

## **All I Want for Christmas Is...**

**By Dan Hannaher**

For many small business owners, the holiday season is the most important time of the year. In the business-to-consumer retail segments, fully 40 percent or more of a company's revenues may be produced between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day.

Even in a robust economy, which was the case for most of the last decade, any downturn in holiday-related revenues by small businesses had significant consequences for the financial health of the company going forward. Indeed, many business bankruptcies of small retailers occur during the first few months of each year, typically as a result of less-than-hoped-for holiday sales.

While a business model that relies on significant consumer spending within a narrow window of time may be considered overly risky by some people, small businesses using that model are merely trying to capitalize on our cyclical buying tendencies that are naturally focused on the last six weeks of the year.

When small firms successfully navigate the 6-week holiday season, several good things usually happen:

- They're around the rest of the year to offer us many choices...just like during the holidays;
- They continue to employ our friends, neighbors and sometimes, family, who all need jobs;
- They remain the primary provider of healthcare coverage for employees and their families, made easier this year by tax credits in the Affordable Care Act;
- They continue to pay taxes, helping to support local community needs;
- They order and sell more goods from their suppliers and manufacturers, which helps keep the rest of us working;
- They continue to be somewhere we can go throughout the year when we need a smile, a welcome hello, or just a place to get out of the cold, or in from the heat while we make our purchases; and,
- They remain the glue that binds our communities together.

As the government agency focused on helping small businesses "start, grow and succeed," the U.S. Small Business Administration provides a wealth of programs and services to give every small company a fighting chance to be successful. But, at the end of the day, it takes all of us and all of you to help turn that goal into a reality.

This holiday season, as our national economy begins to emerge from what many have dubbed The Great Recession, let's all make a conscious effort to shop at the thousands of small businesses that we want there for us the other 11 months of the year.

That's all I want for Christmas.

*For more information on the services and support of the U.S. Small Business Administration visit [www.SBA.gov](http://www.SBA.gov) or call your nearest SBA office. Dan Hannaher is SBA Regional Administrator in Denver. [Daniel.Hannaher@sba.gov](mailto:Daniel.Hannaher@sba.gov) or phone (303) 844-0505.*

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