



**THIS IS**

# Small Business

**Define Your Purpose**

**Tales of Triumph finalists**

Which business journey are you on?

Spotlight: Mental health & wellness



SOLUTIONS FOR SMALL BUSINESS  
**FALL EDITION**  
2022

“There is no finish line. There are only mile markers.”

Michael Ventura  
*Novelist, essayist & culture critic*



A Stronger Canada Delivered

## Purpose in an era of transformation

**If there's anything we've all learned over the last two years, it's how to adapt.**

As Canada emerges into an ever-changing landscape, we're proud to do our part in moving our nation forward.

**A renewed commitment to serving small business**

As a small business, your contribution to Canadian communities is immeasurable. We want to be there for you, always. We will continue to expand small business support programs like our Tales of Triumph contest and the Free Shipping Tuesdays annual promotion. In the coming months, you can also expect to see new services, products and support that reflect your evolving needs.

In addition to what we are doing to better serve Canadian businesses, we also think it's important *how* we show up for them. A greener Canada is a goal we all embrace, which is why we're investing in becoming

a leader in sustainable delivery. And like you, we're shaping and building a diverse and inclusive workplace, one in which all voices are welcomed and heard.

Our plan will help ensure you and all Canadians can continue to trust and rely on Canada Post. And as your business continues to evolve, so will Canada Post. We look forward to this journey with you.

**Doug Ettinger**  
**President and CEO**



# Which business journey are you on?

No two small businesses are alike. They vary in size, capacity for growth, and even in their owners' aspirations. Here, we present five of the most common small business journeys.

Not sure where you are on your journey? Take our quick quiz at [canadapost.ca/SMBmagazine](https://canadapost.ca/SMBmagazine).



## New to the game

Whether you're on a second (or third!) career, or fresh out of school, entrepreneurship just feels right for you. But you may not know what you don't know at this point. Your goal is to master the basics of running your own thing, including the role of a business plan, tax ramifications and more.



## Steady as they go

You're proud of your small business pedigree, having already managed to weather a downturn or two. As the shadow of the pandemic lifts, you're seeking ways to power a quick and full recovery – and to future-proof your hard-won business.



## Ready for prime time

You started off small, but things are taking off – whether you're ready for it or not! Now you're looking to scale it by boosting capacity and capability. You're likely leaning on mentors and industry experts that have the experience you may not.



## Reinventors

Whether your motivation is fueled by ingenuity or market forces, you're reinventing yourself in the ecommerce world. Your pre-Covid business plan? It needs a serious makeover, if not a complete rewrite. But like everything else, that's just another opportunity to do what you do best.



## Side hustlers

You're part of a growing phenom. For some, the side hustle may be helping to pay the rent. For others, it's a passion project that could evolve into a legit business with some love and care. One thing is for sure: Balancing between the two gigs means the work week – and often, the weekend – is jam-packed.

Take our small business journey quiz at [canadapost.ca/SMBmagazine](https://canadapost.ca/SMBmagazine).

# Tales of Triumph Winner

## Every small business has a big story.

Tales of Triumph was created by Canada Post in 2020 to recognize and celebrate the resilience of our nation's small businesses.

The contest was so successful, we brought it back for a second year. Here are some of the finalists who revamped – and even reinvented – their business strategies for future success.

We hope their stories inspire you to build your own business future-strong.



Learn more at [canadapost.ca/SMBmagazine](https://canadapost.ca/SMBmagazine)

## Bliss Skateboard Shop

Windsor, Ontario  
[skatebliss.ca](https://skatebliss.ca)



## Doing Good

# A blissful balance: How Bliss Skateboard Shop succeeded while giving back to the community

Winner of the Doing Good category of the 2021 Tales of Triumph Contest, Sasha Senior started skateboarding as a way to make friends when she was 13. Skateboarding also ignited a lifelong passion that would lead to a successful small business and a way to give back to her community.

## An ecommerce success story

Senior, a 31-year-old mother of two, opened Bliss Skateboard Shop in Windsor in 2020. The original plan was for a brick-and-mortar shop. But the shop's opening day, March 20, 2020, came at the start of Covid. The business strategy took a hard turn.

"As soon as we had our opening, we had to shut the doors the next day. I had to figure out how to put all my products online and...sell them that way."

The shift worked.

Besides skatebliss.ca, Senior used Instagram and Facebook to get the word out. The small shop gained recognition and support from Canadian skateboarding brands and garnered attention in the U.S. and the Caribbean.

### **A small business that gives back to the community**

Bliss Skateboard Shop is more than a business, it's a hub for their community. Senior runs two programs to bring skateboarding to the local kids.

Through Build a Board, Senior collects skateboard parts that would otherwise go unused and builds new skateboards with them. She then gives those boards to kids who couldn't otherwise afford them.

Senior reaches out to her community through Boards in the Hood to fundraise for brand new skateboards that are distributed to underserved communities. Senior's given away 30 boards and is sending another 10 to Walpole Island First Nation.

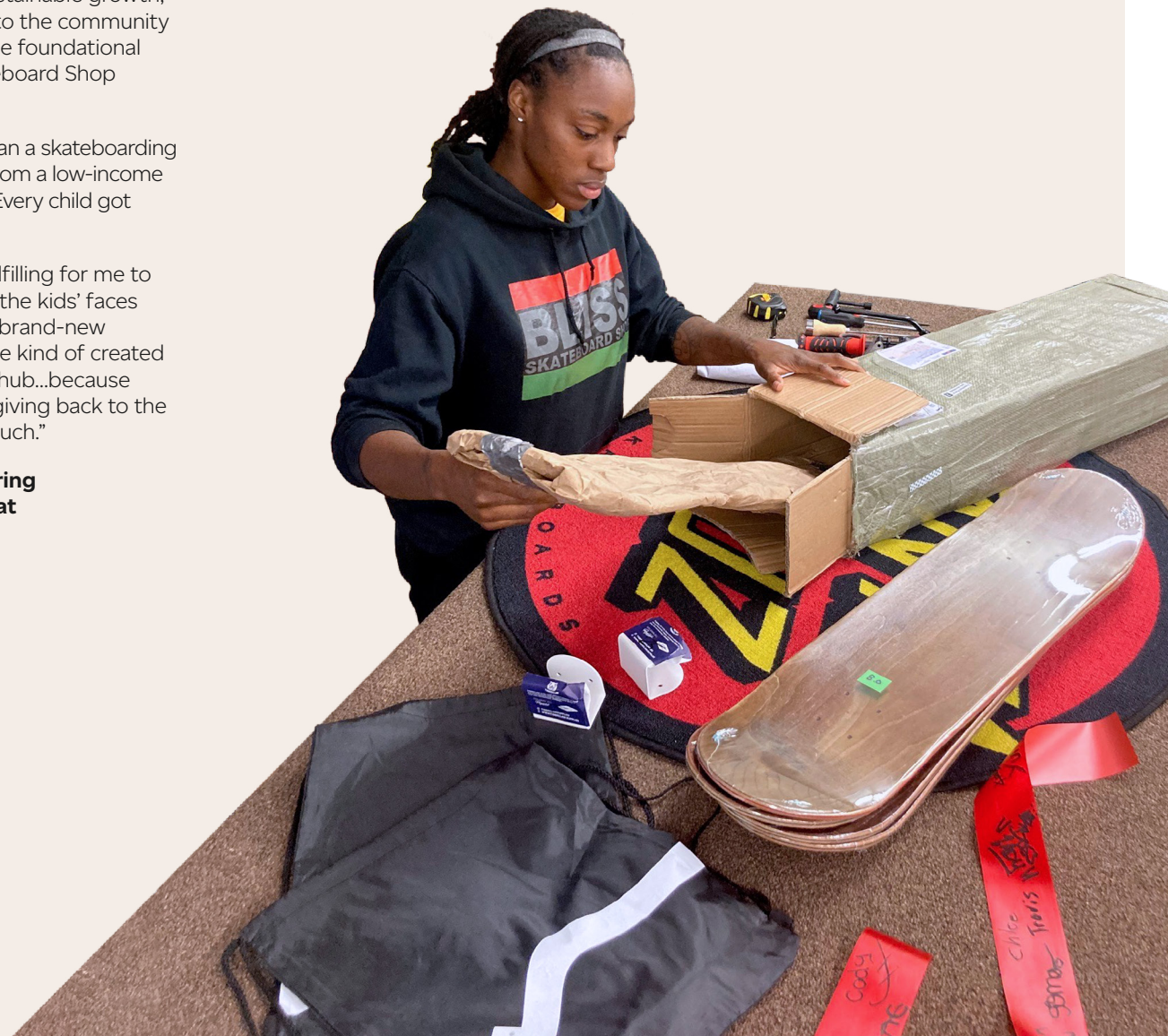
### **Focusing on sustainable growth and community outreach**

Senior is opening a second store about 45 minutes from her current location. She is focused on measured, sustainable growth, and giving back to the community will continue to be foundational to the Bliss Skateboard Shop business model.

This year, Senior ran a skateboarding club for 40 kids from a low-income neighbourhood. Every child got new gear.

"It's been very fulfilling for me to see the smile on the kids' faces when they get a brand-new skateboard...we've kind of created a skateboarding hub...because we've just been giving back to the community so much."

**Find more inspiring success stories at [canadapost.ca/SMBmagazine](https://canadapost.ca/SMBmagazine).**



# Get your brand into customers' hands

## Direct mail's breakthrough quality makes it ideal for the times

Everything old is new again. Small businesses are rediscovering the power of direct mail, even as they continue to spend on email and social marketing. Why?

Its unique combination of tangibility, relevancy and targeting is irresistible to customers. And then there's the research:

## 4.4%

Is direct mail's response rate, compared to 0.12% for email\*

## 88%

of Canadians will visit a store or website after receiving direct mail\*\*

## 6 in 10

Canadians love receiving coupons no matter their generation\*\*

**So how do you get started with your direct mail campaign?**  
**Simple.**

## The DIY solution: Snap Admail™

The easiest online tool out there to create effective, integrated direct mail and digital campaigns on any budget.

### 1. Target

Find the best neighbourhoods to target by using our powerful mapping tool.

### 2. Design

Choose a postcard or flyer size, then browse over a thousand FREE design templates. You can also upload your own artwork or get professional design help.

### 3. Launch

Place your order online, then relax. We do everything for you, including printing, online ad design and delivery.

## The DIFY (Do-It-For-You) Solution: Smartmail Marketing™ partners

Our approved industry pros can help to target, design, print and send your direct mail campaign.

They can help you market to your customers and prospects, design effective mail pieces, save postage costs, and manage the printing and mailing process.

Direct mail is tangible, targeted, superefficient and universal in its appeal. It just may be the competitive advantage you're looking for.

**For more direct mail insights, visit [canadapost.ca/SMBmagazine](http://canadapost.ca/SMBmagazine).**



\*Direct Marketing Association (DMA)  
\*\*PC/Phase5, Fall Omni, CPC 20-214.

# Putting a stamp on reconciliation

**One of the challenges facing those who live and work in many Indigenous, rural and northern communities is staying connected with the rest of Canada.**

Canada Post's new purpose, A Stronger Canada – Delivered, renews our commitment to serving every Canadian, small business and community from coast to coast to coast. Simply, we are where you are, and we are here for you.

The opening of a Community Hub in the Membertou area of Cape Breton is a case in point. It is a one-stop shop for a wide range of services that may not otherwise be readily available in the area.

Residents and small businesses can conveniently pick up mail and packages, access new money services, charge up their electric vehicles, and enjoy 24-hour secure

dropoff and pickup of packages. There's also a meeting space and boardrooms available that can be rented by the hour.

**Reflecting the unique characteristics of the community it serves.**

Design elements for Membertou were chosen in consultation with local Indigenous leaders. Signage is in Mi'kmaq, French and English, and the space showcases local artwork.

According to Jeffery Ward, General Manager of the nearby Membertou Heritage Park, "The hub is full of photos of artifacts from the Heritage Park, plus a large image of a stamp of Chief Membertou, and copies of artwork by the late Dozay Christmas."

But, as Jeff will be the first to tell you, there's also a deeper meaning reflected in the hub's opening.





**“Reconciliation isn’t a tagline.”**

According to Jeff, “We can’t get to reconciliation without knowing the truth, which is why an initiative like this one is so important. Reconciliation isn’t a tagline; it’s about taking real action. People must know the truth in order to get to reconciliation.”

Truth-sharing is the central goal of the park Jeff has managed for over a decade. “We ask visitors to come celebrate the unique heritage and culture of our region’s First Nation peoples. There is so much wisdom, so much truth, to be shared with all, including our own people.”

The hub also provides career opportunities for locals. Says Jeff, “What I love about it is that our people are working at the post office in our own community. My cousin, a former employee of the park, works there!”

Maureen MacDonald, Jeff’s cousin, and Mariah Joe were the hub’s first two employees.

“Local artists who sell their jewelry, crafts and other goods are definitely making use of the hub,” says Maureen.

Adds Mariah, “There’s real excitement in the community about the hub. Just by working here and helping people, we’re reconnecting with people we haven’t seen in years.”

**For more on Canada Post Community Hubs, visit [canadapost.ca/SMBmagazine](https://canadapost.ca/SMBmagazine).**

**Discover more about the Mi’kmaq people of Membertou at [membertouheritagepark.com](https://membertouheritagepark.com).**



# The Comic Jock finds a superhero at Canada Post

**When Brian Gaudet suffered a workplace injury in 2017, he was told his days as an iron worker were over.**

A major setback for most, Brian looked at it as an opportunity to pursue a lifelong passion: comics, sports and movie memorabilia, and other collectibles. The Comic Jock was born soon after.

Starting modestly with limited inventory on marketplaces like eBay, Brian eventually launched thecomicjock.com, and then opened a physical location near his home in Whitby, Ontario. Whether you're looking for a mint LeBron James rookie card or a rare issue of The Amazing Spider-Man, Brian has you covered.

Today, the Comic Jock's growing fan base can be found across Canada and the U.S., so dependable and economical shipping is a big area of focus. From day one, Brian has depended exclusively on Canada Post to deliver his valuable merchandise to collectors.

"I'm in my Canada Post location all the time. I find the people there really helpful, and I've never been let down by the shipping services. Because some of the items I sell are so valuable, I use the tracking feature a lot."

Biljana Angelovska, a Canada Post retail clerk, has assisted Brian with his shipping almost from the beginning.

Brian recalls one of his early visits. "I came in once with a package that was pretty badly wrapped. Biljana took the time to repackage everything properly. Little things like that go a long way with me."

Biljana always looks forward to seeing Brian. "He's an awesome customer and trusts us to recommend the right services. We never want to disappoint him!"

Small business owners are a significant customer base at Biljana's location. "Our team loves working with smaller businesses. Things like helping them save money on shipping or advising on the right product is very rewarding."

As for the Comic Jock, Brian recently increased the square footage of his store, and has more expansion in mind for the future. If it involves shipping, he'll continue to make Canada Post his go-to. "The service is outstanding, and I like the idea that I'm going with a name that is so tried-and-true Canadian."



# alder apparel: The right fit in more ways than one

## From kitchen table start-up to a leader in inclusive outdoor apparel, alder is a classic Canadian success story.

The foundation of the brand's growing reputation? Founders Naomi Blackman and Mikayla Wujec weave their personal values and beliefs into every stitch.

Founded in 2019, alder offers a range of inclusive sizing, backed by community-informed design and sustainable and ethical production.

"We believe that outdoor recreation should be focused on fun, not exclusively on performance," says Naomi, who was previously a marketer at top Canadian fashion brands. "And the outdoors should be for everyone, regardless of the individual's abilities...or size for that matter."

Mikayla, a former National Geographic Explorer, speaks from personal experience. "In all of my research expeditions I had a real bone to pick with outdoor apparel options for women. It was always

very unflattering. Truly function over form. We're making clothing for you to go outside, have fun and get dirty."

"We want to be the leader in inclusivity, diversity and sustainability."

While many business owners may be hesitant to advertise their personal values, Mikayla and Naomi put theirs front and centre.

In fact, every aspect of their business – from design to fabrics, transparency to new hires – is informed and inspired by their shared passion for inclusivity, diversity and sustainability.

And beyond great-looking, highly functional apparel, this is central to alder's expanding legion of devotees.

## A loyalty program unlike any other

Every alder shopper is asked to join The Recreators Club, a loyalty program that takes rewards and customer engagement to a whole new level.

"Our community of Recreators Club members actually helps us design our clothing through surveys and focus groups," says Mikayla. "Further, we asked our community about the kinds of programs and organizations they wanted us to support through the alder fund."

Mirroring the founders' values, the alder fund helps support youth-focused organizations, women-run programs, Indigenous-run organizations and many more.

Daily social posts keep everyone up to date on the latest happenings at alder, adding to the sense that, as a customer, you've joined a family, not just purchased hiking shorts or a reversible tee.

## alder's success is a lesson for every purpose-led business

"Consumers are drawn to alder because we don't shy away from having a strong point of view," says Mikayla. "More to the point, today's consumers are expecting companies to take a stand, to reflect their own beliefs."

"Making a solid product, delivering good service," adds Naomi, "just may not be enough anymore."



# Mental health and wellness is no small matter

Starting, running and growing your own business can be a rewarding experience, but it comes with its fair share of stress.

In a new recent report, 50 percent of small business owners asked said they had difficulty coping with mental health challenges.\*

Here are some suggestions and strategies you and your employees can consider:



## 01

### **Put your health first – access a personal support system**

Make time for sleep, family and exercise. Don't forget about your favourite hobby. Keeping mentally and physically strong requires regular maintenance and downtime! Although it's hard, learn to say "no" to opportunities if they could negatively impact your well-being.

## 02

### **If you can, delegate or outsource tasks**

Don't take it all on yourself. Consider delegating work that doesn't require your expertise or leadership.

## 03

### **Don't go it alone**

Fortunately, the stigma around mental health is disappearing. There are now numerous resources that offer advice; plus your personal and professional networks can be a great source of support and guidance.

## 04

### **Set the example for your people**

Look for a healthy life/work balance and set the boundaries that fit your business's needs.

Learn more at [canadapost.ca/SMBmagazine](https://canadapost.ca/SMBmagazine).

\*Near the Breaking Point: Mental Health in Small Business, by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) and Nexim Canada (PrimaSure).

# Jamie Gentry Designs: Doing good, one sole at a time

Jamie Gentry's handmade moccasins are more than a product – they're a way to connect. The artist uses her platform to share her experiences, spotlight other creators and raise awareness about cultural appropriation.

## What was the inspiration for your business?

I'm from the Kwakwaka'wakw Nation and I was fortunate to grow up immersed in culture and surrounded by talented artists. My whole life I was drawn to the arts, music, dance, but I was particularly drawn to working with my hands – whether it was sewing, beading or weaving.

I learned how to make moccasins about six years ago. I'm a stay-at-home mom with three children and I had been looking for a way to contribute financially to our family.

Growing up, I didn't see Indigenous artists or Indigenous business owners growing and making a living off of what they

were passionate about. I'm so grateful and I hope it inspires other Indigenous people to follow their heart, their passion, and know that they can do this, too.

## Tell us about the products you create

I make traditional, custom-made moccasins for modern day living. Each pair is cut, beaded, sewn and carved by hand and infused with love. When we connect with the maker and the product, we are more likely to hold that product close, and it is less likely to end up in a landfill.

## How did you transform your passion into a business?

When I started making moccasins, I was accepted as a Storyboot Artist with Manitobah Mukluks. That involved me sending them my work. They would photograph, list, promote and sell it for me, and then 100 percent of the sale came to me. Their reasoning for offering this is that, as an Indigenous company, it's part of our culture to share the wealth. This is what we do.



**Jamie Gentry Designs**  
Sooke, British Columbia  
[jamiengentrydesigns.com](http://jamiengentrydesigns.com)

I originally had an order form on my website for people who were coming directly to me. They found me on social media and they knew what they wanted...so I decided to open an online shop on my website. It's definitely a work in progress. It's a lot of work, and it's humbling.

## How does doing good underpin your work?

There's an abundance of appropriated and "inspired by" Indigenous items available for sale. These products not only take away from our cultures, they are dehumanizing. There is no significance behind them other than being a cute accessory.

**"Many people are looking to learn and understand right now, and I want to do everything I can to help, so we can heal. So our people can finally be valued and respected."**

– Jaime Gentry

Having an online platform allows me to share educational resources and raise awareness around Indigenous rights, history, art and life. Before the pandemic I received a lot of backlash from people who felt I was just being another native looking for a handout, or that I should just get over [cultural appropriation]. Now people thank me for sharing.

**Find more inspiring success stories at**  
[canadapost.ca/SMBmagazine](http://canadapost.ca/SMBmagazine).

# Generation gaps: How values drive purchasing behaviour

## It's not just about great prices, customer service or product selection.

Canadians are increasingly likely to purchase from businesses that share their values, but the strength of these preferences varies greatly across generations. Here are some insights from a recent Canada Post survey.\*

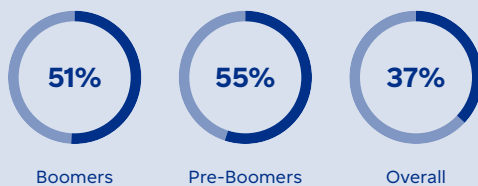
### On Canadian-owned businesses

How likely are they to support Canadian-owned businesses?



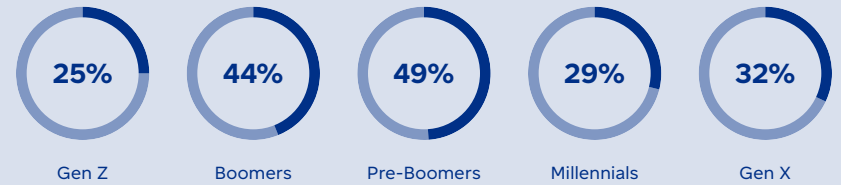
### On Canadian-made products

What is their likelihood to choose a retailer if it carries Canadian-made products?



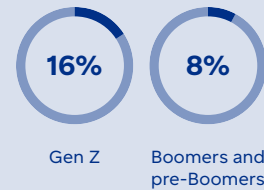
### On being a local business

How likely are they to choose a business because it's local?

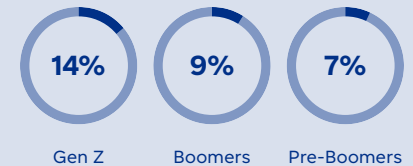


### On businesses owned by under-represented Canadians including BIPOC and women

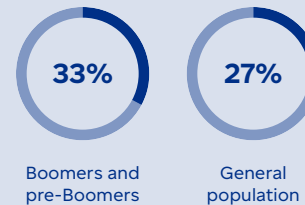
How likely are different generations to support these businesses?



Likely to support women-owned businesses:

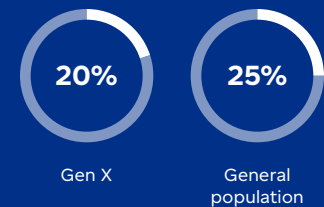


### On eco-friendliness and sustainability



### On doing the right thing

How likely are they to support businesses that have strong values and a genuine commitment to doing the right thing?



For more consumer insights, visit [canadapost.ca/SMBmagazine](https://canadapost.ca/SMBmagazine).

\*Phase 5, Canadian Online Shopper Study, May 2022

# We're always evolving with your business needs

At Canada Post, we're constantly investing in our network, services and thought leadership – all to ensure we meet your changing expectations. Here are just a few examples:



### Fast, economical and just what customers are looking for

Expedited Parcel™ is fast, cost-effective ground shipping within Canada, making it ideal for every size of business. All items can be tracked and offer on-time guarantees.



### Free small business events

We're helping you understand relevant ecommerce trends and consumer insights by investing in an ever-growing range of free events, seminars and webinars.



### Keeping your business running smoothly

Find the packaging supplies you need in our retail locations – mailers, boxes, bubble wrap, tape and more. Plus, now you can easily view the last 18 months of invoices on your Dashboard.



### Physical locations work seamlessly with our online services

For extra convenience, you have the option to create a shipping label online and then either request a pickup, take it to your local post office or drop it into any street letterbox, if it fits. Shipping to the U.S. or internationally? To save time, we recommend creating your shipping label online, as you'll be able to complete the mandatory customs documents at the same time. Learn more about our online services at [canadapost.ca/SnapShip](https://canadapost.ca/SnapShip).

To discover more ways we're supporting your business, visit [canadapost.ca/SMBmagazine](https://canadapost.ca/SMBmagazine).



# Evolving with Canadians' changing expectations

**Of all the consumer trends emerging over the last two years, at least one ranks as truly seismic in my mind.**

Canadians expect more than great products and service from the companies they support. They now actively seek businesses who share their values and align with their aspirations.

Whether it's championing the environment, inclusivity, diversity or social justice, Canadians are, in a way, voting with their dollars.

They also have a renewed love for our nation's small businesses, a competitive advantage if there ever was one! The profile of companies featured in this issue have one thing in common: They are successfully building communities of loyal customers and fans. And we hope their stories will inspire you to connect with your consumers in deeper, more meaningful ways.

As expressed in our CEO's message, Canada Post is also taking this moment in time to redefine our purpose. More than ever, we're proud to reflect and respond to the evolving expectations of businesses like yours.

Wherever your business journey is taking you, we hope you've found lots of great advice and inspiration in this, our team's latest labour of love!

**Danielle Doiron**  
General Manager, Marketing