

Environmental and economic advantages of buying research papers example

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LOCAL, HANDMADE ITEMS

ABSTRACT

Purchasing local, sustainable, green and handmade goods helps stimulate the local community and keeps the money with the people. Instead of purchasing goods that are manufactured and distributed by large-scale businesses, it is better for the economy and the environment if people would buy from local small-businesses. Local businesses can produce high-quality products at a lower price. This can also reduce the cost of shipping and minimize the impact on the environment. Local businesses can help circulate the money within the community, which can embitter market place in the locale. Many local businesses focus on the customer and the satisfaction of each client, which means that better quality, affordable prices and a better cause is guaranteed. This paper discusses the benefits of purchasing local and handmade items from small businesses.

Environmental and Economic Advantages of Buying Local, Handmade Items

There are a number of reasons to buy local and handmade items. Although the first most obvious benefits would stem from economic factors, there are a number of environmental reasons why it is better to look for goods that are made locally and are not mass-produced. Due to industrialization, mass-produced, factory-made products from large scale companies are what hits the markets as popular. These items have been flying off the shelves of stores both locally and internationally. Not only are these products most of the time low in quality, there are a number of big corporations who do not

practice fair or ethical working standards for their employees. There are a number of people who go down the chain of production that do not get compensated as much as those who sit in the seat as CEO or company chairman (Hagenhofer, 2012). This means that by purchasing goods made by bigger retail companies; you are supporting a corrupt capitalist system where the people who actually make the goods are not being paid what they are due. Most of the time, these large scale companies outsource work - these come from developing or poor countries - so that they can save money on their production. The workers in these factories are usually children or underage workers who have quit school in order to provide food for their families. The money that you pay to the distributor or the store in which you purchased the product will not give these young and exploited factory workers their money, instead the workers will get less than minimum wage. Most of the time, these workers get a salary as low as \$2.50 a day for working more than ten hours a day in a factory line (Maris, 2009). Whatever product you purchase will only benefit those who own the company or people who fund the creation of such exploitative products. However, if you purchase local and handmade items that did not go through a factory, you will actually be helping the economy as well as the environment.

Environmental Benefits

There are a number of environmental benefits to buying local goods. For one thing, there is no need for a factory or any other industrial machines to create things that are hand-made - this is the term "handmade" (Hagenhofer, 2012). A person or a family will create the items in their own home or a small

studio, which means that they would not necessarily need to go out and use machines that would produce too much carbon emissions. Since these items are handmade, they also are better quality than those created in a factory. Each artisan who creates their own products will make sure that the items are made with care. This means that there is less waste as compared to those products that go through quality control in large-scale factories. There are also times when faulty products or overrun items are pushed through for sale even though they do not meet specific standards.

Local handmade goods use local products which are the best for whatever environment you are in. For example, if you purchase locally carved furniture which are made from native trees, the products that you purchase will definitely have a longer life-span as compared to furniture carved from trees that are not found in the area. This is because the material used to make the products are naturally able to withstand withering and the wear-and-tear of the weather conditions in your locale. Environmentally, this is good because it means that there will be less wastage and that the products you have will last longer (Maris, 2009).

There are a lot of artists who are conscious about their environmental impact, and therefore only commit to using materials that are upcycled or recycled. They can carefully choose the materials used to make their works of art, and they can purchase eco-friendly and sustainable products for creating their masterpiece. A lot of local artists who are committed to their craft know how to give back to the environment, and therefore only use their talents in a low-scale production so that they can minimize their carbon footprints.

Shopping locally will also reduce the need for shipping. Not only is this more economic in terms of price, but it can help reduce carbon emissions. There will be no need to ship or fly your product anywhere as it is available locally. This means that you can pick the product up any time you want, and there will be no long wait. You get your product faster, and there is no need to worry about damaging the environment with carbon footprints left by the shipping companies who had to get the product to your door.

Economic Benefits

Besides the environmental benefits of buying local handmade items, there is an economic benefit (Hagenhofer, 2012). As discussed earlier, purchasing items from large scale productions which are sold and marketed by big capitalist countries is supporting the exploitation of workers. Not only are the workers in the factories being exploited, the retail salesman who is working odd shifts at a minimum wage salary job is also not getting his fair share of the deal. Mass-produced items are generally more expensive as compared to the local ones because they need to cover a number of costs that are connected the production, marketing and distribution of the products. Shopping locally does not mean that you do not step outside of your community. It means that you support the people who make goods and sell it within their spheres. This means that when you travel, instead of purchasing goods from large-chained souvenir stores, you take your time to step into small family-owned shops and support their business. Not only will you be contributing to their local community, you will be supporting the family business that is probably the livelihood of a number of people.

When you purchase local goods from your own community, you are contributing to the economic stimulus. The welfare of your community also lies in the local businesses around you. Instead of purchasing mass-produced products, you can have fresh, good quality and unique products from people who are producing and selling ones right down the street from you. The sellers who make their own goods are members of your own community, which means that however well they are doing will reflect on your local marketplace. If you want to support this, you need to purchase goods that are from places within your community.

Purchasing goods that are locally made means that you get to keep the money within the community. This gives the local businesses near you more money to invest in their companies, which can provide a sustainable and greener community for everyone who lives near you. When you purchase goods that are handmade and local, you are supporting those within your community who are as much affected with the economic depression as you are. At least, when you purchase from them, you are strengthening your local community and putting money back in where you live, rather than sending it overseas or to larger-scaled corporations.

Studies show that local businesses donate more to charities as compared to larger-scaled corporations. This means that by supporting local businesses, you are actually supporting charities in your area, as well. Before you purchase a product, try and ask the artist or craft owner if they have a favorite charity. Chances are, they donate a portion of what they make to that local charity, so when you buy from them, you are also giving back to the community. Large corporations donate a very small amount if they do

donate anything at all.

When you support local businesses, you are helping give jobs to people in your community. Studies show that local businesses are less likely to lay-off their workers in the case of economic depression. More local businesses employ people who live just close-by. This means that by supporting local businesses, you are helping stimulate the job market within your area. This gives people a better chance to find work and provide for their families. Local businesses are the largest employers nationally, and unlike larger corporations, they will not cut-down on workers just to save on costs.

Local goods made by small companies are better in terms of purchasing choice because they focus on the customer, rather than what would be better for their business. This means that quality is really the key when creating these things. By purchasing something that is better in quality and will last will ensure you a product that can serve you for years. This will help reduce wastage, meaning that you do not have to buy a replacement product in the near future in any case that the item breaks or is no longer functional. Small business owners value their customers, so if you are not fully satisfied with the item that you have purchased, they will listen to your complaints and try to make your next interaction more pleasant. This is unlike large businesses who only care about number being sold and profit.

Local handmade goods are usually sold by the artists who create them. This means that when you purchase an item made by an artist, all the fees go directly to them and go back to their business. This supports the small scale business in the local area which can support the local market economy in an almost even type of distribution. The distribution of profit or wealth will not

be imbalanced where the creator of the product only receives a small amount. Purchasing local, sustainable and green handmade goods ensures that the artist whom you purchased it from will be compensated for their time, craft and effort. By purchasing these goods, you are supporting a cause which supports local items that are not industrialized or exploitative. There are a number of different reasons why purchasing local goods is better than mass-produced items. Not only is the quality better, but it can also help the environment and the economy. Local goods created by artists within your area are usually made with love and care (Maris, 2009). You can be sure that you will have a quality, one-of-a-kind item that will go directly back to your local market economy.

References

Hagenhofer, F. (2012). *Locally Grown & Sustainable Textiles: Exploring Current Possibilities*.

Maris, L. (2009). *Live Green, Calgary!: Local Programs, Products & Services to Green Your Life and Save You Money*. Rocky Mountain Books Ltd.