



Voter's Guide

effinghamdailynews.com/peopleschoice

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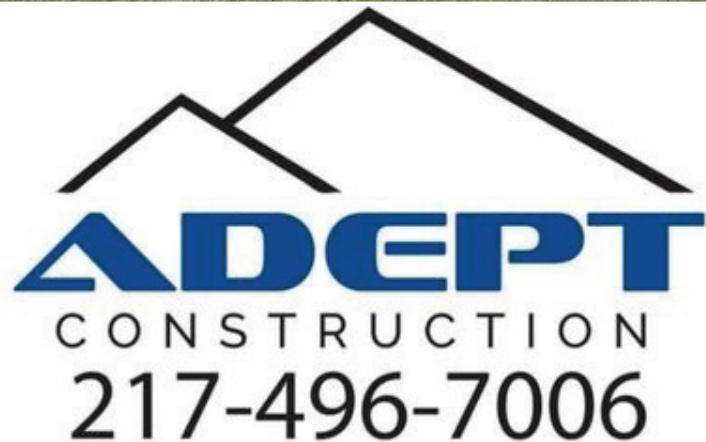


THANK YOU

for Voting us Top 5!

✓ **Best Building
Contractor/Remodeler**

✓ **Best Roofing Service**



- New Construction
- Remodeling
- Pole Buildings
- Roofing
- Siding
- Stone Veneer

People's Choice Voting to begin today

The Effingham Daily News each year conducts the annual People's Choice Contest. This popular battle of the businesses begins with the People's Choice Nomination ballot in January. For two weeks in January, Effingham Daily News readers are asked to go online and actually type in the name of their favorite business in almost 200 different categories. Since we do not provide names of businesses on the ballot to choose from, having readers type in the name of your business on this ballot is quite an honor. Our readers care enough to take the time to let our local businesses know just how much they really enjoy their products and services by recognizing them on the ballot. When the nomination process ends, we receive a list of all businesses recognized. At this point, the top 5 in each category then go

on to be listed on the People's Choice Voting ballot.

The People's Choice Voting ballot will be available online starting today through Saturday, March 5. See page 4 of this People's Choice Voting edition to find out how to register and begin the voting process. We encourage our readers to take the time to vote for their favorite business of the top 5 listed in each category. As you read through the voting ballot, you will notice that some categories have more than 5 listed while a few have less than 5 listed. For those categories with more than 5, there was a tie or multiple ties for 5th place. It is only fair, then, to also include all those who tied for 5th on the voting ballot. Rest assured, in many cases there were even more wrote in than those listed on our Voting ballot. We thank our readers for their votes, even though they did not

make the top 5. For those categories with less than 5, we have listed all those who were nominated on the January Nomination ballot.

If you go in to register for this Voting ballot and have trouble getting registered, please give Jody Hardiek a call at (217)347-7151 ext 141 for assistance.

Once the Voting ballot process has ended, we will tabulate the results and report the winner in each category in our March 26 People's Choice Winners guide. It really is fun for us when we get to contact a business to let them know they were the winner in their category. There is immense pride and many times they are very humbled by the news. We truly live and work in an area where businesses support one another and cheer each other on. They really love what they do and this award is just one way for

us to let them know just how much they are appreciated and loved by their customers and our readers. And the best part is that they get to promote this all through the year on their billboards, in their advertisements in the newspaper, and on their Facebook page, just to name a few. It really is an honor to be recognized as a "favorite"

among the majority of our Effingham Daily News readership. Each winner also receives a wooden plaque that includes a certificate to hang on their wall at their places of business in yet another way to promote their achievement.

So, from all of us to all the businesses in our readership area, best of luck during the next two weeks during the

Voting ballot process. And please know that even if your business is not chosen as the top winner in your category, we very much appreciate what you provide in products and services to this area and beyond. We know it takes all of us to provide the needed products and services to this area we are proud to call home.

Thanks For Your Votes!!

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HSHS Medical Group

Best Doctor
Robert Frost, MD

Best Surgeon
John Powell, MD



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HSHS Medical Group

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Here's your chance to vote for your favorite businesses, places, personalities and products.

It's easy as **1** — **2** — **3**

- 1** Log in to or create your account online at:
effinghamdailynews.com/peopleschoice
- 2** Vote for the 2022 People's Choice awards
February 19 through March 5
- 3** Results for the 2022 People's Choice awards
will publish in the Effingham Daily News
Winners Edition on March 26.

CATEGORIES INCLUDE:

Food & Beverage
Healthcare
Around the Home
Personal Services
Retail Stores
Financial/Legal/Insurance
Transportation (purchase/repair/care)
Home & Business Services
And more!

Limit one voting ballot submission per registered user. People's Choice ballot will consist of the top nominees in each category. All voting is conducted online at effinghamdailynews.com/peopleschoice.



Thank You!

I Appreciate
Your Nomination
For Best Real
Estate Agent!



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Katie Koester, Agent
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Joe Sippers Cafe
Plum Pies Bakery
The Cookie Jar
Kirby Foods IGA Plus
Bakery

BEST BAKERY

Kirby Foods IGA Plus
The Cookie Jar
Holli's Flour Shop
Daylight Donuts
Joe Sippers Café

BEST BARBECUE

Lickin' My Chicken & Pullin' My Pork
BBQ
Gabby Goat
Kick Addis BBQ
Veteran's Smokin' Hot BBQ
Gopher's Grill

BEST BEER ESTABLISHMENT

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Effing Brew Company
Gabby Goat
A1 Liquors
Top Shelf Beer, Wine & Spirits
Ping's Tavern

BEST BREAKFAST PLACE

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Cracker Barrel
Denny's
The Open Door Diner
Joe Sippers Café
TK Grille

BEST BUFFET

Golden Corral
Niemerg's Steakhouse
China Buffet
Kirby Foods IGA Plus Iron Horse
Restaurant
Pizza Man

BEST BUSINESS LUNCH PLACE

Gabby Goat
Joe Sippers
Niemerg's Steakhouse
Firefly Grill
Gopher's Grill

BEST CATERING

Deb's Catering
Niemerg's Steakhouse
Kirby Foods IGA Plus
Lickin' My Chicken & Pullin' My
Pork BBQ
Joe's Pizza

BEST CHICKEN

Niemerg's Steakhouse
Kirby Foods IGA Plus
Lickin' My Chicken & Pullin' My
Pork BBQ
Kentucky Fried Chicken
Culver's

BEST CHINESE FOOD

Fujiyama Japanese Steakhouse
China Express
China Buffet
Panda Express
Effingham Food Express
Classic Thai

BEST COFFEE SHOP

Joe Sippers Café
Fox Holler Coffee
Starbucks
Niemerg's Steakhouse
The Open Door Diner

BEST CUSTOMER SERVICE GROCERY STORE

Kirby Foods IGA Plus
Aldi
Save A Lot
Heartland Health Food Store
S & W Supermarket

TOP 5

- Best Beauty Salon
- Best Nail Salon
- Carrie Bloemer for Best Hair Stylist
- Laynae Arnold for Best Nail Tech

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Niernerg's Steakhouse

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The DOG
Cruiser's Drive Thru
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Pork BBQ

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Pizza Man
Niernerg's Steakhouse

BEST DONUTS

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The Cookie Jar
Dunkin Donuts
Niernerg's Steakhouse

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Culver's
Gabby Goat
Wendy's
Andrew's Eats

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Dairy Queen
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Culver's
Cruiser's Drive Thru
Andrew's Eats

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Panda Express
Effingham Food Express

BEST MEXICAN FOOD

El Rancherito
Puerto Vallarta
Taqueria Don Pedro
La Terraza Express Taqueria
Don Sol Mexican Grill

BEST FAST FOOD

Cruiser's Drive Thru
Culver's
Wendy's
McDonald's
Taco Bell
Panera Bread

BEST HOME COOKING

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Cracker Barrel
Kountry Kitchen
The Open Door Diner
Kirby Foods IGA Plus Iron Horse
Restaurant

BEST ICED TEA

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Rosie Jean's Sweet Tea & Jesus
McDonald's
Joe Sippers Café
Niernerg's Steakhouse
Panera Bread

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Lucia's

BEST STEAKS

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TK Grille
TGI Friday's
Roe's Steakhouse

BEST SALADS/SALAD BAR

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Kirby Foods IGA Plus
Joe Sippers Café
Joe's Pizza & Pasta
Golden Corral

BEST TRUCK STOP RESTAURANT

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Popeyes
Chaser's Grill & Bar
Sbarro
McDonald's

BEST SANDWICHES

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Gabby Goat
Panera Bread
Joe Sippers Cafe
Jimmy John's
Subway

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Village Wine Shop
Top Shelf Beer, Wine & Spirits
Firefly Grill
Lion's Liquors

BEST SEAFOOD

Fujiyama Japanese Steakhouse
Firefly Grill
TGI Friday's
Long John Silver's
Niernerg's Steakhouse

BEST WINERY

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Vahling Vineyards
Irene's Vineyard
Willow Ridge Winery
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Kerri Schackmann

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BEST HOSPITAL

Sarah Bush Lincoln Hospital
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Hospital
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BEST MEDICAL CLINIC

Runde Clinic/ Mid-Illinois Medical
Sarah Bush Lincoln Effingham Clinic
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Springfield Clinic
SHS Medical Group

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Care Center
Willowbrook Memory Support
Residences
Lutheran Care Center

BEST OPHTHALMOLOGIST

Dr John Kay
Dr Chris Weber
Dr Joseph Spraul
Dr. Michael Stock

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Faith Miller at James Graham
Bev Wodtka at SHS St. Anthony's
Memorial Hospital
Margo McMahon at Springfield
Clinic
Claire Schuette at SHS St.
Anthony's Memorial Hospital
Kara McNeely at Sarah Bush Lincoln
Candi Estes at Family Care
Associates

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Amanda Fisher
Danyelle Kessler
Ashley Cravens
Jayme Florida
Sandra VanAtta

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Duane Kremer
Jenny Kabbes
Rob Runde
Courtney Carr
Greg Uebinger
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Best Banking Institution
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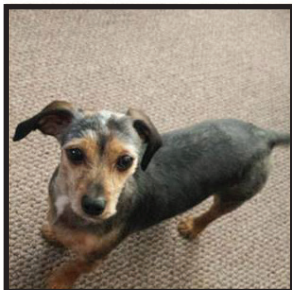
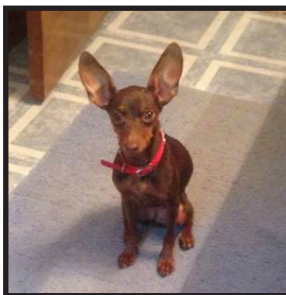
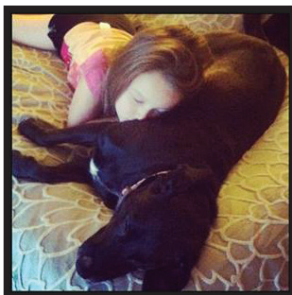
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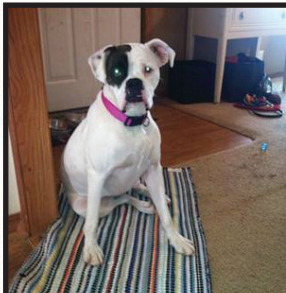
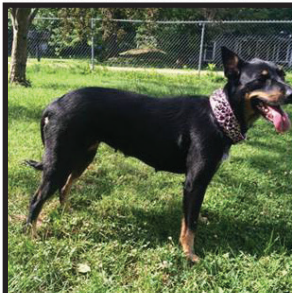
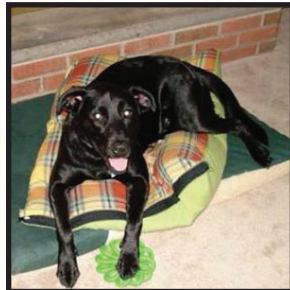
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Friday 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m. & 4:30-10:30 p.m.; Saturday 12 noon-10:30 p.m.;
Sunday 12 noon-9 p.m.



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T-A Nails and Spa
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Boho Chic Clinique

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Wiedman Cleaners

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SiemerWorks CrossFit Effingham
The Zone
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Katie Martin
Brittany Tucker

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Michelle Caraway
Rebecca Kelly
Jessica Kessler
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Casey Koester at J & R Collision
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Julia Myers at Branches Salon & Spa
Annie Wendt at Dan Hecht Chevrolet
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Goeckner Bros
Roy Schmidt Honda
KC Summers
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Eric Morales at Dan Hecht Chevrolet
Toyota
Chad Koester at Dan Hecht Chevrolet
Toyota
Doug Mette at Roy Schmidt Honda
Gene Zerrusen at Dan Hecht
Chevrolet Toyota
Robert Tuman at Northside Ford

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Kary Jansen at Jansen Auto Sales
Eric Morales at Dan Hecht Chevrolet
Toyota
Mary Burrell at Dan Hecht Chevrolet
Toyota
Josh Stone at Northside Ford



**BEST AUTO REPAIR PLACE ■ BEST CELLULAR PHONE DEALER
BEST TIRE DEALER ■ BEST ELECTRONICS DEALER ■ BEST OIL CHANGE PLACE**



Your votes have Al's in five categories and now we need your help in the final phase of voting to be #1 in ALL OF THEM!

Balloting will go live at EffinghamDailyNews.com on Saturday, February 19 and will remain open through Saturday, March 5.

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THANK YOU FOR NOMINATING US IN THESE CATEGORIES:

**New Car Dealer - Used Car Dealer
Car Rental**

Also thanks for nominating Jake Traub & Robert Tuman as Favorite New Car Salesperson & nominating Josh Stone as favorite Used Car Salesperson.



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McMahon Meats
Kirby Foods IGA Plus
J & J Meat Processing
Howe Custom Deer Processing
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- Best Flooring Store
- Best Furniture Store (New)

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Awesome Blossoms in Greenup
Janet Huston at Burkland' Florist &
Gifts

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Thank You for the Nominations

Vote for our finalists in the *Effingham Daily News People's Choice* online at www.EffinghamDailyNews.com/PeoplesChoice.



Tina Rozene, MD
Best Doctor Nominee



**Margo McMahon,
APRN, CNP**
Best Nurse Nominee



**Springfield Clinic
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Thank you for your votes of confidence in Roy Schmidt Honda, nominating our dealership in the following categories:

- Best New Car Dealer
- Best Used Car Dealer
- Best Auto Dealer Service Dept.
- Best Oil Change Place

Thank you for nominating
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 Sales Manager - 27 Year Sales Professional
 as Best New Car Salesperson



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 in 2021**



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America's Groove Record Store
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 Bruce's House of Guitars

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Ten Brooke LeAnne
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Bryonna Meskimen
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Keely Gosnell
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The Equity's Planters Precision
Sloan Implement
Bluff Equipment

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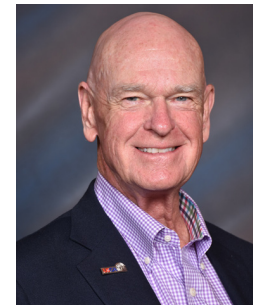
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Unique reasons to shop at small businesses

The numbers don't lie. Locally owned businesses may be classified as "small," but they have a big impact on the national economy.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Business Employment Dynamics report, small businesses created 10.5 million net new jobs between 2000 and 2019, accounting for 65.1 percent of net new jobs created since 2000 in the United States. The Government of Canada reports that the number of small businesses in Canada in 2020 was far greater than the number of medium and large businesses, accounting for 97.9 percent of all the businesses in the country.

Supporting locally owned businesses is a great way to support a neighbor, but that's not the only attraction. Here are several reasons to shop small.

The feel-good factor

Doing for others certainly has an impact on the person on the receiving end, but

also benefits the do-gooders. A November 2020 survey by Union Bank found that 72 percent of Americans said supporting small businesses was more important than getting the best deals. That may be due to the feeling of helping out a fellow neighbor.

Create job opportunities

Shopping at small businesses keeps those establishments afloat, and it also keeps their employees afloat. Small businesses are the largest employers in the United States. That's also true in Canada, where 68.8 percent of the total labor force works for a small business. A person may never know when he or she — or a relative — will need a job. Keeping small businesses viable provides a strong job market for locals.

Keep more money in the community

The Small Business Administration says \$48 out of every \$100 spent at a small business stays in the community. Spend the same \$100 at a national retailer and only \$14 stays.

Enjoy a more local flavor

National retailers and other businesses follow a global business model that may not allow for much customization, but small businesses can provide products or services that relate directly to the needs of the communities they serve. These same small businesses also may be more inclined to work with local vendors and start-ups than national companies that have global supply chains.

These are just a few of the many reasons to seek out small businesses when in need of products or services.



3 ways educators can use newspapers in the classroom

The COVID-19 pandemic had a profound impact on communities across the globe. No individual, household or industry was unaffected by the pandemic, and the ripple effects of the virus may be felt for years to come.

Though many effects of the pandemic have been devastating, one unforeseen and potentially positive consequence of the spread of COVID-19 was a growing recognition of the invaluable role played by local newspapers. Responses to the virus and strategies regarding how to combat it varied greatly, and local newspapers were a go-to resource for citizens who wanted to learn about rules and regulations in their towns. For example, in England the Bishop's Stortford Independent, a local weekly paper in Hertfordshire, experienced a significant monthly web audience growth during the pandemic. Prior to the global outbreak in January 2020, the paper's monthly web audience was 260,000. By October, that number had spiked to 360,000, reflecting a growing need for local news outlets as readers across the globe sought to learn about the pandemic within their own communities and how local officials were

responding to the threat posed by COVID-19.

If the pandemic illustrated the vital role local newspapers can play, it's important that readers recognize that role won't be any less valuable when COVID-19 is in the world's rearview mirror. Educators can help the next generation of readers recognize the importance of local newspapers by taking various steps to incorporate newspapers into their lessons.

1. Employ newspapers when teaching current events. Everyone was directly affected by the COVID-19 virus, making the story of the pandemic one of the most unique in modern history. Though children are often sheltered from global news stories about conflicts or economic crises, no such

sheltering was possible during the pandemic, as kids were forced to learn from home and confront life with little or no access to extracurricular activities. Educators can show how local newspapers reported on the pandemic when teaching current events, using that example as the foundation for teaching current events in the future.

2. Utilize the newspapers when teaching ESL. Students who do not speak English at home or as their primary language can benefit greatly from their local newspapers. It might be easy to learn how to say certain words in English, but reading them in a newspaper gives ESL students a chance to see the words they've learned in context. And because local newspapers feature sections on everything from news to

sports to entertainment, ESL students are sure to find a few articles that appeal to their existing interests.

3. Use newspapers to encourage a love of reading. Just like ESL students are bound to find something that interests them in the local newspapers, their English-speaking classmates

are sure to find a recap of their favorite team's most recent game or a review of the latest superhero movie or a local news story about their town to pique their interest. Students may not realize it, but they're learning when reading such stories by developing their vocabularies, fine tuning

their comprehension skills and catching up on current events.

The valuable role played by local newspapers was on display during the pandemic. That role won't be any less valuable in a post-pandemic world, and it's a lesson teachers can apply in their classrooms.



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The impact reviews have on businesses

Online reviews have long been a mixed bag for small businesses. Though positive reviews can help businesses stand out from their competitors, negative reviews can be as harmful as positive reviews are helpful. That's true even when negative reviews do not reflect the average customer's experience.

Search Engine Land, which covers digital advertising technology, reports 88 percent of consumers trust online reviews as much as personal recommendations. Unfortunately for businesses, Inc. magazine and entrepreneur Andrew Thomas found that a customer who has a negative business experience is highly likely to share that experience by leaving a

bad review. On the other hand, someone who has had a positive experience is unlikely to leave a good review. Roughly 10 percent of happy customers say they were pleased by a product or service. Furthermore, Thomas indicates it takes roughly 40 positive customer experiences to undo the damage from a single negative review.

Customer happiness should be the goal of businesses, with the added benefit of helping to generate more positive reviews and word-of-mouth recommendations. While that is happening, customers can think twice about online reviews.

• Speak to product quality especially when you have a very good experience with an item. Many retailers request

feedback via email shortly after consumers have made a purchase. Take advantage of this opportunity to offer positive feedback.

• Companies gather personal information from customers so they can follow up in many cases. Great customer service helps prevent bad reviews and defines companies' brands. If you are asked for a phone number or email address, provide it. Doing so helps companies improve their products or services.

• Happy customers can reach out to friends and family members to share their experiences with certain companies. Posting your own review on social media also can drum up business for a company you respect.

• Customers should weigh

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their words heavily and think before posting a review. The marketing and consulting resource The Chat Shop says 31 percent of customers are interested in grocery store reviews, 60 percent are likely to read restaurant reviews and 70 percent rely on

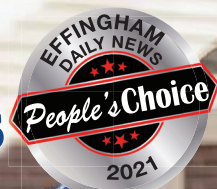
technology product reviews. Make an effort to discuss issues with a company before leaving a negative review. You may be pleasantly surprised with the outcome. There's no need to hesitate when leaving positive reviews. Simply explain why you were

pleased.

Reviews can make or break a company. Both business owners and customers have a role to play in making online reviews a valuable way to learn about a company.



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The Effingham Daily News is a newspaper serving the counties of Effingham, Clay, Cumberland, Fayette, Jasper and Shelby counties in Illinois. The Joseph McNaughton family owned the paper for 46 years. For 25 years, it has now been owned by Community Newspaper Holdings, Inc.

The Effingham Daily News is published on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. Every other Monday features a page from the Effingham County Museum. The Wednesday edition features an Effingham County Farm Bureau newsletter page as well as farm news and information on area auctions. Friday's edition of the paper features a Homes section with listings by area real estate agencies as well as home improvement services and property transfers. Saturday's weekend edition features a color comics section and a TV Entertainment section. The Effingham Daily News also publishes a total market coverage edition each Wednesday called Crossroads Supersaver.

To fulfill the newspaper's purpose of serving the community and providing information to readers, the newspaper is proud to also provide an online edition at effinghamdailynews.com, in addition to a complete news edition in print.

The Effingham Daily News is committed to keeping the residents informed about what is occurring in the communities throughout the area. Each publication includes local, state and national news, special interest stories, weather,

obituaries, opinion page with letters to the editor and local and syndicated columnists, upcoming events, sports news, classifieds, accidents and Effingham County jail reports and news from The Associated Press. Readers are encouraged to email us at news@effinghamdailynews.com to submit news items of interest.

Effingham Daily News journalists and advertising departments are consistently recognized for the quality of their work by the Illinois Press Association, the Southern Illinois Editorial Association and the Illinois

Associated Press Media Editors.

The Effingham Daily News was named Newspaper of the Year in its division for news and sports coverage in 2020 by Community Newspaper Holdings Inc. Judges lauded the Effingham Daily News for their strong local coverage, relevant editorial page, clean design and frequently updated website.

Of CNHI's 90 newspapers in 22 states, the division of small and mid-size publications has the most — 36. Editor Jeff Long says, "Everyone who works for

the Effingham Daily News understands the importance of local journalism — from the people who sell ads and get them in the paper, to those who answer the phone and make sure the paper is delivered."

"The Effingham Daily News produced robust local online and print content," the judges said. "Attractive, reader helpful layouts from front page to last page. Well done centerpieces. Focus on everyday local coverage, from big stories to small news. Sports (good mix of local and Chicago pro) and features pages

also showcased the paper's strength. Inviting opinion page highlighted local editorials as well as letters to the editor. Fresh website, with a nice array of photo galleries."

Besides the newspaper, the Effingham Daily News publishes the quarterly Effingham Magazine, annual Progress magazine, Discover magazine, A Day Away magazine, the annual Farm Fair sections, and many other special features including Citizen of the Year, Top Community Leaders and Peoples Choice. Editor Jeff Long says, "It's a lot of work

for a small staff, but we think it's important to tell the story of where we live in a variety of ways." So if you drive by the Effingham Daily News late at night and still see the lights on, you now know why.

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How to identify what customers want

Generating repeat customers should be the goal of any small business. Various studies have found that consumers spend more the longer their relationship with a business lasts, which only underscores how vital repeat customers can be to the long-term success of a business.

One component of keeping customers happy and returning time and again involves understanding what patrons are seeking from a business. Addressing customer needs early on generally involves solving a current problem or thinking about what customers may need in the future — perhaps even before they recognize it themselves. The following are some of the factors customers look for in the products and services they choose.

Good price

Price is one of the biggest factors in choosing one

business over another. Customers frequently compare prices between different sellers. Prisync, which offers competitor price tracking and monitoring

software, indicates 90 percent of consumers invest their time to hunt the best online deals, and 86 percent of consumers say it's important to compare

prices from different sellers. Business owners can get ahead of bargain hunters by figuring out how to make their prices more attractive than their competitors'.

While you may not be able to offer the lowest unit price, you may be able to bundle items and services or offer some other perk, such as free delivery, which makes your overall product value better.

or those who reside in small houses, you'll need to offer items that do not take up too much interior space. Identifying these factors can ensure you always have something useful to offer your customers.

Ask customers questions

Figuring out what customers want may come down to asking them. Reach out to customers to learn about why they visited your establishment. Getting a clearer picture of what makes you stand out to customers helps you to fine tune that advantage even further.

Assess customers' lifestyles

Rather than focusing on a product or service, look at the people who will be relying on it and plan with that in mind. For example, if you have a store that stocks housewares and other furnishings, and find that your client base is largely apartment dwellers

Reliability

No matter what item or service is offered, most customers want products to last and be dependable, states Power Reviews, a consumer opinion company. If you're an electrician, show up for the estimate on time and complete the job as promised. A store owner should choose a product line that endures by carefully vetting vendors to ensure only the highest quality products are being sold in their stores.

Learning what customers want involves asking the right questions and getting to know a customer base more deeply.



The various advantages to shopping locally

Residents of a given town or city are often encouraged to support local businesses by looking to these firms to fill their needs. Small businesses are not just integral parts of communities, employing millions across the country, they also are operations that fund the very communities they service.

Efforts to promote shopping local appear to be working. According to the Commonwealth Financial Group, over the last several years there has been a shift in consumer purchasing behavior marked by a preference among consumers to support locally owned shops and stores over big-box retailers and even online shopping.

The following are some key reasons why shopping locally not only benefits small

business owners, but also the communities they call home and the customers they serve.

- **More money stays in the community:** According to the American Independent Business Alliance, for every \$100 spent at a local business, \$68 remains in the community. Conversely, only 43 percent of every \$100 spent at a chain retailer stays in the community.

- **Job creation:** The Business Alliance for Local Living Economies says local businesses create the majority of economic growth. They employ millions of Americans by creating roughly two-thirds of private sector jobs. Local business owners also tend to hire people who represent the demographics of the communities where the business is located, which

may include historically underserved populations.

- **Diversity of products:** Local stores tend to diversify their products and services to meet the needs of the local communities, whereas chain stores often stock their shelves based on national demands.

- **Personalized service:** A small business owner may be more inclined to go to great lengths to make customers happy because the long-term success of the business depends on customers becoming repeat customers.

- **Personal connection:** Knowing the people behind a business facilitates a connection not easily achieved with other companies. Customers may celebrate when a favorite business succeeds and look to spread the word about that

business because they feel like they played a positive role in its success.

Shopping locally has gained momentum and is fueled by the many

advantages to supporting local businesses.



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