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Isaac M. O'Bannon • Oct. 08, 2012

Whether you're a tax and accounting professional (like most of our readers), or a small business owner in the retail space, Small Business Saturday is a great opportunity to enhance sales.

Sponsored by [American Express](#), Small Business Saturday is held annually on the Saturday after Thanksgiving. This year, the event is November 24.

### **For Businesses**

On that day, American Express will give its cardholders a \$25 statement credit (on their next statement) if they spend at least \$25 at participating small businesses. That will get many consumers/customers out of the big box chain stores, at least for a day, to explore locally-owned businesses. Cardholders must register their card on the Small Business Saturday website to be eligible.

This credit will be applied for purchases made at any qualifying small businesses that accept American Express. The credit is per-cardholder, so households with multiple cardholders on an account can multiply that \$25 credit. It also applies to AmEx gift cards.

### **Free Promotional Tools**

A free kit is available at [www.SmallBusinessSaturday.com](http://www.SmallBusinessSaturday.com), and can be used by any small business, whether they accept American Express or not. The kit includes free signage for use in their storefronts or around town, as well as banners and logos to use online.

There are also free templates that can be used to promote the day on a business' Facebook and Twitter pages, and customer emails. The signage, which can be printed for free at a FedEx Office location, can also be personalized.

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It's never too early to remind them that they can get a free \$25 to spend on their early holiday shopping... if they spend it at a small business like yours. But you need to remind them to register their card to get the credit.

Other sponsors of Small Business Saturday include Facebook and Twitter. Facebook is helping by offering up to \$100 in free Facebook ads to qualifying small businesses.

The program started in 2010. Last year, American Express reported that more than 100,000 businesses downloaded the marketing materials, and 200,000 AmEx cardholders registered their cards to get the credit.

As of this writing, the Small Business Saturday Facebook page had nearly 2.9 million likes.

### Some “fine print”:

What is an eligible small business with regard to the \$25 credit for customers?  
According to American Express:

Eligible small business merchants are independently owned small businesses located in the United States that accept the American Express Card. Purchases made at large or national chain stores, at franchised business locations and at government agencies are not eligible. Prepaid, Corporate Cards and ExpressPay transactions are not eligible. [...] Statement credits are generally issued within 5 business days after your qualifying purchase, but may take up to 2 billing cycles to post to your account.

(NASBA) as a sponsor of continuing professional education on the National Registry of CPE

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