

Brand new website helps us identify the good and bad businesses in your town

The Brownbook (www.brownbook.net) is a brand new website that helps consumers in your town find reputable local businesses. It's an online local business directory, but with a special twist – anyone can update the information in it and anyone can review any business!

The founders launched the service after experiencing the long delays and high cost of getting their own business listed in the big directories. In addition they realized that their best advertising was word of mouth from happy customers, but the big directories had no way for them to present those testimonials to potential customers.

In *The Brownbook* (www.brownbook.net) even the smallest business can immediately add their business and they can update their listing at any time – for free. They can even add photos, videos, marketing information, and links to their own website.

People looking for a local business can read reviews made by other people about any business, helping them and other members of their local community evaluate businesses before making contact. Anyone can also check out businesses they know and add positive or negative reviews depending on their experience of those businesses, directly contributing to the local reputation of the business *and* helping other local consumers. If a business you want to review is not already listed it takes just seconds to add it, so you can be the first to review it and voice your opinion.

“We’re launching all over the UK with over 2.2 million businesses of every type already listed- that’s 99% of all businesses in the UK”, said Jerry Brown, one of the founders. *“Any business owner can find their listing or add it instantly for free, and they can immediately add additional contact and marketing information to help potential customers find and contact them, bringing them more quality enquiries.*

*“By encouraging existing customers to add positive reviews, businesses owners can use *The Brownbook* to build their local reputation and win new customers.*

The service is free to use for consumers and for businesses. Regular users can optionally register with the site, which lets them build their user profile, keep a record of all their reviews & updates, create a list of their favourite local businesses, and show a picture of themselves to accompany their reviews.

Business owners can get instant alerts of any reviews or updates to their listing by claiming their listing for £5 a year, and those that want to promote their business listing with marketing information, photos and videos can do so by choosing from a range of promotions which are just £1 each for a year.

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Contacts: Email: jerry [AT] brownbook [DOT] net

Phone: 0208 1235 466

Blog: <http://blog.brownbook.net>

Forum: <http://forum.brownbook.net>

Press info, screenshots etc: <http://blog.brownbook.net/press/>

About the Founders

The Brownbook was founded by two directory industry executives who saw that local businesses needed a faster and cheaper way to promote their businesses and their reputations online and to get found by ever more discerning consumers.

*“We knew that the big directory companies had monopolised the local directory business for decades, charging businesses high prices to advertise and giving no way for consumers to judge the credibility of businesses. We wanted to give the businesses and the consumers more power, and when we saw Wikipedia, the user-generated encyclopedia, we realised it was the perfect concept. We set about building *The Brownbook* by embracing wiki principles of ‘anyone-can-edit’, but we made it so simple that even the most techno-phobic could do it. The result is a local business directory where anyone can add businesses, edit, or add reviews; and one that puts total control into the hands of the businesses and consumers.”*

There’s more on the ethos and beliefs behind *The Brownbook* on the blog: <http://blog.brownbook.net>.

About *The Brownbook*

The Brownbook is the UK’s first user-created local business directory where anyone can edit and anyone can review. The business is owned and run by the founders and it is independent of any of the large directory providers.