



## Your Guide to Making the most of Small Business Saturday

In just a few short weeks, the successful #SmallBusinessSaturday event will take place on November 25<sup>th</sup>. As always, it falls on Thanksgiving Weekend and follows Black Friday.

Now in its eighth year, Small Business Saturday (started by American Express) has sparked a social movement to #ShopSmall and #ShopLocal for the holiday season. In 2011 even the US Senate got on board to support the movement and now it is affecting real and lasting change on consumer shopping behavior.

And, ShiftYourShopping.org (#ShiftYourShopping) is a national grassroots organization that 'encourages residents to take job creation and economic concerns into their own hands by strengthening their own local economies' and it provides forums with ideas and feedback for local business owners to share. Go there to get inspired for ideas to help your small business.

Consider this: According to the 2015 Institute for Local Self-Reliance impact report, for every \$100 spent at a national chain store outlet in your neighborhood, \$14 stays in the community; but that same \$100 spent at a local small business in your neighborhood contributes \$48 to the community – that's a 71% increase and the difference can often mean the availability of funding for everything from the library to the parks, schools, police, fire and other services necessary to the quality of our lives and our communities, and it has profound effects on employment, taxes and real estate values.

In 2015, a record 95 million consumers spent \$16.2 billion shopping on small business Saturday, an 8% increase over 2014. According to digitaltrends.com, small business owners have reported at least a 245 percent increase in revenue compared to the previous year.

Don't let this opportunity get away! Here are some tips and resources you can implement now to promote the big shopping day and claim your piece of #SmallBusinessSaturday:

1. Go to <https://www.americanexpress.com/us/small-business/shop-small/>. There you'll find an Event Inspiration idea package along with downloadable logos to use digitally and in print.
2. If you're an American Express merchant, you can request lots of swag to use such as signage, tote bags, promotional content, plus more.
3. Start promoting it in your own email blasts, website, storefront, your email signature, outgoing phone message, etc.
4. Follow, then help promote the event on social media using #ShopSmall, #ShopLocal, #SmallBusinessSaturday, and #ShiftYourShopping.
5. Connect with the sponsors on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/SmallBusinessSaturday>
6. Check out [AMIBA.net](http://AMIBA.net) - the American Independent Business Alliance. Another nationwide supporter of local and independent businesses that offers research, resources, and ready-to-use graphics.
7. Consider expanding your hours and having a website promotion.
8. Put a #SmallBusinessSaturday promotion on your outgoing voice mail message and put it in your email signature block as well.
9. Be ready for a long and profitable day. Consider hiring help if you have a retail store or other customer-facing staff to handle increased traffic.

And of course, as you do your own holiday shopping, keep in mind that **shifting as little as 10% of your spending to a local, small business can make a tremendous difference in your community.**