

Small-Mart Revolution ***Checklists*** ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

FOR CONSUMERS, INVESTORS, ENTREPRENEURS, POLICYMAKERS, COMMUNITY BUILDERS & FOR PROMOTING THE LOCAL, GLOBALLY

Excerpted from *The Small-Mart Revolution: How Local Businesses Are Beating the Global Competition*

Small-Mart Revolution Checklist

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ TWENTY-SEVEN ITEMS FOR CONSUMERS

BEST PLACES TO LOCALIZE SPENDING

(and often save money)

* All the items can be at least cost neutral with careful shopping, but items with an asterisk actually can yield significant household savings.

1 Localize Your Home*

Rent from a local landlord, take a mortgage from a local bank, or own your home.

2 Live in Local Style

Use local building materials for your house, with local architectural designs. Furnish with locally fabricated tables, chairs, beds, and couches.

3 Minimize Automobiles*

Ride your vehicle less by walking, biking, carpooling, living in “walkable communities,” and using mass transit.

4 Fuel Up Locally

Make your next car very fuel efficient. Use local biodiesel and ethanol as they become available.

5 Local Car Services

Find a good local mechanic whom you trust and who charges reasonably. Use the local car wash, local auto-parts store, and local insurer.

6 Eat Out Locally

Avoid chain restaurants, especially fast-food joints that addict children to high-fat, high-salt food.

7 Buy Fresh

Link up with local farmers and hydroponics operators for fruits, vegetables, and meats through farmers markets, co-ops, direct delivery services, and community-supported agriculture (CSA) programs. Rediscover local bakers, butchers, cheese makers, chefs, and caterers.

8 Support Local Retailers

Dump Safeway, Albertson, Wal-Mart, and even Wild Oats for local grocers. Be loyal to competitive local pharmacies, bookstores, hardware stores, coffee roasters, photocopy centers, and so forth.

9 Play Local

Minimize your passion for high-end electronics and television. Spend more time at local sports events, health clubs, playgrounds, pools, parks, games, films, plays, puppet shows, dancing, music, and debate leagues. If you must gamble, favor local lotteries, casinos, and horse tracks.

10 Heal Local

Use local doctors, dentists, therapists, acupuncturists, and nursing homes.

11 Live Healthy*

Emphasize local nutrition, exercise, emotional balance, and spiritual nurturing, all of which minimize the need for nonlocal pharmaceuticals.

12 Sign A Living Will*

Have the hard conversation with your family about end-of-life decisions to save them from expensive, nonlocal life-support systems.

13 Minimize Household Energy Use*

Add insulation, double pane the windows, buy compact florescent lights, replace the inefficient furnace and appliances, and do the 101 well-known items that cut purchases of nonlocal electricity, oil, and natural gas. Better still, put photovoltaics or a wind-electric generator on your roof and sell your electricity back to the utility.

14 Give Local

Target charitable giving at local causes & nonprofits.

15 Axe Bad Habits*

Minimize consumption of booze (except local micro-brews and wines), cigarettes, and naughty Internet sites, all of which are hard to localize.

16 Educate Locally

Support local public schools. If they are beyond repair, send your kids to local private schools.

17 Read Locally

Buy books from local authors or local publishers, sold at local bookstores. Advertise in the local papers. Become a regular at the local library.

18 Honor Junk*

Pare down your piles of “stuff” by repairing, reusing, and refurbishing. Substitute hand-me-down clothing, especially for young kids who never heard of Nordstroms. Give more gifts from the heart and fewer gift certificates to Best Buy.

19 Rent More*

Rent or lease more big ticket items, like Zip cars. Create neighborhood tool sheds for shared lawnmowers or snow blowers.

20 Recycle More

Send your paper, glass, and plastic to the local recycler not only because it’s good for the environment but also because it gives local industries affordable local inputs.

TOOLS TO ASSIST LOCAL PURCHASING

1 Directories of Local Business

Create lists for your neighbors in print, online, in newspaper ads, and on coffee cups.

2 Directories of Local Products

Highlight, again in print or online, the many locally made goods or locally provided services that are available.

3 Local Labels

Develop a insignia of local ownership, so that you know if a store is locally owned or if a product is locally made.

4 Buy Local Days

Or weeks, months, or seasons, all of which can provide the basis for a buy-local campaign.

5 Local Currency

Mobilize your community to print its own “money” that can only be used by local businesses and consumers.

6 LETS

Create computerized trading systems, which are especially popular in Europe, that encourage locals to trade with one another without touching mainstream money.

7 Time Dollars

Set up a computerized system for tracking volunteer hours as a way of legitimizing and expanding such contributions for the community.

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★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ FOURTEEN ITEMS FOR INVESTORS

1 **Bank Local**

Favor local financial institutions like credit unions, small thrifts, and small commercial banks, and especially make sure your biggest loans—for your home, car, and college—come from them.

2 **Multiply Local Banks.**

If you can't find a good local bank, help start one; credit unions are the easiest and cheapest.

3 **Localize Mainstream Banks.**

Use the Community Reinvestment Act to evaluate how well nonlocal banks are recirculating your savings locally and to pressure them to improve their performance.

4 **Cut Up Credit Cards**

Remember that nearly all credit card processing is nonlocal and wastes precious local money on nonlocal high-interest payments.

5 **Expand Small Business Loan Funds**

Mobilize local banks, philanthropists, foundations, and government agencies to expand the assets of revolving loan funds for small business.

6 **Create Micro Funds**

If your community lacks small business funds, set up one in partnership with your bank. Several dozen depositors can pony up money, create a lending pool, and then team up with the bank to administer the loans to whomever you think is creditworthy.

7 **Invest Local**

Invest more of your savings in local business as a cooperative member, a program-related investor in a nonprofit, a limited partner, or a shareholder.

8 **Local Venture and Hedge Funds**

If you're a securities industry professional, think about creating a local investment fund that specializes in high-performing local businesses.

9 **Technical Assistance for Small Stock Companies**

Create a company that helps small businesses issue local stock (that is, tradable only intrastate) on the cheap, and then handles the ongoing reporting and due-diligence requirements.

10 **Local Underwriters**

Set up a local investment company that helps successful local firms create local stock issues, and then sells the securities intrastate for a fee.

11 **Local Stock Markets**

Put together an electronic trading platform to help local business investors find and trade with one another.

12 **Local Mutual Funds**

Once a critical mass of local securities are issued, assemble diversified funds of these securities and make them available to local retirement-plan managers.

13 **Local Investment Advisers**

Set up a firm that specializes in helping investors evaluate the performance of local business.

14 **Pension Fund Advocacy**

Pressure your pension fund, whether private or public, to invest in local real estate, local business, local venture and hedge funds, and local mutual funds.

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TWELVE ITEMS FOR ENTREPRENEURS

1 **Local Niche**

Make local ownership a key part of marketing your business to consumers and to investors.

2 **Go Green**

Make your business an outstanding local environmental citizen by using local renewable resources and reusing nonrenewable resources (through recycling and reuse), and be sure to brag to your customers about your practices.

3 **BALLE Chapter**

Create a local business alliance so that you're not alone. Use the alliance to promote local purchasing, fight chains, solve problems, secure credit, and learn new skills.

4 **Producers Cooperatives**

Join existing producers cooperatives or other kinds of industry-specific affinity groups that collectively purchase, advertise, and lobby for local members. Or start one.

5 **Bazaars**

Help set up and participate in local business mini-malls, whether they are weekend farmers' markets or dedicated shopping destinations.

6 **Direct Delivery**

Create or join a direct delivery service affiliated exclusively or primarily with local businesses.

7 **Flexible Manufacturing**

Form a network of local businesses that is ready and willing to seize manufacturing opportunities as they arise.

8 **Buyers' Cards**

Team up with other local businesses to create instruments that promote local purchasing, such as local credit cards, debit cards, loyalty cards, and gift cards.

9 **B2B Marketplace**

Set up a business that links local businesses to one another and takes a commission on each local "input" substitution.

10 **B2G Midwife**

Create a business that aggregates small businesses into compelling bids for government contracts and handles the mountain of paperwork in exchange for a fee.

11 **Super-Incubators**

Take existing small-business incubators (or start a new one) and rededicate them exclusively to local business. Restructure them to operate on a self-financing, venture-capital model.

12 **TINA Collaboration**

Break bread with nonlocal businesses to learn and work together (at least wherever it does not weaken the local business community).

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★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ THIRTY ITEMS FOR POLICYMAKERS

DAILY MANTRA

Remove all public support, including anything that requires city staff time and energy, from nonlocal business and refocus it instead, laser-like, on local business.

LOCAL STUDIES

1 Indicators

Prepare quantifiable measures of the community's quality of life (economic, environmental, social, and political) that hold economic development policies accountable. Conduct public hearings in which residents decide which indicators are most relevant, then put together an annual report on the best ones, distribute it widely, and place it on a website.

2 Assets Analysis

Gather data on assets in the region, especially unused or underused economic inputs like unemployed labor, abandoned lots and buildings, and idle machinery, all to clarify what's available for new or expanded small business.

3 Imports Analysis

Prepare an annual measure of imports and dependencies, especially in basic goods and services, to underscore where local consumer demands already exist for new locally owned businesses.

4 Subsidy Inventory

Perform a full evaluation of all subsidies given in the last ten years to business (grants, loans, guarantees, tax abatements, capital improvements, TIFs, or bond issues), and catalogue which, if any, went to local businesses.

5 State of the Region Report

Prepare an annual booklet with the latest assessments of indicators, assets, and imports, as well as other inventories noted below, all to strategically identify business opportunities that offer the greatest benefit for your community.

6 Community Reinvestment Report

Study which local depository institutions – and, if any exist, which investment institutions – are reinvesting more than 90 percent of their savings/investments locally.

7 Pension Fund Analysis

Identify which pension funds, whether public or private, specialized or mutual, might be capable of reinvesting locally.

8 Good Community-keeping Seals

Evaluate the performance of all businesses in the region and award a special seal to any firm that is not only locally owned but also a good performer with respect to workers, consumers, and the environment.

LOCAL TRAINING

1 Entrepreneurship Programs

Revitalize entrepreneurship programs in public schools, community colleges, and local universities to emphasize local and small business. Allocate municipal funds to help other institutions like churches, civic groups, and small business associations set up entrepreneurship study groups.

2 Mentorship Programs

Link established businesspeople (especially retirees with extra time) with young and aspiring entrepreneurs.

3 Place-based Scholarships

To retain the best and brightest, create a scholarship fund that extends no-interest loans to college-bound kids. (If they return to and settle in the community after graduation, they enjoy no- or low-interest provisions; otherwise, interest rates kick up to market levels.)

4 Incubators

Limit public support to incubators that house only locally owned businesses, and link them to local entrepreneurship programs and business mentors.

LOCAL PURCHASING

1 *The Homegrown Directory*

Prepare a directory of local businesses organized by product or business type that could help residents buy local. This could then be distributed in hard copies and over the Internet to consumers.

2 *Regional Directory*

Combine your homegrown directory with neighboring towns around a regional theme.

3 *Selective Public Contracting*

Give a 5 to 10 percent bidding advantage to local businesses. Better still, demand that all bidders estimate anticipated multiplier benefits.

4 *Small Business Bidding Assistance*

Set up an office that helps local business compete more effectively for public contracts.

5 *Broker B2B Deals*

Consider replicating the model of the Oregon Marketplace, which in the 1980s and early 1990s helped local businesses buy cost-effective inputs from local suppliers.

6 *Buy-Local Campaigns*

Support private efforts to create local credit, debit, loyalty, or gift cards, perhaps by providing them to public employees.

7 *Time Dollars*

Help coordinate a city-wide Time Dollar program, and provide tax credits for each Time Dollar earned to promote volunteerism and to lower public expenditures on social services.

8 *Local Currency*

Support or create a local scrip, since only businesses and service providers committed to respending locally will be interested in accepting the currency. Pay bonuses or raises to public employees in the scrip, and accept the scrip for partial payment of taxes, both of which Philadelphia did during the Great Depression.

LOCAL INVESTING

1 *Bank Local*

Make sure the city uses a local bank or credit union to conduct business and handle payroll.

2 *Invest Local*

Begin moving municipal investment, including surplus revenues and pension funds, into local business either directly or indirectly through local-business venture, hedge, or mutual funds.

3 *Bond Finance*

Limit the use of industrial revenue bonds to projects involving locally owned business.

4 *Subsidies*

Remove as many business subsidies as possible, and sunset the rest. Subject those remaining to a fair bidding process open to local business. Never pay subsidies, even tax abatements, before the promises of jobs and other benefits are fulfilled.

LOCAL PUBLIC POLICY

1 Smart Growth

Revamp zoning to permit most kinds of uses in most places, especially home-based businesses. More fully use developed land and buildings before grinding up green space or farms.

2 Smart Zoning

Use local zoning powers to prevent gigantic chain-store clusters that can destroy existing small business (though beware the legal and economic ramifications of total bans on outside competition).

3 Smart Schools

Refurbish older, smaller school buildings instead of building newer, bigger ones. Make it easy and safe for children to walk or bicycle to school.

4 Smart Taxes

Phase out all taxes on business, income, sales, and property, and phase in revenue-neutral taxes on energy, nonrenewable resources, pollution, and nuisances. If more revenue is ever needed, use Henry George property taxes (on land, not on improvements) to spur business.

5 Smart Wages

Create a living wage ordinance to eliminate most working poverty in the community. Use savings in local welfare programs to ease the transition for burdened small business. Celebrate, don't lament, how these scare away chain stores.

6 Smart Politics

Invest in serious, professional lobbyists to press for reforms of various national laws concerning subsidies, corporations, banking, and trade that are currently biased against local business.

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★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ FIVE ITEMS FOR COMMUNITY BUILDERS

1 Education

Help key members of the community (including businesspeople, politicians, civil servants, civic activists, and academics) understand the virtues of the Small-Mart Revolution.

2 Local First

Undertake grassroots education about which businesses are local and how best to support them with local planning, training, purchasing, investing, and public policy.

3 Identify Leaks

Identify economic leaks (all those places where goods and services are being imported unnecessarily) that suggest opportunities for new or expanded local businesses. Use this, along with an analysis of local assets, to assess specific businesses most promising for the community's future.

4 Vision

Organize key stakeholders to study the leakage analysis and craft a unified, coherent vision of the community's economic future.

5 Implementation

Develop a set of consistent, reinforcing Small-Mart programs and policies that help the community realize its vision.

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★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ EIGHT ITEMS FOR PROMOTING THE LOCAL, GLOBALLY

1 *Revamp Trade Agreements*

Lobby national and global decision makers to reform, revamp, and rethink current global trade agreements so that they are community friendly.

2 *Intermunicipal Agreements*

Link up with Small-Mart cities worldwide and formulate agreements on key issues ignored (or squelched) by existing trade agreements regarding environmental protection, corporate responsibility, worker rights, human rights, and community rights.

3 *Global Technical Assistance*

Help poorer communities become more self-reliant by providing them, without charge, your best Small-Mart technology, training, business, and policy ideas.

4 *Global Boycotts*

Work in concert with sympathetic communities worldwide to boycott countries and global corporations who oppose the Small-Mart Revolution.

5 *Global Investment Funds*

Set up global “funds of funds” that can provide geographic diversification of local business investment funds.

6 *Global Banks*

Finance a Small-Mart World Bank that provides targeted loans to local business development in poor communities.

7 *Global Currency Exchanges*

Create a Small-Mart International Monetary Fund that facilitates exchanges of local currencies.

8 *Global Business Networks*

Weave global networks of related businesses together so that they can support one another against multinational enterprises. Like U.S. producers cooperatives, these networks could facilitate bulk purchases, mutual credit, large-scale marketing, and technical assistance.