Small Business Day attendees will have access to the following sessions at the Main Street Now Conference:

Monday, April 12

**Expo Hall: 11:00 - 11:30 AM EDT**

**Opening Plenary: 12:00 - 12:50 PM EDT**

The 2021 Main Street Now Virtual Conference kicks-off with the high-energy Opening Plenary, featuring keynote remarks by entrepreneur and philanthropist Howard Schultz, former CEO and chairman emeritus of Starbucks Coffee Company. The past year has been an extremely challenging and pivotal one for small businesses, Main Street programs, and all those engaged in community revitalization efforts; we have all learned about leading through crisis. With his vast experience in the challenges of starting and growing a retail business, Mr. Schultz will share his unique perspective on what small businesses and communities need now to grow in recovery and how to cultivate courageous leadership during turbulent times. Patrice Frey, President and CEO of Main Street America, will also welcome attendees from across the country - and the world - to this year’s event and begin to unpack the past year’s impacts on Main Street. And be sure to tune in for some fun cameos from familiar Main Street faces!

*Generously sponsored by The Hartford.*

**Speakers:** Howard Schultz, former CEO and chairman emeritus of Starbucks Coffee Company; Patrice Frey, President and CEO of Main Street America

**Format:** Special session. *Participants will be muted but are encouraged to use the chat function to interact throughout the session.*
**Simple & Actionable Steps for More Effective Marketing for Businesses and Communities with Marketing 3-4-5™**

1:15-2:00pm EDT

This Marketing 3-4-5™ Quick Course will provide a foundation that anyone can use to become more effective at marketing without becoming an expert. We'll review a content marketing approach that can be done by anyone using simple 10-15 minute activities — no creativity required! If you're interested in implementing or growing e-commerce we'll have some tips for you there, too. We'll explore free ways to cross-promote and distribute your content, as well as examples from both businesses and Main Street programs. The session will wrap up with key website considerations and examples of effective websites that you can quickly copy.

Speaker: Brian Ostrovsky, CEO, Locable

Format: Education Session. Participants will be muted but are encouraged to use the chat function to interact throughout the session.

**Destination Downtowns**

1:15-2:00 pm EDT

Description TBA

Speaker: Jon Schallert, President, The Schallert Group, Inc.

Format: Education Session. Participants will be muted but are encouraged to use the chat function to interact throughout the session.

**Expo Hall: 2:00 - 3:30 PM EDT**

**The Role of Place in Supporting Small Businesses**

2:30 - 3:30pm EDT

A Main Street revitalization program is an essential for establishing the physical and promotional environment that supports the launch and growth of small businesses. In this session, hear from Main Street small business owners on how they selected their locations, their important decision drivers, and how through COVID-19, place variables continue to be an important component for scaling these businesses. In addition, Main Street America will present new research findings on place variables that offer insight into priority areas as part of entrepreneurial ecosystem building at the local level.

Speakers: Amber Lambke, Founder & CEO, Maine Grains, Inc; Ryanne Hodson, Founder & Owner, Broad Porch Coffee, Co.; Bernetta Powell, Owner, Westend Fresh Seafood Market in Charlotte’s UrbanMain Beatties Ford / LaSalle Road corridor

Format: Workshop. This is an engagement-based workshop. We encourage you to have your cameras on and be ready to participate with your fellow attendees.
Coffee & Conversations: Digital Footprints - What Brick & Mortar Stores Need to Know About Being Online

**9:00 - 9:30am EDT**

Join us for a small business networking session! One of the key lessons learned from 2020 is that having an online presence should be a priority for retailers to keep inventory moving—even if their objective is to move inventory from their physical stores. This discussion will offer strategies for physical merchants to sell online—including ways that do not involve having a traditional ecommerce store—while also providing best practices to simply being online. From email marketing to online review sites to community digital offerings and more, expect to gain COVID-approved updates on how to best position your brick-and-mortar store digitally. Join Retail Minded’s Nicole Leinbach Reyhle as she offers direction on ways to expand your selling avenues, increase your customer connectivity and strengthen your overall business awareness. Come with questions, as you’ll have the chance to chime in live during this virtual, round-table discussion!

Speakers: Nicole Leinbach Reyhle, Founder and Publisher, Retail Minded

Format: This is an engagement-based workshop. We encourage you to have your cameras on and be ready to participate with your fellow attendees.

Integrating Brick & Mortar and eCommerce

**10:30 - 11:00am EDT**

Session Description: TBA

Speaker: Martin Guerrero, Small Business and Community Advocacy, Square

_Generously sponsored by Square._

Main Idea General Session: Big Plans for Small Business

**12:00 - 12:50pm EDT**

In the wake of COVID-19, small businesses are experiencing far-ranging economic and social implications. While the future is uncertain for the small businesses that anchor our communities, this moment can also be a catalyst for new approaches to supporting entrepreneurs in commercial districts. As we look toward recovery, local governments, small businesses, and place management organizations must work together in new ways to spur regrowth. In this conversation, hear from leaders in the planning, policy and Main Street worlds about the creative ways that we can focus on district-level solutions to sustain businesses.
Speakers: Bruce Katz, Director of the Nowak Metro Finance Lab at Drexel University; Kennedy Smith, Principal, Community Land Use + Economics Group; Maurice Cox, Commissioner, Department of Planning and Development, City of Chicago; Jess Zimbabwe, Executive Director, Environmental Works

Format: Participants will be muted but are encouraged to use the chat function to interact throughout the session.

Generously sponsored by American Express.

**Trends and New Norms: How COVID-19 is Impacting Consumerism and the Economy**

1:15 - 2:00pm EDT

The immediate and long-term impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and associated shifts in consumer demand and preferences will require business owners to rethink how they operate their businesses. For small businesses in a commercial corridor, these trends are tied to the location, assets, and specific pandemic effects in the local business ecosystem. In this session, learn about the macro trends facing small business owners and the ways in which consumer choice will affect your downtown business.

Speakers: Matthew Wagner, Ph.D. Main Street America

Format: Education Session. Participants will be muted but are encouraged to use the chat function to interact throughout the session.

Generously sponsored by GoDaddy.

**Small Business Marketing: 3 Ways to Increase Customer Engagement for Physical Storefronts**

1:15-2:00pm EDT

Let’s face it – retail isn’t what it used to be. Times have changed as a direct result of COVID-19, and consumers and shopping have changed, as well. What has not changed, however, is the desire for customers to engage with small businesses and communities. This session will explore realistic ways for merchants to capture customer attention, keep customer attention and ultimately gain customer dollars specifically in physical stores. With a core focus on COVID-approved best practices and customer-centric experiences, this is a session you won’t want to miss that will offer actionable, realistic insight you can begin applying to your store right away!

Speakers: Leinbach Reyhle, Founder and Publisher, Retail Minded

Format: Education Session. Participants will be muted but are encouraged to use the chat function to interact throughout the session.
Shifting Your Business Model: 5 Marketing Strategies to Reach Customers Despite the Challenges of COVID-19

2:30 - 3:30pm EDT

Customer expectations, preferences, and shopping experiences have shifted tremendously due to COVID-19. This session will highlight five marketing strategies that benefit customers and retailers alike—ultimately aiming to help retailers increase both profit and visibility. Expect to gain some no-cost and low-cost strategies to help your retail business survive the challenges of COVID-19 in 2021 and beyond. Plus, be introduced to resources that can help you achieve these goals. Led by Retail Minded’s Founder, Nicole Leinbach Reyhle, this session will include experts from companies across the industry.

Speakers: Nicole Leinbach Reyhle, Founder and Publisher, Retail Minded; Crystal Vilkaitis, Founder, Crystal Media

Format: Education Session with Q&A. This session will be a mix of pre-recorded content and live Q&A at the end.

Small Business Advocacy

2:30 - 3:30pm EDT

Throughout the pandemic, small business advocacy has been front and center with federal, state and local programs creating new ways to support entrepreneurs survive. To thrive in a commercial district, entrepreneurs and small businesses need continuous support in reducing regulatory barriers and developing a business-supportive climate. In this session, join the National Federation of Independent Businesses to learn about the current moment in small business advocacy and tools and resources that you can use to help support your small business advocacy.

Speakers: Holly Wade, National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB)

Format: Education Session with Q&A. This session will be a mix of pre-recorded content and live Q&A at the end.

Grow with eBay

3:45 - 4:15pm EDT

This presentation will cover some of the unique features, tools, and opportunities eBay offers Main Street small businesses looking to get and/or grow online.

Format: Education Session. Participants will be muted but are encouraged to use the chat function to interact throughout the session.

Generously sponsored by eBay.
Online Reputation Management for Small Businesses: Success in 2021

4:30 - 5pm EDT

Last year was filled with unexpected challenges for everyone, but especially you as business owners. Yelp has been working to create and launch new tools and features that help you communicate the most important information to your current and potential customers. Join Yelp’s Small Business Expert Emily Washcovick to learn about how to effectively manage your online reputation and the free resources that are new to Yelp. Listen as Emily dives into:

- COVID resources and the most important information in the eyes of your customer
- Yelp’s free tools and information on our newest features (e.g. verified license and services offered)
- Advice for how to respond to online reviews and leverage them in your marketing strategy

COVID-19 or not, marketing and customer communication are key to your success. Yelp has created tools for you to succeed in this area—learn all about optimizing your listing and taking control of your online reputation.

Speaker: Emily Washcovick, Senior Field Marketing Manager and Small Business Expert, Yelp

Generously sponsored by Yelp.

Happy Hour & Chit Chat: Action Steps to Gaining Visibility & Sales in an Increasingly Challenged Marketplace

5:15 - 5:45pm

Want to gain more attention for your store? Looking to increase profit for your business? Join Retail Minded’s Nicole Leinbach Reyhle as she unveils five ways to do this despite the increasingly competitive retail landscape. While some action steps may be outside your comfort zone, all can help you stay relevant in a challenging marketplace. Come curious. Leave informed. This virtual, round-table discussion is specifically designed to support Main Street communities and their unique offerings, challenges, small businesses and more. Plus, you’ll get the chance to share your questions or comments live during this virtual, round-table discussion!

Speaker: Nicole Leinbach Reyhle, Founder and Publisher, Retail Minded

Format: This is an engagement-based workshop. We encourage you to have your cameras on and be ready to participate with your fellow attendees.

Wednesday, April 14

Expo Hall: 11:00 - 11:30 AM EDT
Does Your Downtown Brand Experience Still Measure Up?

1:15-2:00pm EDT

Join us for a lively presentation to learn how to define and celebrate a community-wide brand post-COVID-19. This session will guide you through developing your ‘sticky factor’ or polishing your existing one. You'll walk away with a practical, tangible, and strategic plan that addresses the messaging, programming, and decorative elements for your downtown and individual businesses. Start small, grow big. This session will appeal to Main Street and commercial district managers and small businesses alike!

Speaker: Lyn Falk, Retailworks, Inc.

Format: Education Session. Participants will be muted but are encouraged to use the chat function to interact throughout the session.

Expo Hall: 3:00 - 3:30 PM EDT