

Small business gets an official day

NEW YORK, US: In 2010, American Express created Small Business Saturday, a new shopping day right after Black Friday, to help small businesses get what they needed most: more customers.



The challenge in 2011 was to cement its place as an official shopping day in the US, and drive solid business outcomes to America's independent, brick-and-mortar retailers.

American Express built a marketing campaign that communicated the importance of small businesses, while driving home a call to action for consumers and small businesses at the local level. Consumers were asked to shop, and small businesses were provided with the tools they needed to get the word out to their customers.

American Express has been offering small business credit cards and services for over 20 years, and is committed to helping small businesses succeed. It is the American Express open mission: helping businesses do more business. To help small businesses be successful, they needed to address their most pressing challenge: getting customers. American Express created Small Business Saturday with the objective of driving traffic and sales to small businesses across America. Building upon the tremendous success of 2010, American Express set out in 2011 to make Small Business Saturday a permanent fixture of the holiday season.

Creating a community

American Express sought to create a community, garnering more Facebook 'likes' than in 2010 and wanted to drive demand for goods and services at small, independently owned businesses. If 2010 was about awareness, 2011 was about sales.

To help it become an annual event, American Express challenged consumers to step up and publicly pledge to shop small. TV, print ads, and banners asked them to pledge on Facebook, where they could also find and map out local small businesses in their area. Corporate partners also pitched in, with FedEx giving away US\$25 American Express Shop Small gift cards to encourage people to shop.

Results

More than 40 000 people redeemed the US\$25 Shop Small gift cards, and 2.7 million people 'liked' the Facebook page - more than double the previous year.

103 million Americans shopped small including President Obama, who took his daughters on a shopping trip to a bookstore in Washington, DC. The US Senate even declared Small Business Saturday an official day.

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