

National Small Business Week

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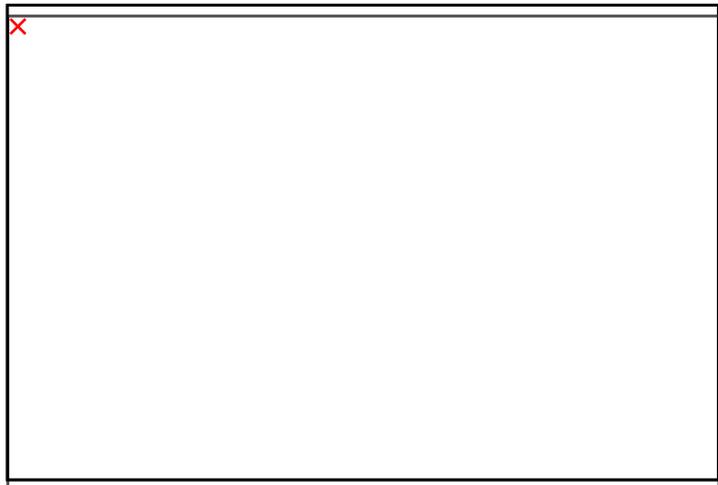
Nearly all Computing Center clients are considered small businesses. Depending on who you ask, companies and organizations with fewer than 500 (or 100) employees are considered "small". Many businesses of all sizes are struggling - some have already closed. Depending on your industry, the pandemic has affected businesses everywhere from mild to totally devastating.

Locally, there are a number of resources that you can go to for help including the Chamber of Commerce, TCAD, and the Downtown Ithaca Alliance. Nationally, the Federal Trade Commission, SBA, and others have been providing resources for small businesses and organizations.

It's National Small Business Week, a time set aside annually to salute American's 30 million small businesses – companies that employ almost half of the country's private sector workforce. The special focus this year is on the resilience and resolve of entrepreneurs and workers as they battle back against the impact of the pandemic. In addition to virtual events sponsored by the [Small Business Administration](#), National Small Business Week is a good time to remind small businesses that the FTC has your back when it comes to protecting against scammers who try to exploit the current economic climate.

Here are some things we've been doing.

We sounded an early alarm against scams targeting small businesses and continue to issue alerts. On March 25th – just a week after many people switched to remote work – we warned you about [seven coronavirus-related scams already targeting small businesses](#) and the steps to take to protect your company, your customers, and your workforce. As new threats emerge, we've spread the word, reinforced by the thousands of [reports we've received](#) from consumers and businesses about potentially shady tactics and the [trends our data analysts have detected](#).



We're challenging the practices of companies that have falsely claimed an affiliation with SBA's COVID-19 relief programs. Working with SBA, we've cautioned small businesses to keep their guard up before responding to solicitations that *appear* to have an SBA association, but really don't. We've sent warning letters and filed suit to stop allegedly deceptive tactics that could injure small businesses already struggling to stay afloat.

We're continuing to take a close look at small business financing. Even before COVID-19, [Strictly Business: An FTC Forum on Small Business Financing](#) and a [Staff Perspective](#) were examining consumer protection issues in this marketplace. Once the pandemic established that it was no longer business as usual for small businesses, we offered [advice](#) to entrepreneurs looking for capital and to the providers of small business financing. We've also brought cases against companies alleged to have targeted small businesses with deceptive or unfair practices.

We're helping small businesses maintain the security of their networks and the personal information in their possession. During the pandemic, hackers and data thieves have remained on the job and may well be working overtime. In an attempt to exploit workplace disruption and consumer concern, infocrooks have come up with a creative array of COVID cons designed to steal sensitive data – for example, [**imposter scams**](#) related to public health and contact tracing. The FTC reminds small businesses that we have [**free cybersecurity resources**](#) to help bolster your defenses.

We're getting information out to your employees and others in the community about financial recovery. Many small businesses are family-owned – or just seem like family – and there's hardly a family that hasn't been touched by the struggle to make ends meet. In addition to support and advice, offer them resources on dealing with the [**financial impact of the coronavirus**](#).

Just as small businesses power the engine of our economy, their innovation and resourcefulness will fuel our economic recovery. National Small Business Week gives us the opportunity to salute small business owners and the people they employ for their immeasurable contribution every year and especially this year.