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THE FIRST 3 SECONDS

The Hook Cheat Sheet for Local Business Video

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Read this first

Before I was behind a camera, I was on job sites laying brick. I know what it's like to run a business where the phone ringing is the difference between a good month and a stressful one.

Here's what I've learned shooting video for local businesses: **the video isn't what gets you customers. The first 3 seconds are.**

If someone scrolls past in 3 seconds, it doesn't matter how good the rest is. Nobody sees it. The hook decides whether your video gets 200 views or 20,000, and whether those views turn into calls.

This sheet gives you the openers, the rules, and the swipe-ready lines to stop the scroll and turn attention into customers.

— João

The 5 rules of a hook that works

1. **Speak to one person.** Not "hey everyone." One customer, one problem.
2. **Lead with the result or the tension, never your name.** Nobody cares who you are until they care what you can do for them.
3. **Start mid-action.** No intro, no logo, no "so today I wanted to show you." Open on the thing happening.
4. **Say it AND show it.** The first 3 seconds need a visual hook and a spoken or text hook working together.
5. **Make them need the next sentence.** A good hook opens a loop the viewer can only close by watching.

The 10 hook formulas

Fill in the blanks with your own business.

1. The Mistake Hook

“The #1 mistake people make when hiring a [your trade/business].”

Why it works: People are wired to avoid losses more than chase gains. They'll stay to make sure they're not the one making the mistake.

Example: The biggest mistake people make when hiring a roofer in Cambridge.

2. The Price Hook

“Here's what [your service] actually costs, and why.”

Why it works: Everyone wonders about price and nobody talks about it. Being open builds instant trust.

Example: Here's what a new driveway really costs in Waterloo Region.

3. The Before and After Hook

“Open on the finished result, then cut back to where it started.”

Why it works: The payoff is shown first, so the viewer stays to see how you got there.

Example: Start on the finished patio in golden light. Text: "This was a mud pit 5 days ago."

4. The Mistake You Caught Hook

“A customer called me after another [business] did this...”

Why it works: It's a story, it shows expertise, and it quietly makes competitors look bad without naming anyone.

Example: A homeowner called me after another company did this to their chimney.

5. The Myth Buster Hook

“Everyone thinks [common belief]. It's actually wrong.”

Why it works: It challenges what the viewer thought they knew, and curiosity forces them to keep watching.

Example: Everyone thinks the cheapest quote saves money. Here's why it costs more.

6. The Behind the Scenes Hook

“Watch how we [do the impressive thing] in [time].”

Why it works: People love seeing skilled work. Process builds trust and shows you're the real deal.

Example: Watch us take this barbershop from empty room to fully booked.

7. The Local Callout Hook

"If you live in [city] and you [situation], watch this."

Why it works: Naming the audience filters out everyone who isn't a customer and pulls in everyone who is.

Example: If you own a restaurant in Kitchener and your Friday nights are slow, watch this.

8. The Secret Hook

"What [your industry] doesn't tell you about [topic]."

Why it works: Insider knowledge feels exclusive. Use it honestly: share a real tip, not clickbait.

Example: What car dealerships don't tell you about trade-in value.

9. The Time Hook

"We did this in [short time]. Here's how."

Why it works: Speed is impressive, and the viewer wants the method.

Example: We turned this empty lot into a finished landscape in 48 hours.

10. The Question Hook

"Do you know why your [thing] keeps [problem]?"

Why it works: A question the viewer can't answer creates an itch they have to scratch.

Example: Do you know why your basement keeps getting damp every spring?

7 opening shots that stop thumbs

Words matter, but the eye decides first. Open on one of these:

- **The money shot first.** Finished result, best angle, best light.
- **Hands at work.** Close-up of skilled hands doing something satisfying.
- **Movement from frame one.** Walking toward camera, a pour, a cut, a reveal.
- **The unexpected detail.** Something oddly satisfying that makes people look twice.
- **Eye contact.** You, speaking straight to camera, starting mid-sentence.
- **A bold text overlay.** Big, readable, one line, in the first frame.
- **Contrast.** Messy to clean, old to new, broken to fixed.

Swipe lines by business type

Copy these and swap in your details.

Contractors and trades

- Three things your contractor should never say to you.
- This is why that quote was so cheap.
- Here's what happens if you skip this step.

Restaurants, bars and pubs

- This is the dish locals line up for.
- Nobody tells you how this is actually made.
- Our Friday night looks like this. Come find a seat.

Barbershops

- Watch this cut go from rough to sharp in 30 seconds.
- Stop asking for this haircut. Ask for this instead.

Car dealerships

- Before you buy a used car, check this one thing.
- We just got this in and it won't last the weekend.

Real estate

- You won't believe what this house sold for.
- The one thing buyers always miss in a showing.

Landscaping and snow removal

- This yard was a disaster 4 days ago.
- Here's why your driveway floods every winter.

Hook killers: never start with these

- "Hey guys, welcome back to my channel."
- "So, today I wanted to talk about..."
- Your logo animation.
- A slow pan with no point.
- Your name and company name before the viewer cares.
- "Hi, my name is..."

The scroll is ruthless. Earn attention first, introduce yourself second.

The structure behind every good short video

1. **Hook (0 to 3 sec):** Stop the scroll.
2. **Value (3 to 20 sec):** Deliver on the promise. Show the work, give the tip, tell the story.
3. **Proof (a few seconds):** A result, a happy customer, a finished job.
4. **Call to action (last 3 sec):** One clear next step. "Call us." "Book a quote."

One video, one idea, one action.

Your 5-minute hook test

Before you post, check:

- Does the first sentence speak to ONE specific person?
- Is there movement or a striking visual in frame one?
- Would a stranger know in 3 seconds what's in it for them?
- Did I cut the intro?
- Does it make someone need the next sentence?

If you answered yes to all five, post it.

Want to see these hooks on your own business?

Reading about hooks is one thing. Seeing your own business shot cinematically, with a hook built to bring in calls, is another.

Each month I take on a small number of local businesses for a **free sample shoot**. I come to your location, film a short video of your business, and you see what it looks like with a real hook and real polish.

Spots are limited every month.

Book yours at viderimarketing.com

Call or text João: 226-218-2948

contact@viderimarketing.com

From the jobsite to behind the camera.