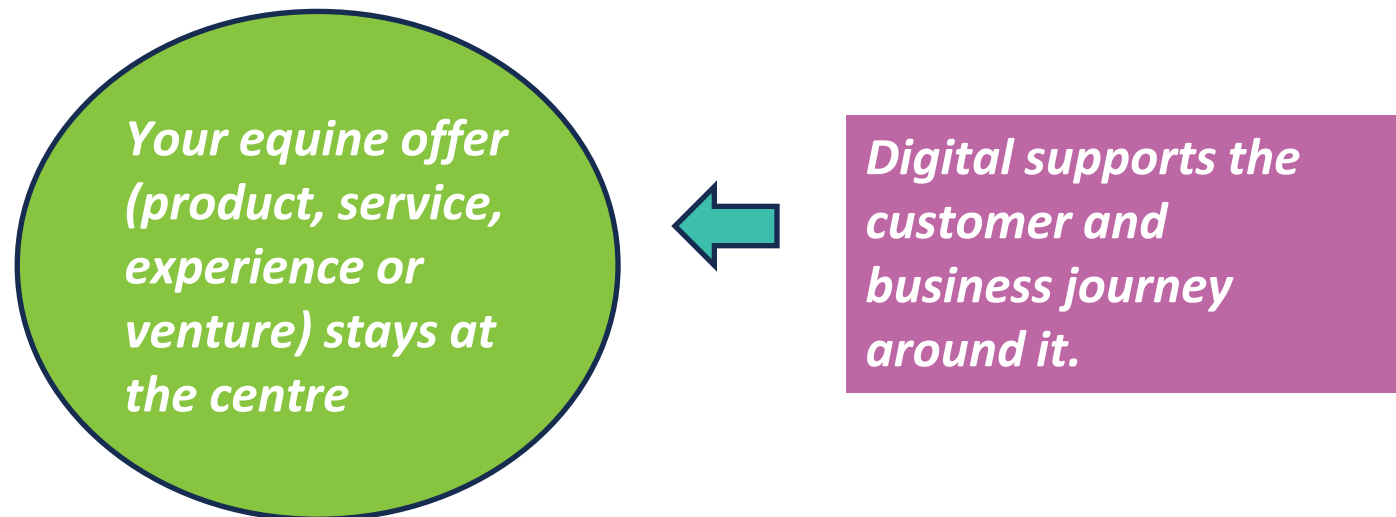
Digital around your equine offer



Digital is the layer around your equine offer

An equine business includes the moments before, during and after the horse-related work - discovery, enquiry, booking, payment, preparation, consent, delivery, updates, records, feedback and return.

- **FIND** — Help the right customers discover and understand your offer.
- **TRUST** — Show standards, consent, welfare thinking and reliable communication.
- **ACT** — Make it easy to enquire, book, buy, receive updates and return.



What we know so far...

Module 4 gave you the bones of your enterprise — systems, customer experience, goals, funding. This module makes them digital.

From Module 4, bring with you:

- Your Business Systems Blueprint — the six core systems you mapped.
- Your Promise to Clients — the 3-5 standards you committed to.
- Your SMART goals for the next 90 days.
- Your Funding Plan — what you'll spend on tools and subscriptions.

Through Module 5 you'll pick a digital tool, or no tool, for each of those systems.

The Digital Choice Filter

Use this filter before choosing any tool, platform or subscription.

CUSTOMER VALUE — does it make the customer experience easier, clearer or more trustworthy?

ENTERPRISE VALUE — does it save time, reduce mistakes, support sales or improve delivery?

COST AND EFFORT — can you afford it, learn it and maintain it with the time you have?

WELFARE AND TRUST — does it protect horses, people, personal information and reputation?

Decision sentence: I will use this tool because it supports my customer, my delivery and my trust standards.



SECTION

02

Map the digital customer journey

The seven stages of the digital customer journey

Every client experience runs through seven moments. Digital makes each one easier, but if badly used, can break them.

1. **DISCOVER** — they first see you (digital search, your digital presence and social media).
2. **UNDERSTAND** — they work out whether the offer is for them.
3. **TRUST** — they see proof of care, quality, welfare and reliability.
4. **ACT** — they message, click, book, or buy.
5. **PREPARE** — they get reminders, directions, what to bring or do.
6. **RECEIVE** — the session, product or service is delivered and recorded.
7. **RETURN** — they review, refer, repeat-book.

Ask before any tool: which stage does this digital choice improve?

Worked example: two different digital journeys

PRODUCT — welfare-first riding gloves

- **DISCOVER:** short Instagram video showing grip, stitching, winter use.
- **UNDERSTAND:** clear "who these suit" line — daily riders, winter yard work, ages 16-30. Sizing guide with one photo per size.
- **TRUST:** customer photos with consent, clear sizing.
- **ACT:** simple order form with size, colour, payment.
- **PREPARE:** confirmation message + care notes.
- **RECEIVE:** packed order with care card.
- **RETURN:** review request + winter stock reminder.

SERVICE — saddle-comfort check

- **DISCOVER:** post explaining three signs a saddle may feel uncomfortable.
- **UNDERSTAND:** "Is a saddle check for me?" FAQ — suitable disciplines, session length, what happens, who it's not for.
- **TRUST:** trainer qualifications, process, price.
- **ACT:** booking link with location, horse details, preferred time.
- **PREPARE:** message about tack to ready and who should attend.
- **RECEIVE:** session notes, observations, recommended next step.
- **RETURN:** two-week follow-up + repeat-check option.

Activity: Build your digital journey map

Use your own offer. For each of the seven stages, write the customer's question, your digital touchpoint, and the standard you'll keep.

Format: Stage — Customer question — My digital touchpoint — My standard

Three examples:

- 1. Discover** — Where will they first see me? — Instagram + Google Business — at least one weekly post showing the work.
- 2. Trust** — What proof helps them feel confident? Pinned welfare pledge + photo gallery — every photo with written consent.
- 3. Act** — How will they enquire, book or buy? — Bookwhen page with available slots + €25 deposit — reply within 4 hours, every time.



SECTION

03

Your minimum digital
presence

What your digital presence must make clear

A stranger should understand what you offer, who it's for and what to do next, within one minute of finding you.

Your minimum presence must show:

- **OFFER** — what you provide and what's included.
- **CUSTOMER** — who the offer is suitable for.
- **VALUE** — the result, benefit or improvement the customer receives.
- **TRUST** — evidence of care, quality, welfare and reliability.
- **ACTION** — how to enquire, book, buy or ask a question.
- **BOUNDARIES** — availability, limits, suitability, consent, safety conditions.

If any of these six is missing, you're losing customers before they even ask.

Choose your first channel

Pick ONE channel and do it well. Spread thin and you could do all of them badly.

INSTAGRAM OR FACEBOOK PAGE — visual offers, local services, experiences, youth-friendly updates.

Include: bio, location, contact, highlights, proof of work, clear action.

ONE-PAGE WEBSITE (Carrd, Squarespace, Wix) — offers needing clear information, prices, forms, policies.

Include: offer page, booking route, FAQs, contact, trust evidence.

ONLINE SHOP OR ORDER FORM (Etsy, Shopify, Instagram Shopping) — products, kits, prints, equipment.

Include: photos, sizes, price, delivery, returns, payment, care instructions.

DIGITAL PORTFOLIO (Notion, Carrd) — freelance roles, photography, coaching, yard services.

Include: skills, availability, work examples, references, contact, invoice routine.

Digital trust — what customers actually look for

Trust is built through clear information, consistent standards and visible care.

REAL INFORMATION — name, area, contact method, offer details, response time.

QUALITY PROOF — photos, examples, testimonials, results, process notes.

WELFARE STANDARDS — how horses are treated, checked and protected.

CLEAR TERMS — price, booking process, cancellation, delivery, suitability.

CONSENT PRACTICE — images and quotes shared only with permission.

PROFESSIONAL TONE — helpful, respectful and calm communication in every channel.

A young equine entrepreneur with all six visible trust points can beat an established business with none of them.

Activity: Design your minimum digital presence

Create the smallest first version that lets a real customer understand and act on your offer.

Format: Question — Your answer

1. Which channel will I use first?

2. What will my profile or page say in one sentence?

3. What three pieces of trust evidence will I show?



SECTION

04

Running the yard digitally.

Your business may sit inside or outside the yard environment. Either way, the yard is central to the equine sector, and understanding how it operates digitally gives you valuable industry insight.

What a digital yard management system actually does

A yard management system replaces "who fed Bonnie?" and the whiteboard nobody updates.

The six things a digital yard system tracks:

1. Daily tasks and checklists — feeding, turnout, mucking, exercise.
2. Horse profiles — age, breed, owner, routine, behaviour notes.
3. Staff rota and shift handovers — who's on, who needs telling what.
4. Feed plans and turnout schedules — repeatable, written, dated.
5. Incidents, vet visits and maintenance logs — searchable, with photos.
6. Owner communication — one place, not five WhatsApp threads.

Digital options (paid): HorseTracking, EquineTrack, Stable Secretary, Hivemind, or a shared Notion workspace.

Horse records — welfare you can prove

If it is not recorded, it did not happen. That's not legal advice; it's how inspectors, vets and insurers see it.

Every horse on your yard should have a digital record showing:

- Medical history, vaccinations and worming dates.
- Farrier, dentist and routine vet visits (with photos of work done).
- Any incident, lameness, or behaviour change — dated, signed, photographed.
- Workload — how many sessions, with whom, for how long.
- Vet treatment entries — date, dosage, reason, who approved.

When something goes wrong, this record is what protects the horse, the staff and the business.

Automated reminders that save welfare disasters

The most useful digital feature for an equine yard isn't digital dashboards — it's reminders that ping you the day before.

Set up automated reminders for:

- Vaccinations due — 14 days before.
- Farrier visit — 7 days before.
- Worming schedule — seasonal.
- Dental check — yearly rolling reminder.
- Insurance renewal — 30 days before.
- Passport renewal — 90 days before.

A €5/month subscription with reliable reminders is cheaper than one missed vaccination.

Worked example: Lýtingsstaðir's daily digital routine

From Module 4 you met Lýtingsstaðir — Evelyn and Sveinn's trekking and farm-stay business in north Iceland. Here's how they actually run their day with digital.

BOOKINGS — phone + email, availability in a shared Google Calendar that staff can see.

GUEST DETAILS — rider weight, experience and accessibility needs in a single guest spreadsheet, used to match horse to rider.

DAILY CHECK — printed laminated checklist per stable run; what's been done, by whom, signed.

HORSE ROTA — paper-and-pen daily, transferred to a yearly digital workload tracker each month — so no horse is overworked across the season.

OWNER UPDATES — a daily group photo + one-line message to the guests' WhatsApp before the ride.

WELFARE RECORDS — digital, kept by Sveinn, updated weekly. Every horse, every treatment, dated and signed.

Cost of the digital stack: €0 (free Google + WhatsApp) plus €15/month for the welfare-records app.

Wearables — when they're worth it (and when they're not)

Sensors and wearables measure heart rate, recovery, stride symmetry, GPS routes. They're a performance and welfare tool and it up to you to determine if they are essential at this stage of your business

Worth it when:

- Racing, sport, or rehabilitation yard.
- You want early warning of overtraining.
- You need data to share with vets or owners.
- Staff trained to interpret it.

Not worth it when:

- Hacking, trekking, or general livery.
- Nobody has time to look at the data.
- Cost outweighs the welfare gain.

The wearable rule: data supports observation. If the horse looks unwell, act first and record after.

ACTIVITY: Your yard's digital baseline

Look at your current yard (or planned yard). Where are the breakdowns? The moments when something gets missed, repeated, or argued over? Those are your digital opportunities.

Format: Problem on the yard — current method — digital alternative — would I actually use it?

Three examples:

1. Feed plans get changed verbally and forgotten — chalkboard wiped daily — shared Google Sheet open on the tack-room iPad — yes, if staff stick to it.
2. Vaccination dates slip — paper diary in the office — automated reminders in a horse-records app — yes, worth €5/month.
3. Owner photos go to a personal WhatsApp — phone gets full and lost — a dedicated WhatsApp Business with broadcast lists — yes, free.



SECTION

05

Reaching and keeping clients

Every equine business depends on people choosing it, trusting it and returning. Digital tools can help you reach the right clients, communicate clearly and build relationships that last.

Online bookings — what actually works

Online bookings remove three problems: missed phone calls, double-booked slots, and clients who give up because they had to leave a voicemail.

What a good booking system needs:

- Available slots shown in real time — no "I'll get back to you".
- Rider info captured up front — experience, weight, accessibility, contact.
- Clear pricing — published, not whispered.
- A cancellation policy that protects the yard without being hostile.
- A deposit option for serious enquirers.

Tool options: Bookwhen, SimplyBook, Calendly, Acuity, or a Google Form + Calendly combo. Cost: From free to €30/month.

Digital marketing — three things, done weekly, done well

Your marketing plan as a small equine business should be simple enough that you'll actually do it. Three things, every week, for a year

1. ONE post a week showing the work — a horse, a happy rider, a moment.
2. ONE post a week sharing the values — welfare, training method, sustainability.
3. ONE direct ask a week — "three slots left this Saturday" or "new pony camp dates released".

Pick one platform — Instagram or Facebook — and do it well. Don't spread thin.

Schedule a month at a time using a free tool (Meta Business Suite, Buffer, Later). Don't sit on your phone every day chasing engagement.

Social media — yard reputation in plain view

Social media is your shopfront. It's also the place a single bad photo can damage your welfare reputation overnight.

Yard reputation rules for social:

- Never post a horse that's stressed, sweating from heat, or in obvious discomfort.
- Never post a child without a parent's clear written consent.
- Never share real-time location for high-value horses (theft risk).
- Show the work, not the perfection — welfare-aware audiences distrust over-curated yards.
- Respond to negative comments calmly and factually, never defensively.

The boundary rule: keep a separate work account. Personal life is not yard business.

CRM basics — knowing who books, when, why

CRM = customer relationship management. For a small equine business, a CRM is a spreadsheet that knows enough about your clients to look like a memory.

A basic CRM tracks:

- Name, contact, location, how they first found you.
- Every session they've booked — when, what, with which horse.
- Their experience level, preferences, any accessibility notes.
- What they paid, and whether they paid on time.
- A short "last time" note — what they enjoyed, what to remember next time.

Tools that work: Google Sheets (free), Notion (free), HubSpot Free, Airtable, or a dedicated equine CRM like Stable Secretary.

Owner updates — keeping livery clients informed

If you run livery or stud, the single biggest source of complaints is poor communication. Digital fixes this almost completely.

What good owner communication looks like:

- A weekly photo + one-line update for each horse.
- A same-day update if anything's changed (turnout, feed, behaviour, treatment).
- An agreed channel — WhatsApp Business, email, or a livery app — used consistently.
- Important updates also recorded in the horse's digital record.
- A clear time window when owners can expect to hear back.

The professional rule:

Use agreed channels, and record important updates in the horse record too.

Conversation goes; records stay.

SECTION

06

AI as your business assistant

AI can make the digital side of an equine business easier to begin and manage, helping you turn your knowledge into practical plans, clearer communication and useful customer tools.

AI as a practical business assistant

AI can help you plan, create, organise and communicate using the tools you already have. The strongest results come when AI supports your equine knowledge, your understanding of the customer and your responsibility for the final decision.

AI can support practical work across an equine business.

- **PLAN** — Turn an idea into actions, timelines, checklists and customer steps.
- **CREATE** — draft product descriptions, booking messages, customer guides, FAQs, marketing content.
- **ORGANISE** — structure notes, appointments, stock information, task lists and follow up actions.
- **COMMUNICATE** — Improve wording, translate information, prepare replies and adapt messages for different customers.
- **REVIEW** — improve clarity, spelling, structure, tone.
- **LEARN** — Enhance your business knowledge, help you practise conversations and suggest questions to ask a mentor, supplier or customer.

You bring the essential parts: real horse observation, customer understanding, local knowledge, values, judgement and the final decision.

Choose the AI Tool That Fits the Task

AI tools develop quickly. Their features, access limits and strongest capabilities can change from month to month. Choose the tool that best matches the work you need to complete today.

ChatGPT Often useful for:

- Developing and testing ideas
- Writing customer content
- Working with uploaded files
- Creating and editing images
- Analysing information and data
- Practising conversations through voice

Equine business example Upload notes from customer testing and ask ChatGPT to organise the findings into improvements for your offer.

Claude Often useful for:

- Working through detailed ideas
- Reading and improving longer documents
- Developing clear explanations
- Refining tone and structure
- Creating editable documents, tools and visual content through Artifacts

Equine business example . Ask Claude to review a detailed customer guide and make it clearer, warmer and easier to follow.

Gemini Often useful for:

- Researching a topic
- Working with Google Docs, Gmail and Sheets
- Summarising information
- Creating repeatable helpers through Gems
- Connecting tasks across Google tools

Equine business example. Use Gemini to organise supplier research and turn the findings into a comparison table in Google Sheets.

Microsoft Copilot

Often useful for:

- Working inside Word, Excel and PowerPoint
- Summarising emails in Outlook
- Creating documents and presentations
- Using information already stored in Microsoft 365
- Supporting regular office and administration tasks

Equine business example. Use Copilot in Excel to review monthly sales, costs and customer booking patterns.

Choose Using 4 Questions

- **Task:** What do I need to create, understand, organise or improve?
- **Access:** Which tools are available through my phone, school, youth service, workplace or personal account?
- **Information:** Will I be entering customer details, horse records, financial information or private business material?
- **Result:** Which tool produces the clearest and most useful result for this particular task?

Give AI a clear brief — the 5-part prompt

A clear brief helps AI produce a useful first draft that you can check, edit and use.

1. CONTEXT — Explain the situation before asking for the task. Include:

- What your equine business offers
- The stage your idea has reached
- Where and how you deliver it
- Any important limits around time, money, skills or access
- Relevant welfare, safety or customer considerations

Example: I am developing a mobile tack cleaning service for riders at three local yards. I am testing the service with five customers and currently collect and return tack on Saturdays.

2. TASK — What exactly do you want created? State the exact result you want AI to create. Use a clear action word such as: Create, Draft, Organise, Compare, Summarise, Improve, Review, Plan

Example: Create a booking confirmation message for a new customer.

Give AI a clear brief — the 5-part prompt

A clear brief helps AI produce a useful first draft that you can check, edit and use.

3. CUSTOMER — Describe the person who will receive or use the result. Include:

- Who they are
- What matters to them
- What they already know
- What question or concern they may have
- What action you want them to take

Example: The customer is a busy horse owner who wants a reliable service and clear collection arrangements. They have already asked about availability and price.

4. REQUIREMENTS — List the information and standards that must appear. This may include: Price, Dates and times, Location, What is included, What the customer must provide, Payment arrangements, Welfare and safety information, Consent or privacy requirements, Tone, Length, Facts that must remain unchanged.

Example: Include the price, collection time, expected return time, payment arrangements and how each item will be labelled, photographed and protected.

Give AI a clear brief — the 5-part prompt

A clear brief helps AI produce a useful first draft that you can check, edit and use.

5. FORMAT —Tell AI how the final result should be presented. Possible formats:

Customer message

Checklist

Table

Frequently asked questions

Action plan

Social media post

Product description

Email or Call script

Booking form

Example: Write a friendly and professional WhatsApp message. Use short paragraphs and keep it under 120 words.

Complete Prompt: *I am developing a mobile tack cleaning service for riders at three local yards. I am testing the service with five customers and currently collect and return tack on Saturdays. Create a booking confirmation message for a new customer. The customer is a busy horse owner who wants a reliable service and clear collection arrangements. They have already asked about availability and price. Include the price, collection time, expected return time, payment arrangements and how each item will be labelled, photographed and protected. Write a friendly and professional WhatsApp message. Use short paragraphs and keep it under 120 words.*

AI across different equine offers

AI can help you turn your ideas, equine experience and existing access into practical business progress.

PRODUCT

AI can help you:

- Write product descriptions
- Create sizing and care information
- Prepare customer questions and answers
- Organise product options
- Draft delivery and return messages
- Compare supplier information

SERVICE

AI can help you:

- Prepare enquiry replies
- Create a booking checklist
- Explain what the service includes
- Draft reminders and follow up messages
- Turn customer feedback into improvement ideas

EXPERIENCE

AI can help you:

- Create preparation information
- Draft schedules and itineraries
- Prepare weather or timing updates
- Organise participant questions
- Create clear suitability and safety information

FREELANCE ROLE

AI can help you:

- Write a professional profile
- Describe your skills and availability
- Prepare a quote or invoice description
- Draft a message to a potential client
- Organise work examples into a portfolio

Keep the human in charge — the CARE check

AI can prepare drafts. You, the young entrepreneur, needs to check, edit and approve the final result.

C — CHECK

Names, prices, dates, calculations and factual information.

A — ASK PERMISSION

Customer details, photographs and horse records used with consent.

R — REVIEW RESPONSIBILITY

Ask a qualified person to review welfare, safety, legal or financial information when needed.

E — EDIT

Add your experience, tone, values and judgement before sharing.

Enterprise rule: AI can prepare a draft. The young entrepreneur approves the final result.

Activity: Write Your Own Five Part AI Brief

STEP 1: Choose one real task that would help you develop or manage your equine business.

STEP 1: Choose the Business Task	My chosen task:
Write a product description	
Prepare a customer enquiry reply	
Create a booking confirmation	
Plan a week of social content	
Compare two suppliers	
Create a simple event plan	
Draft a professional profile	
Prepare a feedback form	
Organise my next thirty days	

Activity: Write Your Own Five Part AI Brief

STEP 2: Create one complete AI brief for a real task in your equine business

2: Set the Scene

Complete this sentence: My equine business provides _____ for _____

My business is currently at this stage:

- Idea
- Testing
- First customers
- Trading
- Growing

Important background AI needs to know:



.....

.....

.....

.....

Choose the result

Start with one clear action word. Choose from

Create	Draft	Plan
Compare	Organise	Review
Improve	Summarise	

Complete this sentence:



I want AI to

.....

.....

.....

The finished result will help me:

.....

.....

Activity: Write Your Own Five Part AI Brief

STEP 3: Describe your equine customer and
STEP 4: Add the business details.

3: Describe your Customer

Complete this customer profile: The person receiving this is

_____.

They care most about:



.....

.....

.....

They may be unsure about:



.....

.....

.....

After reading or using the result, I want them to:



.....

4: Add the Business Details

List the information AI must include.

- Price:
- Dates or times:
- Location or delivery arrangements:
- What is included:
- Customer responsibilities:
- Welfare, safety or consent requirements:
- Important facts that must remain accurate:

Activity: Write Your Own Five Part AI Brief

STEP 5: Shape the final result

5: Choose the Output

- **Message:** Use for a short reply, reminder, confirmation or update.
- **Email:** Use for a more formal enquiry, booking response, supplier request or customer follow up.
- **Checklist:** Use when someone needs to complete or confirm a series of actions.
- **Table;** Use to compare prices, suppliers, products, customer feedback or options.
- **Plan;** Use to organise actions, responsibilities, timing and expected results.
- **Product Description;** Use to explain what the product is, who it suits, its benefits, price, care and delivery information.
- **Booking Form;** Use to collect the information needed to confirm a service, session or experience.
- **Social Post;** Use to attract attention, explain value and invite a clear customer action.
- **Customer Guide;** Use when the customer needs fuller information before, during or after delivery.
- **Frequently Asked Questions ;** Use to answer the questions customers are most likely to ask before they book or buy.

Choose the Tone

The tone should match the customer and the situation.

Friendly: Warm and approachable.

Professional; Reliable, respectful and business focused.

Clear: Simple, direct and easy to understand.

Reassuring; Calm and confidence building.

Energetic; Positive and action focused.

Direct; Brief and focused on the essential information.

You can combine tones. For example:

Friendly and professional

Clear and reassuring

Energetic and direct

Example Instruction

- Present the result as a friendly and professional WhatsApp message.
- Use three short paragraphs and keep it under 120 words.
- Include one clear action for the customer at the end.

Digital skills can become YOUR offer

A useful digital skill can become a small paid role for an equine business, club, yard or event.

- SOCIAL MEDIA ASSISTANT — plan posts, prepare captions, keep updates professional.
- BOOKING SUPPORT — organise enquiries, confirmations, reminders, follow-up.
- PRODUCT LISTING CREATOR — write descriptions, prepare images, update stock.
- DIGITAL RECORD HELPER — set up horse records, care logs, simple spreadsheets.
- CONTENT CREATOR — photos, short videos, event documentation with consent.
- ONLINE SHOP SUPPORT — order forms, customer replies, delivery notes, FAQs.

A strong first digital role starts with one customer, one clear task, one result and tools you can already use.



SECTION

07

Getting paid

Online payment processors — the four real choices

Most small equine businesses use one of four payment processors. Pick the one that fits how your money actually moves.

- **STRIPE** — best for online bookings and recurring subscriptions. 1.4% + 25c per transaction. Pairs with most booking systems.
- **REVOLUT BUSINESS** — best for invoicing, multi-currency, quick payments to suppliers. Free and €7/month tiers.
- **SUMUP / SQUARE** — best for in-person card payments at the yard, shows, and events. Card reader €29 once.
- **PAYPAL** — easy, instant, no business account needed — but watch the fees and the seller-protection limits on horse-related transactions.

Don't run more than two processors. Reconciliation gets miserable fast.

Invoicing, tax and admin — the tidy stack

Once you take real money, you need a proper paper trail. Three tools cover almost all small equine businesses.

1. INVOICING — Wave (free), Revolut Business, Stripe Invoicing, or Xero. Send numbered invoices, track who's paid, follow up automatically.

2. ACCOUNTING — Quickfile (free), FreeAgent, or a clean Google Sheet with monthly income, expenses and VAT category.

3. RECEIPTS — Dext, Receipt Bank, or a dedicated folder in Google Drive with monthly subfolders. Photograph every paper receipt the day you get it.

Cost of the full stack: €0–€20 a month. Time saved at tax return: at least a weekend a year.

ACTIVITY>: Choose your payment stack

Look at how money actually arrives in your business — one-off bookings, monthly livery, in-person events, online courses. Pick ONE processor per channel.

Format: Income channel — current method — chosen tool — fees expected

Three examples:

- 1. Saturday lesson bookings** — cash on the day — Stripe via Bookwhen, deposit at booking — 1.4% + 25c.
- 2. Monthly fees** — bank transfers I have to chase — GoCardless Direct Debit on the 1st — 1% of payment.
- 3. Show photo prints** — cash at the show — SumUp card reader — 1.69% per transaction.

SECTION

08

Trust, safety and ethics online



Cybersecurity for a small equine business

Cybercrime targets even the smallest businesses precisely because they assume they're too small to be targeted. You're not.

Five things to do this week:

- Unique passwords on every account — use a password manager (Bitwarden free, 1Password €3/month).
- Two-factor authentication on email, banking, social, and your booking system. No exceptions.
- Lock screen on every phone used for work — yours and any staff's.
- Never share staff passwords by message — use a shared vault if multiple people need access.
- Treat any "urgent payment" email asking for new bank details as a scam until you've phoned the sender.

Phishing emails asking for payments are the #1 risk for small equine businesses today.

Data protection — the GDPR basics everyone needs

GDPR applies the moment you keep client names and contact details. That's everyone. The good news: the basics are simple.

What a small equine business needs:

- A short privacy notice on your website — what you collect, why, how long you keep it.
- Explicit consent for photos and videos, especially of children — written, dated.
- A clear way for clients to ask for their data or have it deleted.
- Don't email lists with all addresses visible — use BCC or a proper email tool.
- Health and welfare data is sensitive — share only with vets and authorised owners.

Free template privacy notices are available from your national data-protection authority.

Photos, consent and welfare — the ethical line

Every photo you take involves three considerations: the horse's welfare, the owner's consent, and any rider's identity.

Ground rules:

- Don't post a horse showing pain, distress, or behaviour problems, even if you think makes a "funny" video.
- Get written consent before posting an identifiable photo of a child rider.
- If you photograph a horse in someone else's yard or at an event, ask first.
- Don't tag locations of expensive horses in real time.
- Surveillance cameras at the yard need a clear sign and a written policy if staff are filmed.

A small ethical reputation is one of the most valuable things a young equine business can build.

ACTIVITY: Your digital trust rules

Draft a one-page "how we behave online" for your business. It should cover what you'll share, what you won't, how you keep client data, and how you'd respond if something went wrong.

Format: Area — My rule — Who needs to know

Three examples:

1. Photos and videos — only with written consent; children under 16 with parent's consent.
2. Customer information — stored in approved tools only; deleted on request within 30 days.
3. Suspected phishing email — forward to the manager; never click the link; ring the sender to verify.



SECTION

09

Measure, improve and look ahead

Five digital measures that matter

Don't measure everything. Measure what tells you whether to keep going, change something, or kill it.

- 1. ENQUIRIES** — how many people ask about the offer each month?
- 2. CONVERSION** — how many of those enquiries become bookings or orders?
- 3. REPEAT RATE** — how many customers return or refer?
- 4. TIME SPENT** — how many hours a week do digital tools save (or steal)?
- 5. MONTHLY DIGITAL COST** — subscriptions, data, payment fees, tools, ad spend.

Check these monthly. If a tool isn't moving any of the five, it's costing you for nothing.

Digital innovation ahead and what to watch for

Some digital developments may become future enterprise opportunities. Explore them through the same lenses: horse, customer, you, enterprise.

- **WEARABLES** — heart rate, recovery, stride and workload data.
- **REMOTE COACHING** — video feedback, lesson review, rider progress support.
- **SMART STABLE SENSORS** — temperature, air quality, movement, safety alerts.
- **DIGITAL PASSPORTS** — horse identity, health records, event information.
- **AI-ASSISTED LOGS** — patterns in training, care, sales, customer feedback.
- **YARD DASHBOARDS** — shared view of welfare, tasks, costs, bookings.

Reflection: which development could create value for your future equine career or enterprise?

ACTIVITY: My Digital Equine Business Plan

TEMPLATE | One page. Bring this module together. Use it alongside your Module 4 enterprise plan.

My offer and customer

From Modules 3 and 4...

My digital customer journey

Seven stages, one touchpoint each...

My minimum digital presence

Channel, what it says, three trust signals...

My AI brief (5 parts)

Context, task, audience, requirements, format...

My first digital systems

Bookings, payments, records, customer comms...

5 things to take into Module 6

By the end of Module 5 you should be carrying these into Module 6:

1. Your digital customer journey map — seven stages, one touchpoint each.
2. Your minimum digital presence — channel, message, three trust signals.
3. Your yard's digital baseline — what's paper, what's digital, what to fix first.
4. Your AI brief template + CARE check — ready to use on any business task.
5. Your payment stack and trust rules — money in, data protected.

Module 6 turns these into a future-proof, sustainable enterprise — environmentally, financially, and in welfare practice.



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