

Local Business Takes on the Supply Chain Crisis



The troubles with the supply chain are daunting. We're seeing predictions that the holiday shopping season will be marred by empty shelves and disappointed children. While the problems are serious, there are some businesses that will triumph in the face of adversity, and this very well could be the best holiday season for them yet. If you are one of those fortunate businesses, it's time you market the benefits of shopping with you for the holidays.

The supply chain issues are affecting restaurants, stores, and other merchants who rely on pieces and parts from other vendors and manufacturers from across the country and the world. But local artisans or restaurants that rely on locally grown food may have a significant advantage this holiday season.

Marketing Tips for the Holidays

If you are a business that is removed from the larger supply chain, it may be time to get the word out. While some box stores are expecting empty shelves in certain departments this season, you can be fully stocked and ready to help shoppers. But they won't know unless you tell them.

1. **Let them know you are ready with "the goods."** People don't know what to expect from supply chain shortages and they don't fully understand the ripple effect. They may assume that if a large chain store is out of something, so are you. Make sure they know you're fully stocked with holiday delights.

2. **Use this as a chance to highlight the awesomeness of local.** Without offending those who are struggling with supply chain issues right now, this is an ideal opportunity to highlight yet another benefit of shopping local.
3. **Offer local delivery.** If you're able to cover the cost and man hours, consider offering local delivery or pick-up options. People tend to buy online and from box stores because they don't have to leave their homes to do it. But this year, even reliable delivery services are having issues now (and we're way ahead of the holiday shipping rush). Tout the reliability of your deliveries and pickups.
4. **Use bags and tags.** Consider creating your own stenciled shopping bags or gift tags that mention this gift was made locally and selected by someone who cares. This messaging will be carried around town by your customers and attached to gifts making a big impression on a larger audience.
5. **Work with your chamber on a shop local campaign playing up the value and availability of items made locally.** As understanding as shoppers may be that everyone is in the same boat, they are tired of hearing COVID as an excuse. If your local business can help make a few holiday dreams come true, it will have a big impression on your future customers. Speaking with the chamber is also a good idea if you're a business that is struggling with supply chain. Your chamber may know of local businesses that can help you with new stock or items/services to get you through the season.

Finally, if you're doing a great job marketing and advertising the benefits of shopping with you this season, consider extending your business hours to accommodate last-minute shoppers and those who work in another town during the day. Some potential customers may avoid shopping locally because they figure local businesses close before 5.

Some local businesses may have the advantage this holiday season. If you're among the fortunate that's not disrupted by the supply chain, these marketing tips can help you have the best season ever.

[Christina R. Metcalf](#) (formerly Green) is a marketer who enjoys using the power of story and refuses to believe meaningful copy can be written by bots. She helps chamber and small business professionals find the right words when they don't have the time or interest to do so. Christina hates exclamation points and loves road trips. Say hi on [Twitter](#) or reach out on [Facebook](#).