

# Small Business Saturday could boost business confidence this year, group says

A leading campaign group has suggested that Small Business Saturday could provide a significant boost to business confidence this year if Britons turn out in force to support their local high streets.

The optimism precedes this year's Small Business Saturday UK, set for 7 December, which is an annual initiative aimed at spurring consumer engagement with local businesses during the run-up to [Christmas](#), as reported by [City AM](#).

Spearheaded by Small Business Britain and American Express, the campaign posits that the festive season could offer a "lifeline" for those enterprises grappling with low confidence levels. An estimated £20bn is expected to be spent over the so-called golden quarter, with a survey of 2,000 consumers revealing that 86 per cent recognise the importance of shopping locally.

Furthermore, it's anticipated that 22 per cent of all Christmas spending will go towards independent businesses, potentially resulting in a £4.4bn windfall for the small business sector. Last year, nearly 11 million Brits participated in Small Business Saturday, contributing a total of £669m in sales.

Of these, 38 per cent acknowledged the economic hardships faced by small businesses in the previous year, particularly in light of post-pandemic challenges and the ongoing cost-of-living crisis. "Small businesses deliver an immeasurable value that goes beyond their economic contribution," commented Michelle Ovens, director of Small Business Saturday UK.

“They are the heart and soul of our communities, bringing joy and vibrancy to our lives and local areas, as well as delivering essential local services,” Ovens said. This year, Ovens emphasised that public support is “absolutely vital” for boosting confidence amid increased economic challenges and post-Budget concerns.

According to S&P’s purchasing managers’ index (PMI) for the services sector, business expectations for the year ahead have plummeted to their lowest since December 2022. This dip in business sentiment followed hot on the heels of a government decision to increase employers’ national insurance contributions, a policy move that many business groups contend will stymie growth as they grapple with the added expenses.

However, the success of the UK’s small businesses during the festive season isn’t solely dependent on consumer patronage; it also hinges on collaboration among the businesses themselves. In this spirit of entrepreneurial fraternity, Simon Henry from York Gin highlighted joint efforts with neighbouring enterprises as crucial to his company’s expansion.

Launching new and engaging products and services, such as rapid personalised engraving, and inviting customers into the distillery for exclusive Christmas tastings, represent some of the innovative approaches taken by York Gin and its allied small businesses.

“Small businesses can create a lot of magic for people and the support we get back from the public makes all the difference to our business at this time of year.”

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