

# Purchasing *Powerfully*



## our top eight reasons to shop with Women's Initiative businesses



With the power of your purchase you can boost the economic vitality and unique character of our neighborhoods. When you support a Women's Initiative client business, you help bring jobs, tax receipts, and new income to your local community. These are our top eight reasons to shop at Women's Initiative businesses:

1. Maximize the return on investment—keep it local
2. Enhance the unique character of neighborhoods
3. Build local leadership in our community
4. Preserve the environment
5. Create quality jobs
6. Get better customer service
7. Increase product diversity and competition
8. Help low-income families to achieve the American Dream



*Discover new products and services designed by women, created by women, and sold by women who are bringing their **business dreams** to life.*

Search the Women's Initiative Orange Pages on our website to find client businesses in your neighborhood! [www.womensinitiative.org](http://www.womensinitiative.org)



When you support Women's Initiative client businesses by shopping with the Orange Pages, you make a statement about your values and priorities. You change the world while enjoying a great product or service!

**Learn more about the power of your purchase on the other side of the page.**

# 8 Reasons

to shop with Women's Initiative businesses!



## MAXIMIZE THE RETURN ON INVESTMENT—KEEP IT LOCAL

For each \$1 invested in Women's Initiative, our clients generate \$30 that strengthen the local economy. Numerous studies have demonstrated a multiplier effect of buying locally, keeping a larger portion of the dollars you spend in the local economy. Three-quarters of our Women's Initiative clients report purchasing goods and services locally, helping to keep money flowing in the local economy.

## ENHANCE THE UNIQUE CHARACTER OF NEIGHBORHOODS

Local businesses contribute to the distinctive character of our neighborhoods and help rejuvenate neglected districts. Women's Initiative clients start all kinds of businesses! Innovative and unique businesses started by Women's Initiative graduates include San Francisco's first and only cut-and-sew craft lounge, environmental travel guides, holistic pet products, hydro-massage, and more!

## BUILD LOCAL LEADERSHIP IN OUR COMMUNITY

Owners of independent and small business are leaders in their neighborhoods, committed to the long-term health and vitality of the community. Women's Initiative clients volunteer 174 hours per year on average and 54% of all clients are mentors in their communities. On average, Women's Initiative clients donate \$1,020 per year to charitable causes, and across the board, independent businesses donate a much higher percentage of their total revenue to charitable causes than national chains. Local ownership means that important decisions are made locally by people who live in the community and who will feel the impact of those decisions.

## PRESERVE THE ENVIRONMENT

More than half of Women's Initiative clients report choosing green business practices. By making more efficient use of public space, local stores help to sustain vibrant, compact, walkable town centers. Local businesses require less infrastructure and have a smaller environmental footprint due to less sprawl, less congestion, less habitat loss, less resource depletion, and less pollution.

## CREATE QUALITY JOBS

Women's Initiative clients have created 685 new jobs in the last 12 months throughout the Bay Area. These quality jobs pay employees \$16.45/hr on average—more than double California's minimum wage. Small local businesses provide more than 3 million jobs in California. Microenterprises represent 87% of all businesses and 18% of all private employment in the US.

## GET BETTER CUSTOMER SERVICE

Doing business with an owner-operated business ensures that the owner is never far from daily operations. Customers can build relationships with the business owner who is responsive to customer needs and desires. And local businesses often hire employees with more product expertise and encourage employees to spend more time with customers.

## INCREASE PRODUCT DIVERSITY AND COMPETITION

Increasing the number of independent retailers maximizes product diversity. Although a single locally-owned shop may carry a far smaller array of goods than a large chain, the cumulative effect of many locally-owned businesses is unique products sold in unique shops. Selection of products and services according to the needs of their local customers—rather than a national sales plan—guarantees a broad range of product choices. A marketplace of tens of thousands of independent local businesses is the best way to ensure innovation and low prices over the long-term.

## HELP LOW-INCOME FAMILIES TO ACHIEVE THE AMERICAN DREAM

All Women's Initiative clients earn significantly less than HUD median income, and 83% are women of color. Our clients increase their incomes by \$10,000 one year after the training, and on average, clients triple their household net worth just two years after the training. By shopping at Women's Initiative client businesses, you support a way out of low-wage jobs for thousands of women who are working to achieve the American Dream.

<sup>1</sup> Women's Initiative research shows that with each dollar invested in our business training, \$30 is generated for the local economy—through increased tax revenue, increased earnings for the business owner and her employees, reduction from public benefits, and recirculation of locally-spent money.  
<sup>2</sup> Between September 1, 2007 and August 31, 2008, Women's Initiative clients reported 685 new jobs. We know the actual number is much higher because we are only able to follow up with a sub-set of our clients about job creation and other outcomes after the program.