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55 YEARS

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Small business, big impact - from the Construction Institute editorial committee

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Did you know that small businesses in Connecticut (firms with fewer than 500 employees) make up more than 97% of all businesses in the state and employ nearly 50% of all Connecticut workers?*

With this exciting number of local entrepreneurs in the state, the opportunity is ours to support them with any means we have available, particularly in times of crisis.

Throughout this pandemic, we have witnessed the creativity and resilience of our small businesses. Their determination has taken many forms, whether it be the adaptation of a business model, the integration of new technology, or simply and profoundly maintaining the high-quality products, client experiences and employee satisfaction ratings that we have become accustomed to in times of good fortune. We see an outpouring of appreciation, and the strength of a community connection in blogs and newsletters.

The Construction Institute shares in the experience of fellow small businesses. Over the past few months, the organization has revitalized the website, and relocated the physical office. In concert with many A/E/C colleagues, the Institute has been hosting a free weekly webinar series on managing the reality of COVID-19.

As these businesses continue to model the ingenuity that will propel us into the future, how can we best support them?

1. Show Up. Then, show up again. Where we direct our attention, we direct our energy. Purchasing from small businesses virtually or safely in person, can have a powerful impact. Not something you usually shop for or need? Buy gift cards and share them with friends and family. If the business is giving something away for free, support them with your participation!

2. Sharing is caring. While we may not always be able to make a purchase, we can usually always hit a "Like" or "Share" button. This is another powerful action that will raise awareness and be an invitation to others.

3. Talk the talk. Can anyone say, "Zoom meeting?" For many, we've been on the phone or in a virtual meeting more than ever before. Bring small businesses into the conversation the next time you need to send the team some encouragement, make a home office purchase, or shop for the next virtual happy hour!

Connecticut is fortunate in the strength of its small businesses. They are fundamental to our communities, and support nearly half of our state workforce. In this time of crisis, we have witnessed on a global scale how interconnected we truly are. Joined together by our struggles, we will prevail together in a future that is surely on the horizon. We have the opportunity to celebrate the creativity and resilience of our small businesses, and through this support, realize a new chapter in Connecticut's economic development.

*Source: Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) - https://portal.ct.gov/DECD/Content/Business-Development/01_Type_of_Business/Small-Businesses

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