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COVID-19 Updates

The COVID-19 vaccine is here. It is safe, effective and free. Walk in to get vaccinated at sites across the state. Continue to mask up and stay distant where directed.

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GOVERNOR CUOMO LAUNCHES "EMPIRE STATE DIGITAL" WITH GLOBAL E-COMMERCE COMPANIES TO ACCELERATE NEW YORK'S SMALL BUSINESSES' ABILITY TO COMPETE IN THE DIGITAL ECONOMY

Empire State Development and Department of Financial Services connecting New York's small business community with global e-

commerce enablers who will provide training, technology, business services, and marketing support

First-In-The-Nation Effort Enables Small Business to Access New Customers, Bigger Markets and Better Opportunities

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced Empire State Digital, a new initiative accelerating New York State-based small businesses' ability to grow their online presence through a first-in-the-nation program with leading global e-commerce enablers, including Shopify, Square, Clearbanc, and Etsy. The partners selected by Empire State Development to participate will offer specialized solutions such as education, free resources, marketing support, and discounted pricing that is unique to the needs of New York's small businesses. Options can be reviewed on Empire State Digital's website which includes additional services available to small businesses from Empire State Development's statewide resource partners, including hands-on assistance, training and counseling.

"This pandemic has been painful in so many ways and has forced us all to find innovative ways to forge ahead and adjust our daily lives and reimagine our economy," **Governor Cuomo said.** "By helping small businesses grow their digital presence, we're providing them the tools to be more competitive, resilient and successful - the very definition of New York Tough."

Globalization, the digital economy, and now COVID-19 have been enormously disruptive not only to individuals' ways of life and daily routines, but to everyday commerce. New York-based small businesses, which make up 98% of all businesses across the state, have a long legacy of seizing disruption as a competitive advantage and business opportunity. Empire State Digital is an invitation for those businesses to explore the benefits of expanding beyond their physical brick and mortar location to an online marketplace. Building a digital presence allows entrepreneurs and small business owners to reach their existing customer base, new markets and provides continuity of business at a time when social distancing is an essential public health priority.

Empire State Development Acting Commissioner, President and CEO-Designate Eric Gertler said, "Small businesses are the backbone of New York State's economy. The Empire

State Digital initiative not only strengthens the economic resiliency of our state's small businesses in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, but also equips them with the tools and support needed to successfully compete in today's digital economy."

New York State Department of Financial Services Superintendent Linda A. Lacewell said, "Innovation and ingenuity are essential to rebuilding our economy and this new initiative will enhance the digital competitiveness of New York small businesses and help them adapt and grow. DFS is pleased to support this ESD managed effort, which provides an opportunity for small businesses to build back better, not only for their own livelihoods, but also for a resilient New York State economy."

Shopify Retail Director of Product Arpan Podduturi said, "Through our partnership, we are helping businesses quickly adapt and thrive in a digital economy, with highly accessible online store technology and best-in-class point-of-sale, local pickup and delivery services, powerful marketing tools, and more. Shopify is here for New York's resilient retailers. Small businesses are the lifeblood of New York's economy, from family-run grocers to independent clothing shops, and we're committed to helping these businesses succeed during and beyond the pandemic."

Square Head of E-Commerce David Rusenko said, "We're honored to partner with the State of New York to support small businesses as they create and innovate in response to this increase in online demand. From launching an online presence in a matter of hours to offering curbside pickup and on-demand delivery, we're focused on providing businesses what they need to meet their customers online or safely in person."

Clearbanc Co-Founder and President Michele Romanow said, "Every company today must be online. New York's businesses will survive this crisis by growing their online presence. Funding can be a huge barrier, and that's where Clearbanc can help. We've invested over $1 billion into thousands of companies, and are offering exclusive discounts to New York-based founders and a free consultation to grow the valuation of their business."

Etsy CEO Josh Silverman said, "Etsy is proud to partner with Empire State Digital to help small businesses grow and thrive right here at home in New York. We're excited to welcome local entrepreneurs to the Etsy marketplace where they can connect with millions of buyers across the globe. When you shop on Etsy, you're directly impacting someone's life by supporting both their creative passion and their small business -- and small businesses need our support now more than ever."

Summary of Offers from Partners to Small Businesses:

Shopify

- First 90 days free for new brick and mortar merchants registering before November 30, 2020
- Free access to Shopify Point-of Sale (POS) Pro features until October 31, 2020
- Free* contactless payment Shopify Tap & Chip Reader for new POS retailers (*limited supplies)
- $500 in Shopify app store credits for new Shopify POS brick-and-mortar retailers
- 24/7 support, including access to online educational resources and possible eligibility for Shopify Capital

Square

- Educational workshops for small businesses, including restaurants and retailers, interested in going online and dedicated office hours in English and Spanish
- Build a free website with Square Online
- Free processing on up to $1,000 in credit card transactions for the first 180 days after joining Square

Clearbanc

- Educational content on improving the financial health of your business
- Discounted rates on funding
- Free company valuation and track growth week-over-week

Etsy

- Educational content on how to start a successful online business
- Free listing credits for new sellers

Leveraging the New York State's relationship with the private sector and small business community, Empire State Development and the Department of Financial Services have worked together to accelerate the reopening of New York's economy that ensures businesses and their customers can conduct transactions in safe, responsible ways at reduced costs to small business owners.

Empire State Development's partners will provide counseling and hands on support through the Entrepreneurship Assistance Centers, Small Business Development Centers, Manufacturing Extension Partnership Centers, Incubators and Hot Spots. The aim of the program is to give small business access to toolkits and resources to digitize, find new markets and adapt to the new economy due to the changes from COVID-19. Additional companies interested in offering

specialized products and services on a concessionary basis to New York small businesses are welcome to reach out to ESD.

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The Department of Financial Services supervises many different types of institutions. Supervision by DFS may entail chartering, licensing, registration requirements, examination, and more.

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