

Small-business Savvy: Shop Local, Shop Small

By Glenn Muske, Rural and Agribusiness Enterprise Development Specialist
NDSU Extension Service

Nov. 28 is Small Business Saturday.

Small Business Saturday began in 2010. It was created to encourage people to do some of their holiday shopping at local, small businesses.

Every year, the event has grown. You will see and hear advertising for it. Social media will be full of posts and tweets encouraging people to stop in and check out their local merchants.

According to economists, small businesses are a driver for job growth. They are where most business ideas get started. Finally, they form the core of the local economy, especially in rural areas.

So why say all of this in a column focused on helping small-business owners? I want to give you a challenge.

Be the leader. Be the leader in building awareness. Plus, be the leader by your example. Make buying local, buying small a key element of your business operation, and of your personal life, if it already isn't.

Remember, you lead by example. Those examples form who you are. They're part of your reputation. And your business reputation is key to your business success.

Believe me, people are watching.

So engage with your community as a store owner and as an individual citizen.

Be the leader in shop local, not only on Nov. 28 but throughout the year. Your customers and community are watching.

Make "shop local, shop small" a win-win for everyone.

More information is available at your local Extension office, as well as at <http://powerofbusiness.net> and www.eXtension.org/entrepreneurship.

The Small Business Administration and its related organizations, such as the Small Business Development Centers and Service Corps of Retired Executives, along with many other state agencies, also can be valuable resources.

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NDSU Agriculture Communication

Source: Glenn Muske, (701) 328-9718, glenn.muske@ndsu.edu
Editor: Ellen Crawford, (701) 231-5391, ellen.crawford@ndsu.edu