Unlocking the digital potential for rural small businesses across the country could add $47 billion to the U.S. GDP per year. For Texas, it could add $3,760 million to the state GDP per year, according to a new study by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and Amazon. The study estimates the economic impact of digital technologies on rural small businesses based on official statistics and a survey to more than 5,000 rural small businesses across the country.

**State Stats**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stat</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>$1,645.1 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult population</td>
<td>20,599,223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civilian labor force</td>
<td>13,219,523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural adult population</td>
<td>2,384,838</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural civilian labor force</td>
<td>1,303,776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural population with access to broadband</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key Findings for Texas**

- **Increased access of digital tools will unlock future economic growth**
  - + $6,656.9 M annual sales
  - + 23,433 jobs
  - + $3,760.0 M annual value added
  - + $962.7 M annual wages

- **Economic impact of digital tools on rural small businesses in the past three years**
  - + $6,107.4 M annual sales
  - + 21,499 jobs
  - + $3,449.6 M annual value added
  - + $883.3 M annual wages
Unrealized gains due to the lack of access to digital tools by rural small businesses in the past three years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>$6,157.3 M</th>
<th>$3,477.8 M</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>annual sales</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>jobs</td>
<td>21,675</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>annual value added</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>annual wages</td>
<td>$890.5 M</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Impact of digital tools on rural small business sales

- + 23.1% sale growth (past three years)
- + 23.3% missed sale growth (past three years)
- + 25.1% potential sale growth (next three years)

Digital tools allow small rural businesses in Texas to reach new customers

- 63.6% Within the community
- 46.9% Within state, outside the community
- 30.8% Across the entire United States
- 28.7% In neighboring states
- 14.0% In countries outside the United States

How to Unlock the Digital Potential of Rural Texas

- Increase digital connectivity in rural areas. 66% of rural small businesses say poor internet or cell phone connectivity negatively impacts their business.

- Increase the talent pipeline of candidates trained in digital skills (cloud, digital marketing). 38% of rural small businesses say they can’t hire the talent with the right digital skills in their area.

- Increase adoption of digital training and digital tools by rural small businesses so they can scale their operations. Nearly 41% of rural small businesses agree that policymakers should create incentive programs that make it easier for rural small businesses to incorporate digital technology into their daily operations.

learn more at:
EmpoweringRuralBusinesses.com

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2. U.S. Census American Community Survey (5-year estimates 2012-16).
3. Ibid.
5. Ibid.

Source: Pham, Nam D. and Mary Donovan. 2019. "Unlocking the Digital Potential of Rural America." U.S. Chamber Technology Engagement Center (C_TEC)