



## BT's Small Business Support Scheme

### Ten initiatives:

#### BOOSTING CONNECTIVITY

- **Funding ultrafast business connections:** BT is helping small businesses fund the cost of an ultrafast business connection (known as an Ethernet line), by subsidising the total cost by up to £2,500 per customer. This extends the benefits of the Government's popular Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme, which closed in May, to provide further financial respite to firms like graphic design agencies and production houses who need Gigabit speeds of up to 10Gbps to send and receive rich media files.
- **Launching bursaries for UK tech start-ups:** BT is introducing a new bursary scheme to give 1,000 UK tech start-ups and entrepreneurs a financial head start. From October, eligible companies can apply for a bursary to benefit from free fibre broadband and mobile bundles. Further details will be announced in due course.
- **Introducing BT Halo for Business:** BT has launched the UK's best converged fibre broadband, mobile and digital phone line bundle for micro-businesses, which represent 91 per cent of all businesses in the UK. By combining three powerful connections in one package, Halo helps businesses stay better connected inside and outside of the workplace, so that they never miss an important call or a sale.
- **Helping small businesses to go cashless:** BT is preparing to launch a new digital payments solution, to help small businesses move to cashless transactions. This is a trend which is accelerating as a result of the pandemic, with 25 per cent of small businesses increasing their use of contactless payments over the past few months. Further details will be announced in due course.

#### BETTER CASHFLOW:

- **Prompt payment for BT's small business suppliers:** With 58 per cent<sup>[1]</sup> of small businesses citing cashflow as their number one concern, BT is committing to pay its 4,500 small business suppliers within 30 days of being invoiced. This sees BT halving the 60-day terms stipulated by the Government's Prompt Payment Code.
- **Financial flexibility for the hardest hit:** BT has been assisting small businesses in financial distress during the peak of the pandemic by helping them find a flexible option for paying their bill. This will continue over the coming months, with BT creating a dedicated team to support customers who are struggling with aspects of their bill as a result of the pandemic.

#### BUILDING CONFIDENCE:

- **Helping small businesses access the full power of digital and social media advertising:** With 63 per cent of small businesses wanting more support around marketing and sales, BT is looking to help small firms across the UK to better promote their goods and services online. More details will be revealed in due course.



- **Supporting small businesses through mentoring:** BT is introducing a new mentoring scheme for small businesses, to provide them with free access to its expertise across strategy, marketing, sales, and more. BT will support businesses via [Digital Boost](#), a free non-profit platform uniting digital experts with leaders of small businesses and charities. Further details will be announced over the coming weeks.
- **Helping small businesses acquire new digital skills:** BT's ambition is to reach 1m small business owners and their employees with digital skills by 2025, with 46 per cent expecting to increase their use of digital tools following the pandemic. BT has already helped tens of thousands of small businesses with digital skills training through its [Skills for Tomorrow](#) programme and has released new learning content on crucial topics, including how to prevent cyber-attacks and using social media to reach new customers.
- **Wellbeing support:** BT is acutely aware that it's an extremely worrying and uncertain time for small businesses, so we will be providing customers with access to expertise around maintaining their wellbeing by boosting their mental and physical health. This will be delivered through a free online toolkit and webinar series specifically designed for small businesses.

[📄](#) Based on Small Business Britain Survey Data from May, 2020

### **[Small Business Britain – top five insights](#)**

1. 70 per cent of small businesses are expecting another lockdown in 2020
2. More than half of those surveyed [53%] do not feel confident in their business
3. Although, two thirds (64%) of UK small business believe that the pandemic has increased support and awareness of their sector
4. Over half (55%) see the business changes they have made in the crisis as positive
5. Over half (51%) are pivoting online to engage with customers more
6. 45 per cent are selling online more and 46 per cent of small businesses expect their use of digital to increase in the future.

### **Social Media Content**

#### Template 1

Small Businesses are the backbone of our economy and have been amongst the hardest hit by Covid-19. To help them recover and grow, @BTBusiness has launched a package of ten key initiatives today. Find out how it could help your #SmallBusiness [here](#).

#### Template 2

Over half of SMEs are moving online to engage with customers more. Digital skills and mentoring programs for businesses will be key to their success. Great to see these initiatives being rolled out today by @BTBusiness in its [Small Business Support Scheme](#).