

The Village Marketplace
hamiltoninternationalvillage.ca



Media Release

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Hamilton's International Village BIA Creates Province's First BIA Built & Operated E-Commerce Marketplace

It's extremely difficult to be a small business owner. It's even harder to be a small business owner during COVID-19 but the International Village BIA has created an opportunity for their members to combat that.

hamiltonInternationalvillage.ca is Ontario's first BIA built and operated e-commerce marketplace website that has been custom built by the BIA specifically to provide another platform for their member businesses to sell their products and services. This online marketplace allows business owners to sell online for free. The BIA has created this free tool for their businesses without taking any commission – just simply as a service to help them succeed.

Susie Braithwaite, Executive Director of the BIA knows this will make a difference. "This is 2020 and businesses must have an online presence. "Bricks & Clicks" is the new reality for small business survival but, not everyone has the resources or capacity to build it themselves, so we've built it for them with the help of one of our very own members, The Laundry Design Works." The e-commerce site, works similarly to those we already know – businesses can register and upload the goods they wish to sell. Customers search the site for their favourite business' products and services then make their purchases online in one cart at checkout.

"Having a bricks and mortar location brings with it a lot of overhead costs and responsibilities. Although this is important to the shopping experience, convenience is also something of value in 2020. Our members were originally preparing for LRT construction that was slated to start at the end of this year which was the original reason why the BIA wanted to build this site, now we're dealing with a world-wide pandemic – how much more can small businesses take?" asks Braithwaite.

Maja from Zoran Designs has registered her business for the marketplace and can't wait until it's live. "I registered for the website because I love the idea of a collective online marketplace. I view the marketplace as a free local ad of sorts that could funnel more traffic to my existing online shop. I guess you could say that to me the marketplace is a virtual store window that can give potential shoppers an idea of what's inside and they can choose to enter for a more thorough browse or move on to the next store front...virtually, much like if they were taking an actual stroll through the neighbourhood."

This innovative e-commerce website built by the BIA is a first of its kind allowing shoppers to purchase from multiple vendors and is Accessible.

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