



Small Business Digital Champions Project

The Small Business Digital Champions Project is underway. One hundred small businesses have been selected to receive a digital transformation, with 15 of these businesses being identified as Digital Champions. Digital Champions have been paired with high-profile Australian innovators that will advise and mentor them on their transformation.

The experience of the Digital Champions will be filmed and showcased to the Australian small business community through online case studies to highlight and share the benefits of digital technology for small business.

The benefits of mentoring will also be showcased through the real-life stories of the Digital Champions. Mentoring can take many forms, including having a trusted circle of advisors, industry networks or business contacts such as an accountant, financial advisor or marketing specialist.

Corporate Partners play an important role in the project by providing in-kind (free of charge) contributions through the corporate partnership. Various private sector organisations have come on-board, demonstrating their commitment to helping small businesses by providing them with relevant products and services like hardware, software, digital training or other digital support.

Fifteen industry associations have been selected to provide trusted digital advice to help their small business members go digital. The industry associations will provide sector-specific, best practice digital advisory services to their small business members free of charge. This will extend the reach of the Digital Champions Project to the broader small business community.

What are the benefits of going digital?

We know small businesses face a range of challenges adopting digital technology. Barriers include small businesses focusing their energies on day-to-day operations, not having sufficient time to explore digital options and the uncertainty on the return on investment.

ABS data shows that only 50 per cent of Australian businesses have a web presence, with even less of them using business processing software for accounting and invoicing.

Small businesses who have a higher level of digital engagement are 50 per cent more likely to grow revenue, eight times more likely to create jobs, seven times more likely to export, 14 times more likely to be innovating new products and services.

Recent research released by Deloitte has also found that small businesses moving from basic to advanced digital engagement see a 60 per cent increase in revenue per employee and on average, earned 28 per cent higher revenue growth in the last 12 months.

The Australian Government has helped open new export market opportunities for small businesses through Free Trade Agreements and comprehensive regional partnerships. Using digital tools, such

as online marketing or e-commerce, small businesses can expand into these new markets and attract additional customers.

The benefits of going digital outweigh any initial challenges. Automating and digitising processes not only frees up time for small business owners, it can lead to a reduction of stress and anxiety levels. These factors help small business owners put their full attention on what is important — spending time with their family and growing their business.

Sounds great – tell me more!

The Department will continue to showcase the digital transformation of the participating small businesses through case studies to show how digital technology can improve the efficiency of a small business. These case studies, along with other useful resources for small business are available on the Department of Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business website:

www.employment.gov.au/digitalchampions.

To access low cost, high quality business advisory services for your small business, visit the Australian Small Business Advisory Services (ASBAS) at: <https://www.employment.gov.au/asbas>. ASBAS Digital Solutions offer a range of digital solutions to help small business owners grow their digital capabilities and meet the needs of their business.

Members of the 15 industry associations, can access digital advisory services free of charge:

- Ai Group
- Business SA
- Caravan Industry Association of Australia
- Commercial and Asset Finance Brokers Association of Australia
- Housing Industry Association
- Institute of Certified Bookkeepers
- Master Plumbers Association
- Motor Trades Association of Queensland
- National Farmers Federation
- National Disability Services
- National Retail Association
- Pharmacy Guild of Australia
- Retail Drinks Australia
- Small Business Association of Australia
- Tourism Industry Council SA