



PRESS RELEASE

Comcast
One Comcast Center
Philadelphia, PA 19103
business.comcast.com

Comcast Business Establishes Technology Initiative with Boston Main Streets Foundation and Cambridge Retail Advisors to Support Boston-based Small Businesses
Program delivers technology solutions and consulting services, resulting in more than \$38,000 in savings to date

BOSTON, JAN. 26, 2021 - [Comcast Business](#) today announced it has established a technology initiative with the [Boston Main Streets Foundation](#) and [Cambridge Retail Advisors](#) aimed at supporting local small businesses throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. Together, the three organizations are providing consulting services and technology solutions to local small businesses across a variety of industries, leading to improved business operations and transformation, and significant cost savings.

While the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact small businesses across the country, many are embracing technology like never before. In fact, a [recent survey from Comcast Business](#) shows that small and mid-size business (SMB) owners have fast-tracked new technologies as a result of the pandemic. SMBs have also used the pandemic as an opportunity to learn new ways to innovate, adapt and future-proof their business.

As technology is a key need for businesses to accelerate innovation, 14 businesses to date have benefited from the implementation of technology through the joint efforts of the newly established program. Even as COVID-19 presents unparalleled challenges, especially for small businesses, the program will continue to support and deliver solutions for businesses to succeed. This includes the identification of more than \$38,000 in savings through reduced credit card processing, internet discounts and payment of point-of-sale subscription fees, made possible through the initiative.

Food for the Soul Serves Up Online Orders Backed by Comcast Business Network

For brothers and restaurateurs Donnell and William Singleton, the partnership has provided their Dorchester-based restaurant [Food for the Soul](#) with tablets to support recent demands in online ordering, along with security to monitor business and operations when they're away, all backed by the speed and reliance that the Comcast Business network provides. Their ability to adapt at the onset of the pandemic also allowed Food for the Soul the opportunity to provide more than 80,000 free meals to Boston area residents. Now as Food for the Soul resumes full operations and looks to expand to a second location in Jamaica Plain in early 2021, technology will be central to their plans.

"Having been born and raised in Boston, the community has done so much for me throughout my entire life. Now, it's important that I give back to my community and set an example of what it's like to be an entrepreneur," said Donnell Singleton, Co-Owner of Food for the Soul. "This program has not only given me the understanding of what I need to run a successful operation, but the confidence to do so. I truly appreciate the patience and support our program director and CRA project manager Joe Lawlor and the entire Cambridge Retail Advisors team have provided me throughout the entire process. The relationship and commitment is priceless."

Mission Bar and Grill and Toasted Flats Delivers Customers an Enhanced Experience

Harry Walsh of [Mission Bar and Grill](#) in Mission Hill has also relied on the initiative to enable his business operations, including Business Internet from Comcast Business to support the recent implementation of a new point-of-sale system and services to support online ordering, along with Business TV to provide entertainment to restaurant patrons. Similarly, Dalila Vargas of East Boston's [Toasted Flats](#) has experienced an improvement in operations with the installation of Comcast Business Internet and Business Phone. With guidance from Cambridge Retail Advisors and Comcast Business services, Toasted Flats has also introduced an online ordering system for customers.

"It's really important to me as a business owner that I balance a positive employee and customer experience. Technology has been critical to the success of being able to do so," said Dalila Vargas, Owner of Toasted Flats. "Not only has this partnership allowed me to deliver an ordering solution that's easy for my employees to use, but it's also easy for my customers. The program has improved my quality of life, and has ultimately allowed for the growth of my small business within our community."

Veronica Robles Cultural Center Improves Payment Process and Enhances Programming

[The Veronica Robles Cultural Center](#), a longstanding cultural center in East Boston, has also experienced the benefits of a transformed business model with assistance from the initiative. Most recently, the center implemented a point-of-sale system to allow for easier payments and better record keeping. And through its longstanding relationship with Comcast Business and use of high-speed, reliable internet, the center will soon be able to enhance its programming through offering online classes to community members.

"We are truly grateful for the support that we have received from Cambridge Retail Advisors and Boston Main Streets. The incredible work that these small businesses are doing would not be possible without the joint efforts of both organizations," said Barry Bader, Vice President of Comcast Business for Comcast's Greater Boston Area. "As technology continues to be imperative for modern day businesses to compete, we're pleased to be recognized as a reliable partner to these local businesses."

"The relationships we have formed with the business owners is a hallmark of this initiative. Our investment into their operation has provided ample opportunities for transformation during this challenging time," said Grant Cohen, Program Director and CRA Senior Consultant. "The reliable Internet service provided by Comcast Business is a key to powering revenue generating opportunities and cost saving to enable small businesses to not only survive but thrive."

In 2018, the Boston Main Streets Foundation launched this initiative to help cash-only businesses transition to digital payments. A pilot campaign in the Bowdoin Geneva Main Street District proved successful and exposed greater technology needs among Main Streets businesses throughout the City, including basic infrastructure elements like WiFi and POS systems to more sophisticated business tools like ecommerce sites and better credit card processing rates.

"Giving access to this suite of technology has been a game changer for these Main Streets businesses, who have had to compete with national retailers and online companies with broad reach beyond Boston. In the face of the pandemic, this initiative has actually been a lifesaver for many," said Joel Sklar, Board Chair of the Boston Main Streets Foundation. "We need to do

everything we can to help our neighborhood small businesses survive and thrive well into the 2020s.”

For more information on Comcast Business, visit <https://business.comcast.com/>.

About Comcast Business

Comcast Business offers Ethernet, Internet, Wi-Fi, Voice, TV and Managed Enterprise Solutions to help organizations of all sizes transform their business. Powered by an advanced network, and backed by 24/7 customer support, Comcast Business is one of the largest contributors to the growth of Comcast Cable. Comcast Business is the nation’s largest cable provider to small and mid-size businesses and has emerged as a force in the Enterprise market; recognized over the last two years by leading industry associations as one of the fastest growing providers of Ethernet services. For more information, call 866-429-3085. Follow on Twitter [@Comcast Business](#) and on other social media networks at <http://business.comcast.com/social>.

About Cambridge Retail Advisors

Cambridge Retail Advisors (CRA) is an innovative and independent retail and restaurant consulting firm dedicated to providing superior service and enduring value to our clients. CRA combines its consultants' deep retail and restaurant business knowledge and cross-functional capabilities to deliver and implement client specific strategy, technology, and process solutions. The firm's unique combination of industry focus, knowledge-based approach, and rapid, end-to-end solution deployment helps clients achieve their maximum business potential. For more information, visit: <https://cambridgeretailadvisors.com/economic-development>

About Boston Main Streets Foundation

The Boston Main Streets Foundation (BMSF) is a public-private initiative established by the City of Boston in 2007. Through corporate, private, and public support, it has been the driving force behind the revitalization of the City's diverse regions by committing to make Boston's neighborhood commercial districts thriving, vibrant centers of commerce and community. BMSF seeks to develop long-term strategies to increase the economic power and resources of neighborhood commercial districts while pursuing initiatives that build knowledge and capacity for the Boston Main Streets programs and businesses they serve. Learn more at www.bostonmainstreets.org.

Media Contacts:

Marc Goodman
Comcast
Marc_Goodman@comcast.com

Shelby Armstrong
Finn Partners
shelby.armstrong@finnpartners.com

Jayda Leder-Luis
Boston Main Streets Foundation
jlederluis@denterlein.com