



Media release

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nbn™ COVID-19 Behavioural Change Survey: 7 in 10 consciously supporting local businesses and set to do more online

- **Almost half of respondents say their households have increased their online shopping activities since the COVID-19 crisis began**
- **70% say they are now consciously supporting local businesses online**
- **70% would like to support more local businesses, but felt they only had a limited online presence**

A groundswell of support from consumers wanting to ‘buy local’ highlights an opportunity for Australian businesses to strengthen their online presence and offer new ways for people to access their products and services.

The *nbn™ Behavioural Change Survey* investigated how attitudes to, and engagement with, local business and e-commerce have changed as a result of COVID-19. Research conducted by Venture Insights and commissioned by NBN Co found that 49 per cent of respondents have increased online shopping during the COVID-19 crisis. Significantly, 70 per cent now consciously supported local businesses online and the same number would like to support more local businesses, but felt they had a limited online presence.

Developing a stronger online presence, adding innovation to product and service offerings and providing home delivery were selected as the top strategies local businesses could adopt to make it easier for people in their communities to support them. Consumers also valued regular communications from local businesses.

With more than one million business customers now connected to the **nbn™** network, the *nbn™ Behavioural Change Survey* highlights how consumers have increased their online activities during the COVID-19 crisis and have a desire to engage more with businesses online.

Paul Tyler, Chief Customer Officer – Business at NBN Co said: “The challenges businesses have faced as a result of this crisis are many and significant, however this research highlights a unique opportunity for local businesses to harness new levels of consumer goodwill and demand online. An online presence can expose businesses to a world market, but the support of local consumers also offers an important opportunity.

“Our research highlights that consumers are shopping more online and consuming from local businesses as a result of their experience with COVID-19 social distancing measures. I hope that this sentiment can become an opportunity for local businesses to adapt and emerge from this time in a position of strength.”

The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry recently conducted its own research that indicates many businesses are already adapting their operations and making the shift online.

Dr Ross Lambie, Chief Economist at the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry said: “Our recent national business conditions survey found that many businesses have adapted their operations to continue trading during the pandemic crisis, with almost a third expanding their online presence, and a quarter changing their mode of delivery or diversifying into new product lines and services.

“These new insights reinforce the importance of businesses developing a digital strategy and online presence. It’s certainly encouraging to hear that so many Australians are eager to support the local businesses in their community and this should provide even more incentive for businesses to meet that demand online.”

To assist businesses impacted by the pandemic crisis, NBN Co recently announced a COVID-19 connectivity relief package, including providing financial support to internet providers on wholesale monthly charges for businesses facing financial hardship and discounted access to new connections of specified wholesale business grade products to help small and medium businesses maintain or re-establish their operations, once the crisis passes.

For more information on the *nbn™ Behavioural Change Survey* and to learn more on what NBN Co is doing to support Australian businesses through COVID-19, please visit: www.nbnco.com.au/campaigns/covid-19

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Notes to editor:

This research was undertaken by Venture Insights on behalf of NBN Co. The research took place in April 2020, and was completed on 28 April. 1,006 respondents aged 18+ completed the survey and they were proportionally spread across ACT (2%), NSW (31%), NT (0.5%), QLD (20%), SA (8%), TAS (2%), VIC (26%) and WA (10%). 77% of the respondents belonged to a metro area, and 23% to a regional area.