



NEWS RELEASE

# Shop Small® and Pay It Forward on Small Business Saturday®: Social Media Endorsements Can be Worth an Estimated \$197 Billion for U.S. Small Businesses

11/17/2020

American Express calls on consumers to Shop Small and Share Joy by posting shout outs of their favorite small businesses on social media throughout the holiday season

NEW YORK--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- This holiday season, American Express (NYSE: AXP) is kicking off its 11th annual Small Business Saturday with a social media campaign that can help amplify the positive impact that U.S. consumers can have on small businesses. According to the American Express Shop Small Impact study, released today, the majority of (78%) small business owners say that positive feedback on social media is a significant driver of business. In fact, the study found that endorsements of small businesses on social media may be worth as much as an estimated \$197 billion for the U.S. small business economy<sup>1</sup>. Beyond that perceived value, positive social media mentions can go even further this year, as 89% of consumers say they are more likely to shop at a small business that friends or peers have recommended.

This press release features multimedia. View the full release here:

<https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20201117005491/en/>

(Photo: Business Wire)

This year's Small Business Saturday, which will take place

on November 28 during Thanksgiving weekend, is an important part of the holiday season for small merchants as they work to recover from the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2019, an estimated 110 million people participated in Small Business Saturday, and sales hit a record high with an estimated \$19.6 billion in reported spending<sup>2</sup>. Initially founded in 2010 by American Express in response to the Great Recession, Small

Business Saturday has evolved into a year-round global Shop Small campaign to support small merchants, and earlier this year, American Express helped jumpstart spending at small businesses by committing more than \$200 million through the company's largest ever global Shop Small campaign<sup>3</sup>.

"Small Business Saturday is an important part of our global Shop Small campaign, and small businesses need our support more than ever as they continue to navigate the effects of COVID-19," said Elizabeth Rutledge, Chief Marketing Officer, American Express. "We know 88% of U.S. consumers feel a personal commitment to support small businesses in the wake of the pandemic. Whether online, curbside or safely in store, we're reminding consumers that they can help make an impact by shopping small and sharing their favorite small businesses on social media all holiday season long."

To mobilize the power of social media heading into this year's Small Business Saturday and all holiday season long, American Express invites consumers to Shop Small at their favorite small merchants – both in-store and online – and share their support on social media. Simply tag the small merchants that you shop at on social media and share what you love about them – from a favorite product to the great service they provide – it can really go a long way to support a small business this holiday season.

## U.S. CONSUMERS: ENTHUSIASTIC TO SHOP SMALL

Fortunately, shoppers want to do their part to support small businesses this holiday season – 75% will Shop Small because they want to support their favorite local shops and restaurants during this challenging time, and 42% said they supported a small business on social media. The study also reveals that the effects of COVID-19 have sparked feelings of deep responsibility among consumers to support the places they love this Small Business Saturday and beyond. A large majority of consumers (88%) feel a personal commitment to support small businesses in the wake of the pandemic and in a divided year, 95% of Americans agree that supporting small businesses unites their community.

"Small businesses connect our communities, you get to know the owner and your neighbors who come in every morning for their coffee fix," said Mike Salvatore, Owner, Heritage Bicycle & Coffee in Chicago, IL. "If they then recommend us to 100 of their friends their word, their value, their review, will go so much farther and will mean that much more to potential customers."

## SMALL BUSINESSES: OPTIMISTIC & INNOVATING

Almost all (92%) of small business owners have pivoted the way they do business to stay open during the pandemic including selling on social (38%) or a third-party platform (28%), introducing curbside pickup (46%) or contactless delivery (40%).

Now, as the biggest shopping season of the year approaches, 46% of small business owners are counting on above average holiday sales to stay in business in 2021. Sixty-four percent have a positive outlook for their holiday sales and say that Small Business Saturday is more critical than ever. As a result they are innovating by offering extended store hours (41%), using social media as a storefront for the first time (25%), partnering with other businesses in their community to offer something special to customers (25%) and offering giveaways to customers (35%).

“We’ve tried so many different ways to keep engaged and in touch with our customers,” said Ann Cantrell, Owner, Annie’s Blue Ribbon General Store in Brooklyn, N.Y. “We’ve done Instagram Live events, reached out through social media and conducted some virtual shopping appointments over the phone. All of those pivots allowed us to stay connected to our customers during a difficult time which is so important to us.”

## BACKING SMALL BUSINESSES ALL-YEAR LONG

Recognizing the devastating effects of COVID-19 on small businesses, American Express has made several commitments to help small businesses:

- Committed more than \$200M to jumpstart spending at small businesses through the company’s largest ever global Shop Small campaign.
- Created Stand for Small, a coalition of more than 100 large companies that provide tools, resources and advice to support small businesses.
- Launched the Coalition to Back Black Businesses, which includes a \$10 million commitment in grants and mentorship for U.S. Black-owned small businesses.
- Pledged to double its spend with minority-owned suppliers in the U.S. to \$750 million annually by the end of 2024.
- Committed to providing access to capital and financial education to at least 250,000 Black-owned small and medium-sized businesses in the U.S.
- Launched a small business Services and Savings Hub and delivered COVID-19 recovery kits to merchants with “open for business” signage and collateral for in-store safety.

More information about these and other efforts can be found [here](#). Visit [Shopsmall.com](https://shopsmall.com) to learn more about how to help support small businesses this holiday season.

## ABOUT AMERICAN EXPRESS

American Express is a globally integrated payments company, providing customers with access to products, insights and experiences that enrich lives and build business success. Learn more at [americanexpress.com](https://americanexpress.com) and connect with us on [facebook.com/americanexpress](https://facebook.com/americanexpress), [instagram.com/americanexpress](https://instagram.com/americanexpress), [linkedin.com/company/american-](https://linkedin.com/company/american-express)

[express](#), [twitter.com/americanexpress](https://twitter.com/americanexpress), and [youtube.com/americanexpress](https://youtube.com/americanexpress).

Key links to products, services and corporate responsibility information: [charge and credit cards](#), [business credit cards](#), [travel services](#), [gift cards](#), [prepaid cards](#), [merchant services](#), [Accertify](#), [InAuth](#), [corporate card](#), [business travel](#), and [corporate responsibility](#).

## ABOUT SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY

November 28th is the annual Small Business Saturday, proudly backed by American Express. Dedicated to supporting the diverse range of local businesses that create jobs, help boost the economy, and enhance neighborhoods around the country, Small Business Saturday was created by American Express in 2010 in response to small business owners' most pressing need: getting more customers. Learn more at and connect with us on [ShopSmall.com](https://ShopSmall.com), [instagram.com/shopsmall](https://instagram.com/shopsmall), [facebook.com/SmallBusinessSaturday](https://facebook.com/SmallBusinessSaturday).

## ABOUT SHOP SMALL

Shop Small is an international movement to support small, independent businesses and call attention to the valuable and distinct contributions they make to their communities and the economy. Shop Small celebrates small businesses ranging from retail stores and restaurants to fitness studios and salons, and everything in between. The Shop Small movement was spurred by the widespread participation in Small Business Saturday, a day founded in 2010 by American Express in the U.S. This national holiday shopping tradition is dedicated to celebrating small businesses and driving more customers through their doors on the Saturday after Thanksgiving. Learn more and connect with us on [ShopSmall.com](https://ShopSmall.com), [instagram.com/shopsmall](https://instagram.com/shopsmall), [facebook.com/SmallBusinessSaturday](https://facebook.com/SmallBusinessSaturday).

## ABOUT THE AMERICAN EXPRESS SHOP SMALL IMPACT STUDY

The American Express Shop Small Impact Study was conducted by Teneo on behalf of American Express. The study consisted of three online surveys conducted between October 23 and November 8, 2020. The first survey was conducted among a sample of 1,004 U.S. adults 18 years of age and older. Consumer data was weighted by five variables: age, gender, geographic region, race/ethnicity and education to ensure reliable and accurate representation of the total U.S. population, 18 years of age and older based on U.S. Census data. Two surveys were conducted among small business owners/managers in U.S. with companies that conduct sales at a brick-and-mortar location in one of the following industries: arts/entertainment/recreation, retail trade, restaurant/bar/coffee shop/hotel/hospitality, or personal services. One survey had a sample size of 501, the other had a sample size of 503.

1 Based on an average of the estimated percent of revenue generated by positive feedback on social media as

reported by small business owners surveyed in the 2020 American Express Shop Small Impact Study and extrapolated based on the overall economic impact of U.S. consumer-facing small business as reported in the 2018 American Express Small Business Economic Impact study.

2 The 2019 Small Business Saturday Consumer Insights Survey was conducted by Teneo on behalf of American Express and the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB). The study is a nationally representative sample of 2,287 U.S. adults 18 years of age or older. The sample was collected using an email invitation and an online survey. The study gathered self-reported data and does not reflect actual receipts or sales. It was conducted anonymously on December 1, 2019. The survey has an overall margin of error of +/- 2.0%, at the 95% level of confidence. Projections were based on the current U.S. Census estimates of the U.S. adult population, age 18 years and over.

3 Our commitment of more than \$200M supported a Card Member offer and the associated marketing campaign to encourage American Express Card Members in select countries around the globe to Shop Small in their local communities and online.

Location: U.S.

View source version on **businesswire.com**: <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20201117005491/en/>

AMERICAN EXPRESS

Megan Hunsicker

**megan.c.hunsicker@aexp.com**

DAY ONE AGENCY

Keri Fitzpatrick

**keri@d1a.com**

Source: American Express Company