



21 small businesses receive grant to accelerate their digital transformation

Port Colborne, ON (Dec. 20, 2022) – The small business community in Port Colborne is accelerating its digital transformation thanks to the support of Digital Main Street.

Digital Main Street (DMS) has been running in many towns and cities throughout Ontario since 2018 after successfully launching in Toronto two years earlier. The program is built around an online learning platform that offers structured training modules to help brick-and-mortar small businesses level up their digital skills and knowledge. It also includes the Digital Service Squad (DSS), a team of street-level technology specialists who provide one-on-one assistance and strategy planning advice. In addition, the Digital Transformation Grant (DTG) provides up to \$2,500 to qualifying small businesses to help cover the cost of adopting digital tools and technologies.

“Near the end of the first quarter this year, the city received a \$50,000 Digital Service Squad Grant to fund a part-time team member over two years,” said Gary Long, manager of strategic initiatives. “Our squad’s commitment to customer service excellence has once again paid off as 21 small businesses are the recipients of this latest round of grant funding.”

“That’s a total of \$52,500 in support from the DTG program,” said Mayor Bill Steele. “Keeping up with a digital world that changes so quickly is difficult for just about anyone, let alone a small business owner who’s time is at a premium. I greatly appreciate the province’s continued investment in this program, and I want to congratulate all the recipients.”

Among those to receive the \$2,500 DTG are:

- Aborigin Handcrafts
- Bakery Collective
- Bambi’s Bistro
- Breakwall Brewing Company
- Canalside Restaurant
- Citrus Seventeen
- Dance Expressions Inc.
- G&M Fitness & Health Club
- Genius Fitness & MMA
- Grant’s Gifts & The Picket Fence
- Lucky Thai Restaurant
- Meraki Beauty Academy
- Mom Dukes Authentic Jamaican Cuisine
- Murdoch's Tire & Automotive
- Oak Tree Yoga & Wellness
- Playful Solutions
- Port Side Petals & Gifts
- The Smokin' Buddha
- The Pie Guys Bakery & Café
- Think Ink, Design & Print Ltd.

The DTG application portal closed on Oct. 31, 2022, but is scheduled to re-open in January 2023. Small businesses that have never submitted an application or have received the DTG before June 30, 2021, are encouraged to contact the city’s Digital Service Squad at dms@portcolborne.ca.

The squad will be hosting a free workshop on Feb. 6, 2023, from 1 to 4 p.m. at the L. R. Wilson Heritage Research Archives. Focused on the theme of “Digital Tools, Software, and Apps for Managing your Small Business”, registration for this in-person workshop is now open on [Eventbrite](#).

About the City of Port Colborne

Located on the south coast of the scenic Niagara Region, with a mission to provide an exceptional small town experience in a big way, Niagara's Port of Call has found the perfect balance – successful industrial and commercial sectors, comfortable and scenic residential areas, white sand beaches, unique culinary choices, the world class Sugarloaf Marina, fishing, golfing, trails, shopping districts along the historic Welland Canal and an energized festival and entertainment scene that includes live theatre – truly a community that adds to the overall Niagara experience. To learn how you can PORTicipate with us, visit our [website](#).

About OBIAA

OBIAA is the network that represents unique and vibrant BIAs across Ontario. The Association supports and advocates on behalf of its members through the building and nurturing of strong relationships and partnerships. OBIAA is a leader in the development and sharing of information, tools, resources, and best practices, and is the ONE voice on common issues.

About Digital Main Street

Digital Main Street is a program that helps main street businesses achieve digital transformation. The program is built around an online learning platform, structured training programs, and our Digital Service Squad, a team of street-level team members who help main street businesses grow and manage their operations through technology.

Digital Main Street was created by the Toronto Association of Business Improvement Areas (TABIA) with direct support from the City of Toronto. DMS is also supported by a group of strategic business partners, including Google, Mastercard, Shopify, Microsoft, Facebook, Intuit QuickBooks, Square, and Lightspeed. The program is delivered Pan Canada in support of small business thanks to the support of all three levels of government.

-30-

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