

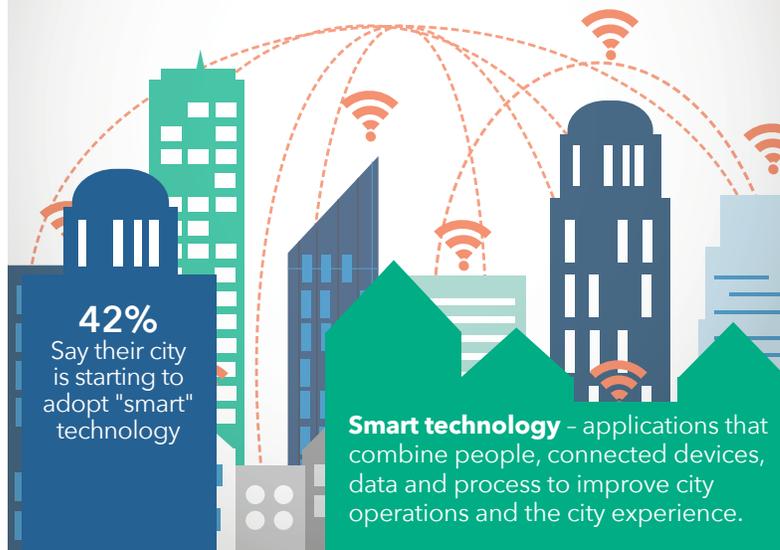
2018 Consumer Pulse on Small Businesses

A survey of more than 1,000 American consumers explores their support of local small to mid-sized businesses and shares their sentiments on what factors would increase their willingness to shop and dine small.

Smart Cities, Smart for Business

Nearly **40** percent (39 percent) ages 18 to 34 think small businesses should adopt Amazon's "checkout-less" shopping model.

Using technology to power better experiences at small businesses is important to consumers and is becoming an important factor when consumers think about their cities.



Business. Better Together.

Social consciousness is spilling over into consumer's small business shopping and dining habits.

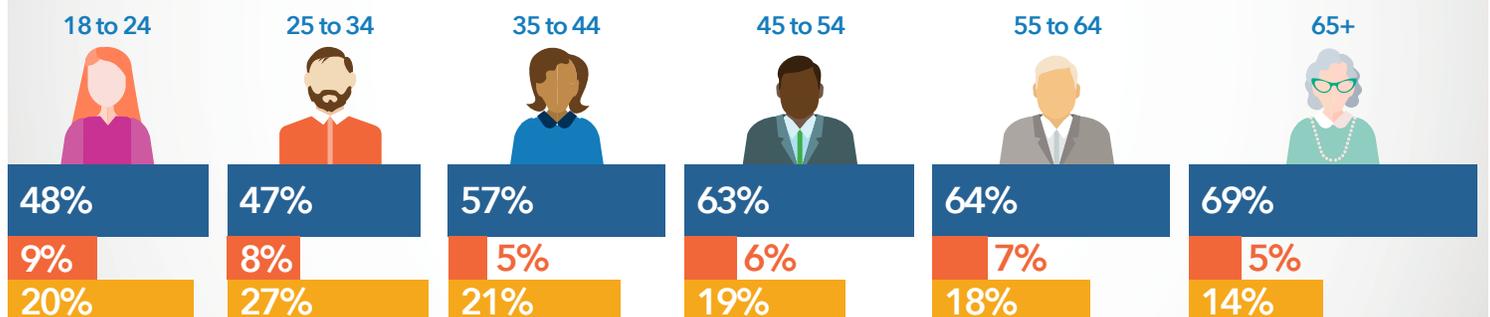
Seventy-one percent of survey respondents said they would spend more money at a small business if it supported a positive social or environmental cause.

In like manner, **71** percent said it is important to them that the small businesses they frequent practice diverse and inclusive hiring.



In-store Shopping is Timeless

Only **7** percent of those surveyed prefer online shopping from their favorite small retail business. Nearly **60** percent (59 percent) prefer making in-person purchases at small brick and mortars. **Nineteen** percent are happy with a combination of both. Here are preferences by age:



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Amazon, the New Goliath?

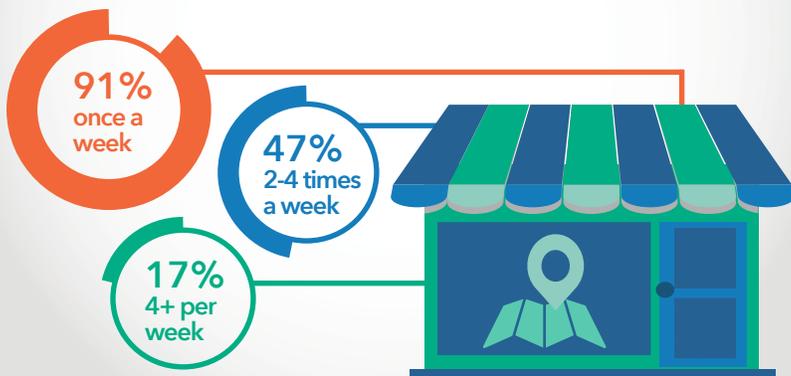
Although convenience is a significant reason why those surveyed say they shop small, these consumers don't have the best perception of convenience champion Amazon. **Seventy** percent think Amazon hurts small businesses.



Local Love

When it comes to small business support, American consumers take it to heart.

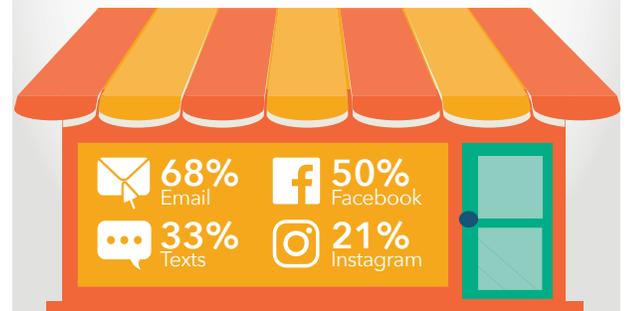
Ninety-one percent say they visit a local small business at least once a week. **Forty-seven** percent shop small two to four times a week and nearly **20** percent visit a small business more than four times a week.



Big Little Marketing Moves

Consumers surveyed think small businesses could increase email (**55** percent), in-person events (**47** percent) and social media marketing (**42** percent) to spark customer engagement.

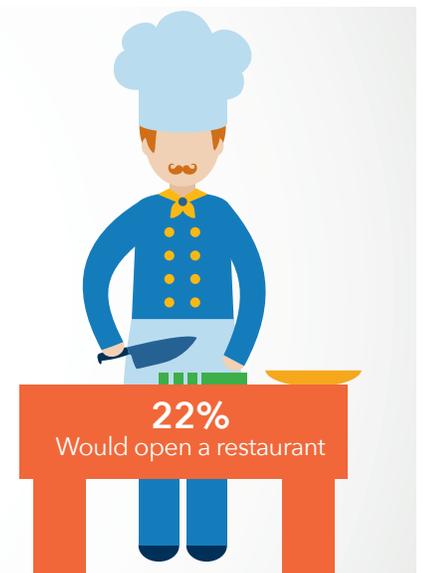
Most said the small businesses they frequent use email, Facebook, text messages and Instagram to stay in touch.



Stop and Sell the Roses

Most consumers surveyed are in full support of adding entrepreneurship to K-12 lesson plans (**79** percent said it should be a part of K-12 curriculum).

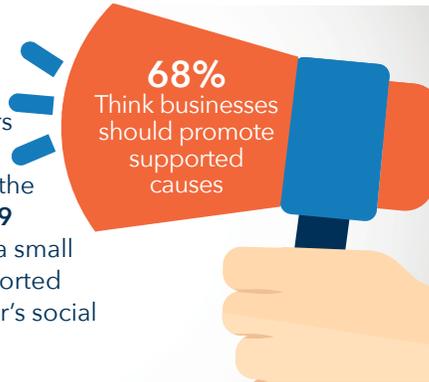
And if they could start their own small business today, despite reports of dwindling sales and closures, most would venture into retail.



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Care With Caution

Sixty-eight percent of consumers surveyed think small business owners should openly promote the causes they support. However **59** percent would stop supporting a small business if the causes they supported weren't in line with the consumer's social and/or environmental views.



Where Everybody Knows Your Name

Aside from the value they place on local support, consumers back small businesses in their communities because:



The local love is so strong, not even a cyber attack could keep patrons away. Nearly **90** percent of survey respondents said they would continue to shop or dine at a small business if it had been the victim of a cyber attack.



However, **47** percent of those consumers would opt to only pay cash.

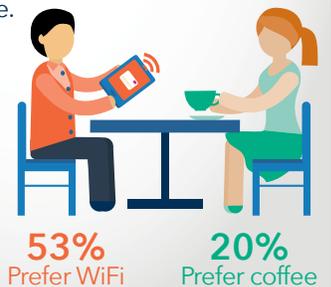
WiFi For the Win

Generally, survey respondents are satisfied with the experiences provided by the small business they frequent. However, there is always room for improvement. When asked what type of technology would enhance the customer experience at their favorite small businesses, the following were the **top three choices**:



WiFi even trumps coffee.

Fifty-three percent of consumers surveyed want small businesses to offer them free WiFi while they wait for service. **Twenty** percent would prefer a piping cup of java.



About the 2018 Cox Business Consumer Sentiment Survey on Small Business

Cox Business commissioned a blind survey of American consumers in April of 2018. Respondents to the online survey included a total of **1,129 consumers**. The margin of error for this survey is plus or minus 3 percent.

About Cox Business

The commercial division of Cox Communications, Cox Business provides voice, data and video services for more than 350,000 small and regional businesses nationwide, including healthcare providers, K-12 and higher education, financial institutions and federal, state and local government organizations. The organization also serves most of the top tier wireless and wireline telecommunications carriers in the U.S. through its wholesale division.

Cox Business is consistently ranked as one of the top Ethernet providers and recognized by third parties for award winning business telecom service. For more information, please visit www.cox.com.