

Show Your Local Pride

By ANNA CHANG-YEN | Green Shoot Media

In 2016, 112 million shoppers supported locally owned businesses on Small Business Saturday — from pubs to retailers to service providers, according to American Express. All told, they spent \$15.4 billion, an increase of 13 percent from 2015.

These awesome numbers show American shoppers are increasingly committed to shopping local. This year on Small Business Saturday, Nov. 25, American Express invites consumers to once again “Shop Small.”

Since 2010, American Express has provided marketing materials and other resources to help locally owned businesses showcase themselves to shoppers on the Saturday following Thanksgiving.

“Small businesses play a key role in helping communities thrive,” according to American Express. “By shopping or dining at your favorite local places throughout the year, you’re showing your support for small businesses and making a positive impact in your community.”

This year, American Express offers an interactive online map to help shoppers locate participating business in their area. Visit www.shops-mall.com to find businesses near you. Shoppers can filter businesses by type, from travel to entertainment to retail to dining, and companies can even find business-to-business sellers, such as office suppliers and marketing service providers.

The company also is offering tools for business owners, such as online banner ads, signage, email templates and sample social media posts, all of which can be personalized for each business through the online Shop Small Studio.



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Why Shop Local This Year?

The Institute for Local Self-Reliance offers the following 10 benefits for shoppers and their communities when they shop locally owned businesses:

1. Local character and prosperity: In an increasingly homogenized world, communities that preserve their one-of-a-kind businesses and distinctive character have an economic advantage.

2. Community well-being: Locally owned businesses build strong communities by sustaining vibrant town centers, linking neighbors in a web of economic and social relationships, and contributing to local causes.

3. Local decision-making: Local ownership ensures that important decisions are made local-

ly by people who live in the community and who will feel the impacts of those decisions.

4. Keeping dollars in the local economy:

Compared to chain stores, locally owned businesses recycle a much larger share of their revenue back into the local economy, enriching the whole community.

5. Job and wages: Locally owned businesses create more jobs locally and, in some sectors, provide better wages and benefits than chains do.

6. Entrepreneurship: Entrepreneurship fuels America’s economic innovation and prosperity, and serves as a key means for families to move out of low-wage jobs and into the middle class.

7. Public benefits and costs: Local stores in town centers require comparatively little infra-

structure and make more efficient use of public services relative to big box stores and strip shopping malls.

8. Environmental sustainability: Local stores help to sustain vibrant, compact, walkable town centers—which in turn are essential to reducing sprawl, automobile use, habitat loss, and air and water pollution.

9. Competition: A marketplace of tens of thousands of small businesses is the best way to ensure innovation and low prices over the long-term.

10. Product diversity: A multitude of small businesses, each selecting products based, not on a national sales plan, but on their own interests and the needs of their local customers, guarantees a much broader range of product choices.



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