

BIA Toolkit: Creating Your Online Marketplace Step By Step

This project by the Riverside BIA was made possible thanks to the BIA Innovation Fund of the City of Toronto.

STEP 1 - MARKET RESEARCH

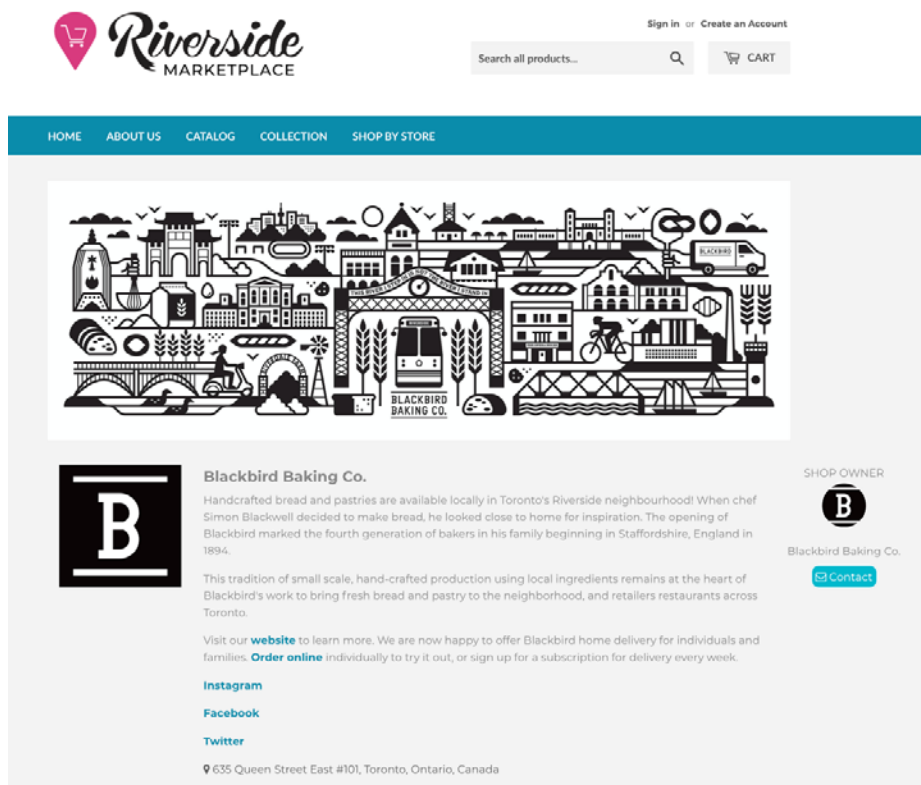
Summary: Survey BIA members; compile member information for online profiles; research and choose an online store platform (Note: this toolkit is based on Shopify):

- Survey Businesses. Here's a [sample survey](#) administered via Survey Monkey
- Compile profile information for all BIA members in an Excel Sheet

STEP 2 - CREATION & DEVELOPMENT

Create BIA Shopify account and install ancillary apps; manage account settings; design your marketplace and create seller profiles:

- Create a Shopify Account: if available, you can do so through the [SHOPHERE program](#) or directly via the [Shopify registration link](#). Please see our Tutorial on [How to create a Shopify account](#).
- Install Applications within Shopify: Get the [Multi-Vendor Marketplace App](#) and the [Pagefly Landing Page Builder](#). Watch our Tutorials on [adding Apps to your Shopify Account](#) and [Managing Your Account Settings](#)
- Design your Marketplace: View our Tutorials on [designing your Online Marketplace](#) and on [image resizing](#).
- Add Seller Profiles: view the tutorial on adding [seller profiles](#) from Multi-Vendor Marketplace App. Create a draft profile for each BIA member that is offering online products or services (sample below)



The screenshot displays the Riverside Marketplace website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Riverside Marketplace logo on the left and 'Sign in or Create an Account' on the right. Below the logo is a search bar with the placeholder text 'Search all products...' and a magnifying glass icon. To the right of the search bar is a 'CART' icon. The main navigation menu includes 'HOME', 'ABOUT US', 'CATALOG', 'COLLECTION', and 'SHOP BY STORE'. The featured product is a seller profile for Blackbird Baking Co. The profile includes a large illustration of a town scene with various buildings, a train, and a bicycle. Below the illustration is the Blackbird Baking Co. logo, a large letter 'B' in a square. The profile text describes the company's history and products, mentioning that they are a fourth-generation bakery in Toronto's Riverside neighborhood. It also provides contact information, including a 'Contact' button and social media links for Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. The address is listed as 635 Queen Street East #101, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

- Communicate with your members to introduce the Online Marketplace and confirm their profile (sample email below). Make any adjustments based on member feedback.

Email Subject line: XYZ BIA is very excited to launch the Online Marketplace! Pls confirm your Profile Information

Hello XX,

XYZ BIA is dedicated to supporting our members. We know that online sales are a key piece of this now, and will continue to be in future to ensure diverse revenues streams for your business.

We are working to deliver an Online Marketplace this summer to help drive traffic to your existing website and online store. The Online Marketplace is a Shopify-based platform which will provide you, as a XYZ BIA member, with a free profile and free marketing and promotion.

At this time we are getting in touch to confirm your interest in being part of the Online Marketplace and to confirm the profile information that we have drafted for your business. Please see the attached profile and please verify or provide changes by DATE in order for us to make your profile live. You may have received an email with your account details in the last couple of days but you don't need to take any action, we will be managing the profile on your behalf.

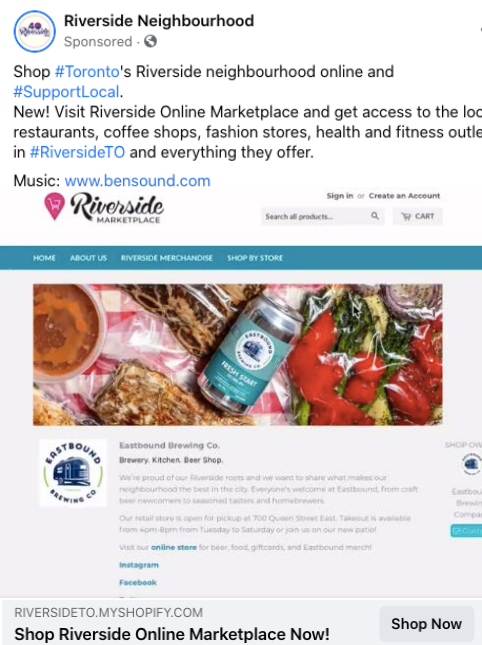
XYZ BIA is very excited to launch the Online Marketplace this summer!

I look forward to hearing from you and would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

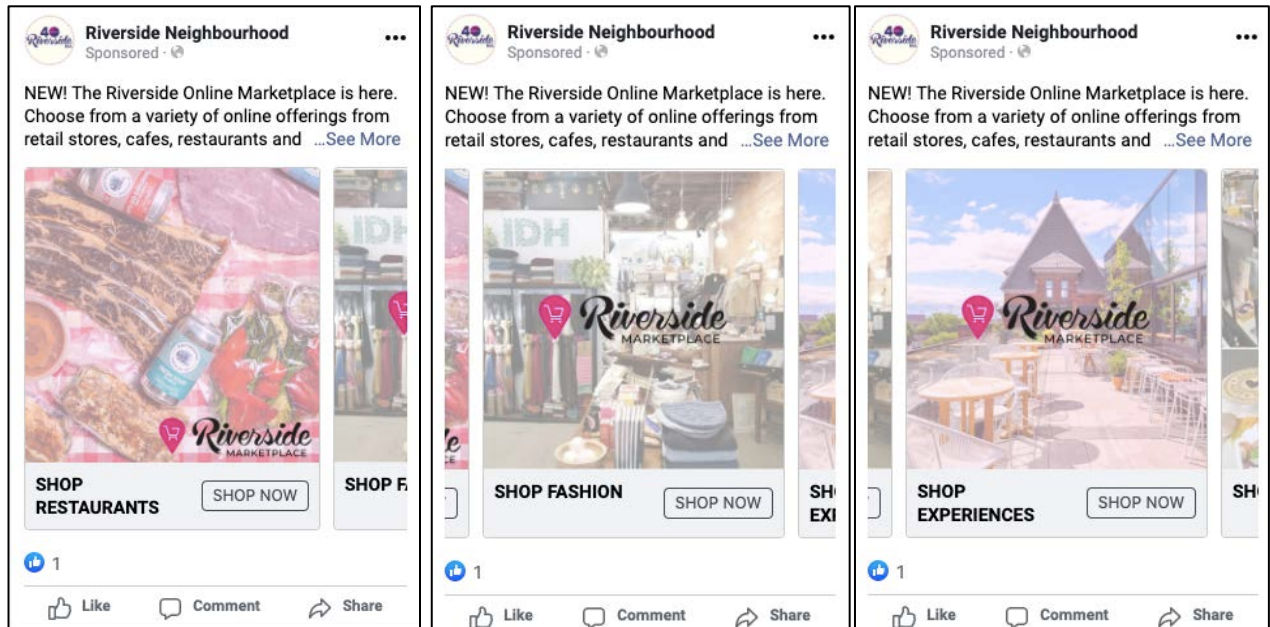
STEP 3- PROMOTION & LAUNCH

Create your key creative and promotional content; develop & execute ads and social media campaign; and launch online marketplace.

- Create your promotional content:
 - See a screenshot of a sponsored Facebook ad example below. To see the promotional Ad video click [here](#)



- **Carousel Facebook ad example :**

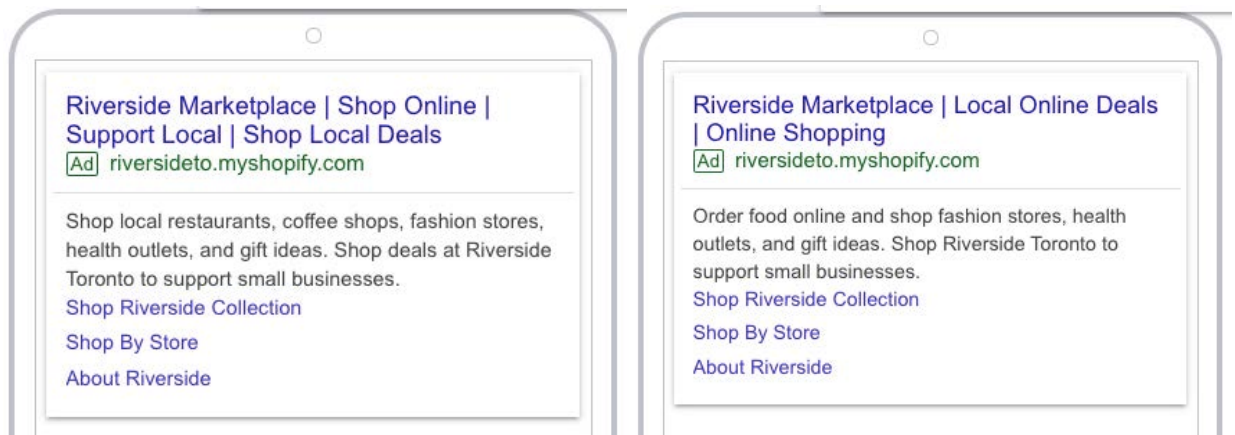


- Launch your Online Marketplace: explore our [Riverside BIA Online Marketplace](#)

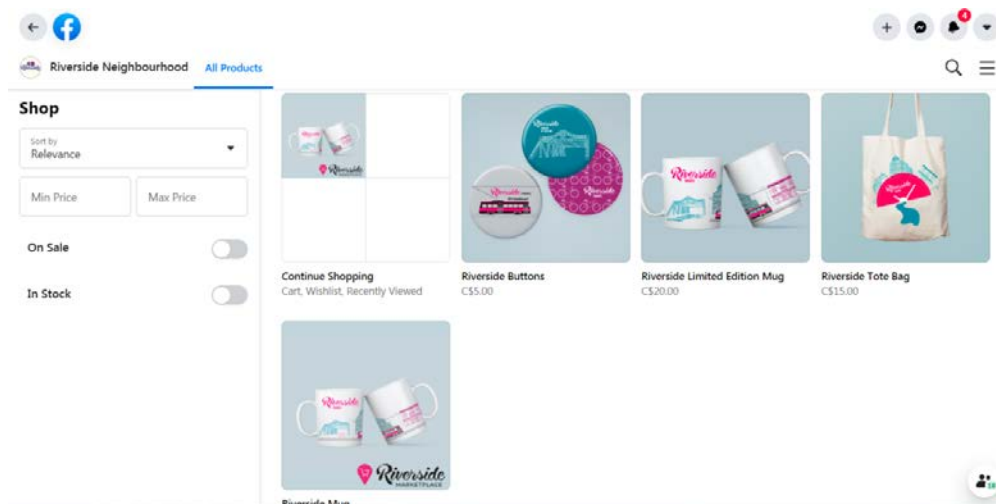
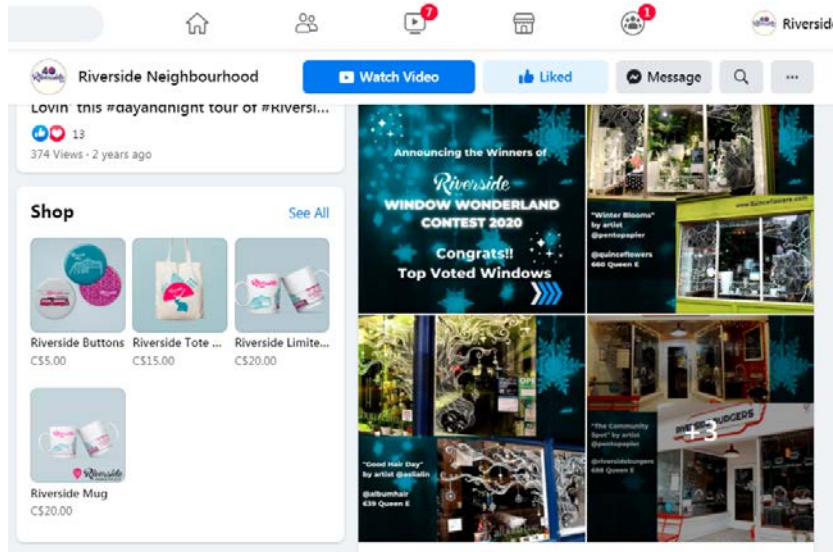
STEP 4 - ONGOING MAINTENANCE & MARKETING

Schedule for periodic updates as members change; and an ongoing marketing campaign to keep it in the public eye

- Create a Google Ads campaign to increase traffic to Online Marketplace.
Example of Google Ads:



- Create a Facebook Shop to lead visitors to your Online Marketplace



Quick Tips for Online Marketplace creation:

- Remember to save and resize all logos and banners. Use 600 by 600px for vendor logos and 1500px by 500px is good for banners.
- If you're creating seller profiles, remember to save the usernames and passwords in an Excel Sheet.
- Always keep track of your budget! [Sample](#)