

SEVEN REASONS TO
SHOP LOCAL
FOR THE HOLIDAYS



REASON NO.

1

LOCAL SHOPPING
STATS

52%

**OF REVENUE IS
RECIRCULATED
LOCALLY BY
INDEPENDENT
BUSINESSES**

A 2012 study in Salt Lake City, Utah showed that more than half of local, independent retailers' revenue is recirculated in the local economy. In comparison, less than 14 percent of national chain stores' revenue was recirculated locally, the study showed. By keeping more money close to home, the smaller, locally based firms can play a big role in growing your local economy.

A Gift For Your City

While you're making your list and checking it twice this holiday season, don't forget to include your local independent business owners. They're not asking for much this year, just a little support. And you'd be smart to give it.

A substantially larger percentage of your hard-earned money stays in your community when you choose to shop locally for Christmas instead of leaving the area.

Recent studies have shown that as much as \$75 of every \$100 you spend at a locally owned businesses remains in your area, versus \$40 at non-locally owned establishments.

This number, in most cases, drops to zero dollars when you buy online.

PUT YOUR MONEY TO WORK

More money staying local means increased funding for the schools, hospitals, and roads that you and your friends, family and co-workers depend on.

Since local business owners hire local workers – about half of all private sector workers are employed in small businesses, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics – money for taxes and wages stays in the community, too.

With volatile unemployment statistics linked so closely to the success or failure of small businesses, shopping locally can actually make a positive impact on a national level.

EVERYBODY WINS

Small business owners are also more likely to make social investments in the community by volunteering at their child's school, donating to charities and hosting fundraiser events.

Doing so allows these entrepreneurs to integrate themselves into their communities and make it known that they are receptive and sensitive to the needs of those around them.

From little league teams to theater groups, small business owners are quick to offer their sponsorship and money to help support local groups.

RIPPLE EFFECT

Small business owners have a tendency to buy supplies locally and to use local services for their business needs.

When an independent business owner requires accounting services or help with building repairs, they are more likely to spend their money on local accountants or contractors, respectively.

When you shop local, your money helps catalyze the circulation of money through your area. It also strengthens your community's economic foundation and helps enhance it for years to come.



REASON NO.

2

LOCAL SHOPPING
STATS

70%

**GREATER LOCAL
ECONOMIC
IMPACT**

A 2004 study in Andersonville, Ind. showed that, per square foot of space, local firms had 70 percent greater local economic impact than chain firms. By sourcing more of their supplies and products from local vendors, employing local people and keeping their profit close to home, these businesses contribute more to the local economy.

Go Unique



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We all know them. They are the people who own one of everything and write nothing in particular on their Christmas lists.

They possess every movie, flaunt the newest jewelry and have read each book from the New York Times best sellers list. Finding a gift for them is nearly impossible – unless you integrate a little creativity into your gift-giving strategy.

Local businesses are hotbeds for the unique and eclectic items that are sure to make a lasting impression on that hard-to-buy-for person in your life.

Pottery, paintings, garden supplies and more can be found just a few blocks away at your downtown establishment.

GET ARTISTIC

Local artists make great sources for unique Christmas presents, and their work can often be found on display in storefront windows.

Buying a painting, craft, or pottery piece from

an artist near you not only helps validate his or her creative endeavor but also gives your recipient a one-of-a-kind gift.

Put a little extra thought into the present by tracking down the artist for a signature and personalized message.

DANDY GIFTS FOR THE HANDY

What if you could find a gift that will provide years of enjoyment, as well as a feeling of personal pride in a job well done?

Well, browse the aisles of your local hardware store and you will be in luck.

Unique tool sets and do-it-yourself birdhouse kits will have your handy friend or family member chomping at the bit for springtime.

Practical gifts like snow shovels, warm hats, or cozy gloves are also viable options and will make an immediate impact during those snowy winter months.

GIFT CARDS

If you're thinking of opting for the trusty gift card, consider your options. Instead of buying one from an out-of-town establishment or online conglomerate, instead think outside of the box – and the box store.

What better way to support your local business community than by purchasing a gift certificate from your regional golf course, barber, gym or car detail shop?

Gift cards are always popular, but giving them a localized spin will make them a guaranteed hit even for the person who already has everything.

REASON NO.

3

LOCAL SHOPPING
STATS

\$326

PER 1,000
SQUARE FEET
IN TAX IMPACT

According to a 2002 study in Barnstable, Mass., big-box retailers can cost cities more in services than they generate in revenue. But specialty retail shops — the kind that make up the Main Street-type business district in many communities — generate significantly more tax revenue than they cost to service. They produce a net return of \$326 per year for every 1,000 square feet, the study showed. The difference comes from how much more road wear and public safety services large businesses require.

Save Money

Shopping locally, you tend to buy just what you need. This helps cut down on the clutter – and the wrapping – once you get home, but also lessens the impact on your wallet.

Keeping local owners in business also fosters a competitive entrepreneurial landscape that will in the long run improve quality while decreasing costs.

As local businesses grow, so grows their ability to create more products and improve their service, all at a lower expense to the consumer.

NO GIMMICKS

Local shops are focused less on the mega deals and buy-one, get-one promotions that actually can cost you more in the long run. But this doesn't mean they aren't in the business of giving deals.

Many local shops provide discounts to those who live nearby, helping you save money instead of paying more in tourist taxes that some out-of-town establishments may charge.

Some local businesses boast price-matching programs, as well. Ask your local owners if they are willing to match deals you find at other businesses. Their answer may surprise you – and help you save money.

SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY

Spearheaded by American Express in 2010, Small Business Saturday has rapidly entrenched itself into the holiday shopping tradition landscape.

The nationally recognized movement to celebrate and shop small businesses was created as a counterpart to Black Friday and Cyber Monday and has quickly gained progressive traction.

Last year, more than 100 million shoppers supported the initiative, which features discounts, giveaways and promotions from some participating establishments. This year's event is slated for Saturday, Nov. 30.

NO PRESSURE

You aren't likely to find quota-driven salespeople around every corner at your local independent business.

Less dependent on the one-time sale, small business owners are more concerned about providing you with positive shopping experiences because they depend on your repeat business to keep their doors open.

And unlike Christmas shopping at crowded out-of-town malls, you are more likely to receive one-on-one attention at local shops. So fill out that customer feedback card and complete that online questionnaire. Your opinions can make a long-term impact on local businesses.



REASON NO.

4

LOCAL SHOPPING
STATS

65%

OF NEW JOBS
CREATED
BY SMALL
BUSINESSES

The vast majority of new jobs are created by small businesses, meaning those with fewer than 500 employees. According to the United States Small Business Administration, 65 percent of America's new jobs in the past 17 years have been created by small businesses. In fact, small businesses make up 99.7 percent of all employer firms in the United States, the SBA says.

Feel Needed

Local business owners treat you with respect and kindness because they need your support. Your money keeps their dreams alive, their families fed and their lights on.

It also helps fuel their innovation — an attribute that we depend on from small business owners to help our communities become better places to work, play and stay.

Local owners are quick to converse with you and ask about your life because they are genuinely interested in learning about their customers.

Gaining a better understating of their target audience helps owners improve their services, which in turn boosts their bottom line.

RETURN THE FAVOR

Since it is better to give than to receive, reciprocate the appreciation by getting to know your local owners by name and tell them that you appreciate what they're doing for your community.

A positive word of encouragement can go a long way toward boosting the confidence of small business owners, many of whom are nurturing their goals one day at a time.

Friendly banter is a cornerstone of downtown America and is what helps set small businesses apart in the realm of quality customer service.

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

It is always a good idea to cultivate and maintain positive relationships with those who need you most.

Whether you're enjoying a friendly chit-chat with your favorite barista at your local coffee-house or catching up with your regular server at the downtown



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pizza establishment, you are unknowingly building and advancing relationships.

These interactions will make future shopping visits more conversational and enjoyable and will add value to both the employer and customer experience.

NETWORK

Shopping locally can also help you and your career. Hand over your business card while discussing the weather with your local business owners.

You never know what services they may need or who they may

know that could spark new business opportunities for your enterprise.

Small business owners can appreciate the benefits of networking, because they use it as a critical tool to promote their services and expand their reach. You can do the same.

REASON NO.

5

LOCAL SHOPPING
STATS

1,838

**MILES A CARROT
WILL TRAVEL
BEFORE GETTING
TO YOUR TABLE**

According to a 2003 study conducted in Iowa, a carrot from conventional sources will travel 1,838 miles before reaching the dinner table. The same carrot grown locally would travel just 27 miles. While this is an extreme example, it shows how small businesses that source more of their inventory from local suppliers can have a big, positive impact on the environment because of less fuel use and lower emissions from transportation.

HIRING LOCAL

Generally, local businesses hire people who are from the area, creating a strong connection of familiarity and trust between workers and customers.

You are more than just another

number in the customer count when you visit a local business. Your patronage matters to owners and employees because your dollars keep them employed.

Workers at all organizational levels – owners, managers, full-time workers, and part-timers, alike – are depending on your business.

TEACH THE KIDS

It's never too early to pass on the values that drive you to shop local and support your neighbors.

Your sons, daughters, nieces and nephews will earn money and shop

for themselves one day, and they may even be future small business owners.

Bringing them along for the shopping trip to your favorite downtown store will give them a great understanding of the benefits of spending money locally and may spark an entrepreneurial spirit within them.

GET A HISTORY LESSON

The next time you are perusing through a downtown business, ask

yourself if you know the history of the building you are in.

No? Odds are the owner does.

Independent business owners are often excellent sources for local history and interesting anecdotes. They can give you detailed information about their buildings or the services that used to be offered through it because they are privy to past records and business documentation.

Shopping locally doesn't just enhance the local economy. It can also increase your knowledge of your surroundings.

Don't Be A Stranger



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There is no place like home, so why would you choose to leave it for Christmas shopping? By spending your time and money shopping locally, you are more likely to run into friends, family, co-workers and past acquaintances, allowing you to enjoy the Christmas spirit around those you love.

REASON NO.

6

LOCAL SHOPPING
STATS

Twice
as much

**CHARITABLE
GIVING FROM
SMALL FIRMS**

A 1991 study examined charitable donations from businesses and found something surprising: Companies with fewer than 100 employees gave an average of \$789 per employee. That's compared with just \$334 per employee at firms with more than 500 employees. It's another reason why shopping at small, locally owned firms can help your community.

Slow Down

Tis the season to be jolly, not stressed, frenzied, or road-raged. Trade in the hustle and bustle of long car rides and over-packed malls for a relaxing stroll through your favorite downtown business.

The benefits of slowing things down over the holidays can improve your health, well-being, and overall mood, especially when schedules are at their fullest.

The less time you spend traveling great distances and drudging through hoards of shoppers, the more time you will be able to enjoy with your family around the fire-place.

So maybe it's time to focus less on leaving the area and take advantage of the calming convenience of shopping local.

TAKE IT EASY

Do you really want to spend multiple hours of your weekend inside a car? How about standing in long lines waiting for a harried cashier to ring up your order?

Local businesses won't delay your service or make it seemingly impossible to find a parking spot. There won't be any fights for shopping carts or that under-produced product, either.

Instead, local businesses offer a more laid-back experience centered on quality customer service and friendly conversations.

Local owners are invested in creating positive, memorable experiences for all customers, and this means fostering low-stress, no-hassle shopping environments.

WALK, DON'T DRIVE

Staying in the area for your Christmas shopping could be good for both your wallet and your waistline.

If you live close enough to local businesses – and if you don't mind the chilly weather – walk or ride your bike to the store. The central locations of downtown businesses helps provide a hub of shopping activity that requires only a short stroll down the sidewalk to shop door-to-door.

Mixing in a little physical activity as opposed to spending hours in your car or extended periods of time on escalators, will aid in burning calories and improving your overall health.

And better health is a gift we all deserve.



REASON NO.

7

LOCAL SHOPPING
STATS

\$137
million

**IN ECONOMIC
IMPACT CREATED
BY MORE LOCAL
SHOPPING**

A 2008 study in Grand Rapids, Mich., concluded that just a 10 percent shift in spending toward local businesses would add \$137 million and 1,600 jobs to the local economy. Spending more money at small, locally owned businesses is a great way to help grow your city's economy and help it thrive financially.

Help the Planet

Shopping locally not only saves you money in the long run, but it also helps lessen your carbon footprint by reducing the amount of gas and packaging required to complete the cycle of product development to purchase.

The connection between smart shopping and sustainability is strong, especially over the holiday season when massive amounts of shoppers are visiting stores across the world.

While you're focusing on the perfect gift for that special someone, don't forget the health of the environment and the shape you want to leave it for future generations.

LESS TRAVEL

Staying local obviously cuts down on travel for both you and delivery drivers, a twofold benefit that means less carbon, pollution and traffic congestion.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, trucks and locomotives are responsible for 25 percent of smog-causing pollution and the majority of the cancer threat posed by air pollution in some areas.

Buying more locally produced products can help us refine our air and optimize our health.

LESS PACKAGING

Local businesses help the environment by stocking local produce and food and also by using less packaging than larger chain establishments.

This helps make our local communities more sustainable and keeps hard-to-break-down plastics out of our landfills.

Local businesses depend less on packaging because their food is fresh and their products are locally produced, lessening the distance and packaging required to maintain quality.

STORE PLACEMENT

Local establishments, compared to large businesses and huge shopping centers, often set up shop in town or city centers instead of developing in the outer parts of town.

Successful shops re-invest into their local downtowns, helping create walkable, revitalized areas for shoppers of all ages to enjoy.

Centralized locations that require less travel to reach also help to decrease sprawl, automobile use, habitat loss and air and water pollution.

