



Rush to buy Australian Made rewarding small businesses

May was a roller-coaster ride for those in small businesses.

The highs felt at the beginning of the month with the Budget measures designed to boost small businesses, have been met with a month-end low, as another lockdown in Victoria was announced.

The last week has again highlighted how a greater degree of predictability regarding the support for small business and family enterprises in the event of various lockdown scenarios would help in navigating and adapting to these challenging times.

In the meantime, small business owners who are struggling to cope with the stress of this latest wave of restrictions are encouraged to reach out for help. Visiting our [My Business Health](#) web portal or registering for Beyond Blue's free [New Access for Small Business Owners](#) program is an excellent start. Remember you don't have to go it alone. Help is available if you need it.

In times like these, it really is a great idea to embrace the 'Buy Local' philosophy. This was the key message of [Australian Made Week](#) (24-30 May).

Small and family businesses have certainly seen the benefits of more shoppers looking for Australian Made products, since the beginning of the pandemic. In fact, new research reveals 93% of Aussies prefer to buy product made here.

It's incredible to think if every household spent an extra \$10 per week on Australian Made products, this would add an additional \$5 billion to our economy over the year and create

11,000 new jobs.

From the small business perspective, this highlights the importance of staying connected to customers – even more so in times of isolation, such as those impacted by lockdown in Victoria.

We know that many small businesses have already adopted better use of mobile and internet technologies as a result of the pandemic.

Being digitally engaged has been very important for businesses, particularly those in rural and regional areas.

MYOB research tells us that SMEs with advanced levels of digital engagement are 50% more likely to grow revenue and earn 60% more revenue per person.

Greater digital adoption by SMEs would result in a \$10 billion boost to the economy.

So what's stopping small businesses from becoming more digitised? According to a new report from MYOB 24% of SMEs are worried new technology is too expensive and a further 24% say they don't have time to set it up.

Even a few minutes per week, guarding your business from being one of the 62% of small businesses that have experienced a cyber security incident by applying the [Australian Cyber Security Centre's](#) practical advice is scarce time well spent.

But it's worth noting that of the businesses that digitised during the pandemic, 39% found themselves to be more productive and 34% were more profitable. A whopping 85% of small business owners say they used digital tools to keep their business running.

Certainly consumers are becoming more aware of the benefits of buying from a local small business – including the one that involves an actual person doing a happy dance.

New research by the Commonwealth Bank shows more Australians are choosing to shop locally, supporting local online retailers and manufacturers as well as suburban shopping centres and neighbourhood stores. This is across a range of categories including recreational goods (59%), fashion (58%), electronics (55%) and groceries (53%). Nearly two-thirds of Aussie consumers say local businesses have done a great job of adapting to the disruption caused by the pandemic.

But a separate survey of more than 1,000 Australians by NBN Co, found that more than two-thirds of respondents said that although they wanted to support local businesses, they were restricted by the limited online presence.

Clearly it is time to ensure your business model is up-to-date. That includes everything from having an e-commerce functional website to targeting your customers through social media.

As Charles Darwin said – it's not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent... It is the one that is the most adaptable to change.

SECURE YOUR SMALL BUSINESS



VISIT [CYBER.GOV.AU](https://cyber.gov.au)

Keep your business cyber safe with [Cyber.gov.au](https://cyber.gov.au)

Ombudsman Bruce Billson caught up with the head of the Australian Cyber Security Centre, Abigail Bradshaw CSC, for a chat about how [Cyber.gov.au](https://cyber.gov.au) can help your small business stay cyber safe.

[Find out more](#)



Kunwinjku Fine Art brings culture to canvas

Indigenous artist Leslie Nawirridj's artworks embody the culture of his Western Arnhem Land ancestors over thousands of years. His work brings to life the unique

experience of his tribe and reinvigorates the rock art produced by generations before him.

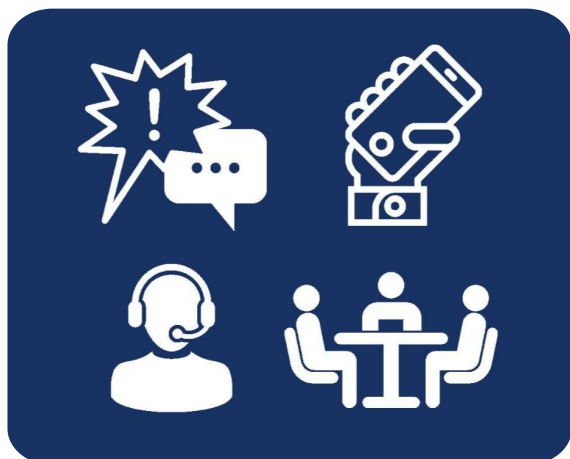
[Read More](#)



The [My Business Health](#) web portal can help you with the challenges of running a small business. Access expert advice and find tips for achieving balance in your busy business world. Visit My Business Health for more information on [Beyond Blue's tailored program New Access for Small Business Owners](#).

[Visit My Business Health today](#)

Key monthly statistics from our Assistance team



442 phone calls to the ASBFEO Information Line.

82% of contacts were from small businesses

Payment disputes (**35%**) and contract disputes (**22%**) were the top two types of disputes.

31% of contacts came from NSW, **27%** from QLD and **23%** from VIC.

Assistance case study

A small business owner contacted our Assistance Team about a dispute with an international marketing company. Our Assistance Team suggested he write a letter of concern to the directors of the company, referencing their value statement about how customers should be treated.

One of the company directors contacted the small business owner to discuss the issues. They then liaised with the Australian providers and agreed to fix the outstanding issues, waive the on-boarding fees and allow the small business owner to exit the agreement.

The amount in dispute was about \$10,000. The small business owner was very grateful for the guidance provided by our Assistance Team and for the encouragement to write the letter.



Make the move to online services for business now

The ATO's old Business Portal retires at the end of July. Online services for business is the new, improved system for businesses and organisations to interact with the ATO online. After July, the new service will be the only way to interact with us digitally. Don't leave it too late- make the switch today using your myGovId.

[Read More](#)



Unfair contract term protections for small businesses

Unfair contract terms protections have applied to most small business contracts since November 2016. From 5 April 2021, these protections will be extended to include insurance contracts which small businesses enter in to or renew, and terms in existing insurance contracts that are varied. ASIC will use its powers to take action where you have concerns about insurers using unfair terms in small business insurance contracts in breach of the new protections.

[Read More](#)

Sales

- ✓ Cash
- ✓ Eftpos
- ✓ Online

Declare all your business income

ato.gov.au/businessincome

C103-00001

Don't forget to declare your income

Forgetting to declare income is one of the most common mistakes small businesses make. Have you included business income from cash sales, dividends, interest, capital gains or one-off transactions such as selling equipment?

[Find out more](#)



Get help growing your small business with NEIS

Find out how you can access the support you need to turn your entrepreneurial dreams into a reality.

[Find out more](#)



Wage subsidies for Victorian businesses and online hub for jobseekers

Jobs Victoria payments of up to \$20,000 are now available for Victorian employers who hire eligible jobseekers for jobs that provide at least 12 months of stable employment.

As an employer, you can apply for a Jobs Victoria wage subsidy for up to 20 full-time equivalent employees, or a maximum increase of 20 per cent in their current staffing levels, who come from jobseeker priority groups.

If you're challenged with staff shortages and need to hire staff, you can register your business on the Jobs Victoria [online hub](#). You can post jobs here and connect with a growing pool of people ready to work for you. This free and easy-use service gives you a shortlist of local candidates with the skills and experience you need – saving you time and money.

[Find out more](#)



Small business showcase

No matter what stage your business is at, the Fair Work Ombudsman can help you understand your workplace rights and obligations.

They have a number of resources to help make running your business easier. They will help you to calculate pay rates and entitlements, make record management easier and assist with managing employee performance and achieving best practice.

[Find out more](#)



Direct practical coaching for NSW small businesses

The NSW Government is providing each business up to four hours of free coaching by expert registered psychologists to help become mentally healthy. Assure Programs have partnered with the NSW Government to deliver this pilot initiative. Coaching is available at a time that suits you, seven days a week from 7am to 7pm, and can be delivered online, over the phone or face to face.

[Read more](#)



Fair Work Ombudsman best practice guides

The Fair Work Ombudsman has refreshed their suite of Best Practice Guides to help small business employers apply best practice in the workplace.

The refreshed Guides address their customers' needs, notably those of time poor small business, focusing on plain English, practical guidance and appealing design. The refreshed BPGs are available via [Best practice guides](#) page on fairwork.gov.au and cover topics including small business and the Fair Work Act, managing underperformance, workplace privacy, parental leave and flexible working arrangements.

[Read More](#)

A graphic with a dark green background. On the left, two white rectangular boxes contain the text 'CELEBRATE AUSTRALIA MADE WEEK' and '24-30 MAY' in bold green capital letters. To the right of these boxes is a large red YouTube play button icon. Further right is a white triangle with a yellow outline, containing a yellow squiggly line that forms a loop and ends in an arrow pointing towards the triangle. The entire graphic is set against a dark green background.

Support Australian Made

Small and family businesses are benefiting from a significant boost in consumer sentiment, with new research revealing 93% of Aussies prefer to buy products made in Australia.

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