



Even small purchases make a difference to local business

Small businesses provide a wealth of benefits to their communities, from creating jobs to offering personalized customer service. Unfortunately, they've been among the hardest hit by the COVID-19 recession, and they need continued support to survive and recover.

Here are four ways you can help.

1. CHECK LOCAL INVENTORIES

Before you head to a big-box store or place an order with a large e-commerce company, find out if the items you want are available through the shops in your area. In addition to carrying many of the same products, small businesses are likely to also sell high-quality goods from local brands. Browse in person or consult their online store.

2. PICK UP YOUR TAKEOUT

If a local eatery doesn't have its own delivery fleet, opt to pick up your order. This helps restaurant owners maximize their profits, as they can avoid having to pay fees to a third-party delivery service.

Since the same often applies to retailers, choose in-store shopping or curb-side pickup as much as possible.

3. BE A LOYAL CUSTOMER

Small businesses rely heavily on their regular customers, so continue to frequent their stores and tip service workers generously when you can. If a business is temporarily closed or you currently don't need anything, consider purchasing a gift card for future use. You can also volunteer your services if you have marketing, accounting or other relevant skills.

4. SHARE THE LOVE ONLINE

Referrals are a major source of new customers for small retail and service businesses, especially those with a limited marketing budget. Help spread the word by sharing their posts on social media, writing online reviews and posting pictures of their products on Instagram or Facebook. Finally, remember to thank small business owners and employees for their continued hard work. (NTB)



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